



DESIGN FICTION: IN TIMES OF CRISIS, GEM HELPS STUDENTS CREATE THE FUTURE'S DREAM JOB AND LAUNCHES THE MUSEUM OF NEAR FUTURES

*In a world marked by crises and transitions, Grenoble École de Management (GEM) is launching its **Museum of Near Futures**, an experimental space dedicated to imagination and innovation. **Selected for the QS Reimagine Education Awards 2025 in the category Innovation in Business Education**, this unprecedented project demonstrates how GEM leverages imagination to enhance pedagogy and drive transformation. As a pioneer in innovation-focused teaching, GEM uses Design Fiction as a strategic tool to train the leaders of tomorrow. This experimental approach, combining creativity, foresight, and critical thinking, prepares students to turn future uncertainties into opportunities.*

IMAGINE TO LEARN: WHEN THE FUTURE BECOMES A TESTING GROUND

At GEM, innovation is not just a buzzword—it's a mindset. The school was among the first in Europe to integrate serious games as a learning tool. A visionary in pedagogy, Hélène Michel has been exploring the potential of games and Design Fiction for over a decade to envision possible futures. Today, she continues this exploration through **Design Fiction, an immersive approach that uses science fiction to question the present and imagine possible futures.**

"We do not teach the future. We teach how to design it, prepare for it, question it, and even make it tangible," explains Hélène Michel professor at GEM.



Design Fiction course focused on creating a deliverable for IRT Nanoelec.

Hélène Michel, center, surrounded by her students.

© Arthur Cauchois

DESIGN FICTION: A PEDAGOGY FOR THE FUTURES

At GEM, Design Fiction goes beyond a simple creative exercise: it is an **experimental and critical method that trains students to anticipate economic, social, and technological transformations.** Among their projects, a Future IKEA Catalog, created in collaboration with **IRT Nanoelec (an R&D, technology transfer, and training institute dedicated to the microelectronics sector)**, illustrates the intersection of local research and the sustainable imaginaries of younger generations. **More than 250 international students** imagine jobs that do not yet exist, reflecting their values and vision of work.

DIGITAL TWIN FARMER: THE URBAN FARMER OF TOMORROW?

Diego Arce Mejia, a Data Science student from Guatemala, designed the role of an urban farmer using a digital twin and IoT sensors to cultivate sustainably in the city.

"Imagining my future job allowed me to reflect on my values and beliefs in a possible future. Through Design Fiction, I created the role of Digital Twin Farmer, a position that combines technology and sustainability to rethink agriculture and address the challenges of an essential but vulnerable sector. This experimental pedagogy pushes us to explore future issues while developing our creativity and critical thinking," explains Diego..



"These stories reveal what students truly expect: sustainability, meaning, and technology serving life. They also inspire companies to identify the skills to be developed by 2030. Who knows—maybe Diego will become the first urban farmer in Guatemala!" summarizes Hélène Michel.

FROM CAMPUS TO COMPANIES: DESIGN FICTION AS A NEW DRIVER OF INNOVATION

This approach goes beyond the academic sphere and is also integrated into Executive Education programs to help companies anticipate disruptions and co-build resilient strategies. Grenoble-based companies such as **BeeAlp** have collaborated with GEM to imagine the technologies of the future — for instance, designing an ethical and sustainable smartphone during a creative evening workshop led by Hélène Michel.

"What if our future technologies were designed not only for performance but also for sustainability? Beyond the experimentation that sparked real reflection, we appreciated drawing concrete lessons to fuel our upcoming innovation projects!" exclaims **Olivier Dufour**, co-founder of BeeAlp.

LAUNCH OF THE MUSEUM OF NEAR FUTURES: IMAGINATION AT THE SERVICE OF INNOVATION

The Museum of Near Futures is a **living laboratory of imagination**. This immersive exhibition, located on GEM's Alps Campus, blends art, technology, and forward thinking to explore possible futures through unique artefacts — such as a connected plant capable of storing data or a "slow delivery" service. The museum also offers immersive workshops to co-create desirable futures with students, researchers, and businesses, as well as traveling exhibitions.

It has been **selected for the QS Reimagine Education Awards 2025** in the category Innovation in Business Education, to be held from December 1–3 in London.

GEM: A PIONEERING SCHOOL OF CRITICAL IMAGINATION TURNING UNCERTAINTY INTO SOLUTIONS

Through Design Fiction, GEM strengthens its position as a **European leader in pedagogical innovation and foresight education**.



"In an uncertain world, the ability to imagine alternative futures has become a strategic skill. Design Fiction helps our students connect vision, creativity, and critical thinking — three essential pillars of responsible leadership. Internationally, few schools go as far as GEM in exploring future-oriented experimentation, and that's what makes us unique," concludes **Philippe Monin**, Academic Director of GEM.



ABOUT GEM : Founded in 1984, Grenoble École de Management (GEM) is a triple-accredited business school (AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA) recognized for its academic excellence, technological DNA, and international outlook. As the first French business school to adopt the status of a Mission-Driven Company, GEM places innovation, sustainability, and societal impact at the heart of its strategy. Through its EAGLE 2030 plan, GEM is scaling up to become the Business School of the Alps, pioneering in the fields of science, experiential learning, and major global transitions. The school develops agile, hybrid professionals capable of thinking and acting in a rapidly changing world. Every year, 7,000 students pursue transformative programs across GEM's campuses in Grenoble, Paris, and Lyon, benefiting from immersive pedagogy and a network of over 230 academic partners worldwide.

PRESS CONTACTS:

Arifé Yildiz • arife.yildiz@grenoble-em.com • +33 (0)6 70 61 61 46

Sophie Almozini • sophie.almozini@grenoble-em.com • +33 (0)6 30 28 03 75