



Press Release  
Nantes, 15 October 2019

## A new director to head up the Centrale-Audencia-Ensa Nantes business incubator

**Pierre Durand took over as Director of the joint Centrale Nantes, Audencia, and Ensa business incubator on 1 September 2019.**

The Centrale-Audencia-Ensa Nantes incubator aims to create high value-added jobs in innovation in the Pays de la Loire region, brought about by the students, graduates and faculty of the three establishments in the Centrale-Audencia-Ensa Nantes Alliance. Pierre Durand's appointment as director marked the start of the incubator's fifth year of operations. His mission is to pursue and accelerate the development of incubated companies (currently 30 in number), working closely with Bertrand Alessandrini (Director of Development at Centrale Nantes), Valérie Claude-Gaudillat (Director of Innovation at Audencia) and Christian Dautel (Director of ENSA).

Pierre Durand worked as a lawyer specializing in business law / mergers & acquisitions in law firms and international companies for over 7 years. He then co-founded humaid, a crowdfunding platform designed for people with disabilities to finance their needs which are not covered by social protection systems. He subsequently joined the Bretagne Loire University as Deputy Head of PEPITE Bretagne Pays de la Loire.

The unprecedented synergy between three higher education and research institutions - of national and international renown in the fields of engineering, management, communication, design, architecture and creation - makes for a particularly fertile environment in which incubated projects benefit from technical infrastructure and support that is conducive to their development.

Since its creation, the Centrale-Audencia-Ensa Nantes incubator has supported more than 150 companies generating 500 jobs. Among the notable success stories: [10-vins](#), [Ho Karan](#) and [Velco](#). The 30 companies currently incubated are already behind the creation of 150 jobs. Some examples: [Apiwi](#), [BeeHealthcare](#), [Captain Data](#), [D-Ice](#), [Hera-Mi](#), [InVirtus](#), Naostage, [SMT Performance](#).

[Discover all the startups on the incubator's website.](#)

Download a [photo of Pierre Durand](#) (© F. Sénard / Audencia).

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### About Audencia

Founded in 1900, Audencia is among the best Business Schools in Europe and regularly ranks highly in the world (Financial Times). With EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA accreditations, Audencia is part of the very closed circle of Business Schools across the world to hold this triple accreditation. As the first French Business School to join the UN Global Compact initiative, and a signatory to their Principles of Responsible Management Education, Audencia committed very early on to training and guiding future managers and responsible entrepreneurs in their development. Audencia offers programmes in management and communication from bachelor to PhD level. It has agreements with more than 300 academic institutions abroad, and more than 180 national and international companies. It hosts more than 5,300 students on site, has a faculty of 135 members and a network of more than 26,000 graduates.

More information on our website: [www.audencia.com](http://www.audencia.com) and follow us on: Twitter [@audencia](https://twitter.com/audencia).

### About Centrale Nantes

Founded in 1919, Centrale Nantes is a French engineering school and member of the Ecoles Centrale Group. Its undergraduate, Master and PhD programmes are based on the latest scientific and technological developments and the best management practices. At Centrale Nantes, research and training are organised into three key areas for growth and innovation: manufacturing, energy transition and healthcare. With research platforms ranging from digital simulation to prototyping using full scale models and an incubator with 20 years of experience in supporting start-up projects, the school has two major tools for innovation and creation, working hand in hand with industry. Centrale Nantes promotes its teaching and research capabilities at international level through around 100 partnerships with prestigious universities and schools worldwide.

Centrale Nantes welcomes 2,410 students, including 1,440 undergraduate students, 170 Executive Education and ITII degree apprenticeship students, 270 PhD students, 430 Masters students, and 100 Bachelor/Foundation Master students on its 40-acre campus.

More information: [www.ec-nantes.fr](http://www.ec-nantes.fr)

Media Library: <https://phototheque.ec-nantes.fr/> / [@CentraleNantes](https://twitter.com/CentraleNantes)

### About ensa

Located in the heart of the Quartier de la Création, on the l'île de Nantes, in a building designed by Lacaton & Vassal, ensa Nantes (National School of Architecture of Nantes) is a public institution under the joint supervision of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. It is one of 20 French schools that prepare students for the State Diploma in Architecture. The ambition of Ensa Nantes, through the quality and diversity of its training, is not only to train architects, but also naval architects, scenographers, architect-engineers, architect-managers, urban planners etc. Its strong roots in the region support a growing expansion of its activities at national and international level. Ensa Nantes has 85 partners in 33 countries. The school also has a Research Institute Centre de Recherche Nantais Architectures Urbanités (CRENAU) – at the heart of the school's activities.

More information on our website: [www.nantes.archi.fr](http://www.nantes.archi.fr) and follow us on: Twitter and Facebook [@ensaNantes1](https://twitter.com/ensaNantes1)

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