



International School for Advanced Studies

New research to study RNA just about to start



SISSA received over one million euro to better understand RNA structure

The group led by **Giovanni Bussi** at the International School for Advanced Studies (SISSA) in Trieste **has just received considerable financing to study RNA**, a molecule with several functions, important in the biology of the cell. In the project, the method of computer simulations will be used.

As its manifold functions are being discovered, RNA is becoming increasingly popular in cell biology studies. This molecule is strictly related to DNA and can be studied in many ways. One of those is to simulate its activity with computers. This is the goal of the *S-RNA-S (Small Ribonucleic Acids in Silico)* project, which will be conducted by the group led by Giovanni Bussi, assistant professor at SISSA in Trieste, thanks to the ERC (European Research Council) *Starting Grant*, amounting to around € 1,300,000.



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In silico technique (a phrase created in analogy with some more common expressions i.e. *in vitro* and *in vivo*, denoting computer simulation method) will help understand molecular RNA mechanisms, including RNA metabolism and the functioning of the riboswitches. Riboswitches are small RNA fragments which can stimulate or suppress the genetic transcription process.

The SISSA **research group** that has been awarded this grant is currently made up by Giovanni Bussi, the coordinator of the project, Sandro Bottaro, Francesco Colizzi and Maria Darvas, as well as the students Francesco di Palma and Andrea Perez Villa, who shortly will be joined by some other students.

USEFUL LINKS:

- > **Twitter profile:** http://twitter.com/S_RNA_S
 - > **Giovanni Bussi's webpage in SISSA website:** <http://people.sissa.it/~bussi>
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Contact details:

Communication office:

pressroom@sisa.it

Tel: (+39) 040 3787644 | (+39) 340-5473118, (+39) 333-5275592
via Bonomea, 265
34136 Trieste

For further information on SISSA: www.sissa.it