

Shahreen Reza, co-founder and CEO of Mission: Space Food and Astreas, First Year Master's Program, Finance and Strategy, First Year Master's Program, Finance and Strategy

Shahreen Reza is the co-founder and CEO of Mission: Space Food and Astreas, where she combines her love for food with her talent for innovation. Astreas produces high-nutrition chocolate that is functional even across planets. In the following interview, she discusses how Sciences Po helped shape her business mindset and how she combined her passions to create something entirely new.

Reza, originally from Bangladesh, decided to study at Sciences Po in 2009 after completing her MPhil at University of Cambridge. Reza was an outstanding candidate who received a brand new scholarship from the French Embassy in Ottawa to attend Sciences Po. Her desire to move to Paris stemmed from her admiration of the culinary arts, which she combined with her Finance and Strategy major to launch her entrepreneurial career. "What took me to France was food, but what took me to Sciences Po was the desire to be in an elite school. I gravitated towards it because of where people go after," she says.

Reza reflects fondly on her time in Paris. "Going to cafés, going to bakeries, I loved the small things." She built many relationships with people across Paris through food and cooking. "People in their local bakeries and creperies got to know me. We had conversations, and that meant a lot because I was able to break the crust. Being in that inner circle makes you realize what a vibrant place Paris is."

Reza specifically speaks highly of her professor for Entrepreneurialism at Sciences Po, Jacques-Henri Eyraud. While in his class, Reza participated in the Boston Consulting Group Competition. "That was the seed of the career I have now," she says.

Reza reflects specifically on one memory from this classroom. "Eyraud invited Michel et Augustin, the yogurt company, over for a lecture. Now I live in Silicon valley, and they have Michel et Augustin crackers in the Google office. They made it, they're big now! Those things left an impression on me," she says. "For me that was great, to realize that you can really make it."

When Reza was working on the BCG Competition, she came across Leigh Cassidy, a woman in Scotland who discovered how to decontaminate water with whiskey through byproduct technology. "I called up Leigh Cassidy and asked her if she had ever tried to use this technology to decontaminate arsenic poisoned water, because in Bangladesh 700,000 people drink arsenic poisoned water every day," she recounts.

Upon the discovery that byproduct technology could remove 90% of arsenic from water, Reza decided to leave Sciences Po early. She started her first company, [PurifAid](#), which brought this technology to the villages of Bangladesh to decontaminate the water. "It all started in Paris, it all started in the Entrepreneurialism class," she comments.

After PurifAid, Reza joined [Palantir Technologies](#), a software development company, as the Deputy Head of Global Business. "At Palantir I really learned what it means to scale a unicorn in Silicon Valley. I lived through IPO, and that gave me such a hunger to start my own company."

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