

Merck Serono and BioMed X extend collaboration

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BioMed X Innovation Center has announced that they have extended their collaboration with Merck Serono, on new approaches for cancer therapy. Based on the results presented at the biannual meeting July 10th in Heidelberg, Germany, Merck Serono has decided to extend the funding of the first two international research groups for a third year.

BioMed X and Merck have jointly developed a unique innovation model which combines a crowdsourcing approach with local incubation of the brightest ideas and research talents. Merck became the first partner of the BioMed X Innovation Center in 2013 by setting up three research groups at the interface between academia and industry in its biomedical research lab in Heidelberg.

As part of BioMed X's innovation model, outstanding lifescience talents from leading academic institutions world-wide were selected to work on metabolism and signaling in cancer, on tools to improve the selectivity of kinase inhibitors and on new approaches to overcome the immunosuppressive microenvironment of tumors. One of the latest successes was the release of KinMap, a free web-based tool for creating and sharing interactive annotations of the human kinome tree (kinhub.org/kinmap).

"We are impressed with the progress achieved by the teams since the start of the projects two years ago. It is great to see that the new open innovation concept we have developed works so well in practice," said Mr Ulrich Betz, head, innovation and entrepreneurship incubator, Merck Serono.

"Merck Serono's decision to extend its funding of our first two research groups marks an important milestone for our center. It clearly indicates that our new innovation model creates real value for the pharmaceutical industry," said Mr Christian Tidona, founder and MD, BioMed X.

