

Visitors flock to annual Open House

October 18, 2017—The RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology (CDB) held its annual Open House on Saturday, October 14, along with the other RIKEN research centers based in Kobe, including the Center for Life Science Technologies (CLST), Quantitative Biology Center (QBiC) and the Advanced Institute for Computational Science (AICS). Despite grey skies, the rain held off for most of the day, and approximately 2,250 people of all ages, including families and school groups, visited the CDB campus to enjoy a wide range of events and hear about the latest research being carried out at the Center.



Scenes from the 2017 Open House

The Open House is the one day of the year in which the general public is welcome to explore some of the laboratories and facilities that are normally not opened to the public, as well as talk directly to scientists about their research. One of the most popular events of the Open House is the Open Lab event, where several laboratories allow the visitors to enter the laboratory premises, talk to scientists working in the laboratory about what they are working on and also take a look at samples of cells, tissues, or of organisms themselves. This year, five CDB laboratories, the Laboratory for Morphogenetic Signaling, the Laboratory for Developmental Epigenetics, the Laboratory for Lung Development, the Laboratory for Organismal Patterning and the Laboratory for Organ Regeneration, took part in the Open Lab event. A hands-on DNA experiment event was also very popular with the visitors, where they could learn about DNA and perform actual techniques used in the laboratories to analyze DNA, including using a micropipette to transfer samples into a gel for electrophoresis. The model organism exhibit attracted large crowds as well, where visitors could see and learn about different model organisms used in research and what scientists can learn from these organisms.

Other events included a casual round table discussion with scientists about anything and everything visitors wanted to ask, a craft corner for making original button badges, straw rockets and paper animal hats, and a book lounge featuring a variety of science books recommended by RIKEN scientists.

Similar open house-style events were held at different organizations and institutions located within the Kobe Biomedical Cluster on the same day.