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Press release
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10 years of BioTechMed-Graz: A success story celebrates its birthday
Taking stock of a unique university research cooperation

Graz, 29 June 2023: Ten years ago, the University of Graz, Graz University of Technology and the Medical University of Graz decided to strengthen interuniversity cooperation at the interface of humans, technology and medicine with its groundbreaking BioTechMed-Graz research alliance. On this special anniversary, the universities are taking stock of this unique research cooperation.

Peter Riedler, Rector of the University of Graz: "This unique alliance is a real success story. Research achievements highly relevant to society in our field of excellence in the molecular life sciences help increase its visibility in international competition."

On the occasion of this anniversary, TU Graz Rector Harald Kainz provided a positive evaluation and looked with optimism to the future: "A joint initiative of TU Graz, Uni Graz and Med Uni Graz, BioTechMed-Graz shows the good cooperation between our universities and has also sustainably strengthened Graz as a research location. The pooling of interdisciplinary competences, the funding of excellent research projects and the promotion of young scientists not only delivers outstanding results but has brought forth true flagship projects. And given the growth of BioTechMed-Graz in the past few years, the next ten years will bring about even more successful research.

Med Uni Graz Rector Hellmut Samonigg also sees the university research alliance as an important milestone for Graz as a science hub: "The interdisciplinary cooperation within BioTechMed-Graz enables a unique bundling of competences in order to achieve internationally acclaimed research success in the research areas as well as to share highly specialized research infrastructure. The active exchange allows young scientists to think outside the box in a competitive setting."

Key information on its development:

- 2013: The BioTechMed-Graz research alliance receives EUR 4.4 million in funding from the Higher Education Structural Funds (HRSM) program of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research. The funding is distributed between three projects: Omics Center, MRI Upgrade and Bioimaging.
- 2014: Three BioTechMed-Graz professorships are filled: Professor of Interactive Microbiome Research (Med Uni Graz), Professor of Bioinformatics (TU Graz), Professor of Neuroimaging (Uni Graz). 13 postdoctoral positions are also funded.
- 2016: Four flagship projects receive a total of EUR 2.4 million in funding. The goal of the program is to develop and promote flagship projects of scientific excellence in one or more BioTechMed-Graz research areas that have a realistic chance of acquiring large third-party funded projects (SFBs, EU projects, ERCs) and thus increasing the international visibility of Graz.
- 2017: Start of the first flagship projects. Topics are periodic fasting, interactions between the gut and bacteria, regulation of bioactive lipids and heart models.
- 2017: Development of the BioTechMed-Graz PhD program, which starts in WS 2017/2018.
- 2019: Establishment of new BioTechMed-Graz programs, e.g., Young Researcher Groups, which support outstanding postdoctoral fellows as they set up their own research groups; the Lab Rotation Program for becoming acquainted with other research areas; the Best Collaborative Paper Award.
- 2019: Three Young Researcher Groups and two new flagship projects (DYNIMO and MIDAS) are approved.
- 2020: Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) infrastructure call for proposals: BioTechMed-Graz supports 5 submitted projects; 1 project receives EUR 2.5 million in FFG funding and EUR 200,000 from BioTechMed-Graz.
- 2022: Five Young Researcher Group projects and the flagship project INTERACD+ receive EUR 3.7 million in funding.
- 2022: Cori Institute: Cooperation agreement with the Austrian Academy of Sciences on the Cori Institute is signed in the presence of Minister Martin Polaschek and Barbara Eibinger-Miedl, a representative of the Styrian government.

BioTechMed-Graz Director Rudolf Zechner emphasizes the great importance of promoting cutting-edge research and young scientists: "The highly successful BioTechMed-Graz program as well as the flagship projects, the Young Researcher Groups and the Lab Rotation Program will be continued in the future. The establishment of the Carl and Gerty Cori Institute of Molecular and Computational Metabolism was a milestone in the groundbreaking development of metabolism research in Graz and Austria. The Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW) institute should be closely integrated into the activities of BioTechMed-Graz."

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