

Klosterneuburg, April 19, 2012

First IST Young Scientist Symposium on Human Evolution

**Scientific conference organized by IST Austria's students and post-docs on
May 7, 2012, at IST Campus • International guest speakers and panel
discussion on future of evolution**

Human evolution is a process of constant changes and adaptations. Likewise, scientific research on this topic is continuously developing as well and news such as the discovery of the Denisovan hominid (2010), or more recently the 'Red Deer Cave people' (March 2012) continue to provoke new theories of how our species evolved.

On May 7, 2012, the Institute of Science and Technology (IST) Austria in Klosterneuburg will host its first 'IST Young Scientist Symposium' on human evolution. The one-day meeting, which is entirely organised by young scientists from IST, will bring together international experts and a broad audience of scientists to foster discussion on progress and problems in this interdisciplinary field of research.

The programme encompasses six scientific talks on diverse topics such as genetics or locomotion and concludes with a panel discussion on the future of human evolution. Among the expert speakers from five different countries are Morten Rasmussen from the University of Copenhagen (DK) and Bence Viola from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig (DE), who worked together with Eske Willerslev and Svante Pääbo respectively on reconstructing genomes of archaic species of humans. The other keynote speakers are Eörs Szathmáry from Eötvös Lorand University Budapest (HU), Daniel Nettle and Bill Sellers from the Universities of Newcastle and Manchester (UK) and Philipp Mitteröcker from the University of Vienna (AT).

Attendance of the symposium is free for the 120 registered participants. “Vienna is a hotspot of anthropology research, and as such we felt that there was a great target audience on our doorstep”, says Tom Ellis, the graduate student at IST heading the organising committee. He adds: “Indeed, most of the registrants are young scientists just like ourselves, not just from Vienna, but also from the rest of the country and even from abroad.”

The organizing committee is composed of eleven IST pre-doctoral and post-doctoral young scientists from different disciplines and was formed in spring 2011 to outline and develop the symposium.

The speakers and the members of the organising committee are available for media activities.

For more information visit the symposium website:

<http://www.ist.ac.at/young-scientist-symposium-2012>

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About IST Austria

The Institute of Science and Technology (IST Austria) is a PhD granting research institution located in Klosterneuburg, 18 km from the centre of Vienna, Austria. Inaugurated in 2009, the Institute is dedicated to basic research in the natural and mathematical sciences. The Institute employs professors on a tenure-track system; postdoctoral fellows; and doctoral students at its international graduate school. While dedicated to the principle of curiosity-driven research, the Institute owns the rights to all scientific discoveries and is committed to promote their use. The first president of IST Austria is Thomas A. Henzinger, a leading computer scientist and former professor of the University of California, Berkeley, and the EPFL in Lausanne, Switzerland.