



SIN France fosters UK-France collaboration in European research programme for offshore wind and marine energy.



It all began in March 2016 at the UK-France summit, when the French President and the Prime Minister agreed that France and the United Kingdom would further science and innovation collaboration on national and regional systems of support for innovation.

The SIN France team identified the network of IRTs (*Instituts de recherche technologique*) as a close equivalent to the UK Catapults and an excellent base for exploring bilateral collaboration. Both networks were launched at the same time in their respective countries and pool public and private research equipment, facilities, and expertise to bring

government, research and business under a single roof. The IRT network consisted of eight centres while there were 11 new catapult centres each with similar areas of focus.

SIN France organised the first Catapult – IRT workshop at the British Embassy in Paris on 25th May 2016, with representatives from Catapults, IRT, UK and French government officials as well as operating agencies. At the workshop, both sides shared policy insights and best practice. The aim was to identify synergies and opportunities for future collaboration and partnerships. The Chief Executive of Innovate UK, Ruth McKernan, gave a keynote speech setting out the UK's national innovation system, investment in innovation, and how the catapults fitted into this.

Less than a year later, a second meeting was organised in London, in collaboration with the French Embassy.

Impact

As a result of these meetings, the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult on the UK side, and IRT Jules Vernes on the French have joined forces as partners in a Horizon 2020 project [Carbon 4 Power](#). The project looks at advanced materials and innovative procedures for renewable marine energy. This will feed into UK government objectives, as detailed in the [2020 Energy White Paper](#), to generate new clean power via innovative technologies that will reduce costs for consumers and increase capacity.

SIN France was delighted that the work the team initiated following the 2016 UK-France Summit led, four years later, to this IRT-Catapult collaboration in a Horizon 2020 collaborative project, showing the importance of international scientific collaboration in key sectors such as energy.

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