

**GNAM GLOBAL NETWORK WEEK
FOR EXECUTIVE MBA STUDENTS**

**ESMT European School of Management and
Technology, Berlin**

Monday, June 15 – Friday, June 19, 2026

Syllabus

An Innovation Sprint from Idea to Business

Linus Dahlander

ESMT Berlin
European School of Management
and Technology GmbH

Schlossplatz 1
10178 Berlin
Germany

<https://esmt.berlin/>

OVERVIEW

Aims

This course is a hands-on experience in which you have to generate your business idea in an accelerated environment. Entrepreneurship primarily addresses the challenges of going from generating an idea, testing it in the market, and iteratively developing the idea to improve it. The course uses a hands-on approach. You will receive guidance on how to structure and implement an entrepreneurial business, ranging from the inception of a product/service design to raising capital. Throughout the course, the cross-functional and interdisciplinary nature of going from idea to company will be emphasized. I will also invite guest speakers in the form of entrepreneurs, business angels and venture capitalists who will share their insights.

Learning outcomes

During the course, students will gain the capabilities to identify entrepreneurial opportunities and to develop business ideas from these opportunities. These skills are not only of high value for new entrepreneurial companies but also relevant in a broader business context. In fact, what we do is a central tool for planning and controlling new business activities/ventures within established organizations.

This course aims to develop:

- Your ability to apply knowledge, frameworks and techniques from many disciplines, such as marketing and finance, in the context of going from idea to company.
- Your ability to modify existing tools to offer new solutions to complex problems or to create new opportunities.
- Your ability to deliver effective written and oral presentations.
- Your ability to identify all relevant stakeholders and propose solutions that take into account multiple interests when setting up new ventures.
- Your ability to be innovative in the development of business solutions/ideas.

Module format

The module will consist of five intense days in Berlin. You will generate one idea individually **before** the module, and then apply different tools and techniques to develop the idea further when in Berlin. You will also interact with other fellow students, guest speakers as well as the instructors. In the mornings you will work have classes with the professor and guest speakers, and in the afternoon, you will interact with other students to apply the lessons learned in your teams.

Project Work (*preliminary schedule – to be confirmed*)

Pre-module work

Generating Entrepreneurial Ideas

Session from Linus' Online Class – Available to enrolled students through ESMT's Hub.

Forming Entrepreneurial Teams and Creating an Entrepreneurial Business Model

Monday, June 15, morning

Live class from the professor

Guest speaker from the Berlin entrepreneurial scene

Monday, June 15, afternoon

Teamwork with coaching from the professor.

Articulating and Testing the Assumptions of Your Idea

Tuesday, June 16, morning

Live class from the professor

Guest speaker from the Berlin entrepreneurial scene

Tuesday, June 16, afternoon

Teamwork with coaching from the professor.

Analyzing Competition and Markets for New Ideas

Wednesday, June 17, morning

Live class from the professor

Guest speaker from the Berlin entrepreneurial scene

Wednesday, June 17, afternoon

Teamwork with coaching from the professor.

Pitching and Selling Ideas**Thursday, June 18, morning**

Live class from the professor

Guest speaker from the Berlin entrepreneurial scene

Thursday, June 18, afternoon

Preparing the final pitch

Friday, June 19

Pitching for real investors in Berlin and the professor

Assessment

You will produce two deliverables that will be used as a final examination of the competencies achieved during the course. It is assessed entirely in groups:

- You will submit a (1) **short** slide deck used for the presentation and an (2) **extended** slide deck where all your analyses are reported. The extended slide deck will include the slides in the second deliverable PLUS additional slides that explain the details of your ideas.

We will look for four aspects when evaluating your work:

1. Potential: What potential does the idea have? Is it realistic? Could it be achieved with realistic milestones? If I were a millionaire investor, would I invest in this?
2. Validation: What external validation of key assumptions do you have that you use to make decisions?
3. Logic: Is the logic in the pitch, pitch deck and video and your decision process convincing? Is it appealing for key constituents?
4. Presentation: Is the pitch, pitch deck and video clear and persuasive? Is it done in a way that a potential investor would understand?

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Linus Dahlander

Professional experience

Prior to being a professor, director of research and the Lufthansa Group Chair in Innovation at ESMT, Linus has been at Chalmers University of Technology, Stanford University and Imperial College London. He has been recognized as one of the best young business school professors in the world by Poets & Quants and his research has won multiple prizes, such as a prize for the best young researcher in Europe on innovation and leadership. He is very active in the European startup scene.

Focus in research and teaching

Ongoing research projects with several companies on innovation, entrepreneurship, strategy and digitalization in close collaboration with several startups and multinationals.

Publications

He has published among others in the Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly, Organization Science, Strategic Management Journal and practitioner articles in California Management Review, Harvard Business Review, and MIT Sloan Management Review.

THE EXECUTIVE MBA TEAM

Henriette Kressner

Senior Program Manager, Executive MBA Program

Tel.: +49 30 212 31 1603

Email: emba-office@esmt.org

Anna Kulpa

Senior Program Manager, Executive MBA Program

Tel.: +49 30 212 31 1605

Email: emba-office@esmt.org

Masha Zenina

Program Manager, Executive MBA Program

Tel.: +49 30 212 31 1609

Email: emba-office@esmt.org