



Press Release

Funding of New Research MRI at the University Children's Hospital Zurich Cooperation with Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development and Opportunity for other UZH Researchers and Clinics

Thanks to the generous support of the Jacobs Foundation for a new research MRI scanner at the University Children's Hospital Zurich, researchers at the Children's Hospital Zurich and the Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development (JCPYD) will have exciting new opportunities for collaboration in Developmental Research.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) lies at the forefront of developmental imaging research, due to the noninvasive nature of the method and the rich and multifaceted nature of the data available, providing unique insight into the development of brain anatomy, physiology, and cognitive function during childhood and adolescence. The latest improvements in MRI technology also offer unparalleled opportunities for developmental imaging, providing methods for characterising brain development on both the microstructural and macrostructural level in exquisite detail, with improved imaging speed, resolution, quality, and comfort.

With financial support for a new, state of the art, research MRI scanner from the Jacobs Foundation, leading researchers at the University Children's Hospital Zurich and the Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development will be able to work in partnership to harness these cutting-edge approaches to study the complex changes taking place during brain maturation. This strong interdisciplinary partnership between basic and clinical research groups also provides an opportunity to foster links between different scientific disciplines, enabling evidence gathered from research to be effectively translated into practice, to the benefit of young people and their families as well as the wider society.

The novel, joint research program will start upon installation of the scanner in the new University Children's Hospital building, and will be managed by a joint committee (Betriebsausschuss). A new model for shared scanner has been created to foster research cooperation and collaboration between the involved organizations. In addition to collaborations in developmental imaging research, opportunities for collaboration in other areas will also be explored in an upcoming research seminar, giving research group leaders from both organisations the opportunity to brainstorm ideas for joint projects.

Several researchers at the JCPYD and the Children's Hospital are already involved in ongoing Zurich-wide collaborations, including the Developmental Science Research Network and a new University Research Priority Program (URPP) investigating adaptive brain circuits in development and learning. In parallel with these UZH collaborations, the joint seminar will facilitate additional bilateral links between research groups at the JCPYD and the Children's Hospital, highlighting areas for potential collaboration on behavioral or other neuroimaging projects prior to and following the installation of the MRI scanner. The scope of the collaboration will include all areas of cooperation on developmental research, both for projects involving imaging and for other (e.g. behavioral) studies, from the initiation of the first joint study until the end of life of the MRI scanner (approximately 8 years). At the end of this period the collaboration will be reviewed and prolonged if desired by both institutions.

Developmental researchers from both the JCPYD and the Children's Hospital Zurich are looking forward to embarking on this exciting new program of collaborative research.