DERCI | Europe of Research and International Cooperation Office

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DERCI's mission

The Europe of Research and International Cooperation Office (DERCI) implements and promotes CNRS European and international cooperation policy. As the unique interface for French and foreign institutional partners with regards to the CNRS international initiatives, it performs the following missions:

• Identifying thematic and geographical priorities, setting up win-win cooperation and structuring partnerships;
• Making CNRS international dialogue an essential tool to enhance French research attractiveness and visibility abroad;
• Improving dialogue and joining forces with other French research organizations and universities to propose coordinated actions at the European and international levels.

CNRS international strategy

International influence

CNRS notoriety abroad is illustrated by hundreds of structuring initiatives that the organization has formalized with its foreign partners. Around 61,000 trips are also carried out by researchers throughout the world each year. In addition, over 100 researchers (including secondees) perform research in foreign institutions for durations of one year or over.

Joint publications with international partners also bear witness to CNRS international vitality. They make up over half of the organization’s publications. Even though CNRS is specialized in fundamental research, its laboratories are pursuing fruitful cooperation with industries and contribute actively to project of high Technology Readiness Level - TRL.

Attractiveness

Around 60 official foreign delegations visit CNRS every year. This testifies to international partners’ interest, not only in CNRS laboratories but also in its research organization and governance. With 25% foreign researchers recruited in 2015, CNRS is open to international scientists.

CNRS participation in European programs

CNRS is a major player in the development of the European research area and thus an important contributor to the European integration process.

As for the 7th Framework Program for Research and Development with which it has signed over 1250 contracts, it keeps being one of the main and successful participants to the Horizon 2020 framework program since its launching in 2014. For the past 3 years, over 522 projects have already been funded under this scheme (122 for the ERC – European Research Council).

With a success rate of 14%, CNRS is one of the best performing research organizations in Europe and remains home to the largest number of ERC grantees in Europe.

To get these results, CNRS has adopted a real strategic plan for Europe. From Brussels to the laboratories via its 10 institutes and its 18 Regional Offices, it has settled from a sophisticated network which provides accurate information, incites its researchers to submit proposals and helps them to get prepared at both scientific and administrative levels. Two main aims are targeted: the ERC and the collaborative projects, for which a network of 10 project engineers supports researchers to serve as coordinators.
As a key actor, CNRS is regularly consulted by the European Commission regarding the functioning of the framework program as well as its scientific strategy. In accordance with its main European partners, the German Max Planck Society, the Aelmholtz Association, the Leibniz Association, the Spanish CSIC and the Italian CNR, it has constantly advocated in favor of a research of worldwide excellence and for the promotion of a more interdisciplinary approach, integrating more particularly the human and social sciences. It has reiterated its opposition to a replacement of the grants by loans and insisted on the necessity of a general simplification of the administrative procedures. A 9th framework program will start in 2021 and CNRS intends to be one of its most active stakeholders.

**International cooperation tools**

CNRS offers a wide range of International Cooperation tools with different structuring levels:

- **International Projects for Scientific Cooperation (PICS)** aim at supporting joint research projects carried out by two teams, one from CNRS and one from abroad that have already established links through joint publications or student training programs. It is a unilateral tool.

- **Joint Research Projects (PRC)** are research projects jointly carried out by two researchers, one affiliated to a CNRS laboratory and the other to a foreign research partner institution. PRC are jointly assessed and selected by CNRS and the partner organization following a joint call for proposals.

- **International Associated Laboratories (LIA)** lay the bases of cooperation around a joint research project, mostly between one or several French team(s) and a main partner abroad. They sometimes foreshadow the creation of an International Joint Unit.

- **International Research Networks (GDRI)** allow teams from two or more countries to meet and exchange on a joint scientific thematic/subject.

- **International Joint Units (UMI)** are real laboratories as found in universities and research organizations. It is based on one single location. They have the same status as CNRS joint research units (UMR) in France. These UMIs are most often backed by one or several French laboratories, making up a “mirror site”. Moreover, the CNRS is a partner of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development in 26 joint units - French research institutes abroad (UMIFRE) working mainly in the field of social sciences and humanities.

Collaborative projects are organized on the basis of researchers’ proposals, which are subjected to a selection process by the CNRS authorities and in liaison with international partners.

A strong international presence

All the UMI form a network of international structures which contributes to the promotion of the French research and CNRS expertise around the world. Because of its large range of disciplines, this network finds itself at the core of the efforts developed at both national and international scales to try to respond to overall issues. Thanks to its 8 Representation Offices abroad, CNRS federates this network and dynamizes it through the organization of regional meetings. Those events underline the quality of the partnerships and make it possible for French and foreign partners with an academic or industrial background to share their approach in terms of multi-disciplinarity and innovation.

Recently, a conference with the CNRS UMI in Québec was organized in 2016 in Montreal. The next “JU NA” meeting will be held in 2017 in Mexico.

**Key figures**

| 83 | Bilateral Framework agreements |
| 436 | International Projects for Scientific Cooperation (PICS) and Joint Research Projects (PRC) |
| 182 | International Associated Laboratories (LIA) |
| 107 | International Research Networks (GDRI) |
| 34 | International Joint Units (UMI) |
| 26 | Joint Units - French research institutes abroad (UMIFRE) |
| 8 | CNRS Representative offices abroad |

Source: DERCI as of 31/12/2016

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