

New optobiology center in Berlin

Start Time: Friday, May 6, 2022

End Time:



At the end of April, the German Federal and State Science Council recommended the joint application of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HU) and Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin for the funding of a new research building with the amount of approximately 69 million euros. Based on this recommendation, the Joint Science Conference of the Federal and State Governments (GWK) will finally decide on the funding in early summer.

The new optobiology center of HU and Charité is to become a competence center for photobiology, optical neurobiology with optogenetics and microscopy. The new research building is to be the core of the optobiology center. Here, scientists from different field will be working on technologies to advance research into the interaction between light and organisms or to make light sources usable for research purposes and medicine. This should give the internationally important research field of optobiology an even stronger presence in Berlin.

UniSysCat group leader [Prof. Peter Hegemann](#) played a major role in the application for the construction of the new optobiology center. Peter Hegemann conducts research on sensory photoreceptors from *Chlamydomonas microalgae*. He is considered one of the discoverers of channel rhodopsins and thus co-founder of the research field of optogenetics. Research at the new optobiology center aims to learn from this biology of light control, understand its mechanisms and use it for applications in a variety of biological and medical research areas. In addition to Peter Hegemann, UniSysCat scientists [Prof. Athina Zouni](#) (HU Berlin) as well as [Dr. Patrick Scheerer](#) und Prof. Christian Spahn (Charité Berlin) are involved in the new optobiology center.

The new building, with approximately 3400 square meters of space, is to be constructed on the north campus of the HU in Berlin-Mitte and will provide space for 110 people working exclusively on optobiological research questions. The start is planned for 2028.