Research Program (PEPR)
« Food Systems, Microbiomes and Health (SAMS) »

Call for a junior chair 2025

CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The growing incidence of chronic diseases is a major public health issue. It is largely the result of an altered relationship between humans and their microbes under the influence of various environmental factors, such as diet, lifestyle, and exposure to pollutants and xenobiotics. This altered relationship may also contribute to the failure of innovative treatments, even though causal links have not always been established. With the aim of reducing the impact (individual, societal, financial, hospital, etc.) of chronic noncommunicable diseases and strengthening the projects funded in response to the PEPR SAMS call for projects set up by the ANR, the call for four interdisciplinary junior chairs has been defined.
The first call resulted in the funding of three chairs.

This call therefore aims to fund a fourth chair with the same objectives as the first call. The objectives are to develop excellence in research in the field of the microbiome in prevention and human health, and to enrich the research environment and infrastructure currently being developed in this field in France.

JUNIOR CHAIRS

This junior chair will enable a young scientist to s**et up and lead a research team within an established laboratory in France** and to develop a **project of excellence on the microbiome and health**.

Candidates' research expertise must cover at least one of the **priorities/research areas of the SAMS Program**, particularly those addressing the following issues:

- Developing cutting-edge research on host-microbiome symbiosis;
- Identifying disruptive elements—whether internal to the microbiome, environmental, dietary, or related to the host itself—and explaining the sequence of microbial, metabolic, immune, and other events that cause disruption of symbiosis and homeostasis;
- Identifying biomarkers of risk, diagnosis, and prognosis, as well as predictors of treatment response and toxicity, in order to include them in the medical arsenal for personalized care;
- Developing new preventive and therapeutic strategies, as well as specific, controlled interventional studies that identify and correct “defects” in the microbiome in order to improve and ensure prevention in the general population, patient care, and optimize treatments.
- Developing data science relating to the study of human holobionts (host-microbiome) at the interface of biology and medicine, and mathematics (medical informatics, statistics, modeling, artificial intelligence).

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Duration
The chair will run for a maximum period of 42 months.

Eligibility criteria

- Experience criteria: open to any young scientist, regardless of their current position and nationality, who has obtained their PhD or equivalent degree within the last 3 to 10 years as of April 30, 2026;
- Candidates in temporary positions may not develop their project within an organization where they have been working for more than 36 months on the closing date for Phase 1 applications. Therefore, in order for the application to be eligible, the applicant must propose a change of unit/laboratory. Returning to the laboratory where the candidate completed their PhD is not encouraged.
- Applicants who hold a permanent position in a national research organization or French university at the time of submission are eligible regardless of the length of time between their recruitment and the submission of their application.
- For maternity and paternity leave, the time requirement since the doctoral thesis defense may be extended by the documented number of days of leave taken for each child born before or after the doctoral degree was obtained, at the candidate's request. For long-term sick leave, the time requirement since the doctoral thesis defense may be extended upon justification.

Assessment criteria

- The PEPR chair will be awarded on the basis of scientific excellence.
- Candidate quality: candidates must be able to demonstrate their professional experience and achievements through significant publications, additional responsibilities within the laboratory, setting up and leading collaborative projects, teaching, participation in international councils and committees, invitations to international conferences, awards, grants, patent and license applications, the creation of start-ups, and other relevant activities.
- Multidisciplinary expertise will be encouraged.

Funding

- Maximum €500,000 (excluding management fees) over 42 months.
- The host laboratory must provide the selected candidate with sufficient office and laboratory space to accommodate an emerging team (approximately 50 m²) as well as access to local technology platforms.

Selection procedure

First step: call for applications.

- Applications must be submitted in English via the Inserm EVA3 online platform (https://www.eva3.inserm.fr/login).
- Candidates will be evaluated on their scientific excellence by a committee of specialized scientific experts;
- Only selected candidates will be eligible to apply for the second stage;
- Candidates selected during the first stage will be informed of the committee's decision by the PEPR management.

Second step: call for projects.

- Eligible applicants will be informed of the submission procedure and timetable organized by Inserm, following the decision of the eligibility committee;
- The second stage consists of submitting a project proposal in collaboration with a host laboratory based in France (written in English);
- The projects submitted will be assessed by an international jury.

Host laboratory:

- The research project must be carried out in a French host laboratory;
- The identification of a host laboratory is not compulsory at the first selection stage. A non-exhaustive list of possible host laboratories will be provided by the PEPR SAMS management;
- The host laboratory must be involved in the design of the research project and the applicant must ensure that the host laboratory has all the equipment required for the proposal, in order to guarantee the best possible conditions for success.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

The provisional schedule is available on the call page.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR APPLICATION

1. Curriculum Vitae;
2. Doctorate diploma;
3. A brief description of the applicant's scientific career and main achievements (in English);
4. A letter of motivation outlining the candidate's interest in joining the French research environment (in English);
5. Two letters of recommendation.

CONTACT

PEPR management team: equipe@pepr-sams.fr
Technical support for the application submission platform: support.dsi@inserm.fr