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# VPB - Virulence bactérienne précoce : fonctions cellulaires impliquées et contrôle dans l'infection aiguë et subaiguë

Rapport Hcéres

► **To cite this version:**

Rapport d'évaluation d'une entité de recherche. VPB - Virulence bactérienne précoce : fonctions cellulaires impliquées et contrôle dans l'infection aiguë et subaiguë. 2017, Université de Strasbourg. hceres-02030805

**HAL Id: hceres-02030805**

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Submitted on 20 Feb 2019

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# HCERES

High Council for the Evaluation of Research  
and Higher Education

Department of Research Evaluation

report on research unit:

Early Bacterial Virulence: cellular functions and control  
of acute and sub-acute infections

VBP

under the supervision of  
the following institutions  
and research bodies:

Université de Strasbourg

Evaluation Campaign 2016-2017 (Group C)

# HCERES

High Council for the Evaluation of Research  
and Higher Education

Department of Research Evaluation

*In the name of HCERES,<sup>1</sup>*

Michel Cosnard, president

*In the name of the experts committee,<sup>2</sup>*

Philippe Huber, chairman of the committee

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Under the decree No.2014-1365 dated 14 november 2014,

<sup>1</sup> The president of HCERES "countersigns the evaluation reports set up by the experts committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5)

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

## Evaluation report

This report is the sole result of 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 name:                          | Early Bacterial Virulence: cellular functions and control of acute and sub-acute infections |
| Unit acronym:                       | VBP   |
| Label requested:                    | EA  |
| Current number:                     | 7290  |
| Name of Director (2016-2017):       | Mr Gilles PREVOST   |
| Name of Project Leader (2018-2022): | Mr Gilles PREVOST   |

## Expert committee members

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Chair:  | Mr Philippe HUBER, CEA, Grenoble  |
| Experts:  | Mr Michel CHIGNARD, Inserm Institut Pasteur<br>Mr Bruno POZZETTO, CHU et Université de Saint-Étienne (representative of CNU)<br>Mr Nicolas SETTERBLAD, Institut Universitaire d'Hématologie, Paris (representative of supporting personnel) |
| Scientific delegate representing the HCERES:            | Ms Anne CAIGNARD  |
| Representatives of supervising institutions and bodies: | Ms Catherine FLORENTZ, Université de Strasbourg<br>Ms Béatrice MEIER MULLER, Université de Strasbourg   |
| Head of Doctoral School:                                | Ms Catherine SCHUSTER, Doctoral School n° 414, "Vie et Santé"   |

## 1 • Introduction

### History and geographical location of the unit

The EA7290 “Early bacterial virulence: cell functions and control of the acute and sub-acute infections” was created in 2013 and gathered two teams of the past EA4438 and clinicians involved in infectious diseases.

The unit is located at the Institute of Bacteriology, at the Faculty of Medicine Campus of the University of Strasbourg.

### Management team

Mr Gilles PREVOST was the director of the team for the previous mandature and will manage the team for the next contract.

### HCERES nomenclature

SVE3

### Scientific domains

In the context of fight against bacterial infection, the research unit objectives mainly focus upon *Staphylococcus* sp. virulence factors, and Lyme illness infective agents dealing with molecular mechanisms and identification of new factors and proteins essential for virulence and immunity. Basic research is completed by applied research on prophylaxis, diagnostic and therapeutics for bacterial infection.

## Unit workforce

| Unit workforce   | Number on 30/06/2016 | Number on 01/01/2018 |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| N1: Permanent professors and similar positions                         | 4                    | 4                    |
| N2: Permanent researchers from Institutions and similar positions      | 9                    | 9                    |
| N3: Other permanent staff (technicians and administrative personnel)   | 5                    | 5                    |
| N4: Other researchers (Postdoctoral students, visitors, etc.)          | 0                    |                      |
| N5: Emeritus   | 1                    |                      |
| N6: Other contractual staff (technicians and administrative personnel) | 0                    |                      |
| N7: PhD students   | 8                    |                      |
| TOTAL N1 to N7   | 27                   |                      |
| Qualified research supervisors (HDR) or similar positions              | 8                    |                      |

| Unit record   | From 01/01/2011 to 30/06/2016 |
|---|-------------------------------|
| PhD theses defended   | 4                             |
| Postdoctoral scientists having spent at least 12 months in the unit           | 9                             |
| Number of Research Supervisor Qualifications (HDR) obtained during the period | 5                             |

## 2 • Assessment of the unit

### Global assessment of the unit

The unit is composed of a single team “Virulence bactérienne précoce dans les infections à Staphylocoques”, and “Virulence bactérienne des Borrelia et cibles thérapeutiques”.

Altogether the work made on both themes led to several original publications, conferences, reviews and book chapters, and three patents. Because of the high incidence of staphylococcal and Borrelia infections, their findings have a broad interest for clinicians, and in particular for dermatologists. The visibility on both themes is high, as underlined by the invitations of principal investigators to meetings or meeting organization committees. The principal investigators are members of editorial boards of scientific journal and participate to local and national committees of scientific and medical organizations. In the past years, the team raised enough money for their research activity and obtained subsidies for PhD students. It should be emphasized that the team made major efforts to translate its basic research results into applications, such as diagnostics or therapeutics. The projects presented by the team on both themes are logically in line with their previous findings.

All permanent researchers of the future contract have hospital and university positions, and thus invest a large part of their time in time-consuming activities (clinical duties, teaching, CNR organization,...). The recruitment of a full-time scientist would have a major positive impact on the future projects.