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THE GGI BECOMES NATIONAL CENTRE OF ADVANCED STUDIES FOR THEORETICAL PHYSICS

The Galileo Galilei Institute (GGI), a centre of excellence for high education in theoretical physics, has become the National Centre of Advanced Studies of INFN, in partnership with the University of Florence. A ceremony in Florence celebrated the event with the participation of the scientific community and the institutions. The ceremony was held on 15 February, the date which marks the anniversary of Galileo Galilei's birth, to whom the centre which, every year, houses hundreds of the world's best scientists, is dedicated. The GGI is now INFN's third national centre, joining CNAF, the National Centre for the Research and Development in Information and Communication Technologies based in Bologna, and TIFPA, Trento's Institute for Fundamental Physics and Applications. In addition to the GGI's transformation into a National Centre, the Galileo Galilei Medal was introduced. This award will be assigned for the first time in 2019 to the researchers who contributed significantly to the progress on theoretical physics research.

Based on the Arcetri hill, a historical location for physics and astronomy in Florence, the GGI is the first European institute dedicated to the theoretical physics of fundamental interactions. Its mission is to organise and host advanced-level workshops. Its transformation into a National Centre of Advanced Studies confirms the driving role played by the centre over the first twelve years of activity for the national and international scientific community in the field of theoretical physics: in the past, this field provided the basis for the recent discoveries of the Higgs boson and the gravitational waves and, today, it plays a fundamental role in the new exploratory phase.

The GGI was founded by Giuseppe Marchesini and other theoretical physicists, and was developed thanks to the collaboration between INFN and the University of Florence. Since 2006, the GGI hosted over 5000 scientists from all over the world. Every year, it organises four graduate schools, lasting 2-3

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weeks each, focused on the String theory, the Theoretical physics of elementary particles, the Nuclear theoretical physics and the Theory of fields and statistical mechanics. In 2019, a school of Cosmology and astroparticles will also be introduced. Thanks to its activities, the Centre also benefits from a loan of approximately 600,000€ granted by the US-based Simons Foundation which funded a five-year project aiming at promoting and supporting the presence of scientists of international standing and young researchers at the Institute. ■