

## Murielle Eyletters – Aliwen SA



Her school options would not have predestined her to entrepreneurship except maybe her will to carry out her ideas and her excellent ability in sciences. The founder of Aliwen managed to turn her passion for trees in a promising enterprise.

### Roots of the project

Murielle Eyletters has always had a passion for the vegetal world. When she was still a child and would play in the region of Charleroi, where she comes from, she already found interesting the vegetation that grew in this hostile environment. This is why she became agricultural engineer, then doctor in agronomy specialised in vegetal physiology. Without being aware of it, the topic of her thesis would later be the starting point of her future society, Aliwen. Indeed, she studied the reaction of the plants from the environmental stress (drought, strong lights, soil mineral deficiencies...) While doing her BA, Murielle Eyletters focused on techniques adapted to this context, notably at the University of Genève (Switzerland) and the University of Stanford (USA). “My aim was to have at my disposal techniques that would be easy to put into practice in order to use them in diagnostics », she explains.

At only twenty-two and then twenty-six, she got her two diplomas with the highest distinction. “Apparently, this is something that characterises me: I never waste time when there is the possibility to act well and quickly! But I always worry about the details and I want perfection, which can sometimes be annoying...”

### Her way into entrepreneurship

After her thesis, she worked four years as researcher in the same field at the ULB. However she did not want to narrow her prospects to basic research only. In January 2003, she was given an opportunity that would change her life forever. The ULB called for an invitation to tender to put forward the results of the research. This is when the spin-off Aliwen, which means “amazing tree” in a language of Patagonia, was born. At the same time, Murielle Eyletters kept two part time jobs as a teacher at Hainaut-Condorcet High School, and as lecturer at the ULB. “The common aspects between entrepreneurship and teaching, is the scientific excellence. Today, I decided I didn’t need to choose one over another because for me, one completes the other. I need the students’ points of view, which brings freshness innovation to my company.

### What is next ?

Murielle Eyletters has many ideas for the future of Aliwen, as much for existing products as for future developments. “The problem that a scientist often has to face is that he wants everything to be perfect. Since 2003, our researches allowed to set up diagnostic methods, computer ID of the trees... Now we should stop improving, and actually sell!” In the short term, the first thing to achieve is commercial strategy, with the setting up of selling networks both national and international. In order to meet the challenge, Murielle Eyletters works with experts, notably from the Awex, to “help her managing exportation abroad. “Developing an enterprise is very hard, but it is a great and rewarding human experience, a team work.” It is as well a personal satisfaction to be able to make a project and ideas a reality.

### ID of the company:

Activity: phytosanitary diagnostics, inventories and managerial plan, and computer ID of the trees from cities and countryside.

Creation: 2003

Location: Aéroport de Gosselies

5 employees

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