Welcome to the New French Revolution
“When I said 4 years ago that France would be the tech leader in Europe, nobody believed that — and it’s happening.”

John Chambers, former Chairman & CEO, Cisco

“France is a country that is at the forefront of defining what this new era of technology will mean to our society... globally”

Satya Nadella, CEO, Microsoft
Welcome to the **New French Revolution**

Since *Emmanuel Macron’s election* in 2017, France has pivoted to a pro-business agenda: labor laws have been reformed, tax cuts introduced and new regulations voted – including introducing the best startup talent visa in the world. The economy is now back on a **trajectory of growth and innovation**.

France doubled its count of unicorn startups in the first half of 2019 alone, and the gold rush for AI **talents** has seen global technology leaders opening up AI research centers in France.

Combined with its **strong history of innovation** and values, France has built a solid reputation for producing category-defining startups.
A rising generation of unicorns

4 new unicorns in 2019 (so far)

**meero**
- B2B photography
  - Series B | $230M
  - June 2019
  - Eurazeo, Prime Venture, Idinvest, Alven...

**eFront**
- Investment Software acquired by BlackRock
  - Growth | $60M
  - May 2019
  - Ardian Growth, Tiger Global

**ivalua**
- Spend management
  - Series E | $170M
  - 2019
  - General Atlantic, Accel, Eurazeo, Bpifrance...

**Doctolib**
- eHealth platform
  - Series C | $77M
  - Eurazeo Growth, Idinvest Partners, Natixis, Sofina...

**BlaBlaCar**

**OVH**

**deezer**

**Veepee**

Thriving French Unicorns

French startups are now able to raise mega rounds to support their global ambitions:

**Insect**
- Series C | $120M
  - Astanor Ventures, Bpifrance, Idinvest, Talis Capital...

**ManoMano**
- Series D | $120M
  - General Atlantic, Eurazeo, Aglaé Ventures, Partech, Bpifrance...

**wynd**
- Series C | $79M
  - Sodexo Ventures, Natixis, Sofina...

**PayFit**
- Series C | $77M
  - Eurazeo Growth, Idinvest Partners, Bpifrance, Accel Partners, Frst Capital...

**MIRAKL**
- Series C | $70M
  - Bain Capital Ventures, 83North, Felix Capital, Elaia Partners...

**Shift Technology**
- Series C | $58M
  - Bessemer Venture Partners, Accel, General Catalyst, Iris Capital, Elaia Partners...

Overview of France VC & Growth activity within the last 6 months
A strong appetite for Venture Capital

1st country in Europe with 97 companies among 500 tech leaders (92 for UK and 50 for the Netherlands) (Deloitte Technology Fast EMEA Study)

2nd in Europe for the number of large companies that created a lab, incubator or accelerator 48% in France, 40% in Germany, 25% in UK (Venture Beat)

$2.7B raised during the first semester of 2019 (CB Insights)

1st in Europe for Venture Capital – 1st country in Europe with 97 companies among 500 tech leaders (92 for UK and 50 for the Netherlands) (Deloitte Technology Fast EMEA Study)

2nd in Europe for fast-growing companies in the technology sector (Financial Times)

x 4.3 number of deals > $22M between 2013 and 2018 (Bpifrance)

French Tech annual financing trends 2014-2019 (6/30/19)

Source: CB Insights

Amount of funding ($B)
Number of deals

Source: CB Insights

Tech giants are investing big in France. Not just for technology, but for the teams that build them. Some examples:

Mobile
- Snapchat
  Zenly: $300M
- IAC
  Meetic: $500M
- Trainline
  CaptainTrain: $189M
- Microsoft
  Sunrise: $100M

Deeptech
- Nokia
  Withings: $190M
- Softbank
  Aldebaran: $100M

Marketplaces
- GetAround
  Drivy: $300M
- TripAdvisor
  TheFork: $150M

SaaS
- Adobe
  Neolane & Fotolia: $1B
- SAP
  BusinessObjects: $6B
- Ultimate Software
  PeopleDoc: $300M
- BNP Paribas
  Compte Nickel: $200M

The playbook from investment to IPO is clear thanks to Criteo (NYSE: $1.69B IPO) & Talend (Nasdaq: $537M IPO).
An unlimited pool of tech talent

Startups grow faster when they have access to a sustainable source of talent. France has 1 million engineers and trains 50,000 more every year – that’s what you get when you invest in STEM education. Additionally, half of our 70,000 PhD students are international.

Europe’s AI Capital

France leads in field medals (per capita & total), so it’s no surprise to find French innovators Luc Julia & Yann LeCun leading Samsung & Facebook’s respective AI departments. Alongside Google, Microsoft, Fujitsu & IBM, they employ 1,000+ AI researchers in France.

US startups put down roots

Unicorns like Datadog, Symphony & Bird are investing big in France already, hiring technical & operations talent that will allow them to stay competitive in Europe and grow worldwide.

7 innovations in how the government supports startups

- The world’s most open talent visa: 4 years, no diploma, no fees & no quotas: the FrenchTech Visa enables hypergrowth startups to recruit global talent at hypergrowth speeds.
- Labor reforms that mean business: standardized severance caps, flexible company level bargaining and simplified contract termination.
- €1.6 Billion public investment fund: including €300M earmarked for deep tech, we’re funding the next generation of startups.
- 30% deduction of R&D expenses: the most favorable tax incentive among OECD members: setting up an engineering hub is a no-brainer.
- 3 major tax reforms for startups: 30% capital gains tax, elimination of wealth & exit taxes, and a 25% corporate tax rate by 2022.
- We’re bullish on crypto: we’ve created a comprehensive legal, tax and regulatory framework for ICOs.
- Rolling out the red carpet: our newly launched French Tech 120 program unlocks access to dedicated “startup correspondents” across key ministries & agencies to fast-track services, procurement & invitations to join the President on foreign visits.
"Our company saved €1.5M in 2018 thanks to France’s research tax credits."

Luca Verre, Co-founder and CEO of Prophesee, a metavision for machines

"France is one of the more progressive nations when it comes to tackling cryptocurrency regulatory issues and is seemingly never afraid of getting stuck in."

The Next Web

So...

What are you waiting for?

In this new France, fortunately many of the best things stay the same. Your next board meeting could be during Paris Fashion Week, at one of the 118 Michelin-star restaurants in Paris, or coupled with a family vacation in Aix-en-Provence.

Some would have you believe that you must choose between building a great business and living a great life. You believe in Unicorns – now believe in the new French Revolution.