



**PRESS RELEASE**

**JUNE 10, 2015**

# USINE IO

## Usine IO, the product prototyping and innovation platform, opens its capital to “French Tech Accélération” and Prodways Entrepreneurs



**Paris, June 10, 2015 – Today, Usine IO welcomes French Tech Accélération, the venture capital fund operated by Caisse des Dépôts and managed by Bpifrance as part of the Investment for the Future program, and Prodways Entrepreneurs, a subsidiary of Groupe Gorgé, which provides dedicated support and financing for European businesses in the 3D Printing sector. An initial funding round took place in June 2014 with Kima Ventures, OCP Finance, Time for growth, Jacques-Antoine Granjon, Arnaud de Ménibus, Henri Seydoux and Hugues Souparis.**

Usine IO is a technological innovation facility located in Paris' 13<sup>th</sup> district, which provides hardware resources and a technical expertise and networking department to assist inventors, entrepreneurs, SMEs and larger corporations with the design and prototyping of objects and their preparation for manufacture.

In its 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> facility, Usine IO combines design space and workshops in wood, sheet metal, electronics, chemistry, textiles and 3D printing, with office space and a dedicated team of professional experts (CAD methods, electronics, etc.).

This funding round will enable Usine IO to strengthen its design and manufacturing support services, consolidate its team of experts and launch its development on a European scale.

Just nine months following its opening, Usine IO already has an enviable position in the French hardware landscape, accommodating more than 130 subscribed clients (designers, engineers, entrepreneurs, employees of large corporations, students) each month, and hosting events of national and international stature. During the first few months of business, its team of technical experts supported more than 150 projects, from the upstream stage of prototyping to preparation for manufacture.

Usine IO, which positions itself as the leading rapid prototyping facility dedicated to startups in the hardware world, has a one-of-a-kind business model in Europe, which allows innovators and product creators to ramp up their development and facilitates their transition into industrial production.

**Gilles Schang, Director of Investments at Bpifrance, explains:** *"Becoming a privileged partner of Usine IO was very important for French Tech Accélération. Usine IO forms an essential building block in the French ecosystem*



*to accelerate the development of object-oriented startups. This project's high caliber and its positioning make Usine IO a remarkable accelerator in its segment, with strong growth potential in France and internationally."*

**Raphaël Gorgé, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Groupe Gorgé, states:** *"With its unique concept, Usine IO is revolutionizing the way in which European startups, SMEs and large industrial groups innovate by supporting them from idea through to product. Groupe Gorgé is delighted to participate in the development of Usine IO which fits within the 3D printing field of excellence that Prodways Entrepreneurs seeks to facilitate."*

Ideally positioned in technologies of the future (robotics, drones, 3D printing, etc.), Groupe Gorgé intends to play an important role in the development of new design and manufacturing methods. Through Prodways Entrepreneurs, Groupe Gorgé strives to encourage and support the creation of a 3D Printing field of excellence in Europe.

The French Tech Accélération fund, launched at the beginning of December 2014 under the French Tech initiative with 200 million euros of funding provided by the Investment for the Future program, promotes the expansion of "startup accelerators" in France. In general terms, the French Tech initiative aims to support French startup ecosystems by financing startup accelerators, but also by structuring and promoting startup ecosystems in France and internationally. With this transaction, the French Tech Accélération fund undertakes its second investment.

#### **About Usine IO**

Usine IO is a product innovation platform with a 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> facility in Paris, equipped with a range of machinery, workbenches and offices. It is an open space for the development and prototyping of electronic, design and mechanical products. Operating on a subscription model for inventors, entrepreneurs, SMEs and large corporations, Usine IO offers shared access to a comprehensive range of tools for machining, prototyping, measurement and testing, in addition to providing ongoing professional coaching. Usine IO is managed by Benjamin Carlu, Gary Cigé and Agathe Fourquet.

[www.usine.io](http://www.usine.io) - @usineio

#### **About French Tech**

French Tech is a new generation of talented entrepreneurs who are creating startups and setting their sights on becoming global leaders in their segments. It is a collective assembled under a brand or, more accurately an emblem, of all those, from entrepreneur to investor to developer, who innovate and contribute to the dynamism and growth of French startups.

It is an innovative public initiative working for this collective to position France among the leading startup nations, through three lines of action:

- mobilize a collective throughout France;
- accelerate the growth of startups;
- promote and extend the influence of France and French Tech internationally.

#### **About the Caisse des Dépôts group**

Caisse des Dépôts and its subsidiaries together form a public group, a long term investor serving general interest and the economic development of the country. Its mission was reaffirmed by the Economic Modernization Act (*Loi de modernisation de l'économie*) of August 4, 2008.

Recognized for its expertise in managing project mandates, the Group focuses its actions on four strategic lines of transition for France's long-term development, namely: territorial, ecological/energy, digital and demographic transition.

<http://www.caissedesdepots.fr>



### **About Bpifrance**

**Bpifrance's** equity investments are run by **Bpifrance** Investissement. **Bpifrance**, a subsidiary of Caisse des Dépôts and the French State, the partner of choice of entrepreneurs, supports businesses from pre-seed through to stock market listing, with loans, guarantees and equity investments. In addition, **Bpifrance** provides advisory and enhanced support services for innovation, external growth and export, in partnership with Business France and Coface.

**Bpifrance** offers businesses a continuum of financing alternatives at each key stage of their development and a range of options adapted to specific regional features.

With 42 regional offices (90% of decisions are made regionally), **Bpifrance** is a tool provided to entrepreneurs to achieve economic competitiveness. **Bpifrance** acts in support of public policy, issued at State and at Regional level, to address three objectives:

- support the growth of businesses;
- prepare for tomorrow's competitive environment;
- contribute to the development of an ecosystem that favors entrepreneurship.

With **Bpifrance**, businesses benefit from a powerful and effective partner that is close at hand to address all their needs for financing, innovation and investment.

For more information go to: [www.bpifrance.fr](http://www.bpifrance.fr) – <http://investissementsdavenir.bpifrance.fr/> - Twitter: @bpifrance

### **About Groupe Gorgé**

Groupe Gorgé is an independent group in high tech industries. The Group is currently active in the safety and protection of people and property in extreme environments and in the 3D Printing sector through its subsidiary, Prodways Group. Present in eight countries, the Group employs approximately 1,400 people and directly exports 38% of its business. Set up in 1988 by Jean-Pierre Gorgé, the Group's activities are anchored to a strong entrepreneurial culture.

For more information go to: [www.groupe-gorge.com](http://www.groupe-gorge.com) - Follow us on Twitter: @GroupeGorge

### **About Prodways Entrepreneurs**

Prodways Entrepreneurs provides dedicated support and financing for European businesses in the 3D Printing sector or those seeking to migrate their production to 3D printing. Prodways Entrepreneurs is a subsidiary of Prodways (Groupe Gorgé) which assists large industrial players with their innovations and production processes by offering premium solutions for additive manufacturing (machines, 3D printing resources and services).

For more information go to: <http://www.prodways-entrepreneurs.com> - Follow us on Twitter: @Prodways\_Ent



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