Innovation serving the fight against cancer
CLARA’s 15th anniversary is a great opportunity to look back on the region’s efforts in the fight against cancer since 2003. With unparalleled support from the French State and local authorities, the region’s research teams are remarkable for the significant increase in their scientific output, with nearly 22,000 oncology publications over the past 15 years. Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes now accounts for 22% of France’s cancer publications and the region has shone through its many successes in major national and European innovation programs.

Stepping up both the quantity and quality of its work, the region’s innovation ecosystem dedicated to the fight against cancer has been successful at creating value. With more than 260 patents filed in 15 years and dozens of start-ups created, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes has shown its commitment to encouraging science for the benefit of patients and to helping the region grow.

2018 is a year not only to review what CLARA has accomplished, but also to look towards the future thanks to a new 2018-2022 roadmap, drawn up with the INCa and all of the cancer research cluster’s partners. CLARA continues to mobilize, because in order to keep advancing the fight against cancer, we must invest in the long term.

The CLARA Team

(1) Olivier Exerter, Secretary General (2) Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, Chair Steering Committee (3) Valérie Four, Executive Assistant (4) Arnaud Guitivet, PhD, Project Manager Programming and Scientific Animation (5) Julien Biaudet, Dr in Sociology, Project Officer Social Innovations and Competences Development (6) Ophélie Philipot, PhD, Project Officer Technology Transfer and Economic Development (7) Amandine Scapotta-Garcia, PhD, Project Officer Translational and Clinical Research, Science Popularization (8) Nora Bouhila, Administrative Management (9) Gwenôlle Pare, Communication Manager (10) Esokia Ridet, Events and Communication Assistant (11) Miéline Honaret, PhD, Project Officer Partnerships and International Relations (absent in the photo)
GOVERNANCE AND
COORDINATION

MEMBERS OF THE GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISORY BOARD

1. Prefecture of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, represented by Prefect Stéphane BOUILLON
2. Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region, represented by its President Laurent WAUQUIEZ - Represented by Yannick NEUDER, Vice-President for Higher Education, Research and Innovation / Vice-President of CLARA’s Guidance and Supervisory Board
3. Lyon Metropole, represented by its President David KIMELFELD - Represented by Thierry PHILIP, Vice-President for Higher Education, Research and Innovation / Vice-President of CLARA’s Steering and Supervisory Board
4. Grenoble Metropole, represented by its President Christophe FERRARI - Represented by Claus HAFBAST, Vice-President for Higher Education, Research, European Relations and Facilities of Community Interest
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10. Clermont Auvergne University, represented by its President Mathias BERNARD
11. INSERM Rhône-Alpes Auvergne represented by its Regional Representative Dominique PELLA
12. CEA Tech Grenoble, represented by its Managing Director Stéphane SIEBERT
13. International Agency for Research on Cancer, represented by its Director Christopher WILD

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

COLLEGE OF UNIVERSITIES AND SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS

COLLEGE OF COMPANIES ACTIVE IN ONCOLOGY

COLLEGE OF CHARITY FOUNDATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

PERMANENT GUESTS

COLLEGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL CENTERS

MEMBERS of the Steering Committee

Franck Chauvin
Representative from Jean Monnet University, Saint-Étienne

Charles Dumontet
Representative from LYric, Lyon

Jérôme Garin
Representative from CEA Grenoble, Grenoble

Pierre Hainault
Representative from IAB, Grenoble

Frédérique Penault-Llorca
Representative from IRUCA, Clermont-Ferrand

Alain Puisieux
Representative from CRCL Lyon

Marina Rousseau-Tsangaris
Invited Member, Lyon

Eduardo Seleiro
Representative from IARC, Lyon
DATA ON INCIDENCE/MORTALITY IN FRANCE

400,000 new cases of cancer estimated in 2017 in metropolitan France
54% in men (214,000)
46% in women (186,000)

150,000 cancer-related deaths in 2017
56% in men (84,000 deaths)
44% in women (66,000 deaths)

CAUSES OF DEATH DUE TO CANCER (BY ORDER OF FREQUENCY)
In men:
- lung, colorectal and prostate
In women:
- breast, lung and colorectal

OVER THE PERIOD 2005-2012, the rate of cancer mortality in France decreased
-2.9% in men
-1.4% in women

IN AUVERGNE-RHÔNE-ALPES, mortality is estimated at over 19,000 people in 2014

DATA ON TREATMENT
At the end of 2015, 928 facilities were authorized to treat cancer, including 98 in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes.

1,200,000 Number of cancer patients hospitalized in France
447,391 Number of hospitalizations for cancer surgery
2,659,067 Number of chemotherapy sessions and stays
2,023,591 Number of radiotherapy sessions (not including private sector)
Initiated and funded by public authorities in 2003, the Cancéropôle Lyon-Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (CLARA) is part of France’s national cancer plans. It aims to develop and enhance oncology research in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes.

With 15 years of experience, CLARA brings together the region’s academic, clinical and industrial players in order to build a regional, national and international strategy to fight cancer with a twofold objective: to quickly transfer research discoveries to patient care and to create economic value from this research.

In 15 years, CLARA has supported actions to open research to new disciplines, such as the social sciences and humanities and public health, placing the patient at the heart of research. CLARA is committed to all players in cancer research with the aim of promoting cross-disciplinary collaboration; since 2005, it has supported projects through funding schemes tailored to their needs.

A leader in oncology research and transfer in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, CLARA is continuing its development in close relation with researchers, clinicians and entrepreneurs, and in synergy with the ecosystem of value-creation organizations (incubators and innovation clusters), universities, EPSTs and non-profits.
15 years of actions with a productive scientific network

Clermont-Ferrand
300 cancer researchers
2 companies developing products for cancer
Clermont Auvergne University
1 University Hospital Center
1 Cancer Center

Saint-Étienne
150 cancer researchers
Lyon-Saint-Étienne University
1 University Hospital Center
1 Facility specialized in oncology

Lyon
1,800 cancer researchers
46 companies developing products for cancer
Lyon-Saint-Étienne University
1 University Hospital Center with two facilities
1 Cancer Center
1 International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)

Grenoble
750 cancer researchers
27 companies developing products for cancer
Grenoble Alpes University
1 University Hospital Center

- 210 academic and clinical teams
- 3,000 researchers and PhD students in cancerology
- 3,500 healthcare professionals in cancerology
- 216 research projects supported
- 75 companies targeting the cancer market
- 312 events held
- €236M in funding from French State and local authorities for the region's cancer research in the last 15 years, including €124M from the French National Cancer Institute
Since 2001, even before the first French National Cancer Plan created the cancer research clusters, local authorities in Rhône-Alpes worked to set up an ambitious program to fight cancer, bringing together the region’s academic, clinical and industrial players to boost local economic development. Its aim was to attract industrial partners and create favorable conditions for better economic development, while ensuring the rapid transfer of knowledge produced by researchers so as to have new, more effective, safer treatments to benefit patients.

General overview

2003-2007
1st cancer plan

2008-2013
2nd cancer plan

2014-2019
3rd cancer plan

CLARA overview

2001
At the initiative of local authorities in Rhône-Alpes, a regional cancer research program was launched, focusing on research by combining academic and industrial strengths

2003
Creation of the 7 cancer research clusters
Professor Thierry Philip, President of CLARA’s Executive Committee

2004
CLARA was placed under the aegis of the Léa and Napoléon Bullukian Foundation

2005
Launch of the CLARA Proof of Concept program, pioneering program to support technology transfer and economic development
Auvergne joins CLARA

2006
First CLARA Scientific Days, later renamed the Cancer Research Forum

Launch of a large-scale investment plan to create technology platforms
CLARA awarded INCa label for 2007 – 2010

First CLARA Industrial-Academic Meetings, later renamed the Research2Business Oncology Meeting (R2B)

Launch of CLARA’s first 2 structuring projects

Launch of the Chair of Excellence Environment, Nutrition and Cancer in Lyon

CLARA awarded INCa label for 2011-2014

Launch of the OncoStarter program, a pioneering program to support emerging projects

First Franco-Chinese Symposium in Shanghai and Launch of Partnership with Shanghai JiaoTong University (EJTS)

Creation of the Cancer Research Center of Lyon

Opening of the Hygée Center, a regional cancer prevention platform

Launch of the Chair of Excellence in Translational Research in Grenoble

Set up of a partnership with Lyonbiopôle

CLARA awarded INCa label for 2015-2017

Launch of the Regional Oncology School and 1st edition of its summer session: the Oncoriales

Partnership with the Rhône committee of the League Against Cancer on OncoStarter

Partnership with Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes GIRCI for clinical research projects

Partnership with the ARC Foundation

Launch of the ERC Booster program

Launch of the Health and Regions Research Chair in Clermont-Ferrand

Professor Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, Chair of CLARA’s Steering Committee

Launch of the Presage Institute (Comprehensive Health Prevention) in Saint-Étienne

CLARA awarded INCa label for 2018-2022

Partnerships with the Rhône, Loire and Ardèche committee of the League Against Cancer on OncoStarter

Signing of a partnership with the Quebec Oncopole cancer research cluster
Since its creation, CLARA has deployed its actions based on the concept of scientific focus areas, which has helped to bring together research teams dispersed throughout the region and to set up collaborative projects.

The research environment is structured according to scientific approaches, making it relevant to organize its distribution across the region and to highlight its scientific strengths.

Carried out over many years, this strategy to consolidate and structure the network has helped to strengthen the potential for excellence and attractiveness, and to make the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region’s scientific assets clearer for the international community. This strategy includes the Labex, RHU and Convergences labels, the emergence of networks of excellence in Lyon (e.g. the LYRic / LYriCAN integrated cancer research) and the Synergy Lyon Cancer research and care foundation.

**5 axes:**
- Epidémiology
- Biotherapy
- Functional genomics
- Pharmacogenomics
- Imaging

**6 axes:**
- Tumor progression and resistance
- Infections and immunity
- Nanomedicine and health technologies
- Bioinformatics and modeling
- Prevention, individuals and society
- Environment, nutrition and epidemiology

**Addition of a new axis:**
- Bioinformatics, biostatistics and modeling
In 2018, CLARA now wants to move beyond a sector-based, discipline-based vision of scientific research by axis. This shift has led to a new strategy to facilitate cross-fertilization by replacing the theme-based vision with a vision in three areas that characterize the region’s expertise:

Through this shift in strategy, CLARA wishes to promote a transdisciplinary approach to scientific expertise in order to explore untapped research fields and identify new fundamental opportunities to innovate in the fight against cancer.
15 years of existence allowing to inventory scientific production in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

Since the creation of France’s cancer research clusters, the cancer research landscape has changed significantly. The structuring of the research clusters has helped to better organize the scientific forces and to synergize research efforts. The effects on scientific productivity and the renown of regional teams worldwide are illustrated by the bibliometric indicators for the period 2000-2016.

Period analyzed: 2000-2016
Publications: 21,805
Patents: 263

A dynamic ecosystem

Growth in number of publications

AURA: 117%
France: 72%
Europe: 77%

At the same time, the number of contributors/co-authors has increased threefold.

Scientific production distributed over 4 university hospital centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lyon</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenoble</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clermont-Ferrand</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Etienne</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recognition throughout France and Europe

In 2016, scientific production in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region accounted for:

- 68% (including IARC 19%) Lyon
- 16% Grenoble
- 10% Clermont-Ferrand
- 5% Saint-Etienne

3% of European publications
22% of French publications

against 16% in 2001
Publications with increasing impact

- **X 10** of the number of yearly publications in journals with an SJR* impact factor higher than 10

*JCR: Scimago Journal Rank

Share of publications by area of innovation, representative of the region’s expertise

- 36% Biomedical innovations
- 34% Innovations in health technology
- 28% Prevention and social innovations

An increase in intraregional collaborations:

- **7%** of publications are the result of collaboration between several research institutes in the region

Since 2000,

- **x5** of the number of publications bringing together several of the region’s research centers
15 years of support for the network

Since its creation, CLARA has focused on developing support systems that meet the network’s needs as closely as possible.

Seven areas of action have been identified that best match all of CLARA’s missions. Some of these areas of action have led to the creation of support mechanisms that enable the cluster to provide a wide range of financial, logistical and methodological support.

*Date of creation of the call for projects
The CLARA Proof of Concept program, created in 2005 with the aim of funding R&D projects that promote knowledge and technology transfer between academic and industrial partners in the field of cancer, was piloted at the national level. This program has generated a national movement to involve cancer research clusters in supporting technology transfer, by integrating a mission to promote research into all of the clusters’ roadmaps.

Since 2003, over 2,000 research projects involving Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes teams have won regional, national and international calls for projects, accounting for investment of over + €1,400M including + €940M in public funding.

Furthermore, the OncoStarter program, organized as a call for projects starting in 2011, has helped innovative, original projects that bring together one or more young teams within the region to become more mature. In addition to financial assistance, it offers selected teams personalized support to enhance the quality of their project. Since 2015, the common specifications for cancer research clusters include a program to support the emergence of new projects.

CLARA has supported: 221 projects, i.e. 11% of all projects in the AURA region, with €26M in investment.
15 years of support for high-potential projects

Strong leverage has been made possible by combining funding mechanisms specific to the CLARA cancer research cluster with regional, national and international funding programs.

Translational research project on prostate cancer

CLARA has helped to organize cancer research at the Clermont site by aggregating multidisciplinary local expertise in fundamental and translational research on prostate cancer.

The NuReP team, part of the the GReD laboratory, has taken advantage of CLARA’s support to build and coordinate an ambitious translational research program on prostate cancer. Founded during a meeting at CLARA’s yearly forum, the project has expanded thanks to support from CLARA and, over time, has won several national calls for projects.

The NuRep team has recently shown that LXR receptors are major players in metabolic control within tumor cells and that their activation prevents the metastatic progression of adenocarcinoma of the prostate.

“CLARA has been a springboard to obtain this funding, and its programs have helped to create a true launching pad for our research at the GReD laboratory,” says Dr. Silvère Baron, co-director of the NuReP «Nuclear Receptors and Prostate Diseases” team in the GReD-Reproduction and Development Genetics Laboratory (Clermont-Ferrand). “One particular example is the CaP project, which we co-coordinate, supported by CLARA and local authorities with nearly €400,000 in funding. The CaP project has made it possible to approach the challenges of treating, preventing and diagnosing this cancer in an integrated way, bringing together nine multidisciplinary teams.”

Meeting at the 2013 €33,000 ChoMeCaP* project

ONCOSTARTER

2013
€33,000
ChoMeCaP* project

STRUCTURING PROJECTS

2014
€391,400
CaP** project

MOBILITY

2015
2,000€*

2016, Plan-State-Region Contract (CPER) funding €2.5 M, EPICURE project

2016, Cancer Plan Funding INCa/Inserm €565,041, EDC-CaP project

STRUCTURING PROJECTS

2017
€53,000
TransCaP*** project

*CLARA (INCa)

**Clermont Auvergne Metropole, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region, Puy-de-Dôme General Council

***Clermont Auvergne Metropolis
Cancer Immunotherapy Project

Immunotherapy offers an unprecedented therapeutic strategy in oncology. By interconnecting CLARA’s funding programs, a long-term public-private collaboration has been established between the research team of Dr. Muriel Le Romancer (Léon Bérard Cancer Center - CLB), Dr. Sandrine Wittmann of the Immunomonitoring and Immunotherapy Innovation Platform (CLB), Professor Charles Dumontet of Lyon Civil Hospitals and a company, Covalab, headed by Dr. Saïd El Alaoui, as part of an original immunotherapy program for breast cancer.

This program aims to develop a therapeutic antibody, coupled with a chemotherapy compound (also called immunonconjugate or ADC), to treat breast cancer, including its most aggressive form, called «triple negative» cancer.

The research program started in 2015 thanks to the funding of two projects: the ISOCAN project, confirming ERα36 as a therapeutic target in breast cancer, and the CovIsoLink project, confirming Covalab’s patented technology for generating therapeutic antibodies combined with a drug. The positive results of these two projects have led to two new complementary collaborative projects, enabling their clinical transfer (PRT-K project) and industrial transfer (isoADC project), at the same time obtaining funding for the highly competitive Translational Cancer Research Program (PRTC).

“After the first CovIsoLink PdC project, which aimed to confirm enzymatic drug grafting technology on antibodies, this new ‘IsoADC’ project is the next logical step in developing a first propriety ADC,” said Dr. Saïd El Alaoui, Managing Director of Covalab. “This is a major step for Covalab in developing its therapeutic activity, which requires constant innovation and combined efforts from everyone for the benefit of patients. My partners join me in thanking CLARA and Greater Lyon for their support and trust in carrying out this project.”

Tertiary prevention of cancers through adapted physical activity

By including a scientific focus on nutrition and cancer since 2006, research in the field of physical activity has followed a path that perfectly illustrates CLARA’s added value, from the emergence of the project to the implementation of a major core research program, mobilizing players in the region.

“CLARA’s support made it possible to launch an initial study on the contribution of physical activity in combination with adjuvant therapy in 2010. Led by the Léon Bérard Cancer Center, Bio-PASAPAS was a forerunner at the national level by combining biological markers. The project was strengthened thanks to support from emerging projects and collaborative work,” says Marina Touillaud, of the Léon Bérard Cancer Center’s Environmental Cancer Department.

“The value these projects have taken on is today reflected in large-scale programs,” continues Olivier Tredan, an oncologist at the Léon Bérard Cancer Center. “In particular, in 2016 Greater Lyon awarded the “CLARA Structuring Projects” label to the Adapted Physical Activity program, supported by Lyon Metropolis, which is an important step in consistently promoting the benefits of physical activity as part of the care pathway.”

2006, PROCAN 1 - PROCAN Bio-PASAPAS project
2011 APAJA* project
2013 €2,000*

2015 €4,000 ISOCAN* project
2015 €333,444 CovIsoLink** project
2017 €315k IsoADC** project
2012 funding of Translational cancer research program PRT-K €572k***

*CLARA (INCa)
** Greater Lyon

*CLARA (INCa)
** Lyon Metropolis
***INCa
SCIENTIFIC ANIMATION

15 years of events serving the cancer research community

For 15 years, the CLARA cancer research cluster has been promoting and building bridges between scientific disciplines. The organization of events is a fundamental part of its role as the leader of cancer research in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes.

The Cancer Research Forum: sharing progress and encouraging collaboration

A key annual event, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cancer Research Forum is a true showcase for the region’s cancer research community, highlighting the dynamism of its scientific teams. A place to discuss major issues in cancer research, the Forum promotes closer collaboration between scientific disciplines and fosters the emergence of new collaborative programs.

Since it was created in 2006, the Forum has brought together more than 5,500 participants. Some 550 speakers have taken part, from young researchers presenting their research results to a Nobel laureate in Medicine (Harald Zur Hausen).

13 editions since 2006

5,500 participants

1,500 posters

550 speakers
Giving the floor to the network

Since 2015, CLARA has organized information and awareness meetings for the cancer research community: the CLARA FYIs. These sessions give research funding agencies the floor to provide you with a “sneak-preview” of the schedule for their calls for projects or invite experts to speak on topics of current interest.

Encouraging privileged collaborations

Setting up working groups is a concrete means of action to build bonds with the region’s research centers, foster collaborative projects, specify strategic issues in a given research topic and identify actions of critical importance to be taken. In 15 years, CLARA has run nearly 60 working groups, which have led to dedicated scientific events open to the community, project proposals in national calls for projects, structuring programs awarded the CLARA label and more.

Strengthening the links between SSH, public health, epidemiology and the environment

With 3 sessions per year since 2017, the CLARA Transversales help to improve the knowledge of researchers in neighboring disciplinary fields who do not always have the opportunity to work together. They testify to the rise of the social sciences and humanities in CLARA’s activities and to greater networking with epidemiology and the environment.

Supporting scientific animation

AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE within the scientific community for the training of researchers and clinicians, CLARA supports and actively assists in organizing scientific events in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, from regional symposiums to international congresses. These scientific conferences help to promote the region’s scientific excellence and foster the emergence of new collaborative projects.

86

events supported since 2011

€60,000

in financial support

Promoting the dissemination of information to the general public

Over the years, CLARA has strengthened its commitment, alongside local associations and stakeholders, to promoting information on advances in cancer research to the general public.

28

general public events to disseminate cancer research results have been held since 2003

Nearly

3,600

people have taken part in these public events

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Created in 2011, the OncoStarter program aims to support emerging, original, innovative oncology projects that bring together one or more teams in the CLARA region, for a period of 12 to 18 months. This program’s main objective is to increase their chances of success in larger regional, national or European calls for projects in order to ensure solid prospects for scientific, clinical and / or economic value-creation.

10 calls for projects launched
192 applications submitted
54 projects funded and followed up, including 10 in Social Sciences, Humanities, and Public Health
€2.2M in funding granted by the French National Cancer Institute
€42k average budget per project
€60k in funding by the Rhône committee of the League Against Cancer to support two projects
In 2016, 37 projects were followed up on

Key figures

- 24 publications accepted or being peer reviewed
- 9 patents filed or being filed
- Integration in 3 clinical trials currently underway
- €1.6M in funding helped research teams to raise €3.4M following OncoStarter

TERRITORIAL BREAKDOWN OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED

- 63% Lyon
- 13% Grenoble
- 13% Saint-Étienne
- 11% Clermont-Ferrand

BREAKDOWN OF PROJECTS BY FOCUS AREA

- 31% Environment, nutrition and epidemiology
- 20% Tumor progression and resistance, innovative therapy
- 20% Nanomedicine and health technologies
- 9% Infections and immunity
- 20% Prevention, individuals and society
Examples of supported projects

ADEPRO project

“The aim of the ADEPRO project (AAP OncoStarter 2012, €39k) was to offer a cross-cultural information and decision-making tool for men in France, Switzerland and Canada. With their doctor’s support, this tool would enable them to make a decision regarding prostate cancer screening. We demonstrated the acceptability and the feasibility of the tool adapted to the 3 French-language contexts. These test phases, essential from a methodological standpoint, were carried out thanks to the OncoStarter program, which is particularly well adapted to this stage of the research. These tests also allowed us to consider implementing and evaluating the approach in each of the countries in close collaboration with representatives of general practitioners, who are increasingly interested in prevention issues.”

Nora Moumjid, University Lecturer, UCBL, Health Economist, Assistant Coordinator, Focus Area 2 HESPER

CASTA Project


“The CASTA project (OncoStarter 2011 call for projects, €39k) aims to evaluate the relevance of adapting therapy in overweight patients. Thus, our team focused on describing the impact of adipocytes (adipose tissue cells specialized in storing fat) and their secreted molecules on response to hormone therapy based on patients’ weight. Original in vitro 2D and 3D cell culture models of women with normal weight or overweight helped to answer the questions we were asking ourselves. The OncoStarter program has been very beneficial for our team. It truly (and very quickly) helped us to develop new models, build new collaborative projects and continue our work through a more ambitious INCa project.”

“Indeed, the year following the OncoStarter program support, CASTA served as a basis for a collaborative project between 3 teams from Clermont-Ferrand, Lyon and Toulouse, a laureate of the INCa PLBIO national call for projects (€455k). This project, called "MammAdipo", coordinated by Lyon-based clinician Professor Charles Dumontet, aims to more broadly assess the role of adipose tissue in resistance to various treatments (hormone therapy, chemotherapy and immunotherapy) proposed in breast cancer.”

Florence Caldefie-Chezet, University Professor, PharmD. Head of ECREIN UMR INRA-UCA 1019 team - Human Nutrition Unit, Micro-Cellular Environment, Immunomodulation and Nutrition. Head of the SVFp Medicinal Plant and Fungi Sciences Laboratory
ImmunoADK Project

Study on the immunosuppressive role of TGFβi in pancreatic adenocarcinoma (ADK) - Lyon (2015-2016).

“Pancreatic adenocarcinoma is the most common form of pancreatic cancer in France, with more than 11,000 new cases each year. Thanks to the support of the OncoStarter program (OncoStarter 2015 call for projects, €40k, in partnership with the Rhône committee of the League Against Cancer), our work has highlighted the expression of a protein named ßig-h3, as a marker of the appearance, progression and aggressiveness of this type of pancreatic cancer. Neutralization of this protein inhibits tumor growth. Indeed, when this tumor develops, it is quickly surrounded by supporting tissues, blood vessels and proteins, including the ßig-h3 protein. These tissues form a sort of bulwark that places the tumor out of reach of an effective immune response and treatment. Thanks to the OncoStarter program, we were able to apply for a patent and initiate other funding from the ARC Foundation (€50,000), the Bristol-Meyers Squibb Foundation (€100,000) and INSERM Transfert (€220,000).

In collaboration with physicians, we will be able to precisely determine the relationship between the ßig-h3 protein assay and the stage of disease development. Based on our results, we hope to be able to offer this assay in the early diagnosis of pancreatic adenocarcinoma and its relapses, or even, eventually, offer treatments targeting this protein.”

Anca Hennino, Inserm researcher - CRCL Cancer Cell Plasticity Department / Signaling, Metabolism and Tumor Progression Team
In 15 years, CLARA has gained solid experience in engineering core projects, which help to galvanize the region’s scientific community, to set up multidisciplinary collaborative projects and to link the research and care centers in various areas of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes. Over the years, these structuring programs have demonstrated their strong impact on strengthening the region’s oncology research, as well as the value they create.

15 years of actions to galvanize the region’s scientific community

Founded with the aim of organizing and consolidating the region’s cancer research at the site or local level, CLARA is working to strengthen the regional ecosystem through the «Structuring Projects» program.

Since 2009,

16 programs labeled “CLARA Structuring Projects”

€5,3M in funding granted by local authorities and private partners

64 teams involved in these research programs

+€11M obtained following the initial support

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World Sarcoma Network
The World Sarcoma Network (WSN), supported by CLARA, meets the need for international organization on the topic of sarcomas and has become a «magnet» for industry and finance. Under the leadership of Professor Jean-Yves Blay (Léon Bérard Cancer Center, Lyon), the WSN was launched in 2009 to create an environment conducive to developing and managing clinical trials on rare subtypes of sarcomas.

This project has enabled the Léon Bérard Cancer Center to become the coordinator of the European Reference Network on Rare Adult Solid Cancers (ERN-EURACAN), a network that was officially launched in Lyon in April 2017.

European Lymphoma Institute (ELI)
Founded in April 2010, The European Lymphoma Institute (ELI) is the result of an innovative approach that led to the creation of Europe's first lymphoma discussion, collaboration and coordination network. This Europe-wide collaborative project will help to improve knowledge, share success stories and provide all patients with equally effective care.

Construction of the ELI building near the South Lyon Hospital Center (CHLS) was planned as early as 2009. ELI, the Lymphoma Study Association (LYSA) and the Lymphoma Academic Research Organization (LYSARC) decided to partner with the European Center for Nutrition and Health (CENS) for the construction of a building to house the research teams in these fields.

FASTRACS: Helping breast cancer survivors return to work
The FASTRACS project aims to develop, implement and evaluate an intervention to assist breast cancer survivors in returning to work, staying employed and maintaining a good quality of life in the workplace.

“One of the strengths and original features of this project is that it relies on a particular methodology (intervention mapping) involving all parties concerned by the problem,” explains Dr. Jean-Baptiste Fassier, Occupational Physician and researcher at the UMRESTTE laboratory at Claude Bernard Lyon 1 University. "Thus, institutions (such as the Regional Health Agency, Lyon Metropolis, CLARA and DIRECCTE), associations (Europa Donna and the French League against Cancer), companies, patients and doctors, actively participate in research. Following the needs assessment, we published a literature review to identify the most appropriate theoretical frameworks in the social sciences and humanities (in social psychology, health psychology, industrial and organizational psychology, sociology, etc.), which enabled formulation of an operational model for innovative intervention that encourages breaking down the barriers between health, social and professional care following breast cancer."

"Joining the FASTRACS project was an easy decision because of Lyon’s investment in prevention," says Dr. Muriel Passi-Pêtre, Director of Housing and Education Solidarity Promotion, part of the Health and Social Development Division at Lyon Metropolis. "The focus on returning to work or staying employed is interesting because it echoes the problems we encounter in a more general way, such as work-life balance, the question of how we see invisible disabilities in our entourage, and the coordination of various players in the care, medical, and social spheres. What is really innovative is that this process is carried out jointly with patients, companies, healthcare providers and social support network. That’s what really appealed to me!"
The Chair of Excellence in Translational Research in Grenoble

Led by Professor Pierre Hainaut between 2013 and 2016, the Chair of Excellence in Translational Research has given new impetus to innovation and scientific influence in the field of life sciences and its applications in the fight against cancer in the Grenoble area.

“Several years after its launch, the «Chair of Excellence» is now fully operational and is advancing autonomously, driven by a deep restructuring of cancer research, motivation, bringing together key players around new projects, significant scientific results and - last but not least - by obtaining competitive research budgets. This is not the success of just one person or a single research topic. It is the result of the action of an entire community which, through the contribution of the Chair, has been organized and structured to offer new national and international programs”, says Professor Pierre Hainaut, Director of the Institute for Advanced Biosciences (Research Center UGA / Inserm 1 209 / CNRS 5 309) and Head of the Molecular Pathology of Cancers and Biomarkers team.

“The Chair of Excellence aims to firmly anchor Grenoble in this sphere as a source of original excellence that generates new ideas, taking advantage of the unique density and multidisciplinary diversity of Grenoble’s scientific and technological platform, one of Europe’s most dynamic R&D communities.”
27 platforms, accounting for €56M, have been supported by CLARA, including 11 that have been awarded labels (IBiSA and INCa) or are now involved in national or international networks.

Thanks to the mobilization of CLARA and its members, facilities with the latest technology have been set up in the region to offer the right tools to perform cutting-edge research.

The support of the local authorities, the State (PER) and FEDER has enabled these platforms to emerge. This impetus has allowed these facilities to obtain labels recognizing their expertise (IBiSA, INCa), to be part of national investment programs such as France Life Imaging (GAIA, IRMAGE, OPTIMAL), Profiproteomics (EDyP Services) or France Genomic Medicine (a molecular genetics platform that is part of the Grenoble Alpes University Hospital Center), or to join European networks such as ENOLL (The European Network of Living Labs) (for Hygée) or the European Infrastructure of Open Screening Platforms for Chemical Biology (for CMBA).
15 years of actions to generate economic development from cancer research

Purpose of the program
Building on the success of the CLARA Proof of Concept program, today CLARA offers a comprehensive program that meets five objectives:

- **EDUCATE AND TRAIN** researchers about industrial transfer and development
- **COACH** project coordinators
- **DETECT** new projects and foster collaborations
- **NETWORK** with pharmaceutical companies and investors
- **FUND** public-private partnership projects

One of the major characteristics of CLARA since it was founded in 2001 has been creating value from research and, in particular, from the proof of concept phase.

This step is essential for transferring a discovery made in the laboratory to the patient’s bed. It gives credibility to investors and manufacturers, but it is risky and therefore difficult to fund. With this in mind, CLARA set up the CLARA Proof of Concept program in 2005, thanks to the support of local authorities in the region.

The Proof of Concept: a key step in developing a health product

The CLARA Proof of Concept program is the only one of its kind in France and allows the funding of a public-private collaboration between a research group and a company in the region, in order to prove the concept of a new product that meets a medical need in oncology and contributes to local economic development.
In only 12 years, the Proof of Concept program has demonstrated its effectiveness with iconic success stories such as Advanced Accelerator Applications (AAA), EDAP, TMS, ERYTECH Pharma, Nanobiotix and Innate Pharma.

**Key figures**

- **49** projects financed
- **30%** of projects passed POC
- **52** partner research teams
- **34** partner companies
- **2** subsidiaries in the region
- **€51.4M** in funding, including **€17.6M** in public funds and **€33.8M** in private funds
- **632** jobs created
- **19** start-ups created
- **10** clinical trials
- **38** patents
- **4** products marketed
- **49%** Medicine for human use
- **25%** Diagnostic tests and assays
- **22%** Medical devices
- **2%** R&D tools
- **2%** Quality of life for patients

**Breakdown of projects by theme**

ERYTECH Pharma, founded in 2004, was supported in its early days by the CLARA Proof of Concept program in two projects, ERY5-FU and GR-SIL01.

In collaboration with academic teams from the Léon Bérard Cancer Center and CRCL, ERYTECH Pharma was able to test and develop its proprietary technology based on the encapsulation of therapeutic active ingredients in red blood cells. ERYTECH Pharma is currently completing Phase III in patients with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) and, as of 2017, had raised more than €320 million in funding.

Since 2006, CLARA has supported collaborations between EDAP TMS and the LabTau laboratory as part of two projects, HIFU and PANTTUS.

This support has enabled the development of a prototype for focused ultrasound treatment of liver metastases used today at the Léon Bérard Cancer Center in clinical trials. Since it was founded, EDAP TMS has raised €58 million.
In 2008, CLARA set up an event that catalyzes new collaborative projects between researchers and companies. These meetings were originally known as the "Industrial-Academic Meetings (RIA)" and, since 2015, as the "Research2Business Oncology Meeting (R2B)".

22 sessions
580 researchers, clinicians and entrepreneurs brought together during these sessions

Topics related to regulatory aspects, CE marking of medical devices, nanotechnologies, project management tools, patent watch tools and more...

In order to create a continuum, CLARA has developed regional strategic partnerships to organize support programs upstream and downstream of the CLARA value-creation program.

Since 2013, CLARA has been a partner of Lyonbiopôle in order to facilitate the transition from the Proof of Concept program to the Inter-Ministry Fund (FUI) program. Since 2015, CLARA has also set up a partnership with the three Technology Transfer Offices (SATTs) in the region (Grand Centre, LINKSIUM and PULSALYS) to accelerate the transition from patent to proof of concept.
Since it was founded, CLARA has run a partnership strategy based on a diverse network of stakeholders, including major industrial partners for research.

With the support of CLARA, the Merck laboratory, the Léon Bérard Cancer Center and Lyon Civil Hospitals (HCL), the Chair of Excellence in Environment, Nutrition and Cancer, awarded to Professor Béatrice Fervers in 2010, has enabled and opened up another field of research within CLARA, focused on occupational and environmental exposure.

From 2010 to 2016, this Chair’s objective was to identify the occupational exposure of patients preceding their diagnosis, in order to better meet the informational needs of patients and their entourage regarding the links between occupational and environmental exposure and the risk of cancer. Support from Merck aided the Professional Cancers Program, led in collaboration with Professor Barbara Charbotel of the Lyon Civil Hospitals Occupational Diseases Consultation Center (CCPP), and set up a dedicated consultation. This partnership in the field of occupational cancers is now being tested in 5 other cities in France.

“The Chair has undeniably been an incentive, first of all in terms of the consultation for occupational cancers, the first of its kind in France, which in 2014 won the Unicancer innovation award,” explains Professor Béatrice Fervers, Director of the Department of Cancer and Environment at the Léon Bérard Cancer Center. “There has also been greater organization and the impetus of several projects on occupational and environmental exposure in various cancers, as well as funding obtained as part of calls for national research projects.”

“For Merck, this Chair is truly a continuation of our commitment to improving cancer care and providing better information on how the environment impacts the occurrence of cancer,” says Thierry Hulot, Managing Director of Merck Biopharma France. “CLARA’s role in identifying and coordinating the network is an essential step in building public-private partnerships that best support patients from their diagnosis to their treatment and thus help to improve their quality of life.”

CLARA, Bioderma and Lyon Civil Hospitals

began a partnership in 2016 offering new solutions in the management of cutaneous side effects. The aim was to develop cosmetic dermatology research in oncology to offer innovative products to patients treated for cancer and thus improve their quality of life. One component of this partnership was to propose a call for expressions of interest in order to identify a Social Sciences and Humanities research project focused on managing cutaneous side effects (as part of the organization of care and the doctor-patient relationship) and patients’ experience of them. Other collaborative projects to develop successful research in this area are under consideration.

Janssen brings its expertise

to benefit participants in the Oncoriales, the Summer Session of the Regional Oncology School. “Janssen had the opportunity to work more closely with CLARA teams when considering how to train nurses on oncology,” explains Michèle Weber, Director of Health Economic Intelligence at Janssen-Cilag. “In 2017, we set up a partnership as part of the Oncoriales to organize a round table entitled ‘Transformation of the Nursing Profession’ that focused on three themes: ‘The Home: a New Place for Cancer Care?’, ‘The City and the Hospital’ and ‘Career Development in Nursing’. The co-building and co-facilitating of this workshop at the Oncoriales is proof of the trusting relationship between partners.”
CLARA’s actions to support clinical research are aimed at facilitating access to the region’s resources, while promoting partnerships between doctors and researchers, in order to help set up ambitious, high-quality clinical trials at the region’s four main university hospital centers. Some of the 98 health facilities in the region are authorized to practice oncology and are federated by the Regional Cancer Network.

15 years of actions to promote clinical research

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2006
- 1st CLARA support for PARCC-ARA

2010
- Co-funding of the INDXA - peritoneal cancer project (winner of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes PHRC-I 2015), coordinated by Dr. Benoît You, Lyon Civil Hospitals (€120,000 from CLARA).

2015
- 1st edition of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes PHRC-I in partnership with CLARA

2016
- Co-funding of the BreastImmun02 breast cancer project (winner of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes PHRC-I 2016), coordinated by Dr. Heudel, Léon Bérard Cancer Center (€78,000 from CLARA).

2017
- Co-funding of the OLAGLI Gliobastome project (winner of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes PHRC-I 2017), coordinated by Dr. Ducray of Lyon Civil Hospitals (€100,000 from CLARA)
- Signing of the CLARA-PARCC-ARA – GIRCI Partnership Agreement

Appointment of Professor Delphine Maucort-Boulch as head of PARCC-ARA
3 editions of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes PHRC-I supported
4 projects co-funded and monitored

€300k in funding allocated
2 strong partnerships
1,400 clinical trials in oncology underway in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes
7,500 patients enrolled every year

Focus on PARCC-ARA

Started by Professor Franck Chauvin, PARCC-ARA originated from a call for bids by the French National League Against Cancer in 2004. The primary aim of this project was to bring together the expertise of the various players in clinical research on oncology in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. It is now supported by the CLARA cancer cluster and is made up of a committee of 13 experts from 4 university hospitals, 2 Cancer Centers and the ICLN.

Its activity:
- Methodological, biostatistical, medical and economic support for letters of intent and application files for the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes PHRC-I program coordinated by the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes GIRCI and the DGOS, as well as for the National Cancer Institute’s Cancer PHRC program.
- Support for the implementation and evaluation of clinical research projects within the CLARA cancer research cluster.

PHRC-I 2015, IPOXA Project

The IPOXA study, coordinated by Professor Benoît You of HCL, aims to improve the administration of chemotherapy for patients with peritoneal tumors. It has recently obtained the required authorizations from the French National Drug Safety Agency (ANSM) and the Patient Protection Committee (CPP) for the operational set-up and opening of enrolment to patients at the South Lyon Hospital Center. The other participating centers – the Grenoble, Saint-Étienne and Clermont-Ferrand University Hospital Centers, the Léon Bérard Cancer Center and the Lucien Neuwirth Oncology Institute – will open shortly.
15 years of actions to promote skills development

CLARA’s actions aim to promote professional development and interactions between young researchers and care providers from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds. To develop the interdisciplinary research of tomorrow, we must build a common culture and share knowledge today.

Regional School of Cancerology

Initiated in July 2015, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Regional School of Cancerology, led by CLARA and supported by universities in the region, aims to educate and support training that meets current needs in oncology. This «off-site» school aims to combine top-level training, research excellence, innovative care and support for the regional economy through strengthened relations with biotech and medtech companies.

The Oncoriales, the summer session of the Regional Oncology School, is the first concrete action in this initiative. In only three years, this event has brought together many of the region’s players (students, scholars, researchers, doctors, entrepreneurs and non-profits) who have been able to share their visions on advances in oncology and discuss prospects in terms of the skills required and additional needs for the future as regards training curricula or tools.

Educational Committee

It is composed of 14 members, including teachers, researchers, health professionals, patients, representatives of the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the ARC Foundation, as well as young researchers. It aims to specify the main orientations of the Regional Oncology School and to implement actions in cooperation with universities and research centers.

Oncolab’ Association

Supported by CLARA with funding from the ARC Foundation, the Oncolab’ association aims to promote employability and scientific dialogue between young researchers and care providers working in the field of oncology in the region.

ARC Foundation for Research on Cancer

In 2017, the ARC Foundation and CLARA signed a partnership agreement. This alliance strengthens synergies and reflects a strong desire to make young researchers a top priority.

Since 2015

4 summer sessions
nearly 300 participants
36 speakers (scientists or patients)
Young researchers’ mobility

The mobility of young researchers is a means to acquire new techniques and know-how, an impetus to create and enhance collaborative projects. With this in mind, since 2011, CLARA has developed the Mobility program for young cancer researchers located in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. In 2018, the program is opening up to second-year Master’s students wishing to attend a scientific congress, as well as to medical students writing a scientific thesis.

“I was awarded a Mobility grant from CLARA for a three-month internship at Fujifilm Visualsonics Inc. in Toronto, Canada, from July to October 2017,” says Jonathan Lavaud, a Ph.D. student from the OPTIMAL Platform at the Institute for Advance Biosciences in Grenoble. “This experience abroad allowed me to work on an innovative R&D project to propose a new «whole body» approach to acoustic photo imaging. This work was presented at several conferences during the World Molecular Imaging Conference in Philadelphia in September 2017 and at the Visualsonics User Meeting in Amsterdam in October 2017. It also resulted in the recording of a Webinar in September 2017. Beyond the scientific interest, this experience was an opportunity for me to discover research within an international company with the challenges of communication, management and marketing in an entirely English-speaking environment, which allowed me to practice my English on a daily basis.

In short, this adventure was rewarding for my personal and professional development by broadening my career opportunities once I have my Ph.D. I would like to thank CLARA very much for allowing me to benefit from this wonderful experience.”
International collaborations to promote the region’s cancer research worldwide

Over the last 15 years, the region’s research teams have distinguished themselves internationally and built an extensive network with research centers around the world.

Scientific partnerships have been developed with 148 countries. 61% of publications are in collaboration with international teams.

Number of co-publications and the main countries with which Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes teams have collaborated since 2000.

76 projects
European projects involving the region’s teams, which have led to...

\[ \text{€271M} \]
in funding from the European Commission
In 15 years, CLARA has mobilized to build relationships with international partners and encourage scientific dialogue and the set-up of new projects.

Israel: Weizmann Institute (2007)

Germany: Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum DKFZ (2009)

Spain: Catalonia Bioengineering Institute IBEC (2010)


Belorussia: Gomel State Medical University (2016)

China: Shanghai Cancer Institute, Jiao Tong University (2011-2018)


Canada: Oncopole and Genome Quebec (2017)

**The ERC Booster Program**

**ERC BOOSTER**

In 2017, CLARA set up a program to support project applications to the European Research Council (ERC). The ERC Booster program aims to help researchers from the region obtain ERC grants and maximize the chances of success through specialized support.

**Focus on the partnership with Shanghai**

Started in 2011, CLARA’s cooperation with Shanghai has resulted in five Franco-Chinese symposia organized alternately in Shanghai and in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. At every edition, these scientific seminars have brought together some forty participants. In 2013, a scientific cooperation agreement was signed by the Shanghai Cancer Institute and the Lyon Cancer Research Center. In addition, as part of the French-language medical branch of Shanghai Jiaotong University (UJTS), some fifteen Chinese Master’s students have been hosted at CLARA-region laboratories.

**Focus on Quebec**

As part of the Jacques Cartier Conversations 2017, a delegation from the CLARA region traveled to Quebec to strengthen existing collaborative projects in three areas: the organization of cancer care, genomics and cancer biology. Projects of joint interest were identified in conjunction with research laboratories and universities with complementary expertise. Since then, CLARA and the Quebec Oncopôle cluster have been actively cooperating to capitalize on oncology research as a means to boost economic development in both regions.
15 years of close collaborations with funding providers

Major financial support from local authorities, the French National Cancer Institute and European Funds.

Origin of the funds allocated in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region for research against cancer 2003-2017 in €K

Use of funds allocated in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region for cancer research 2003-2017 in €K
As part of INCa’s renewal of cancer cluster labels in 2018-2022, the Cancéropôle Lyon Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (CLARA) is proposing an ambitious new action plan for the next five years.

To do so, the region’s scientific strategy in oncology will leverage its areas of excellence in cancer biology, medical technologies, prevention and social innovations. By linking the expertise in our region, we will have everything it takes to meet challenges such as immunotherapy applied to cancer, the rise of genomics, big data in health, environmental risks and cancer prevention.

CLARA’s action plan for 2018-2022 aims to consolidate the range of services in line with the needs of researchers, companies, doctors and patients in the fight against cancer. Strengthened by its networking abilities, CLARA will focus on cross-fertilization between different areas of knowledge, in order to better address the increasing complexity of cancer research by combining contributions from various scientific disciplines.

From fundamental research to clinical research, to organization and technology transfer, CLARA will work towards better incorporating the value chain. Helping projects grow through the OncoStarter program, encouraging young researchers’ mobility and developing skills via the Regional Oncology School will enable us to build the research of tomorrow. Support for structuring projects and Chairs of Excellence will be renewed.

Creating various forms of value from research results will be one of CLARA’s top-priority actions for the coming years. Creation of economic value will result in new collaborative projects between the region’s research centers and companies, supported by the CLARA Proof of Concept technology transfer program. The popularization of scientific findings will help to disseminate advances in cancer research to the population at large. The clinical value of research will ensure better patient access to innovation throughout the care journey.

In order to boost awareness and recognition of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, CLARA’s communication will highlight the region’s expertise and successes. The region’s attractiveness and international renown will be consolidated thanks to our strategic partnerships in China (Shanghai) and North America (Quebec), as well as by increasing participation in European programs.

Through all of these actions and the creation of value from the region’s expertise in oncology, CLARA 4.0 will focus on generating ever more innovations to better prevent cancer, improve care and manage life after cancer.
INNOVATION SERVING THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

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