

FINAL RESUME ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:
Laboratory Ethology Cognition Development
(LECD)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE
FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND
RESEARCH BODIES:
Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense

EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2018-2019
GROUP E



In the name of Hcéres¹:

Michel Cosnard, President

In the name of the experts committee²:

Leonida Fusani, 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 provided by laboratories and supervising bodies in the unit's application and in the Excel files "Données du contrat en cours" and "Données du prochain contrat".

UNIT PRESENTATION

Unit name:	Laboratory Ethology Cognition Development
Unit acronym:	LECD
Requested label:	EA
Application type:	Renewal
Current number:	3456
Head of the unit (2018-2019):	Mr Sébastien DEREGNAUCOURT
Project leader (2020-2024):	Mr Sébastien DEREGNAUCOURT
Number of teams and/or themes:	mono-équipe

EXPERTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair:	Mr Leonida FUSANI, University of Vienna and University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Austria
Experts:	Mr Thierry ASTRUC, Inra Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (supporting personnel)
	Mr Jonathan DELAFIELD-BUTT, University of Strathclyde, UK
	Mr Gilles GHEUSI, Université Paris 13 (representative of CNU)

HCÉRES REPRESENTATIVE

Mr Jean-François HOCQUETTE

REPRESENTATIVE OF SUPERVISING INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES

Ms Helene AJI, Université de Nanterre

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The current laboratory is the result of several mutations since the establishment of Ethology at the "Université Paris 10" in 1970. In 1992 the research team was affiliated to the URA CNRS 667 which also included two other research teams based at the University Paris 13 in Villetaneuse. In 2000, the laboratory left this association and became singly affiliated with the University Paris Nanterre as an associated unit ("Equipe d'Accueil": EA3456). In these last 15 years, new lines of research have emerged, especially in the domain of animal cognition and the laboratory became the "Laboratoire d'Ethologie et Cognition Comparée". In 2013, three developmental psychologists joined the laboratory. In 2014, the "Laboratoire d'Ethologie Expérimentale et Comparée" became the "Laboratoire Ethologie Cognition Développement". The LECD is located on the 1st floor of the building BSL (recently renamed: Charlotte Delbo) on the campus of the University Paris Nanterre. The LECD is affiliated with the Paris Nanterre University and is a member of the COMUE: University Paris Lumières (UPL).

MANAGEMENT TEAM

From 01/01/14 to 12/31/15: Mr Gérard Leboucher (adjunct director: Mr Sébastien Derégnaucourt);
Since 01/01/16: Mr Sébastien Derégnaucourt (adjunct director: Mr Gérard Leboucher).

HCÉRES NOMENCLATURE

SVE1: Biologie Santé / SHS4 : Esprit humain, langage, éducation
SVE4 : neurobiologie / SHS4_2 : psychologie

SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN

The LECD is active in the areas of Ethology, Animal Behaviour, Comparative Psychology, Social behaviour, Language, Evolutionary Psychology, and Developmental Psychology. The focus of the lab was traditionally vocal communication in birds with a particular interest in sexual selection of vocal traits from both the male and the female perspective. In the last period, the lab has expanded its interests with the incorporation of developmental psychologists who are interested in how the social environment shapes communication during development.

UNIT WORKFORCE

	Unit workforce	
	Laboratory Ethology Cognition Development	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions	6	6
Assistant professors and similar positions	9	10
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	0	0
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	0	0

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)	2	2
Permanent staff	17	18
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	1	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs	2	
PhD Students	10	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	2	
Non-permanent staff	15	
Total	32	18

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The LECD is organized as a single team that includes both biologists and psychologists. This interdisciplinarity originates from recent developments that have seen an increasing number of developmental psychologists joining a group that originally was composed only by ethologists. Such a rare configuration represents the strongest potential for the Unit to deliver innovative, original, and impacting research in the next years.

The scientific productivity of the unit is of excellent quality and the moderate number of publications reflects the consistent involvement of all staff members and PhD students in teaching. The unit was successful in securing grants to support its research, and measures are being taken to ensure that more members of the Unit will have access to third-party funds in the future.

New collaborations have been started to launch innovative projects based on new technologies, such as the use of robots to study social learning in humans and non-human animals. Several publications of the unit have had strong resonance in the public, and the potential for increasing their impact outside the academic world is strong.

Junior members of the unit profit from a friendly, stimulating working environment where they have frequent and intensive interactions with staff scientists. All members of the unit including the technical and administrative personnel participate in decisions about resources and space allocation, and the management is transparent and fair.

The project proposed for the next contract period is innovative and original, with an optimal ratio between gains and risks. Proposal have been submitted to ensure third-party financial support for the next years, and while the unit values academic freedom, the team is ready to adjust allocation of personnel and resources to projects on the basis of available funding, so that efforts can focus on well-supported projects.

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