

## **DUO for a JOB ready for European take-off with the support of the Degroof Petercam Foundation**

Brussels, 15 April 2019 – DUO for a JOB is the laureate of a new program launched by the Degroof Petercam Foundation. The Foundation's goal is to boost each year an innovative project that offers solutions for tomorrow's employment. DUO for a JOB will receive a 1 million euro grant, and will be able to lean on the Foundation's expertise and network. This support will help DUO for a JOB to bring their project also to the rest of Europe, with France as a first stop.

### **Mentoring key in enhancing job market access**

Founded in Brussels at the end of 2012, [DUO for a JOB](#) offers free, tailored support to young job candidates with a migrant background. How? For a period of six months they are given the opportunity to form a duo with experienced volunteers (mentors) who are over 50 years of age. Through this intergenerational and intercultural mentorship, the association aims to achieve three main objectives: leveling out job market access inequalities, capitalizing on the skills and experience of older people and promoting a better society by offering a unique platform for encounters between different generations and cultures.

In the five years the association exists, nearly 1750 duos have been created, resulting in 3 out of 4 young candidates finding a positive solution to their problems (53% have found a job whereas 20% have been selected for an internship or training within 12 months), thus significantly increasing their chances of accessing the job market. The benefits for mentors are also very encouraging as 9 out of 10 mentors are eager to repeat the experience after their last coaching.

### **Stepping stone for the future**

The grant will enable DUO for a JOB to realize its European ambition and will be distributed over a five year-timeframe according to the needs and the absorption capacity of the project. "We are very proud and enthusiastic that our project has been selected", explain **Matthieu Le Grelle and Frederic Simonart, the two co-founders and managers of DUO for a JOB**. "Thanks to this significant financial support our European ambition can really take off, starting with France, where we plan to open an office in Paris this summer."

In addition to the financial support offered, the Foundation will actively monitor the project for the next five years and provide access to its expertise and network. The employees of Degroof Petercam will be given the opportunity to get involved in the project by contributing their time and knowledge to the association.

### **Rigorous selection and sustainable impact**

42 associations based in the five countries where the Degroof Petercam group is active in (Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Spain and Switzerland) have been invited by the partners of the Foundation to submit their application. In order to identify potential projects, the Foundation can rely on a network of expert partners who identify the sector champions who meet the strict selection criteria.

To determine the winner, the jury of independent experts took into account several criteria: the solution offered by the project, the maturity of the organization behind it as well as the values of the association involved. The objective is to reward an innovative and sustainable project that can be used on a large scale to maximize the positive impact on job creation. **Jean-Marc Verbist, HR Director of Degroof**

**Petercam and member of the jury:** "DUO for a JOB clearly won the final vote thanks to its bold concept that offers an innovative and sustainable solution to improve access to the job market".

Since its creation in 2008, the Degroof Petercam Foundation has supported associations in the field of education and entrepreneurship. On the occasion of its tenth anniversary, the Foundation has reconfirmed its objective by focusing on projects that develop skills for the future, stimulate entrepreneurship and favor a more inclusive job market. **Xavier Van Campenhout, President of the Degroof Petercam Foundation** summarizes: "Over the last ten years, we have been able to achieve very neat results with our Foundation. By awarding a significant grant each year to a rigorously selected new project dedicated to solutions for tomorrow's employment, we increase our efforts to fight unemployment and underemployment on the job market."

### **Two other award-winning projects**

Next to DUO for a JOB, the Foundation also awarded two other projects a grant of 50,000 euros each. The first one is [Bayes Impact](#), a French non-profit organization that aims to strengthen public services through artificial intelligence. Its platform, called "[Bob emploi](#)", helps job seekers improve their employability. The second winner is also a French project: [Mozaïk RH](#), the first recruitment and human resources consulting firm in France specializing in the promotion of diversity, aims to achieve a systemic impact through its new platform "[diversisifiezvostalents.com](#)".

For more information, please contact:

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