

**PRESS RELEASE
2019 GENERAL MEETING AWARDS**

**A group of investors, led by Comgest and Phitrust,
winner of the Special Jury Award**

At the 2019 General Meeting Awards ceremony held on July 10 as part of the “Rencontres Financières Internationales de Paris Europlace”, the Jury awarded the Special Jury Award to an investor collective led by Comgest and Phitrust.

This year, the jury has exceptionally decided to give this Award, not to an issuer but to a coalition of responsible investors led by Comgest and Phitrust (with Baillie Gifford, Edmond de Rothschild AM, Fidelity International, GuardCap AM et Sycomore AM). Their action: to help resolve the governance crisis experienced by the EssilorLuxottica merger process, a crisis that erupted publicly in March 2019.

Phitrust and Comgest, at the head of this coalition of seven investors filed two resolutions at the EssilorLuxottica AGM on May 16 to propose the appointment of two independent Directors. If these resolutions were not adopted, they received 43.7% and 34.2% of the votes respectively, thus helping to resolve the governance conflict and finding a tentative middle ground for the reconciliation process moving forward.

For Denis Branche, Phitrust: *"Shareholder engagement requires time and a lot of determination. After more than 15 years of shareholder engagement, we are one of the few who can demonstrate very concretely that it is possible as an investor to maximize our chances of positively and concretely changing the practices of companies, while having a steady financial performance in line with our goals."*

Sébastien Thévoux-Chabuel, Comgest: *"As a responsible, independent and long-term investor, Comgest is ready to intervene if we believe that we can provide solutions to the major ESG issues of the companies in our portfolios. It is our responsibility to our clients, but also to the men and women who work in these companies. This initiative has shown that the path of constructive and positive activism is both possible and desirable."*

Created in 2005, the General Meeting Awards are coordinated by the Institut du Capitalisme Responsable. Its purpose is to encourage and highlight the best practices of companies at their General Meetings in terms of shareholder dialogue, governance or CSR, insisting on the importance of presenting these elements in a clear and educational way to their shareholders. The General Meeting Awards are aimed at all CAC 40 companies and 20 companies belonging to the SBF 80 index.