



## Press Release

### Professor Nobutaka Hirokawa appointed President of the Human Frontier Science Program Organization (HFSP)



The International Human Frontier Science Program Organization (HFSP) is pleased to announce the election of Professor Nobutaka Hirokawa as President and Chair of the Board of Trustees. He took office on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. He succeeds the eminent theoretical physicist, Professor Akito Arima, who has served as President since April 1<sup>st</sup> 2009.

Professor Hirokawa is a prominent neuroscientist and cell biologist at the University of Tokyo. After studying medicine and obtaining a PhD in neurobiology and cell biology in Tokyo, he spent 4 years in the USA, first as a postdoc at the University of California, San Francisco and then as Research Assistant Professor and Associate Professor at Washington University School of Medicine. On returning to Japan, he was appointed Professor and Chairman of Cell Biology and Anatomy at the Graduate School of Medicine, University of Tokyo, where he served as Dean from 2003-2007. He now holds the position of Distinguished Project Professor at the same institution.

Nobutaka Hirokawa is a world leader in studies of the molecular mechanisms involved in transporting materials within nerve cells, in particular in his discovery of many of the functions of the kinesin superfamily of molecular motors. In his research he has employed multidisciplinary approaches including molecular cell biology and genetics, electron microscopy, structural biology and biophysics. In recognition of his scientific achievements he was elected as an Associate Member of EMBO in 2003 and a Member of the Japan Academy in 2004. He has served on editorial boards of international journals such as Cell, Science, Neuron, Developmental Cell, Journal of Cell Biology and EMBO Journal.

Professor Ernst-Ludwig Winnacker, Secretary General of HFSP comments “I am delighted that Nobutaka Hirokawa has been elected as President of HFSP. Through his previous participation as a member of the grant review committee and the HFSP Council of Scientists he has a profound knowledge and appreciation of HFSP’s mission. He has been an active member of the Board of Trustees since 2009 and it is a great pleasure to know that he will be steering the HFSP in the coming years.”

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The Human Frontier Science Program is an international program of research support implemented by the International Human Frontier Science Program Organization (HFSP) based in Strasbourg, France. Its aims are to promote intercontinental collaboration and training in cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research focused on the life sciences. HFSP receives financial support from the governments or research councils of Australia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, UK, USA, as well as from the European Union.