



Research evaluation

## FINAL RESUME ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:

Desbrest Institute of Epidemiology and Public Health (IDESP)

## UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND RESEARCH BODIES:

Université de Montpellier

Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale - Inserm

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## **EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2019-2020** GROUP A

Report published on July, 17 2020



In the name of Hcéres<sup>1</sup>:

Nelly Dupin, Acting  
President

In the name of the experts committee<sup>2</sup>:

Anita Burgun, Chairwoman of the committee

Under the decree No.2014-1365 dated 14 November 2014,

<sup>1</sup> The president of Hcéres "countersigns the evaluation reports set up by the experts committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5);

<sup>2</sup> The evaluation reports "are signed by the chairman of the experts committee". (Article 11, paragraph 2).

Tables in this document were filled with data submitted by the supervising body on behalf the unit.

## UNIT PRESENTATION

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Unit name:</b>                    | Desbrest Institute of Epidemiology and Public Health |
| <b>Unit acronym:</b>                 | IDESP  |
| <b>Current label and N°:</b>         | None; de novo creation                               |
| <b>ID RNSR:</b>                      |  |
| <b>Application type:</b>             | de novo creation                                     |
| <b>Head of the unit (2019-2020):</b> | None; de novo creation                               |
| <b>Project leader (2021-2025):</b>   | Mr Pascal DEMOLY                                     |
| <b>Number of teams and/or axis:</b>  | 3 axes   |

## EXPERTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Chair:</b>   | Ms Anita BURGUN, Assistance publique - Hôpitaux de Paris   |
| <b>Experts:</b> | Ms Marie-Christine BOUTRON-RUAULT, Inserm/Gustave Roussy, Villejuif<br>Mr Marc CUGGIA, Université de Rennes 1<br>Ms Anne VUILLEMIN, Université Côte d'Azur, Nice |

## HCÉRES REPRESENTATIVE

Mr Serge BRIANÇON

## REPRESENTATIVES OF SUPERVISING BODIES

Ms Corinne ALBERTI, ITMO Inserm  
Mr Arnaud BOURDIN, CHU Montpellier  
Mr Jacques CAVAILLE, Inserm  
Mr Jean-Christophe GRIS, CHU Nîmes  
Mr Jacques MERCIER, Université de Montpellier

## INTRODUCTION

### HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The *Desbrest1 Institute of Epidemiology and Public Health* (IDESP) is a project of creation for 2021-2025 of a mixed research unit, University of Montpellier (UM) and INSERM in Epidemiology and Public Health focusing on chronic Non Communicable Diseases (NCD), massive health and environmental data, and modern mathematics, in coherence with the scientific environment of the Region Occitanie Méditerranée, Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole and Université de Montpellier(UM) University of Excellence program (MUSE - I-SITE2).

It is composed of previous entities, mostly (1) a research team created in January 2019 in the UMR-S 1136 in Paris; the team was led by Isabella Annesi-Maesano, including Pascal Demoly who worked already at the university and hospital of Montpellier, (2) clinical groups from research groups from the two university hospitals of the region (CHU Montpellier and Nîmes, the Institute of Cancer of Montpellier (ICM), and (3) the UM Department of Primary Care. It also relies on a strong collaboration with the Montpellier Institute of Mathematics Alexander Grothendieck (IMAG).

It will be located in a unique building to provide scientific interactions, and allocation of administrative and operational staff. A thousand square meters will be provided by the Faculty of Medicine of the UM within the Health Campus of Arnaud de Villeneuve, thus in the vicinity of Montpellier medical care, health science, and data centre.

### Management team

The head of the unit will be Pascal DEMOLY, and the deputy head Inserm research director Isabella ANNESI-MAESANO.

### HCÉRES NOMENCLATURE

SVE6 Santé publique, épidémiologie, recherche clinique.

### THEMATICS

The general theme of the project is to combine epidemiology, public health, clinical research, and advanced mathematics to understand the development and aggravation of chronic non communicable diseases (NCDs), to develop integrative and comprehensive models of health strategies, and ultimately prevent chronic NCDs. There are three axes: the first one (AMex) aims at understanding the environmental determinants of chronic NCDs; the second axis (APCare) aims at understanding the determinants of care/prevention strategies in patients with NCDs; the third axis (AITraj) aims at understanding the interactions between multimodal data and trajectories leading to NCDs.

### UNIT WORKFORCE

| <b>Desbrest Institute of Epidemiology and Public Health (IDESP)</b>                             |                              |                              |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Active staff</b>   | <b>Number<br/>06/30/2019</b> | <b>Number<br/>01/01/2021</b> |
| Full professors and similar positions   |                              | 16                           |
| Assistant professors and similar positions  |                              | 11                           |
| Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions                    |                              | 1                            |
| Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions                      |                              |                              |
| Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.") |                              | 5                            |
| High school teachers  |                              |                              |
| Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)                               |                              | 14                           |

|   |  |           |
|---|--|-----------|
| <b>Permanent staff</b>  |  | <b>47</b> |
| Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus                   |  |           |
| Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs (except PhD students) |  |           |
| PhD Students  |  |           |
| Non-permanent supporting personnel  |  |           |
| <b>Non-permanent staff</b>  |  |           |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>47</b> |

## GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The Desbrest1 Institute of Epidemiology and Public Health (IDESP) proposed for this *de novo* creation (2021-2025) a program intrinsically multidisciplinary regrouping researchers in epidemiology and statistics, as well as many clinical experts in chronic Non Communicable Diseases. Most senior staff are recognized experts in public health, and conducted high-level research on allergy and respiratory diseases as other chronic conditions. They have very strong publication track records with publications in the best journals in these domains. Members of the unit were involved in European projects (including as coordinator), participated in establishing guidelines in NCD management, and worked on new classifications of NCD for the World Health Organization. They exhibited very good interactions with non-academic world, including recommendations for policy making and collaboration with private companies. Their approach is intrinsically multidisciplinary with researchers in epidemiology and statistics, as well as many clinical experts in NCD. Their project integrates a component on social sciences in addition to environmental factors, and subsequent big data approaches. The project is built on a holistic view, which makes it original and tailored to answer fundamental questions in public health. Regarding translation to routine care, several domains are of major importance for clinical practice and patients. For example, better understanding of epigenetic-mediated impact of mother's exposure on their babies and better classification of allergy-related respiratory diseases will lead to better prevention and treatment. The approach is developed in the unit in coherence with the favorable scientific environment of the Region, the *Metropole and the University benefiting from the I-SITE MUSE* program.

Such ambitious project will require more research on dedicated methodologies. All the axes would benefit from it: Integration of exposome data and EWAS studies, predictive models to determine the optimal conditions for prevention/care strategies in NCD, analysis of patient trajectories and patient reported data. The expertise of the unit in methodologies dedicated to big multidimensional data has not yet been demonstrated through specific publications in these fields. One of the strong provided recommendations lies is to deepen the explanations of the required methods and the strategy to integrate the dedicated competencies and reach the ambitious objectives of the expected new unit.

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