



Newsletter ParisTech China

News from Alumni

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jean-Philippe VANOT, President ParisTech



Dear Reader,

Following the previous special issue in July 2013 on our Chinese alumni, I am very proud and happy to introduce to you some of our French alumni who have studied in our partner universities in China.

ParisTech's engineering schools expect their French students to be fluent in at least two foreign languages, one of them English, and to have some knowledge of the culture and history of the countries where those languages are spoken. The reason is simple: business is world-wide and our engineers become business leaders able to speak the language of their customers.

Our corporations need European engineers fluent in Chinese and familiar with China's culture, in order to exchange with China, as well as they need Chinese engineers trained in our schools. International cooperation in business and in education is a playing-field in which the players must become multi-cultural.

As an important component of our China programme, the Chinese language is taught in ParisTech schools. A significant number of French students attend a summer language course in China each year; nearly 150 of ParisTech's French students have studied or are currently studying engineering and management in China. On average they spend about two years in Chinese universities. More and more of our French alumni are not only gifted scientists and engineers but also well versed in China's language and culture.

We shall increasingly encourage and send our French students to study in China and we cherish our partnership with the leading Chinese universities who support us in this task.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Chinese partners for the excellent education they provide to our students.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this issue.

Sébastien GAUCHET

ENSTA ParisTech 1999 - 2002
Tongji University 2001 - 2002
HEC EMBA Shanghai Track 2013 - 2014
Managing Director, Gebo Cermex (Tetra Laval Group) Beijing, China



My current role implies an internal spinoff merger project and leading the Asia Pacific region strategy development and implementation.

I was born in Paris and from my earliest years have had Chinese friends, so when I got the opportunity to learn Chinese at ENSTA ParisTech I seized it with both hands, and it changed my life. In 1999, during a language summer course in Beijing, I witnessed China's economy dynamism at first hand.

Therefore I decided to finish my studies in China, and spent the last two years of my ENSTA ParisTech course in Tongji University attending both Chinese language and urban planning elective courses. Since then, I have lived in China where I started my family and have built my career.

After graduating from ENSTA ParisTech I started my career in Shanghai, working as a project engineer for Systra, a French urban transport engineering consulting firm. There my engineering skills allowed me to make some relevant proposals that were implemented and are now visible on the Shanghai and Beijing subways.

Then, I joined Saint-Gobain, firstly as an industrial director and plant manager in Shandong province for refractory division, and later on as deputy general manager of the Shanghai building material distribution organization: LA MAÎSON.

After that, I decided to try out more aspects of general management. For the board of Maars Partitioning System, a Dutch medium-sized company, I led the spinoff of the Chinese subsidiary. After nearly a year, the Chinese subsidiary was sold and the brand licensed allowing the Board to recover the loss accumulated over the past three years.

At the end of 2010, I relocated with my family to Beijing and took a Managing Director's position for a subsidiary of Tetra Laval Group, providing end-of-line engineering and packaging solutions to fast manufacturing consumer goods companies in Asia.

Now my career requires that I go further in my education and develop new competencies: as a result I have recently enrolled in the HEC EMBA Shanghai track with a Major in Entrepreneurship & Innovation. In my experience the network of ParisTech is a great source of support, expertise and information that helped me to move forward at critical stages in my life.

Sébastien FRENDO

Telecom ParisTech, 2000 - 2004
Shanghai Jiao Tong University, 2002 - 2004
Management Consultant, Africa



My story with China started in 2000. I just had spent 3 years in Versailles preparing my admission to Telecom Paris. It was like being in the starting blocks for years, waiting for the moment to escape! And learning an "exotic" language was one of my escape plans. I must admit, I

did not have any particular reason to choose Chinese rather than Japanese. I barely knew anything about China, nor about Japan. But I told myself that there would be more things to see in China if I had to travel there.

Luckily, I found a summer internship in a printing factory in Jiangmen, in Guangdong province. It was a real eye opener. China was not only an "exotic" place but on the verge of becoming an emerging power. The speed, the dynamism and its very deep roots to as a flourishing civilisation impressed me. Something is happening in this part of the world.

Just after I returned, I went back to the head of the international department in Telecom ParisTech, and asked if it was possible to do my 3rd year in China. She looked at me very surprised. It was in 2001, China was not yet popular in the global headlines and no student from Telecom ParisTech had been to China yet to finish their Masters.

But she liked the idea, was very supportive and did her best to find me a way to study in China. And it worked. I was accepted by Shanghai Jiao Tong

University and I studied fiber optics, artificial intelligence and macroeconomics.

Now 10 years later where am I? I am working for the Tony Blair Foundation in Africa where I lead his initiative to advise the government of Sierra Leone, a 6 million people country in West Africa. I advise the President and with my team we support his government to deliver his next 5 year economic plan.

And the link with China? Not very obvious. After China, I went to India to do a second Masters at the Delhi School of Economics. Then went back to France and worked as a consultant at the Boston Consulting Group. I worked then as a free-lance consultant in Africa and consolidated the social youth venture I set up when I was in Shanghai (www.share-share.org). I still continue to speak Chinese in Freetown with Chinese diplomats and investors but more importantly I have seen development happening in China and I can say to the government of Sierra Leone that it happened through trade and private sector development and not through traditional aid.

Hélène LE TENO

École des Ponts ParisTech 1997-2001
Scholar at School of Economics and Management,
Tongji University 2001- 2002
Carbone 4, France



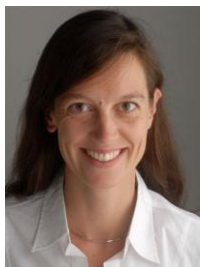
During my studies at École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées (École des Ponts ParisTech), I learnt Chinese with an outstanding teacher who passed on her lifelong passion for China to her students. After two internships in Beijing and Shanghai and my graduation, I

faced a dilemma: to begin an unadventurous career in Paris in project finance or to fly to Shanghai and get to know better the other side of the Earth. Thanks to a scholarship offered by the Chinese government and the strong support of ParisTech organization, I joined Tongji School of Economics and Management in September 2001. I was then hired in my first job as Operations Manager at Chinaloop (now Acxiom Group), a direct marketing company based in Shanghai serving L'Oreal, Dell, Carrefour among others. Daily work with Chinese colleagues, customers and partners has been a real education.

After returning to France, I became an engineer and consultant at Shell Global Solutions, then manager in a consultancy firm operating in the banking sector in Paris. I am now a manager at Carbone 4, I work in the field of future studies, helping customers to assess opportunities in a changing world where resources are getting scarce. Having experienced speedy changes in booming China helps me to think unconventionally and imagine how challenging our world will be tomorrow.

Marie FLAMENT

Telecom ParisTech, (2002 - 2005)
 Department of Information Security,
 Shanghai Jiao Tong University, 2004-2006
 Marketing Director EMEA, Hotels.com, London



When I entered Telecom ParisTech in 2002 I had two main objectives: to learn new skills and know-how and to have an international career. In 2004 I left for China to live a new experience and finish my studies at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. My initial plan was to stay in China for the duration of my scholarship - 2 years. The truth is I loved China so much that I ended up staying for 5 years!

My first year in China was entirely dedicated to learning Mandarin. I was in a very special class of just 8 students, including 4 North Koreans sent by their government! When I was not learning new characters I was playing basketball. Thanks to Yao Ming (who also studied in Shanghai Jiao Tong University) the orange ball is a big thing in China – luckily enough, it's also a passion of mine! This first year provided me not only with the basics needed to finish my Master in Information Security Mandarin, but also with a lifetime experience and knowledge of the Chinese society that has since then proven extremely handy wherever I go.

After graduation I joined LVMH (Louis Vuitton – Moët Hennessy) in Shanghai where I became IT Project Manager. Then in 2007, I was promoted to Regional Financial Analyst and moved to Hong Kong. After 2 years in this position I was ready for a new challenge so I decided to go back to school and do an MBA at London Business School.

Since then I have worked in Paris for The Boston Consulting Group, and I am now Marketing Director EMEA for Hotels.com. Although I now live in London, something inside me tells me that I am not done yet with China. I still listen to Chinese podcasts and read Chinese articles – my Chinese experience transformed my life and I know that one day I will go back!

Charley PAULUS

Telecom ParisTech 2003-2006
 MSc in Information and Communication
 Engineering in Tsinghua University 2006-2008
 Automatic Train Control Engineer, Alstom Transport
 Paris



I started my exchange program in China in 2005 with one year of intensive Mandarin courses in Beijing Language and Culture University. I continued my engineering studies in Tsinghua University, where I got my MSc in

Information and Communication Engineering in 2008. While conducting my research in the Image Processing lab, I had the opportunity to work with my Chinese classmates on a motion tracking project in collaboration with EADS Innovation Works. During my last year in Beijing, I lived in a hutong (traditional alley in Beijing) in the center of the city, which was a great way to get a deeper insight into the culture and live closer to the local people.

In 2008, I moved to Shanghai to work for Alstom Transport as a Test & Commissioning engineer for the subway line 10 signaling project. Working in the tunnels of Shanghai, in the huge marshalling yard or in the office, together with my Chinese colleagues of Casco signaling company, was a great experience. Collaborating with others, growing trust and mutual training were keys to success. Shanghai subway line 10 opened in 2010 for the World Expo.

Since then, I have been working for Alstom Transport in Paris as the Automatic Train Control sub-system manager for Mexico line 12, then Lille line 1 signaling projects. I now live in Paris China Town. My five years in China sharpened my taste for discovery and adventure, from my first steps on the Great Wall to my journey to the West (coming back from Beijing to Europe by train+bus). I continue trekking the world during my vacations.

Maxime CURIONI 麦信

Telecom ParisTech, 2004- 2006
 MSc, Department of Computer Science &
 Technology, Tsinghua University 2007 -2009
 Software Engineer, YouTube, California, United
 States



I studied at Tsinghua University in Beijing from September 2006 to July 2009, as part of a double-diploma exchange program organized by ParisTech. I am very grateful for the challenging yet rewarding adventure in which I took part. My stay has forever changed the way I look at China, its people, the country and the civilization.

I moved back to the San Francisco Bay Area and started my career in a web startup, leveraging some of the skills I learned while freelancing in college. I then fulfilled my childhood dream of working in the computer graphics industry, as a R&D rendering consultant at DreamWorks Animation/PDI. I decided to move on to new challenges by joining Google in early 2012. I have been working as a software engineer on YouTube ever since.

I have had very positive feedback regarding my education at Tsinghua University, most likely due to a

strong alumni presence in the Silicon Valley. My experience in China has given me enough cultural background to understand how to relate and work with my Chinese colleagues. When I tell them about my student experience at in China, I am initially faced with funny looks and surprised stares. Quickly though, it gives us the opportunity to share our stories about living abroad, comparing the pros and cons of both countries, but most of all, talking about how great the food is in China! I also feel fortunate that I have kept in touch with some of the great people I met during my years studying at Tsinghua University.

I hope to have another experience of work and life in China sometime in the near future.

Roman LAFAGUETTE 罗哲文

ENSAE ParisTech, 2005 – 2007
Chinese Center for Economic Research,
Peking University, 2007 – present
PhD under double supervision, Peking University
& Paris School of Economics
Research Analyst, European Central Bank, DG
International



I am currently a dual PhD student at the China Center for Economic Research (CCER) in Peking University and the Paris School of Economics (ENS). My research is focused on China's monetary policy and the internationalization of the Renminbi. I have worked for the Bank of France and for the European Central Bank (ECB) in their research departments specialized in China's economy and international monetary issues. I currently hold a research position at the European Central bank.

After graduating from ENSAE ParisTech in statistics in 2007 I went to China to study Mandarin, and after one year, I was admitted to Peking University to start in PhD in monetary economics. To date, I've stayed almost 7 years in China.

Being in China has given me an exceptional opportunity to interact with the key decision makers and scholars in my field, such as a Vice Governor of the People's Bank of China (PBOC) and several top economic advisors to the Chinese government, as well as foreign experts on China from the United States. This has given me a broader vision of how China's policy is influenced by the domestic socio-political environment and the dynamics of governmental institutions.

China is rapidly evolving as a major driver of the world economy, and to live in China during such a pivotal moment has been a thrilling intellectual experience. I have decided to share this experience with Western

readers by launching the *Red Economist*, a website dedicated to synthesizing and highlighting the key developments about China's economy.

Yannick BENICHO 潘伯良

École Polytechnique 2003 - 2006
MSc in Nuclear Engineering
Tsinghua University, 2006 – 2008
Operations Manager, Saint-Gobain Surface
Conditioning Handan, China



I had the chance to start learning Chinese at École Polytechnique in 2004 with a great teacher (Mme Bai), at a pretty intensive pace (6 hours of classwork per week). My attraction to China dates from that time. Two years later, I headed to Tsinghua University in Beijing for a Master in Nuclear Engineering,

while benefitting from a scholarship given by the Chinese government and another by the Areva Group.

I spent two terrific years at Tsinghua, especially from the cultural point of view: full immersion within the Chinese top educational system (I was the only foreigner in my class) and naturally very rapid progress in Chinese (I chose to take all the scientific courses in Chinese). I then decided to go back to France so as to get a first work experience and learn the working methods in my country prior to moving back to China.

I then worked for three years in Areva as core design engineer. I was deeply involved in the project of a nuclear power plant in Guangdong province, and cooperated closely with several Chinese engineers expatriated in Paris to learn about our company's state-of-the art technology.

I then decided to come back to China and accepted an offer at Saint-Gobain for leading the construction and the operations of a new plant in Handan (Hebei province). Our company has more than 50 plants all around China and provides various opportunities to French or Chinese graduates with a dual culture, which is very attractive regarding long-term development. I now plan to work in China for a few more years before going to other parts of the world within the same company.

I believe that the combination of ParisTech and Tsinghua curricula is an excellent preparation to work in French global industrial groups, where a strong ability to work in international teams and an opening to different cultures are must-have skills. My current situation – working for the Chinese subsidiary of an American division of a French group – perfectly illustrates it. I hope that many ParisTech French students can follow the same path!

Mathieu SAINTÉ 圣宏宇

École Polytechnique, 2006 – 2011
 MSc, Institute of Nuclear and New Energy
 Technology
 Tsinghua University, 2008-2011
 Business development Manager, MyCO2, Taiwan



I studied nuclear sciences for two years and a half at Tsinghua University. If I was not quite satisfied by the academic experience, the experience of living in Beijing was incredibly rewarding. I learned Mandarin to a level that surprises most of my Chinese interlocutors, I traveled around most parts of China, I opened myself to different ways to see the world and to do the things.

I graduated from Tsinghua, and therefore from Polytechnique, at the beginning of 2011. After graduation I moved to Taipei. My first mission was to implement a system of project management at Air Liquide in Taiwan. In this mission, I had been selected by the managing director for my "Polytechnician" rigor. My Chinese was not necessary as most of the project team members could speak good English. But it helped to build stronger personal relations with my colleagues. I was even invited to host the year end party.

In my second mission at DKSH in Taiwan, a Swiss trading company with focus on Asia, I worked with the Sales Teams to define and implement effective strategies to maximize the sales. In this job, my knowledge of Chinese language was a must have as the sales teams hardly spoke English.

With solid business skills developed at DKSH, I moved on to for my current mission: the business development of MyCO2 on the Taiwanese market. MyCO2 is a fast growing French company specialized in innovative energy reduction solutions with a lot of projects going on in the European and Chinese market. This mission is my dream mission: I do everything to have our product and services sold and implemented in Taiwan. It means prospecting the customers, defining and introducing our solutions, looking for local partners for hardware supply and implementation, etc. It is rare that I don't need to go through my three languages during a day!

My knowledge of the Chinese language and culture also allows me to have a lot of fun in my free time. I am regularly invited to express myself on talk-shows on TV. I share my experiences as traveler, translator, employee, student studying abroad.

Sarah HOESSLER 何姗

ENSAE ParisTech 2006 – 2010
 Quantitative Methods applied to Social Studies
 Department of Sociology,
 Tsinghua University, 2009 – 2010
 Exportation project coordinator,
 PSA Peugeot Citroën, Shanghai, China



I was the second student in the history of ENSAE ParisTech to take part in the China exchange program. After completing my 2nd year at ENSAE ParisTech, I came to China for the first time in my life, in 2008. That was quite a shock! My first year there was devoted to learning Mandarin at Beijing University of Languages and Cultures (BLCU). After one year of intensive study, I was able to attend Master level classes with my fellow Chinese classmates in the Sociology department of Tsinghua University.

In 2010, having completed my study plan and graduated from ENSAE ParisTech, I went back to Paris and started working as a consultant in statistics for a big French company. Though the size and complexity of the data in the company were astounding, I felt that the problems I was dealing with were not quite what I was looking for.

I believe that international business fuels some of the most complex issues nowadays, both on the technical and on the human sides. So I rapidly decided to go back to China. I was offered a VIE contract (International Volunteer, special contract subsidized by the French government to help French companies and administrations abroad recruit young European citizens) in PSA Peugeot Citroën's Shanghai Asia headquarters, followed by a Chinese local contract after the end of my VIE. It has now been two years and a half that I happily coordinate projects and people in France and China, exporting cars built by our joint-ventures throughout Asia and other parts of the world. From the start, I was granted a fair amount of trust and responsibility by my manager. This allowed me to quickly develop interpersonal and communication skills, and become fluent in strategic management. For sure, young engineers very seldom have this kind of opportunity in France.

Pierre AUCKENTHALER

École Polytechnique 2006 - 2009
 MS Environmental Engineering
 Tsinghua University 2009 - 2011
 Sinofrench (Suez Environment joint venture),
 Shanghai, China



I was always fascinated by China, the Chinese language especially, but while I was young I honestly didn't know much about real China. After two years very focused on scientific studies, entering École Polytechnique in 2006 allowed me to start studying Chinese at

Ecole Polytechnique. It also gave me the opportunity to go to Beijing and Guangxi for a two months summer internship in 2008. After this first introduction to China, I was confident when choosing where to do my last year of education: I wanted to go back to China! Thanks to the agreements negotiated by ParisTech, I was able to apply to Tsinghua University in Beijing and was admitted to do a Master of Science in the Environmental Science and Technology Department, working on water network modeling from 2009 to 2011.

These two years in Tsinghua taught me a lot, some academic knowledge of course, but more importantly how to live in a foreign environment, how to deal with imperfect communications, how to adapt to different work conditions. Of course, my Chinese language skills improved a lot as well!

After graduating, I went on to work with Suez Environment, a perfect match with my studies on water treatment and water supply. After a few months in India, I started working in Shanghai for "Sinofrench", a joint-venture established by Suez Environment to work on water, wastewater and solid waste treatment in Mainland China. I am part of a team providing technical support to the different local companies managed by Sinofrench. It is not a coincidence if out of this team of seven employees, five have this double culture and studied both in France and China. We need to understand the issues and knowledge of the local staff in operations, but we also need to understand the requirements and way of thinking of the French and Chinese experts and the management.

While I have no idea where my future will be, in China, in France or elsewhere, I am sure this multicultural experience will stay with me and be an asset in a more and more interconnected world.

Alexis HE

Telecom ParisTech 2007-2009
 M.Sc. Department of Computer Science and
 Technology
 Tsinghua University, 2010-2013
 Engineer , Schlumberger, France



In 2009, instead of completing my 3rd year to graduate as an Embedded Systems Engineer at Telecom ParisTech, I applied for the joint program between ParisTech and Chinese universities, and flew the same year to Beijing, China. Thanks to this partnership, I studied Mandarin Chinese seriously

at BLCU for one year, then completed a research thesis on Operating Systems within the Department of Computer Science at Tsinghua University and graduated in early 2013, with both the Engineer Diploma of Telecom ParisTech and the M.Sc of Tsinghua University.

I learned the language, the culture, the implicit rules of a complex country; I built a network of friends and classmates of many nationalities; I have worked with the talented researchers and teachers of Tsinghua University, and learned a lot from them; I have had the opportunity to broaden and improve my technical insight and skills on many subjects, complementing the training I had received in France.

Overcoming the multiple challenges I was exposed to on a daily basis has allowed me to gain a lot of hands-on experience. Overall, the four years I spent in China have been greatly satisfying and valuable, changing me into a truly international person. I now work at Schlumberger, France, as a Software Engineer for Petroleum and Geology interpretation software products, within a multinational team (including Chinese co-workers), knowing that I can set foot again in China in the future.

Gilles MERCERON 梅思鸿

Arts et Métiers ParisTech, 2007-2009
 MSc, School of Mechanical Engineering
 Shanghai Jiao Tong University, 2009-2011
 Data Management Engineer, TOTAL, France



Nothing predestined me to spend almost 4 years of my life in China: I had no particular interest in China when I was in high school and no one in my family went to China before me. However, when my engineering school gave me the opportunity to complete my studies abroad, I immediately chose China

and Shanghai Jiao Tong University. Today, I know that this university has strong links with France and especially ParisTech, I also know that SJTU shares symbolic values with the students of Arts et Métiers ParisTech, but I didn't know this at the time.

I chose China firstly for my taste of adventure and travel, and also to satisfy my wish to discover and understand a new culture, radically different from European cultures. Moreover, I also wanted to see by myself what was going on in China, when all the Western media were speaking about this amazing country: the Olympic Games, the international Expo, the economic and industrial boom, etc.

I left France in August 2009 with five of my classmates from Arts et Métiers ParisTech. We first went to Kunming for three weeks for intensive training in the Chinese language. Then we started a one year and a half joint degree program between Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Arts et Métiers ParisTech. During our first semester in SJTU, we were following technical courses in English as well as courses in Chinese language and culture. During the next two semesters, we spent most of our time on our Master project and I studied the biocompatibility of neural implants.

After my joint degree, I was offered a job in the Scientific Department of the Consulate General of France in Shanghai. My position of Deputy Attaché for science and technology included scientific and technological monitoring of Chinese research, communication and animation of communities. I worked there for 2 years and I met many interesting people from French and Chinese research labs and companies.

After three and a half years in China, I acquired a good overview of China with all my travels and today I can say that I am beginning to understand the Chinese culture but there is a lot more to discover.

Stéphane PHETSINORATH

Arts et Métiers ParisTech 2008-2012
MSc in Materials Science and Engineering,
Shanghai Jiao Tong University 2010 – 2012
Business Analyst, bioMerieux, Shanghai, China



In 2010, I made the choice of a career in China by choosing the Double Degree MSc program between Arts et Métiers ParisTech and Shanghai Jiao Tong University. For me, this journey represents a return to my Chinese roots. I spent 2 years at the School of Material Science and Engineering (SJTU), focusing my research on

revolutionary Magnesium-based Nanoparticles, which enable the development of new hydrogen storage technologies. This experience was a total immersion in the Asian scientific world, and I witnessed the wonderful time when China had become an international crossroads of great minds and remarkable ideas.

After my graduation in 2012, I started my 1st job in a Chinese company. As Business Developer, my challenges were to develop new business partnerships/ventures. Capitalizing a strong experience, I discovered the Chinese management style and have deepened my understanding of the Chinese market.

In 2014, I decided to move one step further by joining bioMerieux, a French company, leader in 'In Vitro' Diagnostic solutions – from microbiology to food testing. As Business Analyst, I am directly involved in the projects that would shape the future of bioMerieux: mergers & acquisitions, technological transfers and joint ventures.

My experience, as a student in France and China, helped me to understand and to manage the cultural differences. And today, I want to build the bridge between our countries and to contribute in the future France-China success story.