



+ Press release

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The Open Innovation Factory selects seven partners to assist GRTgaz's transformation

The fifth edition of the Open Innovation Factory organised by GRTgaz was held today at the Lyon Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Seven winners were selected to sign contracts with GRTgaz and proceed with the industrial rollout of their solution. This edition comes as GRTgaz is stepping up its transformation to adapt its network to new ecological and digital challenges. Since the first Open Innovation Factory in 2016, 23 partnerships have been signed and more than €1,000,000 invested with the winning companies to develop innovative solutions.

GRTgaz's open innovation policy is part of a corporate strategy that aims to achieve a carbon-neutral energy mix by 2050 and to develop the French hydrogen and renewable gas sectors.

The panels were made up of Open Inno peers (RTE, Total, Orano, etc.), partners (Comité Richelieu, Paris & Co, CCI Paris, Inwibe, Raiselab.), entrepreneurs (e.g. Serapid) and GRTgaz experts. On Tuesday 22 June, the seven winning companies were named in the presence of Philippe Valentin, President of CCI Lyon, Axel Riehl, Director of Innovation and Economic Action of Métropole Grand Lyon, and Thierry Trouvé, CEO of GRTgaz. These winners have signed a partnership agreement with GRTgaz to provide sustained support with carrying out their "proof of concept" and through to the completion of their projects.

These companies and start-ups allow GRTgaz to test and industrialise solutions that are shaping the gas industry of tomorrow. The initiative promotes advances in new low-carbon gases, mobility using biogas, smart grids and security. It also allows GRTgaz to improve the maintenance of its network and facilities.

For the winners, the Open Innovation Factory allows them to develop a partnership with a major client, increase their visibility, and develop a high-quality professional network (in particular through the network of Open Innovation Factory winners). The winners also receive a one-year of membership of the Richelieu Committee, which brings together hundreds of innovative French start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps.

The seven winners and their innovations

ASMAN TECHNOLOGY, in association with the SME **INNOVIDEA**, has proposed a way of detecting gas leaks on overhead pipes using a light aircraft (ULM) on which various sensors are mounted.

Olikrom wants to develop a "smart paint" that makes it easier to detect corrosion on overhead pipes. The smart coating will become fluorescent in the early stages of corrosion.

Lynx offers a mixed reality headset solution to make safety exercises more realistic. The headset will be accompanied by an augmented reality scenario, enabling GRTgaz employees to simulate a fire safety exercise involving a fire outbreak on a gas pipe.

Three companies are working on high pressure purification linked to the production of renewable gas from liquid waste ("hydrothermal gasification"):

- providing bespoke and turnkey biogas purification systems (**Greenmac**)
- the treatment and recovery of biogas, in particular biomethane, using innovative patented technologies for membrane separation and amine scrubbing (**Arol Energy**)
- biological methanation based on a gas flow from hydrothermal gasification without catalysis, allowing the creation of additional renewable gas from CO₂ and hydrogen (**microbEnergy**)

Matcor has proposed a patented earthing system that is stronger and more efficient than the one already installed on the GRTgaz network. The aim is to counter the influence of alternative currents and their corrosive effects on the pipes.

GRTgaz's open innovation policy

GRTgaz's open innovation approach was launched in 2016. It aims to uncover operational and innovative solutions to problems encountered by the company's business lines. The company issued its first calls for projects in April 2020, with 65 applicants offering solutions in the following areas: managing the influences of alternative currents; promoting the emergence of the green gas sector by purifying high-pressure gas; using smart coatings to detect corrosion on our pipes; making safety simulation exercises more realistic; detecting gas leaks remotely and predicting pipe movements during connections.

"The GRTgaz Open Innovation Factory is a great adventure that puts ecosystem innovation at the heart of the company. Working alongside the Open Innovation team and the business line, we crossed several borders in search of solutions. The French border, on the one hand (we went to the US, Canada, Belgium, etc.), and the limits of startup ecosystem on the other, as we also worked with SMEs and mid-caps. We can't wait to see where the next step takes us!" Benjamin BLAZY, Head of Open Innovation Raiselab, a partner since 2020.

Press contact:

Valentine Leduc

T +33 (0)7 64 78 26 47

valentine.leduc@grtgaz.com

www.grtgaz.com

Twitter: @GRTgaz

GRTgaz is Europe's second-largest gas carrier, with 32,500 km of pipes and 640 TWh of gas transported. The company has 3,000 employees and generated nearly €2.3 billion in turnover in 2020. The GRTgaz core purpose is: "Together, we enable an energy future that is safe, affordable and climate neutral". GRTgaz is an innovative company undergoing a major transformation to adapt its network to new ecological and digital challenges. It is committed to a 100% carbon-neutral French gas mix by 2050. It supports the hydrogen and renewable gas sectors (biomethane and gas from solid and liquid waste). GRTgaz carries out public service missions to guarantee the safety of gas transmission for its 945 customers (shippers, distributors, industrial companies, biomethane plants and producers). With its subsidiaries Elengy, the European leader in LNG terminal services, and GRTgaz Deutschland, operator of the MEGAL transmission network in Germany, GRTgaz plays a key role in the European gas infrastructure scene. The company exports its know-how internationally, in particular services developed by its research centre, RICE. Find us on www.grtgaz.com and [Twitter](#).