



# Director's message

## Global alliances towards personalized medicine

by Marco Foiani



*For decades humanity tried to cure cancer with drug therapies without fully understanding the real causes underlying the onset and the development of the disease. The success of these approaches has been greatly limited by this lack of knowledge and today many cancer patients still die after a relapse of their illness.*

*The promise of research organizations like IFOM, which are involved in the exploration and understanding of such basic molecular mechanisms at the root of the disease, is therefore critical. These efforts are now showing the first results as we begin to understand why in some patients some therapies are working better than others. Moreover, an entire new predictive and personalized medicine landscape is being shaped with the aim of assessing in advance the risk of development of diseases on a genetic basis in the population.*

*This is a massive collective effort that the scientific community is pursuing all over the world. In this framework, IFOM is well aware that partnering with world-class institutions with complementary skills and resources is essential to reach the critical mass necessary to deliver results. IFOM has therefore taken up avenues that would maximize its own efforts, by synergizing with other institutions with the same aims. Besides the long-standing collaboration with the European Institute of Oncology (IEO) in Milan, we have therefore opened Joint Research Labs in India and Singapore (IFOM Asia) where the aims, the approach, the costs and the funding are shared.*

*Thanks to our partnerships with IEO in 2000, A\*STAR in 2011 in Singapore, NCBS and InStem in 2012 in Bangalore (India) we have been able to join forces and create synergies that are being of benefit to all the institutions involved, and to science in particular.*

*We plan to further extend the IFOM Asia program by increasing our investments in Singapore and Bangalore, and to expand it to Japan. To this aim, plans have been put in action to increase the investment in Bangalore and details are being solved with the National University of Singapore. In addition, a partnership with the Kyoto University Medical School has started with an agreement for the exchange of scientific staff.*

*The return of these investments is not only that of expanding our scientific staff with highly qualified colleagues, but also a major increase in the number of highly selected young talents from Asia who come to study in our institute in Milan.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. M.', followed by a large, light gray quotation mark.

*IFOM Network, Joint Research Labs, IFOM Asia*

Director's message

*The author:*



**Marco Foiani**  
*Scientific Director*

Prof. Foiani has a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from the University of Milan (Italy).

Since 2002, Prof. Foiani, who is also Head of the Genome Integrity Laboratory at IFOM since its establishment, is Full Professor in Molecular Biology at the University of Milan.

His research interest focuses on the regulatory mechanisms that control genome integrity. Particularly, his work has contributed to elucidate the cellular mechanisms causing genome instability in cancer cells and chromosome abnormalities in certain human syndromes leading to cancer predisposition. Prof. Foiani has more than 80

papers published in international scientific journals.

Since 2008 Prof. Marco Foiani is the Scientific Director of IFOM.

Prof. Foiani was honored with internationally recognized memberships and awards, such as: the European Molecular Biology Organization membership; the Academia Europaea membership; the New York Academy of Sciences membership; the Italian Society of Genetics (AGI) membership; the Italian Society of Biophysics and Molecular Biology (SIBBM) membership; the Award from the Italian Society for Biophysics and Molecular Biology (SIBBM); the Biotec Award promoted by Amgen and Dompé; the “Chiara

D’Onofrio” Prize from the Italian Federation of Life Sciences.

He was the founder in 2009 of the European Nanomedicine Foundation (CEN) and vice-president up to 2011.

He is also member of the Scientific Advisory Board of AIRC, the Italian Cancer Research Association, member of the editorial board of Cell and editor and reviewer for top impact factor scientific journals.