IST Austria
OUR WAY TO EXCELLENCE

BASIC RESEARCH
Curiosity-driven
INDEPENDENT
English Language
INTERNATIONAL
INTERDISCIPLINARY
No Boundaries
PHD GRANTING
SUPPORTING CAREERS
DIVERSE FUNDING
EXPLOITING RESULTS

Graduate School
Tenure Track
Public and Private
Intellectual Property
Institute of Science and Technology Austria

focus on biological, physical, and mathematical sciences

educates aspiring young scientists in a vibrant environment

committed to pursue basic research at a world-class level

fosters a collaborative and cross-disciplinary culture

attracts researchers from around the world

located in Klosterneuburg, near Vienna

founded in 2006, operational since 2009

visit IST Austria on the web: www.ist.ac.at
Cross-disciplinary research by an international community of scientists – the essence of IST Austria.

No internal boundaries and hierarchies IST Austria aims to overcome all barriers within and between research groups and scientific disciplines. By actively promoting collaborations between its researchers across different fields of science and different levels of experience, the Institute provides an atmosphere of passion for expanding the frontiers of knowledge. IST Austria is well-positioned to take advantage of the fact that, in science, unexpected breakthroughs often occur at previously unexplored interfaces between different fields. The absence of scientific departments and hierarchical structures, the multitude of cross-disciplinary courses and lectures, and the sharing of space and resources by all research groups allow the Institute to react briskly to new developments in science.

An international community The interactive and collaborative research culture is one of the main assets of IST Austria, attracting scientists from around the world. To integrate seamlessly into the international scientific community, the IST Austria campus is an English-language environment. In its development and day-to-day operations, IST Austria follows successful international role models, such as the American research university, the Swiss ETH system, and, more than any other single institution, the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel.

Research and doctoral education at IST Austria bridge the traditional boundaries between several disciplines, making IST Austria a truly cross-disciplinary institution. In the future, IST Austria will expand and include also other fields of science.

Scientists from all over the world perform research at IST Austria.
what drives us is CURIOSITY

Basic research pursues the unknown. Many of the greatest discoveries of mankind spring from curiosity-driven research.

Excellence in basic research IST Austria is dedicated to research that is guided solely by the interests of its scientists. Basic research, the venture to push the boundaries of our understanding of nature, is the basis of all scientific knowledge and technological development. The independence of IST Austria permits the Institute to focus strictly on scientific quality. The only criteria for hiring scientists at IST Austria, from the youngest student to the most senior professor, are their scientific excellence and promise. When competing with the best in the world, basic research stands in no contradiction to economic value – indeed, the opposite is true: many international examples show that if world-class scientists are brought together and given the freedom to pursue their visions, their research will yield results that benefit society and industry.

INDEPENDENCE
The President of IST Austria, a scientist, works together with the two governing bodies of the Institute to secure its independence. The Board of Trustees comprises of members of both the scientific and business communities; the Scientific Board consists of internationally distinguished scientists. The Institute and its scientists are evaluated regularly by independent reviewers in order to ensure the world-class standard of IST Austria.
Graduate education. More than a third of the scientists at IST Austria are doctoral students. While the Institute has no undergraduate students, it provides doctoral students with the training to become world-class researchers. The cross-disciplinary IST Austria Graduate School offers courses across the entire spectrum of scientific disciplines represented at the Institute. Before choosing a dissertation supervisor, all students take courses outside their areas of expertise and work on projects with at least three different research groups, which gives breadth to their scientific backgrounds and establishes the basis for cross-disciplinary communication.

Scientific organization. The basic scientific unit at IST Austria is the independent research group, which is led by an Assistant Professor or Professor. A research group consists, on average, of around 10 doctoral students and postdocs – small enough to be supervised directly by the group leaders, who are active, world-class scientists. The Institute recruits young group leaders as Assistant Professors, gives them complete scientific freedom during the most creative years in a researcher’s career, and promises them the opportunity to be promoted to Professor, based solely on an independent evaluation of their scientific performance (“tenure track”). Only Professors have career positions at IST Austria, but the reputation of the Institute will depend critically on the success of its doctoral students and postdocs on the international scientific scene.
Performance-based public funds IST Austria is financed by several sources. The development of the Institute has been made possible through generous public funds by the Federal Republic of Austria and the State of Lower Austria. These funds are, to a large degree, conditioned on the scientific performance of the Institute. If IST Austria is maximally successful in its performance, it will be able to grow to 90–100 research groups with 1'000 scientists by 2026. The second pillar of financing for IST Austria is provided through the acquisition of research grants by its scientists. Such third-party funds are intensely competitive, and the scientists of IST Austria have been highly successful in both national and international competitions.

Private support The ultimate success of IST Austria will depend on two additional sources of income. Private donations provide the essential third pillar of support. IST Austria is enormously grateful to the individuals and companies that have contributed so generously to the research at the Institute. These donors do not influence scientific directions at IST Austria, but support the Institute because they are convinced of its importance for Austria. Their support is acknowledged through the naming of buildings, rooms, professorships, and fellowships for students and postdocs. In the future, IST Austria intends to use income from intellectual property rights to build a fourth pillar of financial support. A technology park is planned adjacent to the IST Austria campus. Managed properly, the fruits of world-class research will create economic value not only for the region and the nation, but also for the Institute itself.

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