

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Grand Prix 2014 **Simone and Cino del Duca Foundation**

Every year, the Simone and Cino del Duca Foundation of the Institut de France awards a scientific prize based on the recommendations of a jury of members of the Institut de France. The Grand Prix will be awarded to a French or European scientist and his/her teamⁱ that will propose an ambitious research project on promising theme:

The theme for 2014 is: ***"Microbiome and homeostasis"***

Pioneering contributions starting in the sixties have revealed the importance of the microbial flora – now called microbiota – that colonize the skin and mucous surfaces of man and mammals, particularly the gut mucosa.

The essential ecological rules that dictate the establishment and balance of the microbiota are increasingly defined, and some functions have been attributed to this « additional organ », such as a barrier effect against microbial intruders, the digestion of complex polysaccharides, the development and maintenance of the immune system.

The recent introduction of high-throughput molecular methods of analysis of the human microbiota has confirmed the extraordinary diversity of its metagenome – or microbiome – and has stimulated contributions evaluating to which point the host-microbe co-evolution has created mutualisms that appear essential to maintaining the homeostasis of complex physiological functions such as nutrition and metabolism, mucosal and systemic immunity, tissue regeneration, and possibly late phases of maturation of the central nervous system.

In parallel, our modern environment, early in life, appears to impose modifications to the microbiota - or dysbiosis - that may disrupt the homeostasis and participate to the current emergence of pathologies such as obesity and diabetes, inflammatory bowel diseases and colorectal cancer, asthma and atopy.

The 2014 Simone and Cino del Duca Prize of the Institut de France will reward an outstanding scientist whose contributions have illuminated our knowledge of the microbiota and its impact on health and disease.

The Grand Prix is as follows:

- **200,000 euros** to finance the work of the award-winning group;
- **25,000 euros** awarded to the director of the research group;
- **50,000 euros** (maximum amount paid on supporting) towards the hiring of one or more French or foreign postdoctoral researchers to be selected by the group director, in the two years following the award of the prize. An agreement will be established between the laboratory and the Simone and Cino del Duca Foundation to define the conditions of payment.

Applications must be submitted online by January 27, 2014 on the website of the French Academy of sciences: http://www.academie-sciences.fr/activite/prix/gp_duca.htm

The files should be **written in English** and possibly in French.

⁽ⁱ⁾The research team is not necessarily the administrative team. The team members do not necessarily work in the same laboratory. It should be clearly specified in the application, the role of each member of the team.

The applications must contain:

- 1) **the application form**,
- 2) **an executive summary** (title of the project, abridged CV of the project head, main past scientific achievements and a short description of the research proposal, a list of 10 major publications) (2-3 pages),
- 3) **a cover letter** signed by the head of the team,
- 4) **the complete CV of the head** of the team (2 pages maximum),
- 5) **an abridged CV** of team member,
- 6) **description of results** obtained by the team (5 pages maximum),
- 7) description of the research proposal and the intended use of the Grand Prix (3-5 pages),
- 8) **a letter of recommendation** or sponsorship of a international scientist of renown.

The deadline for the submission of the applications is by **January 27, 2014**.

Applications will be examined by a jury composed by the Academy of Sciences members and other academies belonging to the Institut de France. The jury will seek the opinion of French and foreign experts.

The Grand Prix will be awarded at the Institut de France, under the Dome, **on June 4, 2014**.

For further information, please contact :

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L'Académie des sciences

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<p style="text-align: center;">Previous years in the areas covered by this call of applications (Chemistry, Molecular and cellular biology, Genomics, Integrative biology, Human biology and medical sciences)</p>

2006: Dr Geneviève Almouzni, director of the interdisciplinary unit “Nuclear dynamics and genome plasticity – UMR 218” at the CNRS/Institut Curie, and head of the “chromatine dynamics” group, for her work on the assembly of genetic material and its dynamics.

2008: Dr Philippe Janvier, Senior Researcher at laboratory of Paleodiversity, History and Evolution of “Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle” for his work on biodiversity and evolution

2010: Pr Patrick Aubourg, Professor at Paris-Descartes University and Director of the unit INSERM genetic and biotherapy, for his work on gene therapy for neurodegenerative diseases of the central nervous system.

2012: Pr. Ben L. Feringa, Professor at the University of Groningen (Netherlands) and Vice-President of the Royal Academy of Sciences of the Netherlands, for his work on stereochemistry, organic synthesis and asymmetric catalysis.
