

Josef Jiricny was born in Prague in 1951. He studied chemistry in Birmingham and obtained his PhD in London in 1977. His postdoctoral studies at King's College London were devoted to studying the chemical synthesis of DNA. In 1980 he moved to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund laboratories in London, where he began to study DNA repair mechanisms. In 1983 he joined the Friedrich Miescher Institute (FMI) in Basel, where he became Senior Group Leader in 1989. In 1990 he helped found a Merck, Sharp and Dohme financed Istituto di Ricerche di Biologia Molecolare (IRBM) as Senior Director of Biochemistry. In 1996 he joined the medical faculty of the University of Zurich as Full Professor. He founded and directed the Institute of Molecular Cancer Research (IMCR, www.imcr.uzh.ch), which housed 85 scientists in 9 groups at the time of his retirement in July 2016.

In 2001, Josef Jiricny and Wilhelm Gruissem co-founded the Functional Genomics Center Zurich (FGCZ, www.fgcz.ch), a joint -omics technology platform of the ETHZ and the UZH. In 2003, Josef Jiricny became a double UZH/ETH professor. Following his retirement from the UZH, Josef Jiricny spent a further 3 years working at the Institute of Biochemistry of the ETHZ. He closed down his laboratory in November 2019.

Josef Jiricny became a member of EMBO in 1996 and of *Academia Europea* in 2000. He is the author of more than 180 peer-reviewed publications. His primary interest lay in the study of human mismatch repair (MMR), the malfunction of which is linked to cancer predisposition (Lynch Syndrome). He was also studying the link between MMR malfunction and *Fanconi anemia*, as well as the role of DNA repair in active DNA demethylation and triplet repeat expansion diseases.