Orange
Digital Center

orange™

Throwback on our first year of activity

Contents

Orange Digital Center Belgium Throwback: our first year of activity

1. Foreword by the Head of Orange Digital Center

The Orange Digital Center concept was born in 2010 in Tunisia. This initiative inspired the whole group, across every country where Orange operates. In 2019 I visited our Digital Center in Dakar, Senegal, and I was very impressed by its impact on the unemployment rate, as well as the fight against the digitalisation gap.

The health crisis brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic confronted us with evidence that digital technology is crucial to allow access to essential services or facilitate social relations. However, it further revealed how digital equality is even more of a challenge.

The numbers speak for themselves. 46% of the Belgian population is digitally vulnerable due to the lack of equipment and digital skills. Orange is bringing to market access to new technologies, and digital inclusion has been at the core of its mission. Young people are mastering the use of social networks, but this has not necessarily given them the basic digital skills needed to find a job. For those reasons, making Orange an actor in the fight for digital inclusion - with concrete action that will provide real tech skills, and help youth people find a valuable and suitable job - is a mission I took to heart.

Through 2021, we conceived a program adapted to Belgium that responded to needs linked to digital inclusion. Thanks to the support of Orange Belgium's management and colleagues, subsidies from Minister De Sutter, Orange Group and Orange Foundation, and of course the commitment of the new and powerful team dedicated to this project, we were able to launch the Orange Digital Center in June 2022.

In just one year, we have contributed to the crafting of many beautiful stories that have impact in the lives of many. From illiterate women who are now working with digital embroidery, to young entrepreneurs who come to create prototypes, this Digital Center offers many opportunities to develop hard and soft skills, while resulting in tangible action.

Juliette Malherbe,
Head of Orange Digital Center

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2. Looking back at the first year of ODC Belgium

- ODC Belgium was launched in June 2022 and has now had **1 year of operations**
- **we value multi-party partnerships** and have partnered with about 20 actors in the Belgian Digital Sector
- through our programs, **150 courses have been given**
- with a total hours of **22 000 hours of trainings**
- our programs are accessible and free for everyone and more than **1410 trainees** have joined our programs
- **5 talent coachees** have been supported in the development of their professional project
- **41% of participants are women**
- ODC Belgium counts **6 dedicated team members**
- thanks to our model, every €1 injected in ODC Belgium **has created a value of 4€ in terms of direct impact** [1]

3. About Orange Digital Center Belgium

a. Our vision
As a trusted partner, Orange gives everyone the keys to a responsible digital world. We believe digital technology is a key driver for promoting equal opportunities. As such we are committed to empowering everyone with the necessary skills and knowledge to grow freely and safely in a digital world.

b. Our mission
Our approach focuses on enabling marginalized populations to be fully included in today's society, and boost employment and entrepreneurship through digital inclusion. To ensure equal opportunities, we need to break down financial barriers, and make innovation accessible to everyone, and by building an inclusive community of coders, makers, entrepreneurs and citizens who will contribute to the digital transformation of Belgium.

c. The origins of the Orange Digital Center
The Orange Digital Center concept was born in 2010 in Tunisia to bring a solution to youth unemployment. The Orange Group has incorporated the ODC at the core of its "Engage 2025" strategy and counts today 18 centers around the world - in Europe, Middle-East and Africa.

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d. The digital gap in Belgium

Did you know that:

There is a high digital vulnerability in Belgium: In 2021, 46% of the Belgian population is estimated to be in a situation of digital vulnerability (Roi Baudouin Foundation, 2022). This vulnerability is linked to two main factors: the lack of equipment and the lack of digital skills.

Essential services are increasingly being done through digital means: In Belgium, 10% of households have no internet connection, but there is an increasing use of digital services today like e-administration (78%), e-commerce (71%) and e-banking (81%); with e-health being on the side with a lower use rate (45%) (StatBel, 2020).

There is an unequal access to digital skills: 75% of the population with digital vulnerability are people with low income or education, and 79% are women between 55 and 74 years old. (Roi Baudouin Foundation, 2022).

There are growing opportunities in the digital sector: 30% of Belgian companies hire Digital Technologies specialists; however, 60% of said companies have a hard time finding candidates for such jobs (SPF Economie, 2020).

The growing use of digital for essential services leads to further inequalities: The increasing digitization of public services will only further highlight the digital gap between populations, and the opportunities offered by digital evolution will contribute to global inequalities.

There are not enough accessible solutions on the market: Professional training and access to innovative solutions have been developed and supported by local and national institutions. However, among those initiatives, some are still costly for the end-users, which means the financial gap to obtain digital skills and enjoy digital as a job opportunity is still existing.

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e. Our activities

To appropriately rise up to such challenges, the Orange Digital Centre has been implemented in Belgium as an initiative from Orange Belgium. It is a space dedicated to giving access to training and innovation tools in order to develop **digital expertise, facilitate access to high value-added jobs and support entrepreneurship.** All the courses and access to the machines are free, so that no additional barriers exist for beneficiaries.

At ODC Belgium, we tackle every level of the digital skills spectrum, from basic digital literacy to expert fields such as Artificial Intelligence, 5G and Internet of Things.

Our programs are addressing two main areas of focus:

1. Discovery programs

These short programs are designed as **introductory sessions** and aim to foster **digital autonomy:**
- basic digital skills
- digital fabrication (creating objects using digitally controlled machines) and Internet of Things (often referred to synthetized as 'Smart Objects')

2. Training programs

These long programs focus on **job creation** and **sector perspective:**
- professional trainings in IT (Cybersecurity, SAP, WebDevelopment, Artificial Intelligence and Data)
- prototyping and entrepreneurship (Project Management, Design Thinking, Social Innovation and Creating a Prototype in our FabLab)

In addition to those programs, we offer free **talent coaching** for people who need help with their professional project: We hold individual or collective sessions aimed at assessing your skills, profile and defining your career objectives with a professional talent coach from Orange.

Our goal when developing the Orange Digital Center is not to reinvent and duplicate existing structures. This is why we work together with the existing ecosystem. We create partnerships with non-profit, public and private organizations that share our values to make those programs happen and boost inclusion and diversity in the digital transformation.

Our role is both to enable and strengthen the potential of our partners, as we can bring our expertise and resources to their existing programs.

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4. A closer look at our programs

a. Discovery programs

■ Basic Digital Skills

Digital inclusion is not only the issue of digitally illiterate people, it's a topic for everyone, especially for actors working in the social sector and providing support to marginalized populations.

By partnering with the ASBL WeTechCare, our goal is to boost digital inclusion by changing the scale of digital support systems and increase the indirect impact of our actions.
Through awareness events, training for people with low digital maturity and resources for digital helpers and caretakers, we also aim to strengthen the network of actors involved in digital inclusion.

Some examples of our Basic Digital Skills trainings:
■ how to use a computer
■ discover tools to create your CV
■ discover cybersecurtity and secure your devices
■ connect to administrative tools (itsme, tax-on-web, MyHealth…)
■ our results:

82 digitally excluded people directly trained

579 social sector actors trained to support digitally excluded people

60% women among our participants

During the training, people are supervised and guided through a sandbox platform which allows them to gain confidence and autonomy in their use of digital administration tools.

■ Digital Fabrication and Internet of Things

Innovation has to be inclusive for new ideas to emerge. As such, we opened a Solidarity FabLab that offers initiations and immersive experiences and initiations around digital fabrication.

We also work hand in hand with partners that tailor programs to the needs of their beneficiaries, and provide positive pedagogy based on peer-to-peer learning, trial error, and celebrating failures. We also aim at demystifying the Internet of Things and electronics more broadly through dedicated workshops.

■ some examples of our training programs:
  - learn to use machines (3D printing, Digital Embroidery, Laser Cutting)
  - discover Artificial Intelligence and IoT with Microbits
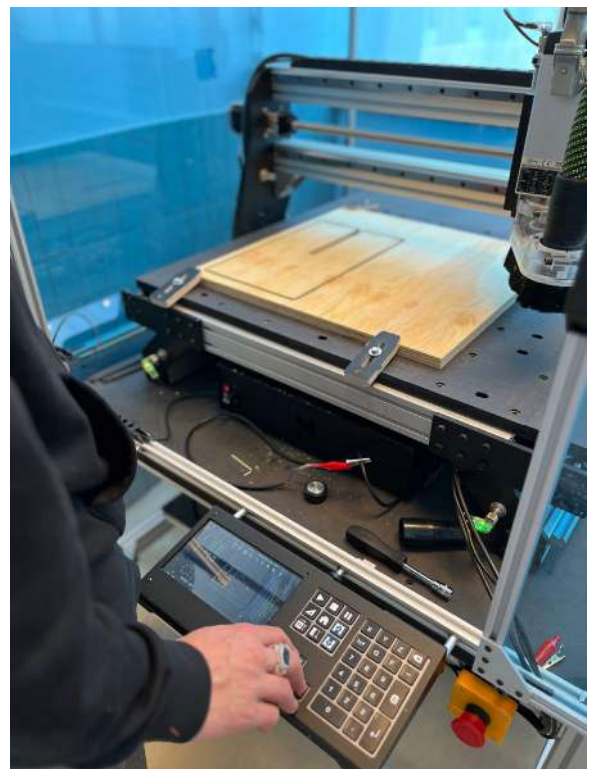
■ our results:

363 beneficiaries

47% of women

In partnership with MOVE, illiterate women came to the FabLab to develop their own alphabetical tools and left empowered.

Woodworking students came to learn how to use digital tools in their manufacture process, enabling them to widen their skills.

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b. Training programs

Digital skills are becoming prerequisites for tomorrow's jobs. That's why we partnered with BeCode, a social impact-driven coding school teaching digital skills to individuals in vulnerable professional situations.

Through our partnership with BeCode, we offer the following training:
- Artificial Intelligence and Data Science
- Web Development
- Cybersecurity
- SAP

In addition to these 7-month-long training programs, support is offered in career orientation and job searching for jobs.

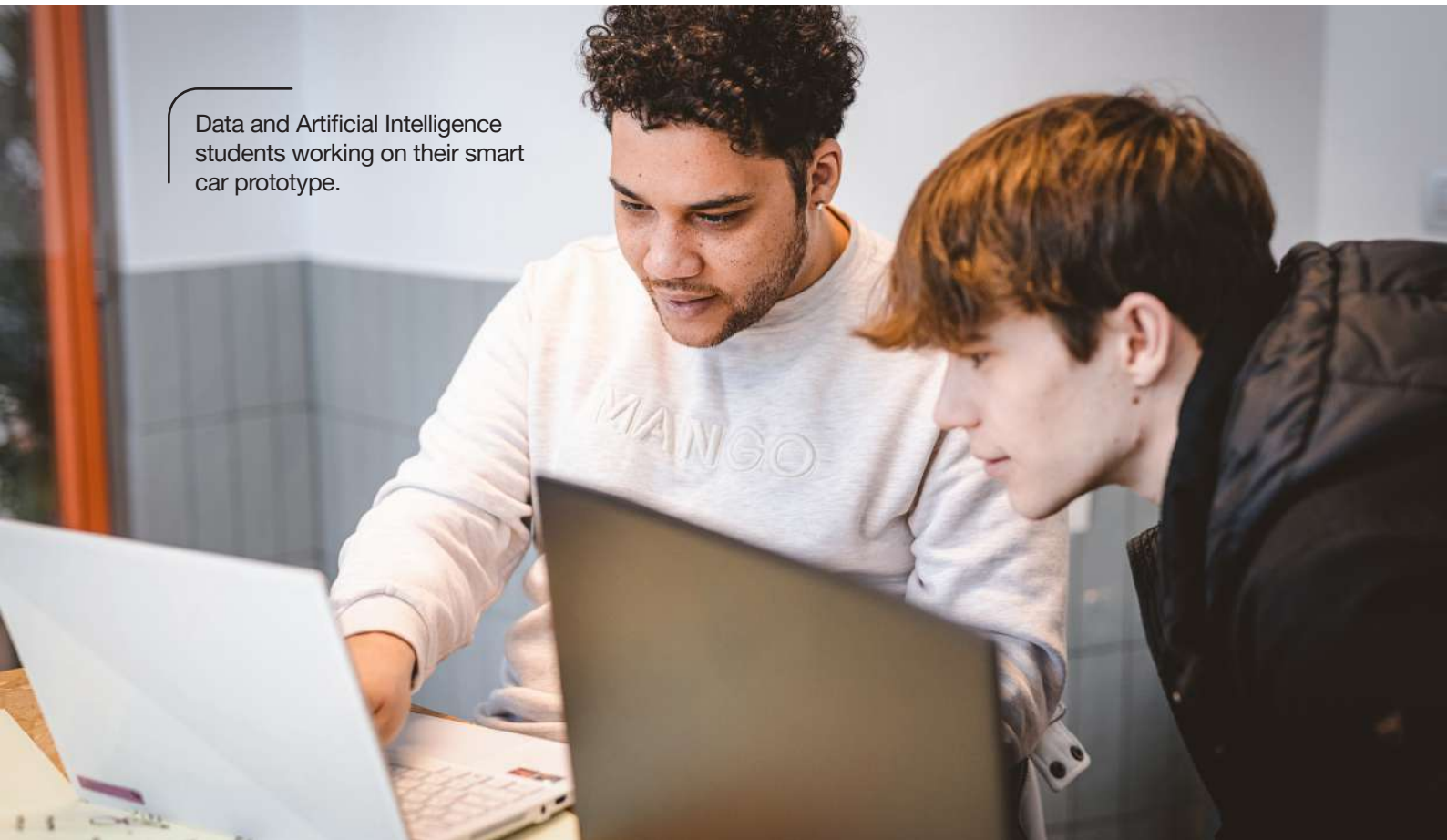**Our results:**

79% were jobseekers

34% were women

63% had at most a highschool degree

18,5% had less than a highschool degree

With positive outcomes:

79%

of these participants (re-)integrated the job market within the 6 months following the training

Data and Artificial Intelligence students working on their smart car prototype.

■ **Prototyping and entrepreneurship**

This one-month program aims at offering an experience in digital and social innovation.
The goal is to help local purpose-driven projects via design thinking, collective intelligence and concrete prototyping while developing project management, interpersonal and machinery skills. We are supported in this by BeGreator and Impact Valley, local actors in digital job and social innovations.

Our results:

89% were jobseekers

53% were women

67% had at most a highschool degree

5% had less than a highschool degree

Positive outcomes:

50%
of these participants (re-)integrated into the job market or pursued further

Our learners offered a gamified visit of the Ferme du Parc Maximilien with interactive riddles, a website and an electrical booth to enrich the experience of visitors.

After one month, our team was able to produce several prototypes, to help people from an ASBL accompany and communicate with autistic children.

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5. Our thriving ecosystem

To generate positive impact, we rely on our thriving ecosystem.

Through our partnerships, we are accelerating the impact of existing actors working on digital inclusion. We do so by providing funding but also skills-based mentoring, expertise and access to infrastructures and machinery in our unique space at the heart of Brussels.

We have founded our partnerships based on the needs of the various actors in this ecosystem and want to continuously adapt our support to address the digital gap. This is why we highly value this peer-to-peer learning experience and continuous journey of improvement.

Our Changemaker Partners

WE*TECH*CARE

'The Orange Digital Centre has made it possible for WeTechCare to offer a 360° digital inclusion solution. From training in basic digital skills for disadvantaged groups, to the creation of educational resources and the training of volunteers and professionals in digital coaching, this initiative has become a real vector for social integration in the heart of Brussels.

With more than a hundred digitally excluded people trained at the Orange Digital Center and several thousand digital helpers benefiting from high-quality training content, in just over a year the Orange Digital Center has become an indispensable player in the field of digital inclusion.'

Jean Deydier - Founder & CEO WeTechCare

‹/becode›

'Orange is a strong believer in the importance of supporting tech education for all. Through the structural partnership with Orange, BeCode is able to continue year after year its mission: to support vulnerable people by training them in tech capabilities and accompany them to a fitting job. The societal role Orange is playing should be an example for all other companies: to have a tangible and active role in the societal challenge of their ESG focus.'

Béatrice de Mahieu, CEO of BeCode

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Our Enabling Partners

BE CENTRAL

EducIT

team4job

RECYCL ART

MVM
Académie des Arts Visuels de Molenbeek

MOVE
Molenbeek Vivre Ensemble

ictjob.be

19 CAMPUS
MEMBER OF 42

maison de jeunes
La Cité
Des Jeunes

Mission Locale
pour l'emploi de
Saint-Gilles

Our Impact Partners

IMPACT VALLEY

begreator

be maker

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6. Stories from our participants

'I found [at the Orange Digital Center] a safespace - a space with real social and intellectual diversity - and a way of developing my network. My regular visits and the few events I've attended have enabled me to step (a little bit in spite of myself) into this rich ecosystem of Brussels' tech world, start-ups and entrepreneurs. This ecosystem, which is closely linked to the BeCentral community, has also made me more familiar with the world of entrepreneurship.

The ODC came into my life at a time when I was asking myself a lot of questions about my professional future, and it clearly opened doors for me. Looking back, it had the effect of accelerating my thinking, boosting my self-confidence and opening me up to 'The World' in general. The values conveyed by the FabLab match my own values and aspirations.

In addition, I still have a lot of ideas for small projects to try out, and the Fablab is a great playground for that! The synergies that come out of it have a hyper-positive impact on me from a personal point of view, and could perhaps be transposed on a professional level, if I started to develop my ideas. In the meantime, I'm continuing to build my network, meeting new people and learning new things all the time.'

Léa, now Project Manager at Femmes Fières

'The two places offered me many opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds, which enriched my way of solving problems and introduced me to new ways of working. I have broadened my knowledge and benefited from the help of highly qualified people when necessary. In turn, when necessary, I was able to help out as well.

Since joining BeCode and going to the FabLab, I've developed professionally, acquired new skills and taken part in some exciting projects. It has stimulated my creativity and pushed back the boundaries to my ideas.

Today, I'm committed to a new project that's close to my heart, applying the knowledge and skills I acquired at BeCode and the FabLab to achieve my career aspirations.

I highly recommend BeCode and the FabLab to anyone with a project who's not sure where to start, as they'll find a community sharing the same ambitions.'

Louis, former BeCode student, then intern at Nirli,
a start-up accelerated by Orange Fab

'Hassan discovered us through the WeTechCare stand at the job fair, and went to the Orange Digital Center the very next day for his first training session. At the first session, he barely knew how to use his smartphone to answer an incoming call. As the training progressed, he learned to use a computer, set up an email address and bought himself a reconditioned laptop to continue learning at home.

Marcela was in her fifties, of foreign origin, and with no locally-recognized diploma; she was part of a group of job seekers who joined in the training course on creating a CV in Canva.

The following week she was unable to attend, as she had secured a job interview. The following week, when she attended the cloud training, she apologized for not being able to come for the remaining training program: her new CV (created on Canva) had made the difference, and she was hired.'

Thomas, WeTechCare Project Manager,
talking about their beneficiaries

7. Our dedicated team

Juliette Malherbe
Head of Orange Digital Center

Ariane Chan
Orange Fab Manager

Marie Dützer
Digital Academy and FabLab Manager

Christine Goffart
Talent Manager

Anouk Jurdant
Fab Manager and FabLab Coordinator

Xavier Klein
Fab Manager

Julien Doolaeghe
Fab Manager

8. Our contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

Through our activities, we contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals defined by the United Nations.

SDG 4 - Quality Education
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Did you know?
⅓ of the youth between 16 and 24 years old have weak digital skills, with a strong tendency among undereducated youth (45%).

How do we help?
All our training programs are free and are accessible to everyone.

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SDG 5 - Gender Equality
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Did you know?
In Belgium, only 18% of digital experts are female.

How do we help?
Although the ODC develops programs which are accessible to everyone, there is a particular focus in reaching populations that are far from employment, as well as women. We have an average of 48% female participation throughout our programs promoting digital skills.

SDG 8 - Decent Work & Economic Growth
Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Did you know?
- the unemployment rate in Belgium is at 5,7% and is at 11,5% in Brussels
- out of the 40% of people who are in digitally vulnerable in Belgium, 54% are job seekers

How do we help?
For the programs where we are allowed to request this information, we have an average of 79,5% of participants are unemployed.
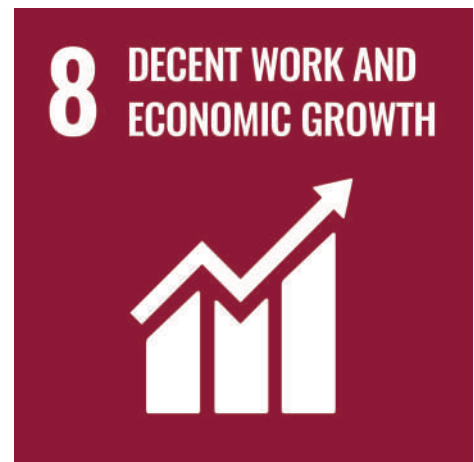
SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities
Reduce inequality within and among countries

Did you know?
In 2021, 46% of the Belgian population is estimated to be in a situation of digital vulnerability. (Fondation Roi Baudouin, 2022).
It has been proven that digital vulnerability leads to segregation, social injustice and structural inequalities (Bonnetier et al., 2017).

How do we help?
Our programs and training are accessible to everyone and cover a variety of topics related to digital skills: AI, Web development, Coding, Basics of Digital Use, Digital Literacy, Machinery Training, Prototyping, etc. Providing such training programs for free directly contributes to reducing inequalities generated by digital illiteracy or vulnerability.

SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Did you know?
There is an increasing number of actors addressing the digital inclusion in Belgium.

How do we help?
We decided not to reinvent the wheel to reach our goals, but partner with actors within the existing ecosystem. In our first year of operations, we have worked with more than 15 partners of whom 2 benefited from €1.7M of funding.

9. Our vision for the future

In conclusion, we are very proud of the results achieved in 12 months. Throughout this first year, we have laid the foundations of the project, we created awareness around our name, and we designed successful training programs that attracted more than 1400 trainees across 80 different kinds of training.

The beauty of the project lies in the fruitful connections we establish between the different pillars of Orange Digital Center, but also within the entire Orange ecosystem, including organizations, academia and government entities. In the coming year, we will further strengthen these partnerships to amplify our collective efforts.

In terms of employment, we want to build more bridges between Orange Belgium and the Orange Digital Centre.

In terms of entrepreneurship, we want to foster innovation and support entrepreneurs by creating even more links between the Digital Academy where people learn to code, our Solidarity FabLab where people create and test their prototypes, and our start-up accelerator Orange Fab where we help start-ups grow through commercial partnerships.

The establishment of the Orange Digital Center in Belgium has marked a significant milestone in our commitment to promoting digital inclusion, fostering innovation, and empowering entrepreneurs. This initiative is linked to other activities at Orange Belgium within digital inclusion that make the story even more powerful, such as the signing of the DigitAll charter, the creation of Care Corners in our shops, the refurbished PCs offered to schools, and help centers in war zones in Ukraine.

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We are in a continuous journey of improvement where we leverage our expertise, resources, and partnerships to create a positive impact in society and reach for systemic change. For the year to come, new initiatives in digital inclusion have been set up by the Orange Belgium Fund:

1. **The launch of the Digital House** for women digitally vulnerable in partnership with Girleek whose objective is to bring new digital skills and tech entrepreneurship support to women.
2. **The support of the launch of a mentoring program for women in tech** with BeCode which will reinforce our mission of gender equality in the tech sector.

To conclude, we are driven by a **vision of systemic change,** where technology serves as a catalyst for positive societal transformation. Our commitment to digital inclusion will continue to guide our actions as we strive to create lasting impact.
We are more than excited for the year to come to embrace the possibilities of the digital age and build a future where everyone can thrive.

10. Our supporting partners

All these inspiring numbers and stories would not have been possible without our supporting partners who have believed in our project since Day one. We can't thank you enough!

'Let us not be mistaken. Digital exclusion goes beyond having a smartphone or computer. More and more often, having internet and digital skills will determine whether you can take part in society. We often take our human rights for granted and underestimate the major consequences that new forms of exclusion can have. Our fight against digital exclusion is nothing but a fight for fundamental rights.'

Petra De Sutter, 2022

'For over ten years, the Orange Foundation has been working to promote digital solidarity in Europe and Africa, and as part of this, we support digital fabrication centers, thanks to their ability to restore confidence, develop skills and act as a leverage for professional integration. Learning by doing, using digital machines, and sharing are at the heart of this approach, enabling everyone to fully express their talents!'

Séverine Ozanne, Solidarity FabLab Program Director at the Orange Foundation

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