I began my term as first president of IST Austria on September 1, 2009. The past sixteen months have been a period of rapid growth for the Institute, which recently surpassed 100 employees and 100 scientific publications.

- In October 2010, we opened the Bertalanffy Foundation Building for experimental research in the life sciences. The name of the building, which is the first laboratory building of IST Austria, honors a donation of ten million Euro that was given to the Institute in support of basic research. As science without experiments remains speculation, and a research institute without a laboratory building remains a think tank, the opening of the Bertalanffy Foundation Building marks a critical milestone on the way of IST Austria towards entering the first league of international institutions for basic science.

- At the end of 2010, twelve research groups were at work on campus, and four additional professors were scheduled to arrive in the first months of 2011. There are already four scientific fields in which IST Austria has obtained international visibility: evolutionary biology; the interface of cell biology and biophysics; neuroscience; and computer science. The Institute is committed to further strengthen these four areas and aims to hire also professors in the physical and mathematical sciences in the coming years.

- In September 2010, the first students of the IST Graduate School arrived on campus. They represent eleven nationalities and pursue a multidisciplinary PhD program that brings together biology and computer science. Every new student is required to work with three different research groups before choosing a supervisor. This way we will train a new generation of researchers that will be able to approach a scientific question from several different angles. As much of the innovation in science happens where traditionally separate disciplines meet, they will be well-positioned to help bring about the scientific breakthroughs of the future.

As IST Austria aims to become a beacon of scientific excellence, there is always the underlying question of how one objectively measures quality in basic research. In recent years, the awards of the European Research Council (ERC) have become a key indicator for research excellence in Europe. By that measure, we are on the right path. Three professors of IST Austria—the evolutionary biologist Nick Barton, the neuroscientist Peter Jonas, and myself, a computer scientist—have been awarded ERC Advanced Grants. The ERC Starting Grant of Sylvia Cremer brings the total number of ERC funded researchers at IST Austria to four. Together we receive more than eight million Euro of research funding from the European Union, in addition to about two million Euro from other funding agencies.

I want to use this opportunity to thank Mag. Peter Bertalanffy for his singular generosity and show of confidence in IST Austria. I would like to thank also all other friends of the Institute—in science, in industry, in government, in the local community, and in the public—for their support, without which we cannot succeed. I especially thank the Federal Minister for Science and Research, Dr. Beatrix Karl, the governor of the province of Lower Austria, Dr. Erwin Pröll, and the president of the Federation of Austrian Industry, Dr. Veit Sorger, for their constant commitment to IST Austria. Last but not least, I thank the entire administrative team of IST Austria, led by Gerald Murauer, for its hard work. Any growth spurt brings with it considerable stress, and it is a great relief for me to be able to rely on such a dedicated and efficient staff.

Thomas A. Henzinger
IST Austria has been built following the blueprint written by Haim Harari, Olaf Kübler, and Hubert Markl. Back in 2006 this international committee looked at successful scientific institutions around the world and selected key elements that they believed would fit together to create a unique new institution fitting for Austria. For six years, I served as Vice President of the Max Planck Society. Therefore I am pleased to see that many of these elements resemble the principles of my own institution. Other aspects, of course, differ from the Max Planck Society as IST Austria has to meet its own specific requirements.

Similar to the Max Planck Society, the freedom of research and the primacy of the scientist—rather than predefined topics, programs, or projects—is one of the basic principles at IST Austria. The commitment to basic research at the world-class level is as fundamental to this Institute as it is to all Max Planck Institutes. While a Max Planck Institute usually deals with one scientific area and its various aspects, IST Austria is set up as a single institution with different scientific fields present on one campus. I look forward to scientific advances in this environment which will cross the borders of traditional disciplines.

As Max Planck Institutes cannot award PhD degrees they always work in close collaboration with universities. IST Austria has its own Graduate School with the right to grant PhD degrees. Excellent PhD training lays the foundation for a scientific career and provides the backbone for a dynamic research institution. Yet it does not discourage the Institute from setting up close collaborations with universities, but allows it to pursue research collaborations purely on the basis of scientific merit, maximizing the benefits for the scientific community in Austria. IST Austria offers a modern tenure-track system for assistant professors. Recently, the Max Planck Society has also started to offer such opportunities to young researchers.

Last but not least, IST Austria and the Max Planck Institutes are evaluated regularly and rigorously through international peers. Independent evaluations are an indispensable tool to maintain quality in science. To organize and oversee these evaluations was one of my main duties as Vice President of the Max Planck Society, as it is now in my new function as Chairman of the Scientific Board of IST Austria. The first evaluation of IST Austria will take place in 2011 and the members of the Scientific Board are looking forward to the report by the international review panel.

Finally, I would like to use this occasion to say that I am impressed—impressed that Austria is committed to the important enterprise of establishing a world-class research institute for basic science. And I am impressed by the achievements that have been accomplished so far by President Tom Henzinger and the employees—scientists as well as non-scientists—of IST Austria. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Board of Trustees and the Scientific Board. The international scientific community has been enriched, and the visibility of basic research in Austria enhanced, through the establishment of IST Austria. The blueprint has become alive!

Kurt Mehlhorn

The bridge connecting the modern Bertalanffy Foundation Building and the Art Nouveau Central Building; connecting theoreticians with experimental scientists.
The Institute of Science and Technology Austria (IST Austria) is a PhD granting institution located in the city of Klosterneuburg, 18 km from the center of Vienna. The Institute is dedicated to basic research in the natural and mathematical sciences. Its international graduate school educates aspiring young scientists in an English-language environment. Established jointly by the federal government of Austria and the provincial government of Lower Austria, the Institute was inaugurated in 2009. By the end of 2009 the Institute had 37 employees. With the opening of the first laboratory building, the Bertalanffy Foundation Building, in October 2010 the first experimental research groups moved to campus. Together with the arrival of the first doctoral students and the establishment of the first Scientific Service Units, IST Austria grew to 12 professors and 105 employees by the end of 2010. The planned campus development will allow a growth to 40–50 professors and 500–600 employees by 2016.

Independent Leadership

The governance and management structures of IST Austria guarantee its independence and freedom from political and commercial influences. The Institute is headed by the President, who is appointed by the Board of Trustees and advised by the Scientific Board. The Institute is evaluated periodically by an international panel of external scientists. The first President of IST Austria is Thomas Henzinger, a leading computer scientist and former professor of the University of California at Berkeley and the EPFL in Lausanne, Switzerland. The administration of the Institute is led by the Managing Director, Gerald Murauer.

Sources of Funding

While IST Austria is dedicated to the principle of basic research, driven solely by the curiosity of the scientist, the Institute owns the rights to all scientific discoveries and is committed to promote their use. The long-term financial health of the Institute will rely on four diverse sources of funding: public funding, peer-reviewed research grants, technology licensing, and donations. For the period until 2016 the federal government of Austria will provide up to 290 million Euro in operational funds, of which 195 million Euro are guaranteed. The payment of the remaining 95 million Euro is conditioned on the Institute raising an equal amount of third-party funds. By the end of 2010 IST Austria has received 17 million Euro in donations and almost 10 million Euro in research grants, bringing the current third-party total to 27 million Euro. The province of Lower Austria contributes to the Institute the budget for construction and campus maintenance, so far in the amount of approximately 140 million Euro.

Nationalities of Scientists at IST Austria

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<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Turkey</td>
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<td>Brazil</td>
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| Czech Republic | 2% |}

IST Austria at a Glance

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<td>Brazil</td>
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| Czech Republic | 2% |}

The scientists of IST Austria are organized into independent research groups, each led by a Professor or tenure-track Assistant Professor. The Institute recruits its scientists-from doctoral students to postdoctoral fellows and professors-in the whole world, based exclusively on their research excellence and promise. Currently the scientists of IST Austria represent 22 nationalities.

Donations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Donor Description</th>
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<td>Invicta Foundation</td>
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IST Employees 2010

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IST Grants

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<td>ERC European Research Council</td>
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<td>FWF Austrian Science Fund</td>
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<td>DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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The International Graduate School of IST Austria offers doctoral studies as a first step into a scientific career in the fields of Biology, Computer Science, Neuroscience, and interdisciplinary areas. Students with a background in related disciplines, such as physics and mathematics, are also encouraged to apply. The language of research and instruction at IST Austria is English.

A Multidisciplinary PhD Program
The length of the doctoral studies, which lead to a PhD degree, depends on previous degrees and individual progress, and will on average last four to five years. The Graduate School offers a single joint program for all scientific fields represented at IST Austria, underlining the interdisciplinary spirit of the Institute. In this way we expect to train a new generation of researchers that will be able to approach a scientific question from several different angles.

During the first phase of the doctoral program, which normally lasts one year, a student takes advanced courses and works with three different research groups. The student uses this period to identify a thesis supervisor and a thesis topic. At the end of the first phase, the student prepares a thesis proposal and passes a qualifying examination. During the second phase of the doctoral program, the student focuses on research towards a doctoral thesis. The progress of the student is monitored through regular reviews by the entire faculty. After a successful thesis defense, the student receives the PhD degree.

Annual Calls for PhD Students
All interested students must apply by January 15 in order to enter the PhD program of IST Austria in the subsequent September. The applications need not identify a potential supervisor, but are evaluated by all IST faculty. All admitted PhD students are offered employment contracts with an internationally competitive salary and full Austrian social-security coverage. Depending on availability, accommodations on campus can be rented for a period of one year from arrival.

The deadline for the first call for students was January 15, 2010. Ninety-nine applications were received from 28 different countries and 21 applicants were invited to campus for interviews. The Graduate School made eleven offers, of which seven were accepted. These seven—among them two Austrians—joined the Institute as PhD students in September 2010. Together with the PhD students who moved to IST Austria from other institutions as members of the research groups of newly recruited professors, 24 students from eleven countries currently work at the Institute.
The opening of the Bertalanffy Foundation Building was celebrated only 500 days after the official campus opening in 2009. This ceremony marked a milestone for Lower Austria and for Austria as a whole—with respect to its international visibility as a location for cutting-edge research.

Outstanding research is a necessary foundation to stay innovative in the future. IST Austria and its researchers have already accomplished a lot in a short period of time. I am convinced that education and research at the highest international level will be important cornerstones for the future. IST Austria contributes substantially to the strengthening of Austria as a prime location for research.

Dr. Erwin Pröll » Governor of Lower Austria

Dr. Beatrix Karl » Federal Minister of Science and Research
The opening ceremony of the Bertalanffy Foundation Building in October 2010 marked the beginning of experimental research at IST Austria. To afford this effort, the Institute depends on the acquisition of third-party funds, through research grants and donations. IST Austria does not receive public or federal funding. IST Austria – depend on the acquisition of 95 million Euro in third-party funds, through research grants and donations. IST Austria has taken some big first steps toward that ambitious goal – which include the gift by the Invicta Foundation, – the successful entrepreneur whose Invicta Foundation donated 10 million Euro to IST Austria, by naming the new building in recognition of his great contribution to the future by giving to science, in Austria and in Europe.

This building at IST Austria is intended as an investment in the future by giving to science, in Austria and in Europe.

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While philanthropy is one of the prime sources of funding for universities and research institutions elsewhere, the private support from companies and individuals can never replace but only complement the public funding of basic research, be it direct funding by the government or peer-reviewed funding through institutions such as the Austrian Science Fund (FWF). In addition to 17 million Euro in donations, – which include the gift by the Invicta Foundation, – the Bertalanffy Foundation donated 10 million Euro to IST Austria, by naming the new building in recognition of his great contribution to the future by giving to science, in Austria and in Europe.

However, donations from companies and individuals are more relative to only complement the public funding of basic research. While it may be possible to obtain or attract new sources of revenue, – which include the gift by the Invicta Foundation, – the Bertalanffy Foundation donated 10 million Euro to IST Austria, by naming the new building in recognition of his great contribution to the future by giving to science, in Austria and in Europe.

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The Bertalanffy Foundation Building completed the festive ceremony. Musical interludes by the Big Band of the BRG Klosterneuburg concluded: “Where there is research, there is the future.”
The Bertalanffy Foundation Building can be seen as a symbol for the interdisciplinary culture at IST Austria. The modern laboratory building—the first one on campus—is connected with the renovated Central Building from the nineteenth century by a bridge. Just as the bridge connects the offices in the Art Nouveau Central Building to the state-of-the-art laboratories in the Bertalanffy Foundation Building, it brings together theoretical and experimental research groups.

The challenge for the architects (ARGE Maurer-Neumann & Partners) was to design a functional and attractive building that harmonizes with the Central Building and the Raithofer Lecture Hall. The project supervision was managed by NO Real-Consult GmbH (formerly NÖ Hypo Bauplan). It took only two and a half years of planning and construction to complete the Bertalanffy Foundation Building. By comparison, the Max Planck Society usually estimates four years for similar construction projects.

The Architecture
The gross floor area of the four levels comprises 4'300 m². The ground floor houses several common services, including a washing room for laboratory equipment, areas for the preparation of biological media, and space for image processing. The first floor is the home of four research groups working on topics in evolutionary biology and biophysics. Three groups in cell and systems biology have moved into the second floor. The third floor is dedicated to neuroscience. The building services are on the roof level and in the basement, which contains also spaces for microscopy and an IT security cell for servers and a computer cluster. The building is linked to an underground collector that serves all campus buildings for maintenance, supply, and disposal purposes.

The interior spaces of the building are designed for maximum flexibility and can be configured according to the needs of the scientists. The individual laboratories differ in size as also the research groups vary in size, type of research, and demand for interaction. While some of the groups prefer smaller rooms for specialized work and equipment, other groups benefit from a more communicative, open laboratory layout.

The facade of the Bertalanffy Foundation Building is made of vertical glass fins that follow the curved footprint of the complex. The glass fins—alternating tinted sunscreens and reflective panels—cause the building to blend into its green environment. The random scattering of the vertical elements repeats the irregular appearance of the surrounding forest and points to the flexibility of the interior layout. The glass curtain enables the entry of glare-free daylight while at the same time offering optimal sun protection during all seasons, without hindering natural ventilation. In winter, the space between the glass shell and the wall serves as a climatic buffer, modulating the temperature range and thus reducing heating costs.

On the north and east sides, the building is surrounded by a ring road for deliveries. To the south, the Bertalanffy Foundation Building faces the site of the next laboratory building: a 5'800 m² complex that will accommodate up to twelve research groups by 2012.

The Scientists
Shortly after the opening in October 2010, seven research groups started to work in the building, and two more groups will follow in the first months of 2011. Their work focuses on different aspects of biology and neuroscience.

Jonathan Bollback studies seemingly simple organisms like microbes in the context of evolution. Tobias Bönnemann uses methods of physics to understand the information processing within cells. Sylvia Cremer investigates the astounding social abilities of ants. Călin Guet explores questions of systems biology by designing networks under synthetic conditions. Carl-Philipp Heisenberg studies quantitative aspects of the development of cells into an organism. Michael Sixt investigates problems of cell biology and immunology, such as how cells change their form. Neuroscientists Peter Jonas researches how signals pass through synapses.

Starting in 2011, Jozsef Csicsvari will combine aspects of neuroscience with computing techniques in order to analyze the activities of certain types of neurons. And Harald Janovjak will develop optical methods to control the behavior of cells.

The building has room for one or two additional groups, meaning that in total ten or eleven research groups will have their home in the Bertalanffy Foundation Building.
To foster inter- and multidisciplinarity, research at IST Austria is not organized into departments. The theoretical research groups—currently representing Evolutionary Biology, Computer Science, and Neuroscience—are located in the Central Building; the experimental groups—currently Evolution, Biophysics, Cell Biology, and Neuroscience—reside in the Bertalanffy Foundation Building. Both buildings are connected through a bridge containing common areas that encourage interaction.
NICK BARTON. MATHEMATICAL MODELS OF EVOLUTION

How do new species emerge from a single population? Why do so many organisms reproduce sexually, despite the obvious costs? How quickly can species adapt to changing conditions? The Barton Group uses mathematical models of genetic change to better understand such fundamental questions about evolution.

We study diverse topics in evolutionary genetics, but focus on the evolution of populations that are distributed through space, and that experience natural selection on many genes. Understanding how species adapt, and how they split into new species, requires understanding of spatial subdivision, whilst interactions between genes are important in species formation, and in the response to selection. The recent flood of genomic data makes analysis of the interactions amongst large numbers of genes essential.

Current Projects
Spatially Continuous Populations
Classical models assume that individuals reproduce and disperse independently, and so miss many features of real populations. Correlations between genes reveal their shared history, patterns may extend over very large spatial scales, and diversity is often lower than expected from the number of individuals. I am working with Alison Etheridge (Oxford) on a model of long-range extinction and recolonisation that includes these features.

Evolution of Sex and Recombination
Why do almost all eukaryotes reproduce sexually? The most plausible explanation is that recombination helps to bring together favorable gene combinations, thus accelerating adaptation. The challenge is to find how recombination is favored, given that selection acts on a very large number of genes. We are analyzing a variety of stochastic models of selection on multiple recombining loci.

Limits to Selection
How can the development of extraordinarily complex morphologies and behaviors be guided by a functional genome of ~10^8 bases—much less information than is held in a personal computer? This issue is relevant not only to natural selection, but also to evolutionary computation, in which selection is used to evolve better algorithms. We are studying the relation between information, entropy, and fitness.

Statistical Mechanics and the Evolution of Quantitative Traits
We have formalized an analogy between statistical mechanics and population genetics; the results are applied to study the evolution of quantitative traits, allowing for arbitrary interaction effects.

We also study several other topics in evolutionary genetics, including the genetics of hybrid zones, limits to a species’ range, models of sympatric speciation, and methods for inferring population structure.
Microbes are everywhere: in our gut, on our skin, and at the source of many diseases. The Bollback Group studies the abilities of seemingly simple organisms in the context of Evolutionary Biology. One of the questions: Why sex may not be needed (at least for microbes)?

Microbes—viruses, bacteria, archaea, and protists—account for half of all the biomass and the majority of organismal diversity on planet earth. Microbes gave rise to higher organisms and have left their genomic calling cards in the form of organisms, genes, and so-called junk DNA. Microbes are the source of the majority of human diseases. For these reasons alone microbes are worthy of scientific study. Yet, they are also important in another way: they are an extraordinarily powerful model system for understanding in very fine detail how evolution works. Our research focuses on microbial evolution, evolutionary interactions between hosts and parasites, and the evolution of bacterial immunity. To accomplish this we use experimental evolution, population genetics, and statistical modeling.

Current Projects
The Rate of Adaptive Evolution in Sexual and Asexual Populations
In the absence of recombination, beneficial mutations appearing on different genetic backgrounds cannot fix simultaneously in a population together. Therefore, only one beneficial mutation can fix at a time, and all other beneficial mutations are lost in a process called clonal interference. As a result, asexual populations suffer a slower rate of adaptation relative to their sexual counterparts: in sexual populations recombination can quickly bring competing mutations together accelerating the rate of adaptation. It has been shown experimentally that in large asexual populations with high mutation rates, mutation alone can provide a recombination-like benefit by bringing together the two competing mutations. Our group is using experimental evolution to understand the mutational dynamics and rates of adaptation in (i) purely asexual populations, (ii) asexual populations with recurrent mutation, and (iii) sexual populations with recombination.

The Evolution of an Adaptive Heritable Immune System in Bacteria
Bacteria and archaea have independently, from multicellular organisms, evolved an adaptive heritable immune system called CRISPR. In this system infected bacteria identify the infecting virus, encode viral information into their immune system conferring immunity, and then pass this immunity onto daughter cells. While we are beginning to understand functional aspects of how this system works, we know little if anything about the evolutionary dynamics of the system. My group is working to understand how this unique immune system evolves by monitoring the dynamics of wild populations of soil bacteria and their viruses, by developing statistical evolutionary models, and by genomic sequence analysis of Staphylococcus pseudintermedius in collaboration with Ross Fitzgerald (Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh).
Cells respond to signals by altering the expression of their genes. But how are such signals processed inside cells? And how are cellular responses controlled? The Bollenbach Group uses methods of biological physics and systems biology to gain a better understanding of these processes.

Cells ranging from those in the tissues of multi-cellular organisms to single-celled microbes respond to signals in the environment by modifying the expression of their genes. While recent technological advances have enabled us to measure and manipulate such gene expression responses genome-wide, i.e. across all genes of an organism, little is known about the high-level capabilities and limitations of the cellular machinery that controls these responses. Our long-term goal is to gain a deeper, more quantitative understanding of the relation between the signals present in the cell’s environment and the information processing and other events, which they trigger inside cells. In particular, we aim to identify general principles that capture key properties of gene regulatory responses. To this end, we combine quantitative experiments, often based on fluorescence measurements in single cells or entire populations, with theoretical approaches from physics. Our emphasis is on quantitative approaches, i.e. whenever possible we measure and interpret numbers, rather than pictures or qualitative effects.

Current Projects
- Cells are often faced with the simultaneous presence of multiple signals that individually elicit opposite gene expression responses. How do cells resolve such gene regulatory conflicts? As a first step, we use fluorescent transcriptional reporters, time-lapse microscopy, and a state-of-the-art robotic system to reveal how the bacterium Escherichia coli responds to combinations of antibiotics. Antibiotics are important drugs for the treatment of infectious diseases and often used in combination, making this a particularly relevant example. We will extend these studies to cover other model organisms and a broad range of different signals.
- Optimality has been suggested to be a key design principle of biological systems. But to what extent are cellular responses optimized for a functional goal? To address this question, we systematically measure and synthetically manipulate gene expression responses. We currently focus on single-celled bacteria and fungi where the maximization of cell survival and growth is a plausible, clearly defined, and experimentally accessible functional goal.
- We are further interested in cell differentiation, communication between cells by secreted signaling molecules, and other key processes in the development of animals such as fruit flies, mice, and fish. Our work employs quantitative data analysis and theoretical descriptions of developmental mechanisms to understand the key properties and limitations of these mechanisms. We collaborate with developmental biology groups at IST Austria and elsewhere to quantify the key parameters of animal development and thus improve our understanding of these fascinating phenomena.

Selected Publications

*equal contribution
Life is a game – at least in theory. This has a number of implications for the verification of software but also on the trustworthiness of Wikipedia articles. The Chatterjee Group contributes to the comprehension of the theoretical foundations of central questions in Computer Science.

Our main research interest is in the theoretical foundations of formal verification and game theory. Our current research focuses on stochastic game theory, probabilistic model checking, logic and automata theory, and quantitative theories of verification. In addition, we are also interested in algorithms for developing robust reputation and trust management systems for Wikipedia.

Current Projects

Game Theory in Verification

This project involves the algorithmic analysis of various forms of games played on graphs. Automatically obtaining correct systems from specifications (synthesis) as well as many important questions in computer science can be analyzed effectively in the broad framework of games on graphs. In this project we work on theoretical aspects for the better understanding of games, developing new algorithms, as well as practical applications of game solving. The results present the theoretical foundations for the formal verification of systems. Last year we obtained several important results: for example, we have established optimal complexity results for one-player stochastic games with partial information, and improved the algorithms related to probabilistic verification and we now have the fastest algorithms for the verification of probabilistic systems with omega-regular specifications.

Quantitative Verification

The classical Boolean theory of verification has a wide range of applications. However, there are a lot of applications where a more quantitative approach is necessary. For example in the case of embedded systems, along with the Boolean specification, a quantitative specification related to resource constraints must be satisfied. In this work we have developed a framework to specify quantitative properties and to answer the quantitative questions related to the classical Boolean theory of verification. The results of this project are useful for the design of correct and robust systems, and present a new theoretical framework for the formal verification of systems. Last year we have obtained results that show that there exists a class of quantitative specification language that is robust and also decidable.

Reputation and Trust Management Systems

In this work we study how to design robust algorithms for automatically computing the reputation of authors and the trust of text of an article in Wikipedia. Our algorithms are based on the content evolution of Wikipedia articles, and are completely automatic. The algorithms we have developed are now implemented and soon our results will be available as a tool that can be used in Wikipedia.

Software

Several new efficient algorithms that we have developed have also been implemented by us to obtain research tools like ALPAGA and GIST for the study of...
Ants live together in high densities tightly cramped together. Even if this lifestyle should favour disease spread, ants rarely fall ill. If one ant contracts an infection, others take care of it and a breakout of the disease is prevented. The Cremer Group uses an Evolutionary Biology perspective to investigate this Social Immunity in ants and its general impact on disease management in societies.

Like other societies, the colonies of social insects also face the problem of a high risk of disease transmission among the members of their social group. This is due to their close social interactions and high densities they live in. Despite this risk, epidemics occur extremely rarely in the colonies of social insects (e.g. bees, ants, termites), as they have evolved cooperative anti-pathogen defenses that complement the individual immune systems of group members. This “social immunity” comprises a) hygiene behaviors, such as mutual allogrooming, b) joint physiological defenses, as the production and application of antimicrobial substances, and c) the modulation of interaction types and frequencies upon exposure of group members to pathogens. In my group, we study all aspects of social immune defenses in ants to learn more about disease management in societies.

Pathogen Detection Abilities
Ants show the amazing feature of being able to detect the presence of pathogens in their colonies even before these could implement an infection. We study the pathogen detection abilities of ants and determine how these are affected by reduction in the genetic diversity of colonies by e.g. inbreeding effects.

Host-Parasite Coevolution
Parasites and pathogens can quickly adapt to their hosts, which—on the other hand—develop better defense strategies. We are interested in the dynamics of these coevolutionary arms races in social hosts such as ants.

Epidemiology
Disease spread occurs along routes of high numbers of interactions and can thus be modeled by e.g. traffic networks. We use the social interaction networks of ants to both apply and further develop epidemiological models of disease spread. This joint approach combining experimental work and theoretical modeling is used to gain insight into disease spread in societies.
The core of our research is a combination of mathematics and computer science, always driven by relevant questions in applications. During a past shift from geometry to topology (which are related subjects without clear separation), we noticed an increase in relevant applications we could address. These include questions in scientific visualization, structural molecular biology, systems biology, but also geometry processing, medical imaging, and orthodontics. The common theme is the importance of shape and the recognition, matching, and classification of shape. Topology is the area within mathematics whose methods most directly speak to that need. Algorithms and computer software are needed to make mathematical insights useful in applications, which is the motivation to study in topology and also geometry from a computational point of view.

Current Projects
- Genome-wide analysis of root traits. This NSF-funded project, lead by Philip Benfey, aims at relating the phenotypes of agricultural root systems with their genotypes. The work in our group focuses on capturing and describing phenotypes. The challenging steps are the reconstruction of the shape of a root system from 2D images, the development of geometric and topological descriptors that characterize the intrinsic and extrinsic shape of roots, and the exploration of changes through growth.

Software
- We developed the 3D Alpha Shapes software some 20 years ago, and see it now as the origin of a number of different developments, in industry as well as in academic research. The software takes as input a finite set of points with x-, y-, and z-coordinates, and produces a multi-scale description of the shape the points sample.
  - A productive branch of development took alpha shapes into the world of molecular structures, in particular proteins and nucleic acids. The alpha shapes provide the mathematical and computational foundation for the fastest and most accurate volume, area, and derivative computations we have today.
  - Another development leads from alpha shapes to persistent homology, which is the most important innovation that has yet emerged from the young field of computational topology. Indeed, the pervasive concept of a filtration was first perceived as a nested sequence of alpha shapes.
  - In industry, the Geomagic Wrap software was motivated by the Alpha Shape software but needed a major new idea to lead to reliable surface reconstruction, a problem that arises in many areas of manufacturing and medical modeling. That new idea is a discrete geometric flow on a simplicial complex, an idea that combines geometric and topological aspects and is eminently computable.
CĂLIN GUET SYSTEMS AND SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY OF GENETIC NETWORKS

Networking is important on any level and in any environment – genes and proteins do it in bacteria. But which rules, if at all, do they follow? The Guet Group explores these questions of Systems and Synthetic Biology by analyzing natural and synthetic networks.

Our scientific curiosity is centered on understanding systems of interacting genes and proteins that constitute themselves into genetic networks in bacteria. These bio–molecular networks are involved in a constant process of decision-making and computation that takes place over various time scales: from seconds to the division time of an organism and beyond.

By studying existing networks or by constructing networks de novo in living cells using synthetic biology approaches, we aim to uncover universal rules that govern biological genetic networks.

We use Escherichia coli as our favorite model system and are generally interested in microbial genetic systems given their relative simplicity and powerful experimental genetic tools available. An emphasis is placed on understanding the molecular biology and physiology of the single cell, since often population level measurements mask the behavior of the individual cell.

To this end we use and develop in vivo techniques that are minimally invasive in order to quantitatively characterize the temporal dynamics of gene expression.

Current Projects

- Information Processing at Complex Promoters
- Systems Biology of the Mar Regulon

Information Processing: physiological information from diverse cellular sources is integrated at the promoter level in order to produce a mostly binary response: gene activation or gene repression. Natural promoters have been shaped by evolutionary processes and reveal only a subset of all possible information processing capabilities. By building synthetic promoters we aim to understand the constraints imposed by the molecular hardware on the information processing potential of bacterial promoters.

Systems Biology of the Mar Regulon

The multiple antibiotic resistance or mar operon, as the name suggests, is an important genetic locus responsible for multiple antibiotic resistance in gram-negative bacteria. Several genes that are components of the wider mar regulon integrate a variety of intracellular and extracellular signals. We are interested in a systems-level description of the mar regulon at the level of the single cell, in order to gain a deeper understanding of how resistance towards a variety of different chemicals emerges in natural settings.

CAREER

- 2010: Assistant Professor, IST Austria
- 2009: Postdoc, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA
- 2005: Postdoc, University of Chicago, USA
- 2004: PhD, Princeton University, USA

SELECTED DISTINCTIONS

- 2005-2007: Yen Fellow, Institute for Biophysical Dynamics, University of Chicago, USA
- 1997: Sigma Xi Membership

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

CARL-PHILIPP HEISENBERG
MORPHOGENESIS IN DEVELOPMENT

Why do fish develop fins? And not arms? Understanding the transformation of a bunch of cells into a highly structured embryo is a core problem of Cell and Developmental Biology – and a central task of the Heisenberg Group.

We are studying the molecular and cellular mechanisms by which vertebrate embryos take shape. To obtain insights into critical processes in vertebrate morphogenesis, such as cell adhesion, migration, and polarization, we focus on gastrulation movements in zebrafish. Gastrulation is a highly conserved morphogenetic process describing the transformation of a seemingly unstructured blastula into a highly organized gastrula-stage embryo composed of the three germ layers ectoderm, mesoderm and endoderm. Zebrafish is an ideal organism to study gastrulation movements in vertebrate embryos because of its transparency, easy accessibility for both experimental tools, and high degree of genetic manipulations. To analyze gastrulation movements in vivo and ex-utero and are easily accessible for both experimental and genetic manipulations. To analyze gastrulation movements, we have chosen a multi-disciplinary approach employing a combination of genetic, cell biological, biochemical and biophysical techniques. Utilizing these different experimental tools, we are deciphering key effector mechanisms mediating the processes by which vertebrate embryos take shape.

Current Projects

Cell Adhesion

The ability of cells to adhere to each other is a central feature in the development of all multi-cellular organisms. We are studying the role of cell adhesion in gastrulation by a reductionist approach. We first analyze the molecular and cellular processes determining adhesion of individual primary cells taken from different parts of the gastrulating embryo with a combination of genetic, molecular, and biophysical/imaging techniques. We then use the information gained from those experiments to study more complex adhesive cell interactions taking place in primary cell/tissue culture and the gastrulating embryo.

Cell Movements

The movement of cells is an integral part of embryo morphogenesis. Cells can move individually (single cell migration), or as part of larger groups of cells (cell intercalation, collective cell migration). We are studying the role of these different cell movement modes in embryo morphogenesis during gastrulation. In particular, we are analyzing how the interplay between autonomous and non-autonomous cell properties influences the movement of cell groups and tissues. To address this interplay we have developed different cell movement assays and use a combination of genetic, molecular, and biophysical/imaging tools to alter and analyze cell properties implicated in migration, such as cell adhesion, polarization, and motility.

Cell Polarization

The generation of embryo polarity (e.g. head-to-tail) depends on the ability of individual cells to polarize. Cell polarization influences the way cells move, interact and assemble into tissues. We study the role of cell polarization in tissue morphogenesis during gastrulation. Specifically, we analyze how cell polarization influences cell adhesion, movement and proliferation. We address the function of cell polarization in these processes by using genetic and molecular techniques to alter cell polarity and high resolution microscopy to characterize the effects of polarity changes on tissue morphogenesis during gastrulation.

Selected Publications


Team

Vanessa Barone, PhD student
Martin Behndti, PhD student
Pedro Campinho, PhD student
Julien Compagnon, Postdoc
Ines Cristo, PhD student
Gabby Krens, Postdoc
Jean-Leon Maire, PhD student
Kensuke Sako, Postdoc
Philipp Schmalhorst, Postdoc
Michael Smuny, Postdoc
Ruby Tandon, PhD student

Career

2010 Professor, IST Austria
2001–2010 Group Leader, Max-Planck Institute, Dresden, Germany
1997–2000 Postdoc, University College London, UK
1993–1996 PhD, Max-Planck Institute, Tübingen, Germany

Selected Distinctions

2000 Emmy Noether Junior Professorship
1998 Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship
1997 EMBL Postdoctoral Fellowship
Humans and computers can be surprisingly similar: Interaction between two actors can be simple but gets more complex with every actor added. With more and more things controlled by software in our everyday life, this fact has an enormous impact on computers – and on humans. The Henzinger Group strives to solve this problem with the methods of Computer Science.

My group is interested in mathematical methods for improving the quality of software. More and more aspects of our lives are controlled by software and over 90% of the computing power is in places you wouldn’t expect, such as cell phones, kitchen appliances, and pacemakers. Computer software has, at the same time, become one of the most complicated artifacts produced by man. It is therefore unavoidable that software contains bugs, and dealing with these bugs is a major technical challenge.

We focus on concurrent software and on embedded software. A concurrent system consists of many parallel processes that interact with one another, whether in a global network or on a single chip. Hardware manufacturers pack an ever increasing number of microprocessors on one chip, generating massive parallelism inside each computer. These systems are difficult to program, creating one of the biggest challenges of computer science today. Concurrent software is extremely error-prone because of the very large number of different interactions that are possible between parallel processes. They cannot be exhausted by testing the system, and concurrency bugs sometimes show up after many years of flawless operation of the system.

An embedded system is a software system that interacts with the physical world, such as the electronic components in a car or aircraft. For such embedded systems, the main technical challenge is to get the software to react in real time. For a flight control system it is not only critical that the software computes the right results, but also that it does so sufficiently fast.

Our tools for building more reliable software are mathematical logic, automata theory, and models of computation. Some of these models can be used also to mimic certain biological systems, making the field inherently interdisciplinary. Computational models of, say, a living cell are different from mathematical equations as they can be executed on a computer and used to study the causal relationships between different events in the cell. This new field of research has been dubbed “Executable Biology.”

Current Projects
- Quantitative modeling and analysis of reactive systems
- Interfaces and contracts for component-based hardware and software design
- Predictability and robustness for real-time and embedded systems
- Modern concurrency paradigms such as software transactional memory and cloud computing
- Model checking biochemical reaction networks

Selected Publications

Selected Distinctions
- ISI Highly Cited Researcher
- ERC Advanced Grant
- Corresponding Member, Austrian Academy of Sciences
- ACM Fellow
- IEEE Fellow
- Member, Academia Europaea
- Member, German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina
- ONR Young Investigator Award
- NSF Faculty Early Career Development Award

Team
- Pavol Cerny, Postdoc
- Dejan Nickovic, Postdoc
- Arjun Radhakrishna, PhD student
- Ali Serig, Postdoc
- Vasu Singh, Postdoc
- Anmol Tamar, PhD student
- Thomas Wies, Postdoc
- Damien Zufferey, PhD student

Career
- 2009 Professor, IST Austria
- 2005– Adjunct Professor, University of California, Berkeley, USA
- 2004–2009 Professor, EPFL, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 1998–2005 Professor, University of California, Berkeley, USA
- 1997–1998 Associate Professor, University of California, Berkeley, USA
- 1996–1997 Assistant Professor, University of California, Berkeley, USA
- 1992–1995 Assistant Professor, Cornell University, Ithaca, USA
- 1991 Postdoc, University of Grenoble, France
- 1991 PhD, Stanford University, Palo Alto, USA

Selected Publications

Selected Distinctions
- ISI Highly Cited Researcher
- ERC Advanced Grant
- Corresponding Member, Austrian Academy of Sciences
- ACM Fellow
- IEEE Fellow
- Member, Academia Europaea
- Member, German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina
- ONR Young Investigator Award
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- Ali Serig, Postdoc
- Vasu Singh, Postdoc
- Anmol Tamar, PhD student
- Thomas Wies, Postdoc
- Damien Zufferey, PhD student
Synapses enable communication between neurons in the brain. The Jonas Group researches how signals pass through these vital interfaces—a major undertaking in the field of Neuroscience.

**Current Projects**

**Nanophysiology of Fast-spiking, GABAergic Interneurons**

The goal is to completely map the distribution of ion channels at soma, dendrites, and presynaptic terminals of this key type of GABAergic interneuron, and to directly analyze the resulting functional properties. To achieve this goal, we will use cutting-edge subcellular patch-clamp recording techniques pioneered in my lab. As fast-spiking, GABAergic interneurons play a key role in the control of the stability of the network and the generation of rhythmic activity in the brain, the results will provide insight into the mechanisms underlying dynamic activity of neuronal networks in health and disease.

**Functional Analysis of Glutamatergic Synaptic Connections between Hippocampal Pyramidal Neurons**

In this project, we will record from ensembles of hippocampal CA3 pyramidal neurons and examine the properties of glutamatergic synaptic connections. In particular, we want to determine the induction rules of synaptic plasticity, including long-term potentiation and depression. As the synapses between CA3 pyramidal neurons play a key role in learning and memory, the results will be important to understand the mechanisms underlying the processing and storage of information in the hippocampus.

**Development of Realistic Network Models of Hippocampal Microcircuits**

Our ultimate goal is to understand how synaptic properties shape complex network functions. To reach this goal, we will develop computational models of neuronal networks based on our experimental findings. Beyond reproducing experimental observations, we anticipate that modeling will make specific predictions, which can be tested experimentally. The interdisciplinary research platform of IST Austria, in particular the presence of several computer science groups, will greatly facilitate our modeling efforts.
CHRISTOPH LAMPERT  
COMPUTER VISION AND MACHINE LEARNING

Every kid knows how to play “I spy with my little eye”, but to a computer the task of analyzing images and recognizing objects in them is tremendously difficult. The Lampert Group explores these problems with the tools of Computer Vision and Machine Learning.

We study and develop statistical machine learning algorithms for computer vision applications, in particular for the task of natural image understanding. Machine learning enables automatic systems to analyze large amounts of high dimensional data with significant between-feature correlations. This makes it particularly suitable for computer vision problems, such as the analysis of digital images with respect to their contents. In the long run, we are interested in building automatic systems that understand images on the same semantic level as humans do, enabling them to answer questions like: What objects are visible in an image? Where are they located? How do they interact?

Current Projects

Efficient Objects and Action Localization

The tasks of identifying and locating objects in natural images are crucial components for any automatic image understanding system, and they are inherently linked. We work on developing fast learning and inference techniques for object localization based on formulating the problem as a regression task between structured spaces instead of a sequence of classification tasks. This allows the use of global optimization techniques, such as branch-and-bound, instead of the exhaustive search used by currently dominating sliding window approaches.

Attribute-Enabled Representations

Image understanding on a semantic level requires knowledge not only about the presence and location of objects, but also about their properties. We work on extending existing image and object representations by attributes. These are characteristic properties of a scene or an object category that can be predicted from the image information, but also have a semantic interpretation. Our goal is to show that attribute-enabled representations can achieve higher classification accuracy than purely object-centric ones, that they require less training data and that they allow solving new image-related prediction tasks, for example for making decisions about the importance of objects in a scene.

Structured Prediction and Learning

We are working on extending and improving existing techniques for the prediction of structured objects using machine learning techniques, in particular graph labeling problems. Treating these in a framework of empirical risk minimization allows us to develop algorithms that can learn prediction functions that are tailored to the specific prediction tasks and thereby achieve higher prediction accuracy. In particular, we work on developing techniques for handling the cases of ambiguous input and outputs.

Selected Publications


Career

2010
Assistant Professor, IST Austria
2007–2010
Senior Research Scientist, Max-Planck Institute, Tübingen, Germany
2004–2007
Senior Researcher, German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence, Kaiserslautern, Germany
2003
PhD, University of Bonn, Germany

Selected Distinctions

2008
Main Price, German Society for Pattern Recognition (DAGM)
2008
Best Paper Award, IEEE Conference for Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR)
2008
Best Student Paper Award, European Conference for Computer Vision (ECCV)

Selected Publications

Every answer gives room to new, fascinating questions: How does a cell change its form? And what impact does it have on the surrounding tissue, which is formed by its likes? The Sixt Group investigates these problems of Cell Biology and Immunology.

The laboratory investigates morphodynamic processes both at the cellular and at the tissue level. We mainly focus on the immune system and try to understand the molecular and mechanical principles underlying leukocyte dynamics during processes such as migration and intercellular communication. We work at the interface of cell biology, immunology and biophysics and currently investigate how the cytoskeleton generates force to deform the cell body, how this force is transduced to the extracellular environment and how the cells are polarized and guided within tissues. To obtain a holistic view of the process we are also studying tissue architecture as well as the distribution and presentation of guidance cues (chemokines) within these tissues. We developed a number of in vitro tools that allow us to observe cytoskeletal dynamics in real time using different life cell imaging approaches. These are all based on advanced light microscopy like total internal reflection, fast confocal and multiphoton technology. We combine these approaches with genetic and pharmacological interference as well as substrate manipulations like surface micropatterning and microfluidics. A general aim of the lab is to test in vitro findings also in the context of living tissues. To this end we also developed ex vivo (tissue explant) and in vivo imaging setups that allow us to monitor leukocytes together with their physiological environment. Finally we are also interested in testing the implications of our findings for physiological immune responses.

Current Projects
- Environmental control of leukocyte migration: We are investigating how different extracellular constraints like the form of chemokine presentation, mechanical forces and the geometry and molecular composition of the extracellular substrate, affect leukocyte locomotion.
- Cellular force generation and transduction: We ask how cytoskeletal activity is translated into actual locomotion. This includes transmembrane force coupling receptors but also locomotion by other means like physical deformation of the cell body.
- Invasion of tissue barriers: How do leukocytes traverse tissue boundaries like endothelial / epithelial layers and extracellular matrix barriers like basement membranes?

The image shows a snapshot of a video sequence capturing dendritic cells that are about to enter a lymphatic vessel in the skin. Dendritic cells are labeled in red and position in close vicinity of the basement membrane of the lymphatic vessel that is labeled in white.

CV
2010 Assistant Professor, IST Austria
2008–2010 Endowed Professor, Peter Hans Hofschneider Foundation for Experimental Biomedicine
2005–2010 Group Leader, Max-Planck Institute, Martinsried, Germany
2003–2005 Postdoc, Institute for Experimental Pathology, Lund, Sweden
2003 MD, University of Erlangen, Germany
2002 Full approbation in human medicine

TEAM
Alexander Eichner, PhD student
Michele Weber, Postdoc
Ingrid de Vries, Technical assistant

Selected Publications
IST AUSTRIA PROFESSORS
Starting in 2011

Jozsef Csicsvari
Jozsef Csicsvari graduated with an MS in informatics from the Technical University of Budapest in 1993. He received a PhD in neuroscience under the supervision of Gyorgy Buzsaki at Rutgers University, where he finished his thesis in 1999 and continued as a postdoctoral fellow until 2002. In 2003, he became a group leader at the MRC Anatomical Neuropharmacology Unit in Oxford. Jozsef’s main research interest lies in the field of systems neuroscience. He explores neural cell assembly activities in the hippocampus, a brain region that plays important roles in long-term memory and spatial navigation. Coming from a computer background, he pioneered methodologies allowing large-scale cell assembly recordings and their computer analysis. Jozsef will join IST Austria as Professor in July 2011.

Harald Janovjak
Harald Janovjak works at the interface of biophysics and cell biology. He studied molecular biology in Basel, received a PhD from the TU Dresden in 2005, and worked as a postdoc in the group of Ehud Isacoff at the University of California in Berkeley. Harald developed new techniques to study the folding and unfolding of single membrane proteins using atomic force microscopy. Later he concentrated on the manipulation of ion channels using light and established a new method for the light-induced inhibition of nerve cell activity. Such combinations of optical and genetic techniques, called optogenetics, are of increasing importance for understanding information processing in the brain. Harald will join IST Austria as Assistant Professor in March 2011.

Galper Tkačik
Galper Tkačik is a theoretical physicist studying information processing in living systems. He studied mathematical physics at the University of Ljubljana and received a PhD in the group of William Bialek at Princeton University. Since 2008 he has been a postdoc at the University of Pennsylvania. Galper uses tools from the statistical physics of disordered systems and from information theory to study biological systems such as networks of neurons or genes. The unifying hypothesis driving his research is that information processing networks have evolved or adapted to maximize the information transmitted from their inputs to their outputs, given the biophysical noise and resource constraints. Galper will join IST Austria as Assistant Professor in March 2011.

Chris Wojtan
Chris Wojtan received a BS in computer science in 2004 from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. He then moved to the Georgia Institute of Technology for his PhD studies. Chris’ research is in computer graphics, with a special focus on the realistic simulation of physical systems. Using numerical techniques, he creates computer animations of physical phenomena like fluids, deformable bodies, or cloth. He combines mathematical methods from computational physics with geometric techniques from computer graphics. Chris will join IST Austria as Assistant Professor in 2011.

FACULTY RECRUITING at IST Austria

The scientific fields of IST Austria are chosen on the basis of the availability of outstanding scientists. The Institute will not enter into any field of research unless it can attract professors who compete internationally at the forefront of their discipline, and unless it can provide them with an environment that allows the scientists to perform at the highest level. The overall recruiting process requires a coordinated strategy of identifying the best available faculty candidates while, at the same time, avoiding the dangers of scientific isolation, by creating networks of research groups in related fields and around intellectual connections between different disciplines.

IST Austria advertises open positions internationally and invites both applications and nominations of candidates. The Institute also tries to actively identify and approach potential candidates, for example, by tracking Austrian scientists abroad. IST Austria is committed to equality and diversity in hiring. Female scientists, in particular, are encouraged to apply and the Institute actively supports their careers.

The complete recruiting statistics is shown in the in the figure. Until December 31, 2010, IST Austria received 2'296 applications and nominations. Thereof, 55 % were considered as candidates for Assistant Professor, 45 % for Professor; 14 % of the candidates were female; 55 % of the candidates applied in the physical, mathematical, and engineering sciences, 45 % in the life sciences; 81 % of the candidates applied, 19 % were nominated. The candidates worked in 74 countries: 51 % in Europe, 39 % in North America, and 10 % on other continents.

After an initial screening, the most promising candidates are evaluated in detail by collecting reviews from leading international scientists. Fewer than 10 % of the candidates have been invited to campus to give a scientific lecture and be interviewed by the professors of the Institute. Less than 2 % of all candidates have been offered a position. The offers have been accepted. Given that the best scientists are sought after all over the world, similar success rates are seen even at some of the most prestigious institutions.

40 Annual Report 2010

56
Annual Report 2010

PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH GRANTS 2010

**BARTON GROUP**

In 2010 the most important milestone of campus development was the opening of the Bertalanffy Foundation Building. On the same day, October 13, the groundbreaking ceremony for the second laboratory building took place. We expect the second laboratory building to open in the fall of 2012. It will provide space for an additional 12 experimental research groups.

Over the past year the ratio of administrative personnel to scientists has changed noticeably. Our main task has shifted from setting up administrative structures to providing service to the scientists. Much of this service is being bundled within Scientific Service Units, the first of which are currently being set up. In the future the Scientific Service Units and the support staff for scientists (technicians, administrative assistants) will grow in parallel with the growth of the research personnel, while the administration of the Institute will grow only moderately.

Our most important goal remains providing the best possible and most efficient support for creating a prospering scientific environment. I would like to thank all administrative employees for their efforts and achievements and look forward to our further collaboration at IST Austria.

Gerald Murauer, Managing Director
A major challenge in 2010 was the establishment of several Scientific Service Units, whose purpose is to provide the scientists with the cutting-edge equipment and professional services that allow them to perform research at an internationally competitive level. The philosophy of IST Austria is to maximize the sharing of equipment and services among multiple research groups, in order to avoid a duplication of efforts and expenses within different groups. The Scientific Service Units of IST Austria are central core facilities that can be used by all scientists of the Institute.

The following Scientific Service Units are currently being set up:

- **Bioimaging Facility:** A number of state-of-the-art microscopes support the work of the cell biologists. Currently the facility includes two confocal microscopes, an atomic-force microscope, a fluorescent stereo microscope, and a multi-photon microscope.

- **Information Technology:** In addition to standard IT services we offer a cluster of machines for scientific computation as well as programmers to support the scientists in their software needs.

- **Library:** The library of IST Austria is designed as a predominantly electronic library, providing electronic access to scholarly journals, conference proceedings, and books.

- **Life Sciences Facility:** In addition to standard research infrastructure for biology, such as laminar flow hoods, autoclaves, centrifuges, and fridges, a media kitchen, a FACSM machine, and services for the neuroscientists are part of the facility.

- **Machine Shop:** A milling machine, a turning machine, a grinding and buffing machine, and several smaller pieces of equipment support our scientists in fabricating customized laboratory set-ups.

A charging system for scientific services will not only make the resource allocation within IST Austria efficient, but will also allow external partners and companies to use the facilities on campus.
IST Austria actively seeks to educate the public about the importance and impact of basic science—through the IST Lecture series, where renowned international scientists are invited to give public talks on campus, and through the annual Open Campus Day and Science-Industry Talk.

The IST Lectures are targeted towards a general audience interested in current developments in science. The speakers are asked to provide sufficient background information for non-experts and, at the same time, go into detailed explanations of a recent scientific topic. Each talk is followed by a Questions and Answers session. The events are concluded by a social get-together offering further possibilities for conversations with the speaker. Special public transportation from and to Vienna is usually provided.

IST Lecture 1: Martin Nowak

Martin Nowak inaugurated the IST Lecture series on November 27, 2009. Nowak, a native of Austria, is professor of biology and of mathematics at Harvard University and director of Harvard's program for Evolutionary Dynamics. His research focuses on the mathematical description of evolutionary processes, including the evolution of cooperation and human language, and the dynamics of virus infections and human cancer. In his lecture, Nowak, who is also a member of the Scientific Board of IST Austria, started by giving an explanation of Darwin's achievements. From this, he led the audience to one of his current research topics, the "Evolution of Cooperation: From Selfish Genes to Supercooperators."

IST Lecture 2: Ada Yonath

As part of a series of events on the occasion of the Institute's first anniversary, Ada Yonath visited IST Austria on June 16, 2010, to give the second IST Lecture. Yonath, one of the 2009 Nobel laureates for Chemistry, is the Martin S. and Helen Kimmel Professor of Structural Biology at the Weizmann Institute in Israel. On this first visit to Austria after being awarded the Nobel Prize, Yonath lectured about "The Amazing Ribosome, its Origin and its Tiny Enemies, the Antibiotics." In the talk she related her personal story of how she got to focus on the mechanism of protein biosynthesis by investigating the structures and functions of ribosomes—the translators from RNA to proteins. Yonath's insights contributed decisively to our better understanding of these molecular engines and to the development of antibiotics targeting ribosomal structures.

IST Lecture 3: Jeannette Wing

In the third IST Lecture on September 27, 2010, Jeannette Wing introduced the audience to her concept of "Computational Thinking". Wing, who recently headed the Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate at the US National Science Foundation, is the President’s Professor of Computer Science and head of the Computer Science Department at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on the areas of trustworthy computing, programming languages, and software engineering. Wing summarizes her vision for the twenty-first century as follows: "Computational thinking will be a fundamental skill used by everyone in the world. To reading, writing, and arithmetic, we should add computational thinking to every child's analytical ability. Teaching computational thinking can not only inspire future generations to enter the field of computer science but benefit people in all fields."

The IST Lecture series will continue in 2011. The next lecture, on March 10, 2011—will be given by Angelika Amon, Professor of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and member of the Scientific Board of IST Austria. For forthcoming events, please visit the Institute's website: www.ist.ac.at.
Communicating science is a central mission of IST Austria—to many kinds of different audiences, be it to fellow researchers from other institutions within the relative privacy of a seminar room, or to children and their parents at the Open Campus Day on the lawn next to the pond. The Institute has developed a set of different formats in order to satisfy the information demands of very distinct target groups interested in the activities of the Institute.

Open Campus Day and School Competition

The biggest event is the annual Open Campus Day on a weekend in late May or early June, celebrating the anniversary of the Institute’s inauguration on June 1, 2009. In 2010 approximately 750 visitors came to the Open Campus Day, enjoying public lectures by faculty members Sylvia Cremers, Carl-Philipp Heisenberg, and Thomas Henzinger, a paper plane competition, a science tour for kids, and a BBQ for parents.

A central activity at each Open Campus Day is the award ceremony for a school science competition aimed, in three age categories, at elementary and high school students from the Klagenfurt region. In 2010 IST Austria invited participants from 6 to 19 years to “Show us your world of numbers – mathematics in everyday life.” The contributors were asked for creative ideas on where to find mathematical concepts—apart from the math lessons in school. With such competitions the Institute wants to instill and deepen in children of all ages a fascination with science and with the role of science in everyday life. The large number of entries showed a remarkable enthusiasm of children and teachers alike.

Meeting our Neighbors

Frequent Neighborhood Talks aim at satisfying the curiosity of the local community about the latest developments at IST Austria. Members of the administration regularly inform regional clubs and associations about the progress at the Institute, and in particular, about physical changes on campus.

Science-Industry Talk

The Science-Industry Talk is an annual event with the goal to foster the interaction between the basic research community—which includes IST Austria—and the business world. The event is organized jointly by the Federation of Austrian Industry (IV) and IST Austria. In 2010 the event was devoted to the question “What kind of research is needed in Austria?” After words of welcome by the Federal Minister of Science and Research, Beatris Karl, and the President of the Vienna chapter of the IV and chairman of the Kapssch AG, Georg Kapsch, the panel members Thomas Henzinger (IST Austria), Christian Schüller (CEG), Boehminger Ingegnen RCV GmbH, Edeltraud Stiftinger (Head of Corporate Technology CEE, Siemens AG Österreich), and Georg Winkler (Rektor, University of Vienna) discussed many different aspects of the multifaceted relationship between science and industry.

Scientific Symposia, Conferences, and Talks

Scientific symposia, conferences, and summer schools are platforms for researchers to meet and exchange ideas. In 2010 IST Austria hosted biannual symposia (“Biology meets Physics” in January, “Reactive Modeling in Science and Engineering” in April, “Neuroscience: From Molecules to Code” in June, and “Condensed Matter Physics and Optics” in December). In September 2010 the Institute hosted the eighth annual international conference on “Formal Modeling and Analysis of Timed Systems”, which brought together computer scientists from the whole world who study real-time computation. The workshop on “Evolutionary Genetics” held in the same month offered graduate students from 18 countries the opportunity to meet some of the leading researchers in that domain.

Throughout the year seminar talks link IST Austria to the scientific community, both locally and globally. The lectures cover not only research topics represented at the Institute, but also bring scientists in new fields to the Institute. Over the course of the year 72 talks by external scientists were held on campus. Sometimes the speakers might be known only to their fellow experts. But this can change abruptly. On March 23 Konstantin Novoselov (School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Manchester) presented his findings on “Graphene and its Chemical Derivatives” in room number 3 of the Mondi Seminar Center in the Central Building of IST Austria. On October 5 Novoselov was named Nobel Laureate in physics—the youngest Nobel Prize winner in 37 years.

Communicating Science

IST Austria friends and neighbors at the Open Campus Day

Events
The city of Klosterneuburg is known for its high quality of living. The location between the river Danube and the rolling hills of the Vienna Woods, with its vineyards, pastures, and forests, provides an exceptional environment that is both tranquil and stimulating for studying and recreation. The city offers educational, medical, social, and cultural facilities of the highest standard.

The historical center of Klosterneuburg is dominated by the enormous medieval monastery, which was redesigned in the early 18th century, in Baroque style, as residence for the Austrian emperor. Close to the monastery, the Essl Museum is world-famous for its contemporary art. Our immediate neighbor on campus is the internationally renowned Art Brut Center Gugging.