



## **OFFICIAL - PRESS RELEASE**

# **Social Good Accelerator EU**

## **New ambitions, New team and sponsorship of Axelle Lemaire**

Paris-Brussels, October 26, 2020

On the occasion of its annual General Assembly and its Board of Directors meeting, the SOGA EU (Social Good Accelerator EU) reaffirms its ambitions in favor of the digital transition of the actors of the general interest in Europe. In order to achieve them, the association is renewing its Board of Directors and Bureau: Axelle Lemaire, former Secretary of State for Digital and Innovation in the French government and Director of Terra numerata, a partner in the Roland Berger law firm, has become the association's patron. Alongside Jeanne Bretécher, President of the movement and Nils Pedersen, Vice-President in charge of Research and Institutional Affairs, Sylvain Reymond becomes Vice-President in charge of Development and Partnerships and Laura Frantz becomes Treasurer.

Created in March 2018, the Social Good Accelerator is a European movement that currently brings together 33 associations and social enterprises and 35 committed citizens between Paris, Lisbon and Brussels to **accelerate the technological transition of public interest organizations in Europe**. An increasing number of these actors are committed within this movement to **ensure that organizations of general interest are fully recognized as actors of the European technological transition, highlighting the** digital culture of non-profit and solidarity, exploring the conditions of cooperation between social economy and technology sector and organizing the influence of organizations of the European Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Brussels.

### **New European ambitions**

In only two and a half years of existence, SOGA EU has managed to organize the first Social Innovation Village at the Web Summit in 2018 (Lisbon) with the support of the European Commission to promote alternative models from the SSE in Europe to Tech actors. At the end of 2019, it published a first study on cooperation between social utility actors and tech actors in Europe.



Last spring, the movement and its members were consulted by the European Commission on Data and AI strategies. At the same time, it launches the SOGA EU Academy, a peer-to-peer digital acculturation webinar program for SSE organizations.

On the strength of this initial assessment and these great successes, the association will intensify its action in the coming months with :

- A mapping of the European actors of the digital transition in the Social and Solidarity Economy
- The second part of our research work on cooperation between SSE and Tech actors in Europe, which will consist in analyzing the contributions of the European Tech sector
- Active participation in defining the digital transition component of the European Plan for the Social Economy, which will be unveiled in Mannheim in May 2021 by European Employment Commissioner Nicolas Schmit, advised by Nicolas Hazard (INCO).

## **Governance that is strengthened as a result**

To achieve these new ambitions, the SOGA EU is renewing and consolidating its governance in depth while ensuring that it is representative of the players.

Six new directors have joined the structure and support its expertise: Aurélien Beaucamp, President of AIDES and CSR Director of Page Group France; Emma Ghariani, Director General of SCIC la MedNum; Laure Vicard, Director of Innovation of Emmaus France; Denis Pansu, Program Director of the New Generation Internet Foundation; and Laura Franz, DAF-DRH of ProBonoLab.

Alongside Jeanne Bretécher, President, and Nils Pedersen, Vice-President, Sylvain Reymond also becomes Vice-President of the movement. Lila Senta Loys becomes Secretary and Laura Frantz, Treasurer.

**Axelle Lemaire joins the association as Patron** and intends to give a new dimension to the Movement: *"The Social Good Accelerator is a young association that wants to contribute to bring this subject of the technological transition of the SSE to Brussels, to create a European community of action and sharing as well as bridges between the worlds of solidarity and technology. These are more than useful but very ambitious projects, led by a new generation of professionals in the social and solidarity economy and digital activists. The cause is just, and I feel completely in line with SOGA's founding vision. This type of initiative requires mobilizations of all kinds: federating the organizations concerned, recruiting experts and volunteers, raising funds, conducting research and bringing sectoral demands to fruition. »*

## **About Social Good Accelerator Europe**

The Social Good Accelerator EU is a European movement that brings together 33 associations and social enterprises as well as 35 committed citizens between Paris, Lisbon and Brussels to accelerate the technological transition of public interest organizations in Europe.

To ensure that public interest organizations are fully recognized as actors of the European technological transition, we highlight the non-profit and solidarity-based digital culture, explore the conditions for cooperation



between the social economy and the technology sector, and organize the influence of SSE organizations in Brussels.

### Our corporate members (2020)



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## **INTERVIEW - Axelle LEMAIRE, godmother of the SOGA EU**

*"I am convinced that Brussels must play a leading role in driving a European technological model centered on a fair, inclusive and responsible societal and environmental transition."*

**Axelle Lemaire**



**Why is it important for you to commit to a technological transition of SSE organizations and the valorisation of the alternative technical models resulting from it, at the European level?**

As an activist European, and former Secretary of State for Digital and Innovation in the French government, I am convinced that Brussels must play a leading role in driving a European technological model centered on a fair, inclusive and responsible societal and environmental transition.

From this perspective, new technologies are capable of the worst as well as the best. The startup financing model, which is based on the gamble of very rapid growth through the injection of private financial capital according to closed governance models, may tend to overshadow other, more accessible alternative models. When only the search for maximum profitability counts, social inequalities are often reinforced and the ecological footprint worsened. It is important that the digital sector welcomes all models of economic and social development and that there is room for everyone, and not just for the glittering fundraisers!

To meet these challenges, the actors of solidarity and environmental protection, often very rooted in their local area, assume a role that is both critical and underestimated. In fact, Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) organizations are key players in preserving societal equilibrium and the expected pivotal role in the functioning of the economic system. Everywhere, these organizations efficiently carry out indispensable educational, social and environmental missions. They also transmit basic skills to the most vulnerable groups throughout the country. They maintain social cohesion by mobilizing citizens, professionals and experts to create communities, defend democracy and the collective heritage. All this is achieved through constant innovation, at all levels and all geographical scales, for



example by hybridizing economic models or creating new services or new processes to serve solidarity and environmental transition.

As such, the technological transition could allow EHS to increase its capacity to act, and to do so in its own way. A number of initiatives - and models emanating from the non-profit or limited-profit sector - deserve to be better known and deployed on a massive scale. But SSE organizations, which should be pushed to do better, are increasingly forced to do less: they find themselves in a "unthinkable" situation in terms of support for the digital transition of organizations, since neither institutional donors nor patrons are funding the increase in skills and support needed for these changes in methods of thinking, working and acting in the field to the level of the reality of the needs. It is time to help SSE organizations go to scale through digital technology.

### **Why did you agree to be a sponsor of SOGA EU?**

The Social Good Accelerator is a young association that wants to contribute to bring this subject of the technological transition of the SSE to Brussels, to create a European community of action and sharing as well as bridges between the worlds of solidarity and technology. These are more than useful but very ambitious projects, led by a new generation of professionals in the social and solidarity economy and digital activists.

The cause is just, and I feel very much in line with SOGA's founding vision. This type of initiative requires mobilizations of all kinds: federating the organizations concerned, recruiting experts and volunteers, raising funds, conducting research and bringing sectoral claims to fruition.

### **How will you concretely engage with our members?**

Godmother, it's a nice role! I will bring a caring and protective gaze and support to the activities of the Social Good Accelerator.

At my level, I am happy to be able to contribute to support the association thanks to my experience, make it known and serve as a springboard. I can also be consulted on one of my fields of expertise and facilitate dialogue with a certain number of decision-makers, or support courageous positions when necessary.