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New genomics lab in Germany

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A research center for functional genomics is to be opened at [Greifswald University](#) in northern Germany at the end of this year as a focus for the development and coordination of research integrating the computational and biological sciences.

"The center is unique in Germany because faculty and participants drawn from the departments of mathematics, science, and medicine will be working closely together for the first time," said Uwe Volker, the principal investigator at Greifswald's functional genomics lab.

Volker said that the center's research on the biomathematical analysis of proteins and their subcellular localization would be of central importance to a major research program at the university on the molecular mechanisms behind infectious diseases.

"With the help of functional genomics, we want to find out how bacterial pathogens interact with the host cell. If we can identify the key proteins that allow pathogenic bacteria to communicate with the host cells, then we will be able to target those proteins with antibiotics," Volker told us.

Broader research on the molecular causes of infectious diseases at Greifswald is being spearheaded by the microbiological institute under the leadership of Michael Hecker, which employs 60 research staff drawn from diverse faculties.

Volker said that the center would provide research training opportunities at the interfaces of computational and biomedical sciences for 12 postdoctoral and doctoral places. "This center will cater for the needs of young scientists. We hope to recruit two leading young internationally known researchers to lead the teams there," he said.

The German [Federal Ministry for Education and Research](#) will fund the teams. It has already pledged €9 million.

"We hope that the establishment of the functional genomics center will help Greifswald build on its reputation as one of the leaders for functional genomics in Germany and even in the world," Greifswald University Rector Rainer Westermann told us.

References

1. University of Greifswald, [<http://www.uni-greifswald.de>]
2. Federal Ministry for Education and Research, [<http://www.bmbf.de>]