

Annex: Biography of Professor Ashok Venkitaraman



Professor Ashok Venkitaraman
Director-Designate
Cancer Science Institute of Singapore, National University of Singapore

Prof Ashok Venkitaraman is expected to assume his appointment as Director of the Cancer Science Institute of Singapore at the National University of Singapore in November 2020, after a period of transition from his current appointments as the Ursula Zoellner Professor of Cancer Research at the University of Cambridge, and the Director of the Medical Research Council (MRC) Cancer Unit.

Prof Venkitaraman was trained in medicine at the Christian Medical College, Vellore, India, before completing his PhD at University College London, and his postdoctoral work as a Sir Otto Beit Memorial Fellow at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology (LMB) in Cambridge. He was then a faculty member at the MRC LMB, before his election as the inaugural holder of the Zoellner Professorship at the University of Cambridge.

Prof Venkitaraman is widely recognised for his contributions to understanding the genetics and biology of cancer, particularly in elucidating the impact of genome instability on carcinogenesis and cancer therapy. His research has not only illuminated the fundamental mechanisms governing genome repair, replication and segregation during cell division, but has also provided insight into their connections with cancer pathogenesis and treatment.

To help translate such fundamental insights to clinical practice, Prof Venkitaraman has worked with colleagues from many different disciplines to develop new approaches for the discovery and early development of next-generation medicines.

As the Director of the MRC Cancer Unit in Cambridge, Prof Venkitaraman has brought together an outstanding team of faculty who together aim to develop new approaches for early intervention in cancer, by explaining the molecular and cellular events that underlie the earliest steps in carcinogenesis, and translating this knowledge towards clinical application for early diagnosis, risk stratification and preventive or curative treatment, using innovative enabling technologies.

Prof Venkitaraman was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, London, in 2001 and a Member of the EMBO European academy, Heidelberg, in 2004.