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HHMI's Graduate Program Begins Search for Inaugural Class

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) has launched a student recruitment campaign for its new Janelia Farm Graduate Program, developed in partnership with the University of Chicago and the University of Cambridge.

“The combination of small labs, an intense research atmosphere, unique resources, and creative people will make Janelia an outstanding place to train as a new scientist,” said Gerald M. Rubin, director of the Janelia Farm Research Campus. “This campus was designed to produce breakthroughs that will eventually lead to a true understanding of the mechanism of the mind. If I were going to graduate school now, I wouldn't want to be anywhere else.”

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- Kevin Moses

The Janelia Farm Research Campus will further extend HHMI's commitment to research and discovery when it opens in October 2006. Janelia Farm will probe fundamental biomedical questions best addressed through a collaborative, interdisciplinary culture. Researchers at Janelia Farm will initially focus on the identification of general principles that govern how information is processed by neuronal circuits and development of imaging technologies and computational methods for image analysis.

To identify outstanding students who will benefit most from Janelia Farm's unique scientific culture, initial recruitment efforts will be supplemented with referrals from HHMI's global network of investigators, who understand the talent and personality traits required to thrive in such a demanding program.

“The kinds of students we are seeking are much like our group leaders and fellows—driven and passionate about research,” said Kevin Moses, associate director for science and training at Janelia Farm. “Their maturity and self-motivation will help them thrive in an atmosphere that will require them to be both independent and collaborative.”

The emphasis on independence begins during the application process, which requires students to submit a research project proposal matched to the focus of a particular lab at Janelia Farm. Matriculating students will have the choice of earning their Ph.D., from either the University of Chicago or the University of Cambridge, where they will generally spend their first year. For the remaining three to four years, students will conduct research alongside Janelia's distinguished scientists in a highly collaborative, multidisciplinary environment.

Each student will be mentored by two advisors; a Janelia Farm lab head and a faculty member at the partner university. Mentors and students will develop individualized education plans and review student progress each year.

HHMI will fully fund each student's academic costs for the duration of the program. Students will also receive health insurance and an annual stipend of \$30,000 (or the UK equivalent).

Interested students must complete the online application at www.hhmi.org/janelia and submit all related materials by December 15, 2006. Janelia Farm scientists and faculty representatives from the two partner universities will interview candidates during a symposium at Janelia Farm from March 1-4, 2007. Successful candidates will have until April 15, 2007 to accept the offer, and the inaugural class will begin studies in the fall of 2007.