

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:

Unit of Genetics and Developmental Biology
(UGBD)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND DC RESEARCH BODIES:

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique -
CNRS

Institut national de la santé et de la recherche
médicale - Inserm

Institut Curie

Université Pierre et Marie Curie

ÉVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2017-2018
GROUP D



In the name of Hcéres¹:

Michel Cosnard, President

In the name of the expert committee²:

Claude Desplan, 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 expert committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5);

² The evaluation reports "are signed by the chairman of the expert committee". (Article 11, paragraph 2).

This report is the sole result of the unit's evaluation by the expert committee, the composition of which is specified below. The assessments contained herein are the expression of an independent and collegial reviewing by the committee.

UNIT PRESENTATION

Unit name:	Unit of Genetics and Developmental Biology
Unit acronym:	UGBD
Requested label:	UMR et U
Application type:	Renewal
Current number:	UMR 3215 - U 934
Head of the unit (2017-2018):	Ms Edith HEARD
Project leader (2019-2023):	Mr Pierre LEOPOLD
Number of teams:	10

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair:	Mr Claude DESPLAN, New York University, United States
Experts:	Ms Sarah BRAY, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
	Mr Josh BRICKMAN, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
	Ms Cathie ERB, IGBMC, Illkirch (supporting personnel)
	Mr Robert FEIL, Institut de Génétique Moléculaire de Montpellier
	Mr Norbert GHYSELINCK, IGBMC, Illkirch (representative of CoNRS)
	Ms Anna-Katerina HADJANTONAKIS, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, United States
	Ms Petra HAJKOVA, Medical Research Council London, United Kingdom
	Mr Michele TRABUCCHI, Université de Nice (representative of Inserm CSS)
	Mr Julien VERMOT, IGBMC, Illkirch
HCERES scientific officer:	Mr Hinrich GRONEMEYER

Representatives of supervising institutions and bodies:

Ms G  n  vi  ve ALMOUZNI, Institut Curie

Mr Yvan BOUBLIK, CNRS

Ms Camille CHAUDONNERET, Inserm

Mr Jean-Maurice DURA, CNRS

Mr Thierry GALLI, Inserm

Ms Tatiana MALHERBE, Institut Curie

Ms Agathe ZOUIOUECH, Inserm

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The unit "Genetics and Developmental Biology" of the Institut Curie was created in 2009 by Dr. Daniel Louvard and Prof. Spyros Artavanis-Tsakonas who wanted to develop a multidisciplinary unit at the Institut Curie that would address problems of Developmental Biology and Cancer. The goal was to have a program that would take advantage of modern approaches of molecular genetics, genomics as well as powerful imaging tools. This benefited from the construction of a new state of the art building in the Paris campus.

The long-term hope was that understanding developmental biology would allow a better understanding of cancer, which would fit well with the overarching goals of the Institut Curie. The teams to be recruited were to include fundamental research groups using a variety of model organisms as well as more applied teams looking at problems of cancer.

A search committee recruited four initial teams, two established (Dr. Edith Heard and Dr. Yohanns Bellaïche) and two junior teams (Dr. Deborah Bourc'His and Dr. Jean-René Huynh). Six other teams were then recruited through open international searches.

The Genetics and Developmental Biology unit has now 10 active groups and 106 researchers, permanent or PhD students and postdocs. The teams and the administration of the unit occupy most of the new building (The Computer Science Department of the Curie Institute occupies the rest of the space). It is financially supported by the Institut Curie, the CNRS, the INSERM, as well as UPMC and PSL.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

The unit "Genetics and Developmental Biology" is currently headed by Dr. Edith Heard. Dr. Yohanns Bellaïche serves as a deputy director. However, upon her departure to become head of EMBL, Dr. Heard will be replaced by Dr. Pierre Leopold who will move from Nice.

HCERES NOMENCLATURE

SVE2-1; SVE2-2; SVE2-3.

SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN

The unit is composed of 10 teams that cover a broad range of Developmental Biology projects and Cancer. The fields of research covered go well beyond classical developmental biology and include extensive cell biology, genomics, epigenetics and chromosome architecture, leading to a broad set of complementary themes that synergize well.

UNIT WORKFORCE

Unit workforce	Number 30/06/2017	Number 01/01/2019
Permanent staff		
Full professors and similar positions	1	1
Assistant professors and similar positions	0	0

Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	7	6
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	13	9
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	0	0
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	19	19
TOTAL permanent staff	40	35
Non-permanent staff		
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	0	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs	32	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	18	
PhD Students	16	
TOTAL non-permanent staff	66	
TOTAL unit	106	

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The "Genetics and Developmental Biology" unit is relatively small, with only 10 teams, but it is doing particularly well, publishing important papers in the best journals, with seven of its research teams benefiting from support from a prestigious ERC grant. All of them are involved in producing breakthrough research and promoting this research and their own scientific interests through extensive outreach programs.

The educational mission of the unit is also successful with 16 current PhD students who should graduate in about three years with at least one published paper, often in the highest profile journals.

Diversity is also well represented and the gender balance is perfect. The impact of the unit on science and society is important and several of the team leaders are among the most successful French or European scientists in their field.

It is clear that the unit has performed very well in the last four years and is promised to a bright future for the upcoming five years.

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