

VIENNA OPEN LAB

The first biomolecular hands-on laboratory in Austria



The Vienna Open Lab is a hands-on laboratory that offers access to practical work in life sciences for everybody. Advised by dedicated young Diploma- or PhD students, visitors perform various basic experiments in molecular biology and get exciting insights into the day-to-day experimental work in a life science laboratory. Children, teens and adults are able to manipulate equipment and materials in an environment suitable for them to construct their knowledge of molecular phenomena and scientific concepts.

Aims

- engage people in exploring the fascinating world of science through hands-on activities
- create a place where scientists and the public meet and enter into dialogue to discuss various aspects of biomolecular research
- stimulate students' interest in taking up careers in the life sciences
- encourage young scientists to participate in science communication activities

Program

The Vienna Open Lab offers activities for children from 5 years, teachers, students, and the interested public. Training programs last from two hours up to six hours. Special programs (e.g. teachers workshops) take one day and longer. During the whole lab course the visitors are advised and stimulated by young scientist.

Experiments and techniques offered

- DNA extraction from fruits, vegetables, food products and saline mouthwash
- cutting and subsequent analysis of DNA via gel electrophoresis
- detection of jumping genes
- detection of genetically modified food by PCR
- predict bitter tasting ability by PCR
- DNA fingerprinting
- bioinformatics
- and many more..

Summer Science Camps

Based on the the big success of the Summer Science Camps in 2007, 2008 and 2009, the Vienna Open Lab organizes two Summer Science Camps in 2010. One is opened to interested high school students from 10 to 13 and the second one is targeted to 14 to 16 year old teenagers. Each genetic workshops lasts five days, provides extensive lab experience and includes a role-playing game about genetic engineering. It also integrates computer methods for analyzing genes. At the „family participation day“ the students present their experiences in the course of a poster session. The Camp is concluded by a „diploma ceremony“ to acknowledge the acquired skills.

For more information please visit our website: www.viennaopenlab.at (english version available)

Start of the Project: August 2004 (parallel to the planning phase, a restricted test-run was launched)

Official Opening: 23. Mai 2006

Lab Area: 77 qm (located at the Campus Vienna Biocenter – a biotechnology cluster that comprises research institutes as well as small companies)

Total Number of Visitors: 10.458 (October 2009)



VIENNA OPEN LAB
Dr. Bohr-Gasse 3, 1030 Wien
Tel: +431 79044 4591
www.viennaopenlab.at
office@viennaopenlab.at

Project leader: DI Maria Halaschek-Wiener
Project assistant: Melanie Kramer

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