

**Piet Grymonprez**  
**Co-Founder**  
**MyMachine**

After graduating as Engineer (Master in Topography) and Master in Communication Sciences, Piet started working at HOWEST University of Applied Sciences in 2000, a small higher education institute in Kortrijk and Bruges (Belgium) that is internationally acclaimed as an innovator in the higher education market. HOWEST has a wide range of unique educational programs in its portfolio, which makes it an attractive partner for both profit and social profit organisations.

Since 2008 Piet is responsible for the Applied Research that HOWEST is delivering to companies and social profit organisations around the globe. HOWEST focuses on managing the leverage of thousands of local SMEs and social profit organizations in Belgium that comes from being research partner for international headquarters of companies like Intel, Amd, HP, Facebook, Adobe, and Decathlon. Piet always focuses not just on leverage in investments but also on sharing know-how and expertise.

Together with Jan Despiegelaere and Filip Meuris he co-founded MyMachine in 2007. This happened in the aftermath of a successful regional development collaboration they pursued in 2006. MyMachine is a three-step process (in one academic year) in which children of elementary schools define their dream machine (Idea), higher education students translate this idea into a product concept (Concept) and pupils from technical/vocational high schools product a working prototype (Working Prototype).

They started a small MyMachine pilot in the city of Kortrijk with private funding from companies and the founding partners: Leiedal, The Community Foundation of West-Flanders and HOWEST University of Applied Sciences. Soon the Flemish government in Belgium became enthusiastic about the unique methodology and started funding MyMachine for its contribution in stimulating creativity and entrepreneurship in education. This made it possible for MyMachine to scale up to the Flemish region in Belgium.

In the meantime they got the attention of the United Nations and were honoured and given the opportunity to present MyMachine (September 2009) at a United Nations World Summit in Monterrey, Mexico. Since then, MyMachine has been asked to testify on their experience in working on entrepreneurship, creativity and open education around the world.

The unique and award-winning methodology of MyMachine, bringing together the three educational levels in one partnership, has now been licensed in different regions on different continents. MyMachine is now starting to experiment with international collaborations between the different countries running MyMachine.

[www.mymachineglobal.org](http://www.mymachineglobal.org)