

2017 Yearbook

2014 & 2015 Laureates



Prince Albert Fund
managed by the King Baudouin Foundation



Dear Friends of the Prince Albert Fund,

“PAF 2.0”: we are on track!

First of all, I would like to congratulate the candidates who have successfully completed their year abroad, as well as to thank the companies who have participated in the Prince Albert Fund program. By doing so, these companies have given the candidates an extraordinary opportunity in their professional development - and this remains the sole purpose of the Prince Albert Fund within the overall values embodied by the King Baudouin Foundation. The Fund's mission has always been about contributing to the Belgian economy in a global context, by unlocking the talent of young international high potentials.

The Fund has been in existence for nearly 33 years now (since 1984). It has delivered successfully on the vision of its founders, as you will see from our latest statistics, as well as from the fascinating stories by our 26 laureates present in this yearbook.

At the Laureate Ceremony in April 2015 we officially launched a new chapter in our story, nicknamed “Prince Albert Fund 2.0”. Its ambition is to create the financial and operational capability for the Fund to double the number of laureates over the next 15 years (2015-2030) – without compromise to the expected standard to select high quality of talent.

And this is happening. In 2016 we already increased to 16, and in 2017 we selected for the first time 20 high quality candidates, a number that will rise further to around 30 per year in the coming years. A big thank you to all PAF Alums, to my fellow Board members, to all our Company partners, to all donors and to all stakeholders, for their ongoing trust and support.

Please join me in a toast to continued transformation and reinvention.

Chris Burggraeve,

Chairman Prince Albert Fund
Alumni 1989



Prince Albert Fund
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► Our Steering Committee

The Steering Committee of the Prince Albert Fund is responsible for its strategic direction.

Composition of the Steering Committee (2017)

Chairman

Chris Burggraeve, Founder, Vicomte LLC, Alumni 1989

Members

Valérie Busquin, Managing Director, MarkQuest, Alumni 1993

Michiel Deturck, Partner, Vendis Capital, Alumni 1990

Hans Maertens, Managing Director, VOKA

Francis Ottevaere, CEO, JIMS, Alumni 2003

Vincent Reuter, Managing Director, UWE

Luc Tayart de Borms, Managing Director, King Baudouin Foundation

Pieter Timmermans, Managing Director, VBO-FEB

Floriane Uyttenhove, Segment Marketing Manager Carbonates EMEA, Imerys

Kristel Van den Bergh, Corporate Innovations, Materialise

Olivier Willocx, Managing Director, BECI

Management team

Anne-Catherine Chevalier, Managing Director, Prince Albert Fund

Anneke Denecker, Knowledge Expert, King Baudouin Foundation

► Our mission

Helping young talented Belgian professionals acquire experience in conducting international projects

Our mission is to contribute to the development of the Belgian economy and Belgian international business by leveraging Belgian companies and organizations to help talented young professionals discover and develop their true international leadership potential.

For more than three decades, the Prince Albert Fund has helped young Belgian professionals develop an international career by giving them the opportunity to manage a 12-month business development project for a Belgian company outside Europe. This very selective entrepreneurial international experience has contributed to the careers of some 390 young people, who since have achieved senior leadership positions as entrepreneurs or in international business, thus succeeding in its aim to drive talent that will make a difference to society in general.

► Our history

A princely tribute to Belgian foreign trade

The Prince Albert Fund was set up in 1984 by the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium (VBO-FEB) and the King Baudouin Foundation to mark the 50th birthday of His Royal Highness Prince Albert, later to become the sixth King of the Belgians.

The Fund's aim was to embody the vision of a group of captains of industries to promote Belgian business abroad.

It is since 2015 under the patronage of HRH Princess Astrid.



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“The Prince Albert Fund project gave me the opportunity to demonstrate my attitudes and mindset for approaching challenges to a potential employer.”



Project country: India

Pieter-Jan Baert

► Role

Pieter-Jan Baert immersed himself in the Indian business culture for Umicore, which provided him with excellent opportunities in different professional areas, such as a Zinc Oxide production unit in Goa, and a new Automotive Catalysis business unit in Mumbai and Pune.

► Responsibilities

The first part of **Pieter-Jan's** mission consisted of reviewing and improving the financial reporting structures for a business unit. After that, he worked together with the finance manager to develop the new Automotive Catalysis plant, the goal being to set up finance and planning and to support the implementation.

Working in India was challenging on several levels as **Pieter-Jan** was used to a business environment that believes in strict planning and tight deadlines. In this country, projects are rarely completed as expected within the timeframe. Added to this, the local bureaucracy is also immense and slow. Nevertheless, Pieter-Jan found ways to tackle these challenges with the help of his Indian colleagues. He also learned how to increase the time spent on follow-up as well as on the detailed description of the requests.

► How he benefited

Pieter-Jan learned to understand the expectations of business partners in a foreign environment, as well as the challenges and uncertainties that are specific to a start-up business. His Indian experience dramatically increased his chances of continuing to be able to tackle international assignments, which are typically only allocated to managers with a longer track record. Umicore hired him at the end of his year-long Prince Albert Fund training. ***“Respect and commitment are key values of Umicore. I feel very proud to be part of this company today, while the Prince Albert Fund experience has strengthened my application of those values in the professional environment.”***

The company - Umicore

Umicore is a global materials technology and recycling group, with more than 10,000 employees worldwide (2015). The Group dedicates most of its R&D efforts to clean technologies, such as emission control catalysts, materials for rechargeable batteries and recycling. Umicore has a long tradition of working with the Prince Albert Fund.

“Pieter-Jan is fast when it comes to understanding the goals and priorities and gives a valuable contribution. He is good with figures, and we are even more impressed with his ability to develop new models. He received a contract to continue to work on some important follow-up actions, which proves that he made an important contribution to this mission.”

“This Prince Albert Fund experience has taught me to think out of the box, multitask, be proactive and considerate of my colleagues and customers.”



Project country: U.S.A.



Jessica Blondeel

► Role

Jessica Blondeel took on the role of product manager for the Strategic Business Unit Chocolate of Puratos Corporation U.S.A. She was charged with developing the product and brand strategies and providing the necessary support to the commercial and technical teams.

► Responsibilities

As a product manager, Jessica was responsible for the management and marketing of the Puratos product range. Her job covered the relaunch of a chocolate brand (Chocolanté), the definition of a clear strategy for a coating range (Carat) and the rise of the market share of chocolate in patisserie.

“Being a product manager is not just about working in marketing. It’s about closely working with R&D, operations and supply chain. You have to understand the flow of the raw material from the cocoa countries, know the products from a technical and hands-on point of view as well as understand what is possible in terms of production capacity.”

Besides having to familiarise herself with a new product range, Jessica got to know 80 salespeople and understand the market structure, which is heavily focused on supermarkets and industrial accounts. She was tasked with multiple projects. ***“Multitasking is not an option, it’s a requirement, it helps you understand that you can do more than you think.”***

► How she benefited

Jessica came along very well in a new environment for her (moving from IT to food industry). She faced the challenges of understanding the business and building up a local implementation plan. Working in the U.S.A. also allowed her to gain visibility with top management, the Group Executive Committee and even with the company’s owner. Jessica feels that this job and the move to the U.S.A. really enabled her to grow as a professional.

The company - Puratos

Puratos is an international group with a full range of innovative products, raw materials and application expertise in the bakery, patisserie and chocolate sectors. Its products and services are available in more than 100 countries around the world.

“Jessica was able to bring together teams located in different places geographically. She was also able, with HQ support, to bring to life a chocolate strategy which had been lacking in the past.”

**“I expected this year to be a practical MBA,
and I really do think that this is true.”**



Project country: Malaysia

Karolien Claes

► Role

The Materialise Group works closely with surgeons for the planning and execution of complicated surgical procedures. Karolien Claes's mission was to continue the search for partnerships that had already been initiated by a previous Prince Albert Fund candidate.

► Responsibilities

A year before Karolien joined Materialise in Malaysia, the company had already started to explore the opportunities in the region and conducted preliminary market studies. The project then consisted of developing partnerships in the Asia Pacific region. When Karolien came on board, the exploration turned into proactive business development. She looked into the different areas where the company hoped to establish partnerships, and systematically started searching for possible solutions in order to launch a franchise business model.

Karolien thinks choosing Materialise as her Prince Albert Fund project was a smart decision, as they are world leaders in additive manufacturing software, and their printing service is very reputable. Moreover, the 3D printing market is growing very quickly, paving the way for future growth.

► How she benefited

For Karolien, the Prince Albert Fund year has been a huge success; it even exceeded her expectations. ***“After working for six years as a self-employed architect I wanted a change”.*** She was after a more business-oriented job, but she still had much to learn before starting up her own business. Now she considers that the future has much more in store for her than she ever thought possible. ***“This experience really was my ticket out of a frustrating situation that completely turned my life around and put me on the path to a more promising career.”***

The company - Materialise

Through its work with Additive Manufacturing (AM), also known as 3D Printing, Materialise helps bring great products, aimed at niche markets, directly to the marketplace as well as making the prototypes of products that will subsequently be manufactured by the millions. The company offers services for Engineering professionals.

“Thanks to Karolien's involvement, we were able to finalise Materialise's first (worldwide) partnership agreement in Singapore. Once the partnership in Singapore was signed, Karolien took the lead, implementing and overseeing the collaboration. She was tasked with a combination of project and account management. In short, Karolien's role in getting the business development efforts ongoing has been instrumental, both in the region (directly) and beyond (indirectly).”

“This project has given me more insight and understanding in a promising high value technology, namely 3D printing, especially in the high value medical field.”



Project country: Malaysia

Stefaan Cortebeeck

► Role

The Materialise Group works closely with surgeons for the planning and execution of complicated surgical procedures. Stefaan Cortebeeck's project consisted of introducing the company's state-of-the-art solutions — 3D printing applications — in the Asia-Pacific region (APAC). The targeted countries were Malaysia, Hong Kong and India.

► Responsibilities

In the countries where he operated, **Stefaan** had first to understand the healthcare market (hospital system, funding/reimbursement, medical devices market...) before identifying Key Opinion Leaders and converting them into users, as well as co-creating a sustainable business model with them.

From the Malaysian office, he also contributed to the development of a local sales team infrastructure and became a local product expert. ***"I now better understand the technology and its applications – especially in the high value medical field - and the existing market for medical 3D printing especially in the APAC region."***

► How he benefited

Stefaan has had the opportunity to experience different fields – sales, marketing, regulatory, quality and so on – for a Belgian company with a high value disruptive technology in a (specific) international context. It has given him the opportunity to better understand Materialise, its key norms, values and its organizational structure. This Prince Albert Fund project has also contributed to raising his awareness of the strengths of our Belgian industry, in the fields of research and innovation. ***"This experience will make me more effective and efficient in future similar international endeavours."***

The company - Materialise

Through its work with Additive Manufacturing (AM), also known as 3D Printing, Materialise helps bring great products aimed at niche markets directly to the marketplace as well as helping to make the prototypes of products which are subsequently manufactured by the millions. The company offers services to Engineering professionals.

"Stefaan brought a lot of enthusiasm and drive to the Malaysian Materialise office. Both within the office as outside as a business developer he took several initiatives. As a business developer, he engaged with the Malaysian surgeon community and raised their enthusiasm about 3D printing applications in their field by organizing a number of in-house events. Although the business as such is still very much in a developmental stage, Stefaan created a new, broader awareness in the local surgeon community than before."

“My project has significantly increased my knowledge of emerging economies, more specifically Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam and the Philippines.”



Project country: Hong Kong

Stijn De Keyser

► Role

Based in the Barco office in Hong Kong, Stijn De Keyser's role consisted of the company's business development in Southeast Asia.

► Responsibilities

Stijn was working for Barco's Industrial & Government Department, which produces video wall displays and related hardware and software for control rooms.

As Barco does not sell its control room products directly to its customers, but through a network of partners (system integrators), his task was to find and establish relationships with new partners in the countries where Barco did not yet have a presence in the fields of traffic control, security and utilities. His first challenge was to find local SMEs active in these markets. Most of these companies in Southeast Asia lack a proper website and hardly advertise. ***"But as people in this region are open and friendly, this really helped me in my networking and eventually I found the right people to talk to."*** The pace at which business is done in Southeast Asia also turned out to be a great challenge. It can sometimes take three to five years for a deal to materialise, requiring a great deal of patience.

► How he benefited

Stijn switched from working for a bank in the Benelux to working for an international technology company in Asia, selling products he was not familiar with. This great experience contributed to his professional and personal development in many different ways. During his Prince Albert Fund experience, he was able to establish an extensive network in the industry and eventually got to know the right people that Barco is still working with today. ***"Besides identifying many business opportunities and increasing my knowledge of emerging markets, this project also helped me to understand what it is like to actually do business with people."***

The company - Barco

Barco is a global technology company that designs and develops visualisation and collaboration solutions for a variety of selected professional markets, including enterprises, healthcare and entertainment. Employing 3,250 people in more than 90 countries, Barco enables customers worldwide to optimise productivity and business efficiency.

"Stijn has helped the Barco team in Southeast Asia to explore certain markets which even today are not covered in the way they should be. The candidate proposed new potential partners to expand our market coverage. He also showed dedication and was highly motivated in his assignment."

**“In terms of management skills,
I made a great leap forward
in Argentina.”**



Project country: Argentina 

Laurent De Smedt

► Role

The focus of Laurent De Smedt's project was on the apple and pear production of Greenyard, which owns around 20,000 hectares of fertile land in Argentina.

► Responsibilities

The objective of Laurent's mission was to prepare a plan for future plantings of the orchards after an in-depth analysis of the situation of the land. He studied the numbers of orchards, production per hectare, planted surface, varieties, age of the trees in order to get a general overview of each farm.

His greatest challenge at the start of the project was to earn the trust of the farm managers. The language barrier was a first problem since he did not speak Spanish at the start. After an in-depth approach of the field, he recommended investments in machinery in order to reduce the production costs. ***"This meant understanding the complexity of the Argentinean tax system, implementing procurement and purchase procedures as well as negotiating terms & conditions."***

► How he benefited

Laurent learned how to do business in a foreign country with a company that owns around 20,000 hectares of fertile land. ***"At that time, the region which relies on the fruit business, was going down and companies were going bankrupt or had to restructure."*** For Laurent, it was very interesting to see how the Greenyard headquarters prepared and implemented the company's restructuring. He was able to follow this process first-hand and also had the opportunity to help improve the company. ***"The process of how to restructure a company, write a new strategy and have it approved by the shareholders was a very interesting and instructive process to follow."***

The company - Greenyard

The Greenyard Group is a global supplier of fresh produce, operating in the fields of fruit and vegetables, flowers & plants, convenience products, transport & logistics.

"The added value of the Prince Albert Fund candidate has been significant. He succeeded in establishing a long-term plan for the company's own production in Argentina. During the time Laurent spent in the country we successfully changed our business model from a sourcing and exporting company with own production, to an own production company that exports. Laurent's personal background (raised in a fruit-growing family) combined with his degree in business administration helped create a good link between numbers and the technical part. As a consequence, we asked Laurent to stay for another six months in Argentina."

**“The Prince Albert Fund gave me
the opportunity to further develop
my management skills.”**



Project country: Brazil

Caroline Houben

► Role

In 2014, UCB Biopharma established the worldwide HQ of one of its core business units, the Central Nervous System (CNS) unit, in Brazil with a dedicated sales and marketing team in order to launch its key products. Caroline helped the company develop its new footprint for this unit.

► Responsibilities

Caroline's responsibilities consisted of bridging the knowledge gap between neurologists, who are specialized in epilepsy, and UCB's new technologies and treatment options. She managed to do so by creating a dedicated medical educational platform and conducting workshops. The selected participants who were invited to participate in e-sessions through the platform were able to participate in monthly e-lectures and take advantage of a continuous educational program. ***"This was the best way to build strong relationships with the medical sector, paving the way for the products' further commercial development."***

Caroline's background as a chemist with an understanding of epilepsy helped her to establish those relationships, thus creating the best framework for interaction. She also contributed to smaller projects, such as organizing the Purple Day in Brazil, the local version of the Global epilepsy day, which raises awareness about this illness and its sufferers. Patient organizations gave very positive feedback about the event.

► How she benefited

Thanks to the Prince Albert Fund, Caroline had the opportunity to work in an emerging market where UCB needed to develop brand and company awareness. ***"Being involved in the launch of new products as well as helping to establish the company's name and reputation was the most challenging project I could wish for."*** This project allowed Caroline to become the lead for UCB Brazil's multichannel strategy. Ultimately, the objectives were largely achieved and the project was presented at the XII World Neurology Congress, in November 2015, in Santiago, Chile.

The company - UCB Biopharma

With its unique mix of expertise in biology and chemistry, UCB is a Belgian pharmaceutical company with operations in 40 countries. The group aspires to be the patient-centric global biopharmaceutical leader transforming the lives of people living with severe diseases. Its major treatment areas are epilepsy, allergy, Parkinson's and Crohn's Disease, and Rheumatoid Arthritis.

"Caroline's role was instrumental in a key project that UCB Brazil established last year, a medical education platform, in which she was involved early on for almost all aspects. She supervised this innovative digital multichannel initiative, establishing a Virtual Representative structure in order to share information about UCB products in areas where geographical access is not always easy."

**“This experience clearly demonstrated
the potential knowledge and guidance
you can receive from
your network.”**



Project country: U.S.A.

Pieter Josson

► Role

Pieter has worked as a business developer and start-up consultant for iMinds, a hub of Belgian start-ups, in Atelier, a co-working space in New York hosted by the Belgian Chamber of Commerce (Belcham).

► Responsibilities

Peter's mission was part of a new program initiated in 2014, called the Columbus project. Its purpose was to help iMinds portfolio companies gain a first foothold in the American market by providing operational support and hands-on services in market research, business development and sales. In September 2014, he monitored the launch of a pilot project with the company Zeticon NV, which developed a product for storing and managing digital media files in a secure and accessible manner.

He was tasked with the development of market intelligence, business development (setting up prospecting strategies, identifying sales leads and partnership opportunities, etc.), account management and customer support.

► How he benefited

For Pieter, one of the major challenges on the professional level was the shift from a large corporate environment - he was working as an IT consultant in Brussels - to the vibrant start-up scene in New York. This new environment stimulated him to become more pro-active. ***“During my project, I was able to come up with new and innovative approaches to set up our prospecting and direct marketing”.***

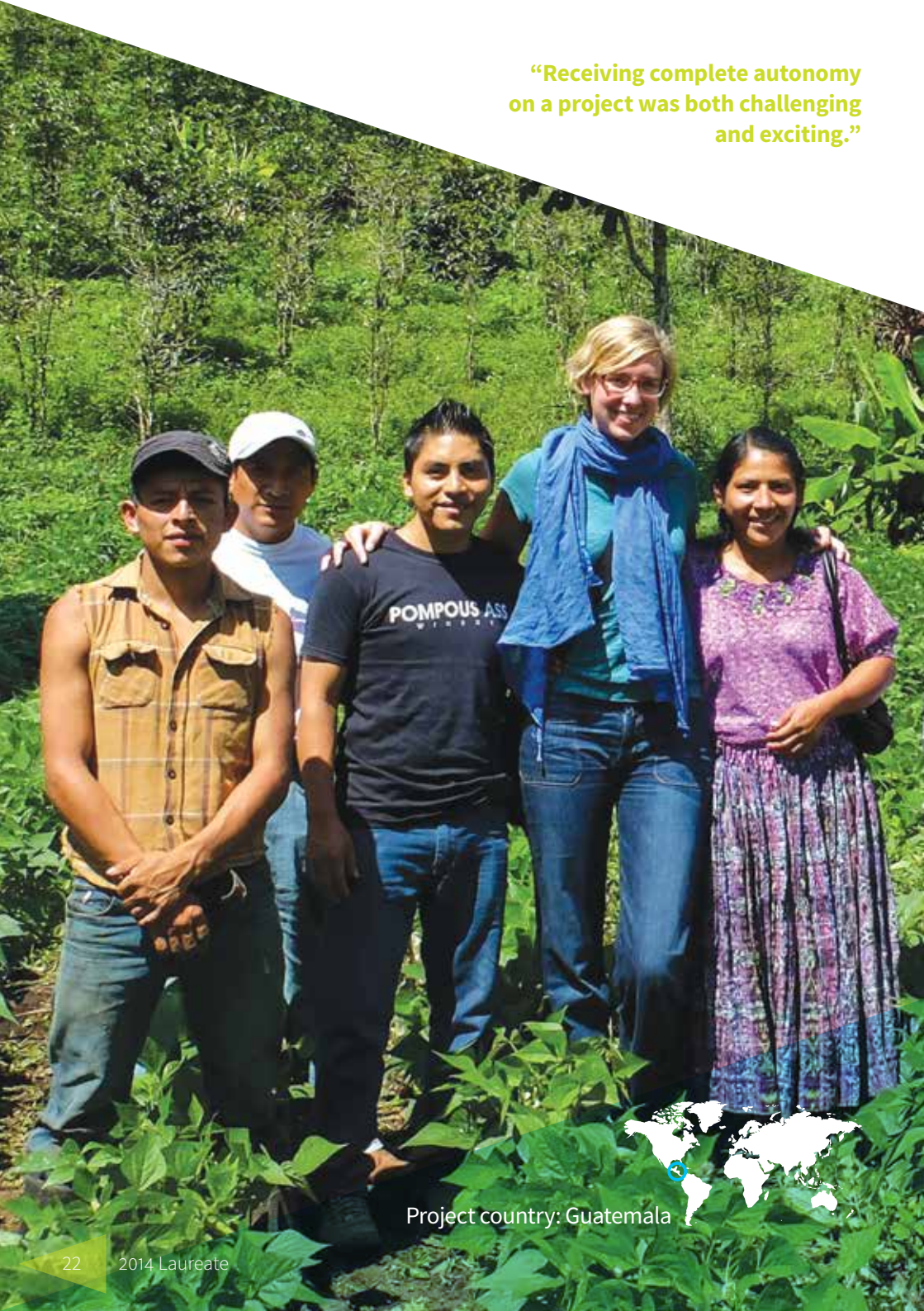
Thanks to the grant from the Prince Albert Fund, he was able to perform a commercial job within a fast-paced environment and to develop a network within the international start-up scene. ***“iMinds has a large network of researchers, companies, entrepreneurs, financiers, incubators and accelerators.”*** After his project, Peter was hired as a full-time start-up consultant for iMinds.

The company - iMinds (iCubes)

iMinds is Flanders' digital research & entrepreneurship hub. It drives digital innovation for society and economy, through strategic and applied research on key digital technologies. The company also encourages tech entrepreneurs to bring their smart innovations to life, helping them start and grow their digital businesses in local and global markets.

“Pieter has pro-actively searched for the best practices he could leverage and implement and worked towards structural solutions. He was able to help secure some first contracts in the American market for Zeticon. This is a great result and to date it is still a work in progress!”

**“Receiving complete autonomy
on a project was both challenging
and exciting.”**



Project country: Guatemala

Marie-Amélie Lenaerts

► Role

Marie-Amélie assisted Durabilis's Guatemalan division, Grupo CEIS, in developing its exports of fresh cut vegetables to the U.S. market.

► Responsibilities

In order to grow in the U.S.A., Grupo CEIS was willing to extend its portfolio with new products such as baby zucchini and Brussels sprouts. The first step consisted in investigating the feasibility of producing and exporting those products, and Marie-Amélie was tasked with coordinating this mission. She started by conducting a market analysis, to identify opportunities and challenges in the American market.

As project coordinator, she acted as a central point ensuring close contact and collaboration between the different levels of management, i.e., the production, plant and sales departments.

► How she benefited

Marie-Amélie's experience in Guatemala had numerous benefits for her professional life. Overall she gained project management as well as analytical skills. She also developed an in-depth knowledge of the global food system, a fascinating sector in which she wants to continue working.

“Personally, I think that my personal development was the biggest benefit of my experience in Guatemala”. Working for a company whose goal is to improve lives of people in poor countries and to challenge the status quo of the global food system was also highly motivating.

The company - Durabilis

Durabilis is an international Impact Investing Company with headquarters in Ghent, investing in sustainable agro & food businesses in low income countries. Through its business units such as Fairfruit, Terral or BaraJii, the group is committed to supplying sustainable quality products to local and export food markets.

“Marie-Amélie has continuously reflected on her own performance and searched for ways to learn in order to improve the project outcome. Thanks to her perseverance, cultural intelligence and out of the box attitude, she tackled the challenges in a smart way and allowed us to make a quantum leap for our growth potential in our American business.”

**“One of the main reasons I applied
for the Prince Albert Fund
program was to sharpen
my strategic skills.”**



Project countries: Thailand and Indonesia



Lauren Peeters

► Role

The main aim of Lauren Peeters's project was to identify the potential of the Southeast Asian market for International Marine and Dredging Consultants (IMDC), a Belgium-based engineering firm.

► Responsibilities

Lauren launched his project in Bangkok (Thailand) and started by conducting a market survey, after which he moved to Jakarta (Indonesia), which he identified as being the most interesting market in the region. It was also important to approach the market in a proactive manner in order to explore opportunities for the preparation of first offers and conclude contracts, with support from the Belgian head office and in cooperation with local or international partners.

His main mission consisted of understanding the market and evaluating the potential for IMDC to enter a specific one. He also started up a regional base, implementing the best strategy for the activities of the group in Southeast Asia.

► How he benefited

As an engineer with a background in dredging projects, Lauren managed to further develop his technical, strategic and commercial skills. It was very important to have an adequate knowledge of the technical aspects of the projects. At the same time, he also needed to study the market strategically and have sufficient impact during negotiations with the clients. ***“The project I executed for IMDC exposed me to the commercial side of the infrastructure business for the first time”***, Lauren explains. A bit overwhelming at first, but challenging and very rewarding once he achieved results!

The company - International Marine and Dredging Consultants (IMDC)

IMDC, an affiliate of Tractebel Engineering, is an engineering and consultancy company specializing in a vast range of water-related projects. It offers services in numerous fields such as dredging, offshore Wind & Blue Energy, flood risk, navigation or integrated Water Resources Management.

“The project executed by Lauren was of strategic importance for IMDC in the context of increased efforts to develop our business internationally. The input from his report was highly valuable to us. It informed us about marine, coastal and flood engineering in South East Asia and helped us to make decisions as to where to focus our business development efforts in this market.”

“The experience, the new skills as well as meeting new people paved the way for many new professional opportunities that I didn’t have before the project.”



Project country: U.S.A.

Benjamin Praet

► Role

Benjamin Praet's mission was to develop the Latin American market for Origis Energy ("Origis"), a developer, financier, and long-term asset manager of solar photovoltaic (PV) energy installations.

► Responsibilities

Origis is currently developing multiple solar photovoltaic energy projects in both the U.S.A. and Chile. Together with another Origis team member, **Benjamin** established commercial agreements with Chile, and instigated further successful business development in Brazil, Mexico, Panama and the Caribbean.

His work consisted of project management including negotiating contracts with suppliers, follow-up on all legal, financial and administrative aspects, cash planning and management during development, negotiations with financial stakeholders including banks, and so on. He also dealt with business development sourcing and assessment of opportunities in different countries including all risks involved.

► How he benefited

This project was a very good experience in **Benjamin's** professional life, which involved moving from a large to a small dynamic company in a high growth industry. In the beginning, he encountered many cultural challenges, as a result of his move to Miami and working in the U.S.A., but also during his travels in North and Latin America.

"I previously worked in a Big 4 consultancy, where everything was well planned and managed. This job gave me the opportunity to work independently, in a different and very dynamic environment with many uncertainties and surprises so I learnt a lot."

It also allowed him to gain an extensive knowledge of new geographical markets, which will definitely be an asset in his future career. After the Prince Albert Fund project, **Benjamin** went on to work for Origis in the U.S.A.

The company - Origis Energy

Origis is powering the solar revolution with solar power projects for utility scale solar and commercial solar energy systems. The company is committed to empowering cities, states, countries, utilities, private businesses and public sector organizations to go solar worldwide.

"Benjamin was an added value to our team for the Latin America development and investment activities. With his help, his hard work and determination, we were able to significantly increase our business presence."

**“I have now the confirmation that the
‘heavy industry’ and especially
Mining / Minerals is a sector
that really interests me.”**



Project country: Malaysia

Floriane Uyttenhove

► Role

In Malaysia, Floriane Uyttenhove was tasked with full business development missions for Lhoist, a leading supplier of lime (calcined limestone).

► Responsibilities

Floriane was tasked with business development in the AAC (Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) market in Asia and asked to analyze its potential for Lhoist. This involved investigating the market segment, conducting a customer and competitor analysis, understanding the region, carrying out in-depth strategic market studies, studying logistics and conducting a cost to serve analysis.

Floriane also worked on a market study on agriculture in view of a potential acquisition that could offer good perspectives for carbonates sales (pure limestone).

► How she benefited

In her host country Malaysia, Floriane constantly had to deal with the different cultural sensitivities of the three major communities that are represented in Kuala Lumpur: Malays, the Chinese and Indians. ***“Being confronted on a daily basis with a different culture, environment and mindset, learning the local language... It was all a very energizing experience”***. She also received geology training from her Prince Albert Fund company as part of her introductory work placement in the industry. ***“I had the opportunity to work with A-level people. This allowed me to learn a lot from truly smart and inspiring people.”***

The company - Lhoist

Established in Belgium since 1889, the Lhoist Group offers a wide range of mineral, calcic lime and dolomitic lime-based products. It brings expertise in a broad range of sectors such as the steel industry, refractories, the environment, construction and civil engineering, agriculture, glass and chemistry.

“During her Prince Albert Fund experience, Floriane undertook a number of project-based assignments to support the development of Lhoist’s business in Asia. Her tasks included evaluating our target markets, defining key factors that affect market development and establishing the potential options available to our company.”

“The Prince Albert Fund exceeded my expectations in terms of development, both on a personal and professional level.”

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Project country: China

Kristel Van den Bergh

► Role

Kristel Van den Bergh was asked to investigate the way Materialise could launch its clinical business in China and determine the optimal entry mode.

► Responsibilities

As the Chinese market is new to Materialise, the first step of the project was to understand the market situation and look into different possibilities for enlarging the market scope. **Kristel** thus gathered market intelligence through extensive desk and field research. At the same time, she worked on partnership projects involving local companies. Her mission required extensive travel to various Chinese cities to meet the company's target regarding customers/partners and to participate in key industry events.

Kristel encountered challenges on various levels during her Prince Albert Fund year: China-related, assignment-related and company-related.

She had to learn **“how to navigate the complex Chinese business environment”**, especially how to gather accurate data about this huge continent. She also had to meet the stakeholders' expectations, which was quite demanding.

► How she benefited

The Prince Albert Fund helped Kristel to progress much faster compared to a traditional career path. ***“The strategic business development role, the Medical 3D Printing industry and the Chinese business context were all new to me which sometimes felt like a triple challenge”***. She also gained experience about how to operate more efficiently at C-level and became more aware of how internal politics/tensions can affect business decisions. But she took it all in her stride and laughs: ***“I learned about the do's and don'ts by making mistakes!”***.

The company - Materialise

Through its work with Additive Manufacturing (AM), also known as 3D Printing, Materialise helps to bring great products aimed at niche markets directly to the marketplace as well as making the prototypes of products that will later be manufactured by the millions. The company offers services for Engineering professionals.

“After having conducted extensive market research and presented the results to the board of directors in our headquarters in Leuven, Kristel received a positive reply regarding the extension of our product portfolio in the market in China. She is a very committed candidate who took on the project and the position wholeheartedly.”

“The cultural training of the Prince Albert Fund is of utmost importance because to succeed you must understand the people and the environment.”



Project country: China

Jerome Vandegeerde

► Role

The outdoor lighting industry faced a brutal transition, which is primarily due to new technologies. Consequently, Schreder was forced to adapt its production and commercial activities in China so as to meet the new challenges in the sector. As a marketing manager, Jerome Vandegeerde's assignment was to transform the existing marketing department into a more efficient one.

► Responsibilities

Jerome had to work in a subsidiary that was undergoing numerous changes: new factory under construction, new business environment, new technology (LED)... He took on a lot of responsibilities both in the strategic and operational fields. Making the business more efficient meant assuming all the functions of the marketing department: creating marketing messages and tools for the sales teams, reviewing the product mapping, market knowledge, pricing and much more.

"Changes also mean resistance so I had to gain the trust of my marketing and sales colleagues which was quite challenging". Communication was key. He organized frequent meetings in order to explain and follow up on those shifts.

► How he benefited

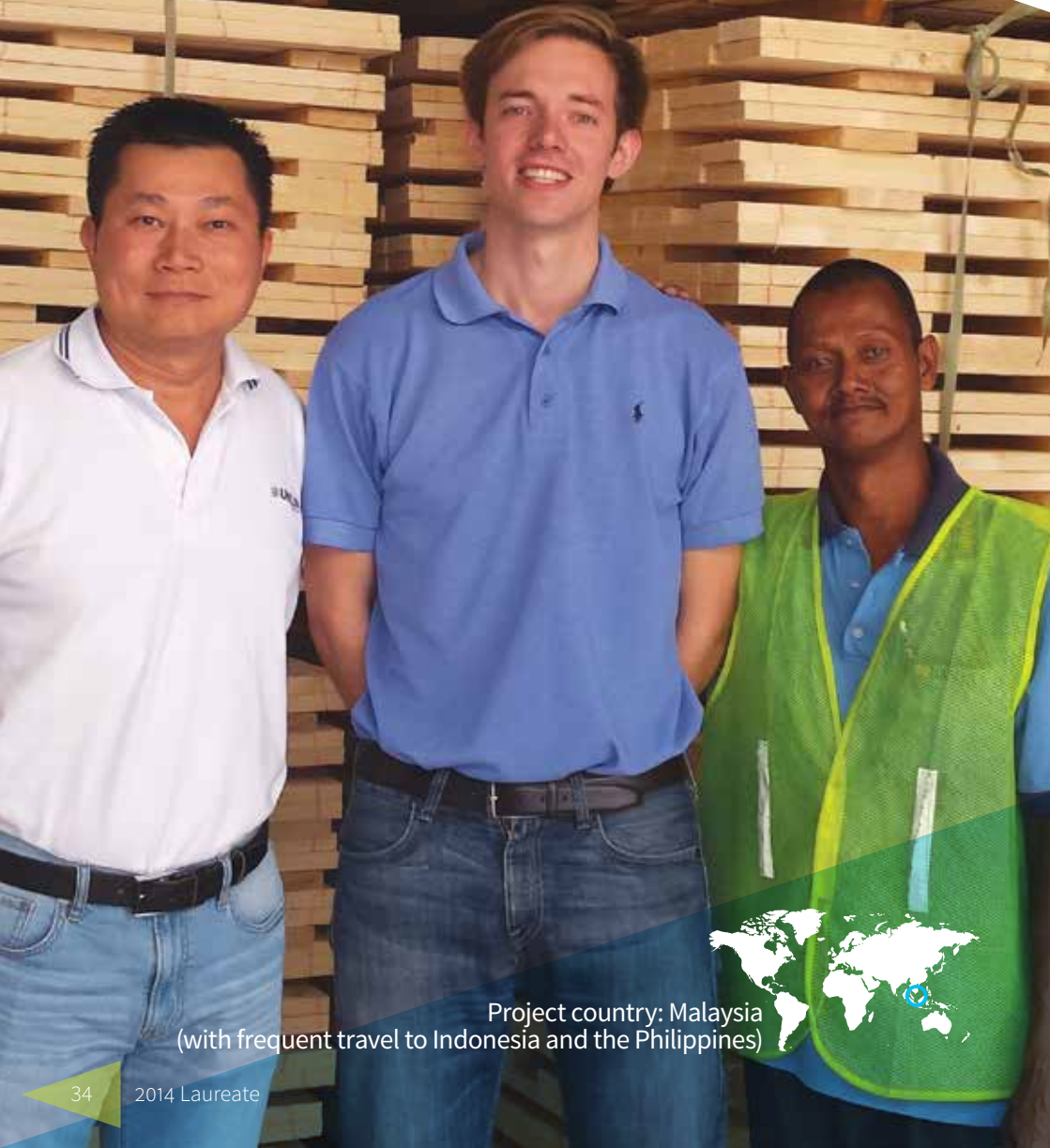
Even though he fluently speaks Chinese mandarin, Jerome learned a lot about Chinese culture by working and living in mainland China. ***"Speaking the language doesn't always mean that you can effectively communicate with others"***. In order to change an organization of more than 200 people in one year, Jerome learned how to proactively assume responsibilities but also learnt a lot about teamwork, motivation, perseverance and leadership.

The company - Schreder

Schreder is an outdoor lighting company, supplying high-quality lighting products since 1977. Since then it has grown into one of the largest suppliers of street lighting and exterior decorative lighting equipment. An international group of 48 companies worldwide, Schreder has had a successful presence in the Chinese market for over 25 years.

"The introduction of a new marketing concept to the Chinese market required a never-ending commitment. Thanks to his persistency, academic and Asian background, Jerome has been a major factor in helping us face transition."

“For me, the Prince Albert Fund project was an opportunity to put things into perspective and to confirm my passion and strength.”



Project country: Malaysia
(with frequent travel to Indonesia and the Philippines)



Stefaan Vandooren

► Role

Stefaan Vandooren's project consisted in developing the flooring activities of Unilin in South-East Asia.

► Responsibilities

Stefaan contributed to the company's development by focusing on three aspects, namely a clear product and pricing strategy for the whole South-East Asian region, the set-up of a hub in Malaysia to support the commercial requirements and the implementation of a go-to-market strategy for Indonesia and the Philippines.

"First encounters with potential distributors made me realise that the standard value proposition of Unilin did not match the local market requirements, and that our local approach had to be different from what Unilin had been doing anywhere in the world so far".

He addressed this issue by making recommendations on competitive pricing and product analyzes for the countries in scope.

► How he benefited

The Prince Albert Fund project helped Stefaan to improve his ability to address business development issues. His project was a very complimentary experience, allowing him to gain a better understanding of the complexities and practical challenges when growing a business in an overseas market. He also developed solid sales experience, realising what is important to succeed in sales and how to negotiate a deal. This project made him somehow more results-oriented and decisive, confirming his interest in working for a conventional industrial company. ***"This experience was really a door-opener as Unilin gave me the opportunity to keep on working for them".***

The company - Unilin

Unilin produces laminate floors, engineered wood, vinyl floors, boards, decorative panels, finished products, roofing elements and insulation panels. The Belgian company is part of the American company Mohawk Industries Inc. Unilin has 20 production units around the world.

"Stefaan has been able to add value to our Asian activities on the sales and operational sides. Overall, we were very pleased with his contribution. In a relatively short period of time, he managed to have an impact on our top-line performance."

“Challenging, entrepreneurial, intense,
my project had it all.”



Project country: Brazil

Sebastiaan Vanhecke

► Role

Sebastiaan Vanhecke was in charge of opening and setting up a new office in São Paulo for Xpenditure, a Belgian start-up that offers a software for expense management.

► Responsibilities

Further to a strong growth in the U.S.A. and Europe, Xpenditure decided to start exploring the Brazilian market in early 2015. **Sebastiaan** had to set up a local business structure, hire and manage a local sales and support team, communicate with the local investment partners and develop new business deals and partnerships. ***“My first month at Xpenditure was a deep-dive into the fast moving world of a technology start-up”.***

After a while, he was able to get the company's software on the Mastercard Brazil business tool platform. This opened doors to companies and was a great reference to be perceived as a secure and premium expense software. It also helped the company adapt its product to suit the local market.

► How he benefited

Before his Prince Albert Fund project, **Sebastiaan** was working as a freelance consultant on various IT projects. Arriving in a start-up with great colleagues and a very open culture gave him the opportunity to build a team from scratch. He learned a lot about how to guide, motivate and manage people. Furthermore, he learned to focus more on building business relations and networking. ***“This experience was a perfect mix of operational challenges, improving my personal skills, sales skills, teaching me how to come up with creative solutions, financial planning and so much more. I will probably only understand the scope of what I learnt in the years to come”.***

The company - Cardwise / Xpenditure

Cardwise, a start-up company based in Mechelen, was founded in 2011. The company developed Xpenditure, a web-based solution for expense & receipt management for business users, based on a ground-breaking scanning methodology. It offers solutions to companies for storing and reporting expenses as well as to design and develop prepaid card management solutions.

“We were very pleased with the added value of Sebastiaan. While Brazil was facing a financial difficult year, he managed to set up a new branch for our software Xpenditure and hire the required staff. He achieved the targets we set and provided us with all necessary updates and financials.”

**“I became more self-aware
and got to know myself better during
my Prince Albert Fund project.”**



Project country: U.S.A.

Rutger Callewier

► Role

Rutger Callewier was tasked with establishing and expanding Decospan's panel floor business in the U.S.A. While this company had already carved out a strong position for itself in New York, it wished to develop its sales in most other American states.

► Responsibilities

Together with the sales manager, **Rutger** had to set up a distribution program in various states, through agreements with two main sales partners. He thus had to translate the strategic plan into various actions. **Rutger** mainly helped develop the structure for distribution agreements, managed the marketing side of operations, worked with representatives and coordinated with the Belgian head office. He also took a more direct sales role in Texas and the North-West region (Seattle, Portland).

Later in the year, he also worked towards expanding the flooring business among more targeted groups in New York, with the launch of a new product line for commercial applications.

► How he benefited

Rutger found that understanding the industry specificities in the U.S. market, where the sale of wood panels is driven by architects, was the main challenge. He therefore developed a strategy that was mainly oriented towards this target group. He also learnt how to develop a new product range from scratch, including product composition, branding, pricing and marketing. ***“During the Prince Albert Fund project, I found out that I enjoyed building an organization much more than pure sales work. Now I would like to work in a small or medium-sized company, helping them take their business to a higher level.”***

The company - Decospan

Decospan, founded in Belgium in 1978, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of veneer wood panels and floors. Thanks to more than 160 wood species, its state-of-the-art machines, a sustainable business model and flexible employees, the company is able to develop new products that meet the needs of all its stakeholders.

“Rutger really helped us expand Decospan's business in the U.S. from 2 to 12 distributors. He and his colleagues closed deals with a large distribution group ensuring that our panel products are now available nationwide.”

**“This project transformed me
into a full project manager.
I became more pro-active,
more creative and flexible.”**



Project country: Hong Kong



Kaat De Sutter

► Role

Kaat De Sutter was tasked with strategic analysis and commercial implementation in the Asia Pacific region for The Cookware Company, an SME selling innovative cookware.

► Responsibilities

Working in the Asia-Pacific office in Hong Kong, **Kaat** developed a full analysis of the markets and competitors, in order to implement the Cookware Company brand in Australia/New-Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam. She did the groundwork for building a cooperation with the new target clients.

An important part of her job consisted of ensuring that new retailers would accept to list the brand in the targeted markets. Kaat also had to launch a major marketing campaign to sustain the brand image and accentuate its environmental-friendly benefits.

► How she benefited

At the start of the project, **Kaat** took a business trip to the company's destination markets, meeting with local distributors and new clients. This was a very positive and intensive experience enabling her to learn a great deal about the company's strategy. Her Prince Albert Fund project definitely provided her with an international angle, which a lot of her professional peers do not get to have this early in their career. Working for an SME, with a start-up culture, also allowed her to work independently. ***"I needed to be a business developer, account manager, marketer and logistics manager all at the same time. I now have a good idea of the entire business supply chain, from production to point-of-sale, whereas previously, during my career, I was only involved in the sales & marketing end phase of consumer goods."***

The company - The Cookware Company - GreenPan

The Cookware Company is a global cookware manufacturer with a global brand presence. The company launched its original brand, GreenPan, in Belgium in 2007, making it the first manufacturer to introduce PTFE-free non-stick cookware onto the market. Nowadays the brand can be found in over 90 countries worldwide. The Cookware Company continues to be known as the house of innovation!

"Our company absolutely appreciated the drive, enthusiasm and passion Kaat put in the project and in business development in the Asia Pacific region. Her output at the end of her 12-month project was substantial."

**“I’ve learned to develop a business
in a different culture, but also
learned what it means to live
in this culture.”**



Project country: Rwanda

Ruben Donceel

► Role

Ruben Donceel's mission consisted in starting up a new branch of Nguvu Utilities in Rwanda. The company operates in the energy sector, implementing solar installations and solar home systems for rural off-grid populations.

► Responsibilities

During his first months in the country, **Ruben** conducted a market analysis, in preparation of a business plan that was adapted to the field.

This prompted Nguvu Utilities to open a Nguvushop to sell off-grid solar equipment in Nyagartare district, a test market located in north-eastern Rwanda. **Ruben** was in charge of every aspect of the shop concept, including the pricing, overseeing the sales agents as well as the promotional campaigns. He also prepared the implementation of a "Pay-As-You-Go" technology, to finance the systems for the clients.

► How he benefited

During his Prince Albert Fund mission, **Ruben** was in charge of the Rwandan branch and as such, responsible for all the aspects of the Rwandan business. ***"At some point, I had to hire a team – accountant/office managers, sales officers... - which proved to be very challenging but was a good learning experience for me."*** Thanks to the Belgian financial consultant, he also learned a lot about financial management, including short-term cash planning, currency exchange risk and long-term financial plans. For **Ruben**, this was also a unique opportunity to place orders and arrange logistics, to get equipment that was mostly manufactured in China to Rwanda. But above all, he appreciated the Rwandan way of life, which greatly values a sense of community.

The company - Nguvu Utilities

Nguvu Utilities is a social enterprise that focuses on small-scale utility services in developing countries. Its objective is to improve the access to affordable and sustainable utility services for households, businesses and communities in rural and peri-urban areas. In so doing, the company wishes to contribute to the local social-economic development and improve the quality of life.

"Ruben's presence provided a lot of added value for our company. As a business development manager in Kigali, he developed the Rwandan branch of Nguvu Utilities, which was a success."

**“I have come across people
and situations that
I feel have made me
a better person.”**



Project country: Singapore

Louis Hoet

► Role

DEME Concessions, a subsidiary of DEME Group invests in several offshore wind projects worldwide. During his project, Louis Hoet assisted the company, which hoped to develop a strategic partnership with an investor willing to acquire a stake in existing projects and/or co-develop new projects.

► Responsibilities

Louis defined a suitable partner profile and established contacts with shortlisted industrial and financial investors. His focus area was the greater Asian region, where he hoped to find a partner that could also grant the DEME Group access to growing market opportunities for offshore wind in Asia.

Even if attracting foreign Asian investors for a large-scale European infrastructure program does come with its set of challenges (a complex business environment and political landscape ...), some promising leads were established and will continue to be developed. The DEME Group recently announced that it concluded a cooperation agreement with a Chinese partner for the development of offshore wind farms in China.

► How he benefited

For Louis, being part of DEME's pioneering culture was a truly inspiring experience. Belonging to a group that encourages innovation and incites its employees to think about and develop new business ideas and opportunities was quite motivational. During his mission, he was invited to a huge conference on the concept of innovation, an event with 200 young DEME employees and the senior management team.

"I want to take what I learned during this Prince Albert Fund project with me and use it in all my future challenges", Louis explains. "But above all, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to contribute to the future of the DEME Group."

The company - DEME Concessions

DEME Concessions is the investment vehicle of DEME, a Belgian dredging and hydraulic engineering Group that has carved out a prominent position for itself on the world market in a number of highly specialized and complex hydraulic disciplines. The group has created a network of branch offices and agencies on all continents. Today, the company has operations in over 90 different countries.

"Louis did an excellent job reporting on his developments and always presented a clear proposal for moving forward, steps taken and results. He swiftly adapted to the DEME culture and was appreciated by his co-workers, on the professional and personal level."

**“I experienced the challenges
of working with partnerships
in countries across
Asia first-hand.”**



Project country: Hong Kong



Caroline Kindermans

► Role

Caroline Kindermans was part of the Strategy and M&A (Merger and Acquisition) team in the Asia regional office of Ageas, one of Europe's larger insurance companies.

► Responsibilities

Caroline's project in Hong Kong kicked off at the same time that Ageas announced to divest the Hong Kong operations and entered into two greenfield partnerships in The Philippines and Vietnam. The timing to start her project at the Strategy and M&A team in Hong Kong was therefore ideal. She was involved in a range of commercial and corporate development projects very soon after her arrival which allowed her to quickly experience how Ageas functions in Asia.

She was involved in a number of projects for both the existing as well as the new partnerships. She worked among others on a new bancassurance cooperation with their Malaysian partner, on regulatory changes in India and the consequences thereof for their Indian partnership, and contributed to the closing of the transactions in The Philippines and Vietnam. She experienced the challenges of working with partnerships in different countries across the region, each market and partner being different and requiring a unique and tailored approach.

► How she benefited

For Caroline, this Prince Albert Fund program constituted a real career change. She previously worked as an M&A lawyer in Brussels, focussing on private equity and project finance transactions, for more than five years. Here she learned a much more multi-faceted approach to projects. ***"I now have more hands-on experience with the identification of targets, the commercial/financial negotiations and valuation, the building and maintaining of partnerships in an intercultural context."*** Towards the end of her project, Ageas offered Caroline the position of Assistant Vice-President M&A and Corporate Development, which she was pleased to accept.

The company - Ageas

As one of Europe's larger insurance companies, Ageas is the No.1 insurer in Belgium and ranks among the market leaders in most of the countries in which it operates. With a total workforce of more than 40,000 people, Ageas is present in Belgium, the UK, Luxembourg, France, Italy, Portugal, Turkey, China, Malaysia, India, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

"Caroline seamlessly blended into her new work environment while her legal skills and transaction experience provided instant added value for the team. She had the opportunity to work in a small, close-knit team, close to where the action is, which allowed her to get a better sense of the financial and business rationale behind strategic decisions."

**“Spending one year in San Francisco
exposed me to new business
concepts and innovative
working methods.”**



Project country: U.S.A.

Stephanie Tang

► Role

As a marketing manager, Stephanie Tang was tasked with the optimization of the client experience, business development and general marketing for Newtree in San Francisco.

► Responsibilities

Within the framework of her Prince Albert Fund project, **Stephanie** had to help Newtree open a third café in San Francisco. The company has already implemented a café concept in the Californian Bay, called 'Savor Life', which serves organic food (pastries, fresh soups, salads, sandwiches) as well as selling Newtree's chocolate products. **Stephanie** professionalized the operating structure of these shops/restaurants, establishing new and clear standard procedures for deliveries, placing orders, streamlining food service, etc. As the head of the kitchen staff, she also learned how to motivate teams of workers as well as solving internal conflicts.

Her work represented a solid base for Newtree to expand its activities in this market.

► How she benefited

Having previously worked for large companies, where the role and function of each employee is well defined, **Stephanie** was faced with a new type of professional environment during her Prince Albert Fund assignment. Aside from the fact that doing business in America is very different from Belgium, especially in the hospitality industry, Stephanie also had to adapt to the small size of the organization. ***"I learned that in the U.S., the customer is king and that the slightest wrong move can result in you being sued!"*** Later, Stephanie was approached by several Belgian companies. Who knows, this experience might even lead her back to Silicon Valley!

The company - Newtree

NewTree SA is a Belgium-based company that operates in the food processing sector. It produces chocolate bars and sandwich spreads made from fruit and natural plant extracts. The company's products are divided into five different lines: Chocolate, Cookies, Spreads, Gifts, and Lifestyle. Newtree has a commercial presence in more than 25 countries, where its products are marketed through supermarkets, department stores, cafés and specialized food retail outlets.

"Thanks to Stephanie's support, we were able to set up a lot of new procedures, work on marketing projects, new architectural designs, products and recipes... just to name a few of her fantastic achievements."

**“I had the privilege of experiencing
a real start-up from up close,
including the successes
and pitfalls.”**



Project country: U.S.A.

Charles van Haverbeke

► Role

Charles van Haverbeke was employed as Head of Operations and U.S. Business Development by Zentrack, a company specializing in interactive video, offering viewers the option of creating their own experience and interacting with the content.

► Responsibilities

Charles worked closely with the CEO and management team, analyzing and improving the operational efficiency of different aspects of Zentrack's business.

Interactive video can be used in various ways by businesses, allowing them to deliver content or advertising and facilitate the direct purchase of products, to publishers and viewers.

During his time at Zentrack, Charles had the opportunity to be part of the overall sales management and operations team. He was tasked with the implementation of the sales funnel, the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system, as well as setting goals for the sales team. Zentrack successfully met its goal to operate on a more global scale, opening several offices worldwide (LA, Helsinki, London and Ghent, the company's head office). Charles also had to deal with the challenge of coordinating on a global level, while dealing with time zone differences and decentralized management

► How he benefited

"I wanted to learn how to scale a business in the fast-growing world of U.S. start-ups, a world that is synonymous with risks and uncertainty in constantly changing environments." And sometimes it feels like a rollercoaster! ***"How to keep calm and save your business when faced with unexpected events?"*** That is one of the key learnings Charles took home from this start-up's best practices. He also opted to work with a product – interactive video – that has enormous potential in terms of global market growth and leadership.

The company - Zentrack

Founded in 2010 in Ghent, Zentrack has since become a global player in interactive video, building technology and developing solutions for marketers, advertisers and publishers that make video actionable and accountable. It helps brands and media companies activate video audiences, deepen content engagement and drive conversion across the purchase funnel.

"Despite the fact that we regularly heaped more 'to do's' onto Charles's plate, he was able to deliver value on all dimensions. He was able to cope with a wide scope of tasks, difficult assignments and constantly switching priorities!"

**“Looking back at my project,
I’m happy to see the immense
learning curve I had.”**



Material



Project country: Malaysia

Michiel Van Hooreweder

► Role

Michiel Van Hooreweder worked as a local business developer in Malaysia for Materialise, a pioneering Belgian company operating in the 3D printing industry.

► Responsibilities

Michiel's job consisted of engaging with local 3D printing machine manufacturers in the Asia-Pacific (APAC), Australia, Korea and India region to establish lasting partnerships that would allow Materialise to market its printing software solutions.

The first phase of his job consisted in mapping the market and its needs. During the second phase, he sought to establish partnerships with the local OEM (original equipment manufacturer) companies, a market that has been booming for a couple of years. Towards the end of his project, Michiel had been able to engage in a long-term partnership with some OEMs, thus having a significant impact on the future sales figures.

► How he benefited

Michiel had the opportunity to approach the particularities of the APAC/India/Korea market and gained a good insight into their specific needs, which gave rise to the development of a software platform in Asia.

“Looking back at the challenges of my project, I realise that one of the main concerns was the communication between the local branches and the company’s headquarters in Leuven”.

Michiel previously worked in a more traditional industry, so he had to learn how to adapt to a high-tech environment and the high level of complexity of the company's products and services. This Prince Albert Fund experience opened doors giving him the opportunity to discover a new industry with a promising future.

The company - Materialise

Materialise currently incorporates more than 25 years of 3D printing experience into a range of software solutions and 3D printing services, which together form the backbone of the 3D printing industry. Headquartered in Belgium (Leuven), the company provides its products and services to various industries: healthcare, automotive, consumer products, etc. It combines the largest group of software developers with one of the largest 3D printing facilities in the world.

“As we needed to approach the new players on the South-East Asia market in a more structured manner, Michiel contributed his valuable presence, meaning we could rely on a professional who was entirely dedicated to business development.”

“I learned to take ownership
of my decisions and take
the consequences
if things go wrong.”



Project countries: Burkina Faso and Togo

Annabel Van Orshoven

► Role

Annabel Van Orshoven was tasked with setting up the first international expansion project of BaraJii Group, a subsidiary of Durabilis.

► Responsibilities

After training in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Annabel moved to Lomé (Togo) to launch a new subsidiary. Starting from scratch, she assembled a new local team including a commercial director, commercial agents, an accountant and production operators. Once the organization was in place, she launched production and sales. ***“My role was to manage the commercial department, to identify processes and procedures, and to manage human resources.”***

Next to this, she was responsible for the different franchising projects in Senegal, Niger and Cameroon. The goal was to find local partners with operations in the beverage industry, who would be willing to collaborate with BaraJii Group to produce and distribute flavoured waters and natural juices under the BaraJii brand.

► How she benefited

Annabel learned to take up a leadership position in various ways during her Prince Albert Fund experience in West Africa: personal leadership as she was responsible for developing a franchising strategy; leadership of others as she had to implement this strategy with a partner in Senegal and manage the project from A to Z. She also managed the commercial department, HR and the internal organization, when launching a new subsidiary in Lomé.

Besides this, she really loved ***“being able to have a significant impact, on the organization as well as on my colleagues, employees and the environment during my year abroad. Durabilis’s vision is to be an ‘impact investing company’ and I was proud to be part of this.”***

The company - Durabilis, BaraJii Group

Durabilis is an international impact investing company that links people to formal economies by investing in and managing sustainable agro- and food businesses in low income countries. The BaraJii Group business unit, which is headquartered in Burkina Faso, supplies healthy, affordable and high quality beverages for the “base of the pyramid” market.

“Annabel made a difference in multiple domains: she started up the new subsidiary in Lomé, developed a franchising strategy and a brand manual... I believe that Annabel’s year within BaraJii Group has been fruitful for both the group as well as for her professional development.”

**“I already had the opportunity to work abroad
before my Prince Albert Fund project,
but thanks to the grant, I had the chance
to work for a great company
like Sibelco.”**



Project country: Thailand

Bernard Vinckier

► Role

Bernard Vinckier joined Sibelco Asia as business development Advisor Energy in their new Energy division.

► Responsibilities

For the most part, **Bernard**'s assignment consisted of a feasibility study regarding the implementation of a supply centre of API Barite distribution in South Thailand, through partnerships with suppliers. For this he had to gather information from various stakeholders: logistics coordinators, warehouse supervisors, supply chain management staff. He also visited numerous mines, identified the best resources and further developed relationships with those companies.

At the same time, he interacted with other Business Leaders within Sibelco, as he was invited to various workshops through the Asian region. This taught **Bernard** much more about the company's business and allowed him to be part of different project teams.

► How he benefited

After a previous experience working in China for a very small company, **Bernard** chose this Prince Albert Fund project as it gave him the opportunity to work for a "start-up" of a multinational company, with a very dynamic team in Asia. ***"By finding my way on my own in a multinational company, I became a more mature person."*** Moreover, thanks to Sibelco, **Bernard** had the chance to be part of the Royal Economic mission to Indonesia, a major event that allowed him to meet with the top management of Belgian companies. In May 2016, **Bernard** accepted the position of Project Manager Operations Asia for Sibelco, and was relocated in Singapore. ***"This project came at the right time in my career."***

The company - Sibelco Minerals

Sibelco was established in 1872 and is one of the oldest companies in Flanders today. The administrative headquarters of Sibelco Benelux are situated in Dessel.

With over 250 production units worldwide, the company specializes in the extraction, production and distribution of five major minerals for industrial use including quartz, cristobalite and plastic clay.

"Bernard has proven to be hands on by leading a task force that analyzed the performance of our biggest processing plant in Thailand, which was very useful for us."

The Prince Albert Fund

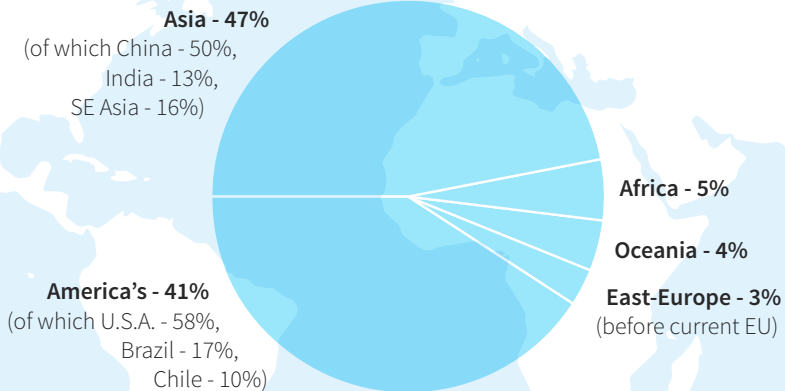
A Unique opportunity for candidates
and companies alike

► Key figures: 1984 – 2016

391 Alumni around the globe

70% men - 30% women

Project destinations



► For candidates

Are you ready to kickstart your international career?

If you're keen to broaden your horizons and take on the challenge of an international career, the Prince Albert Fund might be just what you need.

Essentially, it is your chance to manage a one-year business project of your choice for a Belgian company outside Europe, giving you invaluable business and inter-cultural experience, as well as accelerating your international career as a member of a select network of the Fund's alumni.

How does it work?

The first step is to apply for the grant online (application from November to mid January).

You don't need a project to apply – the first thing we look at is the quality of your candidature as an individual via a thorough selection process.

Once you're selected as a candidate, you'll receive a number of training and coaching sessions. Here, you'll be able to choose your own project and destination, either an opportunity from one of our candidate companies, or from your own contacts.

You get a Tax-free compensation of €25,000 from the Prince Albert Fund, while the company will pay for your housing, flights and mission related expenses.

And then you'll be off – one year, one country, one project, and it's up to you to make it work. Hand in a successful project report at the end of your mission and you have a chance to become a Prince Albert Fund Laureate, a distinction that carries real recognition in the world of international Belgian business.

Who can apply?

The ideal candidate:

- Is Belgian or is a EU citizen with a clear link with Belgium
- Holds a master's degree preferably in the field of economy, law, marketing, finances, engineering, economical sciences or in any other field with an additional degree in management
- Is fluent in English
- Is mature, motivated, eager to learn and to discover new cultures, open-minded and with an entrepreneurial mindset
- Has at least 2-3 years of professional experience
- Is not older than 30 (at the date of application)

Interested?

Find out more on www.princealbertfund.be
or join one of our info sessions and decide
whether you're ready to spread your wings and take off!

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VBO
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Belgische
Ondernemingen

FEB
Fédération des
Entreprises de
Belgique

► For companies

Looking for highly motivated young talent for your international business development?

The Prince Albert Fund offers a fantastic opportunity for Belgian companies with an existing international presence or planning an international expansion to take on pre-selected, high potential management candidates for a one-year contract at a low risk and attractive cost ratio for your company.

We are always on the lookout for challenging business projects abroad to match our grant participants.

How does it work?

The Prince Albert Fund carefully selects the best candidates each year. Once selected, they will be able to choose a company, project and destination.

As high potentials, they are not junior trainees – they should be given decision-making power and autonomy to encourage initiative and allow them to acquire relevant international experience.

The project must offer a challenge to explore and set out new strategies for your business. For each project, you should appoint a coach or mentor within your organization.

The Prince Albert Fund provides the participant with an annual scholarship grant. The company pays no salary, but pays a contribution to the Prince Albert Fund to help cover operational expenses, as well as paying for the candidate's housing, flights and mission related expenses.

Who can apply?

Any company that fulfils the following criteria:

- Is Belgian
- Has or is developing an international presence outside the EU
- Has a challenging international business development project to offer
- Is prepared to take a Grant candidate on board as project manager for a year
- Is ready to support the candidate with appropriate coaching during the assignment

Interested?

Find out more on www.princealbertfund.be
or contact us to propose a project!

