

## 4-year Research Group Call for nomination at Centre Pasteur Cameroun

It is well known that various arboviruses of medical interest are circulating in Central Africa in a continental context of environmental changes, which enhances contact between humans and mosquito vectors. It is by consequence of uttermost importance to set up the necessary forces to study the implications of these changes in a One Health perspective. The Centre Pasteur Cameroun (CPC), through its newly created platform of Entomology, aims to improve its capacity to predict the risk, better detect and respond to possible epidemics due to mosquito or tickborne transmission.

To reinforce the research on arbovirus transmission at the CPC, the Institut Pasteur will support the creation of a 4-year Research Group (G4) with the focus on entomology in this institute.

By consequence this International Call 2022 for applications for a 4-year Research Group will support one (1) new G4 award holder with a group-leader career development opportunity of up to 400,000€. The successful applicant should propose an innovative research project on vectors of emergent arboviral diseases.

### **CONTEXT:**

Centre Pasteur du Cameroun (CPC) is a state-owned institute for medical laboratory analyses and biomedical research with legal personality and financial autonomy. CPC is also a member of the Pasteur Network with specific missions within the scope of the study and control of infectious diseases.

The G4 award holder will benefit of the CPC entomology platform, inaugurated in October 2021. This platform is composed of 7 rooms for insect breeding and experimentation, 3 laboratories dedicated to molecular biology, immunology and 2 storage rooms, it is perfectly operational to host a new research group on medical entomology applied to the surveillance, prevention and control of vector-borne diseases.

CPC also has four other platforms that are used cross-functionally by scientists to carry out research and disease surveillance activities in the main public health themes:

- An immunology platform with ELISA chain test, BD FACS CANTO and a Luminex-Magpix.
- A biobank of more than 15000 samples stored at -80°C or in liquid nitrogen; with a « Pathogen Asset Control System (PACS) » system.
- A molecular biology and bio-informatics platform with PCR and Real-time PCR machines such a Quanstudio 7, two MinIONs (Oxford Nanopore) and an Illumina Iseq 100 and a Next Seq 550.
- A biosafety laboratory of level 3 (the only in Cameroun).

The G4 leader will have the possibility to interact with experienced staff in virology and molecular biology at CPC. Cooperation with other CPC and scientific partners in the region will be encouraged.

## **WHO CAN APPLY FOR A G4 PI POSITION?**

The G4 applicant should ideally be an early to mid-career post-doctoral scientist, wishing to establish a research group as an independent researcher at the CPC. The G4 team, as employees of the CPC, must adhere to its rules and regulations.

An enabling environment should motivate the G4 award holder to pursue his/her career at the CPC with the prospect of obtaining a permanent position at the end of the award tenure.

As the CPC is member of the Pasteur Network, it is expected that the G4 PI will express a willingness to participate in the development of this network by strengthening research through collaboration and training across the Pasteur Network.

As for any research group, the G4 award holder will be encouraged to develop and strengthen his/her capacity to manage a team and to welcome and supervise Masters and PhD students, as well as interns. A G4 PI can also hire postdoctoral researchers.

Finally, the involvement of the G4 PI in teaching activities will be highly appreciated.

The CPC should support the G4 PI to become an independent researcher and a future scientific leader in his field. Mentorship for the candidate will be put in place and a training on management will be offered (by the host institution). It is expected that successful candidates will be offered a **permanent position** at the end of the G4.

## **THE PARTNERSHIP WITH INSTITUT PASTEUR**

Institut Pasteur will support the career development of the G4 PI through four (4) annual payments of up to €100,000, payable at the beginning of each financial year. This fellowship can finance salaries up to 50% of its total annual amount.

All scientific and ethical standards and requirements, in accordance with the statutes of the CPC and Institut Pasteur, need to be respected as stipulated in the agreement relating to the G4. This agreement will also define the start date of the G4, which will be agreed with each successful applicant.

The period of tenure of a G4 award is 4 years.

## **ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA**

### Eligibility

Any scientist holding a PhD in Entomology or related field and having 5 to 8 years of post-doctoral research experience can apply for G4 Award.

The call is open to researchers of any nationality.

The candidate cannot already have a permanent position at the CPC.

To have already financed projects is an asset

### Selection criteria

The candidate will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Quality of his/her research  
*Did the research projects carried out by the candidate result in measurable outputs or outcomes in public health or in fundamental knowledge on the subject of interest (peer reviewed articles, patents, etc.)?*
- Capacity to finance his/her projects  
*Has the candidate shown real ability in securing grants from national or international funding agencies?*

- Collaborations and any plans to develop strategic local and regional partnerships  
*Has the candidate demonstrated the ability to initiate, maintain, and develop research collaborations?*
- Supervision and training  
*What management and training experiences does the candidate have?*  
*Does the candidate demonstrate their willingness to be involved in the training of local young scientists?*
- Peer recognition  
*Has the candidate's work been recognised by the scientific community through awards, prizes?*  
*Has the candidate been invited to participate in international scientific events?*

The proposed research project will be evaluated not only on its quality, originality, and feasibility but also on the added values it will bring to the host institute and its contribution to the regional/global health priorities. It is expected that the candidate will bring an experience working on arboviruses, arthropod vectors of medical and/or veterinary significance.

Thus, the right match between the candidate and the host institute will be pivotal, for as well as the motivation of the candidate to participate to the scientific strengthening of the Network.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

A pre-selection will be conducted by the CPC direction. Candidates must contact and send to the [CPC direction](#) a PDF file containing:

- a letter of intention including career objectives,
- CV,
- short description of the research program and,
- three references with contact information.

**Deadline for pre-selection tour: July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

The pre-selected candidates will be invited to complete an [online application](#). The selection will be made during the panel meeting following a review of each application by at least two (2) scientists from our expert panel and external reviewers and an interview of each candidate. The selection will be confirmed by the executive management of the Pasteur Network. Candidates will be notified in due course.

**Deadline for [online submission](#): September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS – APPLICATION FORM**

**Applications must be written in English and submitted online. Incomplete or paper-based applications will not be considered.**

When deemed necessary, the Institut Pasteur reserves the right to ask candidates for additional information in order to evaluate their application.

Candidates must not submit information in their application that is confidential and/or protected by the intellectual property rights of third parties, and may contravene any rights of third parties.

The Pasteur Network is in charge of the G4 selection process.

## **FOLLOW UP PROCESS**

The Department of International Affairs/ Pasteur Network is responsible of the follow-up process of the G4. As part of the evaluation, each year, the G4 PI should provide a complete progress report regarding the scientific activities, including details on annual expenditures. A mid-term interview will be organised with panel members in charge of the follow up.

Each G4 PI will be paired with a suitable mentor, offering advice and guidance for all aspects relating to G4 management and career development. The mentor will be identified from a pool of experienced scientists who already have experience in leading a research group within the Pasteur Network. The G4 PI or the host institute direction can also suggest mentor to the Pasteur Network foundation.