

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:
Institut De la Vision (IDV)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE
FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND
RESEARCH BODIES:

Université Pierre et Marie Curie

Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche
Médicale - INSERM

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique -
CNRS

ÉVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2017-2018
GROUP D



In the name of Hcéres¹:

Michel Cosnard, President

In the name of the expert committee²:

John Greenwood, 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:	Institut de la Vision
Unit acronym:	IDV
Requested label:	UMR
Application type:	Renewal
Current number:	
Head of the unit (2017-2018):	Mr José-Alain SAHEL
Project leader (2019-2023):	Mr José-Alain SAHEL
Number of teams:	19

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair:	Mr John GREENWOOD, University College London, United Kingdom
Experts:	Mr Frédéric BRAU, IPMC, Université de Nice Sophia Antipolis (supporting personnel)
	Mr Matthew CAMPBELL, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
	Mr Frans CREMERS, Donders Institute, The Netherlands
	Mr Kishan DHOLAKIA, University of St Andrews, Scotland, United Kingdom
	Mr Luc DUPUIS, Université de Strasbourg (representative of INSERM CSS)
	Mr John FORRESTER, University of Aberdeen, Scotland, United Kingdom
	Mr Christian GRIMM, University Hospital Zurich, Switzerland
	Mr Henry KENNEDY, Institut Cellule Souche et Cerveau, Lyon
	Ms Susanne KOHL, University of Tübingen, Germany
	Mr Pierrick POISBEAU, Université de Strasbourg (representative of CNU)
	Ms Marie-Catherine ROUSSELIN-TIVERON, Aix-Marseille Université, (representative of CoNRS)
	Mr Alan STITT, Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom
	Mr Simon THORPE, Université Paul Sabatier Toulouse III
	Mr Uwe WOLFRUM, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Germany

HCERES scientific officer:

Mr Jacques NOËL

Representatives of supervising institutions and bodies:

Mr Étienne HIRSCH, Inserm

Mr Vincent MOULY, Université Pierre et Marie Curie

Mr Bernard POULAIN, CNRS

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The Institut de la Vision (IDV) has its origins in INSERM Unit 592 created in Strasbourg in 1999. Following the move of Mr José-Alain Sahel in 2002 to chair the Department of Ophthalmology at the Quinze-Vingts Hospital, Paris Paris and the Adolphe de Rothschild Foundation hospital, the IDV was created. Since 2008 it has occupied purpose built premises within the grounds of the Quinze-Vingts Hospital, 17 rue Moreau, 75012 Paris. In 2005 the Clinical Investigation Centre in the Quinze-Vingts Hospital was established to facilitate translational and experimental medicine research. The unit was established in 2009 under the management of Paris 6, INSERM and CoNRS. In 2009 a catastrophic fire destroyed much of the Institute.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

The unit is under the direction of Mr José-Alain Sahel. The deputy director is Mr Serge Picaud.

HCERES NOMENCLATURE

SVE4_1 Neurologie.

SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN

The unit constitutes four current departments namely the Department of Development, the Department of Genetics, the Department of Visual Information Processing and the Department of Pathophysiology and Therapeutics. A new department, the Department of Photonics, has been created for the next contract. The 19 Teams cover a wide range of research topics from fundamental mechanistic biology and development of associated cutting-edge technology through to translational and clinical research aimed at understanding the visual system in health and disease. There is a strong record of innovation and cross-disciplinarity with seminal advances being made in various fields of study relevant to ophthalmic research as well as in the technology that is needed to address the biological hypotheses raised.

UNIT WORKFORCE

Unit workforce	Number 30/06/2017	Number 01/01/2019
Permanent staff		
Full professors and similar positions	12	10
Assistant professors and similar positions	7	9
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	11	15
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	11	16
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)	65	73

TOTAL permanent staff	106	123
Non-permanent staff		
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	0	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs	43	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	41	
PhD Students	55	
TOTAL non-permanent staff	139	
TOTAL unit		
	245	

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The committee considers the overall strength of the IDV to be outstanding. The management is forward looking and inspired and is well supported by an excellent hierarchical reporting structure and an impressive international Scientific Advisory Board. It has established itself as a world-leading centre for research and can be justifiably considered as the foremost vision research centre in the world. The leadership and management have implemented a well-conceived strategic policy of focussing on specific areas of vision research (development of the visual system and visual processing, ocular genetics and pathophysiology and therapeutics) thus maintaining, in the most part, critical mass in these areas. Strategically astute recruitment has been used to create strong groupings and a unique multidisciplinary environment that enable key questions of substantial global importance to be addressed. Appointing expertise from outside the vision field to expand and contribute to the mission of the IDV is to be commended as it provides the innovation to potentially address important voids in our knowledge in vision science. There is evidence of excellent collegiality and collaboration that is bearing fruit. The ophthalmic research activity is also facilitated by a strategic investment in world-leading teams that are developing state-of-the-art technology that can be applied to vision research. Both fundamental and translational research are represented with the generation of new mechanistic biological insight, new IP, the formation of spin-out companies and the development and pre-clinical evaluation of new therapies. The publication record is truly excellent and there is an outstanding history of securing substantial external research funding from governmental organisations, charities and from the commercial sector. The number of PhD students is commensurate with HDR eligibility. Information dissemination and interactions with the Industrial sector are excellent. The research activity outside vision, particularly the auditory research, is an opportunity to share common goals and platforms.

The weaknesses are few and many are universal within the academic sector. Accordingly, there are risks associated with the threat of insufficient funding for permanent staff, availability of quality young researchers and French employment law restrictions limiting postdoctoral continuity. With the growth of the IDV one of the major threats is the lack of space and how this will be resolved.

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