

#20

IÉSEG!

IÉSEG NETWORK MAGAZINE



**ENTREPRENEUR SPEAKS**

With NeoCem,  
Benjamin Constant has  
cemented his beliefs

**INTERNATIONAL**

Michael Codron:  
his new life in  
the United States!

**ANALYSIS**

The latest trends in the  
automotive sector with  
Ekaterina Polishchuk

LIKE IÉSEG  
LIKE INDUSTRY

Michael Codron, President of  
Bridgestone Aircraft Tire USA.

## A SUPPORTIVE NETWORK

This year, IÉSEG Network has introduced a system of grants to create closer links and synergies between our association and the student's ones and to increase its visibility among students. It offers financial, logistical and/or strategic support to help bring projects (humanitarian, sporting, etc.) to fruition as effectively as possible. It's a win-win approach that has generated a real buzz, with 18 grant applications received and assessed at oral presentations held in mid-September. No doubt there will be even more next year!

@ More information: [c.tardiveau@ieseg.fr](mailto:c.tardiveau@ieseg.fr)

## A PLATFORM FOR INSPIRATION

Our recently launched new website offers a mentoring option that should interest many of you. IÉSEG Network has brought together a panel of experts ready to share and discuss ideas about your projects, and help alumni seeking advice or support. Intuitive and modern, our new tool enables you to establish mentor/mentee tandems based on your requirements and areas of expertise, and even to set up 30-minute "Meet & Share" exchanges to focus on a specific issue. Go to the mentoring tab to take advantage of this much-needed service.

@More information: <http://ieseg-network.com/mentoring>

## HIT THE HEIGHTS!

An exceptional party to mark an exceptional event : seven PGP programs and two MBA programs will be celebrating their 10th anniversaries in 2024 and 2025. All the alumni are invited to celebrate on Thursday, November 21 on the 56<sup>th</sup> floor of the Tour Montparnasse in Paris! The evening will feature a cocktail reception, reunions with former classmates, teachers and current students, not forgetting a magnificent 360-degree view of Paris and the Eiffel Tower. It's an experience that's not to be missed - to relive happy memories and create new ones...

@ More information: [L.noel@ieseg.fr](mailto:L.noel@ieseg.fr)

## TOP CONFERENCES

Have you heard of the Top Alumni conferences? Co-hosted with IÉSEG's Junior-Entreprises, they offer a chance for graduates with inspiring careers to take part in a relaxed discussion with a small group of around 30 students. The eight sessions scheduled throughout the year (four in Paris and four in Lille) were well-received, proving the relevance of the format. The first one welcomed Simon Bracon (Grande École 2016), who has since moved to New York to take up a new position at the NBA headquarters. We wish him every success in his new role!

@ More information: [c.tardiveau@ieseg.fr](mailto:c.tardiveau@ieseg.fr)



Credit: personal

Born in Lebanon, Rayane El Rif (bottom right in the photo) has fond memories of her year at IÉSEG. Read her story on page 7.



Credit: Altermundi

## 04

## WHAT'S NEW?

All the news and forthcoming events from IÉSEG.

## 06

## ENTREPRENEUR SPEAKS

As co-founder of NeoCem, Benjamin Constant has turned his beliefs into a project for a more virtuous, low-carbon world.

## 07

## FLASH-BACK

Born in Lebanon, Rayane El Rif came to France to study at IÉSEG and she still lives here today: she looks back on a career that combines biology and marketing.

## 08

## INTERNATIONAL

In his 26-year career with Bridgestone, Michael Codron had visited 53 countries, but had never lived abroad. Until one day in June 2023...

## 10

## 24 HOURS WITH

Regulatory Affairs Manager at Lesaffre, Ophélie Roblot spends her days bringing regulation to the world of fermentation.

## GIVING AND RECEIVING

Do you remember that at the beginning of the year, IÉSEG Network carried out a survey? Many of you responded, demonstrating how attached you are to our association, its services and its projects. The results have enabled us to identify three pillars which will form the main thrust of our strategic plan for the coming years.

The three pillars are: "Networking & conviviality", "Lifelong development" and "Engaging and giving back": all three relate to specific actions in the service of alumni and the IÉSEG community. These include, for example, setting up clubs, an offer tailored to entrepreneurs, career services, enhanced lifelong learning opportunities and organizing events to bring alumni back to the School.

"Engaging and giving back" is definitely the pillar that is closest to my heart in creating ever-stronger links between IÉSEG and us. IÉSEG Network is our association, and I invite all of you to get involved, in whatever way you can, to make your own contribution in return for all the School has given you.

Finally, I'm pleased to announce our new digital entrepreneurship platform, which has been expanded and replaces the Christmas catalog in a more sustainable and flexible approach to supporting IÉSEG entrepreneurs. It's an opportunity for them to showcase their activities, particularly in the run-up to the festive season, and to stay in touch with you throughout the year. Congratulations to the entire IÉSEG Network team on setting up this project, and a very happy end of year to you all!

**Thibaut Ringô (Grande École 2007)**  
IÉSEG Network President

## 11

## FOCUS ON CAREERS

Meet Owen-Basile Marsch, a graduate driven by his desires... and his convictions.

## 12

## ANALYSIS

What does the future hold for the automotive industry? Ekaterina Polishchuk has the answer.

## 14

## THE NETWORK

News from the Network: births and marriages, news...

-----  
**IÉS!** IÉSEG Network Magazine

**Publisher:** IÉSEG Network

**Publication director:**

Thibaut Ringô

**Editor-in-chief:**

Laëtitia Dugrain Noël

**Editorial board:**

Alexandra Briot, Irène Burietz, Manon Duhem, Annalisa La Monaca, Victoire Salmon, Vincent Schiltz, Charlotte Tardiveau & Elizabeth Toucas

**Conception:** LUNA CREATIONS

**Cover:** Michael Codron (Grande École 1995)

**Credit:** Maylen Villaseca

**Legal submission:** November 2024

**Print:** 7 700 ex.



Sponsor of the Class of 2023, Benjamin Constant invites young graduates to have the courage of their convictions in their professional lives (see interview page 6).

Credit: IÉSEG

## IESEG IN THE WORLD'S TOP 25!



The entire IESEG community was delighted to see the publication of the Financial Times' world ranking of the best Masters in Management on September 9.

And with good reason! Our School is now in the world's Top 25, ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> (climbing nine places) among the 100 institutions listed. IESEG also ranks sixth among French business schools and first among those offering a five-year Grande École program. This prestigious ranking is based on a total of 19 different criteria, including 16 where the School has made significant progress: carbon footprint (up 47 places) and Career Center (up 14 places) to name a few. IESEG also joins the club of the world's top 15 institutions for the proportion of professors with a PhD, the international diversity of the faculty, the percentage of women among permanent professors, and international reach. Having recently entered the rankings for the world's top Masters in Finance for the first time (26<sup>th</sup> place), and having made significant progress in the "Executive Custom Education" ranking (43<sup>rd</sup> place), IESEG is once again demonstrating the excellence of its teaching, the expertise of its faculty and the global recognition of its degrees.

@ More information: [b.jablonski@ieseg.fr](mailto:b.jablonski@ieseg.fr)

## RECRUIT NEW TALENT

Famed for their academic excellence, versatility and interpersonal skills, IESEG students are currently looking for their next work experience opportunity (internship or CDD/CDI contract): send us your offers to recruit talent for your business!

- **First year:** introductory professional and social work experience, 1 to 3 months (June to August).
- **Second year:** sales internship, 2 to 3 months (June to August) or junior assistant internship, 3 months (April to August).
- **Third year:** professional internship, 4 to 5 months (April to August) or junior manager internship, 6 months (January to August).
- **Final year internship (Masters):** 6 months (usually from January to June or July to December).
- **Gap year internship:** up to 6 months (January to June or July to December).
- **Specialized Masters:** 4 to 6 months (from June or September).

@ To send us your offers: [v.allard@ieseg.fr](mailto:v.allard@ieseg.fr)

## ON THE RIGHT TRACK



Always keen to adapt to the changing needs of the world around us, IESEG is announcing the creation of a brand-new Bachelor's degree in September 2025.

Entitled "Bachelor of Business in Data Analytics" and launched in partnership with Le Wagon, this program will equip students with cutting-edge business knowledge (in management, marketing, finance, etc.) while providing them with solid skills in essential subjects such as math, statistics, programming, and cybersecurity. The curriculum will focus on practical, hands-on learning through numerous case studies, an interdisciplinary project focusing on entrepreneurship, and two internships. The program will prepare students for a career full of opportunities in a particularly promising job market with exponential developments in technology and data.

@ More information: [r.joliet@ieseg.fr](mailto:r.joliet@ieseg.fr)

## FOCUS ON CAREER CENTERS



Renowned for its commitment to academic and professional excellence, IESEG recently inaugurated its new Career Centers in Lille and Paris-La Défense.

Inspired by Nordic models, these innovative spaces are designed to support students on their career journeys, fostering an environment that encourages exchange and collaboration. Flexibility and personalized solutions are key, with various spaces tailored to different needs: tables for small group work, a large-screen area for medium-sized gatherings, and soundproof booths for private discussions. To strengthen the connection between future graduates and the professional world, weekly internship and career support sessions are offered. "Our Career Centers are spaces where students can connect, exchange ideas, and develop personally, embodying the School's modern, inclusive vision," says Valérie Marragou, Executive Director of Corporate Relations. Notably, the Career Centers can also accommodate visiting graduates with specific needs, provided we receive 72 hours' notice.

@ More information: [v.marragou@ieseg.fr](mailto:v.marragou@ieseg.fr)



## ONE PARTNERSHIP, THREE NEW DEGREES

By forging a partnership with CentraleSupélec, a prestigious institution renowned for its expertise in its teaching field, IÉSEG is now offering students three new double degrees...

### Reinforcing the blending of skills

The aim of these new programs is to prepare students to find their place in a world where the boundaries between management, science and technology are becoming increasingly blurred. "Our approach is based on the crossover of skills, which is essential in a context where companies are looking for managers with a solid foundation in science and technology to tackle the issues of the present day and the challenges of tomorrow," explained Robert Joliet, Director of Academic Development France and Academic Director of the Grande École Program at IÉSEG.

### The future starts today

Master's students can pursue a double degree in one of CentraleSupélec's three programs. The Master of Science in Technology & Management will develop their ability to undertake in-house projects and contribute to innovation. The Specialized Master® in Industrial Management, Projects and Supply Chain focuses on the implementation of innovative systems as well as the project management and operations of technological systems. Finally, the Specialized Master® in Innovation and Transformation invites students to initiate, lead and manage innovation and transformation projects in complex environments. Along with a joint Bachelor degree with Rubika, a work-study program and a new Bachelor degree in partnership with Le Wagon, our School is proud to continue its development through this new alliance.

@ More information: [r.joliet@ieseg.fr](mailto:r.joliet@ieseg.fr)



## MORE AND MORE IMPACT



IÉSEG's Social and Environmental Impact Department has just inaugurated its "Impact Corners". Here's what they are for.

Open to IÉSEG students, staff, alumni and partners, these two collaborative and interactive rooms (one in Paris and one in Lille) are dedicated to ecological and social transition issues. Would you like to organize a meeting on climate change, a workshop on the fight against food waste, a serious game on diversity and inclusion? Think about holding it in one of our Impact Corners! These can be booked as soon as your project has been validated using an online form. Please note that all event proposals must be made at least one month in advance. We look forward to hearing from you!

@ More information: [a.pare@ieseg.fr](mailto:a.pare@ieseg.fr)  
[sustainability@ieseg.fr](mailto:sustainability@ieseg.fr)

## IÉSEG IN FIGURES 2024/2025



Sometimes a few numbers are better than a long speech. You can also see them in a video on the IÉSEG channel on YouTube.

**8,450**

French and international students.  
**1,200** executives trained every year.

**208**

permanent teaching staff, all of whom hold a doctorate or PhD.

**84%**

of permanent faculty is international, from **54** countries.

**100%**

of the permanent academic staff have a PhD/Doctorate.

**331**

partner universities in **74** countries.

**17,000+**

alumni

**2,500+**

partner companies.

**50,000M<sup>2</sup>+**

of premises on the Lille (29,000m<sup>2</sup>) and Paris - La Défense (21,000m<sup>2</sup>) campuses.



NeoCem has supported major infrastructure projects such as the Grand Paris Express, the Seine-Nord Europe Canal, the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, etc.

Credit: IÉSEG

# BENJAMIN CONSTANT

## A MAN WITH CONCRETE VALUES!

They say life begins at 40 and for Benjamin Constant (Grande École 1996), his big birthday was a real turning point. After 20 years running major international groups in the textile and creative leisure industries, he decided to reinvent himself. But what made him turn his back on an established career? In 2014, it was a quest for a more meaningful role which would make an impact on society that led him to redefine his professional priorities... and take an unexpected path!

### CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS TURNING POINT IN 2014-2015?

Over the previous 20 years, I had lived in ten different countries (Spain, South America and Sweden, to name but a few) and managed the international subsidiaries of major companies. In my role as Marketing Director Europe, there were plenty of challenges, but that was no longer enough for me. I felt I needed to focus on more than just economic performance and add a strong social dimension. So I set out to find a new project that would meet three criteria: firstly, it had to make an impact, especially on the environment. Secondly, it had to involve me working with employees who were passionate about what they did, who shared my values and commitment. Finally, it had to be economically viable, and I needed to believe in it! During this period of transition, I began by working with start-ups, particularly in the energy and agriculture sectors, and then met Christophe, founder of Neo-Eco. It was a professional match made in heaven, and we quickly decided to work together. Admittedly, I'm not earning as much as I was - at Neo-Eco, the salary structure is much flatter than in a large group - but my job satisfaction has gone up tenfold! You just can't put a price on that...

**"OUR GRADUATES ARE BOTH HUMBLE AND GENEROUS. THEY WANT TO MAKE AN IMPACT BY BECOMING CHANGEMAKERS THEMSELVES".**

### WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT NEO-ECO?

Neo-Eco is an engineering firm specializing in the circular economy, giving new life to used materials. Our team is made up of around

100 engineers working in eight agencies in France, with projects in 23 countries and over 500 eco-products made from construction materials or industrial by-products. This new professional project has enabled me to set up and co-found several start-ups, most recently NeoCem, which produces low-carbon cement solutions. We have developed a process to transform clays, bulky excavation waste, into a low-carbon construction material (offering a 90% reduction in the carbon footprint). Awarded the "France 2030" label, the project moved to a new level in 2023, with the raising of 30 million euros to launch construction of the first plant 30 km north of Paris.

### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING YOU RECEIVED AT IÉSEG AND THE NEW GENERATION OF GRADUATES?

Thinking back 30 years, what I remember is the open-mindedness, the ability to adapt to all participants and the international aspect. When I was a student, only ten members of my class went abroad in the fifth year. I was one of them, and it changed my vision of the world and probably the course of my life. I also remember the School's values, and I'm proud to see that they're still as strong as ever in our young graduates: they're both humble and ambitious, they want to make an impact by becoming "changemakers" themselves, and they're fully aware of the challenges of today's world. I invite senior staff to let their voices be heard and include them in decisions: they have everything to gain!

@ More information:  
[bconstant@neo-eco.fr](mailto:bconstant@neo-eco.fr)  
[www.neo-eco.fr](http://www.neo-eco.fr)



Rayane El Rif, where science and business meet in the fight against cancer.

Credit: Novartis

## RAYANE EL RIF MAKING THINGS BETTER

At every stage of her career and her studies - a bachelor's degree in biology and master's degree in molecular biology in Lebanon, followed by a year at IÉSEG - Rayane El Rif (MIB 2022) always asked herself the same question: "Will this enable me to contribute to making the world a better place?" Now living in France, she can say a resounding "Yes!", as she puts her scientific understanding and business/marketing skills to work every day to improve access to healthcare.

### WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO STUDY IN FRANCE?

I started my career in a small Lebanese company providing regulatory and logistical services for clinical trials. It was there I discovered the exciting world of the pharmaceutical industry and, as is often the case in SMEs, I was given assignments that went beyond my initial responsibilities. After three particularly rewarding years, I felt I was slipping into a comfort zone. It was time for a new challenge: to study and then work in a foreign country. France was the obvious choice for its culture, landscapes and history!

### WHAT MADE YOU CHOOSE IÉSEG?

I found a program that corresponded to all my needs, introducing me to subjects such as marketing, accounting, finance and HR. I also chose the School for its international approach, its accreditations and rankings, but also for the city of Lille, which I really enjoyed discovering. I have nothing but positive things to say about this course, from the quality of the teaching, the links forged with my fellow students from different backgrounds, or our evenings spent putting the world to rights.

### RAYANE'S CAREER PATH

After completing her studies at IÉSEG, Rayane went to work at Novartis, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, as a strategic analysis intern. She spent six months familiarizing herself with all aspects of the pharmaceutical industry, before joining Adivo Associates, a healthcare consulting firm specializing in rare diseases. As an associate consultant, she worked on ambitious projects for the European and American markets. In April 2024, she returned to Novartis. She is now Business Insights and Strategy Analyst for solid tumors.

### HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT INTEGRATING INTO THE FRENCH WORLD OF WORK?

Moving from a small Lebanese company to a large structure in France meant lots of changes: roles are well-defined, procedures more structured and lunch breaks are sacred! Employees are rigorous and hard-working, but everyone respects the notion of free time. This can be seen in conversations such as: "What are you planning to do at the weekend?" or "Where are you going on holiday this summer?" This has encouraged me to take breaks that I wouldn't necessarily have allowed myself.

### DO YOU PLAN TO CONTINUE YOUR CAREER IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY?

The further I advance in my career, the more I realize that it's not enough just to create the right treatment: it has to get to the patient, in spite of the many regulatory and logistical constraints that exist. Working on a daily basis to improve access to healthcare and enhancing people's quality of life is what motivates me to get up every morning. I'd like to stay in the pharmaceutical industry, which is full of challenges, and continue at Novartis because of the many opportunities for development around the world.

@ More information: [rayane.elrif@gmail.com](mailto:rayane.elrif@gmail.com)  
[www.novartis.com](http://www.novartis.com)



Turning a subsidiary around is a joint venture in which all employees have a role to play. Here, in Panama, last September.

Credit: David Sampson Jimenez

## MICHAEL CODRON

### A MAN WITH PERFECT TIMING

Globetrotting **Michael Codron** (Grande École 1995) has been to 53 different countries during a 26-year career with Bridgestone. Ten of those years were spent turning around the Group's ailing subsidiaries. His latest challenge has everything he could wish for: a move to a new continent to take over the presidency of Bridgestone Aircraft Tire USA. He talked to us about his new role.



#### Career path

As soon as he graduated, **Michael** took on a civilian service role running management courses for people setting up companies, which gave him the opportunity to put into practice what he had learned at IÉSEG. He then joined Bridgestone as a Corporate Auditor, changing positions every three years with a variety of roles: Legal Counsel, General Counsel, Finance Director, Sales Director and Business Unit Director. In 2023, he left France for the USA, where he is now President of Bridgestone Aircraft Tire USA.

#### YOU'VE SPENT YOUR ENTIRE CAREER WITH BRIDGESTONE. IS THAT BECAUSE OF ITS INTERNATIONAL SCOPE?

Absolutely. I've always loved travelling, and the culture shock you get when you arrive in a new country, learning about its customs and traditions. It's so varied and exciting, as long as you do your homework beforehand to avoid any *faux pas*. In Japan, for example, it's rude to blow your nose in public, however it's quite common to pass round a spittoon in the conference room when negotiating with Chinese clients. Travelling is a chance to reflect on your own habits, which may seem strange in other parts of the world, and to learn to respect differences: it provides some wonderful life lessons. As soon as I graduated from IÉSEG, I wanted to join a company with global reach: Bridgestone's advert for a job as Corporate Auditor - which enabled me to visit European subsidiaries with my Japanese colleagues - came just at the right time.

#### OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS, YOU HAVE SPECIALIZED IN THE TURNAROUND OF THE GROUP'S SUBSIDIARIES. WHAT DREW YOU TO THIS TYPE OF WORK?

In the way it often happens, they offered me the opportunity and I grabbed it with both hands. I was CFO of the French subsidiary and our truck tire division was losing money. My Managing Director was tired of listening to me ranting and raving about our poor performance. He suggested that I lead the

negotiations myself by making me Sales Director for this task. I immediately enjoyed this aspect of the business, because when you meet a customer, you can soon tell whether you've been convincing or not, unlike with the legal or financial aspects, which take time. I was able to turn the business around within a few months, and was eventually promoted to head up the Business Unit for Europe.

#### WHERE DOES YOUR APPETITE FOR THIS TYPE OF CHALLENGE COME FROM?

The more desperate the initial situation seems, the more I enjoy it! I like things which are tangible with the opportunity to implement a coherent strategy, taking the teams with me. It's a real adventure that's exciting and rewarding. I'd compare it to spring-cleaning your attic: everything's covered in dust, but as you start to sweep, treasures that you might not even have known were there gradually come to light, waiting to be discovered...

#### YOU HAVE HELPED SEVERAL SUBSIDIARIES RETURN TO PROFIT. WHAT IS THE "MICHAEL CODRON METHOD"?

The diagnostic phase is key, and usually takes me three months. This breaks down into three successive stages: - **data analysis** (financial, production, etc.), which is no problem when you've been to IÉSEG;



## "YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW ENERGIZED AND MOTIVATED EMPLOYEES CAN BE WHEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE LIFE AND SUCCESS OF THEIR COMPANY".

- **what the customers are saying:** I meet as many as possible to sound out their opinions, understand their expectations and find out about the background to their relationship.

- **what the teams are saying:** this is a stage I particularly enjoy, and where I can learn a lot. I turn up with pizzas, and we sit down around a table in groups of ten to talk freely about what's going well in the company and what's not.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

I summarize the results and share them with the management team. This is where we work together to visualize the company we want to work for, what we'd like customers to say about us and our strategic priorities. I then communicate these to all employees during "Town Hall" sessions, which give everyone a chance to say their piece and make their contribution. You can't imagine how energized and motivated employees can be when given the opportunity to contribute to the life and success of their company.

### LIKE MANY OTHER COMPANIES, BRIDGESTONE HAS HAD TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE PANDEMIC. WHAT WAS YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE?

Three years previously, the Group offered me the chance to take over the subsidiary that markets aircraft tires for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, with a plant in Belgium. The subsidiary was in a very difficult situation, but with unprecedented potential for growth: the commercial aviation market was doubling every 20 years, and no crisis, whether it be financial or political, had so far had any impact on this growth. In March 2020, the world came to a standstill, and air transport entered the worst crisis in its history. My sales collapsed,

my customers ground to a halt, and we had no idea how long it would take for things to get back to normal. I was sleeping five hours a night and wanted to do everything I could to hang onto jobs: we came up with a plan that allowed us to keep 90% of the workforce, on condition that everyone went on temporary layoff, even the top managers. Saving on the highest salaries, but above all ensuring that all employees were treated equally, enabled us to emerge from this shared ordeal with our heads held high. It was a risky approach, but when business picked up again in 2022, we were able to recover faster than our competitors who had chosen to cut the payroll.

### 2023 MARKED ANOTHER TURNING POINT IN YOUR CAREER, WITH A CHANGE OF POSITION... AND OF CONTINENT. WHAT TRIGGERED IT?

Once a subsidiary is up and running and performing well, I tend to get bored. I had started discussions with my Japanese managers; our aircraft tire business in the USA was in the most trouble. We envisaged a transfer in 2024/2025, which gave me time to talk to those around me, starting with my wife. In the end, the CEO of the Americas zone threw in the towel in June 2023, and we had to speed things up. My wife and daughter's enthusiasm really encouraged me to take the plunge.

### HOW DID YOUR FIRST FEW WEEKS GO IN THE US?

The three of us arrived in Greensboro, North Carolina (see inset), feeling a bit nervous, and began the process of enrolling our daughter in school, finding a house and opening a bank account. We even had to retake our driving tests! The support and advice from Bridgestone helped us to tackle each of these steps calmly and in the right order! The first few weeks were intense: we stayed in an Airbnb while our furniture arrived by boat. Once the house had been chosen and the furniture delivered, we could start planning.

### WHAT SURPRISED YOU MOST?

The first thing that strikes you when you arrive is how welcoming and helpful everyone is, not least

## A LITTLE PARADISE ON EARTH

What really sets Greensboro apart is the beauty of its landscape: forests as far as the eye can see, stretches of water and lakes. Despite its 400,000 inhabitants and numerous restaurants and theatres, the town is so sprawling that you feel like you're living in the middle of nature! It's not uncommon to see a deer at the bottom of my garden. The weather is mild, as we're on the same latitude as southern Spain. Since I don't know how long I'll be here, I make the most of every opportunity within a few hours from home: in one year, we've visited the Outer Banks, the Grand Canyon, Louisiana, New Orleans, Orlando and Miami. We are trying to explore as many places as possible before my job takes me to other parts of the world...

at the school, which does everything it can to integrate new arrivals and their parents, especially expats. Donut parties are a great way to make new acquaintances and share everyday worries with families from all over the world. The American way of life seems similar to our own, but the differences quickly become apparent: we were invited to a Thanksgiving feast at 6 pm. By the time we arrived at 6.45 pm, everyone had almost finished eating! Another difference is modes of transport, since almost everything is done by car. This seems to be the case all over, since Americans preparing to spend their vacations in Europe are advised to walk 20,000 steps a day in the month preceding their arrival.

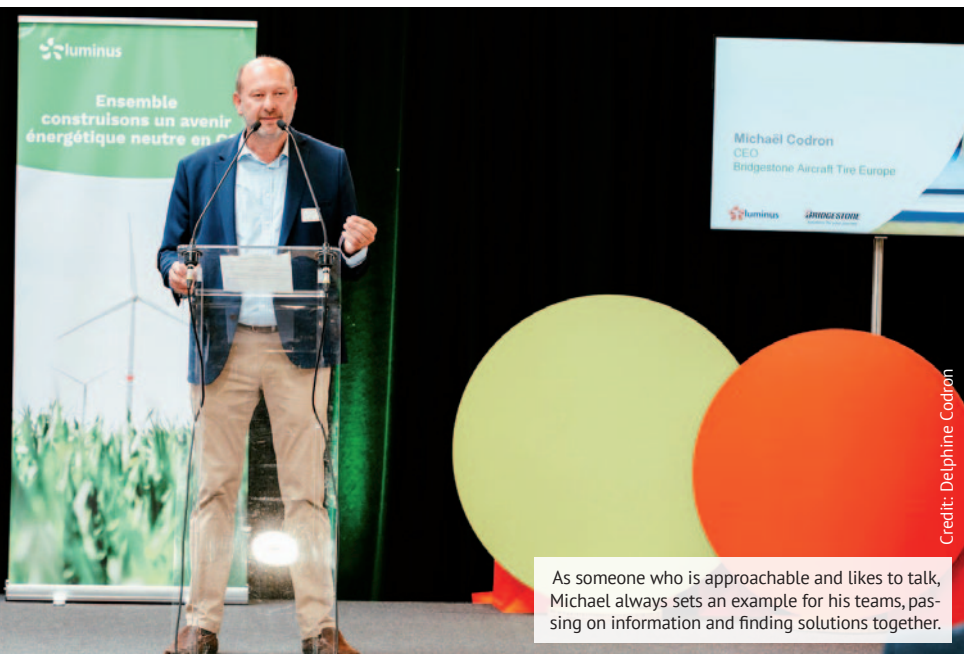
### WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE COMPANY OF WHICH YOU ARE PRESIDENT?

Bridgestone Aircraft Tire USA is a company of 150 people covering North and South America. Our main customers are airlines such as American Airlines, Delta, United and others. We're all on first-name terms, with the spirit of an SME but the power of a large group. From a managerial and cultural point of view, issues of harassment and discrimination are much more advanced here: I've been advised against asking questions about an employee's family or complimenting a colleague on his or her outfit or new haircut, for example. Once again, it's important not to pass judgment, but simply to adapt and respect local customs.

### HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE?

I've been here for a year now and things are going well, with the company already back in the black. However, there's still a lot of ground-work to be done in order to consolidate the basics and sustain good results. I would therefore expect to stay with the company for between three and five years. This will depend in particular on the emergence of new problems in another subsidiary. I'd like to follow this with experience in Asia, but I'll go wherever I can be useful and where my family can grow alongside me.

**@ More information:**  
[michaelc@bridgestone-bau.com](mailto:michaelc@bridgestone-bau.com)



Credit: Delphine Codron

As someone who is approachable and likes to talk, Michael always sets an example for his teams, passing on information and finding solutions together.

# OPHÉLIE ROBLLOT

## FERMENTATION AND REGULATION

When IÉS! was first created in 2017 (yes, it's really been that long!), the aim was to give you an insight into the diversity and individuality of careers that IÉSEG alumni go into. The "24 hours with" section in particular pulls back the curtain on daily life and there's no better example than in this issue with **Ophélie Roblot** (Grande École 2007), who is "Regulatory Affairs Manager" at Lesaffre. A role that is still slightly obscure, but is a major challenge for a growing number of business sectors.

Credit: personal and Lesaffre



### A MEANINGFUL CAREER PATH

After an end-of-studies internship at BusinessEurope (the European equivalent of the MEDEF), Ophélie decided to complete her IÉSEG diploma with an M2 in European Law at the University of Paris XI and an MSc in Politics and Government in the EU at the London School of Economics.

This triple competence in Management, Law and Political Science enabled her to secure an internship at the European Commission in the REACH unit of DG Enterprise. She then joined the European Chemical Industry Federation in Brussels, before moving on to Lesaffre five years later.

At a time when finding meaning is central to our lives, Ophélie considers herself fortunate to be able to enjoy an exciting career in a buoyant sector which chimes with her convictions. She is convinced of the immense potential of micro-organisms (yeast and bacteria) as solutions and alternatives in a wide range of applications: food, health, environmental protection, energy production or the design of new materials.



### 7.30 AM

Time to wake up, or perhaps a little earlier if my two-and-a-half-year-old daughter has anything to do with it! I have a shower, breakfast and get ready before heading to the nursery where Lesaffre has places right beside the office to make life easier. Because I live in the town where I work, I get around by bicycle - weather permitting.

### 9.00 AM

I manage the Chemical and Sustainable Development Regulatory Division for the factories and subsidiaries of Lesaffre, a world leader in fermentation. Every day, my job consists of analyzing technical rules and finding solutions to bring our products to market so they comply with legal regulations, anticipating and contributing to new legislation through my expertise, and defending Lesaffre's interests through various professional bodies. When I arrive at the office, I start by reading the most urgent e-mails and casting a quick eye over new texts and rulings: we have alerts and access to databases that help us keep up with legal news in the countries where we sell our products and where our production plants are located.



### 10.30 AM

No two days are alike. When I'm not in meetings with our subsidiaries helping them meet their obligations, I'm called as an expert for certain projects, such as the purchase of a factory in another country, to analyze its compliance with local standards, or getting ahead of the marketing of a new product. I also collaborate with other industries, notably large agri-food groups, to develop positions and carry out joint lobbying actions.

### 12.15 PM

I head for the break room to heat up some food and have a quick bite to eat, so as not to leave too late in the evening. I get back to work at 1 pm: the hour that follows is often quieter, making it ideal for me to concentrate undisturbed. I use this time to carry out regulatory analyses or to draft position papers.

### 3.00 PM

I regularly devote this part of the day to committees of experts from industry associations in the sector, with whom



we discuss regulatory developments and implement strategies to look after our interests. There are also numerous meetings with researchers, scientists and engineers to build and support our positions. I'm surrounded by people passionate about their profession and always available to share their expertise.

### 6.00 PM

Just before leaving the office to pick up my daughter, I always enjoy a final moment of concentration or discussion with my manager after the frenzy of daily meetings. Then it's time to go home to bath my daughter and to prepare dinner.

### 8.00 PM

One evening a week, I take a tennis lesson with three friends at a family club in Lambersart. It's a great way to relax and enjoy sport, which has become rarer since I became a mum, but is essential to my work-life balance. I always end the day with a good book to relax before going to bed at around 10.30 pm.

@ More information:  
[oroblot@hotmail.fr](mailto:oroblot@hotmail.fr)  
[www.lesaffre.com](http://www.lesaffre.com)



Owen is involved in several charities alongside his business activities.

Credit: Clotilde Penet

## OWEN-BASILE MARSH MAKING AN IMPACT

Ask **Owen-Basile Marsh** (Grande École 2013) about all his commitments and the time they must take up and he'll always give the same answer: he gets back as much as he puts in - if not more! Feeling useful, staying true to his values and contributing to a fairer society are more than just catchphrases: they're the driving force behind a busy personal and professional life helping as many people as possible. We talk to this good Samaritan who will almost certainly inspire you to do your bit...



### Career path

At the age of 33, **Owen-Basile Marsh** seems to have already had several career incarnations. In fact, he admits to admiring people who have their careers all mapped out! The common thread running through all his experience is that he listens to his instincts, works where he feels useful and always remains true to his convictions. Whether it be working for charities, the Accor Group or Air France, Owen has put his pragmatism, open-mindedness and sense of teamwork to good use. These are qualities he has also drawn on as a volunteer for a number of associations, notably the *IESEG for Change* club, which he runs and invites you to join straightaway.

### YOU'VE HAD A SLIGHTLY UNUSUAL CAREER. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?

I ended my years at IÉSEG by writing a thesis on the role of leadership in social entrepreneurship, for which I interviewed Jean-Marc Borello, Chairman of Groupe SOS, and then joined his organization for my end-of-studies internship. Afterwards, I transferred to a permanent contract with a part of the group set up to manage an innovative housing scheme for families in difficulty. The project was a runaway success, and managing the build up was both a stimulating and formative experience. After three years, I felt like leaving the operational side of things and joined the Accor Group, then Air France, where I spent five years working on strategy.

### WHY DID YOU END UP LEAVING THE AVIATION SECTOR?

The job was exciting, the company had an autonomous management style, and I loved my colleagues. Yet, as time went by, I felt that there was a growing gap between my deep-rooted convictions, particularly in terms of ecology, and my job, which, roughly speaking, consisted of getting planes into the air. Leaving a company that you love and where you know you could have a great career isn't easy, but thanks to my previous experience with Groupe SOS, I knew what to expect when I went back to the world of impact organizations. This made it easier to dive back in. I joined each One, an association that helps migrants find employment. It runs short training courses to give them the basics of a trade and the soft skills they need to integrate more easily into the French corporate world.

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO READERS WHO WANT TO RETRAIN FOR A CAREER IN A HIGH-IMPACT STRUCTURE?

First of all, take your time. A change of career is often prompted by the straw which broke the camel's back, but that's no reason to rush headlong into any decisions. Ask yourself the right questions: what cause do you want to champion? In what type of structure? Use your network to meet people who work in the field you're targeting, to get a better idea of what's involved. Then, be careful not to idealize it: these are organizations with the same rationale and problems as most other companies. Finally, you need to be able to take a step back and get the right balance between your commitment and your personal life. Beware of burnout!

### YOU ARE ONE OF THE PEOPLE WHO RUNS THE IÉSEG FOR CHANGE CLUB. WHAT DOES THE CLUB DO?

Its aim is to ensure that the wider IÉSEG community can do their bit for social and environmental transition. We're convinced that such issues need to be integrated into our teaching to raise awareness among as many students as possible. They are the people who, in the future, will make the difference through the companies they choose to join or set up. Whether it's through conferences, forums, round-table discussions or in-class presentations, alumni have a role to play in ensuring that our School is up to the challenge, and in creating a sense of rivalry with other establishments. The more of us who get the message across, the more progress we'll make: so, join the movement!

@ More information: [owenmarsh@hotmail.fr](mailto:owenmarsh@hotmail.fr)  
«Club IÉSEG for Change» on LinkedIn

# EKATERINA POLISHCHUK SHE'S ON A ROLL!

It's what's known as intuition: back in 2014, with a degree in economics from Russia, [Ekaterina Polishchuk](#) (MSc in Digital Marketing & CRM 2016) sensed that digital technology would play an increasingly important role in all aspects of our lives. As luck would have it, IÉSEG had launched its "Digital Marketing and CRM" program, which was exactly what she was looking for. It was a practical course which Ekaterina then put into practice working for Nissan where she has now been for almost a decade. During this time, the automotive industry has experienced some of the greatest upheavals and challenges in its history. Our graduate takes a look in the rear-view mirror...

## YOU JOINED NISSAN IN 2015. DID THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR HOLD A PARTICULAR ATTRACTION FOR YOU?

Let's just say I was in the right place at the right time... with the right skills! Nissan's European headquarters was recruiting for an English-language internship with a role in the customer loyalty department. It was a subject that matched perfectly with my IÉSEG training and was the ideal opportunity to put everything I'd learned into practice. It was a bit of a gamble. Nine years later, I don't regret taking it and I'm now French!

## YOUR JOB TITLE IS NOW PRODUCT MANAGER/E-COMMERCE. WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

My main mission is to oversee the development and optimization of our various digital platforms to improve the customer's online journey and overall experience. This includes the smooth and continuous development of our e-commerce platform and the implementation of a roadmap for our digital products, with a clear objective: to maximize the company's growth and customer satisfaction in Europe, Australia and Middle East.

## YOU'VE BEEN WORKING IN THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR FOR TEN YEARS. WHAT TRENDS AND CHALLENGES HAVE YOU SEEN EMERGING?

Some of the main ones would be the boom in electric vehicles, the development of on-board connected services, advances

**"THESE DAYS, A CAR HAS TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY".**

in autonomous driving and the digitization of sales and the customer experience. Sustainable development challenges have spurred on innovations in energy and cleaner production, while the exponential growth of e-commerce has revolutionized the way customers research, buy and interact with brands. Another aspect is the way drivers think about mobility, as we gradually move from traditional ownership to flexible solutions such as car-sharing, subscription systems or car-pooling. These successive upheavals have led manufacturers to redefine their ranges, focusing on urban mobility and electrification...

## WHAT DO TODAY'S CONSUMERS EXPECT FROM THE CARS THEY BUY?

A vehicle that responds to the challenges of sustainable development, safety and the very latest technology. This is reflected in a growing demand for electric or hybrid cars, which offer smart features and real-time services, as well as advanced driving assistance systems and autonomous functions. In response, we recently presented our ARC Business Plan: 30 new models will be launched by 2026, 16 of which will be electric. We are aware that for the public to adopt them more widely prices will have to come down, and we are aiming to reduce costs by 30% by 2030, to be as affordable as a petrol-powered car. This will require substantial investment in next-generation battery technology through strategic partnerships. We will continue our efforts in the field of driver assistance and smart vehicle functions to enhance the appeal of our electric vehicles and make Nissan a pioneer in each of the above areas.



Credit: Nissan

Ekaterina believes digitization is the ideal tool for developing the customer experience, and therefore the sales and appeal of brands.



Nissan will launch 30 new vehicles by 2026, 16 of which will be electric.

Credit: Nissan

#### WHAT ROLE DOES E-COMMERCE PLAY IN THE SALES STRATEGY OF A COMPANY LIKE NISSAN?

It has grown steadily over the last few years. I was lucky enough to lead the digital transformation of Nissan, which was a forerunner in this field, moving from a presentation website to a fully integrated e-commerce platform. Creating a seamless, fluid online shopping experience was a major challenge: we had to ensure continuity and consistency between the online experience and that at the dealership. To achieve this, I relied on the ability to purchase vehicles from existing stock online, a feature first launched in the United Kingdom in 2022 and then extended to major European markets. This type of initiative offers customers a greater transparency on prices and delivery times.

#### WHAT ARE THE CURRENT TRENDS IN DIGITAL MARKETING IN THE BROADEST SENSE OF THE TERM, TO ENCOURAGE PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMERS TO MAKE A PURCHASE?

Now is very much the time for personalized strategies, based on data, but also on the use of Artificial Intelligence, which enables us to put out tailor-made messages, product recommendations and relevant, engaging omnichannel experiences. "Social commerce" is growing steadily, thanks to platforms like Instagram and TikTok that offer direct purchasing, while influencer marketing is developing trust between brands and consumers, encouraging conversion and the act of buying. In addition, advertisers are focusing on loyalty programs to foster deeper ties with their customers, to encourage engagement and develop a sense of belonging and authenticity.

#### WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR NEXT CAREER STEP?

Against a backdrop of exponential growth in Artificial Intelligence, I plan to move to the role of Chief Digital Officer, drawing on my experience in CRM, digital marketing and e-commerce. I firmly believe that A.I. can simplify the customer experience, create fluid relationships with consumers and maximize engagement with brands. Digital transformation is a subject you can never really get to grips with, and I'll make sure my company always stays one step ahead...



#### Career path

After an internship at Nissan, Ekaterina joined Publicis as a CRM consultant, learning the ins and outs of successful strategy for the agency's clients. She then returned to the marketing department at Nissan's European headquarters, where over the years she has managed customer relations, digital marketing, promotional campaigns and e-commerce. It was a logical career path built up gradually, which has enabled her to acquire a range of skills to improve customer engagement and company growth.

@ More information:

espolishchuk@gmail.com - www.nissan.fr

## OUR GRADUATES ARE ON THE MOVE!

There are some of new jobs our graduates have moved into over the last few months. Congratulations to all of them!



**BENOÎT DELATTRE (GRANDE ÉCOLE 1997)**

is Head of Consulting France, Belgium and Luxembourg at JLL.



**MARINE BAUD (GRANDE ÉCOLE 2018)**

is Head of Digital Partners for Asia Pacific Latin America at Nike.



**LAËTITIA MAURY LAM (GRANDE ÉCOLE 2017)**

is Strategic Partnerships Manager at Microsoft.



**CORENTIN BALMONT (GRANDE ÉCOLE 2020)**

is the new Key Account - New Channel Sales Partner at Doctolib.



**KÉVIN AUTHIER (GRANDE ÉCOLE 2011)**

is now Partner at PWC France.



**SANDRINE CHAUDEY (GRANDE ÉCOLE 2003)**

is Head of Multi-management at Allianz Global Investors.



**MAILYS ROLIN ARQUIZAN (GRANDE ÉCOLE 2007)**

is Governance & Strategic Projects Director at Lacoste.



**JULIEN BOUVEROT (GRANDE ÉCOLE 2008)**

is now CEO at L'Olivier Assurance - Admiral Group PLC.

## BIRTHS AND WEDDINGS

It's good to share all our graduates' great moments, send them to [L.noel@ieseg.fr](mailto:L.noel@ieseg.fr) - You'll get a little surprise from us!

### BIRTHS

**Grande École 2010** – Blanche, daughter of Marguerite and Jean-Baptiste Calemard, born April 23, 2024.

**Grande École 2010** – Anouk, daughter of Aurélie Franza and Adrien Wartelle, born July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

**Grande École 2012** – Valentine, daughter of Margaux Cantais and Adrien Jacta, born March 25, 2024.

**Grande École 2014** – Arthur, son of Camille Catelle and Maxime Soulas, born July 24, 2024.

**Grande École 2015** – Leo, son of Anne Sebton

and Quentin Perceval, born April 4, 2024.

**Grande École 2016** – Adriel, son of Veronika and Arnaud Guittet, born July 20, 2024.

**Grande École 2016/2015** – Louis, son of Léa Chazeau and Guillaume Piat, born March 25, 2024.

**Grande École 2018** – Oliver, son of Camille Parpaleix and Anders Johannes Stein Andersen, born April 13, 2024.

### WEDDING

**Grande École 2009** – Martène Schild and Jérémie Bisson, June 22, 2024.



Credit: Aurélie Franza

Aurélie Franza and Adrien Wartelle welcomed baby daughter Anouk on July 1.

## SOCIAL NETWORKS: FOLLOW US!

To never miss any IÉSEG Network news between two issues of IÉSI!, meet us on our social networks: LinkedIn, Facebook, X and Instagram [@iesegnetwork](https://www.instagram.com/iesegnetwork)

## VIRTUAL REALITY, REAL CONVIVIALITY

Credit: IÉSEG Network



IÉSEG Network is constantly organizing events and they're always different! The evening of September 19 was a case in point, when our community met up at Virtual Room...

The concept behind this innovative venue in Villeneuve-d'Ascq is an escape game offering an immersive, collaborative and fun experience. Wearing virtual reality headsets, the participants (IÉSEG alumni, students and staff) were taken on a journey through different worlds, featuring zombies, video games and even Asterix and Obelix. Thrills are guaranteed, thanks to the cutting-edge technology and some very creative scenarios! In between two 30-minute gaming sessions, the teams enjoyed a networking break over pizzas, discussing the latest news about each other, the School and our Network. Everyone agreed it was a perfect evening.

@ More information:

[i.burietz@ieseg.fr](mailto:i.burietz@ieseg.fr) - <https://lille.virtual-room.com>

## A DELICIOUS AFTERWORK MEET-UP

Credit: IÉSEG Network



When will Alexandre Dudouit (Grande École 2018) stop? After opening three bars and two pizzerias, the serial entrepreneur has just launched "La Cadière", his sharing platters bar.

Around 40 alumni went along to check out this new venue at an afterwork party to mark the start of term on September 12 in the 11<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris. There were delicious plates of cheese, charcuterie and tapas on the menu, as well as wines and beers specially selected by Alexandre, who was delighted to share his passion for gourmet produce and talk to everyone about his latest establishment. The friendly atmosphere promoted lots of talk and laughter at an event that reminded us of one of the founding principles of our association: to create ever closer links between alumni. And once again, we succeeded! If you weren't able to make it that evening, head to 28 Boulevard du Temple for a catch-up session. Bon appétit!

@ More information: [a.lamonaca@ieseg.fr](mailto:a.lamonaca@ieseg.fr) - Instagram @lacadiere.paris

## A WEEKEND WHEN TIME STOOD STILL

Credit: Laurence Guermonprez



It was an original initiative and it's a wonderful story - the class of 1984 decided to celebrate 40 years of working life on September 21-22 with a cycling weekend in the Netherlands!

The group had previously met up in 2019 for an unforgettable day in Brussels to celebrate its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This year, Laurence Guermonprez and Béatrice Dupire went all out to organize a cycling weekend on the island of Walkeren in the south-west Netherlands. The weather was warm, even allowing for an impromptu swim, and everyone enjoyed the breathtaking scenery along the 88 km route. Dinner in a brewery, an evening stroll under a starry sky, an energetic workout... participants were unanimous in their praise for the quality of the program, and reiterated how moving it was to take part in a two-day break which rolled back the years.

@ More information: [L.noel@ieseg.fr](mailto:L.noel@ieseg.fr)

## NO, NO, NOTHING'S CHANGED

Credit: Thomas Bonduelle



How time flies... graduates of the class of 1999 would agree. A group of 60 of them gathered on September 21 to celebrate 25 years since leaving IÉSEG.

A quarter of a century is something to celebrate! Jérémy Ritter and Thomas Bonduelle took matters into their own hands, organizing a get-together for classmates from all over France (and even further afield for some of them!) in the city where they studied. Renowned for their solidarity, the Lille alumni immediately offered to put up their friends for the weekend. It was a very emotional occasion, and everyone agreed: it really felt like they had graduated yesterday. Congratulations to Thomas and Jérémy for this initiative, which they sum up as "generous smiles, a lot of happiness and a little bit of beer!" See you again in 25 years?

@ More information: [L.noel@ieseg.fr](mailto:L.noel@ieseg.fr)

# NEW WEB SPACE!

## IÉSEG ENTREPRENEURS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

**NEW**



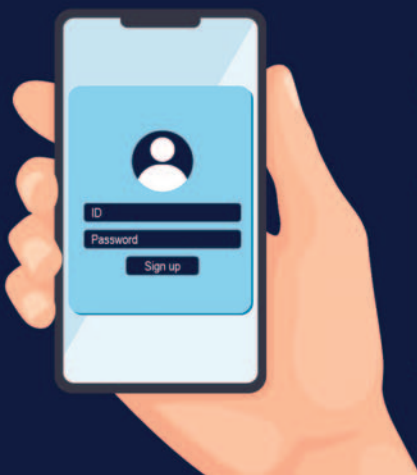
- *A SHOWCASE FOR ALL ENTREPRENEURS WISHING TO PROMOTE THEIR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES*
- *PROMOTIONAL OFFERS FOR THE ENTIRE IÉSEG COMMUNITY*
- *OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTACTS, CONNECTIONS & BUSINESS WITH AND BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURS*



**CONTACT**

**ANNALISA LA MONACA - [A.LAMONACA@IESEG.FR](mailto:A.LAMONACA@IESEG.FR)**

## ARE YOU AN IÉSEG ENTREPRENEUR?



**CREATE  
YOUR COMPANY  
PROFILE**

**[HTTPS://ENTREPRENEURS.  
IESEG-NETWORK.COM/](https://entrepreneurs.ieseg-network.com/)**