

# BIF GETS A FACELIFT



**»We will continue to grow and change, but the spirit of BIF remains unchanged.«**

This year's spring sees the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds (BIF) shine in new splendour. The first outward sign of change, which you will have noticed right away, is our new and colourful logo. Nor will it have escaped your attention that this edition of FUTURA, our quarterly journal, also comes with a new livery. The new design reflects a change in the emphasis of its contents. From now on, the journal will not only present research for scientists, but also more general contemporary scientific issues, as well as news from the foundation itself. This will accommodate the interests of the growing number of former fellowship holders who are no longer engaged in basic research. And last but not least, our website has been updated and is now even more user-friendly – as well as supplemented by pages in German. The last 'coat of paint' has served us well for about 10 years, but it was time to meet contemporary requirements and extend our outreach.

Our team of 9 has also seen considerable changes: three crucial positions had to be filled in the last 18 months. Our most recent arrival in July 2010 was Dr Anja Hoffmann, who brings new scientific expertise to the foundation. A former BIF fellowship holder, Anja also knows the ropes and so we are now very well equipped to provide personal support for our ever-increasing 'family' of fellows and alumni.

Needless to say, these changes are not an end in themselves. They will ensure that we continue to fulfil our central roles, while continually adapting and improving our programmes and services. This is what the biologists call evolution. Having said this, however, we will remain true to our core values: long-term support activities, not short-lived trends, and being a reliable partner for scientists. We will continue to rely on our tried-and-trusted programmes such as PhD fellowships, travel grants and the International Titisee Conferences, some of which are as old as the foundation itself. In addition, thanks to our donors, whose foresight enables us to review and improve our support programmes, we could launch a new venture – the MD fellowship programme – a few years ago. We now sponsor an additional 10 fellows annually, who also receive personal support from BIF.

At the risk of sounding complacent, our facts and figures confirm that we are still on the right track. We have more applicants for PhD fellowships than ever before: in 2010, we received 473 applications, 51 of which were awarded fellowships. At the first deadline in 2011, we received 203 applications – a new all-time high. If the trend continues, we will soon have more than 600 applicants each year for our PhD fellowship programme alone.

So we will continue to grow and change, and while a fresh coat of paint now and again is necessary, you will still find the spirit of BIF unchanged.

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Managing Director