FINAL RESUME ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:
Institute of Human Genetics (IGH)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE
FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND
RESEARCH BODIES:
Université de Montpellier
Centre National de la Recherche
Scientifique - CNRS

EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2019-2020
GROUP A

Report published on September, 30 2020

High Council for evaluation of research and higher education
In the name of Hcéres¹:
Nelly Dupin, acting President

In the name of the experts committee²:
Geneviève Almouzni, Chairwoman of the committee

Under the decree No.2014-1365 dated 14 November 2014,
¹ The president of Hcéres “countersigns the evaluation reports set up by the experts committees and signed by their chairman.” (Article 8, paragraph 5);
² The evaluation reports “are signed by the chairman of the experts committee”. (Article 11, paragraph 2).
UNIT PRESENTATION

Unit name: Institute of Human Genetics
Unit acronym: IGH
Current label and N°: UMR 9002
ID RNSR: 201722404H
Application type: Renewal
Head of the unit (2019-2020): Mr Monsef Benkirane
Project leader (2021-2025): Mr Philippe Pasero
Number of teams and/or themes: 23

EXPERTS COMMITEE MEMBERS

Chair: Ms Geneviève Almouzni, Institut Curie, Paris

Mr Peter B. Becker, Federal State of Bavaria, Planegg, Germany
Ms Florence Besse (Épouse Aubry), CNRS, Nice
Mr Marc Blondel, Université Bretagne Loire, Brest
Mr Simon Boulton, The Francis Crick Institute, London, United-Kingdom
Ms Déborah Bourc’his, Institut Curie, Paris (representative of CNRS)
Mr Fabrizio D’adda Di Fagagna, IFOM, The FIRC Institute of Molecular Oncology, Milan, Italy
Ms Cathie Erb, Inserm, Illkirch (supporting personnel)
Mr Helder Maiato, Institute for Research and Innovation in Health, Porto, Portugal
Mr Jean-Christophe Marine, VIB-KU Leuven Center for Cancer Biology, Belgium
Mr Ramesh Pillai, University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
Mr Jan Rehwinkel, University of Oxford, Oxford, United-Kingdom
Ms Fatima Sanchez-Cabo, CNIC, Madrid, Spain
Mr Mikhail Spivakov, MRC London Institute of Medical Sciences, London, United-Kingdom

HCÉRES REPRESENTATIVE

Mr Hinrich Gronemeyer
REPRESENTATIVES OF SUPERVISING BODIES

Due to the Coronavirus epidemic, the site visit has been cancelled and the committee, following the instructions from the HCERES and in agreement with the unit director, conducted the evaluation of the unit under these exceptional circumstances based on the documentation no site visit and the various updates provided by the unit. There has been no request of the supervising bodies for a specific interaction with the committee.
INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The Institute of Human Genetics (Institut de Génétique Humaine, IGH) was founded in 1998 by Professor Jacques Demaille, former director of the CRBM institute of Montpellier. The IGH was originally a CNRS unit and became associated with the University of Montpellier in 2017. IGH is located within the fast-growing biomedical campus Arnaud de Villeneuve in Montpellier, which includes several CNRS and Inserm laboratories (Centre de Biochimie Structurale (CBS), Institut de Génomique Fonctionnelle (IGF), Laboratoire de Physiologie et Médecine Expérimentale (PHYMEDEXP)), academic hospitals and the new University of Montpellier School of Medicine (Montpellier University) that opened in 2017. It is close to the site of the University of Montpellier and the Center for Cancer Research (IRCM). The Institute has a total surface area of 3800 m2 and has around 220 active personnel. Two teams are relocated, one (IMGT) to the Faculty of Pharmacy and the other (part of the “Maintenance of genome integrity during DNA replication” team which focuses on multiple myeloma) to St Eloi Hospital.

A project for a business building is also underway, pending funding from the Occitanie region.

Management team

The Institute Director Monsef Benkirane is assisted by a Deputy Director, Dominique Giorgi. The future director proposed is Philippe Pasero.

HCÉRES NOMENCLATURE

SVE2 - Cell Biology, Imaging, Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Genomics, Systemic Biology
SVE3 - Microbiology, Virology, Immunology

THEMATICS

There are three major thematics covered in scientific departments: (i) Genome Dynamics, (ii) Genetics and Development, (iii) Molecular Bases of Human Diseases. The unit has developed a set of technologies that are constantly updated to ensure the availability of the most appropriate tools for the questions of interest and their model systems.

UNIT WORKFORCE

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<th>Institute of Human Genetics</th>
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<th>Number 01/01/2021</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant professors and similar positions</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Other scientists (“Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>High school teachers</td>
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Institute of Human Genetics, IGH, U Montpellier, CNRS, Mr Philippe Pasero

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)</th>
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<td>Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus</td>
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<td>Non-permanent supporting personnel</td>
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<td>PhD Students</td>
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<td>Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs (except PhD students)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>229</td>
<td>101</td>
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GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

Since its inception in 1998, the development of IGH has enabled to promote a research of high standard, with a success that is confirmed over time. This is due to an effective combination of active teams successful in securing funding, along with the developments of technological regional platforms (Biocampus) providing high level quality technological services (deep sequencing, microscopy, etc.) and the particular context of the Laboratory of Excellence (LabEx) EpiGenMed initiated at IGH. The latter enabled not only to bring together excellent teams in Montpellier life sciences which engaged in collaborative works towards new frontiers in Sciences, unexplored fields of research and develop new paradigms, but also to set up international PhD and postdoc programs that could fuel their laboratories with talented people and preparing new generation of scientists. The capacity to build on this instrument to attract teams of excellence by offering a generous package after a highly competitive selection by an ad hoc committee also proved very efficient. The scientific output is remarkable with major contributions in understanding the organization, dynamics and expression of the genome at the molecular, cellular and whole organism levels, and further engaging into elucidating the mechanisms leading to pathologies associated with disruption of these biological processes with implications in translational and possibly even clinical work.

Within the period from 2014 to April 2019 IGH had 175 publications which were considered by the panel as major contributions to the field. This scientific excellence is also supported by their success to the highly prestigious ERC grant applications.

The current Director of IGH and the current deputy director with the general administrator should be praised for their great leadership and engagement for the future with the establishment of shared services (Project Office, TTO) and projects of expansion for the construction of two buildings, respectively IncubaSciences and a building devoted to an Artificial intelligence and Cancer department, a timely and important area to develop for which the Bettencourt Schueller foundation has been solicited. They also managed to create an international laboratory with Oxford. Thus, the future director is now well placed to pursue and further develop the capacities of IGH with the trust of the group leaders and the personnel.

The IGH has thus at hands the key ingredients to produce outstanding research and continues to be a central piece in the international arena. They should be encouraged to pursue and strive for the best science in an attractive working place.
The evaluation reports of Hcères are available online: www.hceres.com

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