

Interview with EIFFAGE managers

This RILEM interview is an endorsement by three RILEM members from the company [Eiffage Route](#), talking about their experience in RILEM:

- Dr Julien Van Rompu has been a RILEM member since 2020. He is an active member of RILEM Technical Committee (TC) [308-PAR Performance-based Asphalt Recycling](#). He holds the position of Research and Innovation Project Manager at Eiffage Route.
- Dr Flavien Geisler has been a RILEM member since 2022. He is an active member of the following TCs:
 - [295-FBB Fingerprinting bituminous binders using physico-chemical analysis](#)
 - [307-PPB Physicochemical Effects of Polymers in Bitumen](#)
 - [323-APD Alternative Paving Materials - Design and Performance](#)
 - [325-APS Alternative Paving Materials – Sustainability](#).

He is a Project Manager in road and pavement engineering at Eiffage within the Research & Innovation Department, and Deputy Director of the same Department.

- Dr Thomas Attia has been a RILEM member since 2022. He holds the position of Research & Innovation Project Manager at Eiffage Route. He is a member of the RILEM TC [MWP Mechanical Wave Propagation to characterize bituminous mixtures](#).

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Daniela Ciano, RILEM Implementation Manager (RIM): Thank you for joining me today, Julien, Flavien and Thomas! Would you like to say a few words to introduce yourself, please?

Dr Julien Van Rompu (Julien): I'll start! My name is Julien Van Rompu. I work in the Research and Innovation Department of Eiffage Route. Eiffage is one of the leading construction companies in France. My research topics are linked to pavement materials and structures, like for instance innovative materials such as bio-binders, or asphalt mixes designed to reduce the rolling resistance or noise emissions. I also work on mitigation of urban heat islands by the use of clear binders and asphalts.

Dr Flavien Geisler (Flavien): Maybe I can continue... My name is Flavien Geisler. I am a Project Manager in the Research and Innovation Department of Eiffage Route. I am also Deputy Director of the Department. I am in charge of the topic "development of green chemistry".

Dr Thomas Attia (Thomas): I am a Research Project Manager, like Julien and Flavien. My expertise is on "future roads", like "electric roads" or roads that gather energy. I did my PhD, which I finished not so long ago, on asphalt materials and materials characterization, so I still work on some projects on characterization of innovative materials.

RIM: When and how did you join RILEM?

Julien: I formally joined in 2020.

Flavien: I have been involved in RILEM since 2022. My first contact was [in Palermo, Italy, in 2022 at the RILEM Cluster F Annual meeting](#), and a workshop focused on the development of alternative materials. At Eiffage we were working on bio-based component in asphalt materials at that time. Since then, I have been involved in two TCs of Cluster F: *325-APS Alternative Paving Materials - Sustainability* and *323-APD Alternative Paving Materials - Design and Performance*.

RIM: What about you, Thomas? You are a RILEM young member, aren't you?

Thomas: Yes! Like Flavien, my first meeting was in Palermo in 2022. A new RILEM TC (MWP *Mechanical Wave Propagation to characterize bituminous mixtures*) on the development of a special mechanical testing for asphalt mixtures was launched just after I joined, so I am part of that TC now.

RIM: Why are you a RILEM member? Is it to strengthen your collaboration with academia?

Flavien: Here at Eiffage, we have a strong collaboration with both industrial and academic partners.

Julien: It's a big part of our job. We have plenty of projects together. One of our jobs as Research and Innovation Project Managers is to keep these partnerships active: for instance, we are involved in the following up of some PhD theses, in some national research projects, we offer internships, etc.

Thomas: Staying updated with what happens in academia is part of the reasons for being RILEM members, but it's not the only reasons. As working in a RILEM TC is voluntary based, this is not how we get funding, but it's a good way to keep a strong link with other people, to know what every laboratory is doing.

RIM: From what you say, it seems that the network that RILEM offers is what attracts you most to the Association!

Thomas: Is it, Julien? Is it the first reason why we are in RILEM?

Julien: I think it is! Because RILEM is a network of highly skilled researchers in civil engineering. So yes, it's a good opportunity for us to be in touch with them, and to build some projects. For instance, we are frequently involved in the settings of proposals of European projects and worldwide projects, thanks to the links that we have established with many researchers through the participation in RILEM. Speaking of which, one could imagine the creation of an official label that RILEM members can claim – a sort of “quality label” – in order to strengthen their candidacy to such fundings programs. It would be very helpful!

RIM: Flavien, would you like to add anything more about the benefits of being a RILEM member?

Flavien: Yes! An important point is the role of RILEM to target pre-standardization processes. For a company like us, to be in these activities before standardization, to be involved in this job, is key! We are very interested in the publication of [STARs \(State-of-the-Art reports\)](#), because that is our up-to-date document. We are not so much involved in the writing process of this document, though.

Julien: Another interesting aspect is our role in the Round-Robin tests, because we can be the materials providers, for example, to produce some mixes or to supply some samples of new reclaimed asphalt pavement or bitumen or aggregates, etc. This is a way industry in general could participate into the RILEM activities quite effectively.

Flavien: We have seen that the lack of participation of an industrial partner/member in a Round-Robin test can be an issue: if there are 10 laboratories involved, you need hundreds of kgs of binder and tons of materials. This binder has to be manufactured, and these tons of material have to be shipped. The manufacturing and shipping of such volumes have a cost that some university laboratories cannot always sustain, so we are happy to help to make this happen.

RIM: Thank you so much! Any final remark?

Flavien: Yes! I have just one final remark. We highlighted the influence and the importance of the RILEM network, but I would like to stress it's an international worldwide network, crucial for our work!

RIM: Thank you for your valuable feedback and for sharing with us your experience in RILEM!