IRL PPC
Particle Physics & Cosmology International Research Laboratory

Autumn 2026 Newsletter

Dear colleagues,

A typo slipped into our latest newsletter. Please accept our apologies to the teams concerned. Here is the correction.

Best regards,
Cédric Cerna

FACCTS Grants (France and Chicago Collaborating in the Sciences) and IIRP Faculty Grants (International Institute of Research in Paris)

IIRP 2026: David Schmitz (UChicago EFI) and Anselmo Meregaglia (CNRS, LP2I Bordeaux) *UChicago EFI Neutrino Group Joining the International Research Network on Neutrinos (IRN Neutrinos*)

Edito

Dear colleagues,

This Fall issue highlights the continued momentum of the IRL PPC, with new collaborative projects, funding opportunities, and scientific exchanges between France and Chicago. As you will see, **dark matter and neutrino physics are at the forefront of our activities**.
We are delighted to welcome Laura Zambelli, who is joining the IRL PPC and the Enrico Fermi Institute for the next two years as a Visiting Scholar, working with the neutrino group on DUNE and SBND.
We are also pleased to share the latest projects supported by FACCTS and IIRP grants, announce upcoming calls for proposals, and celebrate the researchers

and students contributing to our community. I would particularly like to congratulate the three UChicago students selected for this year's FADEx program on dark matter.

I would like to draw your attention in particular to the upcoming deadlines for the UChicago–CNRS Joint PhD Program, FACCTS, IIRP Faculty Grants and Chateaubriand Fellowship.

Warm regards,
Cédric Cerna
Director, IRL PPC

FACCTS Grants (France and Chicago Collaborating in the Sciences) and IIRP Faculty Grants (International Institute of Research in Paris)

- FACCTS 2026: Alex Drlica-Wagner (Fermilab / UChicago KICP) and Johann Cohen-Tanugi (CNRS, LPClermont Auvergne) — *Enabling the First Dark Matter Science with the Rubin Observatory*
- IIRP 2026: David Schmitz (UChicago EFI) and Anselmo Meregaglia (CNRS, LP2I Bordeaux) *UChicago EFI Neutrino Group Joining the International Research Network on Neutrinos (IRN Neutrinos*)
- IIRP 2026: Luca Grandi (UChicago KICP) and Davide Franco (CNRS, APC Paris) — *In the Dark, Together: A France–Chicago Initiative to Shed Light on Dark Matter*

Funding Opportunities

- The **coming IIRP faculty grant call** is open with a deadline of **December** --> link here
- The **coming FACCTS call** is open with a deadline of **February 2, 2027 --> link here**

- The **UChicago-CNRS PhD Joint Research Program** is now open with a **deadline of December 10**, 2026, for funding period: July 1, 2027-June 30, 2030 **--> links** here **(UChicago) and** here **(CNRS)**
- The **MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions)** doctoral exchange is open with a deadline of **November 24, 2026 -->** link here
- The **Chateaubriand Fellowship Program** in STEM is open with a deadline of January 18, 2027 **-->** Link here

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French American Doctoral Exchange "The Dark Side of the Universe" (FADEx)

Meet the 16 PhD students selected for FADEx



Sixteen PhD students from the United States and France working in dark matter physics are taking part in a one-week scientific immersion across **Paris, Modane in the French Alps, and Geneva (CERN)**, from **October 19 to 23, 2026**. Congratulations to the three UChicago awardees: Abby Chris, Gabe Hoshino, and Aashay Pai, who is also a 2026 Chateaubriand Fellow.
Learn more about the FADEx program

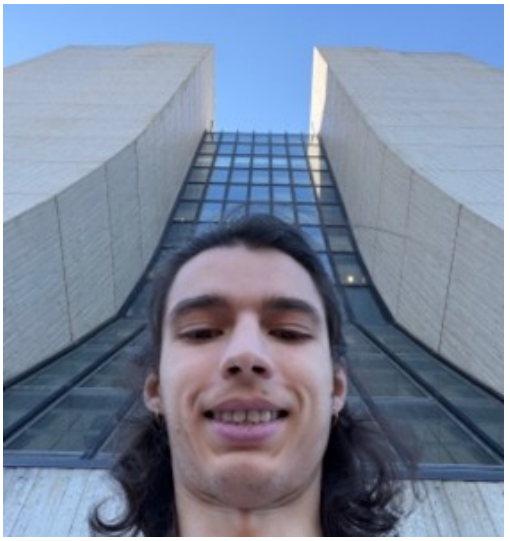
Research Visits & Internships

Laura Zambelli (CNRS, IRL PPC)



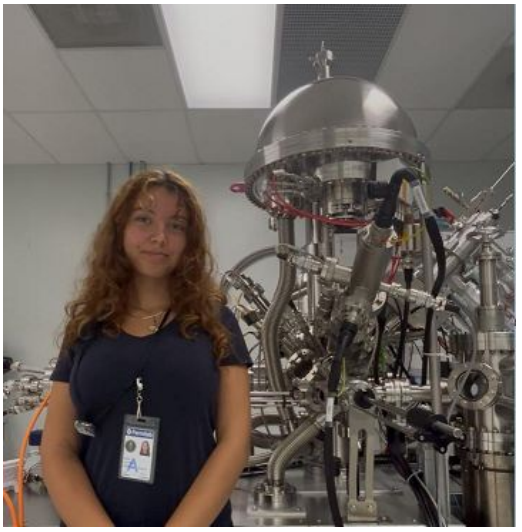
Laura Zambelli (CNRS, IRL PPC) joined the IRL PPC as a researcher and will be a UChicago Visiting Scholar at the Enrico Fermi Institute for the next two years (2026–2028). Building on her experience studying the performance of the ProtoDUNEs at CERN, she will contribute to the SBND experiment, working with exciting neutrino data. Outside of work, she enjoys exploring all that Chicago has to offer!

Jérémy Quelin Lechevranton (CNRS, IJCLab Orsay)



Jérémy Quélin Lechevranton (CNRS, IJCLab Orsay) is undertaking a two-month internship at Fermilab within the DUNE collaboration. His PhD research focuses on calibrating the DUNE Far Detector using prototype experiments at CERN. During his stay, he will work with supernova neutrino experts to apply his calibration studies and assess the experiment's sensitivity to these rare events.

Syrine Gruszka (CNRS, IJCLab Orsay)



Syrine Grusza, a student at Polytech Paris-Saclay specializing in Materials, Mechanics, and Energy, is completing a work-study placement at IJCLab. During a visit to Fermilab, she worked with Bianca Giaccone to study plasma cleaning of niobium RF cavities, investigating its effects on surface oxides and carbides. This hands-on experience helped her refine experimental methods, develop her analytical skills, and strengthen her scientific thinking. The results are promising and will help guide future studies.

Upcoming Colloquium — December 7, 2026, Enrico Fermi Institute



Patrice Verdier, CNRS Research Director at IP2I Lyon and Scientific Director of IRC Discovery, will give a colloquium entitled *“Gravitational Waves: A Decade of Discovery and the Road to the Einstein Telescope.”*

Stay Connected

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