

ICP: an international biomedical research Institute

When Christian de Duve founded the Institute of cellular Pathology (ICP), in 1974 he was acutely aware of the contrast between the enormous progress in biological sciences that had occurred in the 20 preceding years and the modesty of the medical advances that had followed. He therefore created a research institution based on the principle that basic research in biology would be pursued by the investigators with complete freedom, but that special attention would be paid to the exploitation of basic advances for medical progress. It was therefore highly appropriate for the Institute to be located on the campus of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Louvain (UCL). This campus is located in Brussels. The University hospital (Cliniques St Luc) is located within walking distance of ICP.



Thierry Boon



Emile Van Schaftingen

The main commitment of the members of ICP is research. Discovery is the endpoint of their effort and the only element taken into account for their evaluation. But the Institute functions in symbiosis with the Faculty of Medicine and many of its senior members hold Faculty position and have teaching appointments. The influx of doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows from the University is also a key element in the success of the Institute.

In 1978 the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research decided to base its Belgian branch within the walls of ICP. A happy collaboration between the two Institutions has been pursued since that time. Even though the two Institutes are completely independent, the collaborations between the scientists of ICP and the Ludwig Institute is extremely close and the sharing of resources is considerable

ICP is managed by a directorate of three scientists, presently composed of Thierry Boon, Fred Opperdoes and Émile Van Schaftingen. The directorate is appointed by the Board of directors, which comprises the Rector of the University of Louvain; the Pro-rector, the General Administrator of the University and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. Also present in the Board of directors are eminent members, of the business community.

About 150 researchers work in ICP and in the Ludwig Institute, assisted by a technical and administrative staff of about 100 members. Despite this relatively small size ICP has the ambition of pursuing research projects of high quality under conditions that allow original, long-term projects to be pursued. The Institute has a limited endowment that is a source of key financing for priority issues, such as the creation of new laboratories for promising young researchers. We expect that the quality of our researchers supported sound organisational approaches will enable ICP to stand at the forefront of the European Research Institution.



Fred Opperdoes