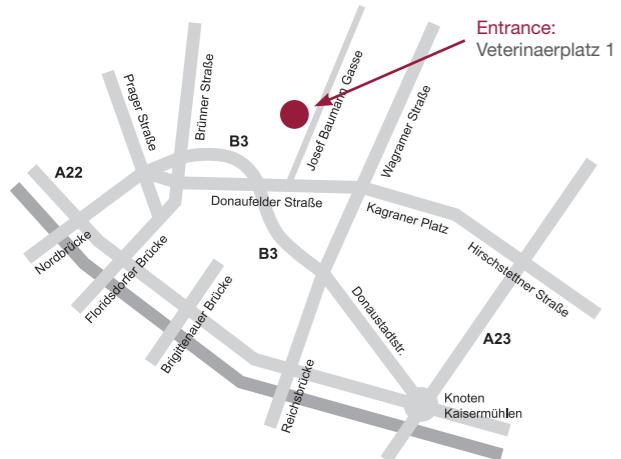


## Contact and arrival

University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna  
(Vetmeduni Vienna)

Messerli Research Institute  
Veterinaerplatz 1, 1210 Vienna  
T +43 1 25077 2681 (secretary)  
[www.vetmeduni.ac.at/messerli](http://www.vetmeduni.ac.at/messerli)  
[messerli@vetmeduni.ac.at](mailto:messerli@vetmeduni.ac.at)



**From the West** – Salzburg, Linz, St. Pölten: A1 to Knoten Steinhäusl; A21 direction Wien Süd/Graz to Knoten Vösendorf; A2 and A23 direction Gänserndorf to exit Hirschstetten, continue as shown on the map

**From the South** – Villach, Klagenfurt, Graz: A2 and A23 direction Gänserndorf to exit Hirschstetten, continue as shown on the map

**From the North/North-West** – Tulln, Stockerau: A22, exit Floridsdorfer Brücke, continue as shown on the map

**From the East** – Schwechat, Hainburg: A4, then A23 direction Gänserndorf to exit Hirschstetten, continue as shown on the map

## Associated centres of the Messerli Research Institute

### Comparative Immunology and Oncology at the MedUni Vienna

A part of the Unit of Comparative Medicine is working at the Meduni Vienna, in addition to the part at the Vetmeduni Vienna. Its location at the Vienna General Hospital (AKH) enables contact with human patients, which is a basic requirement for any comparative strategy.

### Research Station Haidlhof

The Research Station is located at the Haidlhof estate of the Teaching and Research Farm Kremesberg (LFG), near Bad Vöslau (Lower Austria). It is the result of a co-operative project of the Vetmeduni Vienna and the University of Vienna, investigating cognition and communication in birds and other species (mammals). Besides the aviaries for corvids and kea, the research station is equipped with a multi-functional lab for behavioural and bioacoustics tests.



### Clever Dog Lab

The Clever Dog Lab is a shared facility of the Unit of Comparative Cognition at the Messerli Research Institute and the association "Clever Dog Lab". The abilities of dogs to solve social and technical tasks, together with their owners or without, are tested in the experimental rooms, using modern equipment. Professional monitoring systems (video, audio) enable recording of the dogs' behaviour, which can later be analysed in detail.

Special devices that have partly been developed by the lab itself (Skinner boxes with touch screens, projection and replay systems, eye trackers) create controlled and precisely measurable learning conditions for the dogs.

### Wolf Science Center

The Clever Dog Lab is closely associated with the Wolf Science Center in Ernstbrunn (Lower Austria), where dogs and wolves are investigated under the same breeding and housing conditions, in order to investigate the evolutionary background and the effects of domestication on the cognitive and emotional processes in dogs.



## Messerli Research Institute at the Vetmeduni Vienna

University Competence Centre to  
investigate the human-animal relationship

**messerli**  
Research Institute

**messerli** Foundation **vetmeduni** vienna

**universität** wien

## ...to investigate the human-animal relationship

The Messerli Research Institute was founded in 2010, with support from the **Messerli Foundation** (Switzerland), under the management of the University of **Veterinary Medicine, Vienna**, in cooperation with the **Medical University of Vienna** and the **University of Vienna**. The research is devoted to the interaction between humans and animals, as well as its theoretical principles in ethics, comparative medicine, and animal cognition and behavior. Its work is characterized by a broad **interdisciplinary approach** (biology, human medicine, veterinary medicine, philosophy, psychology, law) and **strong international focus**.

Research findings are an integral part of the academic curriculum in the Master's program (in English) at the Vetmeduni Vienna. They are also designed to provide guidelines for the responsible and acceptable treatment of animals, and to improve this treatment. Thus, the Messerli Research Institute sees one of its main responsibilities as providing scientific information to help people act responsibly in the field of human-animal interactions.



## The Units of the Messerli Research Institute at a glance

### Comparative Cognition

Cognitive abilities are not unique to humans, but can also be found in many animals. In order to understand the variety of processes, their different functions, their evolutionary development and the animals' ability to solve problems, the Unit of Comparative Cognition investigates different species: wild animals (wolves, kea, pigeons, woodpeckers), companion animals (dogs) as well as farm and lab animals (pigs, chickens, rats). Different biological and psychological methods and approaches are combined. Studies are carried out on different levels of complexity (genetic, neuronal, individual, social, and cultural level), yet always in a non-invasive way.

The aim is to better understand the cognitive and emotional abilities of animals, especially in a social context, as well as to support human responsibility and sensitivity towards other social, affective and intelligent beings, and to improve the various relationships with (and the treatment of) animals.

#### Current research focuses of the Unit of Comparative Cognition

- Canid cognition
- Kea Cognition
- Cognition of farm animals

#### Contact Comparative Cognition

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### Comparative Medicine

The Messerli Research Institute considers the term "Comparative Medicine" a method to speed up the development of pharmaceuticals for human and animal patients. The Unit of Comparative Medicine sees itself as a strong bridge between veterinary and human medicine.

Therefore, the team is working at two locations:

- Comparative Medicine Lab at the Messerli Research Institute, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna
- Lab of Comparative Immunology and Oncology at the Institute of Pathophysiology and Allergy Research, Center for Pathophysiology, Infectiology and Immunology at the Medical University of Vienna

#### Current research focuses of the Unit of Comparative Medicine

- Developing a vaccine against the carcino embryonic antigen in dog cancer
- Defining EGFR (Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor) family members as targets for cancer immunotherapies in dogs
- Introducing molecular allergy diagnosis into veterinary dermatology

#### Contact Comparative Medicine

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### Ethics and Human-Animal Studies

The Unit of Ethics and Human-Animal Studies at the Messerli Research Institute is concerned with ethical questions in the relationship between humans and animals, its change in society and its implications on the keeping of livestock, pet husbandry, animals in scientific experiments, zoos, etc. The moral aspects of these fields are reflected, and suggested solutions are reasoned. The unit's application-oriented and basic results are not only brought into the academic debate, but also provide information for the public and scientific consultation for government.

Interdisciplinary exchange between natural sciences and humanities is very important, which is strongly supported by the structure of the Messerli Research Institute.

#### Current research focuses of the Unit of Ethics and Human-Animal Studies

- Theories and foundations in the Ethics of human-animal interaction
- Methods of applied ethics and animal ethics
- Veterinary medical ethics and animal ethics in research

#### Contact Ethics and Human-Animal Studies

Head: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Herwig Grimm  
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