

## AWARDS

# CONVERGENCES 2015 AWARDS CEREMONY

[PC]

Salle des Fêtes  
Hôtel de Ville de Paris

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2012

## MAIN FINDINGS

In partnership with Paris City Hall, Le Monde, the European Commission and FACTS, the Convergence 2015 Awards were handed out in recognition of innovative partnerships that aim to alleviate poverty through innovative and viable projects. This second ceremony of the Convergences 2015 Awards saw the France Award handed to the 'Vie Grande Ouverte' project from Entreprendre pour Humaniser la Dépendance, in partnership with Habitat et Humanisme and the Catholic University of Lyon. The International Award went to the social enterprise Prakti Design in partnership with SkillMech. Whereas the first project seduced the jury with its social and humanistic character, the second seduced thanks to its innovative and economical characteristics. The 'Vie Grande Ouverte' project creates intergenerational solidarity within one single living space, one notable example being a student hall of residence in Lyon. The project from Prakti Design, a social enterprise, consists of developing self-combustion cookstoves on a large scale in order to achieve the dual purpose of meeting household needs while saving energy.

## SPEAKERS

**Philippe Escande**

Managing Editor, Le Monde Eco & Entreprises

**Anne Houtman**

Head of the Representation in France, European Commission

**Pierre Shapira**

Deputy to the Mayor of Paris in charge of International Relations, European Affairs and Francophony, Municipal Councillor of Paris

**Pauline Véron**

Deputy to the Mayor of Paris in charge of Social and Solidarity Economy

## MODERATOR

**Michaël Knaute**

Executive Director, Convergences 2015 / CEO,  
OXUS Group / Executive Director, Octopus  
Microfinance Software

## IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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## SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS

### The International Award

**Anne Houtman** introduced the three nominees for the International Award one by one on behalf of the European Commission.

1) The Indian social enterprise Prakti Design develops self-combustion cookstoves on a large scale in order to replace traditional stoves which are damaging for vulnerable local populations, particularly women. This is therefore a company that addresses environmental problems while bearing in mind a social approach to production. The first pilot project was carried out in Haiti. In addition, Indian schools and refugee camps have been successfully equipped with the stoves. The company was able to set up a 'bottom of the pyramid' partnership with the Indian private company SkillMech.

2) The humanitarian association SOS Enfants Sans Frontières provides funding for school teacher training or for school materials. Projects have been set up in Haiti which specifically aim to allow schools destroyed by the earthquake to be rebuilt. Moreover, the association promotes raising awareness on disabilities. The jury was particularly aware of these projects since they have great potential to be replicated in the long term. The association has set up a partnership with the Gecina foundation which is specialised in property.

3) The Foundation for NICT incubators in Senegal has the aim of identifying talent in the sector of New Information and Communication Technologies and to support them in their entrepreneurship, with roughly thirty businesses or startups involved. The Foundation benefits from a partnership with Sonatel France Telecom, the Senegalese branch of the Orange group.

**Pierre Shapira** announces the Indian social enterprise Prakti Design in partnership with SkillMech as the winner of the International Award. Pierre Shapira stresses that the work of this company is of great use in making timber savings at a time of great deforestation. The representative of the Indian company speaks about the reasons why he developed this concept of creating cookstoves which are less harmful for people and which lead to great savings, given that they allow for a 50% saving on charcoal costs. Today, the project reaches out to about 250,000 people.

### The France Award

**Philippe Escande** introduced the three nominees for the France award one by one.

1) The 'Vie Grande Ouverte' project from Entreprendre pour Humaniser la Dépendance, in partnership with Habitat et Humanisme and the Catholic University of Lyon.

2) The Don en Nature Agency, in partnership with the SEB group, which aims to become a bridge of trust between the voluntary sector and the world of business.

3) La Foncière Chênelet, in partnership with Schneider Electric, which builds ecological social homes.

Despite the undeniable progress that has been made in alleviating poverty, **Pauline Véron** insisted on the need to set up convergences between development stakeholders, decision makers and civil society representatives in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals. In this way, the Forum, which brings together a large number of important public, private and solidarity-based stakeholders, offers the opportunity for good practices to be exchanged, for powerful initiatives to be linked together, thus offering the prospect of creating an economy which is based to a greater extent on solidarity and which is resolutely focused on human beings. The three projects that have been presented are an example of convergences that should be promoted.

**Pauline Véron** announces the winner of the France Award as the 'Vie Grande Ouverte' project from Entreprendre pour Humaniser la Dépendance, in partnership with Habitat et Humanisme and the Catholic University of Lyon. The prize winner highlights the importance of freedom, culture, training and solidarity-based housing. One of the buildings was designed to be located within a student hall of residence in order to curb the dependence of the elderly. What happens is that the students are asked to care for the elderly in order to make this intergenerational living space more human.

## SUMMARY OF DEBATE WITH THE AUDIENCE

### How does the Prakti Design stove work?

It is an efficient charcoal-powered cookstove which consumes little power, is long lasting and which families will greatly appreciate. It uses insulation to ensure that the energy is concentrated within the stove.

### What are the common difficulties that the different partner associations that have been presented had to face?

The representative of the 'Vie Grande Ouverte' project from *Entreprendre pour Humaniser la Dépendance* points to the high price of land as the main obstacle in setting up operations in an area under development, such as that which was needed for the project in Lyon. Without setting up a partnership and without any political will for supporting the most vulnerable populations, none of what has been achieved would have been possible.

### At Prakti Design, are women aware that the stove could revolutionise their kitchens? Do habits change?

The head of *Prakti Design*, a qualified engineer, does not intend to change a cook's habits. Product tests are always carried out so as to ensure that the housekeepers are satisfied.

### What are the manufacturing costs for the stove?

The price the customer pays is 50 dollars per stove. It is expensive, but if we take for example Haiti, the

savings made are estimated at 250 dollars a year. In three and a half months, the stoves pay for themselves. Microfinance programmes are also available. The stoves are designed in India, although the production is outsourced abroad.

### What are the potential problems regarding donations in the case of the Don en Nature Agency?

The head of the association explains that the only concern is that of combating instability in people's lives. However, there are two main problems: the lack of traceability for donations and the volume of sums collected. It should be noted that the association has been very rigorous since the beginning of the partnership with SEB in managing its donations, which has in turn eased the situation for SEB. It is worth pointing out that SEB also funds and sponsors skills-based programmes to foment loyalty among partners. SEB reaffirms its commitment to supporting the project in the long term.

### How can one find the right partners in industry? How does intellectual property come into play in this partnership?

The head of *Prakti Design* explains that the product design patents belong to SkillMech. Any development linked to production belongs to the partners. In order to find the right partners, several different actors are needed because it is difficult to find the right one with human qualities and the right technical skills. It is better to have no partners than to have a bad partner.

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## MORE ON THIS TOPIC

- L'Agence du Don en Nature : [www.adnfrance.org](http://www.adnfrance.org)
- Chênelet : <http://www.chenelet.org>
- Entreprendre pour Humaniser la Dépendance : [www.epargne-en-conscience.fr/cms/index.php?page=entreprendre-pour-humaniser-la-dependance](http://www.epargne-en-conscience.fr/cms/index.php?page=entreprendre-pour-humaniser-la-dependance)
- Fondation des incubateurs des NTIC du Sénégal : [www.cticdakar.com/#](http://www.cticdakar.com/#)
- Gecina : [www.gecina.fr/fo/index.php?id=5185](http://www.gecina.fr/fo/index.php?id=5185)
- Groupe SEB : [www.groupeseb.com](http://www.groupeseb.com)
- Habitat et Humanisme : [www.habitat-humanisme.org](http://www.habitat-humanisme.org)
- Institut Veolia Environnement, rapport Facts : [factsreports.revues.org/](http://factsreports.revues.org/)
- Prakti Design : [www.praktidesign.com/](http://www.praktidesign.com/)
- Schneider Electric : [www.schneider-electric.fr](http://www.schneider-electric.fr)
- SkillMech: [www.praktidesign.com/partner.html](http://www.praktidesign.com/partner.html)
- SOS enfants sans frontières : [www.sosesf.org/](http://www.sosesf.org/)
- Sonatel France Telecom : [www.sonatel.sn](http://www.sonatel.sn)
- L'Université Catholique de Lyon : [www.univ-catholyon.fr](http://www.univ-catholyon.fr)
- [Booklet of applications to the Convergences 2015 Prize](#)