



PRESS RELEASE

Shanghai, September 2nd 2016 - ICL CUP: Overview of two unforgettable months in China for the four young winners.

PARTICIPANTS' TESTIMONY

Two unforgettable months for the four winners

(pictures of the winners at the end of the document)

Even though the four winners all come from very different backgrounds, they all agree on one thing: their experience in China is beyond their expectations. Soon enough, all their prejudices against China such as pollution, censorship and bad-manners, are forgotten. Time flies for the four winners in China, they are all impressed at how vibrant and energetic Shanghai is. A 100-people afterwork event only takes two weeks to organize whereas it would take close to three months to organize in Switzerland admits Anne-Lise who does her internship at the Swiss Center Shanghai.

Chinese people are very welcoming and like to joke a lot tells Jordane who does his internship at LX Precision, with 199 chinese co-workers. It is far easier than we think to make friends with them, he adds.

The expat community in Shanghai is very rich, which allows the winners to network with people from all around the world and from very different backgrounds.

Shanghai is a city full of contrasts; modern skyscrapers are adjacent to tiny traditional streets, businessmen manage to find time in their busy schedule to relax around a traditional cup of century-old tea.

The first edition of the ICL CUP is coming to an end and its outcome so far is very positive. The two months adventure in China allowed the winners to challenge and rethink the prejudices they had against China. Whereas Philippe and Anne-Lise decided to extend their stay for a year, the two other are already excited to come back to China in a near future to witness the result of the ongoing striking development of the country.

WHAT IS THE ICL CUP?

The ICL CUP was created with the purpose to educate Swiss people about the importance of Sino-Swiss relations, to create an interest towards China among younger generations and to help them learn Chinese culture and language.

For its first edition, two students and two apprentices have been chosen from a pool of 257 candidates to spend two months in China and to act as ambassadors of our Swiss educational system*. Anne-Lise Déquenne (VD, HEC Lausanne), Philippe Nasr (GE, UNIGE), Meghan Golinucci (VD, HEIGVD, apprentice earlier) and Jordane Neukomm (BE, apprentice) have been selected by a jury composed of ten major actors of the Sino-Swiss relations.

The four young winners have all done an internship in Shanghai, learned mandarin, participated to cultural events (tea ceremony, discovery of the local food for instance) and attended networking events.

Swiss educational system*: The Swiss educational system, so-called dual education system, is one of the strength of Switzerland. This system is flexible and suits all individual skills. Instead of focusing solely on the academic world, this system also aims to train young

people to learn advanced technical competency through practical experience. This system thereby ensures a constant influx of qualified workers for all domains.

Winners individual testimony

Anne-Lise Déquenne (VD, HEC Lausanne) - *“Time flies in Shanghai:*

It is not the first trip to China for the young woman, her cultural shock is therefore not as intense as it is for the other winners. It is nonetheless her first professional experience in China, and she is amazed by the dynamism of Shanghai. In China, everything goes very fast. One has to learn how to adapt to this intense and busy lifestyle in order to benefit from all the opportunities it has to offer. Anne-Lise is very fond of the perfect balance between modernity and tradition in China. Her favorite location in Shanghai is the famous Yu Garden; one of the most visited place in Shanghai. This garden is almost 500 years old and the ideal location for the tea ceremony.

Philippe Nasr (GE, UNIGE) - *“One has to see and understand China before judging”*

Before his experience ICL CUP, Philippe saw China as a huge and powerful country with repressive politics but nonetheless open to commercial and diplomatic relations. He thought chinese people would be rather cold, not always respectful and with a very tiring and harsh lifestyle. These two months in China have allowed him to challenge these prejudices and see that they are not always accurate. Thanks to ICL CUP, the young man is now able to better understand the way chinese people think and behave. By working in a multi-cultural team, one has to learn and adapt to differences in mentality and behaviour. “This was the opportunity to build a new view on my personal and professional life and to remain open-minded, something very rewarding for any young professional” tells Philippe.

Meghan Golinucci (VD, HEIGVD, former apprentice) - *“One has to see it to believe it”*

For Meghan, prior to her two months in China, she described the country as being crowded, polluted, with a culture and cuisine very different from what she was used to in Switzerland. Today however, Meghan is happy to have been given the chance to build her own opinion of China. She sees the country very differently from what she used to. “It is a dynamic country, full of contrasts shared between tradition and innovation” says the young woman. Meghan feels stronger at the end of her two months in Shanghai. She believes the ICL CUP experience gave her true assets not only for her professional life but also for her personal life; it taught her how to better understand a new culture. Meghan just accepted a job offer from a Swiss SME to work as an Export Account Coordinator for asian markets, she will thus keep contact with China.

Jordane Neukomm (BE, apprentice) - *“Don’t be fooled by prejudices”*

The first thing that came to mind to Jordane before coming to China was that it was a “very communist country”. After two months in Shanghai, Jordane sees now China as a country full of beautiful landscapes and with a very rich and diverse culture. Thanks to his internship at LX Precision, Jordane now feels ready to adapt to any situation at work.

ICL CUP - FORTHCOMING EDITIONS

Due to the success of the first edition of the ICL CUP, ICL is already planning to renew the experience next year, this time with 15 participants. The goal being to promote China among young Swiss people and encourage them to get involved in Sino-Swiss relations. ICL has already approached about ten companies, all willing to participate in the next edition.

ICL is also thinking forward for its third edition, which would involve this time Chinese participants coming to Switzerland!

SPONSORS AND JURY TESTIMONY

Xavier Comtesse, member of the jury

In a globalized economy, Switzerland needs an increasing number of young people trained internationally, especially in China. The ICL Cup is organized by young people for young people, and provides this very opportunity.

Blaise Godet, member of the jury, former Swiss ambassador in Beijing from 2008-2012

I wish great success to the ICL Cup! Sharing with China our experience in the dual track educational system shall greatly and concretely contribute in strengthening the relations between the young people of both countries.

Laurent Feuz, member of the jury, head of post-compulsory education services of Neuchâtel

A great project offering participants the chance to understand a key region and giving them the opportunity to live a onsite social and professional experience that will enable them to acquire important skills in terms of personal development certainly useful in their professional career.

Christophe Weber, Banque Cantonale de Genève (BCGE)

The Banque Cantonale de Genève has a tradition of promoting young people's training and offers a particularly large number of apprenticeships and traineeships for many students and young professionals during their academic career. The bank serves the Geneva economy which, year after year, has been weaving ever stronger links with China and so it is only natural for the BCGE to continue this same movement. Giving young people greater opportunities to understand China's economy is consistent with the ongoing commitment of the bank.

Vincent Subilia, Geneva Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services (CCIG)

Enjoying a privileged relationship with Switzerland thanks to our free trade agreement, China features a highly inspiring and promising marketplace for young Swiss who are willing to gain expertise in the world largest economy. By supporting this outstanding initiative, the Geneva Chamber of Commerce thus underlines its support to economic dynamism and its faith in young entrepreneurs.

Pascal Marmier, Swissnex China

Following the Chinese Ministry of Education's recent announcement of reforms aiming to establish a dual track education system in China, swissnex China believes that introducing Switzerland's highly successful dual education system to China will be extremely helpful in building upon the solid foundations already in place, in addition to improving Sino-Swiss partnership and cooperation. As part of this foundation, swissnex China fully supports the message of the ICL Cup.

Nicolas Curty, Affolter Group

The Affolter group is taking part in the ICL Cup in order to promote training in the technical trades. In its capacity as a training company employing 22 apprentices, the Affolter group is strongly committed to training professionals in mechanics, micromechanics and profile-turning. Adding an international dimension to the training already offered represents a key factor in attracting students to learn these skills. The Affolter group also has a company in Shanghai, China.

Aline Ballaman, Swiss Center Shanghai

Thanks to constant innovation in process, Swiss companies in China are among the top leaders in their technologies. Innovation and high technologies is the reflection of its people, its workforce. The people is tomorrow's future and education is one of the key. Swiss Center is glad to support ICL Cup and its participants to "lead" their eyes to new horizon and experience China, China who is a sharing-opportunities partner with Switzerland.

THANKS AND INFORMATIONS

ICL CUP would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of our four sponsors: Banque Cantonale de Genève (BCGE), the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of Geneva (CCIG), swissnex China and Affolter Group and without the help of our partners: Swiss Center Shanghai, the Swiss Chinese Association, the French-speaking section of the Swiss Chinese Association and Air China. A big thanks to those institutions, which have recognized the importance of the project.

Further information

www.integratechineselife.com/icl-cup.php

Follow the experience in direct live: <https://www.facebook.com/ICLCup/>

Media information

For more information, videos or photos, please contact Nicolas Toledo to nicolas.de.toledo@integratechineselife.com.

ANNEX PHOTOS



