

PRESS RELEASE

Sorbonne University and Inria create the “Sorbonne University Inria Centre”

Paris, 2 July 2021

At the Sorbonne Center for Artificial Intelligence on 1 July 2021 Jean Chambaz, vice-chancellor of Sorbonne University, and Bruno Sportisse, Inria CEO, signed a strategic partnership agreement aimed at consolidating their position as leaders in the digital sphere. Strengthening a longstanding partnership between the two institutes, this agreement, which was signed in the presence of Frédérique Vidal, France’s Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, also marked the beginning of a series of strategic partnerships between Inria and world-class research universities through the “Inria University Centres” programme.

Sorbonne University’s aim in entering into this partnership was to set its stall out with regard to its strategy for the digital revolution, data, intelligence and open science, fulfilling its responsibilities as a research operator. Meanwhile, by providing Sorbonne University with its expertise when it comes to research and innovation on digital technology through the “Sorbonne University Inria Centre”, Inria (the French National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology) is seeking to establish France as a leader both in and through digital at a scientific, technological and industrial level.

For Jean Chambaz, President of Sorbonne University, *“Inria’s decision to enter into strategic partnerships with leading research universities is testament to their desire to push the boundaries of the system we currently have in France, drawing on the potential of both university and non-university research operators to support the country’s development.”*

By combining their scientific excellence and digital expertise, the aim is for Sorbonne University and Inria to give fresh impetus to disciplines within digital science (including IT and mathematics), as well as how they interface with other disciplines. Joint interdisciplinary research projects in fields such as health, digital humanities, quantum computing and artificial intelligence are geared towards enabling groundbreaking research in response to the major challenges facing society, while boosting France’s economic impact and international appeal.

The framework agreement identifies key areas for collaboration on future research topics, drawing on existing strengths within joint project teams involving Sorbonne University and Inria (both current and those to be created in the future). There are a number of drivers with the capacity to enable synergy on digital in research, education and innovation: Inria researchers teaching students at Sorbonne University; joint project teams with industrial partners; the development of innovation initiatives such as Inria Startup Studio or Paris Parc, which will be Sorbonne University’s space for innovation and entrepreneurship; and in-house training on digital for SMEs and intermediate-sized enterprises.

This partnership will also see joint activities involving the Sorbonne University Inria Centre taking place on the new Censier campus, which is shared with Paris 2 University Panthéon-Assas. This

interdisciplinary centre will help to develop new synergies between the social sciences, digital science and technology, and research on artificial intelligence.

For Bruno Sportisse, Inria CEO, *“this strategic partnership with Sorbonne University, a world-class university, is in keeping with Inria’s proactive site strategy aimed at supporting the development of major research universities. For years now Sorbonne University and Inria have worked closely together through joint project teams, often with other academic partners, in addition to major projects such as SCAI. Located within the Inria Paris Centre, the “Sorbonne University Inria Centre” reflects our shared vision for education, research and innovation in digital, with a set of shared operational initiatives geared towards delivering greater impact.”*

Signature of the strategic partnership for the creation of the Sorbonne University Inria Centre. From left to right: Jean Chambaz, President of Sorbonne University; Frédérique Vidal, French Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, and Bruno Sportisse, Inria CEO. ©Sorbonne University – Pierre Kitmacher.

About Sorbonne University:

Sorbonne University, which came about as a result of the merger between Paris-Sorbonne University and Pierre and Marie Curie University, is a world-class university for intensive, multidisciplinary research, covering everything from the humanities and medicine to science. Located right in the heart of Paris, and with a strong regional presence, Sorbonne University is committed to the success of its students and meeting the scientific challenges of the 21st century, in addition to passing on the knowledge developed within its laboratories and research teams to society as a whole. With 55,000 students, 6,700 faculty members and researchers, and 4,900 administrative and technical staff, Sorbonne University is diverse, creative, innovative and open to the world. Together with France's National Museum of Natural History, Compiègne University of Technology, INSEAD, the Pôle Supérieur Paris Boulogne Billancourt and France Education International, it is part of the Sorbonne University Alliance. The diversity of the Sorbonne University Alliance is geared towards a global approach to teaching and research, promoting access to all knowledge and developing a range of joint programmes and projects for initial, continuous and lifelong learning across all disciplines. Sorbonne University is a member of the 4EU+ Alliance, a new model for EU universities, alongside Charles University in Prague (Czechia), Heidelberg University (Germany), the University of Warsaw (Poland), the University of Milan (Italy) and the University of Copenhagen (Denmark). www.sorbonne-universite.fr @ServicePresseSU

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 open-source software publishing to deep tech startups.

www.inria.fr

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