

Cambridge News



CAMBRIDGE HEALTH NEWS

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£212m lab building is ready for moving day



As hundreds of Cambridge scientists prepare to move into a bespoke £212 million research facility, health correspondent Rachel Allen takes a look around.

RESEARCHERS are making the mammoth move into the new home of one of the most successful research centres in the world: the Laboratory of Molecular Biology (LMB).

Walking into the impressive new £212 million building that will house some of the greatest scientific minds in Britain is awe-inspiring and humbling to say the least.

Around 600 scientists and support staff from the Cambridge-based Medical Research Council (MRC) unit, which over the years has won nine Nobel prizes between 13 scientists, are moving from their old building at the front of the Addenbrooke's campus to a building near the Cambridge Research Institute (CRI) on the same site over the coming weeks.

The opening of the new centre comes at the start of the MRC's centenary year.

Coincidentally built in the shape of a chromosome 'X', the building will provide first-class facilities to some of the world's leading scientists as well as attracting new ones to make discoveries in virus immunity, nerve degeneration and synthetic biology among other studies that could prove vital to health worldwide.

Sir Hugh Pelham, director of the LMB, said: "We try to develop things

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that people have not yet thought of. The really big advances come from the unexpected."



He explained that after more than a decade of planning and building work he is looking forward to seeing the building in use.

"It will help us to interact with and retain internationally renowned scientists. There is nothing that will limit us now in the new building and that's a very powerful incentive. I'm very pleased with the way it has turned out."

Sir Hugh added that he wanted to "give something back" by leading the project.

He said: "I have been here 31 years and I have been supported and allowed to get on with my work. This is something I feel I have given back to the future generations."

The building, which boasts a rooftop restaurant to allow researchers to mingle and share ideas, has a variety of bespoke design features including external sculptured towers that carry vibrations and noise away from the labs, which will contain extremely sensitive equipment.

There are also spaces in between floors to allow maintenance work to be carried out without disturbing the laboratories and it also provides flexibility if changes need to be made to the layout of laboratories.

One of the wings in the building has been devoted to Cambridge University researchers.

The original LMB building, which dates back to 1962 and is owned by Cambridge University, will be handed back to the university when the move is complete.

The new building is due to be officially opened in late spring.

rachel.allen@cambridge-news.co.uk

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Last

Bobby

@avinalaugh - I couldn't agree more. No doubt the space will be called "the atrium". Architects love such spaces and they can be visually very pleasing. However they cost a fortune to heat as all the warm air buggers off to the ceiling where no one benefits from it. It also represents a lot of wasted space, I am sure within a few years the occupants will be desperate for more space in their labs.

19/01/2013 14:34

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opaque

Separation can be very important with some of the things and you need space in buildings otherwise it becomes incredibly depressing. Ever been in the old LMB?

18/01/2013 22:11

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AnResident

Where's the canteen?

18/01/2013 19:03

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avinalaugh

Its all good but could they not have utilised the space shown in the picture for something better than a great void - mind you I guess it represents "a black hole"

17/01/2013 10:18

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