



Paris · Munich · Torino

FOUNDATION OF THE COLLÈGE DES INGÉNIEURS

CDI was founded in Paris in 1986, to take advantage of the dynamic global economy that was emerging. These years marked a change of an era: Europe, West as well as East, industrialized, emerged from the command economy which, during the “reconstruction” had continued the war economy (World War I, Civil wars, World War II, Cold war). The mid-1980s marked the emergence of the continental European economy into the market economy, of which the European Union is one of the regulators. At the same time, European organisations started taking their place in the global industrial and financial economy.

This change of era was destined to change the development of engineers in Europe. For almost a century (1880-1980), development of scientists and engineers had been almost exclusively dedicated to the intra-European industrial war: vehicle mechanisation, railways, air transportation, iron and steel manufacturing, energy, nuclear, resource planning & production had been devised and directed towards winning the military battles to be able to impose new power relations. In the repeated massacres that followed (one hundred million war dead, famines, genocides), how many young people killed or not born, unable to bear new ideas, have fled to America, denied Europe the power to rebuild itself? The command economy was principally a transformation from the war economy, driven by production engineers. The aged pre-war elite, the war survivors still in power perpetuated the old world for too long. The great youth revolts of the 1960s and 1970s expressed the deeply held desire to get out of the war culture that continued to impregnate everything.

In the 1980s, the final political and social aftermaths of this “great intra-European civil war” finally disappeared in Europe: the symbolic collapse of the Berlin wall accelerated the change. The culture of European engineers could also be re-oriented as “a weapon of peace”, as quoted by Samuel Pizar. Throughout Europe we saw innovation and value creation combining, breakthrough techniques spreading, greater understanding of product quality defined by customer satisfaction, freely expressed by the act of purchase, the ability to locate necessary resources for innovation by the creation of businesses, discovering new technical resources for services, understanding market complexity, these are the new stakes in the development of peacetime engineers. **In other words, by bringing together the entrepreneurial spirit with engineering science needed by the new era, the Collège des Ingénieurs is a new centre of excellence** which, for a new educational ‘mix’, for over the past 30 years has focused on selecting talent coming out of the best engineering schools and universities in Europe, to have, despite the small numbers, a maximum impact out of its bases in **Paris, Munich and Turin**.

The worldwide economic depression which spread in 2008, after two decades of exceptional growth and globalisation, shows above all, a lack of intellectual control and understanding of the change mechanisms that enabled the enormous growth of wealth from different parts of the world. We appreciate that the talent needed to understand today’s complex technical, economic, social and financial systems that energize our planet are very rare. Without some intellectual advance which will enable us to understand the complexities at work, overcautious politicians could impose stifling controls: what is the point of armies of blind regulators in the labyrinth of today’s complexity, if nobody knows exactly why wealth has ever increased or been destroyed. A movement towards the development of new actors, including regulators, is both urgent and necessary, and on all continents. **Obviously, we need to build a network for development and exchange of ideas on these subjects, and the Collège des Ingénieurs is ready to play its part: The shifting business environment demands a change in how leaders think and act. We aim to prepare future executives for this challenge.**

MILESTONES

1985

Prefiguration committee with Jean Peyrelevede as chairman

1986

Founding of the Collège des Ingénieurs by Philippe Mahrer, director

1990

With the support of the French Président de la République, creation of the COPERNIC programme (for Central and Eastern European graduates) in co-operation with the French Ministry of Foreign Affaires, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris (Science Po), École des Mines de Paris and École des Ponts et Chaussées.

1994

Creation of the Collège's China agreement

1996

Foundation of the Collège in Germany by Knut Stannowski with the support of the presidential office of the Land Baden-Württemberg

2000

Start of company executive programmes

2005

Foundation of the German Alumni Association (CDI Alumni Deutschland e.V) First Alumni meeting in Baden-Baden.

2006

The 1000th fellow graduates from the Collège

2009

Initiation of the "Science and Management programme. Signing of the agreement with the UMPC, Sorbonne Universités, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

2009

By the joint initiative of the Collège des Ingénieurs, John Elkann (VP, Fondazione Agnelli), Marco Tronchetti Provera (President, Fondazione Pirelli) and Riccardo Garrone (President, Fondazione Edoardo Garrone) the Collège des Ingénieurs Italia (formerly SAFM - Scuola di Alta Formazione al Management) is established.

2017

Start of CDILabs in Torino

2018

Foundation of SEI (School for Entrepreneurship and Innovation) with the Agnelli Foundation in Torino.

Prefiguration Committee in 1985:

Independent Personalities:

Jean Peyrelevede President of Indosuez Bank
Philippe Mahrer, today director of the CDI
Maurice Saias, Strategy Group, Kellogg School of Management

Industry Representatives:

Financial Director of LagardèreSCA
Pechiney President, President of Conseil National du Patronat Français

Public Force Representatives:

Special Advisor to the First Minister
Chief of Staff of Ministre des Finances

University Representatives:

Director of l'École Normale Supérieure
Director of l'École des Ponts et Chaussées
