



Inria underlines its commitment to the development of world-class research universities in digital science and technology through the creation of “Inria Centres at *** University”

With the signature of an initial agreement on 1 July for the creation of the “Inria Paris Centre at Sorbonne University”, in the presence of Frédérique Vidal, France’s Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Jean Chambaz, President of Sorbonne University, and Bruno Sportisse, Inria CEO, Inria launched a cycle of strategic partnerships with those major research universities that the institute has a presence at.

Inria’s strategic ambition is to help France to establish itself as a leader at an EU level both in and through digital, from a scientific, technological and industrial perspective. This is centred around synergy between Inria’s national and regional policies, underlining the institute’s commitment to the development of world-class research universities at the heart of entrepreneurial and industrial ecosystems given fresh impetus by digital.

This was followed by further agreements with Côte d’Azur University (7 July), the University of Bordeaux (20 July) and the Polytechnic Institute of Paris (23 July), which were joined by other sites at the beginning of the academic year.

Inria - supporting the development of world-class research universities

Promoting internationally renowned research universities is central to French public policy for higher education, research and innovation. Inria, practically all of whose research centres are partners with Ixex or I-Site universities, is fully committed to this dynamic, as outlined in its 2019-2023 Objectives and Performance Contract. This was signed back in February 2020 with the support of Inria’s academic partners, led by major research universities and national research bodies, including the CNRS.

Reflecting this major change at a symbolic, strategic and operational level, Inria research centres are now “Inria Centres at *** University”. Given the extent of the academic dynamic at the Paris and Saclay sites, these “Inria Centres at *** University” will be part of the Inria Paris Research Centre and the Inria Saclay Research Centre respectively, with a separate strategic road map for each partner university.

For Bruno Sportisse, Inria CEO, “This first strategic partnership with Sorbonne University provides a clear indication of Inria’s commitment as a national research institute to the development of world-class research universities. This will require a shared vision on digital and the capacity to identify - for each site - possible ways of strengthening, simplifying and incorporating the operational mechanisms we deploy on behalf of our partners, delivering greater impact on education, research and innovation.”

Strategic and operational coordination

A range of initiatives will be required if Inria is to draw on its capacity for impact in order to assist with the development of major research universities, whether this is in relation to regional presence, governance, stakeholders getting to grips with Inria's organisational model, fluid coordination with other organisational models, human resources policies or the openness of Inria departments to its partners.

The mechanisms deployed by Inria on behalf of universities include the creation of project teams (including inter-laboratory project teams), Inria Startup Studio for supporting software-intensive startups with their roots in public research, the development of open-source software platforms, the recruitment of researchers to Inria Starting Faculty Positions in the context of the Research Planning Law and contributions to both initial and continuous training activities in digital.

By emphasising this change, the aim is to strengthen partnership dynamics between academic stakeholders and to deliver greater impact in every sense, whether at a scientific, technological, industrial or societal level, in the context of France's Recovery Plan.

About Inria:

Inria is France's national institute for research in digital science and technology. World-leading research, technological innovation and entrepreneurial risk-taking are in its DNA. Within 200 project teams, the majority of which are joint undertakings with leading research universities, more than 3,500 researchers and engineers explore new avenues, often in conjunction with industrial partners, in response to ambitious challenges. As an institute of technology, Inria supports diversity in innovation, from opensource software publishing to deep tech startups.

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