CIIL
CENTER FOR INFECTION
& IMMUNITY OF LILLE

NEWSLETTER

du Centre d'Infection et d'Immunité de Lille



An Introduction from the Director

Welcome to our new newsletter!

This new online format allows you to explore selected topics in greater depth through interactive links embedded throughout the content.

For offline reading, a PDF version is also available. It preserves access to enriched content via clickable links, ensuring you can continue exploring additional resources and information wherever you are (see the top of the page). Special thanks to Sophana Ung for making it all happen.

In this issue, you will find profiles of an INSERM researcher (Christelle Faveeuw), a professor from the University of Lille (El Moukhtar Aliouat), engineers from the CNRS (Nathalie Callens and Teddy Grandjean) and the Institut Pasteur de Lille (Benoît Snella), a postdoctoral researcher (Dylan Juckel), and several PhD students (Yoel Dagan and Cécilia Sobieski).
In the CIIL section, you will discover the Unit’s support services and meet our Secretary General, Sabine Blin. We will also look back at the symposium held on 11 June in honour of Jean Dubuisson—a brilliant scientist, a director who listened to everyone, and a man of great integrity.
You will learn more about the working groups that make up the CIIL Steering Committee, as well as the scientific day organised by the Institut Pasteur de Lille on 9 June, during which the CIIL stood out thanks to the high quality of its presentations.
As part of the induction programme for PhD students, a workshop on open data was organised on 9 February by Cécile Lecoeur. We will also present the QVCT initiative before concluding with a news-in-brief section covering ongoing projects and recent arrivals within the Unit.
We hope you enjoy this new edition and invite you to share your thoughts on this format. Your feedback will help us continue to improve future issues.

PROFILE





Christelle FAVEEUW
Researcher - INSERM

Christelle Faveeuw is a Research Scientist at Inserm and carry out her research activities within Team ‘Bacteria, Antibiotics and Immunity’, led by Jean-Claude Sirard. Trained as an immunologist, she has been interested for several years in the innate immune response in pneumonia, initially in viral infections and more recently in bacterial infections.
She has always had a strong interest in dendritic cells and their central role in the activation of the immune response, in both infectious and non-infectious contexts. Her work has also led her to explore other innate immune cells, such as marginal zone B lymphocytes, NKT cells, and more recently neutrophils.

More about Christelle

El Moukhtar ALIOUAT
Professor – University of Lille

El Moukhtar Aliouat is Professor at the University of Lille and Head of the Department of parasitology, medical mycology, and animal biology within the Faculty of Pharmacy (UFR3S). His professional activities are divided between teaching and research on malaria within the API-B team (Apicomplexan Parasite Integrative Biology), led by Mathieu Gissot. He mainly teaches medical parasitology and mycology to pharmacy students (community pharmacy practice, medical biology), as well as to BUT3 students (biological laboratory technicians) and undergraduate students in « sciences du médicament et des produits de santé ».

More about El Moukhtar





Nathalie CALLENS
Research Engineer – CNRS

Nathalie Callens is a CNRS research engineer in the MCV team led by Sandrine Belouzard. Her work focuses on the design and development of new tools for virology research, with a particular interest in coronaviruses and the Zika virus. These tools aim to enable the identification, through high-throughput screening, of antiviral molecules, whilst contributing to a better understanding of the molecular and cellular mechanisms involved in viral infection. In addition to her research activities, she is in charge of the IBL's laundry facilities. This offers the opportunity to thank Johanna, Florent and Olivier, whose dedication helps ensure optimal conditions for high-quality research.

More about Nathalie

Teddy GRANDJEAN
Engineer – CNRS

At CIIL, as a research and training engineer, Teddy Grandjean has built his career at the crossroads of pharmaceutical technology, microbiology, and immunology. After an initial internship in colonic release formulation for inflammatory bowel diseases, he joined Pr Simonet's team to study host–pathogen interactions and the immune response during bacterial infections. Then, he joined the "NLRII" team of CIIL, where he developed strong expertise in murine models and innate immunity. Since 2013, within EA7366 and then the TIILD team, he has been designing infection models for Pseudomonas aeruginosa and exploring how gut dysbiosis influences the severity of pneumonia, while also contributing to laboratory management, funding applications, and the supervision of students and engineers.

More about Teddy



Benoît SNELLA, Engineer - IPL

Engineer in chemical synthesis at the Institut Pasteur de Lille, within the MinT team led by Dr. Oleg Melnyk, Benoît Snella develops new approaches for the synthesis and modification of proteins through chemical or enzymatic methods in aqueous media, using biocatalysis (proteases, transpeptidases). His work focuses on native chemical ligation (NCL) under mild conditions, including an innovative one-pot cycle mediated by the TEV protease, currently being valorized. He will soon begin a PhD to further explore the chemistry and biochemistry of peptides and proteins. He is also responsible for the team's instrumentation platform (HPLC, HPLC-MS, and MALDI-TOF MS).

More about Benoît



Dylan JUCKEL Postdoctoral Researcher

Postdoctoral researcher in the VICI (Viral Infection & Chronicity) team, co-led by Fernando Réal. After completing a bachelor's and master's degree in molecular and cellular biology in Nancy, he joined the CIIL in early 2020 as part of a Master's internship, under the supervision of Sandrine Belouzard. He initiated work aimed at profiling the complex glycosylation of the M protein of coronaviruses. He continued this work as part of my PhD after being awarded a PhD scholarship by the FRM. In February 2024, He joined Fernando's team to develop hiPSC technology and derived cell models, with a view to contributing to research aimed at understanding the persistence of certain viral infections in myeloid cells of the bone marrow.

More about Dylan





Yoel DAGAN
PhD student

Yoel Dagan is a pharmacy student who turned to research after passing the internship entrance exam. He is currently pursuing a PhD under the supervision of Dr Priscille Brodin and Dr Alexandre Grassart. His research focuses on infection with Mycobacterium tuberculosis. He is working on two main projects:
The study of phagosome rupture induced by Mycobacterium tuberculosis in alveolar macrophages, notably via the recruitment of galectin-3,
And the development of a lung-on-a-chip model as an alternative to in vivo models for studying pulmonary infection.

More about Yoel

Cécilia SOBIESKI
PhD student

Cécilia Sobieski is in the final year of her PhD, supervised by Ruben Hartkoorn and co-supervised by Laurye Van Maele within the ANTIBAC (Antibacterial Drug Discovery & Development) team. Her PhD project focuses on the potential of bacterial efflux pump inhibitors (EPIs) to combat antibiotic resistance in multidrug-resistant (MDR) strains of Klebsiella pneumoniae. She is investigating the best combinations of antibiotics and EPIs that restore antibiotic susceptibility in MDR K. pneumoniae strains in vitro and in vivo (Galleria mellonella & mice). She is also characterising the resistance mechanisms present in these strains to assess whether they can be overcome.

More about Cécilia

LIFE AT CIIL



Sabine BLIN - General Secretary

General Secretariat Overview

The General Secretariat of the Lille Centre for Infection and Immunity is responsible for the operational management and coordination of all the unit’s support functions. It supports the management team and the scientific teams in the day-to-day running of the laboratory, ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework, the quality of the service provided and the smooth running of work processes.

The General Secretariat team provides day-to-day support to CIIL staff with administrative, financial, HR, logistical and institutional matters.

Learn more about the role of the General Secretary



Jean Dubuisson Symposium

On june 13th, 2026 we had the privilege of celebrating the remarkable career of Dr. Jean Dubuisson during a special symposium held in honor of his upcoming retirement.
An internationally recognized virologist, recipient of the CNRS Silver Medal and an awardee of a Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) grant, Jean Dubuisson has made outstanding contributions to the field of virology. He is particularly renowned for his pioneering work on the hepatitis C virus, notably in elucidating the mechanisms of viral entry into host cells and viral morphogenesis. More recently, his expertise has also contributed to advancing our understanding of coronaviruses.
Beyond his scientific achievements, Jean has been an inspiring leader and mentor. As head of a research team for many years, he has trained, guided, and inspired generations of scientists. He also led the Center for Infection and Immunity of Lille through the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating vision, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to scientific excellence.
The symposium was opened by Dr Frank Lafont, Director of the Center for Infection and Immunity of Lille, alongside Pr Regis Bordet(President of the University of Lille 1 Sciences and Technology), Dr Eve-Isabelle PECHEUR (CNRS Biology), Dr Patricia Renesto (INSERM ITMO), and Pr Frédéric Batteux (Director General of the Institut Pasteur de Lille, before a series of presentations highlighting Jean’s scientific legacy and lasting impact on the research community.

On behalf of colleagues, collaborators, and former trainees, we extend our deepest gratitude to Jean for his dedication, scientific rigor, generosity, and leadership. His career stands as an inspiring example of how excellence in science can advance knowledge and shape future generations of researchers.

A special thanks to Laurence Cocquerel, Sandrine Belouzard, Loic Coutte, Arnaud Machelart in organizing this event, as well as to all the colleagues who helped make this celebration such a success.

Congratulations, Jean! We wish you all the very best in this new chapter.

François PENIN Philippe Roingeard Dimitri Lavillette, Anne Op de beeck, Philip Meuleman, Gabrielle Vieyres, Francois HELLE, Cécile Voisset, Costin-Ioan Popescu, Yazdan Yazdanpanah.



11th Scientific Meeting - Institut Pasteur de Lille

On Tuesday, June 9, 2026, the 11th Scientific Day of the Institut Pasteur de Lille took place, a key event showcasing the latest research advances achieved within the institute. On this occasion, several members of the unit stood out through their presentations and active involvement. Arnaud Machelart also contributed to the organization of the event.

A session dedicated to vaccine research was chaired by Nathalie Mielcarek, who invited Valentin Sencio and Laura Matarazzo to present their work to all participants.

In addition, three PhD students from the unit—Clément Bordas, Carlos Vigil, and Venkat Mudiyam—had the opportunity to highlight their research projects during a session devoted to early-career researchers.

Rich in scientific discussions and opportunities for networking, the event once again showcased recent discoveries and highlighted the dynamism of research conducted at the Institut Pasteur de Lille.

This translation is written in a professional and institutional style suitable for a newsletter, annual report, or website article.

Working groups and steering committee

To enable more people within the Unit to get involved in governance, working groups have been set up for this new term, open to everyone regardless of rank or department. Each working group has a specific remit, and members are free to join or leave at any time. Those responsible for leading these groups meet within the steering committee to facilitate discussion and explore synergies. This steering committee makes proposals which will be reviewed by the management committee together with the team leaders.
The working groups with their mandates and members are (those responsible for leading the groups are underlined) :

Working Group on Events & Communication: A Machelart, L Coutte, S Bontemps-Gallo, C Lecoeur, S Ung, N Gantois
Organising internal seminars, unit symposia, the off-site day, managing social media communications, and updating the internet and intranet sites.

Budget Worging Group: S Blin, S Bontemps-Gallo, S Lecher, S Marion, C Pierrot, M Sénéchal, K Serrure
to report on the unit's financial status twice a year.

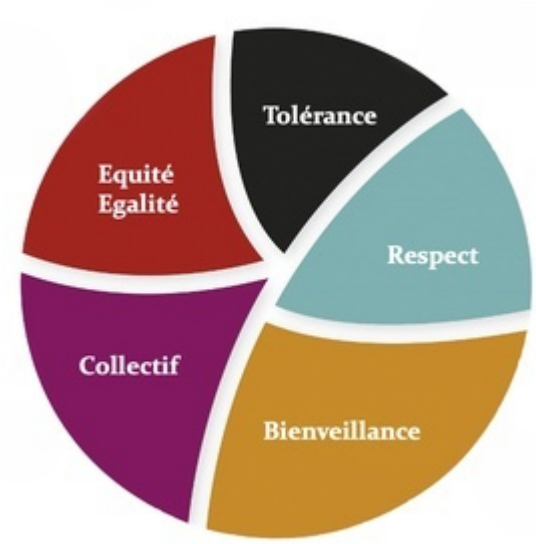
Infrastructure Working Group: L Cocquerel, A Denhez, S Blin, M Pichavant, A Vandeputte, S Janel, A Baulard
optimise space and organise maintenance of the IBL whilst taking environmental constraints into account, carry out a follow-up inspection at the E Roux building.

Education Working Group: A Tasiemski, S Marion, C Carnoy
help develop mock-ups to improve the visibility of the theme.

Strategy Working Group: M Gissot, F Lafont, N Mielcarek establish/ strengthen partnerships, liaise with the external scientific advisory board and development services, ensure that priorities are adhered to, and refine the strategic direction where necessary

Unit Life Working Group: C Wichlacz, K Séron, C Montpellier

organise quality of life at work in challenging circumstances; promote equality in the workplace; maintain professional and social dialogue; assist with career development; support management in risk prevention.


Tolérance
Equité
Egalité
Respect
Collectif
Bienveillance



Quality of Working Life and Working Conditions (QWLWC)

Upcoming events and ongoing initiatives – QWLWC

A half-day session entitled ‘Looking after yourself to work better’ – September 25th 2026, 9.30 am to 12 noon

will focus on the following topics:

- Stress
- Sleep
- Nutrition
- Active breaks
- Ergonomics

The sessions will be led by: members of the Centre for Health Prevention Education and Christophe Leviel, an ergonomist.
The aim is to raise staff awareness of prevention, well-being at work and practical measures that can be applied in daily life.
Solidarity cupboards:
To help address the financial difficulties faced by some of us, we have set up two solidarity cupboards: one in the scrubs room on the ground floor of the IBL, and the other in the staff lounge on the 3rd floor of the Emile Roux building.
The principle is simple: anyone can donate non-perishable food items (pasta, rice, tinned vegetables, etc.) and/or hygiene products (soap, shampoo, sanitary towels, etc.) so that those in need can help themselves freely and discreetly.
To take part in this initiative and help students or your colleagues, simply stock these cupboards. This will make people happy.

Thank you to everyone for the solidarity shown within the CIIL.

Open Data Mural Workshop

A collaborative morning for first-year PhD students

On February 9th 2026, our first-year PhD students worked together to create a mural on the theme of research data management. Our students were introduced to the regulations, platforms and tools relating to data management and open science by Monica Michel Rodriguez (coordinator of the data workshop (LORD Lille Open Research Data)) and Candice Hector (curator of the Lillodata data repository), both of whom are support staff within the LORD initiative.
The workshop took place in two stages. The first stage involved familiarising participants with the cards, which they then had to link together. These cards prompted questions such as: what is personal data, and how does it differ from sensitive data?

These discussions and reflections led to the creation of the mural shown in the photograph.
The participants reported that they enjoyed the workshop, which they found engaging, informative, and educational. It gave them a better understanding of data management and the regulations designed to protect data. They also appreciated having the opportunity to engage in discussions and debate. We would like to thank the facilitators for creating an environment that encouraged open and constructive exchanges. The participants unanimously recommended this workshop to future doctoral candidates.
The facilitators also shared how much they enjoyed visiting the CIIL premises and interacting with the doctoral candidates. They would like to thank Cécile Lecoeur, the laboratory’s LORD liaison officer, for inviting them.
This mural was created by LORD in collaboration with Datactivist as part of the Fabrique de la science ouverte initiative.
If you are interested or need support with the management of research data, code, or software, you can contact the LORD team at bit.ly/lord-contact.



Infrastructure: Ongoing and Upcoming Works

As part of our efforts to improve the working environment, several projects have already been successfully completed, including the renovation of the showers and restroom facilities on the ground floor of the Cédille building.

This year, the CNRS will continue to fund the maintenance and improvement of the IBL building. Planning is currently underway for several upcoming projects, including:

- the refurbishment of the emergency staircases;
- the replacement of the heating network circulation pumps;
- the refurbishment of the freight elevator;
- the compliance upgrade of certain fire dampers.

In addition, work on the fume hood extraction systems on the 6th floor will begin very shortly.

New Members Join the CIIL

The CIIL has recently welcomed several new members to its research teams and administrative services:

- Christelle Bataille (General Administration)
- Aurore Bidon (PYP)
- Eugénie Boulagnon (BAI)
- Amandine Bruère (API-B)
- Charlotte Costa (BAI)
- Marcelo Silva Folhas Damas (VICI)
- Silvia Gaggero (TIILD)
- Bérénice Dremierre (BVG)
- Aurélie Burette (MOHMI)
- Damien Hot (E2M)

These recruitments are part of several research projects, particularly in the fields of vaccines, Resist-Omics, and studies in biology and immunology.

In addition, several contracts have been renewed within the MCV, MOHMI, and PYP teams.

We warmly welcome them to the CIIL and wish them every success in their roles and scientific projects.

ACKOWLEDGEMENTS

With thanks to the contributors

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