

WORK AND PLAY IN DRESDEN

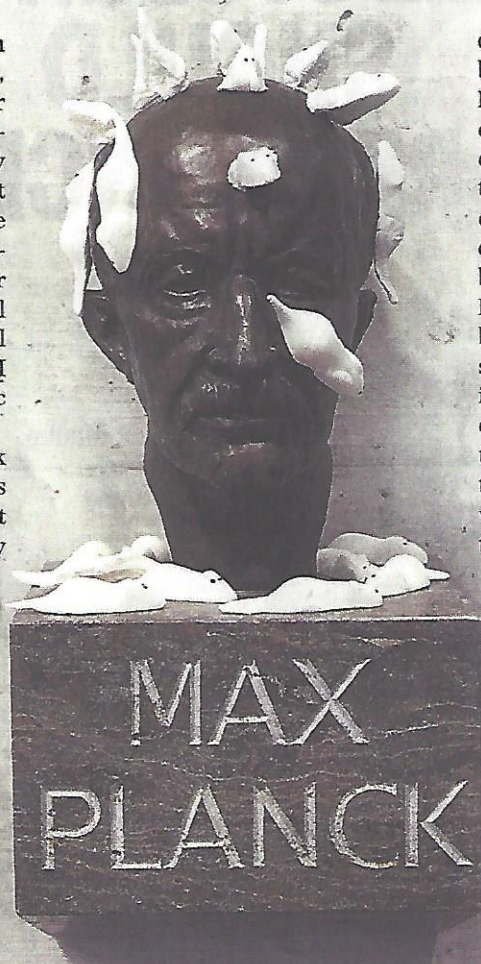
A mixture of fun, teamwork and cutting-edge resources makes life at the Max Planck Institute in Dresden an unforgettable experience for scholars

After a degree in Chemistry from Delhi University, I chose England, the birthplace of molecular biology, to pursue a career in life sciences. During my masters in biotechnology from University of Nottingham, I spent some time doing research at Oxford. The excellent quality of research opportunities in England made me choose Cancer Research UK in Manchester for my doctoral studies. After publishing the results on cell division and the role it plays in cancer, I decided to explore a different scientific culture for my post doctoral studies.

And so I arrived at the Max Planck Institute for Cell Biology and Genetics (MPI-CBG) in Dresden, Germany. What drew me to the institute was not only the exciting research atmosphere but also the beauty of the city itself. Having now spent a year at the MPI I have had an amazing scientific and cultural experience that is quite different from that of England and the rest of the world.

The Watson and Crick discovery of the DNA double helix is a standard guide to all basic biological research done today, where you tackle a huge complex problem by addressing small simple problems first. However, currently England is moving more towards complex biological research aimed at a clinical outcome for treating diseases such as cancer. However, the Max Planck society of Germany still believes that the key to complex problems still lies in basic biological research.

Often, we consider good scientific research to be the result of hard work and intelligence. But, what we always forget is that it takes many more factors to build impactful science. Here at the MPI-CBG we believe that the best way to learn is through collaboration and teamwork. To this effect, the institute and staff continue to put in efforts to build and nurture team spirit. It is this spirit that encourages the exchange of



Tips for prospective applicants

- For post doctoral applications spend some time reading about the research in the lab you wish to work with.
- It's important to frame a relevant and impactful subject for your application. Keep it to a maximum of 450 words.
- Don't forget to keep an eye out for securing your own fellowship for the post-doctoral programme
- To find out more about PhD programmes and how to apply, visit www.dresden-ipp.de

different ideas and expertise between academics at the institute. Furthermore, weekly seminars and discussions with visiting international experts ensure that the MPI-CBG is at the forefront of international scientific collaborations. Scientists here not only communicate about the world of science but also interact socially with their peers. Be it the single spiral staircase in the main building that everyone has to take, the single coffee-machine for the entire building or the social get-together hour at the end of each week, everything is geared towards promoting social interaction at the institute. As I have come to discover, working together is much more effective than working in isolation.

As an example, at MPI-CBG I am currently working on a scientific problem to understand how cells, a basic unit of life, manages to separate a number of complex biochemical reactions in a limited space of only a few micrometres. Being a biochemist, I enjoy and understand the value of working closely with biologists, physicists, chemists and engineers. At MPI-CBG I have actually gotten a chance to do so. This has really enhanced the quality of my work and experience in Dresden. Not only do we plan and perform our experiments together but we often also play sports and go out to restaurants together. Recently, all of us working on the same scientific project took part as a team in the annual fun sports event of MPI, called Biolympics. It was an amazing team building experience to further strengthen our team spirit. The activity also really brought to life the motto of the institute in my mind - we work like we play.



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