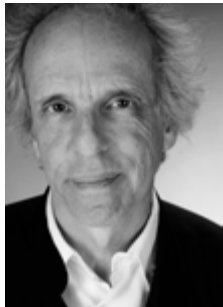




IdEx: challenging excellence



Four years after it was launched, the “Beyond Frontiers” Excellence Initiative (IdEx) has become the spinal-cord of a shared strategy for the University of Strasbourg and its partners CNRS and Inserm. This strategy is based on top-performance research, multidisciplinary education, building up contacts with the regional economic stakeholders, opening out towards the City and an ongoing quest to achieve structural and administrative efficiency.

All the ambitions and all the goals described in the initial file validated by the international jury, have been achieved. Beyond carrying out the actions planned, IdEx has raised the challenge of inciting a dynamic atmosphere and inspiring a spirit of innovation and boldness within the entire University community.

There was a danger of generating a two-speed University, where IdEx would prefer funding a few privileged projects and leave other players by the wayside. However, just as we hoped would happen, the opposite is true. IdEx has deeply invested in its role as catalyst by taking on board appropriate instruments and making it possible to launch original and innovative initiatives that generate radical changes.

As proof, I will quote 3 examples: USIAS – the University of Strasbourg Institute of Advanced Study, Idip - the Institute for Innovation in Higher Education Pedagogy, and Eucor – The European Campus. These emblematic projects today embody the flagships of the University of Strasbourg in terms of its international attractiveness, teaching practices and Franco-German cooperation.

Through its tool-based structure, rather than by set themes, and its reactive, responsible and transparent governance, IdEx has fired up energy and enthusiasm. IdEx has been both a trigger and a driving force addressing the community in its entirety. We have refused excellence by exclusion, we have succeeded in gaining excellence by inclusion. The challenge of drawing up the themes of tomorrow, revealing hidden talents and attracting new lecturers and researchers has been just as important as reinforcing our current strong points.

Thanks to IdEx, the University of Strasbourg stands tall as an attractive campus and a stakeholder reaching out to its environment within an exceptional area, the cross-border region of the Upper Rhine. To this effect, students hold a central place in the project and are at the heart of a number of instruments aimed at strengthening their feeling of belonging.

Another positive impact of the project has been closer collaboration (and maybe even complicity) with our partners - research organisations and local and regional authorities - within the frame of a straightforward, efficient governance based on mutual trust.

As the keystone of the merger carried out in 2009 and the cornerstone of a number of other Strasbourg projects that have been awarded Investments for the Future (LabEx, IHU, SATT etc.), IdEx constitutes a solid base on which the University of Strasbourg can sustainably build up its development as a major establishment in Europe. Thanks to IdEx, the University of Strasbourg has demonstrated that the world of research and higher education does not constitute an expense for society, but is a profitable investment - a true investment in our future!

Alain Beretz,
President of the University of Strasbourg

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Excellence acknowledged

AIn order to raise the challenge of competitiveness in France and give rise to a new model of economic growth, a committee, presided by former prime ministers Alain Juppé and Michel Rocard, was commissioned in 2009 to identify which strategies would foster innovation in the future. The committee's conclusions and proposals led to the launch of the "Grand Loan" Plan, re-baptised the "Investments for the Future" Programme in 2010. To promote excellence in higher education and research, an Excellence Initiative (IdEx) label was created to support universities and French university clusters in terms of international competition.

Various calls for projects were launched within the frame of this instrument, spurred on by the General Commissariat of Investments (CGI) under the aegis of the Prime Minister: Excellence Equipment (EquipEx), Excellence Laboratories (LabEx), University Hospital Institute (IHU), Transfer Technology Company (SATT), Biotechnology Infrastructure, Bioinformatics, Day-release Training and the Carnot Institute. The University of Strasbourg met the highly selective criteria imposed by these various calls for project and boasts nearly 50 Investments for the Future projects in which it is involved either independently or in partnership.

The University of Strasbourg and its partners CNRS and Inserm applied for the very first IdEx call for projects in 2011. Together, they drew up an ambitious programme called "Beyond Frontiers". In order to set up a cohesive dynamic stemming from an "excellence hub", the IdEx project upheld a multidisciplinary strategy for research, education, technology transfer and international attractiveness. At the heart of a border city and the capital of Europe, the University of Strasbourg set out to strengthen its position as an international University by putting forward a project that reflected its determination to go beyond the frontiers of knowledge and contribute actively to economic and cultural development.

The projects were selected by an international panel according to stringent criteria aimed at creating university clusters of excellence ranking among the best in the world.

The University of Strasbourg was one of the first three IdEx awardees. In addition to direct endowments linked with other calls for projects amounting to approximately €200 million, the University was allocated a non-consumable capital of €750 million. The annual interest of €25 million generated by investing this endowment serves to fund the 11 LabEx projects run by the University of Strasbourg (€9 million) and specific IdEx actions (€16 million). This latter endowment allows IdEx to be supported through 5 different levers: research, education, economic development, culture and science in society, and steerage and organisation.



François Hollande speaking at the "Institut de science et d'ingénierie supramoléculaires"

The IdEx label is an acknowledgement of the excellence of the Strasbourg site in terms of both research and education and on both a national and international scale. Having demonstrated its capacity to innovate and its dynamism through launching ambitious initiatives, the University of Strasbourg in partnership with CNRS and Inserm, wishes to reinforce its rank in the top 20 great universities in Europe.



Serge Potier,
Deputy Vice-President
in charge of Investments
for the Future



Olivier Guyot,
Executive Director
of "Investments
for the Future"
Office

CRNS and Inserm strongly committed partners



Contributing to upholding multidisciplinary excellence

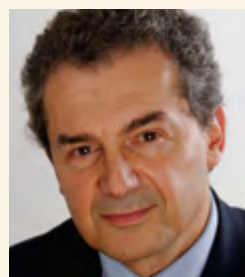
By capitalising on the dynamics of the newly merged University of Strasbourg founded in 2009, CNRS has been a strongly committed founding member of the IdEx UNISTRA project.

In the frame of a policy shared with its partners on the site, the national CNRS organisation is, therefore, a full stakeholder in a coherent and transparent excellence strategy implemented dynamically and efficiently on a national and international scale.

Through its involvement in joint actions and more specific aspects such as inter-disciplinarity, CNRS is contributing to upholding multidisciplinary excellence in a continuum that binds education, research and society and today gives the University of Strasbourg an international status that reflects the excellent qualities inherent in all the partners' personnel.

Today, the University of Strasbourg is a great, multidisciplinary, European University that looks to the future and federates on a regional and cross-border scale. By going beyond the frontiers, together we will raise the challenge of building tomorrow's world of higher education and research in France, Europe and indeed, the world.

Alain Fuchs,
President of the CNRS



A shared strategic vision

The governance of IdEx UNISTRA has allowed its members to share a strategic vision, thereby facilitating complementarity and synergy. I salute the overall organisation which has always been conducted in close collaboration between Inserm, CNRS and the University of Strasbourg.

In concrete terms, the actions supported by IdEx and LabEx have provided the teams with a structure to prepare the next five-year plan resulting in a policy to create a joint, innovative scientific site. They also helped us to form a response together to the challenge of scientific employment (reinforcing research teams with post-doctoral researchers, some of whom have since been recruited by Inserm).

The originality of this collaboration is also illustrated by the public/private partnership set up at the Ksilink Centre, which aims to fast-track the development of medical drugs stemming from new image-based technologies. This partnership, bringing together the University of Strasbourg, Inserm, the Medical Faculty Mannheim of the University of Heidelberg, the Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum and Sanofi, is an example of research-driven economic development.

IdEx has thus been a lever in strengthening the historical partnership between the University of Strasbourg and Inserm by opening up new prospects. It is therefore only natural that I wish to renew the experience.

Pr. Yves Lévy,
Chairman and Managing Director of Inserm

Backing by local stakeholders



Complementary actions furthering regional attractiveness

The Region is proud that the University of Strasbourg should be among the eight French universities bearing the “IdEx” label and the only national University outside Paris to rate so high in the Shanghai ranking (87th), thereby confirming the quality of its research and teaching.

Regional policy extends and accentuates the actions launched by IdEx, thereby bolstering the attractiveness, scientific outreach and competitiveness of our region.

The Region's support is characteristic of this complementarity with investments in structuring research facilities, such as the Image-Guided Surgery Institute and the factory training centre EASE. The backing granted to international student mobility, engineering schools, the Gutenberg Chairs, Fulbright scholarships and doctoral contracts are all examples generated by this shared determination to promote excellence in research and education.

Furthermore, the Region has set itself the goal of devoting 3% of its GDP to R&D expenditure, in line with the proactive strategy of IdEx and the European Commission's recommendations.

Thus, the Region is upholding innovative enterprise by facilitating the transfer of research, reinforcing its excellence and fostering collaboration between the academic and economic worlds. The complementary backing provided by the Region and IdEx in this field testify to this joint determination to strengthen competitiveness on a regional level.

Lilla Merabet,
Vice-President for Innovation and Research
in the Alsace Champagne-Ardenne Lorraine Region

Région **ALSACE**
CHAMPAGNE-ARDENNE
LORRAINE



“Beyond frontiers”... a virtuous and productive alliance

The young and talented University of Strasbourg has confirmed its capacity to adapt to an evolving and demanding environment. In 2009, it marked the landscape by merging three specialized Universities and becoming a pioneer in transforming the French university system. The University of Strasbourg is definitely one the leading universities in France and aims to confirm its position as an innovative and attractive hub in Europe (Eucor-The European Campus) and in the world.

The “Excellence Initiative”, or IdEx, is the keystone of a set of measures aimed at stimulating its ecosystem and partners, especially Strasbourg Eurometropolis. Economic development based on research and the development of projects with a high potential for industrial commercialisation converge quite naturally with the economic development strategy of the City, as stated in the roadmap based on economic fundamentals*.

Shared means and objectives, cross-fertilisation and leverage are some of the unique assets fuelling a productive partnership serving the local and regional community, the future of young people and the academic and scientific sphere - all joined by a common goal.

Catherine Trautmann,
Vice-President in charge of Economic Development for Strasbourg Eurometropolis

** Employment and competences – entrepreneurship – innovation and new economies – equipment and infrastructure.*

Strasbourg.eu
eurométropole



Pooling potential, stepping up cooperation

It is with the greatest pleasure, in my capacity as President of the University of Freiburg and President of Eucor-The European Campus, that I can testify to the role played by IdEx in this project.

Stemming from a group founded in 1989 by the Universities of Basel, Freiburg, Haute-Alsace, Karlsruhe and Strasbourg, and therefore backed by a long tradition of cooperation, Eucor-The European Campus brings together all the potential in research and education in the Upper Rhine. The aim is to reinforce its position in the international arena to attract the very best brains and ideas.

IdEx funds have played a key role in this project. In research, inter-University cooperation has been stepped up through co-funding joint research groups between Freiburg (FRIAS) and Strasbourg (USIAS), as well as the IRTG Soft Matter project. In terms of education, several courses and summer schools have been backed through the Franco-German University. Finally, structurally speaking, we have been able to set up indispensable instruments thanks to IdEx funding.

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans-Jochen Schiewer,
President of the University of Freiburg, President of Eucor-The European Campus

eucor
The European Campus

Research: International outreach

In terms of research, IdEx's strategy is based on:

- bolstering the current state of excellence by providing established or newly arrived researchers with an privileged work environment (mutualised hubs, state-of-the-art equipment, post-doctoral fellows etc.),
- developing tomorrow's excellence by enhancing the site's international appeal and promoting new avenues for research (chairs at the Institute of Advanced Study (USIAS), calls for interdisciplinary projects and international doctoral contracts, exploratory projects etc.).

Within the frame of its special relationship with Germany, the University of Strasbourg has strengthened its scientific collaboration with German research centres, with special focus on Freiburg.

These cooperation programmes include launching a joint call for projects between USIAS and the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Study (FRIAS), and backing the International Research Training Group (IRTG), which notably brings together the Universities of Strasbourg and Freiburg in the field of physical sciences.

Overall during the 2012-2015 period, more than M€30 were devoted to these actions, providing backing for 275 different projects.

USIAS, interdisciplinary by nature, international by vocation

The University of Strasbourg's Institute of Advanced Study (USIAS) was founded in 2012 in the frame of the Excellence Initiative as an incubator for intellectual innovation and interdisciplinary scientific exploration. Its major task is to support original, innovative and ground-breaking fundamental research. To this end, the Institute attracts leading researchers and provides them with the means to pursue their work independently by exploring new ideas and approaches.

Thomas Ebbesen, Director of USIAS explains.



How does the Institute operate?

USIAS is run by a Governing Board made up of ten eminent researchers from Strasbourg appointed by the President of the University. I am

the Director and I am assisted in this task by Professor Sylviane Muller. The Members of the Governing Board all hold a Chair in their respective fields of research and receive an annual endowment to fund their scientific activities.

Each year, in the frame of an international call for projects, we select around twenty fellows who, over a period of three months to two years, receive the support required to bring their research project to fruition. As members of the Institute, they are also invited

to exchange and share their research with the entire community of fellows in an approach that spans different disciplines. The criteria for selecting the fellows are based on the originality and quality of the applicants in terms of ambition, topics, methodology and their cross-disciplinary approach. The Governing Board acts as a selection committee on the basis of external project assessments.

Under the supervision of the Governing Board and the Director, the everyday running of the Institute is managed by the USIAS Office.

Since 2013, USIAS has launched joint calls for projects with its German counterpart in Freiburg. Why?

The links binding the University of Freiburg and the University of Strasbourg are strong for geographical and historical reasons and engender a range of potential cross-border synergies. With this in view, the two Institutes of Advanced Study decided to set up a concrete form of collaboration. The first joint call for projects was therefore launched in 2013 with the aim of backing collaboration between researchers from both universities and fostering highly original joint research projects combining and optimising the strengths of each University. Each project includes at least one researcher from each campus and the researchers become full fellows of both Institutes.

We launched a second biennial call in 2015 and three top-quality projects were selected. The applicants answering the 2015 call show the great potential inherent in pooling the research expertise of both Universities and the benefits of on-going support for cross-border collaborations.

How does USIAS contribute to international outreach of the University of Strasbourg?

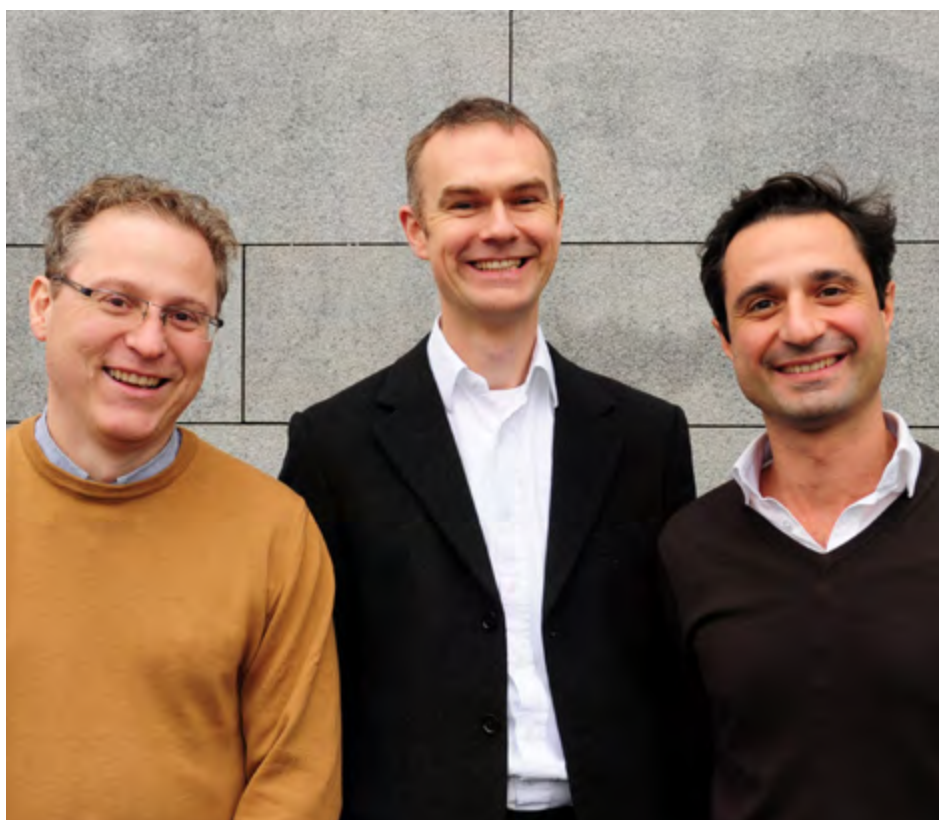
USIAS is both an international showcase for member researchers from Strasbourg and an instrument that attracts top international researchers who come to Strasbourg and plough their expertise into our campus. About 40% of the fellows come from outside - either from other French or European Universities or elsewhere in the world.

Since 2014, USIAS has also set up a short-stay programme targeting internationally renowned researchers. To date, we have invited nine researchers in this frame to come to Strasbourg for a few days and interact with the Strasbourg research community.

In 2015, we also decided to join the UBIAS network which brings together 35 Institutes of Advanced Study from Europe, Asia, Australia, the Americas and Africa. Every year, an international conference of the Directors of the Institutes of Advanced Study is organised to debate common themes and issues.

What does the future hold for USIAS?

In the coming years, our ambition is to further improve our response to the needs of the University community by supporting high-level, original research in Strasbourg and attracting more internationally renowned researchers. Our future goals are therefore broad in scope and in line with the work conducted over the past four years.



Pr. Carlo Gasbarri (University of Strasbourg), Pr. Stefan Kebekus (University of Freiburg), Dr. Gianluca Pacienza (University of Strasbourg), Freiburg-Strasbourg Fellows 2013 working on the joint project Rational points, rational curves and automorphisms of special varieties.

ProjEx, the emergence of new themes for the future

Within the frame of certain calls for applications to obtain the Laboratory of Excellence (LabEx) label, some projects were given highly favourable assessments by the National Research Agency (ANR) and yet were not ultimately selected. Three of these top-level projects boasting a particularly structured frame involving researchers from different research units, have benefited from funding by IdEx.

Entitled "ProjEx", these projects cover the following themes:

- Contributions of exotic animal models in the discovery of new therapeutic approaches in human pathophysiology (H2E)
- Creative, sustainable economies and societies (CSES)
- Strasbourg School of European Studies (SES)

Studying the brown bear to treat humans

Scientists working in the H2E excellence project are examining the mechanisms by which hibernating brown bears manage to preserve their muscle proteins while remaining inactive and fasting for several months. This interdisciplinary research could be useful in treating muscular atrophy in humans.

For several years, wild animals have been used as study models with astonishing results. Fabrice Bertile, a biologist and chemist at the Hubert Curien Multidisciplinary Institute and scientific head of Projex H2E, has taken this firmly on board. Backed by a team of around ten people, he is investigating the physiology of the Scandinavian brown bear. "This species hibernates for five to seven months without losing its muscle mass - a feat man is incapable of imitating. We are therefore studying the molecular regulation that could explain why the muscle proteins are preserved," explains Fabrice Bertile. To do this, the team has called on several experimental approaches ranging from

physiology to proteomics (large-scale analysis of proteins in a cell). Parallel studies are also being run on humans. The metabolism of volunteers, whose task is to remain lying down, is compared to hibernating bears. The research has led to the identification of anti-atrophy molecules.

Group dynamics

"Thanks to funding from IdEx secured until May 2016, we have been able to set up long-term collaboration with our colleagues from Lyon, Scotland, Sweden and Ireland," claims Fabrice Bertile. "Without IdEx, the H2E project would not have progressed so quickly and it would have been difficult to introduce parallel projects, for example our research into new therapeutic approaches against obesity in exotic species (collaboration with the University of Aberdeen)."

Presenting the team's findings has given rise to new projects and cooperation programmes. "The National Centre for Space Studies is particularly interested because during space travel, the muscle mass of astronauts wastes away. With a colleague

from Paris, we will also soon be investigating how the microcebus, a small primate, alternates between obesity and emaciation each year without developing a metabolic pathology. Group dynamics are at the heart of our approach."

In the long run, the ProjEx H2E team wants to find solutions to halt muscular atrophy in humans and even foster the reconstruction of atrophied muscles.



Captured bear sleeping in its den

Interdisciplinary call for projects by IdEx/CNRS: research at the interface

The IdEx/CNRS programme of calls for interdisciplinary projects promotes themes at the interface between the three major fields of research at the University of Strasbourg: the human and social sciences – law economics and management; sciences and technologies; and life and health sciences. Priority is given to projects in the phase of acceleration bringing together at least two project leaders from two different research units or belonging to two different fields of research. In three years, 1.2 million euros have been allocated to 17 interdisciplinary projects.

Two examples

Water as a federating factor

The project on water resources entitled "Expansion and regression of a territory irrigated by the Bahariya oasis from the pharaohs to today" is conducted by three mixed University of Strasbourg/CNRS research units: the Archaeology and Ancient History Laboratory: Mediterranean – Europe, the Institute of Earth Sciences and the Image, Town and Environment Laboratory. The aim is to bring researchers from different disciplines together (archaeology, egyptology,



Lacustrine deposits from the Lower Holocene dissected into yardangs

geophysics, geology, geography) around the issue of water resources and their impact on human activity in a hostile environment – the Egyptian Sahara.

The project focuses on the Bahariya oasis where a field of hydraulic structures has been preserved in particularly favourable archaeological conditions. "We are trying to find out if there is a causal link between the development of these human irrigation techniques and the environmental changes observed at the time, i.e. a more humid period within a principally

arid trend," explains Frédéric Colin, one of the project leaders. "IdEx has enabled us to pool the competences of several disciplines to respond to a common scientific issue," he adds. In the next phase, satellite image software, funded by IdEx, will provide the team with the opportunity of pursuing their research remotely to counter the increasing lack of security on site.

Mixing disciplines to better understand the building of Europe and new anti-Europeanism

The aim behind this project is to better apprehend the phenomenon of refusal, resistance

and opposition to the building of Europe from the early 20th century to the present day. "The very scope of the theme meant we had to call on scientists from all over Europe who had addressed this issue in the frame of their research," explains Patrick Moreau, one of the project leaders. Through an approach broaching "historical depth" and current societal and electoral realities, the reasons for opposing the building of Europe have been deciphered, the highpoints of this resistance updated and the gradual changes in their inherent nature analysed. "We have differentiated the specific nature of opposition according to the players, places and periods concerned. Various forms of resistance have been reset in their national contexts, but also analysed in terms of developments in international relations. This analysis also centred on the outlying borders of the Europe of the 27 to demonstrate why some of our neighbours often share a negative image of the building of Europe." This interdisciplinary research, which blends contemporary history, political sociology and the political sciences, has enabled researchers to update a series of variables and constants on the phenomenon of hostility towards Europe since the 1980s. The project will be pursued by research on the conservative parties in the face of rising anti-Europeanism (Baltic countries, Balkans, Ukraine).

A privileged work environment for researchers

The University of Strasbourg is determined to strengthen the international appeal and outreach of its research units. Three calls for projects play a key role in helping the University to recruit the best national and/or international researchers by honing its attractiveness in the international arena.

“The calls for projects Attractiveness, PhD Contracts and Post-doctoral Contracts are the first we launched thanks to IdEx. With a success rate of 50%, they have helped us welcome and support newcomers and new graduates from our University and to recruit the very best young researchers. These calls for projects are the ideal means of gaining an intermixture of competences and ideas from all countries,” claims Catherine Florentz, Vice-President for Research and Doctoral Training. In four years, there have been 65 awardees of the attractiveness tender (M€6.6), 38 post-doctoral grants (M€3.2) and 58 doctoral grants (M€5).

From Novosibirsk to Strasbourg, the journey of a young post-doctoral researcher

Antonina Fedorova, a young Russian aged 29, chose France for her post-doctoral fellowship. She arrived at the University of Strasbourg in November 2013 for a 2-year contract. Spotlight on the journey of this young scientist with a promising future.

Antonina was born, bred and educated in Novosibirsk at the home of her parents, who are both scientists. After graduating in Engineering and then writing a thesis in Biochemistry, she decided to leave Russia to embark on a post-doctoral fellowship. “After my thesis, I wanted to work in the field of virology on a theme that was more tangible and more useful to society. I applied for a post-doctoral position put online by Dr Schuster* on the website of Nature Jobs and that is how I ended up in Strasbourg,” the young researcher explains. Furthermore, her former director had herself been on several research visits to the University of Strasbourg and approved of her choice. “When you study or do research in Russia, it’s not always easy to attend scientific conferences or travel abroad,” adds Antonina.

Her profile caught Dr Schuster’s attention through the diversity of her competences and professional experiences.

Experience and publications

“Other applicants had more expertise in virology compared to Antonina, but she had experience in corporate project management, research valuation and already 4 scientific publications to her name testifying to the quality of her work,” underlines Catherine Schuster. “Antonina is totally open-minded. She immediately fitted in and adapted to her new environment – France, Strasbourg and the research lab,” her Director enthusiastically adds.

Within the Institute for research into viral and hepatic diseases, Antonina has achieved her goal: to develop a screening system to identify inhibitors of a ribosomal protein called RACK1 essential to the propagation of certain viruses such as hepatitis C.

Antonina Fedorova is the awardee of the 2014 Lavrentiev Prize granted by the French Embassy in Russia.

*Director of Research at Inserm, Assistant Director of UMR1110: Interactions between host viruses and hepatic diseases at the Institute for Research into Viral and Hepatic Diseases – Laboratory of Excellence HepSYS.

Rewarding the University’s young scientific talents

The University of Strasbourg has set up awards for Strasbourg University’s emerging scientific talents in recognition of the quality of the work and paths of young researchers forming the bedrock of the campus’ scientific potential.

For the first edition of the “Strasbourg University’s promising scientific talents” awards in 2014, the call for applications was answered by 29 lecturers, researchers and assimilated personnel benefitting from 6 to 10 years’ seniority in the research units attached to the University of Strasbourg. In 2015, the research committee received 34 application files. On offer each year, ten awards of 10,000 euros given to scientists with an original, dynamic approach to implementing their research. Rather than an assessment of the quality of the scientific research at a given moment in time, it is the relevance and dynamic path of the applicants that is rewarded. The criteria for analysing their achievements since taking up their positions include the scientific value of their current work, diversity and the potential for future developments.

The wealth, diversity and complementarity of research fields are given a place of honour

Joseph Schacherer, heading a research team of 10 people within the Molecular Genetics, Genomics and Microbiology research unit, received the award in 2014. His research work examines the genomics of populations (study of the genetic diversity of individuals belonging to the same species) and is based on the systematic next generation, high-speed sequencing of whole-genomes of yeast. “A large proportion of the award will be used in sequencing genomes in the frame of our different projects,” confirms Joseph Schacherer.

During the 2015 award ceremony last October, Catherine Florentz, Vice President in charge of Research and Doctoral Training, underlined that “the wealth, diversity and complementarity of research fields are given a place of honour,” and also commented on “the knock-on effect these distinctions have on the whole community”. The fact that ten new awardees will be designated in the spring of 2016 is proof the initiative’s success.



Award-giving ceremony for “Strasbourg University’s promising scientific talents”

Sport and health: a centre at the interface of research and training

Strasbourg already pioneered the concept of “sport & health by prescription” in 2012. In September 2016, it will host the European Centre for Training, Research and Innovation in Exercise Physiology (Ceeripe) on the site of the general hospital. Funded by IdEx, this project is run by the Faculty of Sport Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine and the Mitochondrion, Oxydative Stress and Muscle Protection research unit at the University of Strasbourg.

Physical activity and sport are an integral part of treating a number of illnesses through educating obese, diabetic or asthmatic patients and those suffering from respiratory or heart disorders or in remission from cancer. On the strength of this observation, the Faculties of Sport Sciences (FS3) and Medicine at the University of Strasbourg have collaborated on the sport-health theme for several years. From this everyday cooperation arose the idea of setting up a platform for assessing and improving physical capacity for both athletes and patients.

Ceeripe offers a dedicated site for classes and practical work and also provides the essential facilities required to develop research activities targeting sport, health and sporting performance. “The research work has a twofold aim: enhancing the performance of sports men and women and improving the physical condition and quality of life in healthy people and patients,” explains Fabrice Favret, who heads the exercise physiology research group.

Innovative training methods

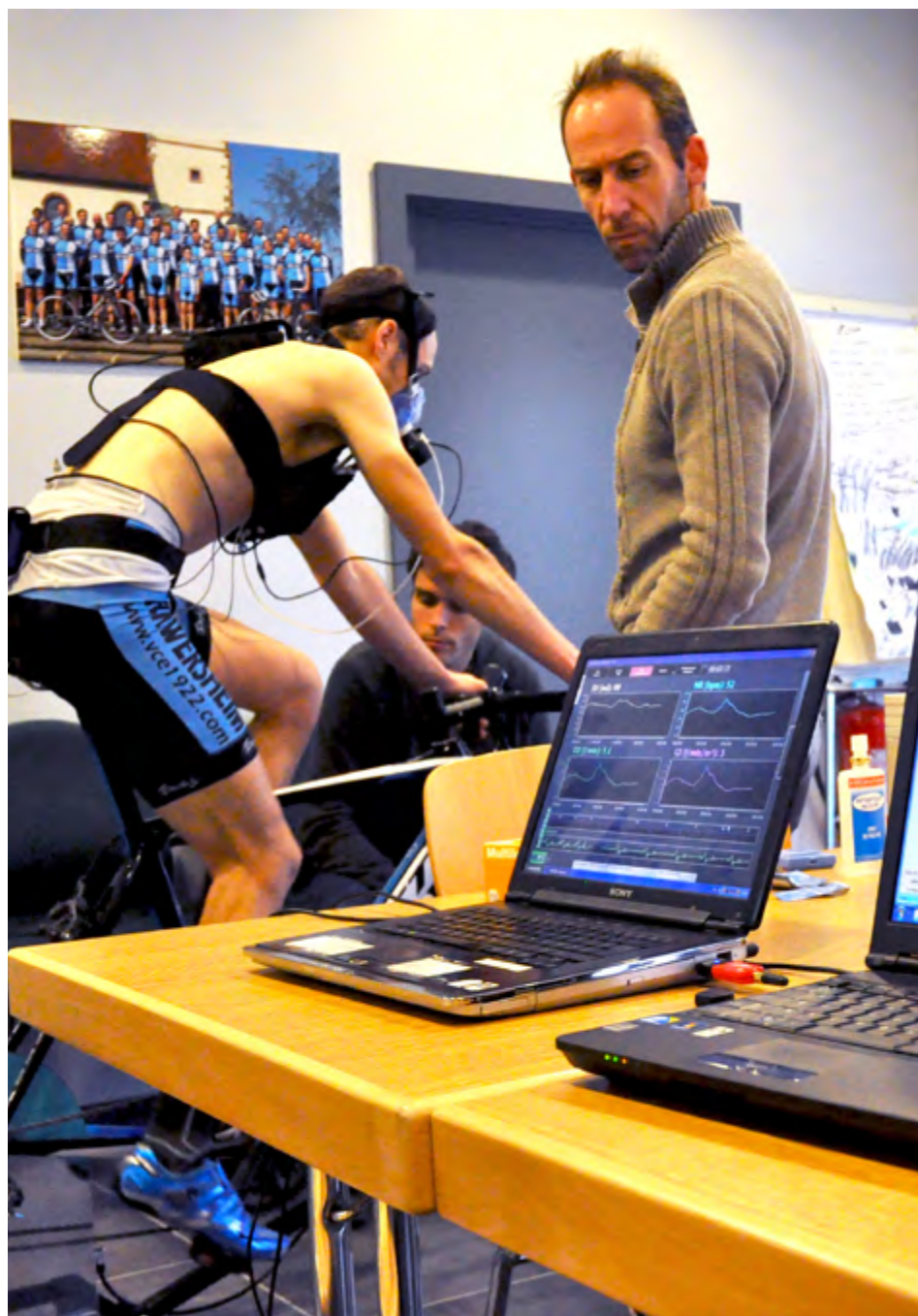
To this effect, specialists can count on top-quality equipment funded by IdEx, in order to measure the oxygen consumption of individuals tested in physical exercise situations. “We will develop innovative training methods based on concentric and eccentric contraction exercises associated with sufficient or insufficient oxygenation.”



This research will also be beneficial to students from both faculties.

One section of the building, covering about 300 square metres, will be reserved for classrooms. “At the centre, students from the second year upwards will be spearheading studies in sport and health. We will be transforming the classical approach to training, which is still highly theoretical today, by integrating a lot of practical work,” explains Fabrice Favret. The fact that students from both faculties work side by side on this platform will also foster greater mutual knowledge and spark off new interactions.

In the near future, both faculties also hope to set up a European Master's Degree in Health and Sport with their Swedish, British and Spanish partners to train future researchers on this up-and-coming theme.



Cardiology-cycling laboratory

INTERVIEW



Catherine Florentz,
Vice-President for Research and Doctoral
Training, University of Strasbourg

Supporting excellence everywhere

“The outcome for research has been extremely positive thanks to the high number of innovative actions that have been energetically undertaken and the remarkable financial support. 60% of the excellence initiative funds have been ploughed into this lever. By gradually implementing appropriate calls for projects, we have attained a number of the key objectives set jointly with our partners CNRS and Inserm. We have attracted leading international researchers, which is particularly stimulating and rewarding, while contributing to international outreach of the University of Strasbourg. USIAS, the Institute of Advanced Study, has been a major instrument to this effect. Supporting the emergence of new projects – be they structuring projects or risky, exploratory, interdisciplinary and innovative projects – and setting up an international PhD programme, all means we can lay down the path for tomorrow's research in a structured fashion and train young researchers. The investment in new-generation equipment boasting state-of-the-art technology has enabled us to transform several mutualised platforms on each campus. Furthermore, the work environment for researchers has been greatly improved in a number of fields. Freshly recruited researchers and those developing new avenues for research have benefited from significant new facilities. During the past 4 years, 275 projects have been backed by the research lever – which is impressive and points to feverish activity! Through adopting an inclusive policy, we have been able to support and open the gateway to excellence everywhere within the vast array of disciplines which make up the extraordinary wealth of the University of Strasbourg. IdEx has most definitely contributed to lending a fresh impetus to research, firmly consolidating the University of Strasbourg's international ranking and upholding our ever-expanding outreach!”

From innovation to conformation

With the aim of attaining the very best international standards in terms of higher education and enhancing its visibility and appeal, the University of Strasbourg advocated an in-depth transformation of its teaching practices and the development of rejuvenated, internationally-oriented training.

The University of Strasbourg has therefore enhanced the courses on offer by ushering in interdisciplinary training, introduced innovative paths, experimented with bringing in novel teaching practices, and created new resources and teaching platforms.

Historically and geographically, Strasbourg has always been at the forefront of Franco-German relations. One of the ambitions of IdEx has therefore focused on consolidating this special relationship by setting up a close partnership with the Franco-German University (FGU). In addition to Franco-German Summer School projects, the aim is to foster in-coming and out-going mobility for the students enrolled in the 17 Franco-German courses coming under the FGU label.

The high point of the Franco-German cooperation is the founding of Eucor-The European Campus. This project, aimed at setting up a free academic zone, is supported by the five Chief Education Officers and Presidents of the Eucor Universities: Basel, Freiburg, Karlsruhe, Mulhouse and Strasbourg.

Idip, radically transforming teaching practices

Founded in February 2013 at the University of Strasbourg, the Institute for Innovation in Higher Education Pedagogy (Idip) is an experimental "laboratory" for developing educational innovations aimed at fostering new teaching practices and learning methods. This structure, which is the flagship of the Training lever of the IdEx, has developed expertise in this field acknowledged at both national and international level.

Since last autumn, Idip has been located in the future Lifelong Learning Centre and today is entering a phase of maturation after 3 years of existence. It was founded to support pedagogical development and innovation and focuses on four key tasks: teacher training in higher education, providing support for teachers in achieving their initiatives, carrying out research on the effects of innovation in teaching practices and change management in higher education. *"This fourth field of action consists in offering tools and environments in parallel to systemic changes - which often trigger doubts and resistance. We help people to go beyond perceiving change as an obstacle and to see it as an opportunity,"* explains Nicole Rege Colet, Director of Idip.

The visible tip of Idip's actions consists in offering a broad range of teaching programmes. Course design, learning assessment, developing teaching practices, basing the 2018-2022 curriculum on competences, and developing course assessment tools for students are all training courses open to university lecturers. *"We welcome a highly varied public ranging from lecturers just starting out on their careers to Faculty Deans,"* Nicole Rege Colet remarks.

Meeting individual needs

Since last year, Idip has developed another line of action: counselling and assistance for teachers and educational teams. Idip's



Nicole Rege Colet



Idip training workshop

team of counsellors help lecturers implement tools so that they can achieve their teaching projects. *"This assistance goes beyond the general principles put forward during training workshops. It really is a question of meeting individual needs,"* insists Nicole Rege Colet.

In the future, Idip will have the opportunity of evaluating the findings of current research to measure the impact of educational innovations on student learning during the many scientific events in the field of education scheduled in 2016. *"Through Idip, IdEx has enabled the University of Strasbourg to make up lost ground in the field of educational innovation and has even*

turned it into a flagship University in this field. We are constantly being invited to other universities to talk about our experience. Now that we have given people hope, we have to keep moving forward," admits Nicole Rege Colet. In terms of training, the Idip team is increasingly involved in course engineering for the various departments investing in innovative educational projects. In terms of counselling and assistance, work must be focused on how to support projects developing in a context governed by tight budgetary restrictions. *"After 3 experimental years, we must capitalise on this project and set ourselves ambitious aims,"* Nicole Rege Colet concludes.

TESTIMONY

Mélodie Faury, Director of the *Maison pour la Science en Alsace*, gives an account of her experience with Idip.

"Idip has the delicate task of taking us out of our comfort zone"

"When I first met the Idip team, I had spontaneously accepted an invitation by Nicole Rege Colet. I enthusiastically embarked upon a new approach with pleasure, but alone. So I decided to come back with my colleagues.

For this contact day, I had asked Nicole Rege Colet and her team to get us to live through the group work experience and act as a catalyst for our collective thoughts on a theme which is central to our own actions when training teachers in primary and secondary education.

The *Maison pour la Science* team waited impatiently for this day, when we were to examine how we train teachers, look into other potential ways of mobilising trainees and think in action. I was surprised by the activities that were proposed to us, the strong, unexpected reactions they triggered in the team, and the words we used to express the way we work as a group and our teaching and training experiences. It was a thought-provoking experience.

I realised how difficult but necessary it is to set people off kilter, because this process destabilises us and forces us to face our own contradictions. And how innovation isn't feasible without going through a reflective process and questioning our inbuilt norms - without taking time to stand back. Idip has the delicate task of taking us out of our comfort zone, and the trainers carry out this task skilfully and with great finesse."

Excellence paths and programmes enhancing the appeal of courses and training

With the launching of IdEx, the university's fundamental mission - education - has become an experimental arena by setting up an approach implementing educational projects based on 5 criteria of excellence: education via and for research, internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, educational innovation and student success.

IdEx supports 2 types of teaching projects:

- degrees of excellence, which offer the students an interdisciplinary and/or international path based on research and flexible, innovative teaching methods,
- programmes of excellence, which provide students from all paths with top-level courses in line with the best standards based on internationally renowned research.

Since the inception of these calls for projects, several courses have received the excellence label such as the Bachelor's Degree in Humanities at the Faculties of Historical Sciences, Arts, Foreign Languages and Cultures and Philosophy, the Bachelor's Degree in International Economics and Management at the Faculty of economics and management, the profession-oriented Master's Degree in International Production of Cinematographic and Audio-visual Works at the Faculty of Arts and the programme Excellence by Experiment at the Department of Physics and Engineering.

Interview with Sandrine Courtin on the EX2 programme

"Delivering training via research"

Since the start of the 2014-2015 academic year, the University of Strasbourg and CNRS have offered a course called Excellence by Experiment (EX2) for students studying physics. Sandrine Courtin, who is in charge of the project, describes this innovative programme.

In what way does this course stand out from the others?

The project provides an opportunity for students from the Department of Physics and Engineering at the University of Strasbourg - from the 3rd year of the Bachelor's Degree up to Ph.D. level - to further their studies through a set of unprecedented experimental classes based on the unique know-how of the great laboratories in Strasbourg and Europe. The heart of the project consists of a set of 7 experimental platforms devoted to a learning experience that goes beyond the usual classroom context. The techniques used involve cutting-edge research work, and also the latest medical and industrial applications. Teaching is conducted in small groups in immersion with the research teams* and all tuition is given in English. This opens our courses up to foreign students and encourages students from the University of Strasbourg to study abroad, especially at universities that offer highly experimental programmes. The aim is truly to deliver training via research in order to support students up until they do their thesis.

What is your initial assessment of this project?

Feedback from the students is excellent. This type of initiative has motivated a number of students to enrol at the University of Strasbourg, including students from abroad. The students underline this unique opportunity to train for research by immersing themselves in a research team and laboratory. The 32 students in the first cohort have all successfully completed the EX2 course with grades above 12/20.

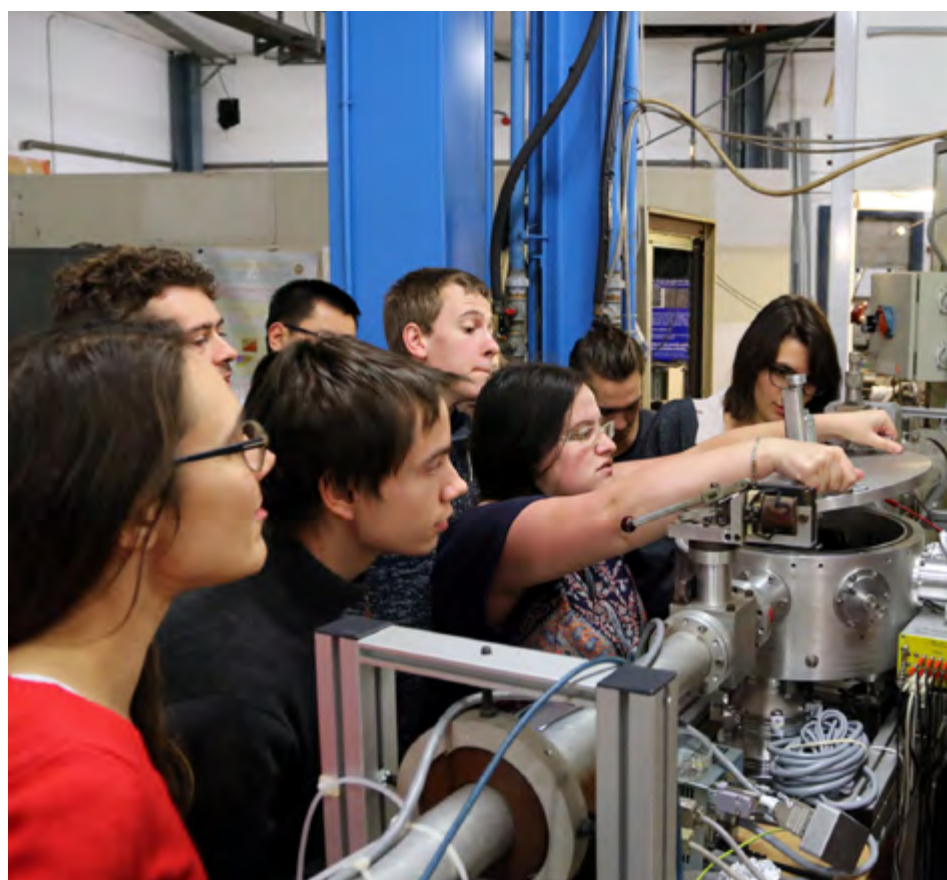
What does the future hold?

For 2015-2016, we already have 21 students enrolled for the first semester and we are thinking of turning this course into a long-term prospect insofar as we can obtain teaching hours for the teachers as

part of their tenure and set up operating funds to keep the platforms running, buy consumables and hopefully be able to cope with any minor hitches.

In any case, the initiative is popular both in France and beyond our borders. I am in contact with colleagues in Britain to discuss how to set up a similar project over there.

*Three research units are taking part in the programme: Hubert Curien pluridisciplinary Institute (University of Strasbourg - CNRS), the Strasbourg Astronomical Observatory (University of Strasbourg - CNRS) and the Laboratory of Engineering, Computer Science and Imagery (University of Strasbourg - CNRS - INSA Strasbourg - ENGEEES).



Experiment run by students in the EX2 programme



"Educational Excellence" award-giving ceremony

Rewarding excellence

Launched in 2014, the Educational Excellence Awards are given to the teams behind exemplary teaching programmes.

The Educational Excellence Awards were initiated in acknowledgement of the work and commitment of training teams. The real work environment set up for the course is of key importance, with the focus being on giving students every chance to succeed through solid support. To select the prize-winning teams, the quality of several aspects is assessed including how the students are welcomed, assisted and monitored. Innovative teaching practices and methods are also decisive criteria. Other aspects focus on how the courses stand out in terms of bridging the transition between school and university, links with research, innovation, career prospects and day release courses.

Six prizes were awarded for the first round:

- the Master's Degree in European Politics at the Institute of Political Science of Strasbourg,
- the Master's Degree in Demography at the Faculty of Social Sciences,
- the tri-national Civil Engineering course at IUT Robert Schumann,
- the Bachelor's Degree in Life Sciences at the Faculty of Life Sciences,
- the Master's Degree in Design at the Faculty of Arts
- the Master's Degree in the Management of International Projects at the Faculty of economics and management.

Each prize-winning department received a prize of €16,600 funded by IdEx in order to support the courses and their teams.

Putting success first

With its student success plan and the implementation of full continuous assessment, the University of Strasbourg is clearly turning the spotlight onto the success of its students.

The list of obstacles to student success is long – making the wrong study choice, going for default options, difficulties with methodology, note-taking and personal work organisation, finding your feet in the great university hub-bub after years of sheltered schooling. And the statistics speak for themselves. Today, only one quarter of students pass their first year of the Bachelor's Degree and 46% of students don't even turn up for the exams. *"The gap is just too wide for some students,"* regrets Pascale Bergmann, Deputy Vice-President for Student Success. *"The situation is not*

satisfactory for the students, their families, the teaching staff or the University." Indeed, the situation is so alarming that the University of Strasbourg launched an extensive programme fostering student success in the spring 2014, funded by IdEx.

Firstly, surveys were conducted directly with the students in order to pinpoint their difficulties more accurately and help them cope with the situation. A number of concrete actions were, of course, set up before the findings of the surveys were published, including informing high school pupils about university courses, student life, job opportunities and careers, strengthening relations with high schools, establishing links between teachers in the secondary and higher education systems, improving our welcome for first-year students, reinforcing

guidance for students who encounter difficulties by acting as rapidly as possible and proposing different study paths. And above all, as Pascale Bergmann insists, *"teaching students that you can learn a lot from your mistakes and failures."*

The Rebound Path

In charge of student guidance, the Espace Avenir Department at the University of Strasbourg has set up an initial Rebound Path targeting students at the beginning of their university education who wish to change courses. The aim of this path is for the students to get to know themselves better, identify new training opportunities and explore new fields of professional activity with an intensive one-week course in

February, several half days in March and a two-week observation internship.

It was also with student success in mind that full continuous assessment was introduced in a number of courses from September 2012. The advantages are considerable: regular assessments allow students to understand their mistakes and therefore progress throughout their training; the personal work provided by the students is more constant; the learning process is gradual and sustained; and the academic calendar is optimised with the duration of the semesters being extended. The final goal, as the Presidency team at the University of Strasbourg never fails to underline, is always to *"work towards greater success for the students and upgrade the quality of degrees awarded by the University."*

Support for students at the top of their game in sport and the arts

Within the frame of IdEx, the University aims to make studying more accessible for students at the top of their game in sport and the arts by granting them a specific status.

In order to reconcile top-level sports activities and success in their studies, 90 students at the University of Strasbourg benefit from learning assistance and adapted class programmes to make it easier for them to train and take part in competitions. This new status is also helping student artists to accommodate the performance of their artistic practices within adapted study conditions. *"Although this status has officially been in force at the University of Strasbourg since 2009, it hadn't been formalised until now. We therefore*

took full advantage of the Culture, Sciences and Society lever of IdEx to systematise the process. In addition to an adapted study programme, students who are involved in an artistic project requiring funds can benefit from financial aid," explains Mathieu Schneider, Vice-President for Sciences in society. An ad hoc committee, bringing together the Vice-President for Initial and Continuing Education, the Director of the University Department for Cultural Action (Suac), the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, an elected student representative and five professionals specialised in cinema, music, dance, theatre and the fine arts, is now in charge of examining student application files. Since 2014, six students have obtained the status of top-level student artists.



The Unistra women's judo team – French champions 2013

Greater mobility for better recruitment prospects



International Mobility Day, October 2014

Unistra's IdEx Mobility Programme encourages students from Strasbourg to embark on the adventure of international mobility. An example with Aurélie Kimmel.

In August 2013, Aurélie Kimmel set off on a long, but wonderful journey. The young student, who had just graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and Economics, flew off to Montreal where she enrolled for 6 months at the University of Concordia, which is highly renowned for its courses in Economics. Thanks to the excellent grades she had earned to validate her degree and the quality of her mobility project, Aurélie Kimmel received a grant of €400 per month from the University of Strasbourg in the frame of its IdEx Mobility Programme 2013. *"I discovered new working methods and research prospects. At Concordia, there were fewer class hours than in France, but much more personal work. The lecturers were always ready to help. They strongly encouraged us to read economic papers and proposed a number of practical case studies. And a lot of workshops were run to help us improve our*

oral expression and ability to work in a team," the young economist recalls.

Back home, in addition to recalling outings to explore Toronto and the Niagara Falls, Aurélie Kimmel draws up a doubly positive evaluation of her semester in Quebec. *"The challenge to do part of your studies abroad is an experience that is highly prized by recruiters. I think this experience will be useful for me since I will have to travel in my professional career. It's also an opportunity to be an ambassador for the University of Strasbourg when meeting and discussing with other students on the campus."* The experience has helped her decide to complete her training with a Master's Degree in Economic Analyses and Policies.

In the three academic years from 2013 to 2016 in the frame of its IdEx Mobility Programme, the University of Strasbourg has granted 149 mobility grants (for a total budget of K€490) to students who have chosen to pursue their university studies abroad in one of the University's 700 partner establishments, divided equally between the European Union and the rest of the world.

The Franco-German knot is tied in Strasbourg

With Franco-German summer schools and courses, the University of Strasbourg ranks top in terms of University cooperation between France and Germany. And the entire establishment benefits from this outreach.

The idea behind summer schools is to get a few dozen students from all four corners of the earth to meet up for a couple of weeks in July or August. Tutored by university lecturers and researchers, they carry out study projects on highly specific scientific themes. Since 2013, IdEx has co-funded 15 summer schools with the Franco-German University (FGU), playing host to around 750 students.

The height of attractiveness

Thus, from 5 to 11 July last year, the Department of Physics and Engineering at the University of Strasbourg welcomed a class on the following theme "Light! An introduction to modern Physics of light". On the agenda, the nature of light, interactions between light and matter, light as a messenger, and how light can be manipulated - with lecturers from the Institute for Solar Physics of the University of Freiburg, the Paris Observatory, the Institute of Optics in Bordeaux, the Institute of Physics and Chemistry of Materials in Strasbourg, and the Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) of Saclay. And to round things off nicely, visits to the Institute for Solar Physics in Freiburg and CNRS were organised as well as a boat tour around Strasbourg and rambling in the Vosges mountains. "Thanks to our efficient Franco-German partnership and the sound link between training and research, we can bring in the best researchers on the subject and attract students from all over the world," explains biochemist Joern Pütz, Deputy Vice-President of the University of Strasbourg for Franco-German Relations. "For our universities, it's the height of attractiveness."

Virtually at the same time, from 5 to 10 July, the Universities of Freiburg and Strasbourg, in collaboration with the Universities of Basel and Mulhouse, organised a summer school on "Concepts and methods in soft matter" in Mittelwihr at the heart of the Alsace vineyards. 80 young Ph.D. students from the Upper Rhine Universities, but also from Africa and Asia, made the journey to attend the lectures and presentations of scientific posters, before enjoying visits to the wine cellars and partaking in tasting sessions of the very best of Alsace vintages. Another location and other dates, from 19 to 29 August, on the Mulhouse campus, around 20 French and German students got together with a single idea in mind: learning their neighbours' language. The students worked in French-German pairs, discussed matters and together solved corporate issues which they presented before a panel, in French for the Germans and in German for the French. The class is called "die Brücke", reflecting the desire to set up sustainable bridges between the two banks of the River Rhine.

100% of students obtain their diploma

That is, after all, the aim of Franco German courses, explains the Deputy Vice-President for Franco-German Relations. "The institutional partnership with the FGU is one of the strategic priorities of the University of Strasbourg. It is a very concrete means of building up the European Campus project developed by Eucor." Indeed, in addition to the summer schools, every year some 400 students from Strasbourg and Germany follow one of the 17 Franco-German courses co-organised by the University of Strasbourg and its partner German universities. The Franco-German Life Sciences path, proposed jointly by the Universities of Saarland in Saarbrücken and of Strasbourg, gives students the opportunity of gaining both a French Bachelor's Degree in Life Sciences and a German BSc. Out of the 6

semesters of study, a French student will spend the first and second years at the University of Strasbourg and the third year at the University of Saarland, plus an internship lasting 20 weeks in a German research laboratory. And German students follow the reverse process.

Sixteen other courses (at Bachelor and Master's level) are built up on an identical model such as the INSA Engineering School in Strasbourg and the Universities of Karlsruhe and Dresden, the Department of History in Strasbourg and the University of Bamberg, and the School of Architecture in Strasbourg and the Universities of Karlsruhe and Dresden. During the mobility phase, each student benefits from a fixed mobility grant of €270 per month, co-funded in equal shares by the FGU and IdEx. The results are unequivocal: the success rates and professional integration for these students studying in the Franco-German courses speak for themselves. 100% of them obtain their diploma, after which 75 to 80% find their first job within 3 months.



INTERVIEW



Michel Deneken,
Vice-President for Initial and Continuing
Education, University of Strasbourg

Mobilising collective intelligence to build up an educational programme of excellence

"Education has benefited from many initiatives supported by IdEx. While Idip has developed individual assistance to improve the teaching skills of lecturers, several innovative programmes have been brought into play, inducing changes which are now firmly anchored in the educational teams who have taken on board our programme-based approach. These assets are opening up new prospects for the University of Strasbourg as it prepares its new 2018-2022 five-year curriculum programme. The entire curriculum will be drawn up in line with a programme-based approach focusing on the competences and employability of students. Furthermore, teaching practices and innovations shall be totally dedicated to improving the learning process.

The IdEx programme will continue to support ambitious teaching programmes and platforms providing facilities. Its main objective will be to help the teaching community to take what has been successfully experimented and turn it into a widespread phenomenon. The challenge our University must take up is to develop excellence where we might not spontaneously expect it to arise. Thus, insofar as French universities are obliged to welcome massive cohorts of students in the first cycle, we wish to mobilise collective intelligence to build up an educational programme of excellence. Some operations are already being envisaged, for example supporting all initiatives stemming from our educational teams in favour of student success and setting up a centre for key competences focusing on reinforcing the transversal competences of students. We would also like to create new university diplomas which will help students to obtain supplementary qualifications outside the usual academic fields, promote the international development of the teaching programme by increasing the number of classes taught in English and strengthen the links between research laboratories and the teaching programme."



Franco-German Forum at the Strasbourg Music and Conference Centre, November 2014

Generating attractiveness, spurring visibility

As a cultural stakeholder reaching out to the City, the University of Strasbourg is committed to boosting artistic creation, diffusing scientific and technical culture and sharing knowledge on the Campus.

The University of Strasbourg facilitates the transfer of knowledge towards society and is particularly keen on keeping the general public informed in order to fuel the debate with citizens on science and technology.

To bring culture, science and society into perfect synergy, various actions orchestrated by IdEx are centred on a twofold strategy:

- supporting the diffusion of scientific culture and artistic creation,
- fostering the dynamics of intellectual and artistic life.

Intervention funds have been set up to reinforce the appeal of cultural life on the Strasbourg Campus and uphold new actions contributing to the dialogue between the University and society.

In addition to the backing provided by IdEx to bring to fruition over 60 artistic and cultural projects advocating knowledge sharing (exhibitions, artist residencies, lectures etc.), the policy undertaken has moreover fostered the development of initiatives stemming from students, thereby reinforcing their feeling of belonging to the University of Strasbourg.

Life of a campus opened to the city

The aim of the Culture, Sciences and Society (CSS) lever of the IdEx, is to strengthen the University's involvement in the life of our fellow citizens. Among others, it plays a role in developing scientific communication, cultural actions, communication tools and student initiatives.

Mathieu Schneider, Vice-President for Sciences in society at the University of Strasbourg clarifies the situation.



What are the objectives inherent in this lever?

The aim of the CSS lever is three-fold. Firstly, pathways between the University and

the City must be built inciting researchers and students to meet and exchange with the inhabitants of Strasbourg and the region. And, in the other direction, the local population must be encouraged to come to our scientific and cultural events. In terms of content, our next ambition is to involve the University of Strasbourg in the debates that fuel our society and for which our researchers can make their contribution. Finally, all this implies a strategic reflection on the University's identity, in other words how it is perceived by our fellow citizens firstly as a place of training and research, but also, without detracting from its main roles, as a melting pot of knowledge into which everyone can dip in all legitimacy.

Abbas Kiarostami, David Diao, Werner Herzog, Ruedi Baur and Steinunn Sigurdardottir have all been artists-in-residency at the University over the last few years. What purpose does this type of action serve?

Artist residencies at the University are not just creative residencies as we often see in cultural structures such as theatres, arts centres and orchestras etc. In our case, they also take on an educational dimension. The artists come to meet the students and work with them on a new artistic project or on the basis of their works. Outreach and interdisciplinarity are the keywords of these ventures, which means that it is not just a question of discussing art per se, but reflecting on its relationship with technology, society, the world, history and heritage.



Was the idea of going beyond certain divides at the heart of the Ososphere Festival last November?

The Ososphere Festival was organised on the campus for two reasons. Firstly, to bring the inhabitants of Strasbourg into our newly landscaped campus and let them discover the park in another way - which was often disconcerting, sometimes poetic and at times frankly strange. And secondly it questioned the role and place of universities in 21st century cities. To do this, we needed artists and researchers, and at the interface between the two, we needed professionals from the world of cultural action and scientific communication. The aim of the event was to give a meaning to the park landscaped on the Esplanade campus. Everyone must feel at home in this park, which has been designed to be "green and open", hence the idea of setting up a scientific and artistic programme. Other smaller events are scheduled to take place, notably the installation of the Metakiosk in the spring - a convertible work of art which will change over the seasons and where people will be able to take refuge, lounge about or chat.

Chatting and debating - does the University of Strasbourg also attempt to answer the questions posed by society?

Of course. That is the second of the 3 objectives covered by this lever. The debates held at the Aubette in 2013 served as a prelude to another cycle of debates that we have launched on the subject of Europe. Any University can organise society debates, but what is specific to Strasbourg, is the presence of the European Institutions and the Eurodistrict. This is why we launched the grand debates on Europe in 2015. This series of encounters attracted important witnesses of our times such as Enrico Letta, Philippe Herzog, Catherine Trautmann and General de Bavinchove. We discussed European policy, finances, culture and defence - but we also spoke about ecology, the media and local democracy. And there's more to come!

How would you sum up the first phase?

I think that over the past 4 years, we have advanced in all three directions. We can say that the University of Strasbourg is increasingly perceived as a real stakeholder in local life at different levels and that it is no longer seen as a forbidden city. Cultural partners and art schools have become used to working with our students, lecturers and researchers. Clubs and associations are in great demand and I have also noted a change in the general public, who come in greater numbers and from different walks of life.



The "green and open" Campus at the Esplanade

The benefits can be seen within our university community as well. Thanks to two calls for projects, backing has been provided for the initiatives undertaken by researchers and lecturers. Students have also taken IdEx on board via the Creative Thinkers programme set up by Quentin Ménigoz, Vice-President for University Life, and myself, in order to fund innovative, ambitious projects stemming from students. When we speak of creating our own identity, we mean first and foremost that we have adopted an inclusive approach linking everyone with the notion of excellence. That is our ambition and we aim to see it through.

So what exactly do you expect the future to hold?

I would like to underline the importance of calls for projects. Expectations in the University community are high and we need to uphold their initiatives. I would like to earmark part of IdEx to enhance our collections. And also there is a lot of spadework to be done in terms of our relationship with the local and regional community. IdEx could back actions targeting the suburbs and rural areas.

Projects and initiatives contributing to Strasbourg University's outreach

Law Moot Court Competition - going for the world title

Having qualified to participate in the international final of the most prestigious and oldest competition for defence speeches in the world, the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, a team of students reading International Law at the University of Strasbourg left for Washington in April 2015. Representing France, they pleaded their cause with fine precision against 4 other international delegations on themes simulating a fictitious dispute between countries before the International Court of Justice.

Creation of the plaster casts Museum "Spotlight on replicas of ancient works"

This is an original initiative launched by two students reading archaeology. In March 2015, Anatole Boule and Jonas Parétias founded the Association of the Friends of the Adolf-Michaelis Museum and carried out a number of projects to enhance one of the largest collections of plaster casts replicating ancient works, some of which no longer exist, in the cellars of the *Palais Universitaire*. First, they

organised an exhibition called "Via Greece" to give a new lease of life to the collection and then they launched an awareness programme for specialists and novices in saving artworks and went on to draw up an inventory of the works and their restoration.

Bulli Tour Europa

From May to October 2014, Claire Audhuy and Baptiste Cogitore, then young graduates from the University of Strasbourg, set off to meet men and women who experience Europe on an everyday basis. The two reporters of Bulli Tour Europa travelled some 16,000 km from the Balkans to the Baltics via the Black Sea in order to gather witness accounts from Europeans on pertinent issues such as "Identities and Minorities", "Memories and Nationalisms" and "Theatre and Resistance". They then followed up this work by formalising their findings in short films and articles.

Louise-Weiss Prize, student literary competition

Founded in 2014, the Louise-Weiss Prize is a literary competition for students from the University of Strasbourg who are at one and

the same time the participants, jury, authors and readers. Organised by the University in partnership with the Eurobabel Association which backs student creation, the competition covers different literary forms: realist narrative, poetic prose and fantasy short stories. Rebounding from the success of the previous editions, the talent-revealing experience is being renewed in 2016. Each year, the University publishes a collection of the short stories most highly prized by a jury made up of all the students in the University in partnership with Strasbourg University Press.

Witness account of a cultural heritage in jeopardy

Focusing on archaeology in the Near East and ziggurats, the exhibition entitled "Ana Ziqquratim - On the Trail of Babel" will be held in the spring of 2016 at the National University Library in Strasbourg.



Led by Philippe Quenet, an archaeologist specialising in the Near East, this interdisciplinary project brings together researchers and students, scenographers and graphic artists, archaeologists and architects in order to reconstruct as accurately as possible the terraced temples of which no vestiges remain today. Models, most of which have not been seen before, show the evolution of these edifices between the 5th and 1st millennium before the Common Era - the crowning glory being the ziggurat of Babylon.

The mathematical calendar: a problem a day

Published by Strasbourg University Press and posing a mathematical problem to be solved every day, the mathematical calendar is a daily challenge launched by researchers at the University of Strasbourg with the complicity of CNRS and the Institute for Advanced Mathematical Research (Irma). Since it was launched in 2014, the mathematical calendar has adopted a different theme every year and presents mathematics as a game in order to promote creative thinking. It has proved to be highly successful with the public at large.

Giving young people a taste for science

Operation OpenLab

Inaugurated at the start of the 2008-2009 academic year, operation OpenLab fosters the innovative and educational outreach of research laboratories supervised by the Doctoral School for Life Sciences and Health at the University of Strasbourg, and has met with great success with high-school pupils and their teachers.

Operation OpenLab was generated firstly by a desire to go out and meet high-school pupils and their families and introduce them to scientific careers. It was also fuelled by the firm conviction that educational actions of this type, such as those run by "La main à la pâte" Foundation, meet with the greatest success. Its aim was to visit Year 12 classes in the scientific streams in high schools throughout the region of Alsace in order to give a dynamic presentation of the sciences with active participation by the pupils themselves.



These visits were taken on by Ph.D. students benefiting from an additional assignment entitled "diffusing scientific and technical information". It gave them the opportunity of being more confident in front of an audience, finding simple ways of expressing complex ideas, enhancing their thesis work with a speech adapted to the audience and exchanging with other people.

"In 2014-2015, we visited schools in 15 towns in Alsace, across the entire region from Wissembourg to Altkirch. 24 high schools welcomed our 6 Ph.D. students, who gave a total of 83 talks to 1,472 pupils," explains Vincent Leclerc, who coordinated the operation. However, like every year, OpenLAB is a victim of its own success and received more requests than it could cope with. *"The replies to our follow-up questionnaires on the quality of the operation show that teachers were satisfied with the organisation of the event and the quality of the teaching tools, the clarity of the explanations and discussions with the pupils. And the pupils themselves say it is a real pleasure to take part in the operation and have close contact with the Ph.D. students."*

Backed by IdEx since 2012, operation OpenLAB has been renewed each year on an ever increasing scale. To this end, two extra Ph.D. students have been recruited with the support of the Region of Alsace and the Eurometropolis.

Atouts Project

The Atouts project - A taste of university for teens - aims to stimulate an interest in the sciences in pupils from elementary to high school and make them familiar with the university world. It is run by Strasbourg University's Garden of Sciences within the frame of investments for the Future.

Launched in December 2013, the Atouts project includes three scientific mediation instruments designed to attract young people of all ages to science and university: Science Lab, Science Parliament and Kids University.

Kids University is a pilot project in France inspired by the German Kinderuni model and targets young people aged 10 to 12 years old. For the space of a day, these young people become real students - going to a lecture, visiting laboratories, meeting up with researchers, going to workshops and eating at the University restaurant. This day-in-the-life of a typical student gives them an opportunity to discover the world of research with its different players, techniques and careers.

The two other events in the Atouts project target 15-18 year olds. Science Labs bring high-school pupils and Ph.D. students together in a



work experience covering several sessions at the University of Strasbourg so that young people can discover the world of laboratory research. The Science Parliament has a more societal aim. Its purpose is to encourage high-school pupils interested in following scientific paths, or not, to consider the end purpose of research and the responsibility of citizens in the face of scientific and ethical choices.

From January 2014 to the summer of 2015, 23 events were organised, 1,361 pupils were welcomed and around 60 researchers were involved in the frame of the Atouts project. *"We are currently filling out our offer with new themes and partnerships at the local and European level. One of the Science Parliaments organised in 2016 falls within the frame of a European project initiated by the German association 'Wissenschaft im Dialog,'"* concludes Amandine Duluard, who heads the scientific mediation project.

A dynamic strategy

The University of Strasbourg has set up a proactive strategy for economic development founded on the potential of academic research within the frame of a policy backed by the local authorities and based on the activities of SATT Conectus Alsace – our Technology Transfer Company.

In order to forge close links between the academic world and the socio-economic environment and foster the emergence of innovative projects, the University of Strasbourg is working in partnership with the regional stakeholders in the field of innovation, competitiveness and economic development.

This joint strategy guarantees the coherence and relevance of the various interventions undertaken, especially in terms of technology transfer and the development of collaborative R&D projects associating competitiveness clusters such as Alsace BioValley.

Thus an ambitious programme has been set up, designed to promote an entrepreneurial spirit among lecturers, researchers and students.

In addition to launching original projects, the economic development lever of IdEx also aims to develop continuing education and reinforce the professional integration of graduates.

EASE, a training factory dedicated to jobs in production in an aseptic environment

EASE (European Aseptic and Sterile Environment) is a training factory of the University of Strasbourg dedicated to working in a cleanroom environment. Designed in partnership with the competitiveness cluster Alsace BioValley, this training centre is unique in its kind in Europe and will welcome its first trainees in 2017.

The purpose of this training centre is to provide a real industrial environment for jobs in production in cleanrooms - from cleaning agents to executive pharmacists. The centre is currently under construction on the Illkirch campus. It will provide trainees with total immersion in real-life conditions so that they can master professional production practices and have full knowledge of the processes, techniques and constraints linked with working in cleanrooms. Three major types of processes are studied in depth: the manufacture of dry forms (capsules and tablets), sterile liquid

forms and biomolecules. The building itself will be an active player in training for positions supporting the production process, such as quality assurance and control, maintenance and energy regulation.

A response adapted to the demands of pharmaceutical and biotech industries

"We are responding to the needs expressed by pharmaceutical and biotech industries in general in terms of training their employees and future employees in order to deal with the current changes in production modes," explains Constance Perrot, Operational Project Manager. "The centre provides a supplement to Strasbourg University's educational spectrum by reinforcing the technical and behavioural competences of trainees."

Winner of the day-release training call for projects as part of the Investments for the Future programme in 2011, the centre has the capacity to train 3,500 trainees per year, with priority being given to day-release courses, including 25% of trainees in initial education and 75% in continuing education (employees from the pharmaceutical industry and personnel from their supply chains). *"The trainees will be immediately operational, our objective being the highest level of employability possible for our trainees and the lifelong development of their competences,"* concludes Constance Perrot.



NextMed Campus

"Turning the Strasbourg Eurometropolis into the European capital of medical technologies"

Report by Nicolas Pellerin, Director of the Campus for Medical Technologies project

Nicolas Pellerin, Department Head of Higher Education, Research and Innovation at the Strasbourg Eurometropolis, is directing the NextMed project, a Campus for Medical Technologies currently under construction on the site of the General Hospital in Strasbourg.

What does this project consist of?

NextMed is piloted by the Strasbourg Eurometropolis, the University of Strasbourg and the University Hospital of Strasbourg, the Research Institute against Digestive Cancer (Ircad), the competitiveness cluster Alsace BioValley and the State. It aims to bring patients, doctors, researchers and businesses in the health sector closer together on a single site at the heart of the capital of Europe. The idea is to foster the creation of economic development through scientific research in order to design the health technologies of the 21st century and place them at the service of Mankind.

How did this project evolve?

Strasbourg and its region offer a very powerful ecosystem in the field of medical technologies thanks to the combined presence of Alsace BioValley (the competitiveness cluster in the field of health), a research university ranking in the top 30 in Europe and the fourth best hospital in France, not forgetting the dynamism of a number of influential public figures. The project was registered in the 2009 roadmap for Strasbourg Eco 2020 and the launching of the Investments for the Future programme has placed this large-scale project on the fast track, notably with the founding of the IHU (University Hospital Institute) and the financial support by IdEx of the position of Head of marketing and communication. In the long term, this space covering nearly 30 hectares will bring together planet-wide giants in the health sector,

business start-ups and public laboratories, thereby turning Strasbourg into the European capital of medical technologies.

Where are we today?

The Campus for Medical Technologies was officially launched in 2012 with the opening of pH8, an incubator for innovative businesses in the field of health and new technologies, and is being built up little by little. The founding stone has been laid for the Strasbourg Biomedical Research Centre (CRBS) and the Institute of Image-Guided Minimally Invasive Surgery. Since then, we have acquired new spaces where businesses can set up. At the present time, 1,000 jobs have been created and more than 20 start-ups have set up home on the Campus.



Training salaried personnel

The University of Strasbourg is one of the leading French universities in terms of developing continuing education. As the evidence clearly demonstrates.

With 900 training courses referenced in 5 catalogues of which 150,000 copies are distributed, the University of Strasbourg clearly stands out as the French higher education establishment that offers the widest range of continuing education.

"Our approach is grounded on the competences of the various academic departments," points out Marc Poncin, Director of the Continuing Education Department. "We have training courses in the field of chemistry, medicine and law, for example. Some time ago, the Ministry for Justice ordered a training course from us on how to approach religion in prison." The continuing education services provided by the University of Strasbourg represented a turnover of €11 million in 2015, up 25% since 2012. One third of the courses are conducted in Alsace and the other two-thirds in France and neighbouring European countries. Half of the courses lead to a diploma and the other half are in the form of short training sessions.

The leading clients are businesses and their salaried personnel, especially for courses leading to a diploma, such as nurses who can take a Bachelor's Degree in Hospital Hygiene and pharmacists who can follow a Master's Degree in the Quality of Pharmaceutical Products. In order to meet the expectations of both businesses and their salaried personnel, the Continuing Education Department launched a research and development programme in 2012 funded by IdEx.

The aim was threefold. Firstly, to set up modular, credit-based courses so that an employee can take a Master's Degree in 2 or 3 years instead of just one year. Secondly, to integrate distance learning where appropriate. "Salaried personnel who cannot travel or take leave from their work, follow their study path from home. This also reduces the total cost of training for companies," explains Marc Poncin.

Several courses have thus been introduced in the field of distance learning, such as the University Diploma (DU) and Master's Degree in gerontology, the vocational Bachelor's Degree for guides, the DU in dental and oral hygiene and sterilisation, DU in teacher training for distance learning. Thirdly, a service called *pass' compétences universitaires* has been set up to manage the entire qualification path for the person undergoing training.

An overall prize-winning educational programme

"Through developing new competences in terms of the modular structure of diplomas and distance learning, we have acquired a new know-how," comments Marc Poncin.

"We have our own recording studio and have set up a distance learning platform so that we can monitor students from an administrative, financial and educational point of view.

We are seeing more and more corporate training organisations among our clients and we offer them a tailor-made service. For example, we recently created a University Diploma in career management for sportsmen and women for the French Athletics Federation. We gave them access to the platform, trained them in distance learning and built up the teaching resources required. Now *pass' compétences universitaires* enables sportsmen and women to manage their own educational training.

The overall educational programme won an award in 2014 granted by the I-Novia label."



Alumni are weaving their professional network

On 19 January 2016, the Alumni network of the University of Strasbourg organised its second sponsorship evening. Students, young graduates, Ph.D. students, not-so-young graduates and teachers - around 100 people met with the aim of setting up sponsor/sponsored pairs on themes such as taking part in university life, professional integration, entrepreneurship, starting up a business and adapting to professional situations.

Set up in 2012 and funded by IdEx, the Alumni network of the University of Strasbourg aims to strengthen the links of solidarity between the generations and foster employment, careers, information exchange and training and research actions. "We want to build up a

network based on solidarity and mutual assistance between the generations," specified Jean-Marc Jeltsch, Vice-President for Business Partnerships. The employability of former and future graduates lies at the heart of the project.

By mid-January 2016, there were 8,170 registered members from all 4 corners of the Earth - from Auckland to Lyon, where clubs have been founded. And there is the brand-new website, also funded by IdEx, which operates as a true social and professional network. "You can post up your CV or consult other CVs and job offers," explains Agnès Villanueva, Director of the Alumni Relations Department. "We have published around 100 job offers in just 2 months. We are at the very beginning of the process and hope to sign up 10,000 members by the end of 2016."



INTERVIEW

Jean-Marc Jeltsch,
Vice-President for Business Partnerships,
University of Strasbourg

"Being a responsible stakeholder in one's socio-economic environment"

"The economic development lever of the Excellence Initiative was set up to form a link between the various local and regional stakeholders. It has fostered the emergence of new projects and forged close links with other stakeholders in our socio-economic environment.

The University of Strasbourg is committed to this lever through bringing together regional partners in innovation, competitiveness and economic development in jointly run projects. We have explored several avenues during the probationary period and some of them must be continued over the long term and even explored more deeply - especially the links we have with competitiveness clusters. We must also reinforce projects in partnership with businesses while opening out to stakeholders within our grand new region.

Many actions have also been undertaken in favour of promoting an entrepreneurial spirit. One such action is the introduction of a student entrepreneurship diploma in the frame of the student cluster for innovation, transfer and entrepreneurship called Pépite Etena which covers the whole of Alsace. The technology transfer company SATT Conectus Alsace and the business incubator Semia have also launched a programme called Revelup which aims to raise awareness among students and train them in how to set up businesses as a means of enhancing public research. Lately, we won the call for projects for the "Innovation and Entrepreneurial Culture" action of the Investments for the Future programme, with Eucor Entrepreneurship. This consists in promoting an entrepreneurial culture among students, jobseekers and people undergoing vocational retraining within Eucor-The European Campus."

The structuring effect

By setting itself an ambitious policy in terms of structural organisation and administrative performance, the University of Strasbourg has successfully launched a number of initiatives positively benefiting the overall management of the entire establishment.

The underlying determination to give University personnel the means to forge ahead in their careers and break down the barriers between in-house departments has been set in stone through two new programmes.

Personnel are encouraged to develop their competences through the programme entitled "Talent Management", which proposes incentive measures notably in favour of validating work experience and providing leave for thematic research or conversions. The creation of scientific and educational awards has moreover highlighted the commitment of lecturers and researchers to the University community.

Running parallel, the "Synergies²" programme has implemented a management strategy based on the relevance, performance and quality of services provided for end-users. For example, a shared resource centre has been set up to assist and support researchers and lecturers when they apply for national and European calls for tender.

Pooling competences in a single centre

The shared pool of resources for research and training contract management (PUI) is a centre that supports members of the University community who wish to request funding for their projects either in research or education on a national, European and international level. Some 350 projects have thus been supported since September 2013.

Progress report with Sandrine Schott-Carrière, Operating Project Manager



Badly harmonised procedures, a lack of support in terms of educational project management, a lack of visibility in terms of who is in charge of what, late responses

on project rationales and the need for training. To respond to this state of affairs, 7 university departments* decided to pool their competences within the PUI in order to propose a

single reception centre and a top-performance service in terms of preparing and managing projects, whatever they may be. "Since the beginning of the 2013 academic year, we have geared ourselves up into project mode so that all the services concerned operate transversely with the aim of performing efficiently," explains Sandrine Schott-Carrière, Operating Project Manager.

The PUI project supervisors are divided into 3 offices - European and International research, National research, and international and European training. They support project leaders from the moment they draw up their projects by guiding them towards the appropriate funding programme, assisting in the preparation of the application file and providing tailored guidance for the project from beginning to end.

Growing interest from project leaders

"After a little less than 2 years of operation, and with the desire to implement ongoing improvements, not forgetting the investment of the

people involved, we have been able to set up harmonised procedures as described in a procedure guide, together with a training schedule and a number of actions enhancing awareness and information," comments Sandrine Schott-Carrière. She adds, *"All this has generated a more efficient organisation in terms of contract and rationale management. We are no longer lagging behind even though our workload has increased. We have noted that project leaders have shown a growing interest in searching for funding - especially in the field of the humanities and social sciences."*

In the last few months, the PUI has geared up from project mode to operating mode. The personnel will be kept on through the departments' own funds and new projects are in the offing. *"We would like to develop the activities of the PUI's project supervisors from a more proactive angle and adopt a transversal approach to funding opportunities. We are now going to reflect on the right form of structure needed for Eucor-The European Campus."*

*The Research Department, International Relations Department, Studies and Registrations Department, Human Resources Department, Financial Department, Valuation Department and the Accounts Department.

Top-quality schools

"Students, future employers, the University and the Ministry were all asking for tangible results with regard to the quality of the education we provide," says Georges Orfanoudakis, Director of the Sciences Engineering Technology Collegium at the University of Strasbourg. Consequently, in 2009, this Collegium, which brings together the University's engineering schools, the University Institutes of Technology (IUT) and associated schools, forged ahead with a quality-based approach.

With the aim of satisfying the needs and meeting the expectations of users, a quality engineer was recruited through IdEx funding. After questioning the school directors, proposals were made in response to the comments and suggestions for improvement, for example concerning how and when exam dates were announced, exam regulations and the publication of results.

Thus, at the Strasbourg School of Biotechnology (ESBS), access to information on the website in 2012-2013 had been graded with 12/20. Two years later, once changes had been brought in, the grade awarded was 17/20.

According to the accounts given by Georges Orfanoudakis and Frédéric Masson, IFIS

Coordinator: *"the backing IdEx brought to the "Integrating Engineering Courses at the University of Strasbourg" project (IFIS), meant the various courses offered by Engineering Schools could be better structured. They are now integrated in the University's educational programme so that students can identify the engineering courses proposed by the University of Strasbourg more easily. Now, the University of Strasbourg's engineering paths are more clearly identifiable on the national and international scene. It should be underlined that these engineering programmes are developed in synergy with the "Engineers' Pact" developed by the Region of Alsace to reinforce the region's economic attractiveness in the frame of the European smart specialisation strategy (S3)."*

Improving reception services



In June 2015, Strasbourg University' SVU (University Life Department) was the first university service in France, outside libraries, to receive the Marianne Label awarded to public services for the quality of their reception.

The charter covers 19 goals such as ensuring a quality welcome for users, and more particularly students, reducing processing time for emails and telephone response times, improving signage on the Campus and displaying waiting time particularly at the start of the university year. A number of processes were finely screened and formalised by the certification procedure.

The awarding of this label should have a knock-on effect throughout the University of Strasbourg. In early 2015, the position of quality engineer was created thanks to IdEx funding. Going beyond reception services, the idea is to overhaul all the procedures at the University, which sometimes prove to be complex for everyone in their daily work, and facilitate relations between the University's various structures.

Building up an identity and identification system

The aim of the Complex Identities project conducted in the frame of IdEx is to introduce a new approach to making knowledge, as it is developed and taught at the University of Strasbourg, more legible and intelligible with all its diversity and complexity.

Since the beginning of January 2015, a team of 9 people has been working on the Complex Identities project. Piloted by the Faculty of Arts and the Communication Department, this programme is the tangible follow-up and development of the study programme and work achieved during Ruedi Baur's artist residency funded by IdEx in 2013-2014. With students from the Master's course in Design, Ruedi Baur triggered a reflection on how graphic design can contribute to a more legible image and identity of the complex structure that is the University of Strasbourg. "Our initial inventory demonstrated that the University remains a closed book due to its complexity. Knowledge is obscured by layers of administration and a number of elements, such as acronyms, hinder transparency," explains Ruedi Baur. "This statement is a reflection of what we see on an everyday basis. The multitude of images, logos, and communication content often gives rise to confusion for users and hinders harmonious, efficient communication," adds Armelle Tanvez, Director of Communication. Through the IdEx programme, the first phase of research and experimentation has been developed and the overall context broadened. The aim is to give the knowledge developed and taught at the University greater transparency and intelligibility and thereby remedy the lack of meaning in the current logos and signs. We need to make our *raison d'être* and specific knowledge stand out within a new visual identity.

Allowing everyone to express their identity

The project contains several phases and is focused on 3 major aspects: typography, a visual system and a lexicon. "Typography



Map of existing knowledge

is no doubt the founding element of this new language. It will be made up of two different founts. One of the founts will denote "University life" and has been specially designed for us and baptised "Unistra". It reflects the notions of diversity, heritage, excellence and outreach through shapes that literally open up, and conjures up a special form/content continuum. The other will be more applied to the diffusion of knowledge. It's an open source fount which is very extensive and contains a lot of scientific signs. It's called Brill-Typeface," explains Pierre Litzler, Dean of the Faculty of Arts. As to the identification system, the team has designed a modular system so that everyone can highlight what is important to them in terms of their identity and signature. "The existing logos can be integrated into this overall coherent visual system," assures Armelle Tanvez. The work on designing the lexicon has now been completed. Once it has been modelled, it should "help everyone understand what we're talking about and therefore, indirectly, bolster everyone's understanding of each other," states Pierre Litzler.

This project involved consulting administrative services, teaching departments and research units. Today, it is ready to be implemented.



The "Unistra" character fount, whose design is inspired by local historical shapes. In this document, the titles and leads are written in the "Unistra" fount, designed by Christina Poth (Typographer and member of the Complex Identities team)

Autonomous campus navigation for visually impaired students and staff

The Navi-Campus software has been developed at the University of Strasbourg with and for visually impaired persons and persons with reduced mobility. It has been available since September 2015.

The buildings on the Campus disturb the GPS signal, which becomes random, and the environment is sometimes complex to decipher making navigation difficult or even impossible for visually impaired persons. Navi-Campus is a smartphone app (Android and iOS) where information from the inertial navigation system of smartphones (gyro, barometer, compass and accelerometer) compensate for the GPS' lack of certitude. Navi-Campus therefore determines a bearing, follows changes in direction and defines distances more precisely and appropriately. The application enables visually impaired persons to travel from a tram or bus stop to the entrance of a building or to find an office or classroom within a building.

"In cooperation with various University departments, we don't just offer a tool but also personal support. Our goal is to foster the integration of visually impaired persons into student life and improve professional integration by making them more independent," underlines Laurence Rasseneur, Head of the Bachelor's Degree in Adapted Physical Activities and Health at the Faculty of Sport Sciences which is piloting the Navi-Campus project.

The outdoor mode has been in operation since the beginning of the 2015 academic year. However, the indoor mode requires further development. A version for persons with reduced mobility is also available providing them with information on accessible entrances and specific services they may find useful, such as accessible WCs. "In the long run, we will be extending the service to other university campuses and other sites such as the University Hospital of Strasbourg," asserts Laurence Rasseneur.



INTERVIEW

Jean-Yves Pabst,
Vice-President for Finances and Digital
Strategy, University of Strasbourg

Stimulating interdepartmental collaboration for the common good

"In terms of steerage, the Excellence Initiative has rallied everyone around projects which significantly improve the overall functioning of the University for the benefit of the entire University community. The PUI (shared resource centre), Marianne charter, the quality-based approach of the engineering schools, the Navi-Campus and Complex Identities projects are all initiatives that have stimulated collaboration between teaching and administrative departments, thereby benefiting lecturers, teachers and students alike. IdEx has made it possible to turn the concept of these ambitious projects into tangible reality. The overview of all these actions after 4 years is very positive today - so much so that some of them are going to be continued over the long term. A typical example of one such action is the setting up of the PUI which brings together 7 different departments with the aim of providing upstream and downstream assistance for lecturers and researchers who wish to apply for national and European calls for projects. Other initiatives have been upheld in the field of research (services based on high-performance computing) and education (facilitating the administrative enrolment process). The concept of Navi-Campus (an electronic walking stick providing better accessibility to the site for visually impaired persons) shall be used on a broader scale, notably on all university campuses in the East of France. Rewriting the digital blueprint for 2016-2020 is one of the grand projects pending, for which we will need to call on external firms specialised in digital technology. The governance lever, which is more transversal than the others, has really enabled us to break down certain barriers and make headway with the idea that we are all working for the University of Strasbourg with a single aim in mind and with values shared by all."

A world-ranking University

A founding member of the League of European Research Universities (LERU), of which it currently holds the Chair, the University of Strasbourg ranks among the top 30 research universities in Europe.

In order to increase the University of Strasbourg's visibility and strengthen its position as the leading establishment in Franco-German collaboration, IdEx is notably contributing to introducing new reception services and integration programmes for foreign students and researchers through the creation of the International University House (MUI).

IdEx not only provides support for the organisation of grand international conferences in Strasbourg, it has also backed the creation of Eucor-The European Campus - the nerve centre of scientific cooperation within the Upper Rhine area. It crystallises the competence and potential of the 130 scientific institutions in the cross-border region, constituting a specific scientific and research centre without walls or barriers, inciting international outreach.

Finally, IdEx will also contribute to defining a powerful strategy to gain international partners - targeting establishments in Asia, and Japan in particular.

The International University House, international by vocation

A former industrial building rooted in the architectural heritage of Strasbourg has been entirely renovated to welcome the International University House. It opened its doors in September 2015, is perfectly integrated in the City and contributes to Strasbourg University's international outreach.

The International University House lies at the heart of a renovated district where culture and new technologies are key concepts. It is within easy walking distance of the central University Campus and is home to all the services useful for international visitors.

It houses Strasbourg University's international reception centre and offers personalised assistance for all the administrative formalities linked with staying in France. The administrative staff are there to help foreign visitors settle in (visiting permits, social security, assistance with accommodation, French classes and the Euraxess centre for researchers). The International University House is also the reference point for Strasbourg University's students and staff who wish to take part in international mobility programmes. All the University services related to international reception are installed within this 13-storey tower, including the mobility section of Strasbourg University's International Relations Department. Students and personnel can now find information on the

various exchange programmes, funding and the formalities involved in going abroad.

The International University House offers 170 modern, energy-saving studios which are fully furnished and equipped to welcome students, lecturers and researchers – and sometimes their families - coming from all over the world, for short, and even very short stays. The surface area of the studios ranges from 18.5 m² to 28 m², and half of them are accessible by persons with reduced mobility. The residents offers a number of services: reception 7 days a week, restaurant, luggage drop, laundrette, bike hire and tactile tablet hire. Most of the accommodation can be subsidised through housing benefit.

Management of the accommodation has been entrusted to the Strasbourg Association Amitel, renowned for its competence in providing lodgings for young people in Strasbourg and the surrounding region, *"With priority given to reservations for the University of Strasbourg,"* insists Marie Déroche, coordinator of the International University House. Moreover, a reservation desk for foreign visitors has been set up by the University.

An attractive house

Funded in partnership with the local and regional authorities and the University of Strasbourg within the frame of Operation

Campus, the International University House also benefitted from IdEx funding during the preparation phase of the project. IdEx funds were also called on to reinforce the services and activities on offer, and provide the furnishings and equipment required. Today, the International University House ranks high among the best reception centres at the greatest universities in Europe and worldwide.

A few months after opening, all the accommodation in the International University House was taken up with *"the majority of requests stemming from researchers,"* specifies Marie Déroche. The French classes for researchers and their families are greatly appreciated, as is the assistance for students from the University of Strasbourg who are preparing to go abroad.

With a surface area of 500 m² devoted to welcoming and informing foreign visitors, its flats offering top-quality facilities and 3 relaxation areas reserved for the residents (a restaurant, music room and fitness room), not to mention its close proximity to 3 great cultural locations in Strasbourg (Malraux Media Centre, Music and Dance Hall and the City's largest cinema complex), the International University House offers an attractive lifestyle for its residents who come from 150 countries, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of the University of Strasbourg in its entirety.



The International University House

Eucor-The European Campus, heading towards the first European University

Since 1989, the five universities of the Upper Rhine - Basel, Freiburg, Haute-Alsace, Karlsruhe and Strasbourg - have formed a cross-border network under the name of Eucor. They are now heading towards the first European University. Through Eucor-The European Campus, they aspire to develop research and cross-border education and to reinforce their position and attractiveness on an international scale.

In early 2015, Alain Beretz, President of the University of Strasbourg, said that moving into the operational phase of Eucor-The European Campus was one of the great projects of the future. Since then, this dream has gradually become a reality. Thanks to the financial support provided by IdEx and under the political supervision of Joern Pütz, Deputy Vice-President for Franco-German relations, Aurelle Garnier has joined the University team as Operational Coordinator for Eucor-The European Campus. *"My main tasks consist in keeping the University community informed, identifying the various stakeholders, mapping cross-border projects, structuring the project and preparing requests for funding. By taking these first steps towards achieving the European Campus, we will be able to forge a link between the various stakeholders in the project and coordinate their actions with the ultimate aim of becoming a major scientific cluster with international scope."*

In December 2015, the Universities of Basel, Freiburg, Haute-Alsace, Strasbourg and the Karlsruher Institut für Technologie signed the founding documents of Eucor-The European Campus. In doing so, the Universities have resolutely turned towards new opportunities for cross-border cooperation in Europe by founding the very first European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) involving universities alone¹.

European funding for the Universities of the Upper Rhine

This grouping of Universities with its own legal personality is a central instrument in Eucor-The European Campus project and means that the member establishments can file joint funding requests and develop a joint strategy, while maintaining their autonomy. Joint chairs, shared administrative personnel and shared services are also in the offing.

The Upper Rhine region in a few figures

The European Campus aims to crystallise the competences and potential of 15,000 lecturers and researchers, 11,000 Ph.D. students and 115,000 undergraduates to turn it into an integrated scientific research hub with international outreach, without walls or borders. The overall budget of the 5 partner universities stands at €2.3 billion.



Signature of the founding documents of the trinational European Campus on 9 December 2015

In late 2015, the Monitoring Committee of the Interreg V programme² approved three requests stemming from the Universities belonging to Eucor-The European Campus. The Upper Rhine Cluster for Sustainability Research and the Serior project on Risk Management and Assessment will therefore receive funding, as will the central "Eucor-The European Campus: cross-border structures" project, endowed with €2 million from the European Union. As Aurelle Garnier indicates, *"This 3-year project provides for the implementation of a joint strategy, the structuring and development of the existing potential of each establishment and the joint recruitment of personnel, the international enhancement of the regional scientific profile, the promotion and development of cross-border education, the facilitation of mobility and interculturality, the reinforcement of the professional integration of students, Ph.D. students and graduates and finally, joint representation at international events."*

¹ After ratification of the documents by the competent authorities in France, Germany and Switzerland, the EGTC will officially be able to start its activities. The foundation ceremony is scheduled for the spring of 2016.

² Interreg is a programme of the European Regional Development Fund.

INTERVIEW



Francis Kern,
Vice-President for International Relations,
University of Strasbourg

Fostering international projects

"In addition to the International University House and Eucor - The European Campus, IdEx supports outgoing student mobility and the development of training in partnership with institutions abroad.

It is often said that the University of Strasbourg does not have sufficient outgoing student mobility in relation to its size. With IdEx, we can offer motivating grants to enable students to go abroad more easily. For the year 2016, €180,000 have been earmarked for these grants. This has had a major impact on mobility and the figures are up by approximately 15%.

Thanks to the IdEx envelope, we can also fund international training projects either in the form of dual diplomas or delocalised courses. I was pleasantly surprised by the number of proposals I received - about 20 - which shows just how enthusiastic our lecturers really are.

As a member of the Academic Consortium (AC21), the University of Strasbourg organised the Student World Forum in April 2015 on the theme of cross-border co-operation in Europe. In future, I would like the University of Strasbourg to host and organise other international events bringing together students from partner universities on interdisciplinary themes. And of course, we wish to go further in our support for outgoing mobility by offering more grants. For international projects, we have avoided spreading our finances too thin in order to give priority to cooperation projects with our strategic partners."

IdEx UNISTRA: key figures

