

## **BNP PARIBAS: 20 YEARS OF SUPPORTING MEDICAL RESEARCH**

Since it was set up in 1984, the BNP Paribas foundation has supported doctors and researchers operating on the dual front of medical research and the application of its results to clinical practice. Helped by the expertise of organisations recognised by the scientific community, the foundation generally supports newly-formed teams, in France and abroad, over several years. These are remarkable undertakings, on a human level as much as on a scientific or medical one.

Since the programme was set up, 19 research teams and almost 200 people have received support.

### **The BNP Paribas foundation's earliest partners**

#### AFM – association française contre les myopathies (French association for fighting muscular dystrophy) (telethon)

In the early 1980s, the public at large knew nothing about genetic disorders. At the time, a handful of desperate parents would meet in an association formed to share their distress, raise awareness in the medical profession, and to sell cards and boxes of chocolates to raise funds for programmes carried out by a few pioneering researchers.

The foundation (Paribas) was AFM's first partner from the world of business, and supported research programmes for a number of years. In 1987, a telethon was held which allowed public opinion to appreciate the seriousness of genetic disorders, and just how much was at stake in the development of research in this field. The bank (BNP) mobilised its branch network and its staff in this big awareness-raising campaign, and became the operation's official banking partner.

More than 20 years later, BNP Paribas is still supporting the telethon and, through events organised by the bank, makes a significant contribution to the fight against genetic disorders -- as indeed does BNL in Italy.

#### Medical genetics centre of the Necker hospital/Professor Arnold Munnich

Founded thanks to the donations from the first telethon, and directed by Professor Arnold Munnich, medical genetics centre of the Necker hospital has become the gold standard in the fight against genetic disorders. The foundation supported it from 1990 to 1995 (when the first DNA bank was set up), and has since supported four young geneticists trained by Prof Munnich, who set up laboratories and genetic clinics in the teaching hospitals of Lille, Clermont Ferrand, Rennes, and Limoges. These laboratories have, in the meantime, become veritable "businesses".

Still heading the Necker hospital's genetic centre, a leading light of science, and as unpretentious as he is erudite, "Arnold" (as he is universally known) is a scientific adviser to the French presidency. We owe him a great deal: he guided us through the world of medicine, and often offered advice. It is thanks to him that we have been able to offer our support to Marie-Paule Vazquez (of the paediatric maxillo-facial surgery centre of the Trousseau hospital), to Vanessa Hayes in Sydney, and to her young and brilliant colleague Jean-Laurent Casanova

### Blood vessels and blood institute/Professor Gérard Tobelem

From the outset, the foundation has been a partner of this institute, a pioneer in the fight against cardiovascular disease, one of the biggest killers in France. Founded in 1988 on the initiative of Professor Jacques Caen of the Lariboisière hospital, this institute brings together researchers and doctors.

After being associated with the institute's foundation, the foundation supported, some years later, the work led by its new director, Professor Gérard Tobelem, in the field of angiogenesis (the study of the formation of new blood vessels).

### La Maison/Jean-Marc Lapiana

From 2002 to 2004 the foundation supported the development of this non-hospital palliative care centre, which has no equivalent anywhere, set up in the town of Gardanne in the French department of Bouches-du-Rhône.

It is a life-affirming place, "invented" by Dr Jean-Marc Lapiana, who is an extraordinary personality.

### Centre for the study of the genetics of infectious diseases/Jean-Laurent Casanova

The story begins in 2000, with the awarding of the BNP/FRM (medical research foundation) prize to Jean-Laurent Casanova for his work on "the genetic predisposition to mycobacterial infections in humans".

The following year, together with the mathematician Laurent Abel, Jean-Laurent Casanova founded the centre for the study of the human genetics of infectious diseases at the Necker hospital. Their research was to prove pivotal to the understanding of the genetic basis of the predisposition to viral and bacterial diseases. Initially agreed for three years, our partnership was extended for three further years as part of the research conducted by this team, together with the Franco-Chinese research team in Shanghai, with which BNP Paribas Hong Kong was associated.

Most recently, the work of this team has been extended across the Atlantic, with the creation of a second centre in the Rockefeller University, New York.

In 2009, Jean-Laurent Casanova agreed to join the executive committee of the BNP Paribas foundation as a member qualified to have an input into research programmes.

## **Today's partners**

### FRM (medical research foundation)

For almost 20 years, the foundation has supported the FRM. Initially, and for about a decade, aimed at post-doctorate students' research grants, support took on a different form in 2001, becoming a plan for multi-year funding of newly-formed teams, identified by the FRM's scientific council for the excellence of their work.

In this way, the foundation has promoted the growth, throughout France, of 10 or so "green shoots" whose work covers several fields of research.

## Institut Pasteur

The close links we have always had with the Institut Pasteur were reinforced in 2004 through the partnership forged by the foundation, and again in 2008 thanks to a “business gifts” campaign taken by BNP Paribas’s corporate and investment banking division to its clients.

The foundation decided to get involved with the “five-year groups” programme set up by the institute. By favouring the creation of a new team, this programme aims to develop research into new fields, and enables researchers to prove themselves as team leaders.

At present, the foundation is supporting the work of Jean Marc Ghigo on biofilms, and that of Michel Véron on Nemo protein.

## Curie institute

Since 2001 the foundation has given regular support to two laboratories in the Curie institute, directed by Frédéric Saudou and Philippe Chavier respectively. Two further teams will be funded from 2010.

## Garches foundation

Set up in 1988 by doctors from the Raymond Poincaré hospital in Garches, this foundation aims to help people with motor handicaps return home after a stay in hospital and, wherever possible, to facilitate their return to work.

Its programmes centre on five areas: autonomy and rehabilitation (24-hour telephone helpline, and medical alarm system), transport and mobility (including a wheelchair trial and test centre), training in the use of multimedia tools, grant-funded research, and information and communication.

The BNP Paribas foundation chose to join the “research” programme. Our partnership will come to an end in 2009; it has enabled almost 100 grant holders to carry out their practical research.

## **An international dimension**

### Australia

In 2006, the 125th anniversary of BNP Paribas’s presence in Australia, the BNP Paribas foundation and the government decided jointly to support, for three years, the work of a young oncologist, Vanessa Hayes, and her team in the Garvan Institute, Sydney.

In 2009 the foundation extended this support, for a specific programme run in conjunction with the Children Cancer Institute.

### Singapore/Vietnam

From this year, and for the next three years, the foundation and BNP Paribas Singapore will jointly support a programme set up by the National Cancer Centre Singapore, comprising a regional fellowship programme worth EUR 30,000 per year in total. This will enable a team of three Vietnamese oncologists (a doctor, a researcher, and a surgeon) to be hosted for a year at Singapore’s National Cancer Centre

to perfect their expertise. Once back in their home country, they will raise awareness and promote innovation in their respective areas.

#### Corporate and Investment Banking and the business gift campaign

Taking its lead from the advice and contacts of the BNP Paribas foundation, CIB (the Group's Corporate & Investment Banking) has, since late 2007, run a remarkable programme supporting medical research through its "business gift campaign. Prolonging the existing partnership between FRM and the BNP Paribas foundation, CIB has, in the first instance, supported 10 young researchers in the completion of their training in important international centres. The following year, in close partnership with the Institut Pasteur's international network, CIB refocused the operation on supporting the worldwide fight against infectious diseases: 29 research teams from the Institut Pasteur or associated centres worldwide have been supported in their relevant countries. Others will be joining this project, which continues until the end of 2009.