INDIA FRANCE YEAR OF innovation 2026

INDO-FRENCH ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

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Liberté Égalité Fraternité

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DIRECTOR'S INSIGHTS

Dear reader,

It is with great pride that the French Institute in India and the Embassy of France in India present this new edition of the Franco-Indian Academic and Scientific Newsletter.

Following President Macron's visit to India and the High Level Scientific and Academic Meetings, a strong momentum has been set in motion, with the outcomes continuing to unfold throughout February, March and April. This edition highlights several newly signed cooperation agreements, underscoring the importance of in-person bilateral engagements in fostering lasting scientific partnerships.

This fast-evolving relationship also aligns with the broader rapprochement between India and the European Union, as initial discussions have begun regarding India's potential association with Horizon Europe. Such a development would open new avenues for collaboration between France and India, particularly as France stands as one of the leading beneficiaries of European research funding.

Finally, both France and India continue to gain international recognition for the quality of their higher education systems. The number of Indian universities featured in the QS Ranking by subjects has more than doubled over the past three years. At the same time, France now counts 35 institutions ranked in the subject rankings, with one additional university joining this group.

In addition, French is now officially recognized as the fourth most spoken language worldwide, with a majority of speakers being under the age of 35. Learning French can open the door to studying in France, and a wide range of future professional opportunities. However, navigating the **French higher education system** can sometimes be challenging. This is why this edition includes a **detailed guide** to help you better understand its structure and pathways.

As always, you will also find the latest developments, ongoing partnerships, and emerging research opportunities, within the scope of the India-France Year of Innovation 2026, as well as scientific advances led by France. At the end of this edition, be sure to check the Save the Date section, featuring upcoming funding and mobility opportunities.

Wishing you an insightful read !

Grégor Trumel | Director, French Institute in India

We invite you to explore these pages and share them widely within your networks. If you have any comments or wish to contribute please feel free to contact us at this email address: newsletter@institutfrancaisindia.in

FOCUS ON...
THE FRENCH HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

France and India have a long-standing partnership in many fields: health, defence, industry… They also share major ambitions in the field of higher education. The agreement on the **mutual recognition of university qualifications**, signed in 2018 by President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has played a key role in promoting student mobility. This agreement is expected to be renewed and updated in the near future, as the French President has set a clear target of welcoming 30 000 Indian students to France by 2030.

Academic cooperation can take various forms and be boosted by other partnerships, for example in the scientific sphere. French public universities have already established partnerships with Indian research institutes with initiatives such as the **'Franco-Indian Centre for AI in Healthcare (IF-CAIH)**'. Inaugurated on 18 February 2026 at AIIMS in New Delhi by French President Emmanuel Macron and Indian Health Minister JP Nadda, it marks a significant collaboration in the field of medical technologies. It aims to advance AI-driven research, cancer screening and digital health through partnerships between AIIMS in New Delhi, the Sorbonne University and the Paris Brain Institute.

As partnerships between Franco-Indian research institutes continue to develop, significant progress in academic cooperation and student mobility can be expected in the coming years. In this issue, we will try to explain how the French higher education system is organised, what are its strengths, how it is funded, and what are the differences between the two models. France has over 3,500 public and private higher education institutions, enrolling approximately 3 million students. These institutions can be divided into **four main categories: the public universities, the 'Grandes Écoles', the engineering schools, and the higher education institutions for art and applied arts**. It should be noted that there are also specialist schools and colleges, as well as national higher schools of architecture, which will not be covered here. France's higher education system follows the **Licence-Master-Doctorat (LMD) system**, a framework adopted by the 47 countries of the Council of Europe through the Bologna process, started in 1998. This framework divides higher education in

three cycles. First, the Licence takes six semesters to complete, equivalent to three years of higher education. A further four semesters (two years) are required to obtain a Master's degree, and the Doctorate is awarded after completing an additional period of three years after the Master's degree. As such, this structure provides legitimacy by guaranteeing conformity to common standards (for example on the number of hours and semester studied), as well as flexibility, with the possibility to pursue post-graduation degrees in another European country without any recognition difficulty.

1/ Public universities form a network of more than 78 institutions, enrolling approximately 1.6 million students. This represents more than 50% of the total number of students in France. Following changes in legislation in 2013, they were regrouped into university clusters, specifically into 'Communities of Universities and Institutions' (ComUES). The aim was to strengthen links between universities and establish research clusters in order to enhance their international attractiveness. French public universities are funded by the government and award nationally recognized degrees (Bachelor's, Master's, PhD). The high quality of higher education is supported by continuous public investment. Although the real cost of studies per student is around 15,000€ per year, tuition fees remain low (around 4,000€ to 5,000€) because the government subsidizes a large part of the expenses, making the system highly accessible for everyone.

The most renowned and prestigious French universities include **Université PSL** (Paris Sciences & Lettres), **Université Paris-Saclay**, and **Sorbonne Université**, which top the international rankings (Shanghai, Times Higher Education). Moreover, French public universities are also inclined to welcome international students for studies but also for research. At **Aix-Marseille Université**, 15% of the 80,000 students are international. And at the **Université de Toulouse**, 40% of the 4,300 ongoing PhDs are held by international students.

Photograph of Université PSL (Paris Sciences & Lettres), one of the most prestigeous university in France.
Photo credits: Université PSL's website

2/ The "Grandes Écoles" are a distinctive aspect of the French higher education system and are seen as a symbol of the country's culture of excellence. These include Écoles normales supérieures (ENS), institutes of political studies (IEP - also known as "Sciences Po" network), business and management schools,

veterinary schools, and a few other institutions. They can be public or private, but all are officially recognized by the State. These institutions offer five-year post-secondary programs, some of which lead to a Master's degree, and many courses are taught in English. In France, they are considered a benchmark of academic excellence. To name a few of the most prestigious, we can think about **École Polytechnique (l'X), HEC Paris, ENS Paris (Ulm) and CentraleSupélec.**
Admission to the grandes écoles is highly selective: It is based on academic merit or via competitive entrance exams, following two years of preparatory classes called "classes préparatoires" (CPGE). The admission can also be directly after the baccalaureate for schools offering an integrated preparatory programme. Tuition and registration fees vary across French higher education institutions. State-funded schools (such as engineering schools, ENS, and IEP) typically maintain lower fees. In contrast, private institutions often set their own tuition rates, which can range from 6,000€ to 18,000€ per year.

Photograph of École Normale Supérieure (ENS) Paris-Saclay, one of the most prestigeous "Grandes Écoles" in France. Photo credits: ENS Paris-Saclay's website

3/ Engineering schools are often regarded as "Grandes Écoles," as they are state-recognized public or private higher education institutions that offer five-year post-secondary programs and are characterized by highly selective admission processes (including entrance exam and/or academic marks). There are different types of engineering schools: generalist (Polytechnique, Ecole Centrale network) or specialist (Aeronautics with ISAE-SUPAERO, Computer Science with Telecom Paris…). Over 200 engineering schools train scientific and technical professionals over 3 or 5 years (at Master's level). There can either be State Schools of Engineering, placed under the authority of the government and its ministries or Private Schools of Engineering, some of which are placed under the authority of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. In all of those cases, the Engineering degree in France is protected by law and can only be issued by a recognised institution.

4/ Higher education institutions for art and applied arts : one of the strengths and particularities of France**.** It counts nearly 50 public art and design colleges that report directly to the Ministry of Culture. The art, design and communication courses offered are organised into two cycles of three or five years, leading to national qualifications, with a very strict selection at the entry.

Four highly regarded public art schools report directly to the Ministry of Higher Education: **the Boulle, Olivier de Serres, Duperré and Estienne schools.**

The excellence of higher education and research in France is widely recognised around the world. Many French institutions rank highly in the most prestigious international rankings. This reputation is largely due to the outstanding achievements of French researchers. With **more than 70 Nobel Prize winners**, France ranks fourth in the world in the number of awards and 3 of the last 4 Nobels in Physics have been won by French researchers.

One key difference compared to Indian institutions lies in their size. While this may seem like a disadvantage, it actually proves to be a benefit: a smaller student body allows for more resources per student and easier access to teaching. Better organisation can lead to stronger rankings, which in turn may result in higher employment rates.

Overall, the French higher education system combines excellence, accessibility, and strong career outcomes, making it an attractive model on the global stage.

Sources:

→ France Universités - en chiffres

→ *Campus France - universités internationales*

→ *PIB gov.in*

→ *France Universités - regroupement universitaire*

→ *Campus France - coût des études supérieures*

→ *Campus France - établissements*

→ *Campus France - classement*

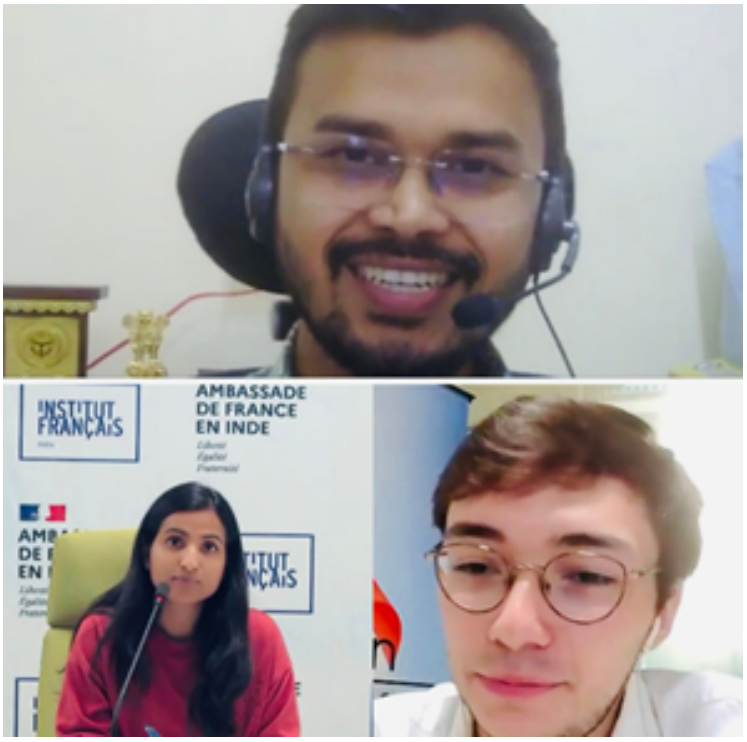
→ *Aix Marseille Université*

→ *CDEFI*

From India to France: a researcher's story

Dialogue with Dr. Bhrigu Kumar Lahkar, Assistant Professor in School of Biomedical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (Banaras Hindu University), Varanasi.

In conversation with Ms. Shakti Sharma and Mr. Angel Fortin, representatives from The French Institute in India, Dr. Lahkar reflects on his academic and research experience in France, underscoring the depth and strength of Indo-French scientific cooperation.



1/ Your academic and professional journey is deeply rooted in France. Could you walk us through your trajectory and what led you to choose France for your higher education?

Dr. Lahkar: My association with France began in 2016 when I received a scholarship to pursue a Master's degree in Biomedical Engineering at Sorbonne University, within the framework of Université Sorbonne Paris Cité (USPC).

I pursued my doctoral research at École nationale supérieure d'Arts et Métiers (ENSAM), specifically within Institute of Human Biomechanics Georges Charpak (IBHGC) located in Paris. Following this, I pursued my postdoctoral research at the Laboratory of Biomechanics and Impact Mechanics (LBMC), Université Gustave Eiffel, which is internationally recognised for its work in human movement analysis.

Subsequently, I was appointed as an Assistant Professor at Ecole Catholique des Arts et Métiers (ECAM), University of Lyon, France. In total, I spent approximately eight years in France, which makes the country very close to my heart.

2/ Your research lies at the intersection of biomechanics and healthcare technology. Could you explain your work and its societal relevance?

Dr. Lahkar: My research focuses on quantitative human movement analysis, particularly in clinical and sports contexts. Traditionally, clinicians assess patient movement -such as gait- through visual observation, which introduces subjectivity.

During my work in France, I utilised advanced motion capture systems -often considered the "gold standard"- to objectively quantify human movement. These systems can be used in clinical diagnostics and monitoring, including sports performance analysis.

For instance, during my postdoctoral work in collaboration with INSEP (Institut National du Sport, de l'Expertise et de la Performance) in Paris, I studied high-performance athletes, including boxers, to analyse biomechanical patterns associated with elite performance, particularly in preparation contexts leading up to major international events such as the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Currently, my work aims to democratise this technology. High-end motion capture systems can cost upwards of €200,000, which limits their accessibility. Therefore, we are developing low-cost, artificial intelligence-driven, vision-based systems using standard cameras and computer vision algorithms. These systems have strong potential for large-scale deployment, particularly in countries like India, for conditions such as Parkinson's disease and other neurological disorders.

3/ You continue to collaborate with French institutions. Could you elaborate on the nature of these partnerships?

Dr. Lahkar: Yes, my collaboration with Université Gustave Eiffel, particularly the Laboratory of Biomechanics and Impact Mechanics, remains active. We engage in joint research, co-publications, and ongoing discussions for future bilateral projects.

We are currently exploring funding opportunities from organizations such as CEFIPRA (Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advanced Research), which plays a crucial role in enabling structured collaboration between Indian and French research teams.

The synergy is clear: France provides advanced infrastructure and deep expertise in mechanics, while India offers a large talent pool and diverse application contexts. This complementarity creates a strong foundation for impactful research.

4/ Having experienced both ecosystems, how would you compare research environments in France and India?

Dr. Lahkar: One of the most striking aspects of the French research ecosystem is its emphasis on work-life balance and structured productivity. Research is conducted with focus and efficiency during designated hours, allowing space for creativity and personal well-being.
Additionally, France offers highly collaborative and interdisciplinary research environments, supported by well-equipped laboratories and strong institutional frameworks.

In India, while we have exceptional talent and growing infrastructure—particularly in institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)—the pace and expectations can sometimes be more intense. However, this also brings dynamism and scale, which are equally valuable.

5/ From your experience, how does France position itself as a destination for Indian students in science and engineering?

Dr. Lahkar: France is an outstanding destination for higher education in science and engineering, and this message needs to be amplified further.
Institutions such as Université Paris-Saclay are globally ranked among the top in disciplines like mathematics and physics.

One common misconception is the language barrier. In reality, a large number of programmes -especially at the Master's and doctoral levels- are offered in English. Learning French is certainly beneficial for integration, but it should not be perceived as a limitation.
I actively encourage my students to consider France. In one instance, a student chose an internship opportunity at Paris-Saclay and later described the experience as transformative, both academically and personally.

6/ Given that 2026 marks the Indo-French Year of Innovation, what advice would you offer to young researchers to translate their work into real-world impact?

Dr. Lahkar: The key lies in shifting from purely exploratory research to a translational and application-oriented approach.
First, it is essential to build strong fundamentals. Second, researchers should identify unmet societal needs - particularly in areas such as healthcare. Third, they should develop and implement solutions early, even at the proof-of-concept stage. Naturally, the stage and timeline will vary depending on the nature of the product.

One important lesson I learned during my time in France is the emphasis on iterative development - deploying early prototypes, gathering real-world feedback, and continuously refining solutions. This approach significantly accelerates innovation and enhances real-world impact.

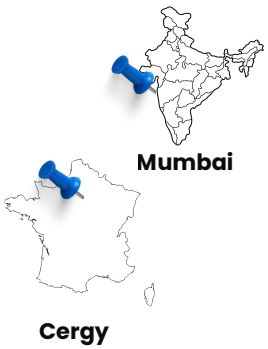
FRANCO-INDIAN COLLABORATION:
WHAT'S NEW?

CLICK ON EACH TITLE TO BE REDIRECTED TO THE CORRESPONDING ARTICLES.

ACADEMIC

ESSEC Business School Signals Long-Term Commitment to India with Launch of Hub in Mumbai (ESSEC Business School website, February 18th, 2026)

ESSEC Business School, a global leader in management education, officially announced the opening of its hub in Mumbai today, in the presence of French President Emmanuel Macron. This strategic milestone coincides with the French President's visit to India in honor of the Indo-French Year of Innovation. ESSEC's Mumbai hub is the first step in a long-term plan to develop a strong institutional presence in India. It will allow ESSEC to boost its international development, establish local partnerships, and enhance student recruitment and mobility.



Université Paris-Saclay strengthens its cooperation with India (Université Paris-Saclay webiste, February 19th, 2026)

The university recently signed two major partnerships with IIT Bombay and BITS Pilani, two world-class Indian higher education institutions during the latest Global AI Summit in New Delhi.

Ashoka University and École normale supérieure – PSL announce strategic partnership (curriculum, 20th February 2026)

Ashoka University on Feb 18 announced it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with École normale supérieure – PSL (ENS-PSL), Paris, one of France's most prestigious higher education and research institutions. The announcement was made at the High Level Academic and Scientific Meetings in the presence of French President Emmanuel Macron, marking an important step in strengthening India–France collaboration in higher education, research, and innovation.

Franco-Indian cooperation: a significant new milestone for the Sorbonne University *(Sorbonne Université website, 3rd March 2026)*

Last February, a delegation from the Sorbonne University travelled to India as part of the RUSH summit (High-Level Academic and Scientific Meetings).
The event provided an opportunity to inaugurate the Franco-Indian Centre for Artificial Intelligence in Global Health, to hold bilateral meetings with the Sorbonne University's strategic Indian partners – the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) – and to hold preliminary discussions with the National Institute of Oceanographic Technology (NIOT).


India


France

Central University of Tamil Nadu (CUTN), India and University of Southen Brittany, France, sign MoU *(India Education Diary Bureau, March 4, 2026)*

The two universities signed an agreement stating their intent to cooperate for the next three years. The agreement envisages collaborative research projects, joint publications, student mobilities, organisation of international conferences and workshops.


Thiruvanur


Lorient

India-France academic collaboration opens a slew of opportunities for Indian students *(The Week, March 5th, 2026)*

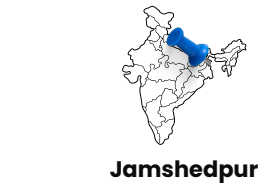
Of late, the choice of study abroad destinations is becoming more diversified, with many European countries attracting Indian students. Indian students are exploring non-English speaking destinations based on international reputation and the high academic standards of their universities. In this context, interest in France as a preferred destination for higher education is rising, as it is gaining attraction for providing affordable, quality and alternative destinations for Indians to pursue education abroad.


Pan India


France

XLRI and Sorbonne launches Executive Development Programme in Global Strategy & Leadership for healthcare professionnals *(India Education Diary Bureau, March 5, 2026)*

XLRI in collaboration with Sorbonne Business School has launched the Executive Develoment Programme in Global Strategy & Leadership for Healthcare professionals. Designed for senior leaders across hospitals, healthcare entreprises and allied services, the programme equips the participants throgh the five pillars of healthcare leadership: Strategy, Finance, Governance, Technology and Ethics.


Jamshedpur


Paris

Pondicherry University signs MoU with Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient (EFEO) (Sahyadri Startups, April 1st 2026)

Pondicherry University and the EFEO signed a memorandum of understandng establishing a five-year collaboration framework aimed at advancing the study of South Asian and Indian civilizations. The MoU will facilitate joint PhD guidance, student exchanges, and access to international scholarly resources.

Université Paris Cité strengthens its alliances in Asia (*Université Paris Cité's website*)

UPCité recently signed several cooperation agreements with Indian institutions, including its first partnerships with Indian institutions: the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Pune and the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay**.**

SPACE & ASTRONOMY

Forging the Next Frontier in India–France Space Ties (ORF website. 6th February 2026)

This article traces the history of Franco-Indian cooperation in the space sector and highlights the importance of this sector in relations between France and India, at the dawn of major bilateral events such as the AI Summit and the Year of Innovation.

TRISHNA, a Franco-Indian space mission to improve water management on Earth (The Conversation, February 28th 2026)

In 2027, a Franco-Indian satellite will be launched into orbit to measure the Earth's surface temperature, assess its water content and support various sectors, including agriculture, agroforestry, hydrology, urban micrometeorology and biodiversity.

TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING

Establishment of a Franco-Indian Binational Centre for Digital Science and Technology *(INRIA's website, 20th February 2025)*

One year on from the Summit for Action on Artificial Intelligence in Paris, Inria took part this week in the India AI Impact Summit 2026. During the High-Level Academic and Scientific Meetings (RUSH) organised by the French Embassy in India, which are crucial for Franco-Indian scientific cooperation, Inria and India-DST announced the creation of the Franco-Indian Binational Centre for Digital Science and Technology.

IIT Bombay hosts Bharat Innovates pre-summit; 137 deep-tech startups showcase ideas (*News* by *Careers 360, 21st March 2026*)

IIT Bombay hosts Bharat Innovates pre-summit with 137 startups selected form 3,000+ entries, a build-up to Bharat Innovates 2026, an international showcase scheduled in France later this year as part of the India-France Year od Innovation announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Emmanuel Macron. The idea is to present some of India's most promising tech innovations to a global audience.

Mumbai

France

INTERNATIONAL

India and Europe Launch Discussions to Strengthen Academic Cooperation Through Horizon Europe *(The Economic Times, February 7th, 2026)*

India and the European Union have begun discussions regarding India's potential participation in the "Horizon Europe" program. If India joins, Indian researchers could receive direct funding and lead projects. This initiative follows a recent summit where both sides agreed to deepen their cooperation in various sectors.

Pan India

Union Européenne

The Irène Joliot-Curie Awards: a triumph for female researchers with international careers *(Campus France's website, 26th March 2026)*

Promoting the role of women in research and technology is the aim of the Irène Joliot-Curie Awards, which have just been presented by the Ministry for Higher Education and the Academy of Sciences. All these awards, including the Special Award for Commitment and the Female Scientist of the Year Award, recognise female researchers of international standing, whether in terms of their training or their professional careers. A profile of these laureates who embody excellence.

International

France

One Health Summit: an interdisciplinary and multisectoral summit to tackle health challenges *(Source: Campus France, 13th April 2026)*

This interdisciplinary summit, which reached its climax on 7 April, World Health Day, brought together all international health stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the One Health approach, which recognises the interconnectedness between the health of people, animals, plants and ecosystems. The One Health Summit, the ninth edition of the One Planet Summits initiated notably by France, was organised as part of the French G7 Presidency and will be linked to the Africa-France Summit in Kenya, scheduled for 11 and 12 May.

International

Lyon

DID YOU KNOW ?

2026 is the 70th Anniversary of the French Institute of Pondicherry !

1947. In the midst of this decisive year for the Indian nation, a french ophthalmologist passionate about indianology and ecology landed in the country. His name was **Jean Filliozat** (1906-1982), an important figure whose journey in India will lead to establishing the French Institute of Pondicherry almost a decade later, and who many regard as one of the first scientific diplomat of the post-independence Indo-French relationship.

During his first year in India, Filliozat pursued a dual career as a physician and historian of science, practicing ophthalmology while conducting research on Indian scientific traditions. He had a great admiration for Indian knowledge systems, and was deeply committed to challenging superficial judgements or misconceptions about their scientific nature. His work represented an important epistemological bridge between western and indian traditions, enabling mutual understanding and respect. In **1956**, the creation of the French Institute of Pondicherry, established under the Treaty of Cession, embodied Filiozat's commitment to interdisciplinary scholarship and intercultural dialogue between India and his native country.

Seventy years after its founding, the French Institute of Pondicherry remains an important bridge between France and India, embodying a shared commitment to knowledge and scientific collaboration, and fulfilling Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of Pondicherry as an "open window to France."

Today, the strength of the IFP remains in the dynamism and complementarity of its four core departments, which together shape its multidisciplinary identity:

- The department of Indology continues a long tradition of rigorous scholarship, focusing on Sanskrit texts, religious practices, and iconographic sources, and housing world-renowned collections, especially its UNESCO-listed Śaiva manuscripts.
- The department of Ecology investigates the structure and dynamics of tropical ecosystems, contributing critical insights into biodiversity, climate change, and landscape evolution in South India.
- The department of Social Sciences offers a contemporary lens, analysing Indian society through interdisciplinary approaches that combine anthropology, sociology, history, economics, and law, often situating India within global comparative frameworks.
- Finally, the department of Geomatics enables to collect, manage, analyse, and disseminate geographic and environmental data through remote sensing and informatics approaches.

Jean Filliozat and Jawaharlal Nerhu during Nerhu's visit to the French Institute of Pondicherry on 26t November 1955. Courtesy of the French Institute of Pondicherry.

Complemented by exceptional archival and scientific collections, including manuscripts, photographs, herbarium specimens, and biodiversity data, the IFP continues to serve as a major repository and producer of knowledge about Indian civilization, society, and environment.

Moreover, as it marks its 70th anniversary in 2026, the French Institute of Pondicherry continues to embody Jean Filliozat's spirit of solidarity with India, whose pioneer work on the ecological history of sciences and the interrelationships between colonization and deforestation anticipated postcolonial studies.

One concrete example of it, took place two months ago : In March 2026, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford returned a 16th-century bronze statue of Saint Thirumangai Alvar to India, after research had established that it originally came from the Soundararaja Perumal Temple in Tamil Nadu. A decisive breakthrough in identifying the statue's true origin came from archival documents held by the French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP), in collaboration with the French School of the Far East (EFEO). In 2019, a researcher discovered a photograph from 1957 depicting this very bronze statue in the temple, held in the IFP-EFEO archives. This photographic evidence proved that the object had been the subject of active worship in India before appearing in Western collections. This evidence supported claims that the original had been removed and replaced with a replica. This discovery led to an official request for restitution from India in 2020, resulting in the return of the statue after nearly eight years of investigation.

Image: Jean Filiozat and Jawaharlal Nerhu entering the French Institute of Pondicherry. 26th November 1955. Courtesy of the French Institute of Pondicherry.

ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC NEWS: *WHAT'S GOING ON IN FRANCE ?*

CLICK ON EACH TITLE TO BE REDIRECTED TO THE CORRESPONDING ARTICLES.

ACADEMIC

International Francophonie Day 2026: French is now the fourth most widely spoken language worldwide *(France Diplomatie News, 20th March 2026)*

With 396 million speakers, French now the fourth most widely spoken language. On March 20th, International Francophonie Day is also a celebration of young people, as more than half of French-speakers worldwide are under 30.

France

Financial Times MBA Ranking 2026: 7 French schools in the world's Top 100 (*Campus France News, March 3rd, 2026*)

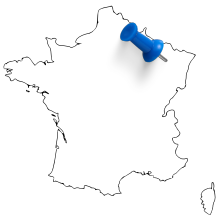
The Financial Times has released its 2026 global ranking of the best MBA programs. Among the 100 ranked institutions, France accounts for seven, including two in the top 10: INSEAD and HEC Paris.

France

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Automatic sign language processing: the human sciences join forces with AI *(INRIA News, 25th February)*

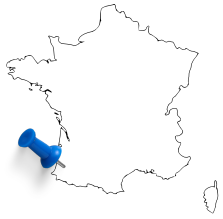
INRIA engineer Sam Bigeard uses artificial intelligence to help computers understand and translate sign languages. Using advance AI techniques, such as contrastive learning, they build databases and open tools collecting different signs to teach computers to distingishes them. Automatic sign language processing, is a challenging field complicated by the multimodal nature of sign languages and the scarcity of available data.



Nancy

A major innovation for the digital simulation of industrial fluids *(INRIA news, 12th March 2026)*

How can airflow around an aircraft be modeled accurately without requiring enormous computing power? As part of the CELTIC project, the Cagire team has found the solution: developing an agile approach by combining two numerical simulation methods. The Cagire project team is a joint venture between INRIA, the University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour, and the CNRS.



Pau

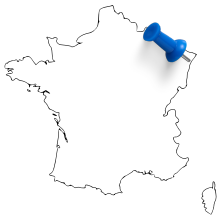
Thinking differently about digital technology: the rise of humanities and social sciences at INRIA *(INRIA News, 4th March 2026)*

Paris

Faced with the growing impact of digital technology on our societies, Inria is developing a new ambition: to fully integrate the humanities and social sciences (HSS) into its scientific strategy. Dedicated recruitment, the creation of project teams, national and international partnerships, enhanced interdisciplinary dialogue... Jean-Frédéric Gerbeau, Deputy Director General for Science at Inria, and Juliette Sénéchal, Assistant to the Scientific Director in charge of SSH, detail the issues, challenges and priorities of this new dynamic for the institute.

BIOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

"Forever chemicals" could see their days numbered *(CNRS News, 25th February 2026)*



Strasbourg

A CNRS laboratory in Strasbourg uses bacterias to eliminate PFAS, bioremediation solution. The PFAS are indestructible synthetic molecules accumulating in both nature and our organisms.

HEALTH

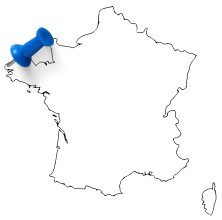
Blocking off highway to infections *(CNRS News, 20th March 2026)*

Nice

By elucidating the mechanism that enables the microscopic fungus "Candida albicans" to cause an infection, a CNRS research team has opened the way towards several new therapeutic opportunities.

MARINES SCIENCES

Study of deep-sea shrimp reveals how life adapts to the most extreme environments *(Ifremer News, 18th February 2026)*



Brest

A study conducted by Ifremer and its partners reveals how 22 species of deep-sea shrimp adapt their diet according to their proximity to hydrothermal vents, increasingly resorting to symbiosis, to the point of feeding exclusively on bacteria lodged in their heads. This work renews our understanding of the evolution of these species and highlights the great vulnerability of deep-sea ecosystems.

PHYSICS

Discover the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) *(ESRF website)*

Grenoble

Imagine a source that produces X-rays 10 trillion times brighter than the X-rays used in hospitals, X-rays that allow us to fathom the structure of matter down to the minutest detail, at the atomic level. Imagine no further! These X-rays, endowed with exceptional properties, really do exist. They are produced at the ESRF – The European Synchrotron Radiation Facility – located in Grenoble, France, in an international and innovative campus.

SPACE & ASTRONOMY

Official start of ESA astronaut Sophie Adenot's εpsilon mission *(ESA, 14th February 2026)*

France

The SpaceX Dragon Freedom capsule carrying ESA astronaut Sophie Adenot, NASA astronauts Jessica Meir and Jack Hathaway, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Andrei Fedyaev, docked with the International Space Station on 14 February, at 20:15 GMT/21:15 CET, marking the official start of ESA's εpsilon mission.

SAVE THE DATES & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Click on each program to be redirected to the dedicated websites!

CEFIPRA

PHD IN WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS AT IMT ATLANTIQUE

Deadline: 20th May

POST-DOCTORATE IN TOPOLOGICAL MECHANICS AT LE MANS UNIVERSITY

Deadline: 20th May

POST-DOCTORATE IN CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND PROCESSING AT GUSTAVE EIFFEL UNIVERSITY

Deadline: 20th May

HORIZON EUROPE

MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS - POST DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Deadline: 9 September 2026

EVENT!

Info Day - MSCA Action doctoral networks 2026

This is an information event for the MSCA Doctoral Networks 2026 and RAISE Doctoral Networks 2026 calls for proposals.

When : 3 June 2026
Where : Online, 09.30 - 12.30, CEST

Link here

FRENCH + PROGRAMS

Focus on Sustainable Development" - Accent français – Montpellier
This stay is organized by Accent Français, in partnership with ENERCOOP, the University of Montpellier, and Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole.

Session dates: from June 8 to June 26, 2026
Registration deadline: May 8, 2026

"Science and Technology of the Sea" - Ciel Bretagne – Brest
Brest session dates:

Session 3: from August 10 to August 28, 2026 (3 weeks)
Registration deadline: June 1, 2026

French + Gastronomy - French in Normandy/Ecole Fauchon - Rouen

- Session 1 : from June 1st to June 19, 2026
- Registration deadline: May 8, 2026

- Session 2 : from June 22 to July 10, 2026
- Registration deadline: May 29, 2026

- Session 3 : from July 13 to July 31, 2026
- Registration deadline: June 19, 2026

French + Hospitality - French in Normandy/Ecole Fauchon – Rouen

Session dates: From June 1 to June 19, 2026
Registration deadline: May 8, 2026