The CNRS in brief

France’s National Center for Scientific Research is a public research institution under the responsibility of the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

A pluridisciplinary organization, it covers all scientific disciplines, including the humanities and social sciences, biological sciences, nuclear and particle physics, information sciences, engineering and systems, physics, mathematical sciences, chemistry, Earth sciences and astronomy, ecology and the environment.

An interdisciplinary body, it promotes research at the interface between disciplines.

Each year, the CNRS awards its Gold Medal, the highest scientific distinction in France. Since 2011, the CNRS Medal of Innovation has been rewarding outstanding research in the technological, therapeutic, economic and social fields.

Revealing talents

21 Nobel prize laureates and 12 Fields Medal winners have worked in CNRS joint research units; 360 researchers have obtained an ERC (European Research Council) grant.

An international player

The CNRS contributes to the visibility of French research worldwide through 36 international joint units, a network of 8 offices abroad as well as partnership agreements with 71 countries and 192 international associated laboratories.

Generating knowledge

With more than 15,000 researchers and nearly 11,000 engineers and technicians, the CNRS is at the forefront of global research. First producer of scientific papers in the world with 50,600 publications, the organization tops several international rankings (Nature Index, Scimago Institutions Rankings, etc.)

Developing large-scale instruments

Telescopes, particle accelerators, computers and large databases are essential resources for modern research. The CNRS is involved in the design and development of very large-scale research facilities, used in all disciplines.

Driving innovation

CNRS researchers and engineers have contributed to the creation of more than 1,200 startup companies. With a portfolio of 5,629 patent families, the CNRS is France’s sixth-largest patent filer (INPI); it also holds a share in each of the 14 French technology transfer companies (SATTs).

Working hand in hand with industry

The CNRS has finalized framework agreements with 21 large industrial groups and shares 126 joint research facilities with industry.

Disseminating knowledge

The CNRS makes its results available to the widest possible audience through films, magazines, exhibitions, websites and social networks. It gives research players access to scientific information.

Leading scientific research

The CNRS is involved in the various sites heralding tomorrow’s main research universities. It is also a founding member of France’s 5 Research Alliances.

The CNRS in brief*

- 952 joint research units
- 32,000 researchers, engineers and technicians
- 135 service units
- 32 intramural research units
- 10 Institutes* orchestrate the organization’s scientific policy
- 97% of units are in partnership with universities, higher education institutions and other research organizations
- 18 divisions manage the CNRS laboratories in the regions
- The CNRS has a budget of €3.2 billion

* INSB Institute of Biological Sciences, INC Institute of Chemistry, INSEE Institute of Ecology and Environment, INSHS Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, INS2I Institute for Information Sciences and Technologies, INSIS Institute for Engineering and Systems Sciences, INSMI National Institute for Mathematical Sciences, INP Institute of Physics, IN2P3 National Institute of Nuclear and Particle Physics, INSU National Institute for Earth Sciences and Astronomy