



Press kit / Launch of the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair in  
"A systems approach to individual differences in longevity"

Wednesday, October 7, 2009



## Items in this press kit /

<b>Press release:</b> The AXA Research Fund commits to top-level research on the challenges of longevity	p.3
<b>Abstract:</b> The AXA Research Fund	p.5
<b>Abstract:</b> The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair "A systems approach to individual differences in longevity"	p.8
<b>Fact Sheet:</b> Interview with François Taddei	p.11
<b>Biographies:</b> Biography: Prof. Thomas Kirkwood Biography: Prof. Linda Partridge Biography: Prof. James W. Vaupel Biography: François Taddei	p.13
<b>Presentation of Paris Descartes University</b>	p.17

## The AXA Research Fund commits to top-level research on the challenges of longevity\* /

On Wednesday October 7, 2009, the AXA Research Fund, in collaboration with the Université Paris Descartes, inaugurates the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair in "A systems approach to individual differences in longevity".

Convinced that basic research is essential to advancing knowledge, the AXA Group, via the AXA Research Fund, is providing support to the scientific community to develop cutting-edge research that will provide a clearer understanding of the challenges posed by the increase in lifespan.

Endowed with €1,250,000 for a five-year period, the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair in "A systems approach to individual differences in longevity" aims to train a new generation of researchers with a scientific understanding of a longer lifespan, approached from a multidisciplinary point of view. Indeed, the major innovation of this Chair resides in the multidisciplinary approach it proposes, which to date is unique in the world. The holders of the Chair, Linda Partridge, Thomas Kirkwood, François Taddei and James Vaupel, have different scientific backgrounds: demographics, genetics, nutrition, biology, etc. This diversity of approaches should make it possible to study accurately the numerous parameters that affect the longevity of an individual.

By providing its support for the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair, the AXA Research Fund hopes it will offer researchers the resources necessary to advance knowledge on the mechanisms of ageing.

### The opinions on longevity of two holders of the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair

#### **What is longevity?**

*Within a period of eight generations (about 200 years), life expectancy has doubled. In the UK and France, it has been increasing at a rate of two years per decade. So for each hour that elapses, your lifespan could be increasing by 12 minutes, i.e. 5 hours per day!*

*We commonly refer to this phenomenon as longevity. Alongside global warming, longevity, or the increasing mean lifespan of a living being, has become one of the major challenges of modern society, and must be a key priority for research.*

*Prof. Thomas Kirkwood,  
Director of the Institute  
for Ageing and Health,  
Newcastle, UK.*

#### **What are the approaches and objectives of this Chair?**

*At present, no explanation provided by a single discipline is sufficient to understand individual differences in longevity. Indeed, the main problem faced by research on longevity resides in the complexity of ageing, which is a phenomenon dependent on numerous parameters, such as genetic heritage, social background or the environment. In this context, the multidisciplinary careers of the Chair holders constitute a major asset and valuable foundations for the work considered.*

*This Chair also has an actual educational objective: it aims to disseminate knowledge and promote vocations. One of our major aims is to train a new generation of researchers with a scientific understanding of ageing, approached from a multidisciplinary point of view and in an integrated manner.*

*We hope to enable the emergence of joint research projects involving Master's and PhD students and postdoctoral fellows from our different institutions and of different nationalities.*

*François Taddei,  
Instigator and holder of  
the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair*

## **The AXA Research Fund "Through research, protection"**

As a major stakeholder in economic development, AXA has a duty to encourage and support research which promotes economic and social progress.

In 2008, the Group thus committed itself to investing €100 million over five years in research by setting up the AXA Research Fund. This provides support for top-level scientists and institutions whose research is linked to the risks that threaten the environment, human life and our societies.

Since it was set up, the AXA Research Fund has already provided support for 115 research projects in 14 countries, for a total of €21 million.

### **A major initiative in scientific sponsorship**

The AXA Research Fund aims to provide support for research carried out by recognised experts, and also for projects led by, or involving, brilliant young researchers, in order to promote the emergence of a new generation of scientific excellence. The AXA Research Fund is the first such initiative to try and assemble top-level research on risks in Europe so as to contribute to scientific research of excellence at the service of society, and thus become a true observatory of global risks.

*"AXA's business is to protect our customers from risk throughout their lives. For AXA, being responsible means, first and foremost, to master and manage risks, and then share this knowledge with society as a whole. The AXA Research Fund lies at the heart of this approach by helping to improve our understanding and anticipation of major risks, such as those related to longevity to which people and their environment are confronted. The AXA Research Fund, and funding of the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair, thus form an integral part of AXA's longstanding commitment to corporate citizenship and our desire to do our job to the best of our abilities."*

*Henri de Castries  
Chairman of the Management Board and CEO - AXA*

*\* Longevity: maximum lifespan of a living being*

#### **Press contact:**

Anne-Laure Dano - +33 (0)1 79 62 14 15 - [anne-laure.dano@mslworldwide.com](mailto:anne-laure.dano@mslworldwide.com)

#### **About the AXA Group**

With 80 million customers and 135,000 employees throughout the world, the AXA Group is a world leader in financial protection. AXA's activities are geographically diversified, although concentrated in the markets of Europe, North America and the Asia/Pacific region. In 2008, turnover (IFRS) reached €91.2 billion, and earnings before interest €3.7 billion. As at December 31, 2008, assets managed by AXA had an overall worth of €981 billion.

AXA shares are quoted in compartment A of Euronext Paris under the symbol CS (ISIN FR0000120628 - Bloomberg: CS FP - Reuters: AXAF.PA). In the USA, the AXA American Depository Share (ADS) is quoted on the NYSE, under the symbol AXA.

## The AXA Research Fund /

Understanding and preventing risks is AXA's core expertise. This requires both energy and talent of thousands of researchers throughout the world. Set up in 2008, the AXA Research Fund provides support for top-level, world-class scientists and institutions whose research is linked to the risks that threaten the environment, human life and our societies. This unique initiative is in line with AXA's longstanding commitment to corporate citizenship and is one of the main pillars of its policy as a responsible insurer.

### The AXA Research Fund, "Through research, protection"

Endowed with €100 million for five years, the AXA Research Fund is an important effort by the AXA Group to enable the progression of basic research on the understanding of major risks.

Some of the projects funded by the AXA Research Fund have been supported by the most important European research institutions: IHES (Institut des Hautes Etudes Scientifiques), Toulouse Sciences Economiques - Fondation Jean-Jacques Laffont, the Berlin Institute of Meteorology, Queen's University Belfast, the Autonomous University of Barcelona, and EDHEC Business School in Lille.

The AXA Research Fund wishes to promote the emergence of leading scientifics from the start of their careers. To date, 41 postdoctoral fellowships and 60 PhD grants have thus been awarded.

#### A few figures:

The AXA Group in 2008:  
135,000 employees  
80 million customers

The AXA Research Fund has already invested nearly €21 million in 115 projects based in 14 countries.

Since it was set up in 2008, the Fund has committed €3 million to funding longevity-related projects.

*The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair will receive funds of €1.25 million.*

#### Research projects:

- CSIC (Institut d'Anàlisi Econòmica), Barcelona, Spain: *The AXA-CSIC Project on Social Conflict - Assessing the Risk of Civil Conflict* (project chaired by Joan Esteban)
- EDHEC, Lille, France: *The AXA-EDHEC Research Project on Inflation and the term structure* (project chaired by Stéphane Grégoir)
- Institut für Meteorologie - Freie Universität, Berlin, Germany: *The AXA-Freie Universität Project on Large-scale European flooding under Climate Change* (project chaired by Uwe Ulbrich)
- Queen's University, Belfast, United Kingdom: *The AXA-Queen's University Project on Marine aliens and climate change* (project chaired by Christine Maggs)
- LSE (London School of Economics), London, United Kingdom: *The AXA-LSE Research Programme on Risk Management and Regulation of Financial Institutions* (project chaired by David Webb)

- PSE (Paris School of Economics), Paris, France: *The AXA-PSE Project on the Economics and Psychology of Risk taking* (project chaired by Jean-Marc Tallon)

#### Endowments and chairs:

- IHES (Institut des Hautes Etudes Scientifiques), Bures-sur-Yvette, France: Capital endowment of 3 M€ to create the *AXA-IHES Chair of Mathematics*, hold by Maxim Kontsevitch
- TSE (Toulouse School of Economics) - Fondation Jean-Jacques LAFFONT, Toulouse, France: Capital endowment of 3 M€
- HEC, Jouy-en-Josas, France: Capital endowment of 1 M€ to create the *AXA-HEC Chair on Decision Sciences*, hold by Itzhak Gilboa
- Université Paris Descartes, Paris, France: Support of 1,25 M€ to create the *AXA-Paris Descartes Chair on a systems approach to individual differences in Longevity*, hold by François Taddei
- GSE (Barcelona Graduate School of Economics), Barcelona, Spain: Capital endowment of 1,25 M€ to create the *AXA-GSE Chair on Macroeconomic Risk*

### **The AXA Research Fund, a major initiative in scientific sponsorship at the service of research excellence**

The AXA Research Fund is now a major project in European scientific sponsorship and a unique initiative by an international group.

It is managed by a Scientific Board chaired by Ezra Suleiman, Professor of Political Science at Princeton University and a member of the AXA Supervisory Board, and is made up of world-renowned researchers and experts from the AXA Group.

#### Composition of the Scientific Board of the AXA Research Fund

**Professor Ezra Suleiman**

*Professor of Political Science at Princeton University, USA*

**Professor Pierre-André Chiappori**

*Columbia University, USA*

**Hervé Le Treut**

*CNRS, Dynamic Meteorology Laboratory, France*

**Professor Miroslav Radman**

*Université René Descartes, France*

**Alain d'Iribarne**

*CNRS, Anthropology of Institutions and Social Organisations Laboratory, France*

**Professor Daniel Laurent**

*Université de Marne-la-Vallée, France*

**François Robinet**

*Chief Investment Officer, Banking and Insurance, Northern Europe, AXA Group*

**François Bucchini**

*CEO of AXA Cessions*

**Véronique Weill**

*Group Executive Vice-President IT & Operational Excellence, AXA Group*

**Alain Rohaut**

*Group Executive Vice-President Human Resources, AXA Group*

**Nicolas Chanut**

*CEO of EXANE, France*

The AXA Research Fund aims to enable exceptional researchers to use their talents freely and independently by providing significant and long-term support that will guarantee optimum conditions for their work.

To achieve this, the Fund provides support to basic and applied research institutions, as well as to more specific research projects for a shorter period being led by scientists acknowledged in their fields and keen to understand and prevent the risks that impact the future of our societies.

To promote the emergence of a new generation of top-level scientists, the AXA Research Fund also tries to support projects that involve young, brilliant scientists.

Through all the projects it supports, the AXA Research Fund aims to assemble the best of research on risks in Europe, in order to contribute to advancing knowledge and understanding of the risks that threaten our societies, and thus their optimum prevention.

### **In greater depth...**

#### **Interview with Ezra Suleiman, President of the Scientific Board of the AXA Research Fund.**

*Ezra Suleiman is Professor of Political Science at Princeton University, USA.*

#### **How does the AXA Research Fund choose the projects it will support?**

We have a robust and transparent selection process for projects, based on assessments by international and independent experts commissioned by the Scientific Board. To guarantee efficacy and fairness in the processing of applications, we strive to respond as rapidly as possible to each candidate (for example, for a doctoral or postdoctoral grant, a period of four months should be allowed for a response). We ensure the greatest possible transparency for the procedures we adopt. Each candidate is examined by external and anonymous reviewers who are entirely free in issuing their opinions.

Our aim is to be robust, open, receptive and highly transparent.

#### **Through what type of funding does the AXA Research Fund support researchers?**

Institutions generating top-level, internationally-renowned research, based in a European Union Member or Associate Country can apply for the funding of Perpetual or Temporary Chairs through major capital endowments.

In order to promote the emergence of leading scientific leaders and support them during their early careers, the AXA Research Fund also awards several PhD and postdoctoral fellowships each year.

#### **Once an application has been selected and funded by the AXA Research Fund, how far is the Fund committed to supporting the project leader?**

We try to ensure that it will enable him/her to devote himself/herself to his/her studies under optimum working conditions. We make a long-term commitment to the projects we fund, and our operational approach guarantees the independence and freedom of researchers that are prerequisites to their success.

## The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair / "A systems approach to individual differences in longevity"

At the initiative of François Taddei, several leading European researchers have become associated in a Chair that aims to promote system approaches to individual differences in longevity. This Chair is funded by the AXA Research Fund and hosted by the Paris Descartes University Foundation. It is the first research programme of this importance to gather several internationally-renowned researchers so that together they can develop their common knowledge of longevity.

### **The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair, a beneficiary of sponsorship for scientific excellence by the AXA Research Fund.**

For the AXA Group, supporting and funding via the AXA Research Fund the Chair initiated by François Taddei is primarily a response to a major social challenge.

The duty of an international insurer is indeed to provide support for its customers all stages of their lives, not only by offering appropriate solutions but also by ensuring an upstream commitment to promoting the best possible knowledge of the risks they face.

### **The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair, "A systems approach to individual differences in longevity"**

With an endowment of €1,250,000 for five years, the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair aims to train a new generation of researchers with a scientific understanding of the increase in lifespan, approached from a multidisciplinary standpoint.

Indeed, the major innovation of this Chair is its multidisciplinary approach, which at present is unique in the world. The holders of the Chair: Linda Partridge, Thomas Kirkwood, François Taddei and James Vaupel, have different scientific backgrounds: demographics, genetics, nutrition, biology, etc. This broad range of disciplines will mean that the ageing phenomenon can be approached as an integrated system, better reflecting the numerous of parameters that influence the longevity of an individual.

By comparing the results of each working group, researchers hope to advance their understanding of the mechanisms of ageing and individual differences in longevity.

*"The dynamism and performance of research, and the innovation and development capacities of companies, depend to a great extent upon the efforts of different stakeholders to promote synergies and partnerships. For this reason, it is necessary to ensure closer links between universities and industry. Since 2006, Université Paris Descartes has hosted the cross-disciplinary Doctoral School on the "Frontiers of Living Organisms", headed by François Taddei, designed to promote projects that require the cross-fertilisation of disciplines around the issues relative to living organisms. It was therefore only natural for the Université Paris Descartes to welcome a multidisciplinary Chair on Longevity. This Chair, combining the best of European research, is a unique illustration of public-private collaboration that will contribute to improving our knowledge of a major challenge for society: longevity."*

Axel Kahn  
President of  
Université Paris Descartes



## **The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair, an incubator for projects and researchers focused on longevity**

The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair also aims to disseminate knowledge and thus enable the emergence of a new generation of researchers. The Chair holders will promote the creation of joint research projects involving PhD and postdoctoral fellows from their different institutions and of different nationalities. By creating a critical mass of scientists from complementary disciplines, the AXA-Paris Descartes Chair will contribute to training the first generation of scientists with a more integrative vision of individual differences in terms of longevity.

The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair thus aims to become an incubator for projects and researchers that will reinforce a multidisciplinary approach to longevity.

### **About the Paris Descartes University Foundation**

University Paris Descartes, the President of which is Professor Axel Kahn, has confirmed its desire for openness to the socioeconomic world by setting up the Paris Descartes University Foundation. Its major aims are to valorise all training courses proposed to students, support an ambitious programme of multidisciplinary research that considers Man in terms of his physiological and psychological aspects and socioeconomic context at all periods of life, and to promote humanitarian programmes and acts of citizenship.

The Paris Descartes University Foundation is chaired by Professor Martine Aiach, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Paris Descartes. It is run by a Management Board, assisted by administrators. The Management Board has 18 members divided into four constituencies: representatives of the establishment, founder members, qualified personalities and representatives of donors. The first meeting of the Management Board will be held during the fourth quarter of 2009.



### **In greater detail...**

#### **Interview with Thomas Kirkwood, Director of the Institute for Ageing and Health in Newcastle (United-Kingdom)**

#### **In practice, how is longevity perceived at present?**

Perceptions of this phenomenon vary considerably, because although in Western countries we have created conditions that allow five in six children to reach a minimum age of 65 years, we still do not know how to handle such an increase in the elderly population. This situation arouses both hopes and fears.

.../...

Furthermore, at an individual level, our perceptions of great age are also highly ambivalent. For some, being very old is associated with losing everything – teeth, hair, intellectual speed, strength or sexual desire. For others, it is associated with something positive that contributes much satisfaction and better self-knowledge.

These differences in perception are a good illustration of how longevity is a subject that our society does not yet know how to assimilate.

### **What are the challenges linked to an increase in human longevity?**

The exceptional increase in human longevity over the past 200 years is probably one of the greatest victories of humanity. However, it also represents a considerable challenge for our societies, in that we need to rethink all aspects of our healthcare and pensions systems.

## Interview with François Taddei /

"The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair aims to become a real incubator for projects and researchers that will reinforce the integrative and multidisciplinary study of longevity". François Taddei

### **Why is a Chair proposing a systems approach to individual differences in longevity so important?**

*The rapidity and quality of advances in research on longevity and ageing, based on complex challenges, now leaves many academics dissatisfied.*

*No explanation put forward by a single discipline has so far been sufficient to understand individual differences in longevity. Indeed, the major obstacles to research on longevity consist in the complexity of ageing, a phenomenon dependent on numerous parameters such as genetic heritage, social background or the environment. .*

*In this situation, any notable scientific advances in our understanding of the mechanisms of ageing are directly dependent on our ability to grasp this phenomenon in its entirety, which is not possible through current approaches that are too segmented. In order to take better account of the numerous parameters involved, it is more than ever essential to study ageing from a multidisciplinary standpoint that sees this phenomenon as an integrated system. That is why we talk about a system approach to the issue.*

### **Why have you gathered these researchers within the Chair?**

*The Chair holders: Linda Partridge, Thomas Kirkwood or James Vaupel, have all followed career paths that involved a combination of disciplines. We share their desire to achieve a better understanding of longevity using an integrative and multidisciplinary approach.*

*In order to throw new light on individual differences in longevity, the Chair will seek to understand observations of human populations by reproducing them in model systems with a much shorter generation time: bacteria, yeasts, nematodes and mice. Then, by comparing the results of each research unit, it may be possible to advance in our understanding of the mechanisms of ageing.*

*Furthermore, by working on micro-organisms, we hope in the longer term to obtain results that are applicable to man, as bacteria and humans have many common biological mechanisms.*

### **Why have you chosen a Chair rather than a research programme?**

*The Chair has a truly educational objective, which is to transmit knowledge and promote vocations.*

*One of our main aims is to train a new generation of researchers with a scientific understanding of ageing who can grasp it from a multidisciplinary standpoint using an integrative approach.*

*We hope to enable the emergence of joint research projects involving Master's and PhD students and postdoctoral fellows from our different institutions and of different nationalities.*

*The AXA-Paris Descartes Chair thus aims to become a true incubator for projects and researchers that will reinforce the integrative and multidisciplinary study of longevity.*

**Why is this Chair really innovative?**

*The major innovation of this Chair is in its multidisciplinary nature, so far unique in the world, although in recent years some researchers have started to prefer a more integrative approach; one of the leaders of this trend is Thomas Kirkwood, who is also one of the holders of our Chair. He studies the biology of ageing systems, from the test tube to practical applications in human populations.*

## Professor Thomas Kirkwood /

Professor of Medicine and biologist,  
Director of the Institute for Ageing and Health - Newcastle (United-Kingdom)

*Professor Thomas Kirkwood graduated from both Cambridge and Oxford, in biology and mathematics. He formerly was a researcher at the UK National Institute for Medical Research and in 1993 he became Professor of Biological Gerontology at the University of Manchester. Today, he is the Director of the Institute for Ageing and Health at the University of Newcastle.*

### Special areas of interest and expertise

The majority of Thomas Kirkwood's work focuses on the molecular genetics of ageing, age-related diseases and developing a biomathematical model for cell senescence. In particular, he has developed the *disposable soma* theory, which presumes that by transmitting their genes during reproduction, animals diminish their potential for longevity. Professor Kirkwood has been European President of the International Association of Gerontology and advisor to the British Parliament, and he belongs to numerous editorial boards for scientific journals.

### Publications, awards and distinctions

Thomas Kirkwood has published more than 290 articles in prestigious scientific journals. He is the author or joint author of several books, including a best-seller: *Time of Our Lives: the science of human ageing*.

Thomas Kirkwood delivered the distinguished BBC Reith Lectures in 2001 on *The end of age*. He was awarded the Henry Dale Prize in 2002, and the Lord Cohen Medal in 2006. He was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2009.

## Professor Linda Partridge /

Geneticist,

Director of the Institute of Healthy Ageing - London (United-Kingdom)

Founding Director of the Max Planck Institute for Biology of Ageing - Cologne (Germany)

*Professor Linda Partridge obtained her DPhil at the University of Oxford. She is Weldon at University College London and is also Director of its Institute of Healthy Ageing.*

### **Special areas of interest and expertise**

Commonly referred to as the "fly people", Linda Partridge and her team have focused their research for the past fifteen years on *Drosophila* (fruit flies). Their very short lifespan and the numerous opportunities offered to scientists to intervene on their life cycle make them an ideal tool to partly understand the complexity of longevity.

Prof Partridge studies the underlying genes and processes that are involved at different stages in the ageing of any organism.

### **Publications, awards and distinctions**

Linda Partridge regularly publishes papers on her work.

In 2002, she received the Sewell Wright Award, and in 1996 was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society for her in-depth research on the life cycle of organisms and their internal clock for survival and reproduction.

## Professor James W. Vaupel /

Demographer

Founder and Director of the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research - Rostock (Germany)

*Professor James Vaupel studied mathematical statistics and then business at Harvard University and was awarded a Ph.D. from Harvard in Public Policy. He is the founder and Director of the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research in Rostock (Germany). He is also Professor at Duke University (North Carolina, USA), where he heads the Duke Center on the Demography of Aging.*

### **Special areas of interest and expertise**

James Vaupel discovered that mortality at older ages is being postponed in humans, a discovery of fundamental importance to the biology of aging and of profound significance for individuals, society and the economy. Publication of this discovery in 1994 was followed by a series of articles buttressing and elaborating the finding.

James Vaupel has been a leader in developing the field of biodemography, including the nascent subfield of evolutionary biodemography. He is a pioneer in the study of supercentenarians. His work on forecasting suggests that half of children born since 2000 in Germany, France, Japan and other countries will celebrate their 100<sup>th</sup> birthdays..

### **Publications, awards and distinctions**

Vaupel has published highly-cited articles in Science, the Lancet, PNAS, and top demography journals. He is a Member of the German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, the National Academy of Sciences of the United States, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has been awarded the two highest prizes of the Population Association of American—the Sheps prize for mathematical demography and the Taeuber prize for developing biodemography. He won the IPSEN Foundation award and will be presented later this year with the Seneca medal for pathbreaking research on longevity.

## François Taddei /

Biologist,  
 Research Director at INSERM - Paris (France)  
 Director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research, Paris Descartes University

*François Taddei graduated from both the Ecole Polytechnique and the Ecole Nationale du Génie Rural des Eaux et des Forêts (National school for rural engineering for water and forests) and became a doctor of science at Paris XI. Head engineer for bridges and forests, seconded to Inserm, he now manages the team focusing on systems biology and evolution with the “Evolutionary and Medical Molecular Genetics” research unit at INSERM and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research at Paris Descartes University.*

### Special areas of interest and expertise

An engineer who became a geneticist, François Taddei is a researcher in systems biology at Inserm. He is also a renowned specialist in evolution and is strongly in favour of an interdisciplinary approach, particularly regarding the issues of ageing and longevity.

In 2004, in collaboration with the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris Diderot and Paris Descartes Universities, François Taddei created the research Masters degree in “life sciences with an interdisciplinary approach”.

This course encourages students from a range of disciplines (maths, biology, physics, chemistry, medicine, cognitive science etc.) to work within research laboratories specialising in different areas from their initial training, promoting the idea of sharing knowledge and different approaches within the scientific community.

He now manages the Interdisciplinary Ecole doctorale Frontières du Vivant and the Liliane Bettencourt programme which helps students carry out research on the borders between disciplines.

### Publications, awards and distinctions

François Taddei is the author of numerous publications, and has published more than 40 articles in international, peer-reviewed scientific journals such as Nature, Science, PNAS, PLoS to name but a few.

He is involved in a number of task groups working on the future of research and higher education, he has contributed to France 2025 and has written reports commissioned by the OECD and the European Commission on how to promote creativity in education.

He has received several awards including the Inserm Basic Research Prize (2003), the Liliane Bettencourt prize for Life Sciences from the Bettencourt-Schueller foundation (2004) and the EURYI (European Young investigator) (2005) and HFSP (Human Frontier Science Program) (2006) awards. He was also appointed to the chair established by Orange from 2007 to 2009.

## Paris Descartes University in brief

Paris Descartes University is located at the heart of the historic Paris Latin Quarter, and it is the second largest university in Paris. It has a staff of 1,900 teachers who provide training courses to 34,500 students through 9 Research and Training Departments (UFR) and one University Institute of Technology (IUT). Its teaching facilities are located on 12 geographic sites.

As a university devoted to Health and Human Sciences it offers a wide range of courses, within the framework of the Bologna Process (LMD), in the following fields: Social Sciences, Law, Mathematics, Technology and Psychology as well as training courses for all the health careers-medicine, pharmacy and dental surgery.

The university participates in all the major international research and training programs. Every year it hosts more than 6,000 foreign students who account for 19% of its enrollment capacity. This makes it one of the most attractive institutions of higher education in France.

Paris Descartes University is home to 102 research teams that often work in close connection with major French research institutes (Inserm, CNRS, IRD).

It also offers rich library and museum collections to its students and guests.

### Research

With more than 1,280 researchers and 1,900 lecturer-researchers, Paris Descartes University is one of the most important research centers in France.

One third of its 102 research teams have been gathered into 6 Federate Institutes of Research (IFR). By setting up five platforms-two of which have just been granted a brand name-the university has made the sharing of state-of-the-art medical facilities possible.

The university has placed the development of its research at the core of its preoccupations by setting up an incubator in health biotechnologies as well as an Industrial and Commercial activity Department (SAIC).

### Education

The university provides training courses in four major educational fields: Health, Science and Technology, Human and Social sciences, Judicial and Economic sciences.

Today it emphasizes the professional aspects of its courses and trainings (DUT, professional Bachelor's and Master's degrees) and the professional integration of its students by developing its links with the industry.

### Schools and departments

- Institute of psychology
- Human and social sciences school
- Law school
- Paris Descartes medical school
- Saints-Pères biomedical department
- School of dental surgery
- Pharmaceutical and biological sciences school
- Department of mathematics and computer science
- Department of sports and sports activities (STAPS)
- University institute of technology (IUT)



### Key figures

34,500 students  
1,900 lecturer-researchers  
1,280 researchers  
102 research teams  
1,275 administrative staff

65 master's degrees - 210 university diplomas  
11,000 degrees granted every year  
6 doctoral schools  
5 Paris Descartes University Institutes (IUPD)  
8 Priority Research Themes

Université Paris Descartes 12, rue de l'École de médecine  
75270 Paris cedex 06

