

CECs, Centro de Estudios Científicos (Center for Scientific Studies) is a private, non-profit corporation, devoted to the development, promotion and diffusion of scientific research. CECs was founded in 1984 as the Center for Scientific Studies of Santiago and has since been directed by physicist Claudio Bunster.

Origins of CECs and its development until today



In its origin CECs involved theoretical physicists and biologists who had well established academic careers abroad but wanted to return to Chile to make a difference through science. It was quickly realized that the desired difference could only be made by starting what became the

first independent research institution in the history of the country. The center was started with a grant of 150,000 dollars a year for each year of three from the Tinker Foundation of New York. Besides that its capital was the first rate scientific quality of its researchers, their strong spirit de corps and their network of scientific relationships abroad. In a few years, functioning in a rented house the center became a focal point for science in Chile and in Latin America. Since 1990 the center also started playing an important role in public service not only through devising new scientific programs, such as the Millennium Science Initiative, but also for conceiving and putting into practice the idea of contributing to democracy by involving the military in science and, therefore, in contact with the civilian world in an uncontaminated context.