



Inserm

La science pour la santé
From science to health

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Press information

Inserm 2021 Prizes: Science More Mobilized Than Ever to Serve Health

In this year 2021, still marked by COVID-19, Inserm's workers have remained mobilized to advance biomedical research and pursue their efforts across all areas of health research. To honor this collective endeavor, Inserm has awarded its 2021 Prizes to five people whose quality of work bears witness to the scientific excellence of the Institute's research. *"By shining the spotlight on its talents, Inserm intends to show the diversity and richness of the biomedical research professions, as well as the tireless creativity and passion of the women and men whose achievements contribute to the Institute's scientific excellence – for the benefit of society and, of course, for everyone's health,"* praises its CEO Gilles Bloch.

The Inserm 2021 Grand Prize has been awarded to psychiatrist and researcher Marion Leboyer, who has dedicated her career to improving the understanding and treatment of mental illness. This Grand Prize rewards the innovative nature of her research, particularly in bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, and autism spectrum disorders.

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Marion Leboyer, Inserm Grand Prize

Marion Leboyer is head of the Translational Neuropsychiatry laboratory in Créteil (Unit 955 Inserm/Université Paris-Est Créteil). She has dedicated her professional life to researching mental illness – innovative work that has greatly contributed to improving the treatment of people suffering from schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorders and autism spectrum disorders, with the ever-present goal of developing personalized therapeutic approaches for each patient.

In 2007, she created the FondaMental foundation, which supports her laboratory with conducting its research. Her team is behind the discovery of several genes involved in various mental disorders and has helped demonstrate the cost of mental health in France. Leboyer's team has also been heavily involved in providing support to patients during the COVID-19 epidemic, by setting up *CovidÉcoute* followed by *Écoute Étudiants Île-de-France* – digital platforms dedicated to psychological support and listening.

Pierre-Louis Tharaux, Research Prize

Twenty-five years ago, nephrologist Pierre-Louis Tharaux set himself the challenge of helping to bring kidney failure out of its therapeutic dead-end. Now a researcher at the Paris Cardiovascular Research Center (Unit 970 Inserm/Université de Paris), he is on the way to success with an innovative approach and a first treatment being trialed in patients: progress that has been rewarded by the Research Prize.



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Laurent Fleury, Opecst-Science and Society Prize

Together with the Collective Expert Review structure that he has led since 2016, Laurent Fleury is at the interface between science and society taking stock of scientific knowledge on a health subject at a given moment in time. The objective is twofold: aid political decision-making and inform citizens. These expert reviews and the value created from them have earned him the Opecst-Science and Society Prize.

Ana Zarubica, Research Support Prize

Ana Zarubica plays a coordinating role at the Center for Immunophenomics in Marseille (Service Unit 12 Inserm/CNRS/Aix-Marseille Université). Her objective: ensure optimal organization of this unit that offers scientists around the world mouse models for use in researching immune system function and dysfunction. An investment that has been recognized by the Research Support Prize.



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Francine Behar-Cohen, Innovation Prize

Francine Behar-Cohen is an ophthalmic surgeon, researcher at Cordeliers Research Center in Paris (Unit 1138 Inserm/Sorbonne Université/Université de Paris), and founder of the start-up Eyevensys, specialized in treating eye diseases with gene therapy. Her greatest wish is for her discoveries to leave her laboratory and benefit patients as quickly as possible. Her research and the value created from it have earned her the Innovation Prize.

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