

TRENDS SHAKER

Newsletter #52

The monthly newsletter for socio-cultural trends

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Young people prefer to engage and innovate, rather than leave companies they consider ecocidal.

Despite the numerous calls in the media to quit companies and professions that are incompatible with the ecological emergency we are facing, many young people are turning to the corporate social and environmental responsibility (CSR) departments in companies. Students and young graduates, who understand societal issues, but also appreciate the comfort offered by major corporations, intend **to change the system from inside**. These youngsters, who are better trained than their predecessors - there are now around fifty training courses in CSR and sustainable development - **are joining the CSR departments of companies, where their missions are becoming increasingly strategic**, especially when they report to senior management. Even in groups where the CSR policy has been rewarded with a label, it is sometimes necessary to fight against the current in order to quickly raise employee awareness, reduce the carbon footprint, use biosourced materials or protect biodiversity. Long-term projections "are not a part of corporate culture. This learning curve demands patience", observes Antoine Lebrun, CSR Manager of the LP Promotion real estate group.

When young people cannot change the system from inside, they set up their own company and address the climate change challenge by innovating.

- Two young engineers from the "Mines de Paris" school have launched the **NotOnlyMine** application that enables anyone to easily lend their car to someone, or to borrow a car that belongs to someone they know. A clever idea, given that 13 million vehicles are driven less than twice a week.
- Two young students at "CentraleSupélec" and "Essec" have launched the **Ecklo**, reusable and recyclable packaging material that replaces the film used to protect goods stored on pallets.
- Five young graduates from "EM" and "Insa" in Strasbourg have set up **Green Phoenix** to collect organic waste from individuals, professionals and local authorities on cargo bicycles, which is then used to produce compost or biogas in order to generate energy that is entirely compatible with green growth.

Doing a job that is meaningful and rises to the environmental challenges we face is a powerful source of commitment for these young entrepreneurs.

Sources:

www.lemonde.fr/campus/article

<https://start.lesechos.fr/innovations-startups>

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Numspot: a 100% French cloud for sensitive activities

Source

<https://www.latribune.fr>

Docaposte, the digital subsidiary of the La Poste group, Dassault Systèmes, an expert in 3D software, the Bouygues Telecom operator and the “Banque des Territoires”, have joined forces to create a trusted cloud for French economic and institutional players in sensitive sectors (the public sector, health and finance). Numspot will be based on an infrastructure certified by ANSSI, the State agency that oversees the security of information systems in France. This new cloud will also provide access to the solutions on offer from Docaposte, the project leader, which proposes remote identity verification, electronic signature and digital archiving systems.

Numspot will be available in 2023 and intends to compete with other players in France that have chosen to team up with American majors, thereby prompting concerns about the legal risks incurred by these alliances.

For the first time in the last 50 years of economic history, growth in India (+6.8% in 2022) is twice as high as growth in China (+3.2%). This is what the economic forecasts for 2022-2023 published by the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Bank indicate. **The slowdown of the Chinese economy can be explained by the zero-tolerance COVID-19 policy, which has been very costly, and by a real estate policy that has seriously tightened funding conditions since 2020.** And this slowdown will be long, because growth is no longer the sole priority for the Chinese communist party, which is now focussed on national security and its mission to claim worldwide leadership, by becoming the most influential country in the world. According to the forecasts of these two institutions, South-East Asia is also growing strongly: Vietnam (+7.2%), the Philippines (+6.5%), Malaysia (+6.4%) and Indonesia (+5.1%). However, some countries are experiencing a crisis, such as Pakistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, where inflation was higher than 60% in 2022.



Economic growth in Asia: India overtakes China

Source

<https://asialyst.com>

PROFILE OF THE MONTH

Thomas Clozel

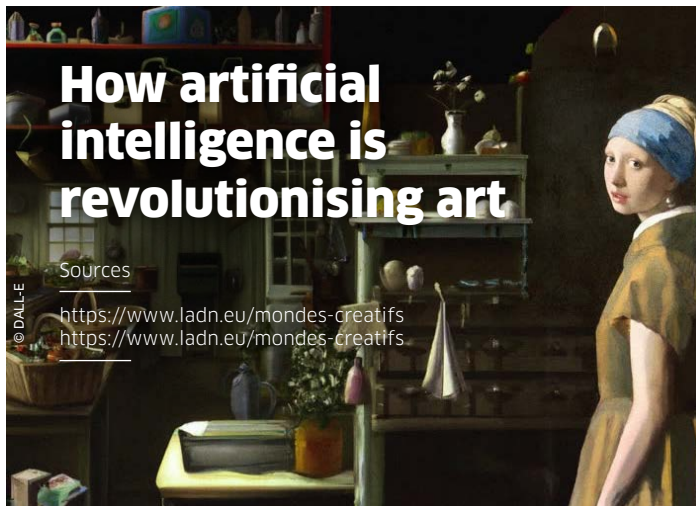
the doctor who became a start-upper

Source

<https://www.lemonde.fr>



Thomas Clozel is someone who builds bridges between different fields of activity. After studying research and medicine at Paris-XII university, he took a Master’s degree at Weill Cornell Medical College in the United States, where he discovered bio-computer science and learned programming. When he returned to France, he became the manager of a haematology clinic, but felt hemmed in by a pyramidal hospital system where cross-functionality was difficult. He then met Gilles Wainrib, a lecturer and researcher at the ENS and a pioneer in AI. They founded Owkin together in 2016, with **the ambition to predict the probability of success of a treatment applied to a patient. But they needed input data from the real world for artificial intelligence to be efficient.** So, the Franco-American start-up entered partnerships with fourteen of the top one hundred university hospitals in the world. Since then, it has become a unicorn, valued at more than €1 billion, since Sanofi invested €159 million in the company’s capital in November 2021.



How artificial intelligence is revolutionising art

Sources

<https://www.ladn.eu/mondes-creatifs>
<https://www.ladn.eu/mondes-creatifs>

© DALL-E

You no longer need to know how to use a brush to become an artist. Today, **artificial intelligence is capable of producing images from simple textual descriptions, which I-artists call prompts.** For example, on DALL-E, the algorithm can produce dozens of images when you type “an astronaut on horseback in the style of a realistic photo”. Even if they are still relatively unknown to the general public, these IA ART generators have brought together a highly productive community. And, since it is quite easy to produce images, a sort of competition has emerged between these I-artists. It’s all about the prompt, where even the punctuation counts. **By enabling every web user to become an artist, I-art is renewing the world of artistic creation and raising questions about the very nature of art.**

Wood-fired heating emits little CO₂ and uses a fuel that is renewable and cheap. However, it emits fine particles that can harm our health, especially when the heating system and the fuel are of a poor quality. Okofen, Europe’s leader in pellet boilers, has addressed this problem by developing **an innovative technology, inspired by incinerators, that drastically improves combustion, does not produce any flames and limits particle emissions.** **The ZeroFlame pellet boilers only emit 2 milligrams per normal cubic metre, compared with 10 to 20 mg/Nm³ emitted by conventional pellet boilers** (20 mg/Nm³ is the maximum authorised emission in cities). Once the silo is full of pellets, these large boilers can function for one year. They are as efficient as gas-fired boilers, but they come with a high price tag (€20,000 for a range-topping model).



Okofen pellet boilers produce heat without any flames or fine particles

Source

<https://planete.lesechos.fr>



The Piana: the first zero-particle ferry between Marseilles, Corsica and Tangier

Source

<https://planete.lesechos.fr>

© La Mériidionale

This is good news for people who live near large ports and breathe seriously polluted air. In partnership with the Solvay chemicals group and Andritz, an Austrian company specialised in exhaust gas technologies, the “La Mériidionale” shipping line has been testing **an innovative system that eliminates 99.9% of fine and ultra-fine particles and 99% of sulphur oxide on the Piana for two years.**

“The sodium bicarbonate is first injected into the exhaust pipe to desulphurize the fumes and remove the sulphur. Then, the magma created by this mix of bicarbonate and soot passes through several filters of fabric soaked in Teflon. The magma stays on the surface of the “socks”, while the rest of the purified gas passes through”, explains Christophe Seguinot, Technical Director of La Mériidionale. Despite the high cost of this filtration system, the line already plans to install it on a second ship. However, it will take some time before zero-particle filters are widely used.

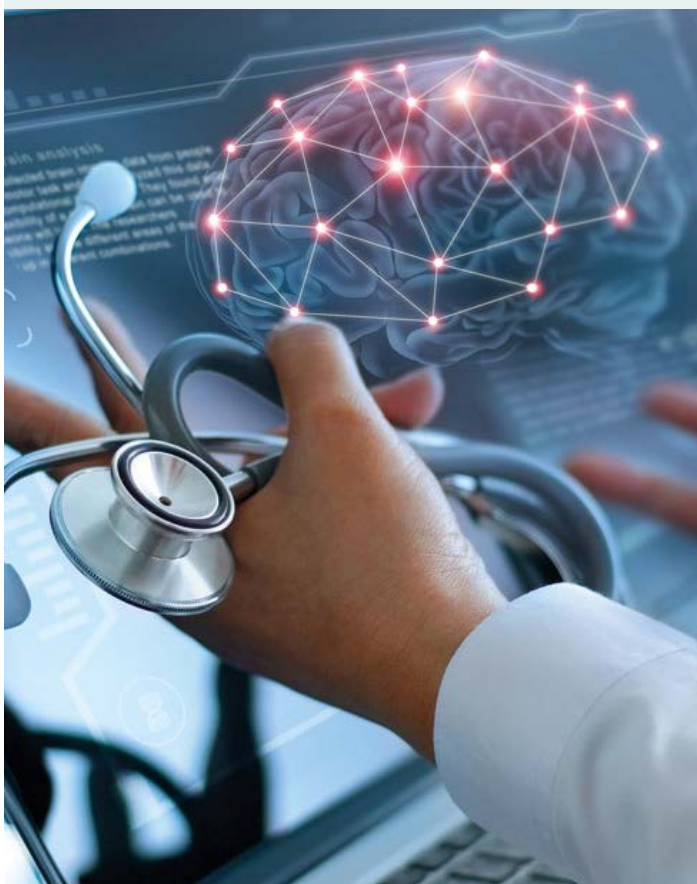
accelRare is using AI to speed up the diagnosis of rare illnesses

Source

<https://www.futura-sciences.com>

Today, three million people in France suffer from a rare illness, and the average time between the appearance of the first symptoms and the first diagnosis is estimated to be three to four years.

In an effort to reduce this delay and to help general practitioners, paediatricians and specialists to diagnose these rare illnesses, Sanofi and MedVir have developed accelRare. This free digital solution enables doctors **to diagnose 270 rare illnesses for which a treatment and/or suitable care already exist today.** It also provides **information about suspected illnesses** and the **information required to contact the specialised centres closest to the patient.** This application is currently being tested by general practitioners and will be released in France in 2023, and then in Europe and worldwide.



Google acquires a start-up that has developed an application to monitor respiration

Source

<https://www.geekwire.com>

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While no information has been made available about the transaction, Google has confirmed the purchase of Sound Life Sciences. Founded in 2018 in Seattle, this start-up has developed an **application capable of monitoring respiration, thanks to the sonar technology used to detect movements.** The application facilitates the diagnosis of sleep apnoea by allowing users to perform self-tests at home, instead of spending a night in a centre specialised in sleep disorders, which is usually the case today. Last December, Sound Life Sciences received the authorisation from the American Food and Drug Administration to market the application, which means that it can be reimbursed by health insurance companies. We still do not know how Google intends to use the technology developed by Sound Life Sciences, but we do know that a subsidiary of Alphabet, Google's parent company, is already offering sleep tests at home to diagnose other sleep disorders.

Rising to the challenge of life: a Mocc that trains the general public in the conservation of biodiversity

<https://vert.eco/articles>

The Engage association, which is specialised in the creation of tools for collective engagement, has published a new Mocc (Massive Open Online Course) to **democratise the main issues of biodiversity and the regeneration of ecosystems amongst the general public**. The free “Rising to the challenge of life” training course, which is supported by the French Office for Biodiversity, invites everyone to become a **“citizen committed to life”, to “make the economy work for life” and to “become a pioneer of diversity in their company”**. The Mocc is available in a wide range of formats in order to facilitate the distribution of knowledge: **interviews, podcasts, discussion forums, quizzes and illustrated videos**. The contributors include the philosopher Baptiste Morizot, the ecologist Philippe Grandcolas and the biologist Pierre-Henri Gouyon.

According to The Law Society, an association of English and Welsh lawyers, trees, animals and rivers should have the same rights as humans. They claim it is essential to **combat the loss of biodiversity and climate change, but also to regulate the interactions between humans and biological elements**. These laws would set up a legal framework, responsibilities and, therefore, “the consequences of everything we do”, claims Dr. Trish O’Flynn, the co-author of a report published by The Law Society. There are precedents to this idea. **Ecuador and Bolivia already have laws to protect the natural world.**

In addition, NGOs are taking action to make “ecocide” a crime that could be prosecuted by the International Criminal Court.

Rights for animals, plants and rivers in order to combat the loss of biodiversity

Source

<https://www.lepoint.fr/environnement>

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Thierry Marx opens a new branch of his cookery school in a market gardening farm-school

Source

<https://start.lesechos.fr/travailler-mieux>

In 2023, the famous chef Thierry Marx will open a new branch of his “Cuisine Mode d’Emploi(s)” school at the “Ferme École Graines d’Avenir” in Magny-les-Hameaux in the Yvelines department in France. These two establishments have teamed up to **reconnect chefs and market gardeners in an effort to propose more sustainable food**. The school-farm, which opened one year ago, grows lettuce, beetroot and chard with compost and horse dung, instead of fertilisers, plus other plants that protect the crops against diseases. The **thirty apprentice cooks** who will join the new school-farm will be able to **learn how the products that they will cook are grown**. After this 11-week course of training, they will be sure to find a job, because **the employability rate of the two schools is nearly 100%**.

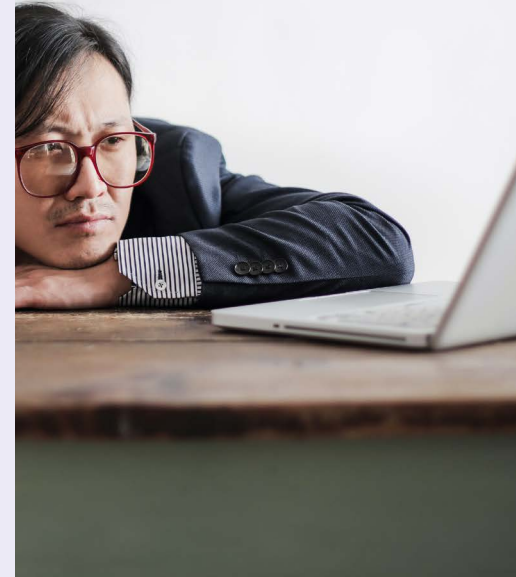
© Pexels - Karoline Gräbowski

75% of employees feel demotivated by the lack of CSR action taken by their company

Source

<https://youmatter.world/fr>

According to a survey conducted by Imagreen and Kantar, 75% of the employees of major companies feel uncomfortable with the lack of action taken by their company to combat the environmental crisis and growing inequality. **39% of the employees who were questioned feel that their convictions regarding social and ecological issues are not reflected by their professional activity and the activity of their company.** Six out of ten employees are considering leaving their company, or have already decided to resign. **The other employees are less motivated, lack engagement or do the strict minimum, to the extent that they now talk of “quiet quitting”.** In addition, by acquiring expertise in CSR issues, employees become more and more critical of the environmental consequences of the activities of their company. One out of two employees feels that their company’s road map is incoherent or inefficient, faced with the social and environmental challenges. Nevertheless, one third of employees continue to perceive the company as a major and priority lever in the ecological transition, behind the government, but ahead of civil action.



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KPMG introduces the four-day week for young parents

Source

<https://lesdeviations.fr>

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On 1 October, the leader in audits and consulting took a measure that is unprecedented in its sector. KPMG France now offers a four-day parental week to its employees for six months on full pay. In other words, **after every birth or adoption, employees can ask to work for four days a week on full pay.** This initiative is in line with KPMG France’s new employer’s promise, the “Autre Contrat”, which aims to innovate in favour of parents. *“As a leader in auditing and consulting in France, **KPMG must play a fundamental societal role in order to bring about fundamental changes in its sector, by responding to the new expectations and needs of its employees, and also to the changes in our society,**”* explains Laurent Geoffroy, Group Human Resources Director and member of Executive board of KPMG France.

The students and teachers in certain schools have decided to take action for change. For example, the **Polytech** which includes 20 engineering universities, has created the **Polytech Green fund to encourage students to travel as part of the Erasmus programme without flying.** The **“Exception’elles”** programme at the **Mines and Alès IMT** invites female engineers to spend a weekend in the company of business women and professional coaches to **improve their leadership skills and boost their self-confidence.** The three-year **Climate Action Program** at **TBS Education** helps students to gain an in-depth understanding of the **economic and geopolitical importance of the climate.** The **InEDI** network, which brings together five establishments and more than 3,500 students, organises conferences, workshops and cine-debates to encourage young people to take **action in favour of inclusion and to combat discrimination.** And the **Besign design school** is focussing on **sustainable innovation.** As a consequence, students are opting for eco-responsible materials in the design of their products and taking inspiration from bio-mimetics and frugal innovation, by doing more with less.

Schools in action in favour of the environmental and societal transition

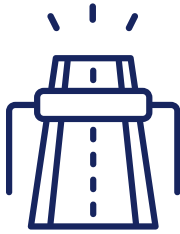
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<https://start.lesechos.fr/apprendre>

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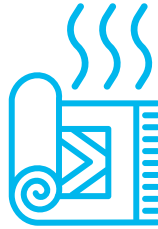
DID YOU KNOW?



Australia is testing phosphorescent strips to light up motorways at night

www.curioctopus.fr

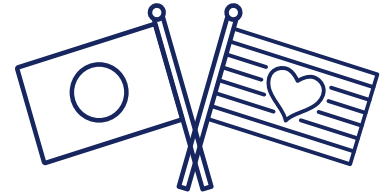
In an effort to improve road safety, motorways in Australia will be edged with long strips covered with a **photo luminescent film** that **absorbs light during the day and shines at night for eight hours.**



Two French designers have invented a heating carpet

<https://positivr.fr>

Natacha Poutoux and Sacha Hourcade have created a **low-consumption padded carpet** made of Kvadrat fabric that **only heats up the place where a person is located**, instead of heating an entire room. This carpet, which consumes very little energy, won the prize for creation awarded by the city of Paris.



Tokyo issues its first same-sex union certificates

www.lemonde.fr

On 1 November, Tokyo city hall issued the first same-sex union certificates to people who live or work in the Japanese capital. **These long-awaited certificates allow LGBTQ+ partners to be treated like married couples for certain public services related to housing, healthcare or social security.** But they do not grant the same rights as a legal marriage.

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Graphic design - devecor.fr - November 2022

All "watchers"

If you spot interesting or unusual "people, ways of life" societal information, share them at: valerie.gaudart@engie.com or julie.philippot@engie.com. Thanks to everyone for your contribution!