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CEITEC MU teams up with Flemish institute VIB to strengthen European plant research

CEITEC Masaryk University (Czech Republic) and VIB-UGent Center for Plant Systems Biology (Belgium) today announced the kick-off of the PASSAGE research project, funded by EU's research and innovation programme Horizon2020. This project solidifies the long-standing collaboration between the two plant research centres and aims to further advance plant science in Europe. Through shared research projects new insights and technologies will be applied to address topical challenges facing agricultural production in a sustainable manner.

CEITEC MU Director Jiří Nantl explains: "The goal of the CEITEC-VIB partnership is to join forces and skills in innovative plant science and crop improvement. For example, the scientists will focus on adaptability of plants to continuously changing environment conditions." One of the desired outputs of the cooperation is to develop plants able to withstand considerably drier environmental conditions.

Dirk Inzé, Science Director of the VIB-UGent Center for Plant Systems Biology: "This alliance builds on the research interests we share with CEITEC - exposing the molecular mechanisms that are the basis of plant growth and development. Furthermore, this partnership facilitates access to CEITEC's state-of-the-art instrumentation and expertise in structural biology."

Jiří Nantl adds: "An important aspect of the CEITEC and VIB cooperation is the implementation of the model of the Flemish institute to reinforce the Czech institute. We especially appreciate VIB's achievements at the level of technology transfer, as the aim of the project is to apply the gained knowledge in innovative plant breeding and optimising crop management."

The partnership between the institutes will entail not only exchanging ideas and knowledge and cooperating in research projects, but also sharing technical facilities and exchanging scientists, students and administration workers. The latter is believed to critically improve the success potential of the research projects. CEITEC and VIB will glean inspiration from each other and work together for mutual benefit and development.



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