




Innovation for sustainability serves as a crucial bridge between industry and academia, fostering collaboration to address some of the most pressing global challenges. As we navigate the complexities of climate change, resource scarcity, and social inequality, the synergy between these two sectors becomes increasingly vital.

Industry brings practical insights, resources, and a focus on implementation, driving the development of sustainable technologies and practices. Companies are often at the forefront of applying innovative solutions to real-world problems, making them essential partners in the quest for sustainability.



Academia, on the other hand, contributes through rigorous research, theoretical frameworks, and the education of future leaders. Universities and research institutions provide the foundational knowledge and innovative thinking necessary to push the boundaries of what is possible in sustainable development.





Together, industry and academia can leverage their unique strengths to create impactful solutions. This collaboration can lead to the development of new technologies, sustainable business models, and policies that promote environmental stewardship and social equity. By working together, they can accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable future, ensuring that innovation not only drives economic growth but also contributes to the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants.

Sessie	Foto	Bio	Topic
19/02/2025 11:00 – 12:00	 <p>Galina Deeva</p>	<p>Following my two Master's degrees in Electronic Engineering from Bauman Moscow State Technical University and in Information Management from Harbin Institute of Technology, I obtained a PhD degree in Business Economics at KU Leuven.</p> <p>The main focus of my PhD research was data analytics in the field of education, with a specific emphasis on behavioral data. In my research, I explored various techniques, such as process and sequence mining, to analyze and interpret complex behavioral patterns within educational context.</p> <p>After obtaining my PhD degree, I have joined KBC as Data Scientist, and have worked in this role for 2.5 years, developing predictive models in the fields of marketing, fraud detection and document handling. Since February 2024, I transitioned to a role of Behavioral Scientist in the team of HR Analytics, in which I work on analyzing data and bring insights on HR related topics.</p>	<p><u>From PhD in Behavioral Data Analytics to working as Behavioral Scientist at KBC: opportunities, challenges and lessons learned</u></p> <p>In today's data-driven world, translating academic research into industry practice is both a valuable opportunity and a significant challenge. In this talk, I will share my journey from completing a PhD focused on behavioral data analytics in education to working as Behavioral Scientist at KBC. I will talk about which skills that I obtained during my PhD I found valuable when transitioning into industry and what insights I've gained into how to effectively bridge the gap between research and real-world applications.</p>
19/02/2025 11:00 – 12:00	 <p>Jan Mertens</p>	<p>Professor Jan Mertens is ENGIE's Chief Science Officer (CSO) building ENGIE's long term vision on technologies, identifying key international research players on selected emerging technologies, and initiating research partnerships worldwide for the group. Since 2019, Jan is also part-time professor at the University of Ghent in the domain of sustainable energy.</p>	<p><u>CO₂: Enemy or Ally in the Energy Transition? But it's not all about you, CO₂</u></p> <p>We are obsessed with CO₂ and its impact on climate change, and this is rightly so! This presentation has as objective to convince you to start seeing CO₂ no longer as (only) a problem but start seeing it as a resource and thus we should show our affection for it. At the same time, it is not all about CO₂ and some other climate change allies deserve our attention, maybe even also our obsession.</p>
19/02/2025 11:00 – 12:00	 <p>Suat Donertas</p>	<p>I completed my PhD in particle physics at UCLouvain after obtaining my bachelor and master in theoretical physics in Istanbul, Turkey. During my grad studies, I was a member and author of an international collaboration and I published both my theses under the collaboration's name. My PhD had two topics that are very complementary under one topic and that is the second set of upgrades that the experimental apparatus the collaboration used for discoveries. I worked on R&D and prototyping of a new particle detector concept as well as the prospective search of a particle that would show the detection capacity of the upgraded device. Leaving</p>	<p><u>Transferable skills with a PhD in Physics</u></p> <p>I would like to talk mostly about how PhDs in quantitative fields and being a part of scientific collaboration helped me already obtain very tangible skills in many fronts that were easily transferrable to private sector. Next, I want to touch the most obvious benefit of a PhD: problem solving. This, I find, is very charming to potential employers and PhD holders should make good use of it.</p>

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		<p>academia with a cv that can go in multiple ways, I chose to follow a career in Data Science and I started at KBC as a Data Analyst/Scientist right after my PhD. After one year here, I now work as a System Architect.</p>	
<p>19/02/2025 13:00 – 14:00</p>	 <p>Hanne Hoskens</p>	<p>Hanne completed her PhD in Biomedical Sciences at the KU Leuven in 2021, and continued her research as a postdoc at the KU Leuven and the University of Calgary, Canada. Her work has focused on integrating 3D imaging, human genetics, and data science to improve diagnosis and treatment for children with genetic disorders. In 2024, Hanne joined Colruyt Group Smart Technics as a computer vision engineer, where she uses advanced visual recognition systems to drive innovative retail solutions.</p>	<p>From biomedical to AI and smart things</p> <p>During my studies, I developed a strong interest in computational work and programming, alongside a passion for creative and visual tasks. These interests beautifully converged during my research on modeling facial variation using 3D images. My research consistently took place in an international context, leading me to spend two years in Canada, which significantly contributed to my professional and personal growth. This journey highlighted the importance of creating a visible impact through my work. In my current role at Colruyt Group, I work on the Smart Cart project, utilizing artificial intelligence and smart sensors to enhance the customer shopping experience. This position allows me to integrate my skills and interests in all three areas -computational, visual, and tangible- demonstrating how my academic background seamlessly transitions into innovative industry applications.</p>
<p>19/02/2025 13:00 – 14:00</p>	 <p>Johan Thiers</p>	<p>Johan holds a Master of Applied Economics degree of the University of Antwerp. He's working for KBC since 1995 and executed different functions across KBC ranging from Corporate relationship manager to Head of Finance for Central Europe, GM Group Strategy, CFO of BU Belgium and Head of Finance and consolidation ad Group Finance. Since 2023 Johan is responsible for the sustainability program in BU Belgium where he drives the Belgian sustainability program with the ambition to support our clients in the different segments in their transition to a more sustainable way of living, investing and doing business. KBC aims to be the reference in this domain.</p>	<p>Sustainability: KBC in action in Belgium</p> <p>Content of my talk: short testimonial of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How we organize ourselves to in the domain of sustainability - What KBC is proud to have realized during the past years - Which external commitments we've taken for the future <p>How we support customers in their transition to a more sustainable way of acting and their ESG Journey and what we offer them (in the different segments) to support their transition.</p>

<p>19/02/2025 13:00 – 14:00</p>	 <p>Charlot van Parijs</p>  <p>Veronika Casteur Petrzekova</p>	<p>Charlot van Parijs is the Sales Director at CTRL-F, a recruitment and selection company specializing in engineering, finance, and sales & marketing profiles. Every day, CTRL-F ensures the right match between specialized engineers and challenging jobs in the industry. With 11 years of experience at The House of HR, one of Europe's leading HR service providers, she has primarily developed her expertise in engineering and international recruitment.</p> <p>During her more than 10-year career at Accent, the largest Belgian employment agency, Veronika Casteur Petrzekova has specialized in labor migration and international employment and is currently in the role of Market Director responsible for expertise in international mobility.</p> <p>She is actively engaged in the field of international recruitment on a daily basis, by supporting the legal cases. In her role as an expert, she advises entrepreneurs, provides governments with valuable insights, and actively participates in European debates shaping policies on labor migration.</p>	<p><u>The Search Year:</u></p> <p>This information session provides insight into the "Search Year", a unique opportunity for international students and researchers to stay in Belgium after their studies and gain work experience. Discover the steps you can take to make the most of this year and how to increase your chances in the job market.</p>
<p>19/02/2025 14:15 – 15:15</p>	 <p>Nele Vandaele</p>	<p>PhD in Applied Mathematics in 2010 at Ghent University. My PhD investigated Quadratic hedging strategies in finance and insurance, where the goal was to set up hedging strategies with a minimal hedging error. The theory was applied to the pure financial market, to the insurance market and also the commodity market.</p> <p>After my PhD, I've started at the insurance risk department of KBC Group and finished meanwhile my studies in Actuarial Science at the KULeuven. After 8 years of risk and various functions, I've started as General Manager responsible for the non-life products within KBC Insurance in 2018. Since then, I'm responsible for the car insurance, home insurance, family insurance, ... within the Belgium business unit.</p>	<p><u>My PhD helped me to become successful</u></p> <p>I will highlight the experiences from my PhD which helped me in my further career and add some essential elements to become successful in business. Next to that, I will explain how the sustainability strategy is implemented in KBC Insurance, which concrete impact climate change has for an insurer and how we adapt to these new challenges.</p>
<p>19/02/2025 14:15 – 15:15</p>	 <p>Stefan Garaleas</p>	<p>Stefan is Head of Corporate Culture & Change. In this position he is responsible for the culture of KBC: PEARL+</p> <p>At KBC he started his career as Head Financial Ethics followed by several positions at Group Compliance. Today Stefan is head of the team creating initiatives linked to the culture, stimulating colleagues to live the culture on a daily basis, achieving the best possible results.</p>	<p><u>KBC Team Blue culture: what is it about</u></p> <p>"Culture eats strategy for breakfast" as Peter Drucker said.</p> <p>But what is a culture and how do ensure that culture is not only a piece of paper? In his speech Stefan will guide you why it is important to have a culture, what you can</p>

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			do to keep culture alive and how do we at KBC apply these aspects to our company culture PEARL+
19/02/2025 14:15 – 15:15	 Tim Neijens	<p>I graduated from Antwerp University in 2009, finishing a PhD in Fundamental Mathematics, on Ring Theory (Algebra). I spent a few years in education after that, first as a teacher, then as a course developer in a local college. I followed that up by accepting a position in the military, becoming a cryptographer for 3 years. After that, I started working at the RSZ (Social Security) as a data analyst and forecaster. After 6 years, I started a new challenge as credit risk modeler at KBC, where I am now.</p>	<p><u>Satisfying my curiosity</u> I am constantly driven by the need of learning new things. I will explain how all of my experiences, and that intrinsic motivation, helped shape my career path. I will go over how mathematics, my family, my ambitions and my constant quest for variation fits into all of these jobs, but why being a modeler KBC in particular is a perfect fit.</p>
19/02/2025 15:30 - 16:30	 Evelyn Grossar	<p>Evelyn has a master degree Electrotechnical Engineering – option micro-electronics with a Phd Electrical and Electronics Engineering at KULeuven and IMEC in 2007. During her PhD, she investigated how to optimally design high performance on-chip memories without overcompensating the increasing side-effects of advanced technologies.</p> <p>After her Phd, she participated the large IT program hospitalisation invoicing at CM. From 2011, she worked for 10 years at Group Risk mainly as project leader implementing regulatory reporting to NBB and/or ECB and different types of risk modelling. She also became a Certified PRM in 2014. Next, she worked for 3 years in KBC Bank first as policy advisor Data but soon as team lead of CDM Office aiming to install a data-driven organisation and mindset. In 2022, she also finished a postgraduate Big Data & Analytics at KULeuven. Recently, she started as business development manager within KBC Insurance with focus on data and project management.</p>	<p><u>Be aware of your backpack of skills: It's likely fuller than you realize.</u> Earning a PhD isn't just about the degree: it's about extensive, versatile skill set you develop along the way, which will shape your career journey. I will share how my own collection of skills, combined with my personal interests guided me to where I am today.</p>
19/02/2025 15:30 - 16:30	 Fabrice Deprez	<p>Fabrice Deprez is CEO of Discai, directly reporting to the KBC group CEO, Johan Thijs. DISCAI is a Fintech fully owned subsidiary of the KBC Group which is commercializing the innovative Artificial Intelligence applications it develops in-house. The first application available focuses on the combat against financial crime, money laundering more precisely.</p>	<p><u>The war against financial crime</u> Fabrice will explain which impact Financial Crime has on Banks and Insurance. In opposite to the public opinion (Banks and Insurance are the bogeyman) the effort done in the financial industry against Financial Crime helps the individuals (saving their financial belongings) but also the society. Fabrice will give an overview about Financial Crime completed by the use of technology and fair AI to fight back.</p>



<p>19/02/2025 15:30 - 16:30</p>	 <p>Frank Stumpe</p>	<p>Frank obtained a PhD in Mechanical Engineering and started his career as Junior-Professor at the RWTH Aachen and changed after several years to the European Commission as Scientific Officer. After 3 years he became consultant in project- and change management in an international consultancy firm. Today (for almost 19 years) he is working at KBC managing a wide range of projects. Actually within Corporate HR he is Project Officer for strategic programs and projects within the Group KBC and responsible for projects related to AI and data within the employee-journeys. Additionally Frank gives guest lectures and is moderator of an international group about Project and Program Management and member of different Scientific Boards and Program Committees.</p>	<p><u>An engineer in a financial industry on HR?</u></p> <p>Just to be clear: I'm an engineer and will stay an engineer.</p> <p>But being an engineer in the financial industry I think different. AN of cause, there are several domains where an engineer is expected to be: IT, data en AI, technology, etc.</p> <p>In my speech I will discuss my way from my birth town to Brussels, my way within KBC Group and what I'm doing today. Curious? Here some key-words: PhD in project Management in complex cybernetic systems, Junior Prof, European Commission, international Consultancy, a lot of projects in KBC. And: how to create and maintain my playground: the PhD community with this event as one of my favourites .</p>
<p>20/02/2025 9:15 – 10:00</p>	 <p>Mychal Langenus</p>	<p>Professor Dr. Mychal Langenus (MSc & PhD, Applied Economic Sciences, University of Brussels) is Professor of Management and Strategy (Tenure Track) at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). Several of his scientific articles have been published in academic journals focusing on stakeholder relationships, strategic management, and sustainability. His expertise lies at the intersection of various aspects of strategic management: project management, performance measurement and management, collaborations, and sustainability, applied to the port industry. He teaches Introduction to Management & Human Resources Management, Business and Corporate Strategy, and is also co-responsible for the internship program.</p>	<p><u>The essence of productivity is not how much work you can take on in a given moment, but how sustainable you are in your work.</u></p> <p>We see that even in 2023 the risks of burnout were higher in Belgium than in 2022, and that the overall feeling of wellbeing is actually worsening (despite many efforts). With an "activating" link to my own personal hobby of sports, I reflect with you on how a sustainable approach to work is not only better for your body and mind, but will actually unlock the way you can learn better and deliver more productive results on the long term in the workplace and in life</p>



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<p>20/02/2025 10:15 – 11:15</p>	 <p>Ayrin Ahmadpour</p>	<p>After a master's in finance at the Shahid Beheshti University I obtained a PhD in Economics (banking and finance) at the Ghent university. My main topic was focused on understanding how and to what extent the hedge fund managers performance in first half of year can impact their level of risk taking in the second half of the year. After one year and half of working as a portfolio manager in the renewable energy market, I joined the KBC bank where I am working as credit risk model validator as of August of 2023.</p>	<p><u>Applying my PhD skills in an industrial environment</u> My talk will be about my studies and my way to industrial environment. As my background combines industrial experience with having a PhD, I will discuss my experience of applying my PhD skills in an industrial environment. Moreover, since during my PhD and my current job, I am working in a very international environment, I would like to give some speech about its advantages and how living and working in a such international environment impacted my lifestyle and improved my growth.</p>
<p>20/02/2025 10:15 – 11:15</p>	 <p>Erik Lauwers</p>	<p>Erik holds a master's degree in electrical engineering from K.U. Leuven. In 2003, after his master's degree, he obtained a PhD in applied sciences with a book about techniques for systematic top-down analog circuit design from the same university. After some years of startup experience, he joined KBC Asset Management in 2006. Since then, he has been working for more than 17 years at KBC where he is currently active in the modeling team of Group Finance.</p>	<p><u>Do not forget your research skills: the academic reflex</u> He will talk about how keeping in sync with the "academic reflex" while working at KBC has always delivered a win-win situation. The only difference really is that the focus is on added value for your (internal) clients and not on advances in science. Erik will present his KBC journey with examples linking to the above.</p>
<p>20/02/2025 10:15 – 11:15</p>	 <p>Jeroen D'Haen</p>	<p>Jeroen D'Haen has obtained a Master of Sociology and a Master of Marketing analytics, both at Ghent University. He also holds a PhD of Applied Economics which focused on using data science for customer acquisition. Currently, Jeroen works at Corporate HR in the Learning & Development department.</p>	<p><u>Jeroen has no idea what he will talk about</u> Jeroen will talk about ups and downs as well as about experiences as a PhD-holder in a large scale company.</p>

<p>20/02/2025 11:30 – 12:30</p>	 <p>An Gerlo</p>	<p>I completed my studies of Fundamental Mathematics in 2003 and finalized a PhD in categorical topology in 2007 at The Vrije Universiteit Brussels. After some additional years as postdoctoral researcher, I started my career at the risk department of KBC as a model validator in 2010. In this position, I have a.o. taken up the role of project lead in the establishment of a model risk management framework, allowing to efficiently manage model risk (i.e. the risks related to the design, implementation or use of models). More recently (2020), I joined the integrated risk team to work in the area of sustainability as program manager on environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks. In the meantime, I also broadened my horizon by completing a master in management (2009), postgraduate degrees in Corporate Finance (2014) and Big Data & analytics (2021) at KU Leuven.</p>	<p><u>My journey and why I enjoy taking up these tasks & challenges.</u></p> <p>Over the last few years, I have been taken up the role of program manager in developing and implementing KBC's approach towards two emerging risks (model risk and ESG risk).</p> <p>I will talk about my journey from being a pure mathematician – with expert focus on a very narrow domain – towards my past and current assignments at KBC, where I combine an expert role (model / climate risk expert) with the role of program manager, requiring a quite different set of skills.</p> <p>I will give some further insight in the content of the tasks I am performing on a daily basis, the challenges I am faced with and the reasons why I enjoy taking up these tasks & challenges.</p>
<p>20/02/2025 11:30 – 12:30</p>	 <p>Dillam Jossue Diaz Romero</p>	<p>Dillam, a Colombian national with a strong background in computer science and engineering, brings a wealth of expertise to his role at Colruyt. He completed his Ph.D. in Engineering Technology with a specialization in data fusion and object recognition from KU Leuven in 2022. Prior to his doctoral studies, he earned a master's degree in computer science from the University of Alberta, Canada, focusing on machine learning and computer vision.</p> <p>Before joining Colruyt, Dillam managed a team of data scientists and robotics engineers at a company that specializes in creating smart and safe navigation systems for inland waterways. He drove innovation by integrating cutting-edge technologies such as cameras, radar, and AIS. Dillam now leads the robotics team at Smart Innovation, a part of the Colruyt Group's innovation division. Smart Innovation is dedicated to implementing advanced technologies such as AI, robotics, and automation across the Colruyt Group, which encompasses retail stores, the supply chain, manufacturing facilities, and farms.</p>	<p><u>Being a manager with a PhD of an innovation team</u></p> <p>As the leader of an innovation team at Colruyt Group, I draw on the unique blend of academic rigor and practical application I developed during my PhD. My research in AI and automation, particularly in areas such as data fusion and automated recycling and sorting systems, along with a strong emphasis on translating theoretical knowledge into practical solutions, has been invaluable in leading and guiding my team.</p> <p>My experience leading a team of talented software, computer vision and robotics engineers has sharpened my leadership and management skills. I foster a collaborative and innovative environment in which my team can flourish. I value teamwork, clear communication and effective project management to ensure the successful execution of complex robotics, AI and computer vision projects. In addition, I build and maintain strong relationships with external partners to ensure the successful execution of joint projects.</p> <p>We are currently driving the advancement of robotics within the Colruyt Group supply chain, including the development and implementation of autonomous pallet</p>

			trucks. I will provide concrete examples of how these initiatives foster a culture of innovation and drive transformative change within the organization. I am committed to continuous learning and adaptation in this rapidly evolving field. My experience as a PhD student has given me a deep appreciation for research, critical thinking and lifelong pursuit of knowledge - invaluable assets to lead the Colruyt Group into a more innovative and automated future.
20/02/2025 11:30 – 12:30	 <p>Francisco Pitthan</p>	<p>Francisco Pitthan has a PhD in economics from KU Leuven, in the topic of behavioural finance and financial literacy, on how financial decisions can be improved when we pay more attention to common mistakes. Francisco spent most of his professional and academic career between South America and Europe, in countries such as Brazil, France, Chile, Belgium, and Switzerland.</p> <p>Before joining KBC, he applied this expertise in projects in collaboration with the OECD and in the Belgian Insurance Sector to foster better financial education. In addition, he has previous experience in financial analysis and consulting, in sectors such as banking, commodities, energy and manufacturing. Francisco joined KBC recently and is involved in managing market risk of KBC's trading activity</p>	<p>Coming back to the industry as an international PhD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During my talk I will go through the main motivations to my transition from academia to KBC. On how the skills learned during the PhD and consulting years helped me becoming a good candidate. - How to prepare a CV and market your skills. - I will share a number of additional challenges that can arise during job applications as a non-EEA candidate.
20/02/2025 13:30 – 14:30	 <p>Willem De Poorter</p>	<p>Willem De Poorter started his career in Retail, became System Engineer and then moved to communication: IT-communication, internal communication and finally strategic communication. Since 3 years he is Chief Inspiration Officer at the KBC innovation hub 'Surf Studio'. His challenge is to get colleagues excited about innovation, ensure the spread of the innovation virus in KBC.</p>	<p>Innovation is key</p> <p>In this keynote Willem will explain why and how we innovate in KBC and why innovation is so important, what is the strategy behind innovation and how we spread an innovation culture in KBC. After this session you will know all about the innovation triangle they use in Surf Studio and why moonshots are so important.</p>



<p>20/02/2025 13:30 – 14:30</p>	 <p>Tracy Villanueva</p>	<p>Tracy works as Corporate HR General Manager at KBC, where she leads the teams responsible for Human Progression, Learning and Development, and People Analytics. In her current role, she champions initiatives that revolve around enabling KBC employees to perform at their best and grow their careers. She also helps to advance thought leadership within the organization through her sponsorship of people analytics initiatives. Prior to this role, Tracy set-up and developed the practice of people analytics in KBC as its first department head. Based in Belgium, Tracy has over 15 years of international experience in financial services. Her background spans management consulting, data analytics, AI, and talent management. She holds a postgraduate degree in Big Data & Analytics for Business and Management, an MBA, and a Master in Cultures and Development Studies. Tracy is also a certified Executive Coach, an amateur novelist, and a doting mom to a toddler.</p>	<p><u>The Fun of Lifelong Learning in KBC</u></p> <p>After finishing a trajectory of a PhD program you're eager to learn and ready to see what opportunities come next. Still, the years you spend in your PhD program counts as only a fraction of your career and life story. Continuous learning: in your job, in the flow of work or outside it, in your spare time, doing so with your colleagues, or on your own: it serves as an important part of your personal and professional development. In this talk, we will share KBC's story on how we stimulate a learning culture that enables people to perform and achieve their professional ambitions within KBC. Oh, and we make learning 'fun' too!</p>
<p>20/02/2025 13:30 – 14:30</p>	 <p>Martinus Vogels</p>	<p>After getting his Master in Electrical Engineering from the Eindhoven University of Technology, Martinus obtained a PhD in Electrical Engineering at the KUL. His main topic dealt with modelling and simulation of oversampled analog to digital converters. This work led him to cofounding a spin-off company of the KUL focusing on automating the design of such converters and other systems. After this adventure Martinus moved to KBC where he worked 7 years in the validation department working on market and insurance risk models. In 2017 he moved to KBC's credit risk modelling department where he currently oversees the development and maintenance of groupwide credit risk models.</p>	<p><u>A PhD in commercial: Advantages & pitfalls</u></p> <p>Martinus knows first-hand how challenging it is to try to market PhD research and he will discuss the valuable lessons learned during this eventful journey, yet without discouraging anyone from pursuing this. On the contrary, he will show that the catchphrase failing forward is a real phenomenon and demonstrate how these lessons learned more than 15 years ago continue to shape his way of working today.</p>

<p>20/02/2025 14:34 – 15:45</p>	 <p>Peter Nyffels – Thomas Roté</p>	<p>Thomas Roté is what you call a real expert, as a senior full stack developer at KBC he cooperated in a lot of successful projects. Ranging from Dynatrace, Cloudnative and Energy Solution Development. Due to his curious nature and his love for quantum physics he pioneered at KBC with Quantum Computing. Currently he holds the position of Quantum Tech Lead within the KBC Quantum team and mentors a student in Quantum Research.</p> <p>Peter Nyffels is Product Owner Quantum Computing at KBC. After 19 years of branch office experience, he switched to a headquarters position in innovation, building communities, chatbots and inspiring others on new technologies. Nowadays he helps others to set up new technological experiments and is a Mc Gyver with expertise in many fields.</p>	<p>Quantum Computing</p> <p>Peter and Thomas are leading KBC's Quantum Research team. This new technology promises to change the future of computing thoroughly. They will take you into the realm of the smallest in nature and prove why it can have such a big impact on the world as we know it. Being at the front of this new realm of research is important for KBC. Are you interested what is in it for you?</p>
<p>20/02/2025 14:34 – 15:45</p>	 <p>Paul Brugman</p>	<p>After a Master in Economics at Tilburg University (The Netherlands), Paul obtained a PhD in strategic management at the VUB (Belgium). He focused on understanding how and to what extent the interaction between firm specific and location specific advantages determines firm competitive advantage and where this interaction breaks down.</p> <p>After a period as Senior Associate with the Boston Consulting Group, Paul switched to KBC where he worked amongst others as Team Coach and Relationship Manager in both the Antwerp and Mechelen offices of Corporate Banking.</p>	<p><u>A PhD in a commercial environment: Advantages & pitfalls</u></p> <p>As Paul works as a relationship manager, he will share his experience of applying his PhD skills in a commercial environment. Specifically, during this speech, Paul will focus on the added value that having a PhD has brought him, and discuss various pitfalls. He will also address various other opportunities that have become available, partly driven by his experience as a PhD student.</p>
<p>20/02/2025 14:34 – 15:45</p>	 <p>Bart Ghysels</p>	<p>Dr Bart Ghysels is a former academic expert in algal microbiology & photosynthesis, and (bio)-electrochemical hydrogen production. He transitioned to industry as an R&D manager at a desalination startup. In 2023, he joined ENGIE Laborelec as a water-chemistry expert, focusing on water-electrochemistry topics such as hydrogen production, ocean-based carbon capture, and generation of chemicals from desalination brines.</p>	<p><u>Extensive research background and interdisciplinary advanced sustainability</u></p> <p>In his talk, Bart will discuss his journey from academia to industry. He will emphasize how his extensive research background serves him in his current role at Laborelec, where he addresses a broad range of water chemistry topics. These include practical applications such as water treatment for power generation, as well as ambitious projects like ocean-based carbon capture. Bart's interdisciplinary knowledge and practical experience help him to support Laborelec's mission of advancing sustainable technologies</p>

<p>20/02/2025 16:00 - 17:00</p>	 <p>Aurore Trottet</p>	<p>Dr Aurore Trottet is the Product Manager of the Hydro-Environmental Services (HES) in IMDC. IMDC offers highly skilled expertise to tackle a wide range of water-related issues. The HES team focused on implementing Nature Based Solutions, performing Environmental Impact Assessment studies, and Ecosystem Service analysis studies. Before joining at IMDC, Aurore worked at IUCN focusing on Biodiversity conservation projects funded by the European Commission.</p>	<p>From Research to Consulting with a PhD</p> <p>During this speech, Aurore will explain her experience since university and how she managed to be where she is today. She will also explain how she tackles challenges and a priority when coming from research in consulting.</p>
<p>20/02/2025 16:00 - 17:00</p>	 <p>Lieven Coppejans</p>	<p>Lieven obtained a Drs degree in Applied Economics at the University of Antwerp (UFSIA) and Drs degree in IT at the University of Leuven (KUL). Main topic of the research was the application of cooperative gametheory on the allocation of fixed costs. At the age of 31 he moved to the private sector in 1999, to KBC, where he has been in senior Management roles in Asset Management, Consumer Finance, Leasing, Shared services, Operational Risk and the last years in Compliance. These roles mostly had a international scope, and he has been active as a KBC expat in Ireland (Dublin) and Poland (Warsaw). Lieven holds additional degrees as Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA), Certified Compliance Officer and is as well trained & very interested in what motivates people and what makes them resilient.</p>	<p>A talented employee?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brief explanation of my research at the UA and of my other learnings at the university - my transition from the University to KBC, the relevance of a PhD, incl my first job - my main learnings from each period in my career - what I define as a talented employee - what I keep in the back of my mind what I think motivates people (and what scares them off)
<p>20/02/2025 16:00 - 17:00</p>	 <p>Bart Cary</p>	<p>Bart finished his PhD in Mathematics with focus on the physical aspects of Numerical Weather Prediction at Ghent University in 2006. After a few additional years within the European Weather modelling community, Bart joined KBC in 2010, shortly after the peak of the financial crisis. His first role was a risk modeller within the Risk function, focusing primarily on ALM/treasury risks. After a few years scenario generation of market drivers became a second area of expertise. In 2015 Bart became head of one of the risk modelling teams which provides technical skills, analyses, models and tools towards our stakeholders within the risk domain (and beyond).</p>	<p>From rain to risk models</p> <p>During my studies in mathematics I discovered my interests in numerical weather prediction. I executed research in the domain which addresses the thermodynamic interaction between local physical phenomena (such as rain) and the large scale dynamics of the atmosphere. Today I'm the head of a risk modelling team in KBC. Although this seems to be very different from each other, I have been able to learn what commonalities and challenges lie here. Interested? Then follow my post about "From rain to risk models".</p>

PhD Winter School Innovation as a common denominator for sustainability
Speakers & abstracts



	 Koenraad Debackere	<p>Koenraad Debackere holds degrees in Electrical Engineering (M.Sc.) and Management Sciences & Business (M.Sc. & Ph.D.). Since 1995, he is a professor technology and innovation at the Faculty of Economics and Business at KU Leuven. As part of his academic duties he was and is member of several committees and boards. He is member or chair of international scientific advisory boards in the areas of innovative technology development, intellectual property management & policy, and product innovation management. In the Board of Directors of KBC Group he is the chairman & independent director, chairman of Nomination Committee and Remuneration Committee.</p>	<p>Koenraad is key-note speaker and chairman of the KBC Winter School</p>
	 Frank Stumpe	<p>Frank obtained a PhD in Mechanical Engineering and started his career as Junior-Professor at the RWTH Aachen and changed after several years to the European Commission as Scientific Officer. After 3 years he become consultant in project- and change management in an international consultancy firm. Today (for almost 19 years) he is working at KBC managing a wide range of projects. Actually within Corporate HR he is Project Officer for strategic programs and projects within the Group KBC and responsible for projects related to AI and data within the employee-journeys. Additional Frank gives guest lecturers and is moderator of an international group about Project and Program Management and member of different Scientific Boards and Program Committees.</p>	<p>Frank is the secretary of the KBC Winter School</p>