

ParisTech

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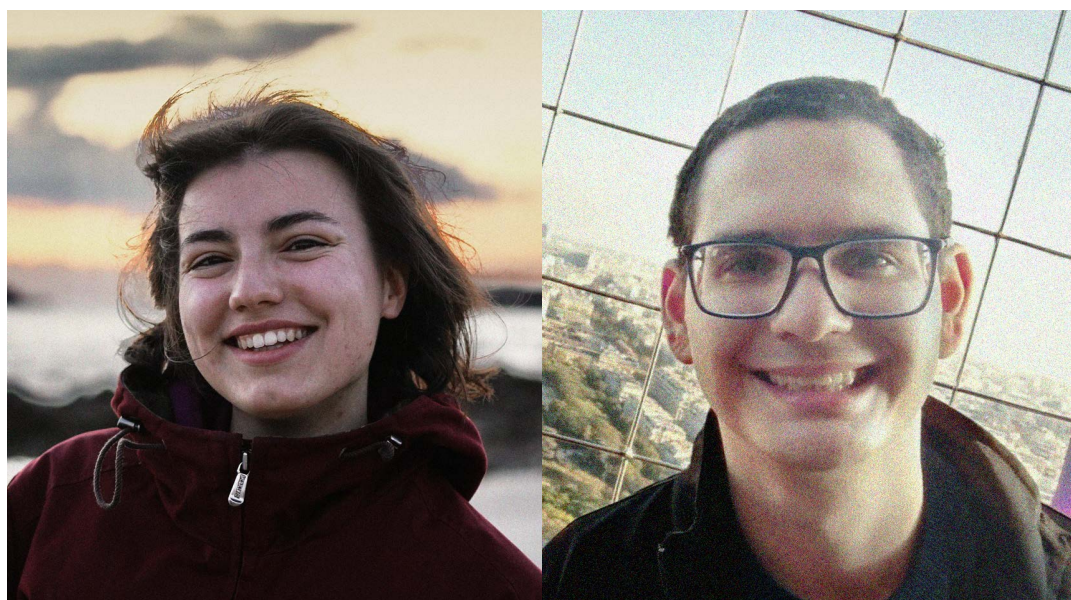
CHRISTIAN LERMINIAUX
President of ParisTech

EDITORIAL

At the end of April, the ParisTech network launched its annual international student recruitment campaign. Having opened up the campaign to Chinese students in 2000, then later to students from Brazil, Russia, Colombia, Argentina and other countries in Asia, this year the network's seven schools have decided to allow students from anywhere in the world to apply for a place on one of their engineering programmes. ParisTech's international dimension is one of its key strengths, allowing the schools to attract students from diverse backgrounds and expanding the horizons of all who work and study here. All members of the network share responsibility for managing cultural diversity and making sure that international students feel welcome and supported, so they can fulfil their potential. This is especially important as the schools prepare to welcome Ukrainian students who wish to enrol on a course here. The question of how best to welcome and support international students was the topic of a recent workshop organised by the ParisTech Diversity, Teaching and International commissions. The event was attended by students, staff, and representatives of the French government and the Conference of Deans of French Schools of Engineering (CDEFI). Discussions were fruitful, allowing the schools to share best practices and identify avenues for improvement.

FEATURE

Support for international students at ParisTech



CHARLOTTE AUDÉOUD
Head of the international student welcome programme run by the Student Union at ESPCI Paris – PSL

GUSTAVO DE LIMA OLIVO
Brazilian student on a double degree programme with AgroParisTech and the University of São Paulo

You're in charge of the international student welcome programme run by the Student Union at ESPCI Paris – PSL. What does that involve?

CA: When international students arrive in France, I help them with their paperwork and admin and invite them to attend a training session about studying at ESPCI – and at ParisTech in general – because the system is usually

quite different to that of their home university. These aspects are often a source of stress for international students. I also manage our induction programme, which helps make the students feel welcome. We organise events like dinners, film nights and sightseeing trips around Paris. I also share information from the Facebook group for each intake, because there's a lot of information and it's easy to miss things. I try to highlight the most important events so students can attend those. Lastly, I run a buddy scheme whereby I match international students with one of our French students, so they have someone to reach out to as soon as they arrive. Overall, one of my most important tasks is to listen and build friendships with our international students.

What support did you receive when joining AgroParisTech?

GLO: The school's support staff helped me find accommodation and deal with all the paperwork. That made coming to France much easier! I also did a training course on intercultural communication to learn about cultural codes in France. Then it was time to join the school and meet the other students. When I arrived, like other international students, I was assisted by AgroParisTech's student welcome association. They pair up international students with French second-year student volunteers to show us around the city, familiarise us with France and its education system, and organise outings. The academic staff at the school also help make sure international students feel welcome, for example

by getting the French students to include us in their working groups.

What does your school do to help international students settle in, and what do you think could be improved?

CA: The school offers conversation classes to give international students the chance to talk with French students, who can correct their mistakes. They already do a French as a foreign language class, which covers grammar, verb conjugations, tenses and so on. But often what they really need is to be able to talk about day-to-day situations, and have someone correct any minor slips. The school also offers extra academic tutoring in some subjects, allowing students to go over certain maths or physics topics more slowly, in a small-group setting. As well as having a student buddy from the school, it would be great if international students could be matched up with a lecturer or researcher or even a former student who could offer more practical help, for instance with administrative procedures.

How do you feel about your induction experience?

GLO: The administrative and academic aspects were all handled relatively well. However, not all French students are aware of the needs of international students. Many don't realise the challenges involved in coming to France, speaking a new language, learning how a different education system works and so on. It would be a good idea for French students to do some training to learn more about the other cultures represented in the student community. It would help us understand one another better. I was lucky as I had a buddy who really supported me, but I know it wasn't the same for everyone. Out of around ten students who took part in the buddy scheme, only two or three felt their buddies really helped them settle in. I think clearer rules need to be drawn up for the buddy scheme, and that the student volunteers need to be made more aware of what international students need. The AgroParisTech student welcome association is made up solely of French students, which sometimes makes it hard for

them to understand the needs of international students. We're already talking to them about that.

In your opinion, what makes for a successful induction experience?

CA: Everyone involved has to be prepared as best possible. In terms of student life, our French students don't always understand how best to welcome international students, so that's one point we definitely need to think about. Our French students can make a real difference in helping international students settle in and feel welcome. It's an opportunity for students to build true, long-lasting friendships too. Those in charge of student welcome activities also need to be attentive. Cultural codes differ greatly between countries. By talking to Brazilian and Colombian students about student nights, I learned that in those cultures it's normal to have to insist when inviting someone to an event. You need to ask them more than once and remind them several times, including the day before. If you don't, they may assume it wasn't a genuine invitation. Chinese students on the other hand tend

not to enjoy big student parties. They prefer sit-down dinners. We have to adapt our communication techniques to the culture of the students we're trying to reach. We need more people on-board so we can organise more events focused on different cultures, so that international students have somewhere to talk about their experiences. The clubs at Chimie ParisTech – PSL and AgroParisTech are a good source of inspiration.

ZOOM



MARIE-SÉGOLÈNE NAUDIN
Delegate for Diversity
& Teaching at ParisTech

A special workshop on the theme of "Internationalisation & Diversity" was held on 31st March this year to encourage reflection on how international students are supported. The event brought together French and international students, academic and administrative staff, and others involved in education, internationalisation and diversity initiatives at the ParisTech schools. Representatives from the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI), the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and the Conference of Deans of French Schools of Engineering (CDEFI) also attended.

What were the aims of the workshop?

The idea was to provide a space for discussion where everyone involved – at all levels – could talk about how international students are welcomed and supported at the ParisTech schools and share their understanding of our approach to diversity. We wanted to compare and contrast different operational and strategic visions. The aim wasn't to provide instant, ready-made answers, but to raise awareness by sharing experience. The ParisTech schools share a common culture, but can nonetheless feel alone when it comes to dealing with these issues, so sharing best practices was a big help.

What key points emerged from the discussions? What did you learn about supporting international students at the ParisTech schools?

Lots of interesting points were raised. Participants gleaned some useful takeaways from the strategies implemented by the government ministries, and the experts present were very interested to hear about the experiences of those "on the ground". The three groups – government representatives, school staff and students – usually operate in their own circles and don't necessarily know what's being done elsewhere. The workshop broke down those barriers and allowed the different stakeholders to discuss this important topic in a way that hadn't been possible before. Several very concrete issues were identified. For international students it was a unique occasion to tell decision-makers about the problems they face so that these could be addressed at a more macro level and so solutions could be

implemented. For example, most international students who arrive in France aren't prepared for culture shock. They don't necessarily realise that mindsets and behaviours that are normal in their home country aren't shared by other cultures. They arrive in France midway through their studies, and find that friendship groups are already formed, that the French used by their peers isn't the French they learned in the classroom, and that teaching methods are very different. In recognition of this, several schools are organising intercultural awareness sessions for both French and international students, to raise awareness of cultural differences.

What do the ParisTech commissions have planned on these topics?

Over the next few months, we're planning to talk to international students directly by sending out an anonymous questionnaire to find out about their experience and needs, and get as broad an understanding as possible of the issues international students face when arriving in France and joining one of the ParisTech schools. The Teaching and Diversity commissions want to encourage the schools to set up new initiatives. For example, those that don't already have one could create an international club or student association to help international students get involved in social activities at their schools. We've also just published a [list](#) of the different kinds of assistance available to international students at each school.

COMMUNICATION



Thursday 23rd June is the 9th annual International Women in Engineering Day. INWED is an international awareness campaign that raises the profile of women in engineering and focuses attention on the amazing career opportunities available to women and girls in this exciting field. The ParisTech schools will be marking the occasion by showcasing the achievements of seven of their students. In doing so, they hope to show young women that they can succeed in the world of STEM, and inform and inspire those who might not otherwise have considered a career in these fields.

TEACHING



In February, the ParisTech RACINE network was delighted to welcome Johanna Boulanger-Laforge, who joins the team as Project Manager for Teaching Practices. Johanna holds a PhD in Educational Sciences and has always sought out roles in education, ranging from teaching to designing and managing training modules. For RACINE she will be seeking out best practices in education and organising and leading activities to offer lecturers, researchers and support staff at the ParisTech schools cutting-edge training opportunities focused on the issues they encounter on a day-to-day basis.



The recruitment campaign for the [ParisTech International Admission Programme](#) is underway! This year's campaign is off to a great start, with webinars and testimonials available on [YouTube](#) and [Bilibili](#) and – for the first time in two years – promotional trips to Brazil and Argentina to strengthen ties with our partner universities. 2022 also marks a new chapter: having opened up the programme in 2021 to include other countries in Asia as well as China, this year the ParisTech schools will be accepting applications from students anywhere in the world, making it easier for independent candidates to apply, and bringing more diversity to the ParisTech community. Applications can be submitted from 1st June 2022! Find out more about the ParisTech International Admission Programme on [Studywithus](#).

DIVERSITY



The second edition of the ParisTech – ENCPB “[Cordée de la réussite](#)” partnership is drawing to a close after another productive year. An impressive 20 tutors from AgroParisTech, Arts et Métiers, Chimie ParisTech – PSL and ESPCI Paris – PSL and 70 *prépa* students from the Lycée Pierre-Gilles de Gennes (ENCPB) took part in the 2021–2022 edition. In the closing session it was clear that all the tutors have gained a lot from the experience: a new perspective; experience managing teams, organising people and handling logistics; and the ability to adapt to a completely new audience. Everyone agreed that it was a fantastic experience and that they'd learned just as much as their tutees!

INTERNATIONAL



From 4–8th April, AgroParisTech, Chimie ParisTech – PSL, the École des Ponts ParisTech and MINES Paris – PSL welcomed a [delegation from the University of Nairobi](#) for a training session on internationalisation, organised as part of the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility (ICM) project. Participants learned about the schools' international strategies and how they organise their international relations departments; manage programmes, partnerships and student mobility; and support international students. The event was a first step towards the “Engineering and Science Complex” partnership between ParisTech and the University of Nairobi.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

International Framework Agreements

Tokyo Tech (Japan): renewed in April 2022

Zhejiang University (China): renewed in May 2022

Huazhong University of Science and Technology (China): renewed in May 2022

International Missions

Brazil: 2–9th June 2022

Argentina: 13–16th June 2022



AgroParisTech

Delivery of the Agro Paris-Saclay campus

On Wednesday 13th April, the new Agro Paris-Saclay campus was officially handed over to Laurent Buisson, Director General of AgroParisTech, and Fabrice Marty, Deputy Director General representing Philippe Mauguin, Chair and CEO of INRAE. The campus was designed by Marc Mimram and Jean-Baptiste Lacoudre of architectural firm Patriarche, in association with landscaping company TER, under a design-build-operate-maintain (DBOM) contract between VINCI Construction France (builder and representative of the consortium set up for the project) and Campus Agros SAS (the contracting authority). The first members of staff moved in immediately after completion, and by October 2022 the campus will be home to some 2000 students and 1350 lecturers, researchers, technicians and support staff from AgroParisTech and INRAE.

attended the Global Industrie trade fair to show companies how it can provide the support they need to make industrial systems and processes more sustainable. The school has campuses and links with partners all across France, meaning it has an in-depth understanding of industrial issues and is perfectly positioned to assist companies with R&D, training, and career management. Arts et Métiers – the only engineering school to attend the event – organised 20 mini-conferences during which its experts and industrial partners shared success stories.



Chimie ParisTech – PSL

Congratulations to Philippe Goldner, CNRS 2022 silver medallist!

Philippe Goldner was awarded a silver medal at the 2022 edition of the talent awards run each year by the CNRS, France's National Centre for Scientific Research. This follows the ERC Advanced Grant he received in 2020 for his "RareDiamond" project, which aims to develop high-quality materials in which rare-earth ions and colour centres in diamond crystals interact at a nanoscale level. The new award is a testament to the quality and rigour of Dr. Goldner's scientific research. Recently, Dr. Goldner and his team have demonstrated the exciting possibilities offered by rare-earth doped nanoparticles for quantum memories and processors. When their synthesis is optimised, these materials show particularly long optical and spin coherence lifetimes for solid nanometric systems.



École des Ponts ParisTech

Jérôme Lesueur appointed Dean of Research at the École des Ponts ParisTech

Jérôme Lesueur, a graduate of the Nancy School of Mines (ENSMN), is a professor of physics and accredited research supervisor (HDR) at the Université Paris-Sud. Prior to this, he worked as Dean of Research at ESPCI (2014) and as co-founder and director of the doctoral programme of the Institute of Technology and Innovation of Paris Sciences and Lettres (2015). In 2007 he was awarded the Langlois Prize for Research.



MINES Paris – PSL

MINES Paris – PSL launches TTI.5: "The Transition Institute 1.5"

TTI.5 is a new institute set up to address the challenges involved in transitioning to a low-carbon future. It aims to provide concrete, interdisciplinary solutions to climate issues by backing ambitious research and tech transfer projects and partnerships, to assist decision-makers and help meet the IPCC's recommendation of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Find out more at <https://www.minesparis.psl.eu/>

ARTS ET MÉTIERS
des solutions
pour une industrie
responsable

#Innovation
#Formation



Arts et Métiers

Arts et Métiers attends the Global Industrie trade fair: sustainable solutions for the industry of the future

Drawing on its strong culture of innovation, solidarity and support, Arts et Métiers recently

ParisTech, the major engineering schools network

The complementary nature of the areas of excellence of the various schools provides our students, researchers and partners (academic and corporate) with an exceptional consortium that offers unique transdisciplinary opportunities. ParisTech also has strong international teaching and research links via its many partnership agreements.

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