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The academic and industrial worlds join forces to create the PRAIRIE¹ Institute, a center of excellence dedicated to artificial intelligence in Paris

CNRS, Inria and PSL University, together with Amazon, Criteo, Facebook, Faurecia, Google, Microsoft, NAVER LABS, Nokia Bell Labs, PSA Group, SUEZ and Valeo are joining their academic and industrial perspective as well as their forces to create in Paris the PRAIRIE Institute, whose objective is to become an international reference in the field of artificial intelligence.

On the occasion of the AI for Humanity summit, the President Emmanuel Macron unveiled France's artificial intelligence strategy. He notably announced the setting up of an "emblematic network of four or five dedicated institutes, anchored in university centres and linking the territory".

CNRS, Inria and PSL University, together with and Amazon, Criteo, Facebook, Faurecia, Google, Microsoft, NAVER LABS, Nokia Bell Labs, PSA Group, SUEZ and Valeo announce the creation in Paris of a centre of excellence in the field of artificial intelligence, PRAIRIE (PaRis Artificial Intelligence Research InstitutE), with the ambition to constitute one of the institutes of this network. They are pursuing three goals:

- to make a significant contribution to driving progress in fundamental knowledge in artificial intelligence (AI) freely distributed among the international scientific community;
- to take part in solving concrete problems with a major application-related impact;
- to contribute to training in the field of artificial intelligence.

¹ PaRis Artificial Intelligence Research InstitutE

The five-year objective is to bring together AI scientific and industrial leaders and make the PRAIRIE Institute a world leader in AI.

Positioning France in the field of artificial intelligence

Beyond its international impact in mathematics and computing, France is among the world leaders in key disciplines such as statistical learning, robotics, automatic processing of natural language and speech, or artificial vision.

Progress in these fields will create disruptions that demand a new integrated framework for AI and, faced with the current international competition, a major positioning challenge for France is emerging.

France has some of the best researchers in the world, excellent training programmes, companies ready to meet the challenge of the forthcoming revolution and an extremely dynamic innovation ecosystem. France has all the conditions to embody innovation in artificial intelligence. The PRAIRIE Institute aims to take up this challenge and propose a strong model for convergence between the academic and industrial worlds.

The PRAIRIE Institute will welcome junior and senior researchers, doctoral and post-doctoral students, as well as visitors. It will be located in Paris and will forge strong partnerships with the key French AI players in research, training, innovation, through a system of governance bringing together academic and industrial stakeholders.

An integrated approach to artificial intelligence ...

The aim of the PRAIRIE Institute is to act as a catalyst for exchanges between the academic and industrial worlds, to train new generations of researchers in artificial intelligence and to play a role in leading and coordinating the community. Transfer and innovation will be among its duties, along with scientific progress. The work done will highlight an integrated approach to the two traditional branches of research:

- **upstream research**, calling on partner facilities of excellence in France and abroad;
- **research focusing on companies and applications**, drawing on industrial partners, who are often also world leaders in their fields.

Integration between research topics will facilitate synergy between the two branches of the PRAIRIE Institute and will enable researchers to make the transition easily from one to the other.

... made stronger by strategic partnerships

At an international level, the PRAIRIE Institute will draw on a network of partnerships with centres of AI excellence to promote exchanges and leverage its impact. Collaborative agreements have already been signed with the Center for Data Science at NYU, the artificial intelligence laboratory of UC Berkeley (BAIR), the robotics institute at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, MILA in Montréal, the Max Planck institute in Tübingen, the CIIRC (Czech Institute of Informatics, Robotics and Cybernetics) and the Turing Institute in London.

Coordination and training within the French ecosystem

The PRAIRIE Institute will be open to future academic and industrial members and will also offer a participation programme for innovative SMEs and start-ups, as well as the possibility for large groups to create joint laboratories. It will play an active part in all national initiatives around artificial intelligence. It will aim to promote links between its members and exchanges with the other disciplines concerned by AI, more particularly through specific events such as workshops and seminars, as required.

Finally, the PRAIRIE Institute will make training one of its core concerns. Initial and continuing training needs in the field of AI are immense and the PRAIRIE Institute has a vital role to play in the higher education landscape, one that is more specifically assumed by its academic members.

The Institute will be inaugurated in the spring of 2018.

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