

France: Air Liquide's plant of the future project is certified "technological showcase" by the Industry of the Future Alliance

A first in the industrial gases sector, the project lead by Air Liquide's Large Industries activities in France was certified "technological showcase" by the Industry of the Future Alliance (*Alliance Industrie du Futur*), an association gathering Industry and Digital Technology professional organizations in order to secure, in particular, the French "Industry of the Future" plan deployment. Named *Connect*, the project in which Air Liquide will invest €20 million by 2017, is in line with the Group's digital transformation and relies on the introduction of new technologies in the teams' daily work.

With *Connect*, Air Liquide is creating in France a **remote operations and optimization center** that is unique in the industrial gases industry, one that will be able to control and **optimize** the production, **energy efficiency** and **reliability** of the Large Industries sites, or carry out **predictive maintenance actions**. Around 20 sites in France, that produce and supply by pipeline industrial customers with oxygen, nitrogen, argon and hydrogen throughout the country, will be connected to this national control center located in the Greater Lyon area. Thanks to **big data** analysis, the production flows of each site could be adapted **in real time to the needs of each customer**. Expected to **start operations in 2017**, the center will control production and energy consumption while the on-site teams will focus on the safety and availability of the equipment.

Air Liquide's plant of the future project notably aims to introduce the latest digital technologies (**3D scanning, augmented reality, touch tablets, video tutorials, etc.**) into the on-site teams' daily work. Around ten new technologies are currently being tested or deployed at the production sites, to optimize maintenance operations or encourage networking, for example.

Connect is part of an **open innovation** approach involving the local economy, the French ecosystem for technology start-ups and the on-site production teams. It brings together over 100 local businesses, including more than **10 French start-ups**. The project, which is intentionally collaborative, gathers teams from each Large Industries site in France and the other Group entities including in particular the **i-Lab**, Air Liquide's innovation lab. This collaborative approach helps develop new skills for production and maintenance teams, which will be completed by the training programs included in the project.

Guy Salzgeber, Senior Vice-President, Europe Industries and member of the Air Liquide group's Executive Committee, commented: **"We are proud to be certified among the first technological showcases by the Industry of the Future Alliance. With Connect, Air Liquide is taking a major step forward in its digital transformation by beginning a large-scale roll-out of the plant of the future, throughout the whole country. After CryocapTM¹, this is another world first for the Group, rolled-out in France, and a technological showcase for the Large Industries business. As an integral part of the project and key to its success, the open innovation process enables us to identify new usages and efficiency levers unexplored until then."**

¹ CO₂ cold capture technology, deployed for the first time in 2015 at Air Liquide's Port-Jérôme site in Normandy (France)

Air Liquide France Industrie

Air Liquide France Industrie is a subsidiary of the Air Liquide group and brings together all of the Group's industrial gases production and commercialization activities in France, with 3 complementary business lines: Large Industries, Industrial Merchant, and Electronics. The subsidiary has nearly 2,400 employees working at 80 sites located across France and helping more than 300,000 customers optimize their performance durably: from craftsmen to petrochemical companies and from analytic laboratories to the automobile, aeronautics, steel and agrifood industries.

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World leader in gases, technologies and services for Industry and Health, Air Liquide is present in 80 countries with more than 50,000 employees and serves more than 2 million customers and patients. Oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen have been at the core of the company's activities since its creation in 1902. Air Liquide's ambition is to be the leader in its industry, delivering long-term performance and acting responsibly.

Air Liquide ideas create value over the long term. At the core of the company's development are the commitment and constant inventiveness of its people.

Air Liquide anticipates the challenges of its markets, invests locally and globally, and delivers high-quality solutions to its customers and patients, and the scientific community.

The company relies on competitiveness in its operations, targeted investments in growing markets and innovation to deliver profitable growth over the long-term.

Air Liquide's revenues amounted to €15.4 billion in 2014, and its solutions that protect life and the environment represented more than 40% of sales. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Euronext stock exchange (compartment A) and is a member of the CAC 40 and Dow Jones Euro Stoxx 50 indexes.