

Inria and Computer Graphics at Inria

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Abstract

While attending this year's SIGGRAPH conference in Vancouver, I had the chance to chat with several PhD students and postdoctoral researchers, many of whom are actively looking for academic positions. As a researcher at Inria, I have experienced and enjoyed its excellent working environment with remarkable freedom to pursue in-depth research, yet its recruitment process and research teams remain relatively little known outside France. This is the motivation behind this short article.

1 Inria Architecture

Inria (L'Institut National de Recherche en Informatique et en Automatique) is the French national research institute dedicated to computer science, applied mathematics, and digital technologies. Founded in 1967, it is headquartered in Rocquencourt (near Paris) and now comprises nine centers across the country: Bordeaux (BSO), Grenoble (GRA), Lille (LNE), Lyon (LYS), Nancy (NGE), Paris (PRO), Rennes (RBA), Sophia-Antipolis (SAM), and Saclay (SIF). Their geographic distribution is shown in Figure 1.

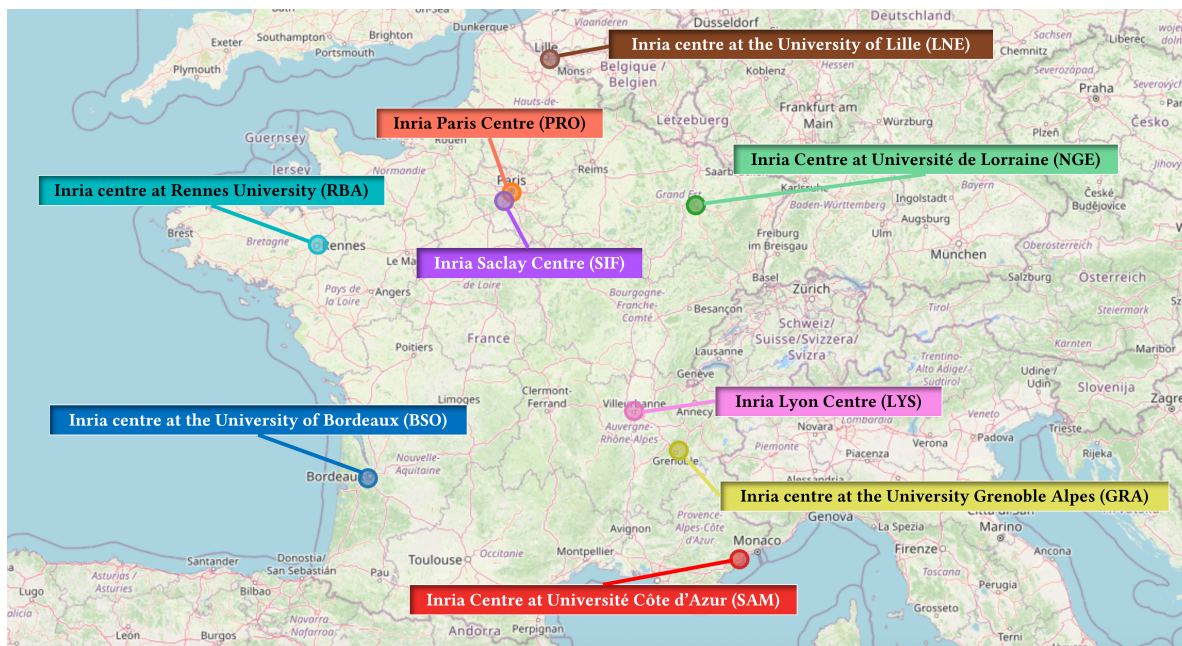


Figure 1: Inria centers.

Although Inria is an independent research institute, it does not operate in isolation. Each center is co-located with leading universities and engineering schools, and many researchers

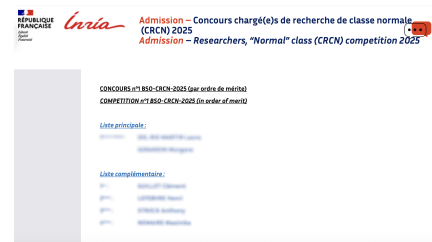
hold joint appointments, combining their Inria positions with teaching responsibilities at partner institutions. Internally, Inria is organized around Project-Teams (Équipes-Projets) rather than traditional departments, with each team serving as a core research unit. Each center hosts a number of project-teams, which typically include permanent researchers (from Inria or partner institutions), postdoctoral fellows, PhD students, and engineers. In fact, of Inria’s nearly 220 research teams, around 80% are joint teams with universities and other organizations [Inria, 2025]. For example, in our team, GeomeriX, we have a mix of three Inria researchers, a CNRS¹ researcher, and a professor from École Polytechnique, and we are a part of Laboratoire d’Informatique de l’École polytechnique (LIX), a joint research unit run by École polytechnique and CNRS yet sharing the same building with Inria Saclay center – I understand this is getting confusing, but that is the way it works.

2 Inria Recruitment

To join Inria as a junior researcher, there are two main tracks: *Chargées et chargés de recherche de classe normale (CRCN)* and *the Inria Starting Faculty Position (ISFP)*. Both are *permanent* positions, which is perhaps the most attractive aspect of most French academic jobs as you get tenure from day one! In practice, candidates often apply to both tracks simultaneously, since the application materials and recruitment process are essentially the same, and the final decision on which track you would like to join comes only after an offer is rolled out. While the two tracks have a lot in common, there are a few differences. Most notably, ISFP has a moderate teaching obligation (32–64 hours per year), while CRCN has no mandatory teaching duties, which partly leads to a difference in salary. A more detailed, side-by-side comparison can be found in this document [Inria, 2025b].

Every year, Inria runs a national recruitment campaign for hiring new permanent researchers. In the past few years, each center had three to five openings, but since 2025 the number has been reduced to three positions nationwide: two CRCN and one ISFP [Inria, 2025c]. The recruitment campaign usually begins in *late January* or *early February*, when candidates can submit their application files online. Applications first undergo a preselection phase, after which shortlisted candidates are invited for interviews. The job interviews typically take place between April and May, depending on each center’s schedule. The interview format is fairly compact though: a 15-minute presentation of your work, followed by 10 minutes of questions from the jury. After the interviews, each center’s jury releases a preliminary ranking of “admissibilité” candidates, which then goes to the table of a local appointment committee to be adjusted and finalized into an “admission” ranking (see inset for an example). Offers are then sent out according to this final ranking, one by one, until all positions are filled. If your name is on the “Liste principale”, you are completely secure; even if you are on the “Liste complémentaire” (waiting list), you still have a strong chance of being offered a position, because candidates ahead of you may decline the offer or choose to join other Inria centers or institutions, which happens quite frequently.

Each Inria center sets its own recruitment priorities every year, based on site policies, team status, and projected scientific plans. *It is highly recommended to contact the teams you are interested in before applying*, to check whether the team has a potential slot this year and whether your expertise aligns well with the team’s research axes. Their support can be important throughout the campaign. Applying to multiple centers and teams can also increase your



¹French National Centre for Scientific Research (Centre national de la recherche scientifique), the largest fundamental science agency in Europe. Unlike Inria, it conducts research in all fields of knowledge.

chances of success, since it is not uncommon for candidates to receive very different rankings across centers.

2026 Update: *Unlike in previous years, the 2026 Inria recruitment campaign will run as a single national competition rather than operating on a center-by-center basis [Inria, 2026]. The number of openings is notably lower this year, with only 6 CRCN and 6 ISFP positions available. Additionally, the CRCN and ISFP recruitment tracks no longer share the same schedule; their timelines for applications, pre-selection, interviews, and final admissions are now separate.*

3 Graphics Teams at Inria

Computer Graphics research holds a prominent place at Inria (I think:), with notable contributions including 11 ERC grants (Starting, Advanced, and Proof of Concept) [Inria, 2025a], as well as the development of widely used software such as Eigen, CGAL, SOFA, and Geogram. Several graphics teams are distributed across Inria’s centers, collectively covering the full spectrum of computer graphics research, from geometry processing and simulation to rendering and interaction. Table 1 presents the graphics teams at Inria and their research axes, while more information about all graphics teams in France can be found at [Association Française d’Informatique Graphique, 2025].

References

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Team	Location	Research axes
GeomeriX	SIF	shape processing, simulation & animation, dynamical systems, geometric machine learning, topological data analysis, multi-physics modeling
GraphDeco	SAM	rendering, accessible content creation, visual representation, artistic design, synthetic & captured data, computer graphics models
Titane	SAM	geometric modeling, scene reconstruction, data integration, massive 3D data, structural analysis, photo-consistent processing
Hybrid	RBA	body-based interaction, brain-computer interfaces, hybrid interaction, real-time simulation, haptics, collaborative VR
Mimetic	RBA	motion analysis, virtual humans, realistic simulation, VR-based training, human-computer interaction, motor skill learning
VirtUs	RBA	virtual characters, populated environments, autonomous behavior, group dynamics, immersive experiences, user interaction
ELAN	GRA	slender structure modeling, contact mechanics, inverse elastic design, micro-macro physical analysis, numerical simulation, mechanical phenomena
MAVERICK	GRA	image synthesis, computer visualization, expressive rendering, illumination simulation, complex scene rendering, perceptual evaluation
ANIMA	GRA	user-centered modeling, shape design, real-time motion synthesis, character animation, narrative design, virtual cinematography
MFX	NGE	complex shape modeling, procedural synthesis, geometry processing, visualization, additive manufacturing, fabrication optimization
PIXEL	NGE	digital geometry processing, 3D reconstruction, parameterization, meshing, optimization algorithms, scientific computing
Manao	BSO	light-matter interaction, shape representation, digital optics, computer graphics, data acquisition, visualization & display

Table 1: **Graphics teams at Inria.**