

Christos Chatziantoniou at Inserm UMR 1155 Wins GSK's Discovery Fast Track Challenge to Investigate Chronic Kidney Disease

Paris, France - 1 December, 2014 - Christos Chatziantoniou, Director of Research at the Inserm UMR 1155, has been selected as a winner of GSK's 2014 [Discovery Fast Track](#) Challenge, which is designed to encourage the translation of academic research into novel therapies. Dr. Chatziantoniou will work with scientists in GSK's [Discovery Partnerships with Academia](#) (DPAc) and the Molecular Discovery Research teams to test their hypotheses and screen targets against GSK's compound collection. Active compounds could then form the basis of full drug discovery programmes that may ultimately lead to innovative medicines for Chronic Kidney Disease.

Dr. Chatziantoniou, researcher in Inserm, is one of 14 winning proposals, chosen from 428 entries from 234 universities and academic institutes from across 26 countries. Research between Inserm and GSK will focus on identifying and validating novel treatments for therapy of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), a pathology affecting millions of people over the world. CKD is defined as the progressive loss of renal function and is associated with the development of inflammatory and fibrotic lesions within the kidney. Diabetes, hypertension and ageing are the major causes of CKD, and the only treatment today against the terminal phase of renal disease is dialysis or kidney transplantation, making thus this pathology one of the most expensive diseases to treat on a per patient basis.

Dr Christos Chatziantoniou, graduated from the Faculty of Chemistry (University of Thessaloniki, 1981), obtained a master in Organic Chemistry (University Paris VII, 1982) and then a PhD in Biochemistry (University Paris XI, 1987). After a two-year post-doctoral training under the mentorship of Drs Gottschalk and Arendshorst in the University of North Carolina, he joined the same university as Research Associate in 1990. In 1993 he won a Young Investigator Return grant from the EU to join the Inserm U64 in Tenon hospital, Paris (Prs Ardaillou and Ronco). In 1995 he obtained a tenured position in Inserm, and promoted to the rank of Research Director in 2000. He is Vice-Chair of the Inserm Study Section "Heart, Vessels, Kidney, Lung, Blood & Muscle", member of the Direction Committee of Doctoral School "Physiology & Physiopathology", University Paris VI, and serves in several European evaluation panels (Horizon 2020, ANR, FRS-FNRS, GSRT). In the beginning of his career he was interested in the mechanisms controlling renal hemodynamics during the development of hypertension. Then, he switched gradually to the Renin-Angiotensin System and the mechanisms involved in the development of CKD with particular emphasis to mediators of renal fibrosis. His team was among the first groups to show that renal fibrosis is a reversible pathology and that renal function can be restored in experimental models. His current interests are to identify new biomarkers predicting the outcome of renal function and to discover novel targets for therapy of CKD.

"CKD is a bad/good news story" said Dr Chatziantoniou. "The bad news are that more than 500 millions of people suffer from a form of renal disease and this number will continue to rise due to the worldwide spread of diabetes and the ageing of population. The good news are that due to the use of technologically innovative approaches a number of novel targets for therapy have been recently identified experimentally that have the potential to be transferred in patients. Joining the forces of academic laboratories to industrial partners will certainly accelerate the quest of providing in a nearby future an efficient therapy for CKD to the millions of patients and their families".

"This project was also presented thanks to the fruitful interaction between Inserm Transfert and GSK's DPAc team. We are very proud of this promising winning," said Augustin Godard, Executive Board Member, Industrial Partnerships, Inserm Transfert.

"We believe there is a real advantage in bringing together the best in academia and industry to help take innovative ideas forward in drug discovery," said Duncan Holmes, European Head of DPAc. *"The Discovery Fast Track Challenge is designed to find the best ideas for collaborative drug discovery from any therapeutic area, in any geography. We look forward to working with each of the winners to help identify novel quality pharmacologically active compounds for their targets and being part of the researcher's journey in making a difference."*

Launched in the UK in late 2010, DPAC is a new approach to drug discovery that enables academics to marry their scientific excellence with the drug discovery insight of GSK. For Discovery Fast Track projects that progress to full DPAC programmes, GSK and the academic collaborator share the challenges and rewards of innovation; GSK provides drug discovery expertise and in-kind resources as well as funding activities in the partner laboratories to progress a programme from idea to candidate medicine. Currently GSK has ten active DPAC collaborations in ten disease areas.

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About Inserm Unit UMR 1155 - www.krctnn.com

The Inserm/UPMC unit UMR 1155 is located in Tenon hospital, and has a strong tradition (started in 1965) and expertise on investigating the biology of renal cells and the physiopathological mechanisms of kidney diseases. Due to the proximity and the close relations between the lab and the Nephrology Departments of Tenon Hospital, a major strength is the implementation in all research projects of the "from the bench to the bed side and vice versa" philosophy.

About Inserm - www.inserm.fr

Founded in 1964, the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm, www.inserm.fr) is a public scientific and technological institute which operates under the joint authority of the French Ministry of Health and French Ministry of Research. Inserm, the only French public research institute to focus entirely on human health, has an annual budget of 1 billion euros, and employs as permanent tenured staff 2 000 researchers and 2 800 engineers/technicians spread in 300 research units nationwide. Most of the research units are implanted in university hospitals and there is an active interaction with the faculties of medicine, as more than 4 000 university-hospital personnel perform research activities in Inserm laboratories.

About Inserm Transfert - www.inserm-transfert.fr

Founded in 2000, Inserm Transfert SA is the private subsidiary of Inserm, dedicated to technology transfer (from invention disclosure to industrial partnership). Inserm Transfert also manages European and International research projects, supports large scale projects in epidemiology and public health. Inserm Transfert runs a 2M€/year proof of concept fund. The company also supports entrepreneurs in the biotech sector, in partnership with Inserm Transfert Initiative, a €39.7m life sciences seed investment company.

About Pierre and Marie Curie University (UPMC) www.upmc.fr and www.sorbonne-university.com

UPMC is France's top university in science and medicine, with close to 34,000 students including 3,200 doctoral candidates. The University, located in the center of Paris, offers a full range of degree programs in chemistry; engineering; mathematics; medicine; physics; life and Earth sciences, and the environment and biodiversity. UPMC's more than 6000 researchers and faculty professor-researchers in 100 laboratories perform basic and applied research in all the sciences and study the most important issues of sustainable development. UPMC is also part of Sorbonne University, a successor to the historic Sorbonne, and one of the most comprehensive university centers in France.