

Press release

Press Meeting – Wednesday, April 15, 2026

Alimentarium Launches “Alima,” a multilingual generative conversational agent to explore the exhibition “SYSTEMA ALIMENTARIUM. Toward a major food revolution?”

VEVEY, SWITZERLAND – March 16, 2026. Starting April 15, the Alimentarium will introduce Alima, an artificial intelligence–powered conversational agent designed to help visitors explore the exhibition “SYSTEMA ALIMENTARIUM. Toward a major food revolution?” in an interactive way. Developed in collaboration with the Paris-based startup Ask Mona, Alima offers a new way to access the museum’s scientific and cultural content. The agent is available in five languages — French, English, German, Arabic, and Mandarin — reflecting the diversity of the museum’s audiences. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first conversational AI chatbot dedicated to the content of an entire exhibition in a museum in Switzerland.

The Origins of the Project with Ask Mona

The project emerged from the Alimentarium’s desire to explore new forms of digital mediation capable of engaging visitors in dialogue. To develop this tool, the museum partnered with Ask Mona, internationally recognized for its conversational AI projects in museums and cultural institutions. Together, the teams designed a conversational agent capable of answering visitors’ questions using the scientific and curatorial content of the exhibition, offering an intuitive and personalized way to explore the exhibition journey.

The User Experience: A Multilingual Chatbot Accessible via QR Code

Alima is available to any visitor with a smartphone capable of scanning a QR code.

Once connected, users can freely interact with the agent and ask questions about the themes explored in the exhibition. The chatbot allows visitors to explore the 18 sections of “SYSTEMA ALIMENTARIUM. Toward a major food revolution?”. It explains scientific concepts, provides additional information, and helps guide visitors through the museum experience.

Powered by generative artificial intelligence, the system enables fluid conversations without the need for keywords or predefined menus. The interaction develops from the visitor’s questions and can evolve according to their interests.

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The Technology Behind the AI Agent

Unlike general-purpose AI systems such as ChatGPT, this project relies on 100% verified content specifically developed from the Alimentarium's own resources, ensuring reliable and contextualized responses.

The tone, functionalities, and recommendations were designed specifically to reflect the museum's identity and the diversity of its audiences.

Alima combines conversational AI technologies with a knowledge base built from the exhibition's scientific content. The information has been selected, structured, and validated by the museum's curatorial team to ensure the reliability of responses and their consistency with the exhibition's scientific and museographic framework.

The Museum's Vision

The launch of Alima marks the opening of a new channel of dialogue with audiences. Through this initiative, the Alimentarium explores the potential of artificial intelligence to enhance cultural mediation.

The aim is to enable visitors to access the knowledge presented in the exhibition more freely and to facilitate the exploration of contemporary issues related to food systems.

This initiative reflects the museum's mission: to make scientific, cultural, and social knowledge about food accessible to the widest possible audience.

« With Alima, we are experimenting with a new form of mediation. Artificial intelligence does not replace the museum visit: rather, it offers visitors a new way to explore the richness of the exhibition—its themes, collections, photographs, and the knowledge they bring together—and to engage with the major contemporary questions surrounding food » — Boris Wastiau, Anthropologist and Director of the Alimentarium

« Conversational agents now make it possible to transform the relationship between audiences and cultural institutions. With Alima, we designed an experience where technology helps make the museum's scientific content more accessible, more interactive, and available in several languages. » — Marion Carré, Co-founder and CEO of Ask Mona

About Ask Mona

Ask Mona is a Paris-based agency specializing in the design of conversational experiences for museums and cultural institutions. Active internationally, it develops artificial intelligence agents that enable users to explore collections, exhibitions, and archives through conversational interfaces. The agency has worked with institutions including the Palace of Versailles, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET), Fondation Louis Vuitton, the Musée d'Orsay, and the Colosseum in Rome.

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A One-Day Immersive Experience at the Heart of Artificial Intelligence

The Alimentarium is transforming its press meeting into an immersive and interactive format. Journalists are invited to discover the “Alima Live” experience, test the conversational agent, and meet the project teams. They will also have the opportunity to speak with Marion Carré, CEO of Ask Mona and author of “Le paradoxe du tapis roulant” (JC Lattès).

Wednesday, April 15 at the Alimentarium. From 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

About the Alimentarium

Located in Vevey, Switzerland, the Alimentarium is a museum dedicated to food. It explores the biological, cultural, social, and environmental dimensions of human nutrition.

Through its exhibitions, mediation programs, and digital initiatives, the museum contributes to the dissemination of knowledge about food systems and their transformations.

The Alima project was developed at the Alimentarium under the direction of Boris Wastiau, with the participation of Marie Desmartis, curator, and Elise Duchmann, scientific collaborator, who contributed to structuring the scientific content and integrating the agent into the exhibition “SYSTEMA ALIMENTARIUM. Toward a major food revolution?”.

PHOTOGRAPHS :

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