

Press Release - 11-08-2008

**Bob Dylan, Neil Young and biodiversity
OptimusAlive!Oeiras08 and IGC award research fellowships**

Come 31st July the call for the first OptimusAlive!Oeiras08-IGC research fellowships will be open. The fellowships mark a unique partnership between an international music-arts event - OptimusAlive!Oeiras08 - and a research institute, the Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência (IGC). Two fellowships will be awarded to young scientists working in the fields of biodiversity, genetics or evolution.

According to Maria João Leão, postdoctoral researcher in Science Communication and Outreach and the coordinator of this project, "The OptimusAlive!Oeiras08-IGC research fellowships aim to promote crucial research for the sustainability of our planet. Strategically, this partnership aims to secure private funding to encourage graduates to take up careers in research. Each fellowship is for a 12 month period, split between the IGC and a foreign institute."

This is one of the long-lasting outcomes of the IGC presence during the three days of OptimusAlive!Oeiras08. Until tomorrow, those who visit the IGC pavilion, just opposite the main stage, will get a taster for the research carried out at this research centre, located just outside Lisbon. A highlight is speed-dating with scientists – quick, 5 minute conversations between visitors to the pavilion and a selection of the 300 IGC researchers. Conversation topics range from genetics to work on cancer, malaria and the use of computational biology in state-of-the art biomedical research, but also about what motivates scientists, the day-to-day of research and how it fits in with private life.

Other activities at the IGC pavilion include molecular cooking, where stout beer flavoured ice-creams are made, frozen in liquid nitrogen, for everyone to see, and also sugar, raspberry and mint sparkling cocktails. Until 11pm, the pavilion is open for all this and also interactive biodiversity games and sci-art installations.



Two research fellows for young researchers working in the field biodiversity will be awarded by the OptimusAlive!Oeiras08-IGC partnership.



Speed-dating with scientists: 5 minutes to get to know their research and interests, in and outwith the IGC.



Finding out about how our genes determine the alignment of pinky fingers, at the IGC pavilion.
