

FINAL RESUME ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:
Bacterial virulence and chronic infection (VBIC)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE
FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND
RESEARCH BODIES:

Université de Montpellier
Institut national de la santé et de la recherche
médicale – Inserm

EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2019-2020
GROUP A



In the name of Hcéres¹:

Nelly Dupin, acting
President

In the name of the experts committee²:

Serge Mostowy, Chairman 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).

Tables in this document were filled with data submitted by the supervising body on behalf the unit.

UNIT PRESENTATION

Unit name:	Bacterial virulence and chronic infection
Unit acronym:	VBIC
Current label and N°:	UMR 1047
ID RNSR:	201119395N
Application type:	Renewal
Head of the unit (2019-2020):	Mr David O'Callaghan
Project leader (2021-2025):	Mr David O'Callaghan
Number of teams and/or themes:	1

EXPERTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair:	Mr Serge Mostowy, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom
	Mr Xavier de Bolle, Université de Namur, Belgium
Experts:	Ms Marie-Cécile Ploy, CHU Limoges (representative of CNU)
	Mr Jean-Claude Slirard, Inserm Lille (representative of Inserm CSS)

HCÉRES REPRESENTATIVE

Mr Théophile Ohlmann

REPRESENTATIVES OF SUPERVISING BODIES

Ms Guia Carrara, INSERM
Ms Armelle Bonet-Kerrache, INSERM
Ms Evelyne Jouvin-Marche, INSERM
Ms Anissa Megzari, Centre Hospitalo-Universitaire de Nîmes
Mr Jacques Mercier Université de Montpellier

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The UMR 1047, entitled Bacterial Virulence and Chronic Infection (VBIC), was created in 2011. The unit is located on the Nîmes campus (medical school) of the Université de Montpellier.

Management team

The unit is headed by David O'Callaghan.

HCÉRES NOMENCLATURE

SVE-3.

THEMATICS

The unit is multidisciplinary- combining microbiology, cell biology, host-pathogen interactions, and clinical research- and successfully works under a common theme of chronic bacterial infections. Research on chronic infections is divided into 3 axes focusing on 1) *Brucella*, 2) *Burkholderia*, and 3) diabetic foot ulcers (DFU).

UNIT WORKFORCE

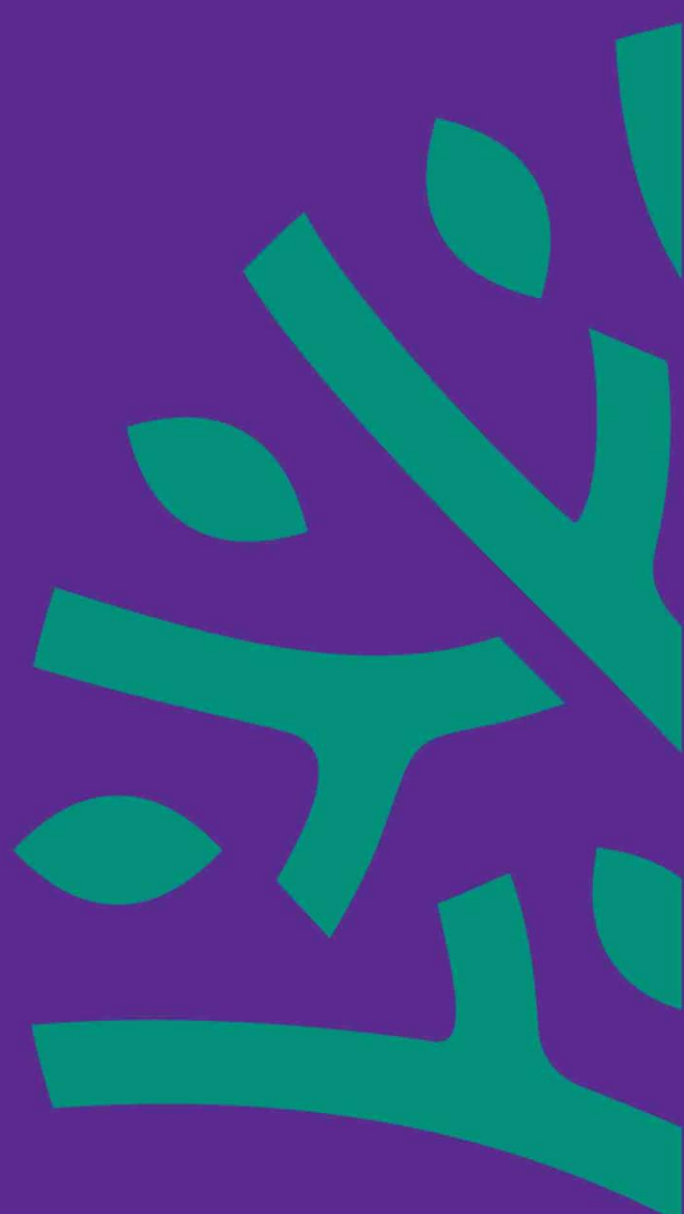
Bacterial Virulence and infectious disease		
Active staff	Number 06/30/2019	Number 01/01/2021
Full professors and similar positions	3	3
Assistant professors and similar positions	1	3
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	1	1
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	2	2
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	1	3
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	1	1
Permanent staff	9	0
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus		
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs (except PhD students)	1	
PhD Students	6	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	2	
Non-permanent staff	9	
Total	18	13

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

Committee members are very positive about the unit and its evaluation. The unit has responded well to comments from the former evaluation by increasing research focus and improving visibility. Although the unit is relatively small the output of the unit in terms of training and publications is very good. The unit represents a mix of PhDs and medical doctors and investigates a breadth of science. The expertise of the unit is nationally unique and internationally visible. The unit is recognised for working with pathogens (*Brucella*, *Burkholderia*) that are poorly studied elsewhere in France and its cutting-edge approaches using specialised equipment, *i.e.* dedicated labs for infection work, zebrafish facility, and access to clinical samples. The head of the unit is playing a pivotal role in the networking of the Brucellosis research community worldwide. The *Burkholderia*/zebrafish axis has emerged as a leader in the field of zebrafish infection, producing high quality publications and PhD training. The unit is also nationally recognised for its expertise in DFU (diabetic foot ulcers). The DFU axis is successful in attracting clinician scientists, developing partnerships with industry and promoting clinical impact. From 2020 onwards, the 3 thematic axes can be expected to continue to work well independently and also in synergy. Output and visibility can be expected to significantly grow. The atmosphere in the unit is healthy, positive and international.

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2 rue Albert Einstein
75013 Paris, France
T. 33 (0)1 55 55 60 10

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