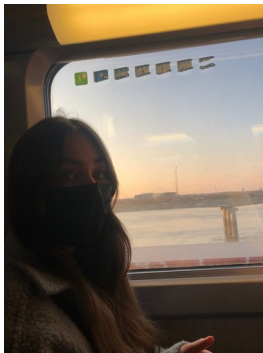


It all started 2 years ago, during the first lockdown. Mr **Brunel** asked us if we were interested in a project with the **CNES**. Since I dreamt of working in the field of aerospace I immediately said yes. Basically the project was that we had to elaborate scientific experiments to execute on a « zero gravity plane » which will do parabolas to create an environment in weightlessness. I was then even more interested. But later we learned that it was a national project and that only 3 highschoools would be selected. I was always interested but also a bit afraid.

Thinking about the experiments and developing them was the hardest part. We wanted to be as original as possible to stand out of the crowd. When Mr Brunel suggested choosing experiments about life on Mars because our European Section program was about it, things got clear in our heads. That's how we thought about our 8 experiments. Then, on a random Saturday in June we learned that **our project had been selected !**

That's how we got to go to Bordeaux, more precisely Merignac, last week.

Sunday, March 6th 2022 :



We agreed to meet at 4:10 pm in front of Angouleme's train station. As soon as we came into the station we saw that our train was 40 minutes late 🚆. Pretty good first impression for the 2 other highschoools that had to cross the country to get to Bordeaux.... Anyways, we arrived and got on a bus that transported us to our hotel. Then we discovered our rooms. They weren't so "chic" or "instagrammable" but as long as I was with **Lola** and that we had a roof on top of our head it was all good. Afterwards, we went to dinner. It was in a restaurant on campus. I don't think I will say what we ate because if I start going into those kinds of details my report will definitely become a novel.



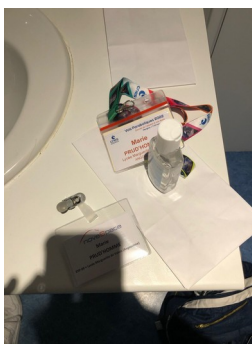
After having our stomach full we had a briefing with all the students, the teachers, **Angelique Gaudel** (an engineer who works at the CNES and who has been taking very very good care of the project and all of us during the trip), **Maria** (she guided us during the visits) and **Marine** (Angelique's intern). Angelique gave us our CNES name tag and we



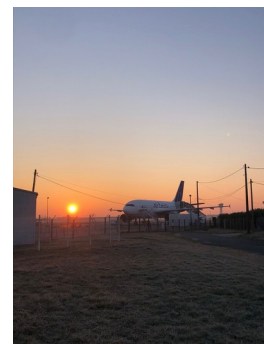
watched the briefing video with all the rules that are necessary to follow at Novespace (rules presented by the one and only **Jean-François Clervoy**, an astronaut and previously Novespace's CEO!!!). After that some of us stayed to

play some games but we, Lola and I, went to bed.

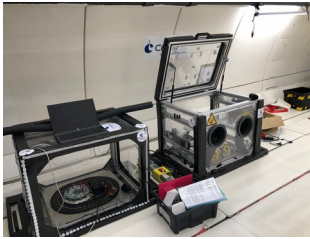
Monday, March 7th 2022 :



5:45 am, time to get out of bed 🛏. We left at 6:30 am with Mr Brunel, Angélique and Marine, heading to Novespace. After we stopped to eat some



breakfast, we discovered the plane for the first time. Actually we saw so many things for the first time.



The plane, our suit (we didn't get out of it for the rest of the day) and our official Novespace's badge, our frames with all the experiments... There were actually stars in my eyes 😊.

We spent all morning until 1:30 pm setting our experiments and doing all the last minute arrangements. In the middle of this we had to get tested for Covid, we were fortunately negative. At 3:00 pm, after many (like, many many) questions and compromises with **Frederick Gai** (who is in charge of the flight program) he and all the people that were ensuring the security on board came to check-up our experiments and told us that it was all good. We would fly the next morning 🍌🍌!!!!

For the rest of the evening we waited for **Lola** to finish her interview with the "**C'est toujours pas sorcier**"'s journalist. A real growing star ✨.

When they were done we came back to the hotel and went to dinner. Then the Marguerite de Valois highschool presented its experiments in front of everybody. And in English, of course. Back to bed after a long day. As always excited but stressed...

Tuesday, March 8th

2022 :

There it was, the big day! morning before we left at stopped to eat breakfast. awesome, and I thought that beautiful sign of the universe When we got there, we were because one of the next overslept.

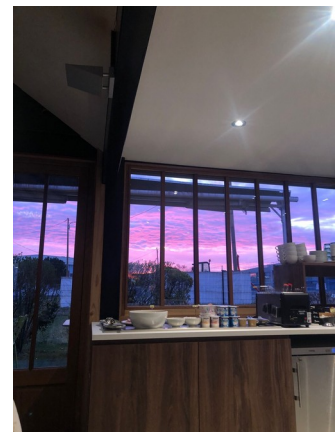


Same as the 6:30 am and The sky was it was a to wish us luck. a little late "**flying**" girls

So we got our scopolamine's quickly.

injection done

I just had 5 minutes to say hi to **Mr Breton** who did the round trip to Bordeaux in one day to support us and give us the SD cards that were compatible with our GoPro. And then, in a snap we were in the plane, on our seats waiting to take off. For me (as for Lola) it was my first flight ever, so all I can say is that the take off was very impressive. I was just pushed into my seat and my head was hurting. I said to myself "if you're sick during the take off what would you be in 20 min...".



When we were high in the sky, heading to La Rochelle to start the parabolas we switched on our computers, GoPros and the car's circuit. And then the magic started. We heard "1 minute... 30 seconds... 20 seconds... 10 seconds... 5 seconds... 3, 2, 1, pull-up". We were in 1.8G. Laying down on the plane's gown, my left hand in Lola's right one. We couldn't say a word. We were literally floored... just so impressed.

And then "50... 40... 30... injection". We were in weightlessness. Phenomenal.

We just took off the ground. Even with the strap on our leg, our back just went up.

For me, that was just one of the best 3 hours of my life. I was looking every 2 minutes around myself to check that it was real.

I had the huge opportunity to do 5 parabolas in the free-flight zone. It was even more phenomenal. We see on the video taken on board that I just can't stop smiling because I was so happy to be there.

3h and 40 minutes later we were back on the tarmac in Merignac.

As soon as we put a foot on the ground **David Gauthier, journalist at La Charente Libre**, questioned us about our flight and the sensation that we felt.

Before responding to their questions we needed to eat something. So we took the time to enjoy our meal (with both of our feet on earth).

After that it was already the time to go to the debrief. Because of covid and the bad conditions Lola experienced during the flight, I went alone.



It was very intimidating. Indeed, there were 22 scientists and researcher workers, **Frederick Gai** and all the security guys that I talked about earlier.

Since our experiment was the 9th one, I had to talk at the end, after all the scientists and the other experiments that were on board.

Everyone was so professional. It was so easy for them, they were talking with extreme ease.

Miraculously it went well for me too, they were all listening and very respectful about all the work that we put into it. Afterwards, we had to answer **David Gauthier's** questions. and then, it was time to undo our experiments and put the ones from Dinan in. We said goodbye to Frederick Gai and thanked him, we gave our suit back and left 😞...

But really I am sure that is not the last time that I will go there! And the fact that we had the chance to do this on the **international day of women's rights** made me smile. It made me realize that if I can do this, it's all because of great women that fought for our rights. But then again, it may be a whole different subject.

The night went fast. We ate dinner and went to the same meeting room. With Lola we explained a bit what happened to us in the morning, how much we were traumatized 😊... We listened to the girls from Dinan talking about their project and their experiments. Our bed was calling us so we went to sleep as soon as possible.

Wednesday, 9th March 2022 :

After a long night of sleep, we left the hotel at 8:30 am. We drove for like 30 minutes and arrived at the **Aerocampus**. A teacher gave us a presentation of the formation proposed there. Basically it's a professional highschool (BTS) that trains students to do **plane maintenance**. It was really interesting to see that even if we don't have BAC +5 we can work in the aeronautic and aerospace field. We split into 2 groups and did 2 activities by turns. First of all, we learned to do "freinage" which is a method every mechanic knows. It consists in twisting a wire that connects several screws. It allows the vis to stay in place even if one of them is unscrewing itself. Then, we tried a flight simulator. We had a controller with gaz and speed lever and we needed to follow the instructions to take off and land our plane in good conditions. Afterward we did a visit of the place. They have several military pieces, such as a "**Rafale**", a "**Mirage**" and helicopters. It was very impressive. We even sat inside of a private jet.



After coming back to the hotel and eating lunch we left for **la Dune du Pyla**. It was my first time there. This afternoon was very windy, the sand dune was very abrupt but once we arrived at the top the view made us forget the ascension. Some of us went to see the ocean closer, but Lola and I stayed on top. We wrote words for each other to guess on the sand. After going down we took the bus and went to **Arcachon**. We had free time to do whatever we wanted in the city. We went to eat a waffle at a bar in front of the beach. The sun was playing hide and seek but it was nice.

Then, we went back to the hotel and ate. It was the evening before the birthday of the boy who was flying the next day. So we sang him happy Birthday and ate his birthday cake. It was all very joyous. After that we listened to the Tourcoing highschool presenting us their experiments. Since it was our last night together we stayed up, danced and talked.



Thursday, 10th March 2022 :

The last day... We packed our things and went to get breakfast with our luggage. After that we went directly to the center of **Bordeaux**. But the weather wasn't mild at all. In fact, it was raining cats&dogs and we were cold. We were supposed to visit some of Bordeaux's main districts but instead we stayed on the bus and did the visit on it.



When the weather calmed down teachers gave us free time in the street "Sainte Catherine". We did some shopping, or browsed in the windows, it depends on what you call it...

It was quite funny because once we were all on the bus we saw that everybody had bought **cannelés !!** Then, it was time to say goodbye. We gave each other our numbers and went to get our train. We waited for 1h30, and ate the picnic that Maria had given us earlier. and 1 hour later we were

back in Angoulême!