

# EXPLORATION

## First Step projects

### Projets "Tremplin International"

## 2020 call for proposals

**Closing date for applications**  
**September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 05:00 p.m. (Paris time)**

## 1. Context and objectives of the program

### Context

In the framework of its new strategic plan for 2021-2025, Inserm wishes to give strong impetus to its international relations by mobilising tools suited to the conditions and requirements of the collaboration of its research teams with their foreign partners.

The First step projects (*projets Tremplin international*) are exploration tools used to meet the needs of researchers who wish to explore avenues for collaboration through a call for projects that is open both geographically and thematically. They aim to initiate a collaboration between a young researcher / a young Inserm team and a foreign team in order to foster new international cooperations.

*This instrument has been incorporated in a range of new Inserm bilateral and multilateral international cooperation tools enabling each laboratory to find the funding vector that is the most suited to its needs depending on the progress made in structuring its partnership with the foreign entity.*

*The Inserm international policy instruments are structured as follows within a broader international Inserm network :*

- 1- Exploration: First steps / Projet Tremplin;*
- 2- Seed funding: International Research Project (IRP) / Projet de Recherche International (PRI);*
- 3- Structuring: Key International Partnerships (KIPs) / Partenariats Internationaux Clés (PIC);*
- 4- Integration: Thematic Coordination Program (TCP) / Programme de Coordination Thématique (PCT).*

### Objectives

**The First step projects** are intended to initiate and develop scientific and technological exchanges of excellence between two research laboratories. The creation of a First step project must demonstrate a **potential for complementary expertise**. The call is aimed at young Inserm researchers (up to 3 years after recruitment at Inserm – eligible to Atip-Avenir and ERC starting grant fellows) or the heads of a "young" team ("*jeune équipe*"), created less than 3 years ago).

As an outcome, this label should lead to initiating more in-depth collaborations, in particular by responding to calls for "International Research Projects" ([see IRP fact sheet](#)), with a duration of 5 years, for teams with a history of scientific cooperation.

## **Duration of the projects and schedule of the call**

The duration of this partnership between an Inserm research team and another foreign research team is one (1) year.

Regarding the 2020 call for proposals, it opens in June and closes in September of year (n) for the creation of the First step call for proposal in 2021: year (n+1).

## **2. Application procedure**

Applications must be submitted electronically by Monday September 7<sup>th</sup>, at 05:00 p.m. (Paris time, France) to the following address:

[firststep@inserm.fr](mailto:firststep@inserm.fr)

Applications must contain the following documents:

- The completed application form;
- The CV of each coordinator (French and foreign);
- A list of relevant publications from the partner laboratories;
- A letter of commitment signed by the institution to which the foreign partner belongs.

Candidates must inform their supervising institutions ("*tutelles*"), their unit director and their regional delegation of the submission of their application.

## **3. Examen des propositions**

### ***3.1 Selection procedure***

The eligibility of the applications will be appraised by the Department of National and Foreign Affairs (DPRE - European and International Affairs units). The evaluation of each application will then be entrusted to experts within the framework of a Scientific Evaluation Committee. The final decision will be made by the Inserm Management Committee, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Inserm.

The candidates will be informed of the results at the end of the year 2020.

### ***3.2 Eligibility criteria***

1 – The application must contain all requested information (see list in section 2);

2 – The submitted projects must be led by one coordinator from an Inserm research unit (referred to as 'French coordinator') and one coordinator from the foreign research country (referred to as 'Foreign coordinator');

3 – The French coordinator has to work in an Inserm laboratory (up to 3 years after recruitment at Inserm – eligible to Atip-Avenir and ERC starting grant fellows) or heads of a young team ("*jeune équipe*"), created less than 3 years ago .

### ***3.3 Evaluation criteria***

Evaluation of proposals will be based on :

- 1- Scientific quality of the project and its potential ;
- 2- Scientific expertise and quality of the teams;
- 3- The feasibility of the project ;
- 4- The complementarity of the teams and the potential for collaboration.

For more details please refer to the evaluation criteria table [here](#).

#### **4. Funding of selected projects**

Beyond the resources directly mobilised by the participating laboratories, First Step projects will be granted funding of up to **10000€ for one year (fixed amount) - excluding human resources expenses**.

The projects will start in 2021 and the fixed sum will be allocated at the start of the project.

#### **5. Monitoring of selected projects**

The funded First step project will be monitored by the Department of National and Foreign Affairs and, in order to evaluate the activity of the project and the impact of its funding, thus a short final report (5 page) will be required.

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#### **6. Contact**

[firststep@inserm.fr](mailto:firststep@inserm.fr)

*The IRP call for proposals is in line with Inserm's policy on equal opportunity and gender parity and will follow the recommendations of the Inserm strategic plan 2020. It will pay attention to gender balance.*