

MAY 13, 2004

## Howard Hughes Medical Institute Seeks up to 50 New Scientists

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) is seeking as many as 50 new scientists in the field of biomedical research through a national competition announced today.

The Institute is looking for candidates from the full range of biological and biomedical inquiry who demonstrate exceptional promise early in their careers as independent researchers. Nearly 200 universities, medical schools, and research institutes have been invited to nominate their best scientists for the competition. Between 30 and 50 scientists will be chosen to join the Institute in 2005.

“HHMI places a high value on innovation and our distinctive approach to supporting biomedical research frees our scientists to use their creativity to extend the boundaries of scientific knowledge,” said Thomas R. Cech, president of the 50-year-old philanthropy.

Cech said the competition represents a commitment by the Institute to invest as much as \$350 million in additional support for biomedical research over the next seven years. HHMI's annual research budget now stands at nearly \$500 million a year.

Currently, the Institute employs 318 of the nation's most innovative scientists who head Hughes laboratories at 66 universities, medical schools, and research institutes through long-term research collaboration agreements. These scientists and their research groups study a broad range of fundamental biological questions, including the causes of many human diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, and AIDS. The standards are high. More than 100 of HHMI's investigators are members of the National Academy of Sciences; 10 current or former investigators have received the Nobel Prize.

“Recruitment of new investigators through a competition like this gives HHMI the ability to respond to emerging areas of scientific interest,” said David A. Clayton, vice president and chief scientific officer.

This general competition for new investigators, the first since 2000, represents a continued expansion of the Institute's biomedical research mission. In addition to its investigator program, HHMI will begin recruiting this fall for scientists for the Janelia Farm Research Campus, the Institute's

innovative technology campus located in Ashburn, Virginia. Janelia Farm, which represents an investment of \$500 million, is scheduled to open in 2006 and will be a unique, multi-disciplinary research environment for small teams of scientists.