

MEDIA RELEASE

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A*STAR SCIENTIST WINS EUROPEAN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY ORGANIZATION (EMBO) YOUNG INVESTIGATORSHIP AWARD

Dr Bruno Reversade first scientist outside of Europe to win prestigious European award

1. Dr Bruno Reversade from A*STAR's Institute of Medical Biology (IMB) is the first scientist based outside Europe to be awarded the prestigious European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) Young Investigatorship. The EMBO Young Investigator Programme (YIP) recognizes the most outstanding and most promising young independent scientists leading their first labs in Europe and EMBO cooperation partner countries¹. More details on the other 2012 EMBO YIP awardees, EMBO YIP and EMBO can be found at [Annex A](#).

2. Dr Reversade was awarded the YIP because the judging panel deemed him "a really original scientist" and commented that "his research output is outstanding." His research examines rare genetic conditions which provide insights into common diseases and traits that affect the general population. His current research on twinning, which suggests that the birth of identical twins could be genetically triggered, was described as "highly innovative and original - probably unique" by the interview panel.

3. Dr Reversade has published seven papers in a short span of four years since he became an independent investigator under the A*STAR Investigatorship (A*I)²

¹ Singapore is an EMBO cooperation partner. <http://www.embo.org/news/press-releases-2011/scientists-in-singapore-and-europe-to-collaborate.html>

² The A*I was initiated as a platform to support and promote the independent early career development of the next generation of world leaders in scientific research. It sets out to nurture the next generation of scientific leaders by offering the opportunity for high potential individuals to conduct independent and impactful research at A*STAR's research institutes, with funding support for set-up costs and research staff, and access to state of the art scientific equipment and facilities.

scheme in 2008. Four of these papers were published in the prestigious journal *Nature Genetics*.

4. Dr Reversade, Senior Principal Investigator at IMB, said, "I am genuinely honoured to receive the EMBO Young Investigatorship. I am most grateful to my team as this is certainly not a one person's work and to Singapore for providing such a conducive research environment."

5. Prof Sir David Lane, A*STAR Chief Scientist and EMBO member said, "Bruno was the first A*STAR Young Investigator award recipient we recruited for his promise and potential as part of A*STAR's efforts to support and promote independent career development of the best scientists of the next generation. His research is patient-driven with strong clinical relevance and we are delighted that his work has been recognized with this prestigious award, which is a true mark of scientific excellence."

6. Mr Lim Chuan Poh, A*STAR Chairman, said, "Bruno is a very promising young scientist. He epitomises the quality of scientists we want to develop in A*STAR to become the next generation of scientific leaders. Bruno's award is not only a testament to his personal talent and abilities, it also speaks of the excellent scientific work that is possible in the conducive research environment that has been created in A*STAR and Singapore."

7. Dr Reversade will receive an award of 15,000³ Euros per year for the three years of his membership as well as extensive support from EMBO for networking interactions and other career development opportunities. More information on the benefits of the EMBO YIP can be found at <http://www.embo.org/programmes/yip/programme.html>.

Background on Dr Reversade

8. Dr Reversade was the inaugural recipient of the A*I in 2008 (<http://www.a-star.edu.sg/Media/News/PressReleases/tabid/828/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/9/Default.aspx>), which was modelled on the prestigious Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Investigatorship award. The A*I was initiated as a platform to support and promote the independent early career development of the next generation of world leaders in scientific research in biomedical sciences, physical sciences and engineering research. More information on the A*I can be found at <http://www.a-star.edu.sg/tabid/88/default.aspx>.

³ EMBO member states provide an annual award of 15,000€ per year for the three years of membership to the awardees. As an EMBO co-operation partner Singapore has agreed to do the same for scientists selected from Singapore. This money can be freely spent for scientific purposes.

9. A French national, Dr Reversade, formerly working at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), obtained his PhD in 2006 from the University Pierre and Marie Curie in Paris under the tutelage of Howard Hughes Investigator, Professor Edward De Robertis, at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Dr Reversade is also the recipient of a prestigious award from the Branco Weiss Foundation based in Switzerland.

Past winners of the YIP in Singapore

10. There are two other EMBO YIP winners in Singapore. Associate Prof Rob Robinson who is currently a Research Director at A*STAR's Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (IMCB), was awarded the EMBO YIP in 2003 when he was at Karolinska Institutet, Sweden. He joined IMCB in 2005 as a Principal Investigator. A/Prof Fred Berger who is currently at Temasek Lifescience Laboratory, National University of Singapore, was awarded the EMBO YIP in 2000 when he was working in the INRA CNRS at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Lyon, France.

AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH (A*STAR)

Enclosed:

Annex A – Details on the 2012 EMBO Young Investigators, the EMBO Young Investigator Programme and EMBO

For media queries and clarifications, please contact:

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National Archives of Singapore

About the Institute of Medical Biology (IMB)

IMB is one of the Biomedical Sciences Institutes of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR). It was formed in 2007, the 7th and youngest of the BMRC Research Institutes, with a mission to study mechanisms of human disease in order to discover new and effective therapeutic strategies for improved quality of life. From 2011, IMB also hosts the inter-research institute Skin Biology Cluster platform.

IMB has 20 research teams of international excellence in stem cells, genetic diseases, cancer and skin and epithelial biology, and works closely with clinical collaborators to target the challenging interface between basic science and clinical medicine. Its growing portfolio of strategic research topics is targeted at translational research on the mechanisms of human diseases, with a cell-to-tissue emphasis that

can help identify new therapeutic strategies for disease amelioration, cure and eradication.

For more information about IMB, please visit www.imb.a-star.edu.sg.

About the Reversade Laboratory

Dr. Reversade, a human geneticist and embryologist holds a Senior Principal Investigator position at IMB and an adjunct faculty position at the Department of Paediatrics in the National University of Singapore. He is a Fellow of the Branco Weiss Foundation based at ETH in Switzerland and also the first recipient of the A*STAR Investigatorship, a programme which provides competitive and prestigious fellowships to support the next generation of international scientific leaders, offering funding and access to state-of-the-art scientific equipment and facilities at A*STAR.

For more information about Dr. Reversade's laboratory, please visit www.reversade.com.

About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) is the lead agency for fostering world-class scientific research and talent for a vibrant knowledge-based and innovation-driven Singapore. A*STAR oversees 14 biomedical sciences and physical sciences and engineering research institutes, and six consortia & centres, located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis as well as their immediate vicinity.

A*STAR supports Singapore's key economic clusters by providing intellectual, human and industrial capital to its partners in industry. It also supports extramural research in the universities, and with other local and international partners.

For more information about A*STAR, please visit www.a-star.edu.sg.

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EMBO Young Investigators 2012

In 2012, EMBO received 160 applications for the Young Investigator Programme. The 22 successful candidates come from twelve countries and include the first scientist from Singapore to join the network. Scientists from Singapore can apply to EMBO programmes due to a cooperation agreement between both parties that started in 2011. More information on the 2012 awardees can be found at <http://www.embo.org/news-a-media-centre/press-releases/22-young-group-leaders-recognized-as-embo-young-investigators.html>

About the EMBO Young Investigator Programme

The EMBO Young Investigator Programme (YIP) is the first initiative in Europe to address the needs of young independent research group leaders and is unique in its focus on effective networking activities, offering support and promoting exchange between the young scientists. Since its launch in 2000, the EMBO YIP selects independent scientists throughout the EMBC Member States, thereby creating a European network of outstanding life scientists. From the onset, this highly competitive programme has attracted applications from some of the best young group leaders in Europe. With a success rate of application of only 13 percent, membership is a true mark of scientific excellence. 292 scientists have been distinguished as EMBO Young Investigators since the launch of the programme in 2000. More information on the programme can be found at <http://www.embo.org/programmes/yip/programme.html>.

About EMBO

EMBO stands for excellence in the life sciences. The organization enables the best science by supporting talented researchers, stimulating scientific exchange and advancing policies for a world-class European research environment. EMBO is an organization of more than 1500 leading life scientist members that fosters new generations of researchers to produce world-class scientific results. EMBO helps young scientists to advance their research, promote their international reputations and ensure their mobility. Courses, workshops, conferences and scientific journals disseminate the latest research and offer training in cutting-edge techniques to maintain high standards of excellence in research practice. EMBO helps to shape science and research policy by seeking input and feedback from the life sciences community and by following closely the trends in science in Europe.

For more information: www.embo.org