

Dear Consul General,

Dear Event Organisers,

Distinguished participants,

It is an honour and pleasure to represent Paris-Saclay University at this launching event, albeit on-line but attended by so many of us. I am particularly appreciative to Professor Ahmed Bassalat for kindly inviting us to assist.

We were happy to learn about the launch of the 2021 WHISHEPP winter school, knowing that the previous editions of this event have testified to the exceptional quality of scientific cooperation between An-Najah University, Paris-Saclay University, and with France in general.

The 2018 IMC project made An-Najah National University UPSaclay's first partner in Palestine. With its multiple, multi-disciplinary faculties and numerous students, it helps us to bring about science and knowledge importance and awareness in younger generations of our citizens.

An-Najah was among the 2019 THE top-ranked higher education institutions for the Teaching and Learning Strategy. Internationalization being one of its strategic priorities, a good number of training and research partnerships with several foreign institutions, more than half of them in Europe, have been successfully developed. Saclay is proud to be one of its partners as WHISHEPP is a model of quality pedagogical support, incorporating tutorials modelled on academic curricula and practical work.

An-Najah is recognised for its excellence in High Energy Physics in the Middle East and we give a great value to our collaboration in this area.

The ICM project aims to train Palestinian students in High Energy Physics, allowing them to enter the world of research during their 3rd year of study. The fact that the project has strong links with the engineering and computer science departments provides for a transversal approach applied to Physics.

The links between our institutions have continually strengthened over the past 5 years, student and faculty staff exchanges have been spectacularly reinforced due to the IMC Erasmus+ project in 2018. Our flow of master's students and interns has equally increased

I will just let myself take a few more minutes of your time to mention some of our key achievements for the past 5 years of our cooperation:

- 1 PhD thesis was completed, and a postdoc student is currently conducting research at Soleil Synchrotron. We also have two ongoing dual PhD theses (started in October 2019).
- 7 2nd year students enrolled at the NPAC Master's degree (NPAC, Large Instruments, Nuclear Engineering) (we had 3 participants in 2019-2020)/

- 4 students enrolled in master's 1 of General Physics in 2019-2020.
- 15 students in combined mobility (research internship and BSc year 3 courses)
- 30 students in research internships or initiation to research ranging from 6 weeks to 6 months for a total of approximately 90 months over 5 years.

Many exchanges have been organized with the help of this program and many more are to come:

- 21 incoming internship mobilities
- 14 incoming study exchanges
- 16 incoming staff training exchanges
- 30 outgoing teaching exchanges

Palestinian PhD students seek various scientific interests at UPSaclay , some of them including the construction of the future ATLAS detector at CERN, data analysis, gravitational waves and the start-up of a gas pedal at Orsay (ThomX). Some courses at An Najah are dispensed by Saclay teaching faculty who share their academic knowledge and professional experience with the Palestinian students. Some newly-designed courses have been recently offered to students with an exceptional level of academic credentials to attend courses in France and have a better performance. We hope this type of mobility experience will come to nurture the creation of dual-degree programmes at some point..

Once again, I extend my highest gratitude to all the teaching faculty involved in the programme, particularly Professors Achille Stocchi and Ahmed Bassalat.

We then wish you all the success for this winter school, held under exceptional circumstances, and we do hope that once the pandemic has receded the next edition will take place in An Najah and will be continue to successfully nurture out bilateral cooperation.

Thank for your attention.