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Rapport Hcéres

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HCERES

High Council for the Evaluation of Research
and Higher Education

Research units

HCERES report on research unit:

Department of immunology

Under the supervision of
the following institutions
and research bodies:

Institut Pasteur Paris

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

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique - CNRS

HCERES

High Council for the Evaluation of Research
and Higher Education

Research units

In the name of HCERES,¹

Didier HOUSSIN, president

In the name of the experts committee,²

Arturo ZYCHLINSKY, chairman of the committee

Under the decree N°2014-1365 dated 14 november 2014.

¹ The president of HCERES "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 expert committee". (Article 11, paragraph 2)

Evaluation report

This report is the result of the evaluation by the experts committee, the composition of which is specified below.

The assessments contained herein are the expression of an independent and collegial deliberation of the committee.

Unit name: Department of Immunology

Unit acronym:

Label requested: Institut Pasteur - Inserm

Present no.:

Name of Director
(2014-2015): Mr Matthew L. ALBERT

Name of Project Leader
(2016-2020): Mr Matthew L. ALBERT

Expert committee members

Chair: Mr Arturo ZYCHLINSKY, Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology, Berlin, Germany

Experts: Mr Jonathan BRAUN, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Mr Simon FILLATREAU, Deutsches Rheuma-Forschungszentrum, Berlin, Germany

Mr Morgan HUSE, Memorial Hospital, New York, USA

Mr Ludger KLEIN, Institute for Immunology, Munich, Germany

Mr Paul KLENERMAN, The Peter Medawar Building for Pathogen Research, University of Oxford, UK

Ms Nadine LEMAITRE, Centre d'Infection et d'Immunité de Lille, Institut Pasteur de Lille, Université Lille Nord de France (Representative of the CSS Inserm)

Mr Tom MacDONALD, Centre for Immunology and Infectious Disease, Blizard Institute, London, UK

Mr Richard MOXON, Department of Paediatrics, University of Oxford, UK (Representative of the Pasteur Institute Scientific Council)

Mr Christian MÜNZ, Institute of Experimental Immunology, University of Zurich, Switzerland

Mr Tom H.M. OTTENHOFF, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, The Netherlands

Mr Frédéric RIEUX-LAUCAT, Fondation Imagine, Institut des Maladies Génétiques, Paris

Scientific delegate representing the HCERES:

Ms Catherine SCHUSTER

Representative(s) of the unit's supervising institutions and bodies:

Ms Pascale COSSART, Institut Pasteur

Ms Isabelle CREMER, (representative of the Doctoral School N° 394)

Mr Alain ISRAEL, Institut Pasteur

Ms Catherine MONNOT (representative of the Doctoral School N° 394)

Mr Antonino NICOLETTI (representative of the Doctoral School N° 157)

Ms Stéphanie POMMIER, Inserm

Ms Geneviève de SAINT BALMAIN (representative of the Doctoral School N° 157)

1 • Introduction

History and geographical location of the unit

The Department of Immunology at Pasteur follows on the long tradition initiated by the recruitment of Mr Eli METSCHINKOFF by Louis Pasteur. The Department is located in the center of Paris and has attractive and modern labs. The Department composed of 14 research units and 2 associated technical platforms is headed by Mr Matthew L. ALBERT since 2009, he will also be the head of the department for the next period. With in the Department 170 scientists share interest in exploring the fundamental processes of immunity and the hope that their contributions will provide new insight into disease pathogenesis, inspire novel vaccines and support the design of unique therapeutic strategies. During the last five years the department recruited 4 new team leaders.

Management team

Head : Mr Matthew L. ALBERT

Deputy head : Mr Philippe Bousso

HCERES nomenclature

SVE1_LS6 Immunologie, microbiologie, virologie, parasitologie

SVE1_LS1 Biologie moléculaire et structurale, biochimie

Unit workforce

Unit workforce	Number as at 30/06/2014	Number as at 01/01/2016
N1: Permanent professors and similar positions	8	7
N2: Permanent researchers from Institutions and similar positions	31	36
N3: Other permanent staff (without research duties)	54 (38.78)	55 (39.78)
N4: Other professors (Emeritus Professor, on-contract Professor, etc.)	1 (0.25)	
N5: Other researchers (Emeritus Research Director, Postdoctoral students, visitors, etc.)	40	45
N6: Other contractual staff (without research duties)	5	5
TOTAL N1 to N6	139 (123.03)	148 (132.78)

Unit workforce	Number as at 30/06/2014	Number as at 01/01/2016
Doctoral students	30	
Theses defended	37	
Postdoctoral students having spent at least 12 months in the unit	68	
Number of Research Supervisor Qualifications (HDR) taken	9	
Qualified research supervisors (with an HDR) or similar positions	28	30

2 • Overall assessment of the unit

Global assessment of the unit

The Department of Immunology at the Institute Pasteur comprises both basic and disease focused research in immune responses. It is comprised of 14 teams of different seniority and covers a wide range of topics that include innate immunity, acquired immunity, vaccinology and infectious diseases and goes from cellular biology, physiology and clinical trials in terms of approaches. The department has a growing focus on human immunology which is in accordance with its interest in human health. The Department includes two core facilities that are available to teams in the whole Pasteur campus and even to extramural investigators. These facilities are the Cytometry and the Human Immunology Platforms. They are both an excellent resource for the investigators in the department. There are at least seven outstanding groups that are doing cutting edge research as detailed later in this document. The other teams were considered excellent. All the investigators publish consistently in top journals and are frequent guests in international meetings. Further support in the areas of animal husbandry and bioinformatics support were thought to be required to ensure the high quality of the research done in the Department.

Strengths and opportunities in relation to the context

The clear strength of the Department is the inclusion of outstanding scientists that are doing highly original research. The move to include human immunology and close links to the clinics is an opportunity to understand Immunology in a global way and use the information for diagnostics, treatment and vaccinology.

Weaknesses and threats related to the context

The Department will experience the retirement of two senior and internationally recognized Immunologists. Immunology, which is at the core of the interest of the Institut Pasteur requires a minimal core of scientist to maintain diversity and scientific excellence. Therefore the Department will be well served by recruiting in areas of Immunology not covered now in their portfolio, myeloid cells come to mind, to ensure their further growth.

Recommendations

Given the excellence of the department the committee recommends further funding and support. The committee would be happy to encourage the further competitive recruitment of principal investigators, preferably and as stated above in the areas of Immunology that are not currently covered.

The interest in human biology requires a large organization and availability of technology that the Department requires and needs to have a successful future. In particular, the Department requires a dedicated unit dedicated to solve the Bioinformatic questions raised by their research. This appears to be suboptimal in the current status. Another area of improvement is the capacity to raise different mouse lines and use them experimentally.

The committee would also like to encourage, in the spirit of the origins of the Institute Pasteur to further the current efforts to understand immunity to infections and, if possible, taking advantage of the expertise in Infectiology available on campus.