



ASCENT

Academic Secured Career Engagement in Toulouse

ASCENT

Presentation webinar

Friday, October 16th 2026

Informations/guidelines:

- The session is being recorded.
 - [Link to the recording](#)
- Please keep your microphones muted.
- Post your questions in the chat at any time.
- Remaining questions will find their answers in FAQ.

ASCENT

MSCA programme for advanced postdoctoral researchers

PRESENTATION WEBINAR



DATE

16 OCTOBER 2026



TIME

12:00 (PARIS TIME)

- Overview of the ASCENT programme objectives, scientific scope and research environment
- Information on eligibility criteria and evaluation process
- Live Q&A session with the coordination team



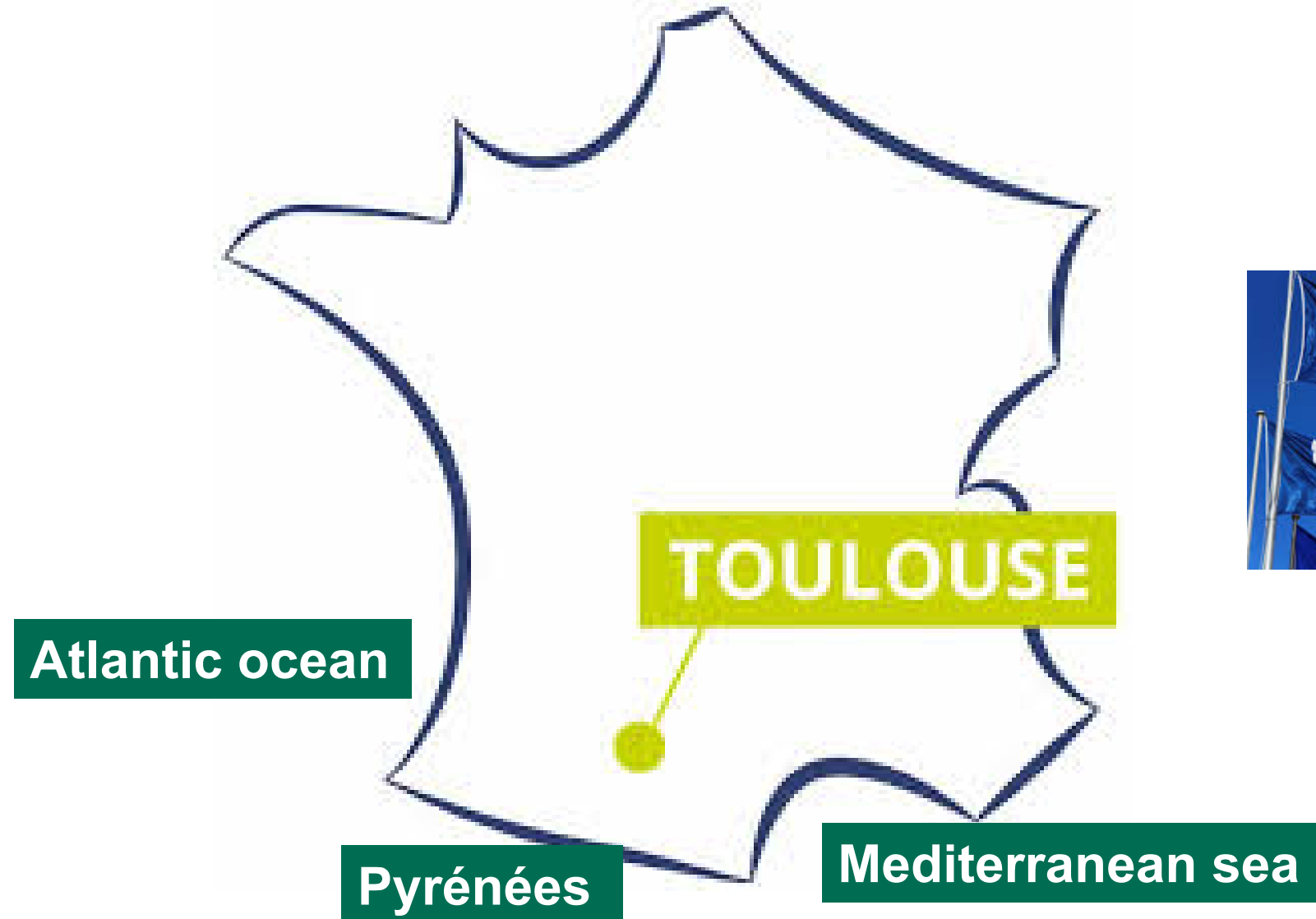
REGISTER NOW



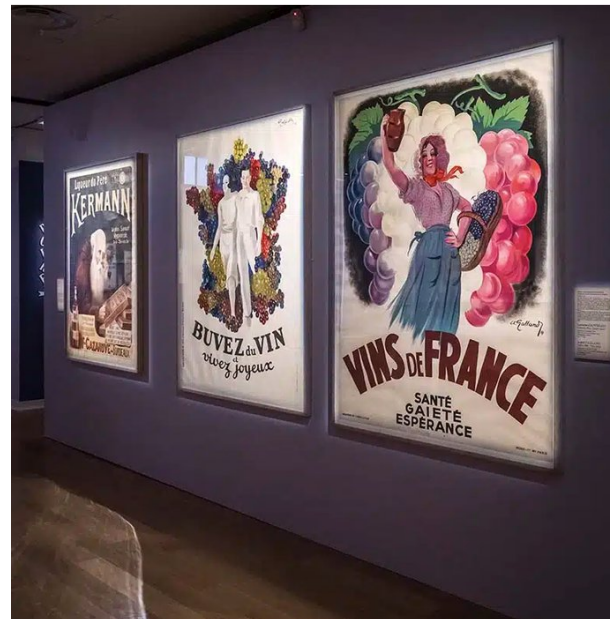
- **Welcome & Introduction** – *Etienne DAGUE, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator*
- **Presentation of the Toulouse Academic Site & the Toulouse Initiative for Research Impact on Society (TIRIS) programme** – *Etienne Dague, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator*
- **ASCENT Programme overview** – *Etienne DAGUE, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator*
- **Eligibility & engagement** – *Vincent Kretz, ASCENT Project manager*
- **Evaluation Process and criteria** – *Etienne DAGUE, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator*
- **General advice & common pitfalls** – *Anna Vermunt, ASCENT Project manager*
- **Plenary Q&A & closing remarks** – *Etienne Dague – Anna Vermunt – Vincent Kretz*

Welcome & Introduction

Etienne Dague, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator

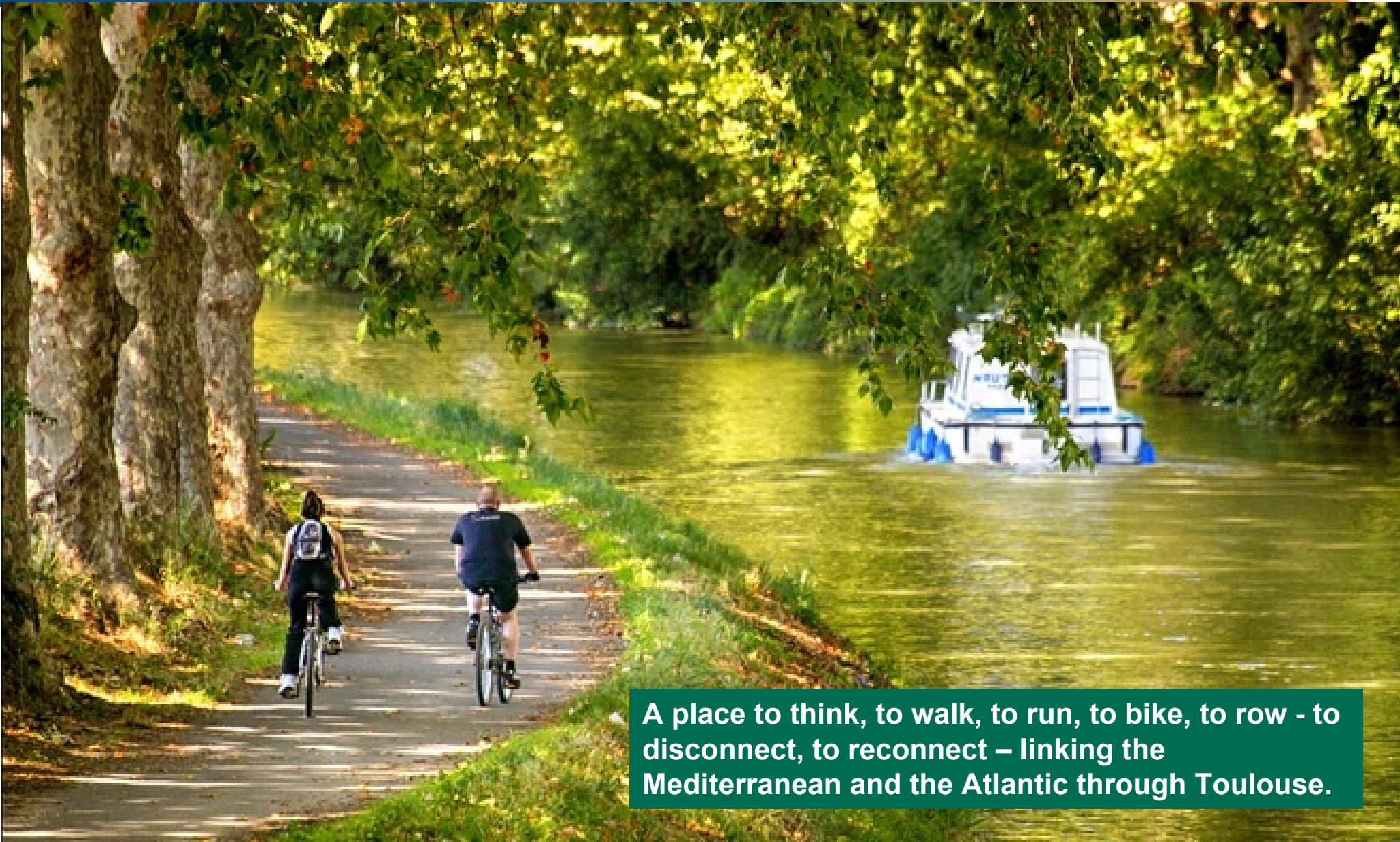


Toulouse a city of sport, culture, leisure and heritage









A place to think, to walk, to run, to bike, to row - to disconnect, to reconnect – linking the Mediterranean and the Atlantic through Toulouse.

**Narbonne
plage 1h15
from Toulouse
by train**



**Ax les Thermes 2h10 from
Toulouse by train**



**Bayonne 3h30 from
Toulouse by train**



Presentation of the Toulouse Academic Site & Toulouse Initiative for Research Impact on Society (TIRIS)

Etienne Dague, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator

The **Community of Universities and Schools of Toulouse (Comue)** brings **together 22 academic and higher-education partners across western Occitania** comprising an exceptional powerhouse of teaching and research excellence.



**15 higher education
+ 1200 training programs
110,000 students**



**14% international students
1500 cooperation agreements with 110
countries**



7 national research organisations



**144 laboratories
7000 researchers**



3240 PhD students enrolled



**17000 employees dedicated to
teaching, research, and associated
technical and administrative support**

15 higher education establishments and 7 national research organisms in 11 towns across all of western Occitania

FOUNDING MEMBERS



MEMBERS



NATIONAL ORGANISMS



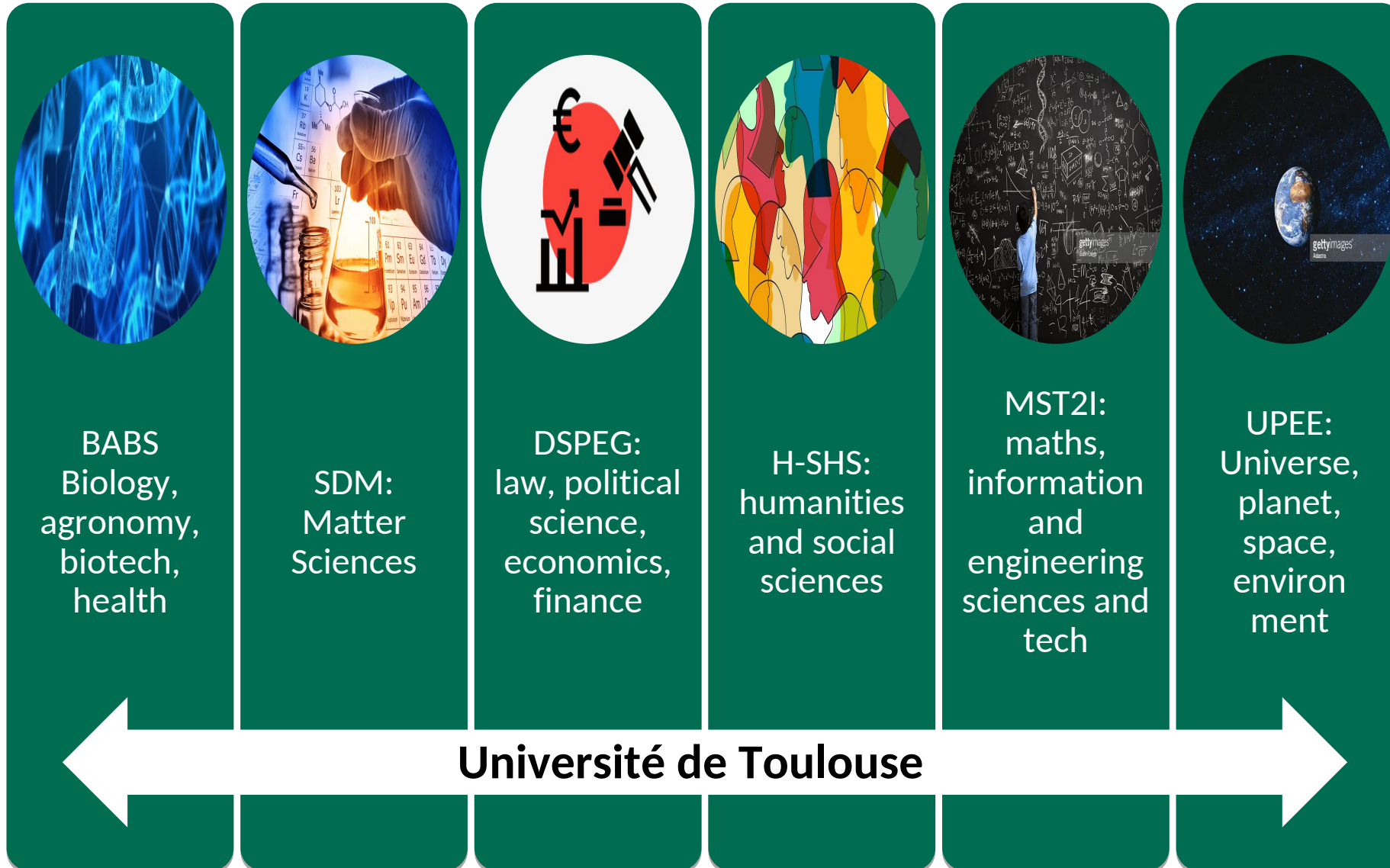
COMUE of Toulouse - Where?

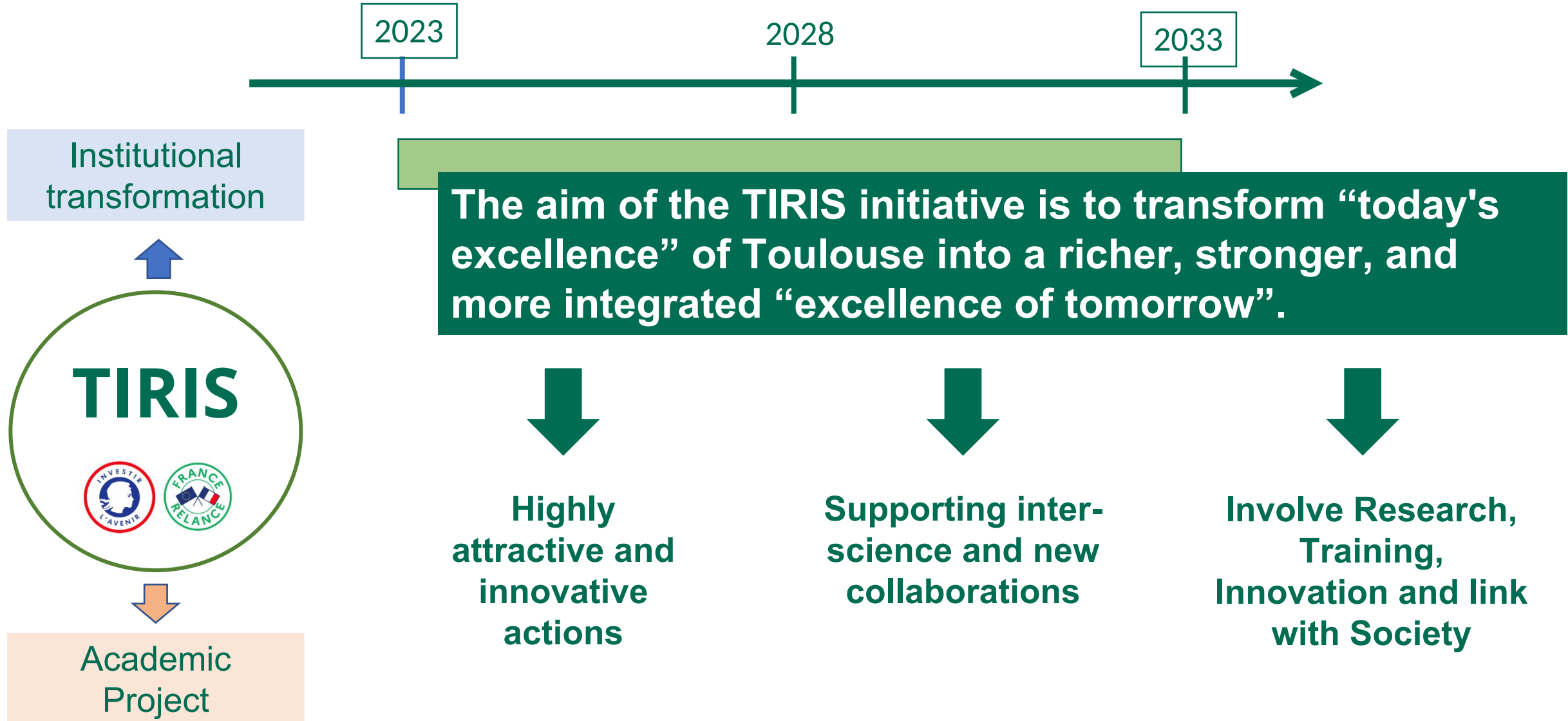


**Répartition
des effectifs étudiants UT
en 2021-2022
par ville universitaire d'équilibre
(Observatoire UT, SISE 2021-22)**

- **High-level community services** (student health, library services, etc.)
- **Welcome initiatives** (Welcome Desk, Toulbox, Cité internationale, etc.)
- **High-level funding opportunities**
- **Overall reinforcement of global strategy**







*Develop our potential to make **paradigm-changing contributions** to the **global challenges** that face modern societies*

Three scientific pillars



*Understanding and fostering
living in good health and
well being*



*Understanding global
changes and their impact
on societies*



*Accelerating sustainable
transitions: mobility, energy,
resources & industrial change*

including theoretical and applied contributions

3 Scientific pillars

Understanding global changes and their impact on societies

Accelerating sustainable transitions: mobility, energy, resources & industrial change

Understanding and fostering living in good health and well being

Training

Research

Innovation

Science and Society

4 programmes

A governance

Executive committee

Operational Committee

PC
Research

PC
Training

PC
Innovation

PC
Science &
Society

Understanding and fostering living in good health and well being



- Understanding the interaction of environmental and bio-psycho-social determinants on life and health
- Challenges of “well-being” (healthy ageing, therapeutic and diagnostic innovation)
- Supporting agro-ecological transitions

Provide new knowledge on the complex effects of environmental and social factors on the quality of life of humans, animals and plants.

Understanding global changes and their impact on societies



- From observation to modelling
- Adaptation and transformation of social worlds
- Long term context

Understand medium- and long-term phenomena and the changes they bring about, but also guide public action, economic models and individual and collective behaviour.

Accelerating sustainable transitions: mobility, energy, resources & industrial change



- Transport of the future
- Decarbonated energy
- Resources, production and industrial change

Identify the necessary transitions in modes and the way we consume (sobriety) and produce, and in mobility at both local and global levels.

ASCENT Programme Overview

Etienne Dague, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator

MSCA Cofund Choose Europe For Science

ASCENT

Academic Secured Career
ENgagement in Toulouse



ASCENT

Academic Secured Career Engagement in Toulouse

- The **ASCENT** program (*Academic Secured Career ENgagement in Toulouse*) is a **prestigious fellowship program for advanced post-doctoral researchers** coordinated by the University of Toulouse and a core component of the TIRIS initiative (Toulouse Initiative for Research Impact on Society).
- **Co-funded by the TIRIS programme** (*Toulouse Initiative for Research's Impact on Society*) **and the European Commission under Horizon Europe** (MSCA-COFUND-2025, Grant Agreement n°101313640), ASCENT aims to position Toulouse as a European hub for scientific talent by offering long-term stability, freedom, and visibility to advanced post-doctoral researchers.
- It is designed to recruit **6 highly talented researchers, for 5 years, in one single call (2026-27)**. Fellows will conduct independent, high-impact research at the **University of Toulouse**, benefiting from an interdisciplinary and intersectoral environment.

- **Early-career researchers face precarious conditions and limited long-term prospects.**
- **Some scientific domains are under threat in certain countries.**

Goal: position Toulouse as a European hub for scientific talent by offering long-term stability, freedom, and visibility to early-career researchers.

Context:

- Global challenges (climate, health, democracy) require protected spaces for independent research.
- France/Europe face brain drain and precarious postdoc conditions.

Solution:

**A 5-year tenure-track-like programme (36 + 24 months)
to bridge the gap between postdoc and permanent positions (R2 → R3).**

- Duration: **5 years positions (phase 1: 36 months research + phase 2: 24 months consolidation)**
- Fellows: **6 researchers (single cohort)**
- Domains: **7 areas:** Climate, Gender studies, Public health, Space, Aeronautics, Governance, Biosciences
- Salary: **Phase 1: 3600€/month; Phase 2: 3300€/month gross**
- **PhD supervision included** (each fellow receives a 3-year PhD position)
- **HDR preparation, mentoring, career development plan**

7 research areas of the programme



These 7 ASCENT strategic research areas are directly link with the 3 TIRIS pillar and the University of Toulouse research clusters :

- **Climate and environmental sciences** illuminate the dynamics of our changing planet and the pathways to resilience.
- **Space and Earth observation sciences** open windows onto planetary systems, environmental risks and the technologies that help us explore and understand them.
- **Sustainable aeronautics:** advanced air mobility, sustainable fuels, hydrogen, green technologies.
- **Gender studies and social equality research** shed light on the structures, identities and transformations that shape human lives.
- **Governance, democracy, migration and human rights research** deepens our understanding of societies, institutions and justice in a rapidly shifting world.
- **Public health, epidemiology and infectious diseases** advance our capacity to protect populations, especially in the face of emerging global threats.
- **Biosciences and data-driven health research** unlock new insights into life, ageing, cognition and the biological processes that define human health.

Attractive conditions :

3 600 € / month (gross) in Phase 1 (3 first years)
3 300 € / month (gross) in Phase 2 (2 last years)

- Subsistence allowance
- Travel allowance
- Family allowance
- Full social security coverage



Research and training costs (including 3 years PhD funding)

Eligibility & engagement

Vincent Kretz, ASCENT Project manager

PhD rule:

**Doctoral degree (PhD) required
+ 5 to 10 years of research
experience after the PhD defense**

Mobility rule:

**Not have resided in France for
more than 12 months in the last
36 months (Jan 2024 - Jan 2027).
+ Not hold a permanent
position at the prospective host.**

Research engagements:

**In line with one of ASCENT's 7
themes.**

**Select a host institution (*among
our 144 eligible research units in
Toulouse*).**

**Commit to various engagements:
→ professionalisation,
communication,
ethical compliance**

Application

Profile documents

- Identity documents
- PhD diploma
- CV
- Motivation Letter
- Previous Research

Research Proposal

With an
Implementation Plan
(including
*Environmental and
Ethical Self-
Assessment*)

Ethical issues checked in Horizon Europe

Data sensitivity
and personal
data

Human subjects
(consent, gender
analysis, ...)

Dual-use and
civil-only focus

Environmental
impact

Oviedo Convention

- ✗ Human cloning
- ✗ Modification of human heritage
- ✗ Creation of human embryos

For more information, consult
the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)

ASCENT's specific risks:

- **Dual-use risks** in space technologies
- **Sensitive data** in health research
- **Political constraints** in governance studies

Evaluation process and criteria

Etienne Dague, ASCENT Scientific Coordinator

Applications are submitted exclusively via the [TIRIS online platform](#). Incomplete or applications received after application deadline will not be considered. You may use the provided application form template to help you (see documents & resources on the ASCENT web page)..

Required documents :

- Application form (to be completed online on the [TIRIS online platform](#) from 21 September 2026):
 - Applicant administrative data
 - Prospective host research unit/supervisor(s)
 - Research project (objectives, methodology, feasibility, impact, bibliography)
 - CV (following and complying with the application form template guidelines) & description of previous research activities
 - Ethics self-assessment
- Identity documents (to upload as a separate PDF document on the platform)
- PhD certificate (to upload as a separate PDF document on the platform)
- Motivation letter (to upload as a separate PDF document on the platform)

When recruited :

- Career Development Plan (CDP) template
- Data Management Plan (DMP) template

Important: Applications will be checked for scientific integrity, fraud, and eligibility.

ASCENT application form
Call deadline: 22 January 2027

Begin at: 09/21/2026 9:00 AM
End at: 01/22/2027 5:00 PM

Information

The application should be completed in English and submitted along with the mandatory supporting documents. All sections of the form should be completed. If not relevant, please enter « N/A » in the appropriate field.

For any questions, refer to the Guide for Applicants and the FAQ on the website <https://tiris.univ-toulouse.fr/en/programs/ascent/> or please contact the following email address: ascent@univ-toulouse.fr

This project has received funding from the European Union's Cofund research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement n°101313640

Applicant administrative data

Civility *

First name *

Last name *

e-mail *

Phone *

Nationality *

Place of birth *

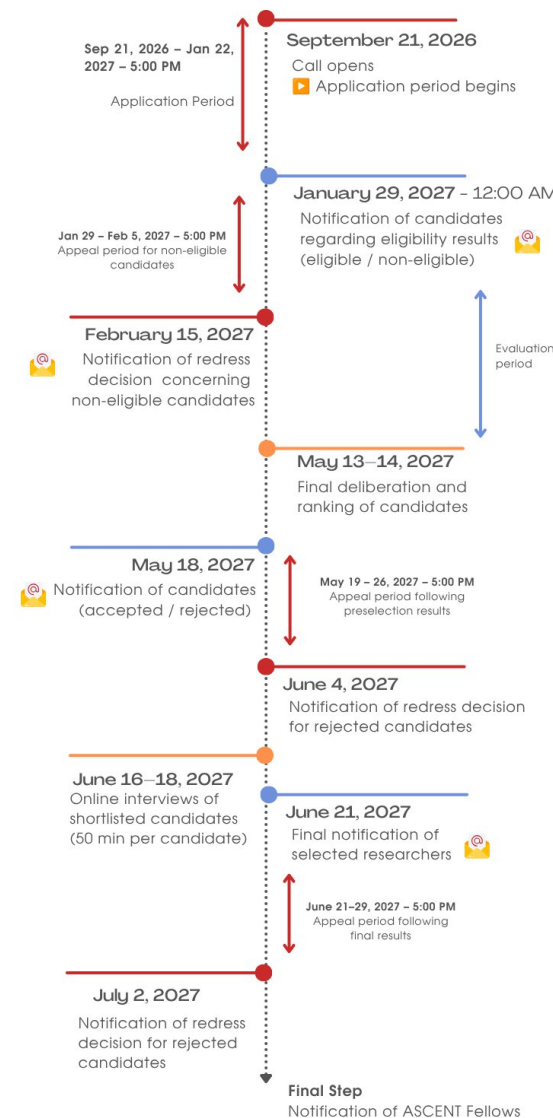
Date of birth *

DD/MM/YYYY



- Submit your application via the [ASCENT online portal](#).
- **No applications submitted by email will be considered or reviewed. All applications must be submitted through the online portal only.**
- Please note that **you must create an account on this portal in order to access and complete the application form.**

- Call opens: **21 September 2026**
- Application period: **21 September 2026 → 22 January 2027, 5:00 PM (Paris Time)**
- Eligibility results sent: **29 January 2027 (eligible / ineligible)**
- Short Listing: **13–14 May 2027: Scientific Committee meeting**
- Notification + evaluation report: **18 May 2027 (interview / rejected)**
- Interviews (online): **16, 17, 18 June 2027 — ~50 min per candidate**
- Final notification : **21 June 2027**



Scientific Committee (SC)

- **14 experts minimum** (~ 1,5 international for 2 locals)
- Selected for **scientific excellence**, disciplinary coverage, and **diversity**
- A **3-member board** coordinates evaluations
- Help finding 2 independent, international and external **peer-reviewers**
- Select by consensus a **shortlist of 18 (+/- 2) candidates**

Interview Committee (IC)

- **14 experts minimum** (~ 1,5 international for 2 locals)
- Interview of candidates during a **20-min project defense**, followed by a **30-min Q&A**
- Evaluates shortlisted candidates based on **excellence, impact, and implementation**
- Finalize and approve the **list of 6 funded candidates and order a waiting list**

Evaluation procedure & fairness

- Initial evaluations are performed independently by peer reviewers and committee members.
- Decisions follow a clear order of priority: excellence > impact > implementation
- High ethical standards with fair evaluation across disciplines and career paths.
- In case of tie, underrepresented profiles and sustainable research are prioritized.

Integrity, Impartiality & Bias Prevention

- Committees include international and local experts, with diverse profiles and gender balance.
- Members sign confidentiality agreements and declare conflicts of interest throughout.
- All evaluators are trained to recognize and reduce unconscious bias, especially gender-related.

Freedom, Fairness and Scientific excellence

- The ASCENT selection process guarantees freedom of research, fairness, and scientific excellence.
- Fellows are free to choose their project topic, approach, and methods within legal and institutional boundaries.
- The entire process is based on transparency, ethics, and merit.

Transparency & Communication

- All applicants receive feedback at each stage: eligibility, evaluation, selection, onboarding.
- The process is fully transparent and communicated through the website, guide for applicants, and email.
- All decisions are made by consensus among committee members.

Phase 2: Shortlisting of candidates

100 %	Excellence 50%	Impact 30 %	Implementation 20 %
CV 45 %	20 %	15 %	10 %
Project 55 %	30 %	15 %	10 %

Phase 3: Interviews of candidates

100 %	Excellence 50%	Impact 30 %	Implementation 20 %
CV 30 %	15 %	10 %	5 %
Project 70 %	35 %	20 %	15 %

- Applicants ≤ 60 %: will not be recruited.
- Applicants > 60 : will be ranked on to a list of funded applicants and a complementary list.
- Applicants > 70 will receive a certificate of excellence awarded by UT, even if they are not funded.

Selection of shortlisted candidates 60% peer reviewer, 40% committee members

Excellence: 50%

Researcher 20% :

- Scientific achievements and research quality 5%
- Emerging research independence 5 %
- Technical expertise, methodological competence 5 %
- Research data management & Open Science skills 5%

Impact: 30 %

Researcher 15%:

- Outreach, teaching, mentoring, Open Science engagement 5%
- International/interdisciplinary/intersect exposure 5%
- Early leadership signals (initiative, contribution to proposals) 5%

Implementation: 20 %

Researcher 10%

- Mobility experience (geographical, institutional, thematic), Evidence of network development 5%
- Ethical and integrity awareness 5%

Research project 30% :

- Originality/clarity of hypothesis and objectives 10 %
- Rigour and adequacy of methodology 10%
- Positioning within and beyond the state of the art 5%
- Fit with ASCENT domains and host expertise 5%

Research project 15%:

- Potential to strengthen independence and leadership 5%
- Contribution to societal, European, regional, UT/TIRIS priorities 5%
- Open Science commitments 5%

Research project 10%

- Adequacy of resources, infrastructures, risk identification and mitigation plan 5%
- Coherence with host environment and supervision capacity 5%

Selection of the 6 successful candidates

Excellence: 50%

Researcher (15 %)

- Ability to articulate scientific achievements and their originality 5%
- Depth of reasoning and methodological understanding, Technical mastery when questioned 5%
- Demonstration of emerging independence (role, contribution) 5 %

Research project (35%):

- Scientific clarity and coherence when presenting the project including the PhD subject 10 %
- Ability to defend hypotheses, methods and novelty 10 %
- Depth of scientific discussion during Q&A 10 %
- Demonstrated alignment with ASCENT themes 5%

Impact: 30%

Researcher (10%)

- Leadership potential (initiative, autonomy, maturity) 5%
- Ability to explain scientific and societal relevance of past work 5%

Research project (20%)

- Ability to explain how the project advances independence/leadership 10%
- Ability to articulate societal impact credibly 5%
- Clarity on interdisciplinary, intersectoral contributions 5%

Implementation: 20 %

Researcher (5%)

- Ability to explain past mobilities and their added value and Ethical and integrity reasoning when questioned 5 %

Research project (15%)

- Operational understanding of feasibility and resources 5%
- Ability to discuss risks and propose realistic mitigation 5 %
- Understanding of fit with host environment 5%

General advices & common pitfalls

Anna Vermunt: ASCENT Project managers

REMINDER : all applications must be submitted on the online platform : <https://portail-tiris.univ-toulouse.fr/callforproject/508/proposal/new>

- **Abstract** Does your abstract answer what / why / why now / why you / why Toulouse in ≤ 200 words?

Example: *“We will quantify food-access inequalities (what), address gaps in urban policy (why), as prices surge (why now), leveraging my causal-inference expertise (why you) with LISST & LEREPS data resources (why Toulouse).”*

- **Objectives** Are objectives specific, measurable, and time-bound?

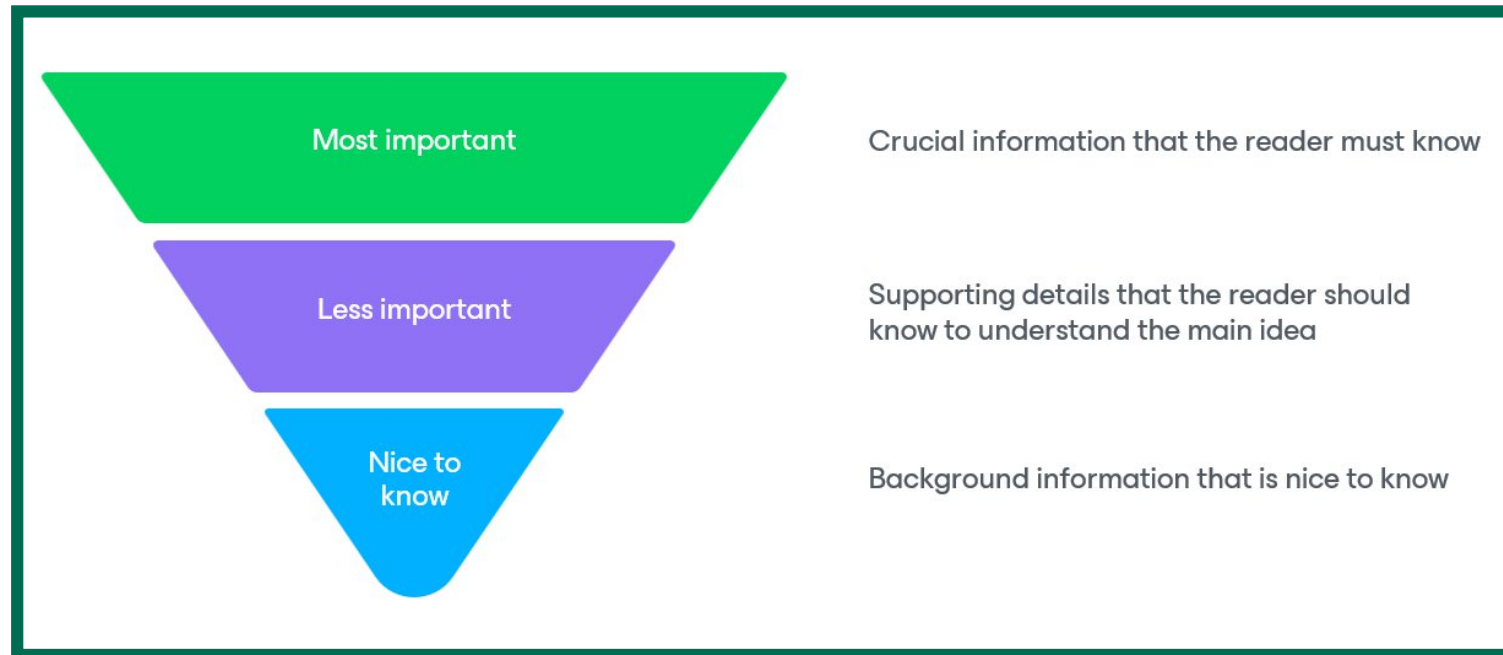
Example: *“By month 18, publish an open dataset of 10k geocoded retail points and a preprint on accessibility disparities.”*

- **Respect characters limits**

- ⚠ **Vague methods** (“we will explore...” → specify data, tools, stats).
- ⚠ **Over-promising** (too many aims for the project duration).
- ⚠ **Generic impact** (no audience, channel, or metric).



- **Inverted pyramid structure:** start with the key message, then evidence; Assert the justify
- **Paragraph design:** one idea → evidence → mini-conclusion.
 - *Example: “We test H1 using 2018–2025 panel data... Results isolate policy effects... This shows feasibility in WP2.”*
- **Citations:** selective, recent, relevant (avoid long literature tours; cite to justify choices).
 - *Tips : use a bibliography manager and copy/paste directly on the appropriate platform section.*
- **Language & style:** short sentences, active voice, define acronyms once, avoid jargon



Participate in our next writing tips webinar to receive more advices on how writing your proposal

- **Date:** 3 November 2026
- **Time:** 12 :00 (Paris time)
- **Where ?** Online (*registration required* to receive the videoconference link)

To register: <https://enquete.univ-toulouse.fr/index.php/244228?lang=en>

ASCENT

MSCA programme for advanced postdoctoral researchers

WRITING TIPS WEBINAR



DATE

3 NOVEMBER 2026



TIME

12:00 (PARIS TIME)

- Read the application form like a reviewer
- Must-Haves & pitfalls
- Polishing Your Narrative
- Live Q&A session with the coordination team



REGISTER NOW



Plenary Q&A & Closing Remarks

Etienne Dague, Vincent Kretz, Anna Vermunt: ASCENT team

Useful links :

- [ASCENT website](#)
- [ASCENT Guide for applicants](#)
- [ASCENT application form](#)
- [Follow us on LinkedIn](#)
- Contact : ascent@univ-toulouse.fr



Thank you! 😊