

EPPENDORF AWARD FOR YOUNG EUROPEAN INVESTIGATORS

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Kerri Smith and 2009 winner Óscar Fernández-Capetillo

NEW DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES!

We invite biological and biomedical researchers not older than 35 years, working in Europe, to apply for the 2011 Eppendorf Award. There is a new deadline of 15th January 2011. The prize ceremony is also moving to the new EMBL Advanced Training Centre (ATC) in Heidelberg, Germany. To find out more visit eppendorf.com/award.

The Eppendorf Award for Young European Investigators was established in 1995 to recognise outstanding work in biomedical science. It also provides the opportunity for young European researchers to showcase their work and communicate their research to the scientific audience. *Nature* is pleased to partner with Eppendorf to promote the award and celebrate the winner's work in print and online. Below, Podcast Editor Kerri Smith talks to the 2009 winner Óscar Fernández-Capetillo about his work, and how it felt to win the award. To listen to the full interview, visit nature.com/nature/awards/eppendorf

"...the DNA damage to which you are exposed in the womb can have a massive impact on your ageing rates later in life."

Kerri Smith: How did it feel to find out that you'd won?

Óscar Fernández-Capetillo: It was impressive - you don't get to win that many awards, at least I don't! When I got the call, I didn't think it was related to the award, so my first intention was to hang up. But luckily I didn't, and then I was super happy - in the next five minutes I made about ten phone calls to friends and family to tell them about it.

"... I believe we have now built up an independent original niche..."

KS: Give me a sense of the work your lab does.

OFC: We work on how cells detect and signal DNA damage. When cells detect DNA damage, they stop growing, and they also start the repair machinery. We use the mouse as a model system to understand how cells detect damage, and the consequences of having an inefficient damage response. If you don't repair damage very well, that leads to mutations, which lead to cancer. There's also this concept that DNA damage is the cause of ageing. We play with different proteins involved in the damage response to find out how we age and whether we can design strategies that will delay ageing, and/or protect us from cancer.



Oscar Fernández-Capetillo received the Award from Kai Simons



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