

PRESS RELEASE

**Brussels now hosts a state-of-the-art public-oriented AI Test & Experience Center**

Brussels, 23 March 2023 - **Brussels' first public-oriented AI Test & Experience Center was officially inaugurated today by State Secretary Barbara Trachte. The state-of-art facility will allow companies, institutes, policy-makers, and citizens to test, experiment, and to ultimately advocate for the development of technically robust, safe, and ethically compliant technologies. The facility is operated by FARI, the AI Center for the Common Good institute jointly set up by ULB and VUB, and supported by Innoviris and Paradigm.brussels.**

The FARI Test & Experience Center is set to primarily serve Belgium's most dense city with over 2.1 million residents. With a growth rate of approximately 0.67%, Brussels faces various risks and challenges in different domains such as Public Health, Mobility, Climate and Energy, Resource Optimization, and Social Inclusivity. Funded through EU's Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF) / Next GenerationEU, and with the support of Innoviris, and Paradigm.brussels, the Test & Experience Center will boost collaboration between governments, researchers, industries, and citizens in Brussels and beyond to address today's urban and sustainability problems. Thanks to its central facility, workshops, training, co-creation activities, and other services, it will aim at bridging the gap between technologies and Brussels public institutions, companies and citizens.

The support of State Secretary Barbara Trachte (Secretary of State of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for Economic Transition and Scientific Research), Innoviris Director General Stefaan Sonck Thiebaut, VUB and ULB rectorates, and key digital transition players from the Belgian Federal Government, Brussels public administration, EU institutions, universities, and companies at the forefront of AI, data, and robotics underlines the importance of making state-of-the-art technologies and developments accessible to all local stakeholders.

***“Establishing a Brussels-based AI Test and Experience Center in the capital of the EU is important to position the region as a key player in making Europe a world-class hub for AI, data and robotics that is human-centered and trustworthy. The center also serves as a physical enabler to showcase collaborative and interdisciplinary AI solutions”, explains Barbara Trachte, Secretary of State of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for Economic Transition and Scientific Research***

In the upcoming years, FARI will pilot the offering of various experience facilities and services that will allow companies, institutes, policy-makers, and citizens to test, experiment, and advocate for the development of technologies grounded on the framework of the Brussels-Capital Region's research and innovation strategy, as well as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

The FARI Test & Experience center is also set to house the European Digital Innovation Hub (EDIH) called sustAIIn.brussels, which will inform and test the progress of global regulatory frameworks on ethical and

sustainable AI under development, and its local applicability. This is made possible through the partnership between Sirris, Agoria, BeCentral, and of course, VUB and ULB through FARI.

***“Leveraging on the facilities and services that the FARI Test & Experience Center will offer, sustAIIn.brussels aims to create a single point of access to sustainable digital innovation in Brussels focusing on AI technologies at the service of the region’s digital transformation strategy, aligned with international and EU frameworks ”, stated Hans De Canck, Co-director of FARI.***

Experience tours, workshops, and other activities in the FARI Test & Experience Center will be offered and designed per specific audience group. Booking procedures will be announced soon at [fari.brussels](https://fari.brussels). For specific inquiries about the FARI Test & Experience Center, email us at [experience@fari.brussels](mailto:experience@fari.brussels).

### Boilerplate

FARI AI for the Common Good Institute is an independent non-for-profit Artificial Intelligence (AI) initiative based on Data and Robotics led by Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) and Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), as part of the National Plan for Recovery and Resilience. Supported by the European Union’s Next GenerationEU project, Innoviris, and Paradigm, this Institute brings together world-leading and future researchers.

FARI aims to help citizens, public administrations, politicians, and companies as well as not-for-profit organizations to address local, every day or long-term challenges in the Brussels-Capital Region, Belgium, and Europe. It reinforces a virtuous circle: our society and economy encounter problems that FARI can help address with projects that in turn could lead to major scientific advances, especially in the fields of Responsible and Trustworthy AI, Open Data, and Fundamental Rights Protection by Design in AI, and Human-Centered Robotics. FARI represents over fifteen disciplines from the Computer Sciences to Humanities and works with over three hundred researchers, and ten research labs based at VUB and ULB.

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