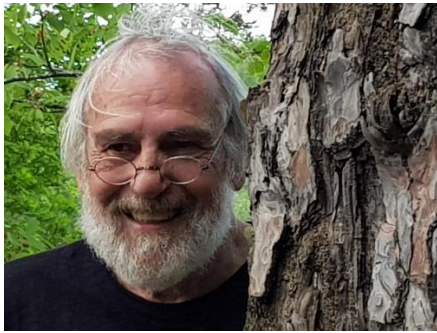


In memoriam — Dr. François Iris, Ph.D.



It is with immense sadness that we announce the passing of Dr. François Iris, Ph.D., on September 10, 2026. We extend our sincere condolences to his family and loved ones.

A passionate and multifaceted scientist, a humanist at heart, Dr. François Iris, Ph.D., devoted his life to understanding the mechanisms of disease in order to give patients effective answers that could be used by as many people as possible. Until his last day, he continued to work on his latest models (autism, fibromyalgia).

A graduate from the University of Canterbury (New Zealand) with honors, he earned a doctorate in animal physiology in 1982 and a doctorate in zoology (physiology, genetics, and biochemistry) in 1985. He began his career at the University of Otago, where he created and led a research group on the molecular biology of autoimmune diseases. Twice the recipient of the prestigious New Zealand Medical Research Council fellowship, he was invited in 1989 by Professor Jean Dausset, Nobel Prize laureate in medicine, to join the CEPH in Paris, where he created and directed a high-throughput DNA sequencing unit recognized as one of the most respected in Europe. There, he contributed to the discovery of glucokinase gene mutations in MODY-2 diabetes and to the first complete sequencing of the human HLA region.

In 1993, at the invitation of Professor Eric Lander, he joined Millennium Pharmaceuticals in Cambridge (United States) where, in less than two years, he built the largest high-throughput sequencing unit in the country, leading to a \$75 million industry agreement—one of the largest in the history of American biotechnology. His team there notably discovered the PKD1 gene, responsible for polycystic kidney disease.

Back in France, he founded ValiGen in 1996, then, in 2004, Bio-Modeling Systems (BMSystems), as President and Chief Scientific and Technical Officer. There he invented the CADI™ Discovery platform, which proved that heuristic modeling—the only approach that addresses the well-known “garbage in, garbage out” problem—was both possible and operational.

This platform laid the foundation to an original approach to systems biology, which gave rise to numerous research programs with leading academic partners (Max Planck Institute in Munich, National University of Ireland Galway, Utrecht University, Tampere University, Imperial College London, Johns Hopkins University, Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital for Children, the CEA, INRA, etc.), as well as to many industrial applications and companies. This work induced recognized advances on subjects as varied as complex

human diseases, chronic fatigue syndrome, metabolism, antibiotic resistance, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, and neurological and psychiatric disorders. Among his most recent work is the H2020 GEMMA program on autism, which he was able to complete.

The future: After many years of unsuccessful searching for a suitable successor to whom he could pass on his experience and expertise, Dr. François Iris, Ph.D., determined to ensure the continuity of his work, finally found in Athanasios Beopoulos, Ph.D., the scientist capable of carrying on his legacy and taking even further the projects he had not been able to complete. Athanasios (Thanos) is currently Director of Integrative Biology at BMSystems. The road ahead will be difficult, but as François Iris would have said: “Nothing is impossible for those who have the will and the ability.”

Dr. François Iris, Ph.D., is the author of numerous scientific publications in journals such as *Nature*, *Nature Genetics*, and *Cell*.

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