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WEL Research Institute announces leadership transition

After five years of transformation and continued growth, during which the Institute has strengthened the impact of strategic research in Wallonia, Véronique Graff succeeds Vinciane Gaussin as Director General of the WEL Research Institute. This transition reflects the continuity of the Institute's mission: advancing strategic research, driving innovation and creating value for society and the economy.

Wavre, Belgium, 10 August 2026 – The Board of Directors of WEL Research Institute (WELRI) today announced the appointment of Véronique Graff as Managing Director, effective immediately. She succeeds Vinciane Gaussin, who stepped down on 9 August 2026 to pursue new professional opportunities after five years of leading the institute through a period of significant strategic growth and transformation.

Returning to the role of Director General in 2021, Vinciane Gaussin led a pivotal phase in the development of WELRI. Under her leadership, WELBIO, an initiative dedicated to life sciences, evolved into the WEL Research Institute, a strategic research institute whose mission now spans both health and sustainable transition. Over five years, with the support of the Walloon Region, WELRI doubled its research portfolio and strengthened its role as a catalyst for technology transfer, innovation and value creation in Wallonia. This momentum has resulted in the creation of several spin-off companies, including Neuvasq Biotechnologies (ULB), Santero Therapeutics (ULB), THERAtRAME (ULiège) and, more recently, InterceptBio (UCLouvain–UNamur). These achievements demonstrate WELRI's ability to accelerate the translation of breakthrough scientific discoveries into impactful innovations, working in close partnership with universities across the Wallonia-Brussels Federation to generate economic and societal value.

*"Vinciane has successfully guided WELRI through a defining period in its history," said **Philippe Denoël, Chair of the Board of Directors**. "Her vision and leadership have transformed the institute, broadened its mission, and strengthened its contribution to Wallonia's innovation ecosystem, while accelerating the translation of breakthrough discoveries into societal and economic value. On behalf of the Board, I sincerely thank her for her outstanding commitment and wish her every success in the next chapter of her career."*

Vinciane Gaussin commented: *"Leading WELRI has been a tremendous privilege. Thanks to the continued support of the Walloon Region, and together with our team, researchers, partners and Board of Directors, we have built an institute that demonstrates how strategic research can create tangible societal and economic value. I am particularly proud to hand over an organization that is stronger, broader in scope and well positioned for its next stage of development. I leave WELRI with great confidence in its future and look forward to pursuing new professional opportunities."*

Véronique Graff joins WELRI after **ten years as Managing Director of GreenWin**, where she successfully led one of Wallonia's flagship innovation clusters and fostered collaboration between industry, research organizations and public authorities to accelerate innovation in sustainable technologies. She brings extensive experience in innovation strategy, ecosystem development and public-private partnerships, as well as a deep understanding of the sectors that will further enhance the impact of the strategic research supported by WELRI.

*" We are delighted to welcome Véronique Graff to WELRI," said **Philippe Denoël**. "Her proven leadership, extensive innovation expertise and deep knowledge of Wallonia's research and industrial landscape make her ideally positioned to build on the strong foundations established over the past five years. Her arrival ensures continuity while opening an exciting new chapter for the institute."*

With this new phase in its development, WELRI is reaffirming its commitment to its core mission: supporting excellence in strategic research and accelerating the journey from scientific discovery to value-generating innovation, contributing to advances in healthcare, the sustainable transition and the economic development of Wallonia.

About WEL Research Institute (WELRI)

The WEL Research Institute (WELRI) is an inter-university institute funded by the Walloon Region. By supporting excellence in strategic research and accelerating its translation into real-world applications, WELRI helps transform scientific discoveries into value-creating innovations that advance healthcare, the sustainable transition and the economic development of Wallonia. For more information, visit www.welri.org

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