

Fonds de recherche du Québec

Société et Culture
Santé
Nature et Technologies





DIRECTIONS OVER THE COMING YEARS

For the Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ), 2013–2014 was a year of strategic planning for the 2014–2017 period. At meetings held in April, the boards of directors approved broad directions for the next three years that will be reflected in the upcoming annual action plans. The FRQ will meet their mandate to foster research, researcher training and knowledge mobilization through their awards and grants programs.

By supporting the scientific community, the FRQ will address key social challenges and government priorities (see Context section), specifically through the development of partnerships, intersectoral research projects and international collaborations.

In addition, the FRQ will document the social benefits of the research they fund—a growing concern in Québec, Canada and around the world. Since scientific research is publicly funded, Québécois and Québec's activity sectors must better understand how researchers contribute to shaping their daily lives. If you have any suggestions to facilitate the communication of research results, please do not hesitate to contact us!

• **Policy on the responsible conduct of research**

In September 2014, an intense year of work focused on research integrity led to the launch of the Politique de la conduite responsable en recherche des FRQ on the responsible conduct of research. All the major stakeholders in Québec's research sector as well as representatives from Canadian and international organizations were consulted. The policy is aimed at researchers, trainees, research professionals and research fund managers in Québec universities who oversee the FRQ's awards and grants.

The policy is part of an international trend to provide a framework for research ethics and integrity and defines the FRQ's expectations with regards to researchers, trainees and the institutions that receive funding. For the universities and research centres supported by the FRQ, providing and promoting training on the responsible conduct of research constitutes an important means to implement a culture of scientific integrity. The policy will take effect in September 2015, and several workshops aimed at all members of the research community are planned.

• **Knowledge mobilization strategy**

The FRQ have developed a knowledge mobilization strategy in an effort to create a common vision and better structure their actions, specifically with the aim to better support researchers and students in the transfer, commercialization and dissemination of their research results. The strategy also involves the development of partnerships to ensure that the impacts of FRQ-funded research are better communicated to potential users and the general public. The strategy supports the 2014–2017 three-year plans.



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Chief Scientist Officer of Québec

Chief Scientist Officer's Report

2013-2014



• **Scientific missions**

• **Conferences**

Development of

• **major intersectoral projects**

• **Promoting research**

Québec 

CONTEXT

On October 16, 2013, the Québec government launched a national research and innovation policy, the Politique nationale de la recherche et de l'innovation (PNRI). The five-year plan (2014-2019) is the result of intense efforts and a vast consultation with research and innovation stakeholders in which the chief scientist officer was very involved. Overall, groups across Québec welcomed the policy. In addition to including measures to stimulate training, scientific culture, research and innovation, the PNRI underscores three major social challenges: demographic change and population aging, sustainable development and climate change and entrepreneurship and creativity.

A few months later, in April 2014, Québec elected a new government for the next four years. The research and innovation mission was split: research now falls under the aegis of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Science and Minister Yves Bolduc, while the innovation mission is overseen by the Ministry of the Economy, Innovation and Exports (MEIE) and Minister Jacques Daoust. Reporting to Minister Bolduc, the chief scientist officer and the FRQ will work in close collaboration with the MEIE to preserve and strengthen the links between the funded research and the innovation that the initiatives may lead to.

The new government established four priority targets for economic development in Québec: Québec's northern region, the maritime strategy, forestry and small and medium businesses. Based on these targets, the FRQ will develop research programs with intersectoral, partnership and international components.

To this end, the FRQ will initiate and support the organization of events to focus research efforts on the four priority targets. In fact, in 2012, a northern research day was held, and the conclusions will serve as the basis of a new research program. A day of discussions focused on maritime research will take place in November 2014 at Université du Québec à Rimouski (Lévis campus), and an entrepreneurship and creativity event is planned for spring 2015 at Université de Sherbrooke.

Despite the difficult economic circumstances, the FRQ's three-year plans will be deployed and account for Québec's major social challenges and the government's priority targets. The development of public/private, national and international partnerships is therefore crucial.



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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

◆ Scientific missions

Development of national and international partnerships

The chief scientist officer plays a strategic role in research development in Québec and was called upon to participate in a series of international missions and host foreign delegations. Below is an overview of some of the activities in which he took part.

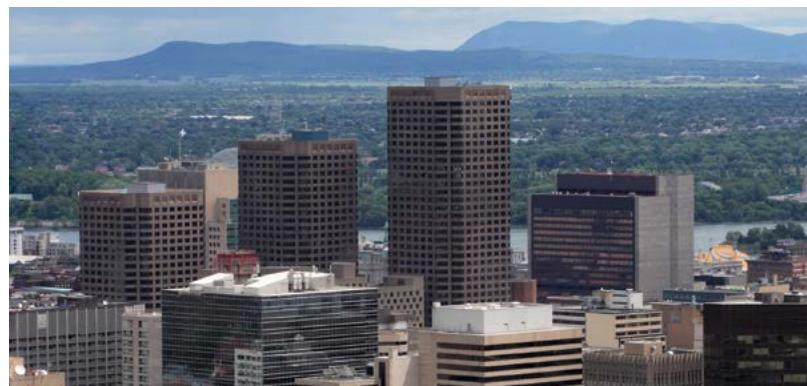
At the request of the city's universities, the chief scientist officer significantly contributed to Montréal's bid to host one of the offices of the secretariat of Future Earth, an international research platform that aims to contribute to the advancement of sustainable development and climate change knowledge and solutions. The choice of Montréal as one of the secretariat's five major hubs highlights the drive and expertise of Québec universities in the sustainable development sector.

From October 4 to 11, 2013, the chief scientist officer, the scientific director of the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies (FRQNT) and several members of Québec's research sector traveled to Japan for the Science and Technology in Society Forum, which brought together leading international experts in the engineering field. The FRQ delegation worked to promote Québec's research and innovation system and explore potential collaborations, specifically with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. The chief scientist officer also had the opportunity to meet with Japan's former finance minister, Mr. Koji Omi, who led the event.

In an effort to establish new ties and strengthen the collaborations with France's leading research organiza-

tions, including the Centre national de la recherche scientifique, the Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale (Inserm) and the Agence nationale de la recherche (ANR), the chief scientist officer led a mission to Paris from October 21 to 25, 2013. During the week, he met with some 50 senior representatives. The mission led to several positive outcomes: a partnership agreement between the

FRQNT and CHIST-ERA (European coordination and cooperation program involving national and international research funding agencies) and the FRQ's participation as an external member of the ANR committee seeking to develop a scientific integrity policy and as the Canadian representative of the intergovernmental committee of UNESCO's Management of Social Transformation program.



FUTURE EARTH

Future Earth is an international organization that spans three continents with offices in five major cities: Montréal (Canada), Paris (France), Tokyo (Japan) Stockholm (Sweden) and Boulder (United States). It spearheads three programs on global environmental changes: the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, the International Human Dimensions Programme and Diversitas. Future Earth also actively contributes to the World Climate Research Programme. All of these programmes are supported by organizations including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Council for Science.

The establishment of Future Earth's secretariat in Montréal is the result of the concerted efforts of several stakeholders: Montréal universities, Montréal International, Ville de Montréal, the Minister of International Relations and the Francophonie and Québec's chief scientist officer.

The second annual ThinkTank meeting, which brought together leading scientists to discuss the latest advances in the neuropsychopharmacology field, was held in Munich from November 23 to 26, 2013. The chief scientist officer was invited to speak at the event.

From January 12 to 14, 2014, the chief scientist officer traveled to Brussels to meet with the senior executives of agencies that fund research and innovation in Belgium and the European Union. Several meetings were held, including discussions with senior officers from several funding councils (Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia) and the new president of the European Research Council, Mr. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon. During the week, the chief scientist officer had the opportunity to meet with the chief scientific advisor to the European Commission, Ms. Anne Glover, as well as the head of policy affairs for Science Europe, Mr. Stephen Kuster.

From February 2 to 9, 2014, the chief scientist officer traveled to three major cities in India: Bangalore, Mumbai and Delhi. India's chief scientific advisor, the director of the government's science and technology ministry and the head of the biotechnology ministry participated in the discussions with great interest. The chief



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scientist officer was also a panellist at the Delhi Sustainable Development Symposium and spoke at two international conferences. The meetings were very successful and led to support for Montréal's bid for the secretariat of Future Earth as well as research announcements in other sectors.

From June 23 to 26, 2014, under the leadership of the ministers of the Economy, Innovation and Exports and of Higher Education, Research and Science, the chief scientist officer took part in the BIO International

Convention in San Diego. The event provided a showcase for Québec in the North American and international biopharmaceutical sectors. A series of meetings helped to promote Québec—specifically to young researchers—as a leading location for early clinical studies owing to the province's vast expertise and prominent research centres. Talks were also held with the Massachusetts Life Science Centre (US) and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Bangalore, India).

◆ Conferences

In March 2014, the chief scientist officer spoke to over 200 guests at a conference luncheon organized by the Conseil des relations internationales de Montréal (CORIM). He stressed the importance of partnerships to the development sectoral and intersectoral research programs and international collaborations. Several cooperation

models developed in Québec were presented in an effort to inspire new initiatives.

As part of the events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Inserm, France's leading health research institution, the chief scientist officer discussed Québec's health research model and its evolution at the organ-

ization's foresight conference held at the Sorbonne's grand amphitheater, under the patronage of French President François Hollande. Several of France's eminent scientists, including two Nobel Prize winners, also spoke at the event.

◆◆◆ Development of major intersectoral projects

Forums, workshop and meeting to strengthen the collaborations

Forum for an inclusive society

On January 23, 2014, the FRQ joined forces with the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Rehabilitation of Greater Montréal, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Rehabilitation and Social Integration, the Québec Rehabilitation Research Network and the Regroupement stratégique sur l'ingénierie de technologies interactives en réadaptation to organize a day of discussions on the development of a major intersectoral project focused on adaptation, rehabilitation and social integration.

The main objective of the forum, entitled *Pour une société inclusive: Forum de réflexion sur le développement d'un projet intersectoriel en adaptation-réadaptation et intégration sociale*, was to define a common vision for a major intersectoral project to foster a more inclusive society, particularly for people with disabilities. Over 100 people from several sectors (government departments, public organizations, private businesses and clinical and research settings) took part in the event. A large-scale initiative touching upon various aspects of active life (e.g. leisure activities, education and employment) and involving different stakeholders in Québec was developed.

The next step will be to organize a consultation and targeted activities to determine specific themes, partners and the priority adaptation and rehabilitation plans driven by social and technological innovation.

Workshop on the responsible conduct of research

As part of the development of its policy on the responsible conduct of research, the FRQ organized a thematic workshop during the 82nd Congrès de l'Acfas, which was held at Concordia University in May. The sector's main stakeholders, including researchers, students, administrators and representatives of provincial and federal government departments, took part in the discussions. The meeting helped to define certain elements of the policy, which was officially launched in September.

Chief scientists' meeting

Spearheaded by Québec's chief scientist officer, the very first meeting of chief scientists from around the world was held in Montréal on June 10, 2014. The event aimed to establish direct ties between chief scientists and their equivalents and initiate a discussion on their roles in regards to their governments and on the best ways to communicate their recommendations. The meeting was held as part of the Conference of Montréal. Guests were invited to take part in a series of activities organized for the International Economic Forum of the Americas.

Forum on sustainable development

On June 11, 2014, Québec's chief scientist officer led an international sustainable development forum to discuss key issues and strategies to fund research in the field. Representatives from Québec (FRQ, Ouranos), Canada

(Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, Genome Canada, Environment Canada) and around the world (Future Earth, UNESCO, Energy and Resources Institute, World Meteorological Organization) took part. The event underscored the importance of raising awareness in the political arena, the private sector and among members of the general public of the role of research and innovation with regards to sustainable development and its impact on our daily lives.



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Measuring research impacts

The FRQ are currently developing an impact measurement strategy that considers the best practices implemented around the world in order to ensure high-quality reporting and document the outcomes of the research they support. In doing so, the FRQ aim to rigorously and systematically demonstrate the social benefits of public research and inform Québecers of the excellence and relevance of academic research.

Time line: 50 years of the FRQS

As part of the events to celebrate the 50 years of the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé (FRQS), a micro-site on the evolution of Québec's main health indicators, the policies and political decisions in the health and research sectors and the leading scientific discoveries and key milestones in the agency's history since the 1960s was created. The site will be updated regularly. Visit frqs50ans.com.



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