



Press Release – Science

Research on heart and vascular diseases earns Peter Carmeliet of VIB and K.U.Leuven the Ernst Jung Medical Award 2010

Leuven, 8 January 2010 – His pioneering research on heart and vascular diseases and thrombosis has earned Peter Carmeliet of the Vlaams Instituut voor Biotechnologie (VIB) and the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (K.U.Leuven) the prestigious Ernst Jung Medical Award, one of the highest European prizes for biomedical research. The Ernst Jung Foundation, which awards the prize, was particularly impressed by Carmeliet's success in making the link between fundamental scientific research and the practical treatment of diseases. The award includes a monetary prize of €150,000, to be used primarily for further scientific research.

The Ernst Jung Foundation is bestowing this prize on Peter Carmeliet for his ground-breaking scientific insights into the growth and the role of blood vessels. Carmeliet has demonstrated the importance of various growth factors in the formation of blood vessels (angiogenesis) in cancer and diseases of the eye; and the therapeutic potential of a new angiogenesis-inhibitor (anti-PIGF) for the treatment of cancer is currently being tested in clinical trials conducted by ThromboGenics in collaboration with Roche. His more recent studies are revealing a major role of one of these factors (VEGF) in ALS, the fatal paralyzing disorder of the nervous system; clinical trials to evaluate the therapeutic potential of VEGF for ALS patients are now underway.

The Ernst Jung Foundation was founded in 1967 by German businessman Ernst Jung, who desired to dedicate his wealth to the service of science. Each year, the Foundation awards its prize to the most deserving medical scientists.

For the editor

More information VIB Communications +32 9 244 66 11

Mention both VIB and the university When reporting this research, please always mention VIB as well as the university concerned.

VIB VIB, the Flanders Institute for Biotechnology, is a non-profit research institute in the life sciences. Some 1100 scientists and technicians conduct strategic basic research on the molecular mechanisms that control the functioning of the human body, plants, and micro-organisms. Through a close partnership with four Flemish universities – Ghent University, the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, the University of Antwerp, and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel – and a solid investment program, VIB unites the forces of 65 research groups in a single institute. Their research aims at fundamentally extending the frontiers of our knowledge. Through its technology transfer activities, VIB strives to convert the research results into products for the benefit of consumers and patients. VIB also develops and distributes a broad range of scientifically substantiated information about all aspects of biotechnology. More info at: www.vib.be.



K.U.Leuven The University of Leuven is Belgium's largest university and one of the oldest universities in Europe, founded in 1425. It is a comprehensive university with 14 faculties, with a long tradition of high-quality interdisciplinary research and teaching. The University of Leuven has over 33,000 students (12 percent international) and over 17,000 staff members (8,600 in the various university departments and 8,700 at UZ Leuven, the university hospital). More info at: www.kuleuven.be