



The Embassy hosts the first FR-US Networking Event in Science and Technology

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The first annual **Networking Event in Science and Technology** (NEST) organized by the **Office for Science and Technology** of the Embassy of France in Washington was held on July 1, 2014. NEST seeks to bring together and honor the members of the French-American scientific community who have established lasting bilateral relationships and who serve as true scientific ambassadors between our two countries. NEST is both a convivial occasion and an opportunity for this community to come together for a high-level scientific event.

The first NEST event also honored French biomedical research as it celebrated the 50th anniversary of **Inserm**, the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research. Created in 1964, Inserm is the only public research organization in France entirely devoted to human health. Thanks to the excellence of its scientific teams and its strategic industrial partners, Inserm has been at the heart of the most important revolutions in the medical field. From the development of medications, to diagnostic and therapeutic techniques for cancer, genetic, metabolic or neurological disorders, and of course, the discovery of virus that causes AIDS, Inserm has participated in the achievement of key medical advances and continues to advance our knowledge of the life sciences, human pathology and medical treatments. Moreover, Inserm played a significant role in the creation of the European Research Area and is currently engaged in over 6300 scientific collaborations with nearly 100 different countries including the United States, the Institute's top international partner.

The conference focused particular attention on the French-American collaborations that Inserm helps foster. Several notable partnerships include the creation of a training workshop at **Harvard Medical School**, the implementation of an Inserm research team at the **University of California, Irvine**, a cooperation agreement with the NIH's **National Institute on Drug Abuse** and the establishment of six International Associated Laboratories. These partnerships enable critical discussions and information sharing, which are essential to the improvement in modern medicinal practices.



Photo from left to right: Richard Simerly, Roger Hajjar, Pascale Augé, Rachel MakMcCully, Emiliana Borrelli, George Koob, Nora Volkow, Nathaniel Comfort, François Delattre, Thierry Damerval, Pascal Griset, Mireille Guyader, Jacques Galipeau, Minh-Ha Pham.

One of the speakers, Pascal Griset, historian, professor and co-author of the book *Au Coeur du Vivant – 50 Ans de l'Inserm*, gave a detailed analysis of the history of Inserm as it evolved has over the decades to respond to the different health challenges that France and the world faced. Thierry Damerval, Inserm's Deputy Director-General and Pascale Augé, CEO of **Inserm Transfert**, Inserm's private subsidiary for the promotion of discoveries made in Inserm laboratories, highlighted the Institute's current role in the national and international context and its economic impact in the field of health.

Photo from left to right: Pascale Augé, François Delattre, Thierry Damerval, and Pascal Griset.

High level American scientists also participated in the conference, including Nora Volkow, Director of the **National Institute on Drug Abuse** and 2009 winner of the Inserm International Prize, George Koob, Director of the **National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse** and Linda Fried, Dean of the **Mailman School of Public Health** at Columbia University. The heads of American structures with ties to Inserm also contributed to the discussion of the added value of a partnership with the Institute.

The first part of the event came to a close with a Signature of Cooperation Agreement between Inserm and the Embassy of France on the **Chateaubriand Fellowship in Science** in the presence of **Ambassador François**

Delattre. This program aims to build and strengthen existing French and American collaborations by providing grants and encouraging exchanges for doctoral students who wish to conduct research in a French laboratory.



The Ambassador's address also opened the second half of the event centered on a scientific lecture given by Nathaniel Comfort of **John Hopkins University**, called "How personal is personalized medicine? The hope, hype, and history of the current revolution in healthcare."

The event concluded with a reception and networking event that allowed the researchers, entrepreneurs, and administrators the opportunity to come together and exchange best practice information.

- Event website: nest.france-science.org
- [More pictures of the event](#)
- Video: