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## Editorial

# RéJIF: The expanding network of French young infectious disease specialists



## *RéJIF : le réseau des jeunes infectiologues français*

Since 2016, thanks to the steering committee of the French Infectious Diseases Society (French acronym SPILF), young French infectious disease (ID) specialists (SPILF member trainees or “young physicians”) have been united within the Network of young French ID specialists (French acronym RéJIF). This national network is a dedicated working group of the SPILF, and was created before the official recognition of ID as a specific medical specialty in France. The role of this working group was mainly to help young ID specialists gather together, do a count of ID trainees in France, and be the favorite channel of communication between ID trainees and the scientific and teaching societies, such as the SPILF or the College of Professors of Infectious and Tropical Diseases (French acronym CMIT). RéJIF was initially created by a group of highly motivated residents and fellows who organized in 2018 the first national elections for its steering committee to gain legitimacy and support. On this occasion, nine members were elected by more than 100 voters. The next elections will take place at the beginning of 2020. To communicate with its members, RéJIF developed a network of local correspondents in charge of the representation of ID trainees and fellows in their region. RéJIF also created a Facebook group page in 2016 ([www.facebook.com/groups/425468117627734/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/425468117627734/)), together with a specific page on the SPILF website in 2017 (<http://www.infectiologie.com/fr/rejif.html>) and a mailing list of more than 380 ID trainees or fellows that are officially registered as RéJIF members (which requires SPILF membership). To date, less than three years after its creation, more than 1000 persons are followers of the RéJIF Facebook group page.

RéJIF has diversified its activities over the last three years, adding many services for its members. The local correspondent network has been reinforced and galvanized, with regular face-to-face meetings, to continue developing the group. The list of local correspondents is available on the RéJIF website ([www.infectiologie.com/fr/referents-regionaux.html](http://www.infectiologie.com/fr/referents-regionaux.html)) and widely used by medical students to contact local ID specialists before choosing their position. A toolbox, offering advice on organizing a scientific literature monitoring, preparing for a PhD, complying with ethical requirements for clinical research or managing references has also been added to the RéJIF website section ([www.infectiologie.com/fr/toolbox-1.html](http://www.infectiologie.com/fr/toolbox-1.html)). Thanks to the annual RéJIF endowment coming from the SPILF, RéJIF has been able to annually offer a €3000 ID innovative project funding grant to a RéJIF official member and “Congress or Workshops participation”

grants to help young ID specialists attend events promoted by the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID). In 2019, RéJIF chose one innovative project awardee out of six applicants and will award 10 grants to ID specialists presenting their work at ECCMID out of more than 14 applicants. A newsletter is sent every six months to the members of the RéJIF mailing list summarizing job offers, surveys, current projects, and main information from the SPILF. Regarding international relations, RéJIF has been in touch with the Trainee Association of ESCMID (TAE) to be its favorite French contact point and to promote ESCMID training offers. RéJIF is a source of inspiration, encouraging young ID specialists in other European countries to structure and federate themselves. Indeed, the RéJIF experience was presented as a model during the TAE meeting at the 2018 ECCMID. RéJIF is also promoting the mobility of young French ID specialists during and after their residency, working together with the SPILF and the CMIT ([www.infectiologie.com/fr/mobilite.html](http://www.infectiologie.com/fr/mobilite.html)). Last but not least, since 2016 at the instigation of Prof. France Roblot and followed by Prof. Pierre Tattevin, the new SPILF President, a specific RéJIF session for young ID specialists was created during the French national infectious disease congress (French acronym JNI), the major ID congress in France which takes place on a yearly basis. It is an extraordinary opportunity for young physicians and scientists to present their works in ID during this prestigious event. RéJIF is also organizing every year a very popular party during the JNI to gather the young and less young ID specialists.

However, the heart of RéJIF probably lies in its Facebook group page. This is where all members directly communicate with each other on a regular basis, sharing news about events regarding ID, microbiology, or any related topic, vacant positions or internships, scientific or medical articles or even general publications which might interest young ID specialists. Most followers are women (60.5%), under the age of 35 (77%). They are located in metropolitan France (70%), Algeria (19%), French overseas territories (3.9%), Tunisia (2.9%), Belgium, Romania, and Benin (1% each). Each month more than 50 publications are recorded with activity peaks during the major ID congresses such as the ECCMID or JNI. Followers frequently visit the RéJIF page with 87.7% of followers categorized as active in the Facebook data analyzer. A total of 1500 publications have been posted on the group page since its creation, creating a true community of young ID specialists. Despite different courses and centers of interest, they all share the same passion for the fight

against infectious diseases and its clinical practice. RéJIF is always working on new projects such as the upcoming development of accounts on other online communication channels such as Twitter – following the example of Médecine et Maladies Infectieuses (twitter.com/medmalinf) – or Instagram.

Thus, over just about three years, RéJIF was able to create a community of young ID specialists who, through their interactions, generate a healthy emulation that will probably benefit the entire French infectious disease community. This initiative indeed inspired the creation in November 2018 of the network of young microbiologists, which became a working group of the French Microbiological Society (French acronym SFM) based on the RéJIF model. Many exchanges and joint projects occur between these two working groups. Thus, through its own growth and with the support of the SPILF, the network hopes to help its members reach the highest level of personal and professional fulfilment. This may well be the way to develop an even healthier and more dynamic infectious disease specialists' community in France.

#### Disclosure of interest

The authors declare no competing interests.

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