**HEIDELBERG, 10 September 2012 –** More than 100 leading researchers from across the life sciences will speak at *The EMBO Meeting 2012,* the fourth annual life science conference organized by EMBO, which starts on September 22 in Nice, France. The conference attracts more than 1,200 participants from Europe and worldwide. Together with keynote speeches, special lectures and twenty concurrent sessions, the lineup represents a vast selection of the latest exciting developments from across the life sciences.

**PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS**

Highlights include **Karl Deisseroth,** from Stanford University in the United States, speaking about **optogenetics** – a new technology that enables researchers to control genetically modified neurons with a brief pulse of light. Over the last several years, optogenetics has provided insights into the
**neural underpinnings of brain disorders**
like depression, Parkinson's disease, anxiety and schizophrenia. For their pioneering roles in optogenetics, Deisseroth and three other neuroscientists were awarded the 2012 Zuelch Prize by the Gertrud Reemtsma Foundation last week (http://www.mpg.de/1156268/Zuelch_Prize).

The session ***Genes to shape*** will deal with the mechanisms that control leaf shape during growth. **Enrico Coen** from the John Innes Centre in the United Kingdom will describe the first computer model able to accurately emulate leaf growth from the bud, work that was published earlier in the year in
*Science.*
Understanding how plants grow might help us better prepare for the future
**by providing food, fuel and preserving diversity**
.

**Peter Carmeliet**, Director of the VIB Vesalius Research Center at the University of Leuven, Belgium, will talk about the relationship between the growth of new blood vessels and the

progression of cancer and other diseases.

**Jiří Friml** from Ghent University in Belgium will explain in his talk how the plant hormone auxin regulates plant development. His research results are of major importance to agriculture as they provide a basis for the engineering of **plants that produce higher yields or which are more resistant to drought** .

Leading researchers will present in the plenary lecture sessions on *chromatin & chromosomes – the dynamic genome* , *RN A life – from birth to death* and *oxygen sensing, vasculogenesis & disease* . To see the full programme go to: http://www.the-embo-meeting.org/
The Abstract Book is available online to registered participants and journalists.

**MEET THE PRESS EVENTS**

All journalists are welcome to participate in the range of activities including lectures, concurrent sessions, poster session viewing and social receptions. Three press events are also planned:

**Paul Nurse**: *How do cells grow and divide?* Sunday 23 September, 11.00 am-12 noon.

**Eric Karsenti**: *TARA OCEANS: New species from the depths of the ocean*. Monday 24 September, 10.00-11.00 am.

**Linda Partridge**: *Putting the brakes on ageing*. Monday 24 September, 11.00 am-12 noon.

All events will be held in the Press Room on the first floor of the Nice Acropolis convention centre. The Press Room is reserved for use by journalists from Saturday to Tuesday during conference hours. To arrange interviews with any of the speakers during the four-day conference, please contact Barry Whyte (M: +49 1609 0193 839) or Yvonne Kaul (M: +49 174 3146512).

**MEDIA PARTICIPATION**

Complimentary meeting registration is available to members of the media who provide appropriate press credentials and identification via the conference registration system.

• All scientific sessions at *The EMBO Meeting 2012* are open to registered members of the media.

• Registered journalists must wear/display their conference press badge at all times while onsite.

• Exchanging, loaning or borrowing of the conference press badge is not allowed.

• Filming onsite during the conference must be pre-arranged with the EMBO Public Relations & Communications office.

• Complimentary media registration is not available for: advertising, marketing, public relations or sales representatives from any publication; publishers, editors or reporters from exhibiting companies and sponsors; in-house newsletters or promotional publications staff; public relations representatives of exhibitors or educational institutions; writers of commercial reports and financial analysts; medical education companies; or others who are not reporting on the content of *The EMBO Meeting 2012*.