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## **Agorize raises €2 million from Iris Capital and Capnamic Ventures, to speed up its international development.**

**As a pioneer in open innovation challenges and talent engagement platforms, the start-up has maintained a stunning three-figure growth rate over the past three years since it was founded.**

**Paris, France, 25 November 2014** - Agorize, the company that provides open innovation challenges and talent engagement platforms raised €2 million through a second round of financing provided by Iris Capital and Capnamic Ventures. Founded in 2012, the company was able to realize immediate successes based on its economic model both unique and pioneering in this sector. Profitable within its first business year, the company has grown sustainably by more than 100% in turnover for three consecutive years, and currently employs 15 employees.

Agorize runs various online platforms, including Studyka.com, which connect companies with highly qualified target communities (students, graduates, developers, start-ups, or their own employees) through open innovation challenges. Over the past three years, the company has organized and managed challenges for more than 100 clients in Europe (including TF1 and Bouygues Construction in France), America (Bank of America and Google) and Asia (GDF Suez and Michelin). In its course of action, Agorize has generated several hundred thousand public student profiles that meet the needs of its client companies. The company partners with more than 2,000 universities across five continents to generate these profiles. The platform provides a link between the academic and business world, enabling students to win prizes, participate in workshops, join companies either for internships or their first job, or to be spotted by recruiters.

Agorize's corporate clients use the platform internally to create and host their own innovation challenges with their employees, service providers, clients and partners. The platform allows them to involve their stakeholders in its open innovation strategy. Agorize's clients today include major players like *Allianz, Michelin, Google, TF1, Bouygues, GDF Suez, Microsoft* and *Bank of America*.

Charles Thou, co-founder of Agorize alongside Yohann Melamed and Yohan Attal, explains: *"As students, we were passionate about innovation challenges. We saw that in the age of social networks, this market that represents a strategic need for businesses, was lacking innovation. Thus we launched Agorize, based on a model that allows the target audiences to collaborate easily via technological platforms."*

In 2012, Agorize raised €300,000 from Bouygues Telecom Initiatives in an initial seed financing round. The company received honours from Scientipôle Initiative and Réseau Entreprendre Paris, which further underline the entrepreneurial qualities of the Agorize team.

The new funds invested by Iris Capital and Capnamic Ventures will allow Agorize to strengthen its commercial resources in Germany, Great Britain, North America and France.



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*“Agorize has quickly become a leading player in the open innovation challenges market. As an internationally experienced investor in digital technologies, we were impressed by the quality and speed of the team’s performance. Furthermore, we are convinced of Agorize’s highly innovative business model that enables businesses to spot ideas and talented individuals, and offers a valuable return on investment. We are delighted to work with them on the next level of their development”,* said Sophie Dingreville, partner at Iris Capital.

Christian Siegele, Managing Partner at Capnamic, commented *“We believe that Agorize’s unique business model offers great growth potential and we are looking forward to support the company over the course of its internationalization.”*

#### **ABOUT AGORIZE**

Agorize is a start-up company with 15 employees, specialising in the creation of open innovation challenges and recruitment platforms. Launched in 2012, the company has provided support to hundreds of major client accounts in France and internationally by involving highly qualified personnel both externally (students, developers, start-ups, etc.) and internally (employees) in challenges. Agorize’s clients include *Bouygues Construction, Google, Allianz, Microsoft and TF1*. Agorize won the Prix BforBank de l’Entrepreneur in 2013, and has also received awards from Scientipôle Initiative, Réseau Entreprendre, Microsoft Tech Days 2014 and SFR Jeunes Talents Startup 2014. The company had been selected successively by the following incubators: LeCamping, ParisTech Entrepreneurs and Paris Incubateur.

For more information, please visit: [www.agorize.com](http://www.agorize.com)

#### **ABOUT IRIS CAPITAL**

Iris Capital is a pan-European venture capital fund manager specializing in digital economy. Since its inception in 1986, the Iris Capital team has invested more than € 1 billion in more than 230 companies. Iris Capital targets opportunities in service or technology companies, seeking growth capital in order to realize their strategy. It provides active support to its portfolio companies on the basis of its strong sector specialization and experience, and has offices in Paris, Cologne, San Francisco, Montreal, Riyadh, Dubai, Beijing and Tokyo. In 2012 Iris Capital has entered into a strategic partnership with Orange and Publicis to manage their joint venture capital initiative.

For more information, please visit: [www.iriscapital.com](http://www.iriscapital.com)



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#### **ABOUT CAPNAMIC VENTURES**

Capnamic Ventures is a multi-corporate venture fund with offices in Cologne and Berlin, Germany. Founded in January 2013 the investment focus lies on fast growing business models along the digital value chain in scalable areas such as mobile, e-Commerce, gaming, payment, advertising and software as a service. Capnamic is backed by well-known corporate investors and family offices. Along with its new fund, Capnamic Ventures manages the entire portfolio of DuMont Venture.

For more information, please visit: [www.capnamic.de](http://www.capnamic.de)

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