In order to structure the collaboration between two to three research teams or laboratories (in France and abroad) which already have joint publications, the creation of an International Associated Laboratory (LIA), a “laboratory without walls”, can be proposed.

What is an LIA?
An LIA is a virtual laboratory involving two to three research teams or laboratories in France and abroad. The relationship between the partners is formalized through a contract signed by the heads of supervising Institutions of all laboratories, with provisions covering issues such as intellectual property rights. Human and material resources are pooled to carry out the project. Teams or laboratories associated through an LIA retain their separate autonomy, status, director and location. The LIA activities are coordinated by two co-principal investigators and assessed by a scientific steering committee.

How long does an LIA last?
Four years, potentially renewable once.

Who can submit an LIA proposal?
- In France, CNRS researchers or an academic staff working in CNRS-affiliated research units willing to be the co-principal investigator of the LIA.
- Abroad, researchers or academic staff from a research organization or a university willing to be the co-principal investigator of the LIA.

How are the proposals evaluated?
For CNRS, the evaluation is carried out by the relevant CNRS scientific institutions. Once the decision to create an LIA has been taken, an agreement is negotiated among the supervising Institutions and signed by the authorized representative(s) of the French and partner Institutions abroad. It must include a research project description, a provisional budget and the list of the staff involved in the project.

How is an LIA funded?
The CNRS and the partner Institutions earmark funding for the LIA projects, in addition to other resources provided by the home institutions for research on the projects. Research visits and small equipment are eligible for funding. The funding starts at the beginning of the fiscal year following the decision to create the LIA.

A scientific and financial annual report is required each year of the LIA.

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