

In June 2025, the VU Knowledge Hub for Strategy & Innovation had the honor and pleasure to host an inspiring and thought-provoking event for the global launch of Professor Victor Gilsing's new book **The Innovation Puzzle**. The event brought together innovation leaders, strategists and two top-level CEOs, to discuss two critical drivers of innovation success: **sound strategy decision making** and **unlocking the power of rare innovation talents**.



Part 1: Boosting Innovation Success? Watch Your Biases!

We kicked off with a hands-on workshop that revealed how unconscious biases can quietly undermine strategic decisions and sabotage innovation successes. Participants gained practical tools to recognize and overcome these biases—empowering them to make smarter, more future-focused choices.



📖 Part 2: Global Book Launch – *The Innovation Puzzle*

We celebrated the launch of *The Innovation Puzzle* with a powerful fire-side chat featuring two visionary CEOs:

🎤 **Johan Van den Neste** – CEO & Chairman of the Board, Univé

🎤 **Hermen Hulst** – CEO Worldwide Studios, Sony Interactive Entertainment

They shared candid insights on:

- 🔍 How to **spot** innovation talents
- 🤝 How to **lead** them effectively
- 💡 How to **retain** them in a competitive landscape

They shared eye-opening lessons on:

- How to identify rare innovation talents
- How to lead, motivate, and retain them
- What it takes to build an environment where innovation can truly thrive

💡 Key Takeaways:

💡 Biases are not just individual; they're organizational, and they can quietly block progress

💡 De-biasing strategies can drastically improve decision-making and innovation outcomes

💡 Innovation talents are scarce and knowing how to spot and support them is a game-changer

