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BASF and University of Heidelberg set up Catalysis Research Laboratory CaRLa

- **CaRLa (Catalysis Research Laboratory) combines the skills of 13 academic and industrial scientists in the development of tomorrow's innovations**
- **Model project 'Industry on Campus' to exemplify the German university landscape**

BASF and the University of Heidelberg have signed a contract to set up a catalysis laboratory. Funded by the two partners and the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, the laboratory is dedicated to the development of new homogeneous catalysts. Starting in the fall of 2006, six postgraduate scientists from the university as well as six researchers and a head of laboratory from BASF will work together to investigate basic research issues and industrial applications in the field of homogeneous catalysis from their base in the Heidelberg Technology Park.

"Setting up the new Catalysis Research Laboratory CaRLa in Heidelberg enables us to participate more intensively in the rapid developments in the field of homogeneous catalysis, while our alliance with the University of Heidelberg gives us access to a highly innovative scientific environment," said Prof. Rainer Diercks, head of BASF's devision for Chemicals Research and Engineering, explaining the strategic objective of the new laboratory.

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Proximity to BASF's research laboratories and cooperation with Heidelberg University's special research area - "Molecular Catalysts: Structure and Functional Design" (SFB 623: www.sfb623.uni-hd.de), whose spokesman Prof. Peter Hofmann is to assume scientific management of the facility - provides an ideal setting for efficient collaborative catalysis research.

"Our special research area's focus and infrastructure, the wide-ranging scientific expertise of the Heidelberg faculty, BASF's chemical technology know-how, and the exciting and novel concept behind CaRLa are bound to draw top scientific talent to this new laboratory," Hofmann said.

The positions to be filled will be advertised at an international level. "We mean to attract the world's best minds and put together the best team to meet tomorrow's challenges," said Dr. Guido Voit, head of BASF's department for Basic Products Research. "We believe a melting pot of this kind is ideal to develop the successful innovations of tomorrow."

Dr. Christoph Jäkel is the designated CaRLa lab manager. During his time as a Humboldt grantee at Stanford University, California, Jäkel learned the importance of an interdisciplinary and international approach for excellence in research. Upon returning to Germany in 2002, he joined BASF's Chemicals Research and Technology division where he works on the development and application of homogeneous catalysts.

For the Ruprecht-Karls University of Heidelberg, the establishment of CaRLa and the research alliance with BASF is part of an innovative, forward-looking strategy in connection with the current nationwide quest for excellence in the German university system. The university's strategy is directed at optimizing knowledge transfer between basic research and applied science. With its

hands-on, balanced collaboration of scientists from academia and industry, the catalysis lab CaRLa is the first research platform of its kind in Germany.

“The University of Heidelberg is assuming a pioneering role here, with the support of the Baden-Württemberg government. We look upon CaRLa as a model example of our university’s new value-adding ‘Industry on Campus’ concept and as a far-reaching signal designed in particular to help young scientists to present the results of their research to a wider community and put their achievements to industrial use,” said Prof. Peter Hommelhoff, Dean of the University of Heidelberg.

Catalysis is the single most important technology in the chemical industry. More than eighty percent of all chemical products come into contact with catalysts at least once during their synthesis process. Unlike heterogeneous catalysis, which uses catalysts in their solid form to mediate reactions, homogeneous catalysis makes use of catalysts that have been dissolved in the reaction mixture. High-performance catalysts have huge benefits, both ecological and economic. For instance, they help to cut down significantly on the resources used for substance reactions whilst producing fewer by-products; open up new, more cost-effective ways of manufacturing established products; and enable the efficient manufacture of new products.

BASF is the world’s leading chemical company: The Chemical Company. Its portfolio ranges from chemicals, plastics, performance products, agricultural products and fine chemicals to crude oil and natural gas. As a reliable partner to virtually all industries, BASF’s intelligent solutions and high-value products help its customers to be more successful. BASF develops new technologies and uses them to open up additional market opportunities. It combines economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility, thus contributing to a better

future. In 2004, BASF had approximately 82,000 employees and posted sales of more than €37 billion. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA), New York (BF), Paris (BA) and Zurich (AN). Further information on BASF is available on the Internet at www.basf.com.