

Mathieu Van de Catsije

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Doctoral researcher at the University of St. Gallen, based in the joint HSG–ETH–Zurich AI Lab, working on what a firm becomes when most of its work is done by AI. Before that, two years of executive-facing strategy work at Zurich Insurance across Zurich and Singapore. Trained in mathematics and physics, then in innovation and technology management. Six industries in seven years, the same habit each time: get curious, learn the business fast, then improve how it runs.

EXPERIENCE

Jun 2026 – present

Doctoral Researcher

University of St. Gallen, Zurich AI Lab — the joint lab of Zurich Insurance, ETH Zurich and HSG

St. Gallen & Zurich

- Doctoral research on how organisations work when some of their members are AI agents, alongside people or in their place; first studies in progress.
- Exploring how employees collaborate with AI agents, starting with the data from Zurich's firm-wide AI hackathon.
- Support the lab's venture incubator, where two AI-first insurance start-ups are being built, with research and working software.

May 2024 – May 2026

Strategic Project Manager

Zurich Insurance Group, Group Strategy — the group's strategy and innovation talent programme

Zurich & Singapore

- Led the programme's Asia-Pacific region from Singapore: four strategy projects, each sponsored by a regional executive, with fourteen project members reporting to me from scoping to final recommendation. Two of the four reached implementation.
- Built the growth strategy for a commercial line of business with a four-person team across three regions; wrote the recommendation, adopted by the line's leadership.
- Seconded to the regional Head of Strategy: owned the macro-economic and market analysis behind the Regional CEO's executive briefings, and contributed to two market-opportunity assessments.
- Led a group-wide AI strategic-monitoring programme, advising executives on AI strategy for their functions.
- Designed and taught a four-day strategy curriculum - project management, design thinking, the craft of a good deck - to over 130 high-potentials and senior leaders.

Oct 2023 – Dec 2024

Independent Consultant

Studio APG — a B2B video studio

Paris & remote · Part-time, alongside the MSc and then Zurich.

- Repositioned the studio's offer by mapping its production workflow against delivery risk, and re-pitching it on what buyers actually paid for.

Dec 2022 – Aug 2023

Bar Manager

The Noble Hops — a craft beer bar

Sydney

- Ran the (in my unbiased opinion) best beer bar in Sydney: hired, trained and managed a team of five, and was offered a partnership in the business.

Apr 2022 – Oct 2022

Founder's Associate

Bubble — a comics and manga e-commerce start-up of eight people

Station F, Paris

- Raised the international delivery margin by five points by analysing 100,000+ sales records in Python and redesigning the pricing; automated the marketing workflow, saving a day a week of operations.
- Built the publishing arm's website.

Oct 2019 – Mar 2020	IT Consultant Intern Wavestone — a consulting firm <i>Paris</i> Built vendor API integrations for the firm's Azure data-governance platform - the youngest hire in the firm's history, at nineteen.
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EDUCATION

2026 – 2029 (expected)	PhD candidate, Management & Strategy University of St. Gallen (HSG) Institute of Management & Strategy, in the joint HSG–ETH–Zurich AI Lab.
2021 – 2024	MSc Technology & Innovation Management Mines Paris PSL & Université Paris-Dauphine Highest honours, top 4 of 36; thesis on evaluating corporate innovation training. Includes a mandatory gap year, spent in Sydney.
2017 – 2021	BSc Mathematics & Physics Université Paris-Saclay, Institut Villebon-Charpak High honours; a selective, project-based cohort of 35 students.

WRITING & BUILDING

The AI Strategy Brief A fortnightly newsletter on what matters in AI for business and finance, written solo since September 2025. It began as an internal briefing at Zurich and has been independent since May 2026.
Essays Long-form pieces on AI, firms and the technologies reshaping work, some hosted here and some first published on Medium and Substack.
The lab Small tools and experiments around AI, research and the way work actually gets done, built in the open. Mostly written by directing coding agents.

SKILLS & LANGUAGES

Research	Field-study design, interview and survey instruments, agent-based modelling, Monte Carlo simulation, pre-registration and research ethics.
Analysis	Market research, financial and survey analysis in Python and SQL; decision papers and executive presentations.
AI engineering	Anthropic and OpenAI APIs, agent harnesses and multi-agent orchestration, evals and deterministic replay, memory and retrieval design.
Building	Python (FastAPI, pandas, scikit-learn, PyTorch), TypeScript, React and Next.js, Astro, SQL, Git, Docker, Vercel, Railway, Azure.
Languages	French (native), English (fluent), German (beginner, in lessons)

OTHERWISE

Lived and worked in France, Australia, Singapore and Switzerland. Long-distance running in the mountains, bouldering, manga and bande dessinée, and the physical newspaper.
