



INSEAD marks the first milestone in its Europe Campus Re-imagination

Tour Desmarais ECR

INSEAD inaugurated the Tour Desmarais, marking a major milestone in its Europe Campus Re-imagination (ECR)—a ten-year, €300 million investment to transform its campus in Fontainebleau for the future of business education and learning.

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INSEAD, The Business School for the World, yesterday inaugurated the Tour Desmarais, marking a major milestone in its Europe Campus Re-imagination (ECR)—a ten-year, €300 million investment to transform its campus in Fontainebleau for the future of business education and learning.

The inauguration took place in the presence of members of the Desmarais family, public officials, members of the INSEAD community, partners and distinguished guests from across the business, academic and philanthropic communities.

Tour Desmarais ECR

From left: Charles Desmarais, Maria Desmarais, Nicolas Desmarais, Paul Desmarais MBA'79, Helene Desmarais, Jean-Michel Wilmotte, Francisco Veloso, Paul Desmarais III MBA'10J, Borina Andrieu

Nestled within one of Europe's most iconic forests, the INSEAD Europe Campus has welcomed students, executives, researchers and entrepreneurs from around the world for more than six decades. The Tour Desmarais, alongside the similarly reimagined Garden Building, reinterprets this unique heritage to create a learning environment fit for the challenges of the twenty-first century—one where architecture, nature and innovation come together to enhance the learning experience.

A phased transformation without disrupting campus life

Launched in 2023, the project is not about creating a new campus, but about progressively reimagining the existing campus while preserving its distinctive

character. Delivered in phases, the redevelopment allows academic and campus activities to remain uninterrupted.

Today's inauguration represents a major step in this decade-long transformation, which will be delivered over several phases.

New spaces designed for the future of learning

The Tour Desmarais is named in recognition of the exceptional generosity of Paul Desmarais MBA'79 and his family, whose gift to the Europe Campus Re-imagination is another demonstration of the family's longstanding commitment to education and leadership development.

The building will serve as the new teaching hub for INSEAD's pre-experience programmes, particularly the Master in Management (MIM). It brings together lecture theatres, collaborative workspaces, as well as informal meeting areas designed to encourage spontaneous, meaningful interaction and academic exchange among students, faculty and researchers. Its contemporary architecture enhances the original structure through open, light-filled spaces that connect seamlessly with the surrounding landscape.

Alongside it, the Garden Building, also now open, houses rooms for coaching, interviews and small-group work, while bringing together student services teams in a single, purpose-built location.

Both buildings were redesigned by internationally renowned French architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte. Having studied under Jean de La Tour d'Auvergne, the architect behind the original INSEAD campus, Wilmotte has created a dialogue between heritage and innovation, preserving the spirit of the campus while adapting it for contemporary learning.

Francisco Veloso, Dean of INSEAD, said: *"INSEAD's Europe Campus borders the Forest of Fontainebleau, a UNESCO biosphere reserve — a setting that has inspired learning, collaboration and the exchange of ideas since the school was founded. These reimagined buildings reflect our commitment to preserving the character of this founding campus while creating inspiring spaces for tomorrow's leaders to learn, connect and thrive."*

I extend my sincere thanks to the Desmarais family for their foresight and leadership, as well as to the architects and all teams, partners and donors for their support and belief in our mission. Today's inauguration marks an important milestone in preparing INSEAD for the decades ahead."

Paul Desmarais MBA'79, Chairman of Power Corporation of Canada, said: *"The challenges facing tomorrow's leaders demand new ways of learning, collaborating, and thinking across disciplines and cultures. The Europe Campus Re-imagination creates*

space for these conversations to flourish and for future leaders to be transformed by the exchange of ideas. I am proud to support INSEAD's vision, just as the school has shaped my own journey, and I hope the Tour Desmarais will inspire generations of students just as this campus has inspired me."

Reimagining a historic campus for the future

Beyond this first milestone, the project responds to the evolving needs of global business education, including more collaborative and technology-enabled learning, stronger connections among research, teaching, entrepreneurship, and growing expectations for high-quality learning and working environments.

The Europe Campus Re-imagination deepens this connection by bringing learning, living and gathering spaces closer to nature, making the forest a source of inspiration, reflection and human connection.

Investing for generations to come

Sustainability is embedded throughout the project. The transformation prioritises renewing and repurposing existing buildings wherever possible, reducing embodied carbon while preserving the distinctive character of the campus.

It also incorporates geothermal energy, photovoltaic systems, sustainable materials and landscape enhancements to improve the campus' environmental performance and long-term resilience.

When completed, the INSEAD Europe Campus will bring together new spaces for learning, research, innovation and student life, supporting its continued development for decades to come.

Key Facts:

- €300 million investment
- 2023–2033: Duration of the transformation
- 2026: Inauguration of the Tour Desmarais
- 2029: Scheduled completion of the second phase of the project
- 56,000 m² campus in Fontainebleau
- Tour Desmarais: 2,198m²
- Garden Building: 1,360 m²

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