



ETAT DE FRIBOURG
STAAT FREIBURG

Direction de l'économie et de l'emploi DEE
Volkswirtschaftsdirektion VWD

Pérolles 25, 1700 Fribourg

T +41 26 305 24 00, F +41 26 305 24 09
www.fr.ch/dee

Address by Olivier Curty, Fribourg State Councillor,
Minister of Economic Affairs

Journées Scientifiques EPFL / Scientific and Educational Days EPFL

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blueFACTORY, 2050

Mr. President,

Es gilt das gesprochene Wort - Seul le texte prononcé fait foi - Check against Delivery

Madam Vice-President and Gentlemen Vice-Presidents,

Dear Professors,

Dear EPFL Communities,

Dear Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,



Speaking for myself and on behalf of the Fribourg State Council / I would like to tell you first off that it is both an **honor and a privilege** for the Canton of Fribourg to have the pleasure of welcoming you here today / in the Blue Hall of blueFACTORY.

Back in 1848 / the Fribourg State Council stated in its management report that:

"The lines of communication establish a community of vision and interest between the peoples that facilitates the spread of ideas as much as it does the advancement of liberty."

At the time / the issue was that of supporting the construction of a **railway line between Lausanne and Bern** that would pass via **Fribourg**.

The goal was achieved! / But **at what a price!**

The construction of numerous tunnels with corresponding earthworks preparation / and above all the building of our famous Grandfey Viaduct/ rapidly transformed the entire operation into a **financial disaster**.

The explosion of the budget by **more than 60%** put the operating company on the verge of bankruptcy as early as **1862**.

And so / the Canton decided to purchase the line two years later / and did so for the modest sum of **44 million francs** / *that is to say...* /// ...**more than 20 times the Cantonal budget**.

This is indeed food for thought...

And yet / **in retrospect...** / ...**what vision!**

It was the same daring that undoubtedly also inspired the **founders of the University of Fribourg** several decades later (1889).

Or than too / the builders of the **Rossens Dam** / terminated in 1948 for a cost of **61 million francs...**



All this / ***Ladies and Gentlemen*** / goes to show you that the history of our Canton is marked by **audacious projects** / whose common denominator is to have been **driven by the right vision**.

Just like back in **2011** / when the Fribourg State Council and the City of Fribourg joined forces / *something rather unusual at that time* / in order to purchase the site of the Cardinal Brewery / with the **somewhat crazy project in mind** to build the blueFACTORY where you are presently located!

At that time / of course / this innovation quarter was going through a period of **adolescence** which was rather **complicated** / not to say unsettled at times / with its **ups and downs...**

AT LEAST UP UNTIL 2022 / *as the most knowledgeable among you certainly remember* / when the **smart living building** (SLB) was handed over with great

pomp and circumstance to the **130 researchers** of the **Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne/ the Fribourg School of Engineering and Architecture** / and the **University of Fribourg**.

And so **today** /// **30 YEAR AFTER this page of History** / how far have we come?

The densification of the site / **completed in 2040** / marked a **decisive new stage** in the life of blueFACTORY / with the transformation of the SLB and its annexes into the SLT / ***the superb Smart Living Tower*** as we know it today.

Without this / we would never have been able to support the exponential development of the SLL / that took place following the **Copernican revolution** in housing which the Platform initiated at the beginning of the 2030s / with its now famous ***NeighborHub Infinity***.

And still today / this collective habitation characterized by its **positive energy** / *autonomous in **water management** and in provision of **plant nutrients** for its occupants* / remains **THE global standard** in terms of housing.

And as for the present / **what are the challenges confronting us?**

With a planet of some 10 billion inhabitants / the issue of **waste** remains a major concern / even though the **blue economy** has become the norm.

In the same vein / the **reparation of ecological damage** also remains one of the challenges of our times.

The truth is that the 7 decades of pollution madness from 1950 to 2020 / those that we refer to as the **70 disastrous years** / have reeked staggering havoc on our environment.

Yet here too / our ***Smart Planet Detox Lab*** Competence Center / is making an admirable contribution to the combat.

(And lastly / I take pride in the recent successes of our **Smart Space Lab** / *one of the spin-offs of the SLL* / that has / *together with the NASA* / just finished developing a **new model of intelligent housing** / **featuring positive energy here too** / for our colonies on Mars.)



Ladies and Gentlemen,

Not long ago / while reading the biography of **Marilyne Anderson** / a former professor at the EPFL / I happened to notice that **2018 was a pivotal year** for our innovation quarter.

She recalls that it was / in fact / in this very same year that the Cantonal parliament **released** funds in the amount of **25 million francs** as its participation in the construction of the Smart Living Building / and that the **last oppositions to the site's development plan were lifted**.

What an immense relief this must have been for **Anne-Claude Cosandey** / who at that time was **project director**.

This is merely an illustration of the fact that at the origin of major projects such as this innovation quarter / there always lies **a vision** / **with people who boldly pursue it** / and who must sometimes **move mountains to make it become reality**.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion / I would like to **paraphrase** my predecessors of 1848 whom I cited in my introduction / in order to emphasize that **after the "lines of communication"** / in today's world it is **"research and knowledge sharing"** *that establish a community of vision and interest between the peoples that facilitates the spread of ideas as much as it does the advancement of liberty."*

I wish all of you / **fruitful** Scientific and Educational Days here in Fribourg.

Please feel yourselves **at home!**

Thank you for your attention.
