

NEOLAIa Visiting Researchers (NVR) Programme

Call for applications and guidelines: NVR Campaign 2026

Deadline 28 october 2026 (1:00pm – CET Paris time)



“After all, science is essentially international, and it is only through lack of the historical sense that national qualities have been attributed to it.”

Marie Skłodowska-Curie,

Double Nobel Prize winning Polish-French scientist famed for her work on radioactivity

PREAMBLE

About LE STUDIUM

Created in 1996, inspired by the history and cultures of the Loire Valley, the objective of LE STUDIUM Loire Valley Institute for Advanced Studies is **to create a dynamic outwards-looking international scientific community** in the Centre-Val de Loire (France) region, covering all research disciplines and involving public and private research institutions.

One of its principal missions is **to attract and welcome experienced international researchers** to the laboratories and companies of Centre-Val de Loire. To date, LE STUDIUM has attracted more than 340 experienced researchers to the region coming from 49 countries.

LE STUDIUM leads the **scientific exchange, network activities and animation** of LE STUDIUM international faculty of fellows, in order to favour cross-disciplinary exchanges with regional and international scientific communities to **build human capacity for research, development and innovation**.

About the University of Tours and the NEOLAIa alliance

In December 2021, the University of Tours officially joined NEOLAIa, with its motto 'Transforming Regions for an Inclusive Europe', an Alliance of nine European Universities cofunded by the European Commission in its 2023 call for the period 2024-2027 (projet number: 101124794).

Some background on the European university concept...

In 2017, the European Union affirmed its desire to encourage the emergence of **networks of universities located in several European countries**, enabling students to study in several countries and in several languages. These networks are also places conducive to educational innovation and research into excellence.

In practical terms, each alliance of European universities will have a common strategy for education, research and innovation, and will form a **genuine European campus** where mobility for all (students, teachers, staff) is facilitated.

This initiative has two major objectives:

- to promote shared values and thus strengthen the European identity;
- to boost the attractiveness and competitiveness of universities in Europe.

Today 65 alliances bring together more than 560 higher education establishments of all types in 35 countries.

NEOLAIa

NEOLAIa was created in **May 2019** as a strategic collaboration between universities in Spain, Germany, the Czech Republic and Sweden. Since then, the consortium has grown, incorporating new universities from Italy, France, Lithuania, Romania and Cyprus.

The NEOLAIa alliance now brings together **9 European universities**:

- Bielefeld Universität, Germany
- Universidad de Jaén, Spain
- Örebro Universitet, Sweden
- Ostravska Universita, Czech Republic
- Università degli Studi di Salerno, Italy
- Universitatea Stefan cel Mare Suceava, Romania
- University of Nicosia, Cyprus
- Siauliai Valstybinė Kolegija, Lithuania
- Université de Tours, France

Partner universities associated with the NEOLAIa Alliance listed below are also eligible to this programme:

- Javna Ustanova Univerzitet U Zenici Universitas Studiorum Zenicaensis, Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Sumy State University, Ukraine
- National University Of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine
- Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, Ukraine
- Chernivtsi National University Yuriy Fedkovych, Ukraine
- Universitatea Tehnica A Moldovei, Moldova
- Caucasus International University Llc, Georgia
- Albanian University, Albania

What all these universities have in common is that they are relatively young, medium-sized institutions that are strongly integrated into their social and economic environment.

3 key pillars are at the heart of the NEOLAIa project:

- > diversity and inclusion;
- > mobility to strengthen European citizenship;
- > digital transformation.

1 disciplinary focus: the challenges of Global Health

As the winner of the **2023 call for proposals of the ERASMUS+ programme**, the NEOLAIa alliance received **€14.4 million in funding from the European Commission**, including **€1.6 million for the University of Tours**, for a period of **4 years**. The University of Tours has also obtained additional national funding of **€1.15 million from the « Plan France 2030 » operated by the French National Research Agency (ANR-23-GURE-0010)**.

The role of the University of Tours in the project

The University of Tours is involved in all the activities of the project, which will run from 2024 to 2027 and cover every facet of the university: teaching and research, of course, but also the establishment of common governance for the alliance, the construction of a shared policy of diversity and inclusion, the development of student and staff mobility, the development of plurilingualism, entrepreneurship, open science and digital transformation.

The University of Tours has a more central role in coordinating activities in the fields of **teaching** (development of joint degrees, organisation of summer schools, dissemination of innovative teaching practices such as **NeoTeAch**), **research** (creation of a network of research support staff, dissemination of Living Labs), **plurilingualism** (organisation of a conference on language policy, drafting of a joint charter) and **entrepreneurship** (organisation of a summer school).

Involvement in the NEOLAiA Alliance

The University of Tours is a partner of the NEOLAiA Alliance while LE STUDIUM is an associated partner.

Funding allocated by the French National Agency for Research (ANR) makes it possible for the University of Tours to set up a visiting researcher programme in order to enhance the involvement of its research units in NEOLAiA activities. Thus, in cooperation with the University of Tours, LE STUDIUM opens a dedicated Visiting Researchers Programme in order to welcome **experienced researchers** from NEOLAiA partner universities in a host laboratory at the University of Tours.

The NEOLAiA Visiting Researchers will be integrated in the **international scientific community** catalyzed by LE STUDIUM in Centre-Val de Loire region across its various programmes.

CONTACT

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1 - CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL FOR APPLICATIONS & PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

1 - 1 Context and objectives

For the NVR campaign 2026, LE STUDIUM offers partnering awards in a host laboratory at the University of Tours with mutual obligations between the research fellow in residence, the host laboratory and LE STUDIUM. Beyond supporting the international mobility of researchers, the programme aims to strengthen the scientific links between the laboratories of the University of Tours and laboratories based in partner universities of the NEOLAIa alliance.

This programme targets international researchers who have to embody, through their profile, the key words that capture the research values of LE STUDIUM: Curiosity, Imagination and Intuition. These values help to create a dynamic outwards-looking international scientific community that recognises the benefits of international, multi- or interdisciplinary and intersectoral research approaches. The awards' package creates conditions that catalyse the development of scientific and human interactions between the laboratories of the different partner universities to strengthen research & development as well as educational schemes pursued in the NEOLAIa Programme.

1 - 2 Brief presentation of the programme

This call for applications does not target specific research themes. The programme **is open to international researchers, working in a university of the NEOLAIa consortium and of partner universities associated with the NEOLAIa Alliance, in all disciplines** (except research directly linked to military applications) wishing to join a research laboratory at the University of Tours¹.

LE STUDIUM VISITING RESEARCHER award targets international researchers who continue to receive a salary in their home institution (permanent or non-permanent position) and who are willing to join a laboratory in Centre-Val de Loire region for a scientific residency for a period of 3 to 9 months. This programme supports the welcoming and residence in the region and the integration into the LE STUDIUM scientific community.

This programme supports the installation of the visiting researcher and his/her family in Tours (accommodation, logistics, and administrative support).

Programme	Duration	Candidate	Award's Benefits	Date of residency
Visiting Researcher	3 to 9 consecutive months	international researcher (Minimum 3 years after the PhD)	-Travel cost contribution capped to 700 EUR. - Furnished accommodation in a high-standard apartment in the city center of Tours - Administrative support - International scientific events - Integration into the Le Studium international	Earliest starting date: 4th January 2027 Latest ending date : 15th October 2027

¹ In order to identify a host laboratory at the University of Tours, experienced international researchers interested in LE STUDIUM opportunities are invited to contact LE STUDIUM (see page 2).

			scientific community	
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2 - CHARACTERISTICS OF APPLICATIONS

The applicants must describe their collaborative scientific proposal in a 3-page document.

The applications have to be written in English in order to allow evaluations by international experts. A summary in French is required.

One of the objectives of the NVR Programme is the development of an enduring scientific relationship between the research fellow and the host laboratory. This has to be clearly expressed in the application.

3 - REVIEW OF THE APPLICATIONS

3 - 1 Eligibility criteria

This programme intends to attract international researchers that are in possession of a doctoral degree and have at least 3 years of full-time equivalent research experience after their doctorate. They can hold a permanent or contractual position in a university of the NEOLAIa Alliance and have secured authorisation from their department for this temporary mobility.

In addition, applicant researchers must also comply with the following mobility rule: applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, etc.) in France for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the deadline for submission of proposals. Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.

3 - 2 Evaluation criteria

Scientific Committee members follow three categorical criteria to review applications: the scientific quality, the impact of the proposed research and the track record of the applicant and the career development through the LE STUDIUM award:

- 1. Scientific Quality (50%)** – This includes the clarity of the stated research objectives, the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed research project, feasibility, risk management and compliance with the ethical principles of H2020.
- 2. Impact of the proposed research (25%)** – This includes the interdisciplinary dimension of the proposed research, the demonstrated skill and ability of the researcher and his/her proposal to increase knowledge, the application of new ideas, procedures, technologies, programmes or policy settings to important topics that will impact the proposed field of study and contribute to the European Research Area (ERA) strategies. An important part of this criteria relies on the impact for long-lasting collaborations between NEOLAIa universities' laboratories. The choice of hosting partner will be clearly explained, and the details of any prospective partnerships will be outlined.
- 3. Career and Track Record of the Applicant (25%)** – The track record evaluates whether the applicant's previous research activities demonstrate her/his capacity to achieve the proposed scientific objectives. This includes the applicant's ability to contribute to the research especially in terms of having the appropriate mix of research skills and experience, to work with research teams and enterprise partners. Experience of inter-sectorial and/or transnational mobility, as well as experience of working in multidisciplinary teams, management experience and team building experience, experience of transfer of technology and training will also be considered. An interruption to the applicants' career path should be documented. Interruptions may include pregnancy and child care, escaping regions of conflict, unexpected illness etc. These criteria evaluate as well the relevance of the choice of the host laboratory to perform the proposed research project.

3 - 3 Evaluation process

After the campaign's closing date, LE STUDIUM team performs an administrative check to ensure each application conforms to the submission format guidelines and that all necessary documents are complete and signed. Only eligible applications will be considered for review and selection.

To ensure a fair transparent evaluation and selection procedure, the following occurs:

- **LE STUDIUM** ensures that the global administration and management of the evaluation process respects set criteria for the scientific review, including non-discrimination and conflict of interest rules.
- **LE STUDIUM Scientific Council** is composed of twenty-five eminent scientists from both public and private sectors, including researchers from the Americas and Europe. At least one member of the Scientific Council provides an independent, impartial and fair scientific assessment of applications.
- **The NVR Selection Committee** will take the final decision and finalise the ranking of the award taking into account the scientific evaluation made by the LE STUDIUM Scientific Council and the strategic priorities for the University of Tours. This committee is composed of representatives of the University of Tours, i.e. the Vice-President for Research, the Vice-President for Science with and for Society and Doctoral Schools, the Vice-President for International relations, the local NEOLAiA Project Coordinator and the LE STUDIUM Scientific Manager and General Secretary.
- **Notification of results:** the cumulative scores and comments of the Scientific Council and NVR Selection Committee members allow LE STUDIUM team to build the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for each application and to establish the final ranking list. Notification letters and ESR are sent to candidates not later than the 4th December 2026



4 - GENERAL PROVISION AFTER ACCEPTANCE OF VISITING RESEARCHERS AWARDS

4 - 1 Preparation for the fellows' arrival

Once an applicant has been awarded a fellowship, LE STUDIUM invites the host scientist and the research fellow to discuss the fellow's award and define the time window for the arrival. The videoconference meeting will enable all parties to review the awards details and clear up administrative questions. Then a formal letter of offer is sent to the research fellow summarizing the details of the award and visit.

Following acceptance of the offer by the candidate, LE STUDIUM team takes in charge all the administrative tasks for the fellow's arrival (visa, residence permit, school for children, French class, other activities...). Likewise, accommodation is prepared to welcome the fellow and her/his family.

4 - 2 Welcoming the fellow

Visiting researchers will benefit from a high-quality welcome. LE STUDIUM offers quality apartments in the city center of Tours. The apartment will be completely furnished (furniture, crockery, household appliances, linens, etc.) and the configuration will be adapted to the size of the hosted family.

LE STUDIUM staffs are dedicated to welcoming international researchers. One member will be available to answer questions and concerns related to administrative matters and living conditions in Tours prior and during the residency period.

Upon their arrival, a member of LE STUDIUM team, welcomes the fellow and their family, introduces them to their apartment and answers any practical question. The next day the fellow attends a meeting with the administrative team of LE STUDIUM to sign the documentation and contract.

In the following days, the fellow and host scientist are invited to a scientific discussion with LE STUDIUM General Secretary, LE STUDIUM Scientific Manager and the local NEOLAIa Coordinator.

4 - 3 Contractual obligations during residency

At the end of the project, LE STUDIUM researcher is asked to produce a final report explaining the outcomes of the project in the context of the original proposal. This report is due at the scheduled exit meeting with the NEOLAIa Coordinator and LE STUDIUM General Secretary and Scientific Manager. The report will be made publicly available on LE STUDIUM website on a dedicated LE STUDIUM Journal section, mentioning the support of the « Plan France 2030» operated by the French National Research Agency (ANR-23-GURE-0010)." The report will also be sent to the NEOLAIa management team in order to report on the work done in the framework of the NVR programme.

Hosting laboratories commit to respect EU procedures regarding ethics procedures, researchers' rights and researchers' involvement in research projects. LE STUDIUM does not acquire any intellectual property rights.

5 - APPLICATION FORMAT

Proposals must be submitted online through the LESTUDIUM website by 28th October 2026 (1:00 pm – CET Paris time) at the following address: <https://www.lestudium-ias.com/recruitment>

The application form is divided into 4 parts:

- Part A: General information (online form)
- Part B: Scientific proposal (document to upload – 3 pages maximum)
- Part C: CV of the applicant (document to upload)
- Part D: Letter of agreement of the host laboratory (document to upload)