RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
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Inserm
La science pour la santé
From science to health

HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

CALL FOR APPLICATION

INSERM CHAIR Recruitment

Next generation of therapeutic T cells for cancer immunotherapy

The Inserm chair recruitments opened to Inserm are intended for researchers with strong potential to manage and lead research teams and participate in national, European or international projects.

This recruitment, based on research and teaching projects, is aimed at researchers with a doctorate or equivalent and a first post-doctoral experience. The position is offered on a fixed-term contract (CDD) with a view to tenure in the Inserm Research Directors personnel at the end of the contract.

How apply: https://pro.inserm.fr

Supporting institution:	Inserm : Institut national de la Santé et de la recherche médicale
Name of the head of the institution:	Pr. Didier Samuel
Academic region:	PAYS DE LA LOIRE
Location/ Site concerned:	Inserm U1302 - Immunologie et nouveaux concepts en immunothérapie (INCIT) - Nantes
Partner institution:	Université de Nantes
Research contact:	Frederic ALTARE: frederic.altare@inserm.fr Nathalie LABARRIERE: nathalie.labarriere@univ-nantes.fr
Administrative contact:	chaires-professeur-junior@inserm.fr
Research fields EURAXESS:	Immunotherapy (Medical sciences)
Keywords:	Immunotherapy, adoptive cell transfer, chimeric receptors

Job title to be filled:	Chaire - Next generation of therapeutic T cells for cancer immunotherapy
Body after tenure:	Research Director
Anticipated duration of the contract:	5 years
Scientific domains/fields:	Immunotherapy/T cell engineering/Translational research
Corresponding specialized scientific commissions (CSS):	CSS5 - Immunity, microbiology, Infection CSS7 - Health Technology

Project name:	Next generation of therapeutic T cells for cancer immunotherapy

Remuneration package	3 500€ - 5 000€ according to research experience
Quota	Full Time

Strategy of the host institution:

Created in January 2022, Nantes University is a new public higher education and research institution including the University of Nantes, a national research institute (**Inserm**), a University hospital (CHU Nantes), a technological research institute (IRT Jules Verne) and three high schools (Centrale Nantes, Nantes-Saint-Nazaire School of Fine Arts, Nantes School of Architecture (ENSA Nantes). Nantes University proposes a sustainable and open university model that aims to build a more fair and respectful society for the individual.

The I-site NExT (Nantes Excellence Trajectory) project aims to create a dynamic in the Nantes area and to accelerate the achievement of this ambition. This project is based on two major areas, the health of the future and the industry of the future, with a knock-on effect on all disciplines and a strong involvement of the human and social sciences.

The Next project's future health axis places a strong emphasis on the development of innovative therapies, including immunotherapy, applied to various pathologies including cancer. The proposed CPJ project is therefore at the heart of Next's concerns focusing on immunotherapeutic strategies for cancer, viral infections and inflammatory diseases.

This Inserm Chair is intended for researchers who have the potential to lead a research group and participate in national, European, and international projects. The position is offered on a 5-year contract with a fast track to a tenure Research Director position at Inserm upon completion. This position offers a remarkable opportunity for personal and professional growth in a cutting-edge research environment.

Strategy of the host laboratory:

The teams of the INCIT unit U1302 (https://incit.fr/) are gathered around a common objective aiming to develop new immunotherapy strategies in different pathological contexts, such as solid tumors, inflammatory and infectious diseases. Our Unit, which relies on the strong expertise of its researchers in the fields of immunology and immunotherapy, aims to further strengthen its skills in recent advances for cell-based immunotherapy strategies. More specifically, our unit is developing adoptive T cell transfer approaches in different pathological contexts, using TILs, or antigen-specific T cells (T clones or specifically selected T cells). The functional optimization of T lymphocytes used for these immunotherapy strategies is now at the forefront of our current preoccupations.

In this context, advances in synthetic biology and genetic modification make it possible to answer these questions, by transferring chimeric antigen receptors (CARs) or T cell receptors (TCRs) that redirect antigen specificity, but also by modulating the sensitivity of these receptors or immune checkpoint expression by the therapeutic T cells.

Although our unit has expertise in adoptive transfer approaches, and a university hospital context favorable to its development, it does not have expertise in these synthetic biology approaches.

To fill this gap, the unit plans to welcome a new research group, led by a talented investigator whose expertise in T cell engineering will bring a new dimension to our immunotherapy projects. This group will take advantage of the expertise of existing teams and platforms to set up new programs aimed at

developing innovative immunotherapy strategies.
The establishment of the Inserm Chair in Immunotherapy associated with our lab will further strengthen this promising field of research within the INCIT Unit, and Nantes University.

Summary of the scientific project:

By opening an Inserm chair, the INCIT Laboratory will be able to recruit an emerging leader in innovative adoptive cell transfer approaches. The candidate will demonstrate advanced skills in receptor design, T cell biology and engineering techniques to implement the next generation of immunotherapy approaches in cancers. The project will aim to use gene editing techniques and synthetic biology to design highly sensitive and multispecific T cell receptors for ACT. Cutting-edge methodology will be employed to deliver receptors into primary T cells. Receptor signaling and its regulation in modified T cells, modulation of functional avidity and synapse formation and T cell functions will be analyzed *in vitro*. Consequences on T cell fate, susceptibility to exhaustion and antitumor efficacy will be determined in pre-clinical mouse models. Multi-specific strategies to address target-antigen loss and/or downmodulation and approaches to provide adequate co-stimulation to preserve transferred-T cell functions will also be investigated. In addition to the expertise of the INCIT unit teams in Immunotherapy and the support provided by this scientific and technological environment, the chair holder will also benefit from existing clinical networks coordinated by INCIT teams and by their collaborators, from the technological platforms associated to the Unit within a Federative research structure (SFR Santé), and international collaborative networks involving INCIT members. The candidate will demonstrate strong emphasis on translating research findings to the clinic.

Summary of the teaching project:

With strong support from the French Government (through the SFRI program TRITON), “Nantes Université” aims to transform graduate training (from master to PhD) through the development of Graduate Programs (GP). In this context, the GPI3 “Immunology, and Immuno-Intervention”’ will open in 2023 as one component of the Graduate School in the “Health for the Future” axis. The objective of the GPI³ is to offer a high level international training leading to Master and PhD degrees in Immunology.
The GP I³ will host students from various backgrounds covering Basic Sciences and Health.
Compared to other national sites, Immunology is a major discipline in Nantes, particularly through its applications in translational research and immunointervention.

In this context, the chair holder will deliver advanced training on innovative immunotherapeutic strategies for solid tumors and viral infections. He/she will also tutor postgraduate and doctoral study projects, supervise internship or thesis work, and contribute to the scientific animation of the Graduate School and the GPI3.

National Research Agency package: 200k€

Other package:

Co-funding*

*source et montant

The chair holder will initially get a package of 200k EUR to initiate his/her own research. Based on his/her profile and experience, additional funding may be obtainable on request.
The applicants are thus encouraged to contact the INCIT laboratory (Frederic.altare@inserm.fr or nathalie.labarriere@inserm.fr) prior to submitting their proposal.

Scientific dissemination/ Open Science:

Scientific communication and dissemination:
The chair holder will aim to publish regularly in the best international scientific journals. He/she will communicate on the results of his/her research during international congresses dealing with his/her research fields, and will participate in the organization and animation of scientific events in France and abroad, such as the INCIT congress that takes place every two years (https://incit.fr/congres-incit-24/).

Open Science:
Inserm, as a public research institution, is committed to accompany societal evolution. It has adopted a global and proactive policy in favour of open science, open education and open innovation, and has recently implemented rules for systematic publication to the open archive Hal.inserm. This approach marks an important step towards generalizing open resources in research and education.

Science and society:
Scientific discoveries from INCIT members and medical advances are regularly taken up by the local and national media. Dissemination to the general public is continuous, through both actions of communication and participations in local or national events.

Indicators:

Teaching:
- Promote teaching at the cutting edge of recent scientific advances for graduate school students
- Introduce courses that reinforce training through research, in particular through sessions analyzing scientific articles
- Reinforce the hosting of Master 1 and Master 2 trainees from GP I3 and ONHU on subjects focusing on innovative immunotherapy approaches, to encourage them to continue their studies at doctoral level.

Research:
- Increase the number of publications in leading journals by 20% and raise the laboratory's international profile, in particular by recruiting talented post-doctoral students.
- Enable the long-term renewal of the host unit's teams, by promoting young researchers of excellence to their management.

Knowledge transfer:
- Increase the visibility of the host laboratory and Nantes University through communications during international congresses, and animation of scientific events in France and abroad.
- Increase communication with the general public by organizing open days and dedicated conferences, with links to the human and social sciences.

Selection of candidates:

It is expected the recruited researcher to become rapidly a group leader in the GAD team. So the candidate should demonstrate ability to supervise Ph.D students, post-doctoral fellow and technical support staff. She/he should have the capacity to obtain competitive funding to manage her/his group.

Successful candidates are chosen by a selection commission composed of six to ten members, the majority of whom are specialists in the fields of research concerned.

The commission carries out an initial examination of the applications, focused in particular on candidate experience and skills relative to the research and teaching project presented above. A shortlist of candidates is then selected for interview.
Only candidates selected by the selection committee on the basis of their applications will be invited to interview.

The interviews are followed by a deliberation during which selection commission will discuss the quality, originality and, where appropriate, the interdisciplinarity of the research and teaching projects presented by the candidates, their motivation and their scientific and teaching supervision capacity.

The candidates selected at the end of the selection process will be offered a researcher contract, following approval from the President and CEO of Inserm.

Required profile:

Education Level: **Phd**

Researcher Profile: R3/R4

R3 Established researcher A stage in a researcher's career describing those who have developed a level of independence and can described as an established researcher
R4 Leading Research A stage in a researcher's career where they can be termed a 'leading researcher'. This would include the team leader of a research group or head of an industry R&D laboratory.

Your application will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Relevance and originality of the project related to the research field
- International exposure in research projects
- Your ability to raise funds
- Participation in editorial and reviewing activities
- Your teaching experience
- Your ability to lead a team…

Application instruction:

Applications can be submitted online at EVA.
Deadline application: **September 2, 2025**

Please complete the scientific file in English.

It is imperative to contact the laboratory corresponding to the Chair you have applied for in order to build the project with them.

Position also open to 'Bénéficiaires de l'Obligation d'Emploi' (disabled persons), as defined in article 27 of law no. 84-16 of January 11, 1984 on statutory provisions for the civil service.

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