



PRESS RELEASE

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## THE ECORCE CHAIR RECEIVES GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO HELP ADVANCE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND FACILITATE THE USE OF WOOD IN CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION PROJECTS

Another step towards the widespread use of wood in construction! The ECORCE Industry Chair was established in March 2023 by École Supérieure du Bois in Nantes (ESB), Icade's subsidiary Urbain des Bois, Eiffage Construction and Saint-Gobain Solutions France, in conjunction with INGENECO Technologies. It has just received full funding from France 2030 in the amount of €2.3 million over four years for the MOBBE project (wide-scale use of timber frames and bio-based materials for building envelopes). As such, the ECORCE Chair is playing a role in meeting the challenges of the city of 2050.

### Funding used to gain proficiency in installing timber-framed façades

The France 2030 plan, which aims to support those driving the green transition, will fund the MOBBE project to the tune of €2.3 million (out of a total project cost of €2.643 million) over a four-year period. This project is designed to amass a shared body of knowledge about timber-framed walls which are mainly used on building façades. All the data on the MOBBE project's findings, managed by ADEME, will be open source. The work, overseen by INGENECO Technologies due to its expertise in the field, will be conducted in collaboration with ESB's research laboratory, the Scientific and Technical Centre for Building (CSTB), the FCBA Technological Institute, as well as with relevant sectors, including timber manufacturing.

Its goal is to enable companies to adopt tried-and-tested techniques for designing, manufacturing and installing timber-framed façades in compliance with regulations and to help them achieve their environmental objectives. The Chair intends to build on the innovations stemming from the Athletes Village and other projects (around 20 innovations in timber façade construction have obtained 'ATEX' technical approval) and to make them more widely available.

The various stages of the MOBBE project can be summed up as follows:

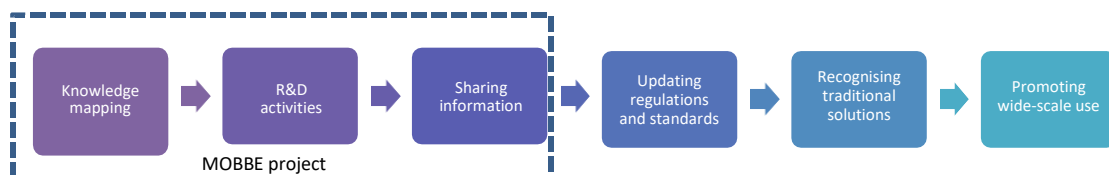


Diagram 1: Schematic of the MOBBE project



## Expanding scientific knowledge to help create a new industrial sector

French environmental regulation RE2020 has already set performance targets for buildings and maximum carbon footprint levels. The levels targeted for 2028 and 2031 are difficult to achieve given the current state of construction methods and scientific knowledge, while maintaining a high level of quality and affordable costs.

The ECORCE Chair seeks to play a role in increasing scientific knowledge in order to have new techniques approved and updated standards and regulations adopted. The Industry Chair ultimately aims to encourage the safe, widespread use of wood in construction for mixed-use and multi-storey buildings and to participate in the France Relance Plan to create new industrial and technological sectors.

*“The MOBBE project will greatly improve best practices relating to low-carbon construction and help to massively expand the use of bio-based materials. This is an extraordinary opportunity to have all the players become involved in shared and ambitious objectives and to work together to build and renovate the city of 2050 to be more sustainable,”* explained Anne Fraisse, CEO of Urbain des Bois, a subsidiary of Icade Promotion.

*“In order for the construction industry to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, a joint effort is required. This objective will be met provided that the entire building supply chain works towards the same goal. Drawing on the experience it has acquired over the last ten years through bold projects showcasing wood, the Eiffage Group is enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to improving knowledge of one of the key low-carbon building materials,”* declared François Vaché, Head of Off-Site Construction at Eiffage.

*“Research and development is vital to ramping up the development of new generations of low-carbon, lightweight, circular construction systems, particularly by focusing on the intrinsic qualities of wood. The ECORCE Chair is in line with this approach. With its multi-material expertise, the Saint-Gobain Group is delighted to be involved in these efforts,”* affirmed Arnaud Tractère, CEO of Saint-Gobain Solutions France.

*“The school seeks to train young people for the wood industry and the sectors that use wood and contribute to the expansion of knowledge about wood and its applications. The ECORCE Chair has partnered with the major players in the construction industry. Within this framework, the MOBBE project reflects a shared desire to advance the scientific body of knowledge on timber-framed walls so that the younger generation can master the use of these products in low-carbon construction,”* specified Jacques Bouillot, Chairman of ESB.



### **About ESB**

ESB is a non-profit private higher education institution (EESPIG) under contract with the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty. It is a member of a number of professional organisations, including the French Association of Grandes Ecoles (CGE). The school has been accredited by the Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (accreditation authority for French professional engineers, abbreviated in French as 'CTI') to award degrees in engineering to students and apprentices.

Its mission is to train the professionals of tomorrow who will change attitudes and, more importantly, the practices in the companies in which they work.

ESB has developed a comprehensive range of higher education courses (from 2- to 6-year degrees) in the science and technology of wood and bio-based materials.

It trains over 430 students each year in the fields of construction, industrial engineering and forest harvesting.

Founded in 1934, ESB enjoys a national and international reputation and maintains close ties to the timber manufacturing and construction industries.

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### **About Icade**

Icade is a full-service real estate company with expertise in both commercial property investment (portfolio worth €6.8bn on a full consolidation basis as of 12/31/2023) and property development (2023 economic revenue of €1.3bn) that operates throughout France. Icade has forged long-term partnerships to respond to emerging trends in the industry. It has made climate issues and the preservation of biodiversity central to its business model to reinvent real estate and contribute to more sustainable cities. It is listed as an "SIIC" on Euronext Paris and its leading shareholder is the Caisse des Dépôts Group.

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### **About Eiffage Construction**

Eiffage Construction benefits from the synergy between its various business lines, namely urban planning, property development, construction, facility management and maintenance. The company is well established in France with eight regional divisions, and also in Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Poland. Eiffage Construction generated revenue of €4.3 billion in 2023.

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### **About Saint-Gobain**

A worldwide leader in sustainable construction, Saint-Gobain designs, manufactures and distributes materials and provides services for the residential and industrial markets. Its integrated solutions to build lightweight structures, renovate public and private buildings and decarbonise the construction and industrial sectors have been developed through a continuous innovation process, ensuring sustainability and performance. The Group's commitment is guided by its Purpose—"MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER HOME".

**€47.9 billion in sales in 2023**

**160,000 employees in 76 countries**

**Committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050**

For more information about Saint-Gobain, visit [www.saint-gobain.com](http://www.saint-gobain.com) and follow us on X [@saintgobain](https://twitter.com/saintgobain)



### **About INGENECO Technologies**

#### **Making innovation sustainable**

INGENECO Technologies has promoted sustainable innovation for about 20 years by sharing its knowledge with all the participants in the construction value chain. In terms of disruptive and incremental innovation, INGENECO Technologies is among the highest-rated engineering consultancies in its category. INGENECO Technologies' highly specialised expertise is recognised by many scientific centres (CSTB, etc.), the Ministry for Higher Education, Research and Innovation (as an Approved Private-Sector Research Entity eligible for CIR funds), etc. Through its efforts, it assists a wide range of decision-makers in ramping up the low-carbon transition that is currently underway in the construction sector.

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