

Hilde Crevits visits the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp

Focus on innovative research with a social impact

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Dit is de omschrijving

Hilde Crevits, Vice-Minister-President of the Government of Flanders and Flemish Minister of Economy, Science and Innovation, visited the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) in Antwerp today. Her visit follows the recent four-year extension (2020 to 2024) of the grant agreement between ITM and the Flemish Government. During her visit, Minister Crevits was given an overview of the Institute's research activities, with a focus on the social impact of innovative research.

After a warm welcome, ITM Director Marc-Alain Widdowson and Mrs Crevits had an in-depth discussion about the Institute's mission, its research objectives for the next four years, and future challenges.

The importance of the Outbreak Research Team (ORT) and the Clinical Trial Unit (CTU) was also highlighted. The ORT is on permanent standby to carry out research action wherever there is an outbreak, and the CTU manages and supports non-commercial clinical trials abroad. The work of both teams is unmistakably relevant and impactful, funded by the Flemish Department of Economy, Science, and Innovation.

The Minister then visited the new insectarium, built in 2019 with a grant of one million euro from Minister Crevits. The facility houses a wide range of insects, including tiger and malaria mosquitoes and sand flies. This new research area offers extensive opportunities for interdisciplinary work and enables an improved investigation of tropical diseases, including those linked to climate change.

Minister Crevits also spoke with several researchers about the Institute's research activities and the international role of innovative research. The activities of the travel and HIV/STD clinic and the COVID-19 projects were explained and discussed in greater detail. Before leaving, Minister Crevits signed the Institute's Golden Book.