

Press release

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ESMT Berlin establishes Sustainable Business Transformation Initiative

With the support of BMW, Daimler, Deutsche Bank, Deutsche Telekom, and Werte-Stiftung, ESMT Berlin has launched the Sustainable Business Transformation Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to increase its academic footprint in research and education on critical areas with impact for business and society and to provide innovative solutions to global environmental and social challenges. This initiative is the first step towards the establishment of a new institute for sustainable transformation, thus strengthening partnerships with external stakeholders and expanding faculty expertise in multiple thematic areas related to sustainable business. These include professorships in sustainable finance and impact measurement, circular business, and energy markets and transition. As a part of the initiative, Deutsche Bank supports the establishment of a professorship in sustainable finance at ESMT.

Ola Källenius, Chair of the Board of Management, Daimler AG, and Chair of the ESMT Foundation Board of Trustees, says, “Germany’s leading industrial companies and ESMT share the ambition of playing a prominent role in creating a sustainable future. That’s why we are jointly launching the Sustainable Business Transformation Initiative. It positions ESMT as a global research and education powerhouse in terms of sustainability. At the same time, it provides a platform for fostering dialogue between science, politics, and the economy.”

The professorship devoted to sustainable finance underpins the commitment of ESMT to promoting economic growth while reducing pressure on the natural environment and taking Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors into consideration. For this, new investment models and incentives for the financial sector have to play a role. This professorship will examine incentives and risk-sharing options, providing important insights into future policy frameworks.

“At Deutsche Bank, we have placed sustainability at the core of our strategy. The sustainable finance professorship at ESMT will support our efforts to focus on the sustainability transformation and to get from ambition to impact as soon as possible,” says Christian Sewing, CEO, Deutsche Bank AG, and Vice Chair of the ESMT Foundation Board of Trustees.

The Sustainable Business Transformation Initiative will not only generate knowledge through cutting-edge research, but also leverage this expertise and apply it through client-driven transformative projects in sustainability. The initiative will benefit from existing successful outreach activities, such as the Sustainable Business Roundtable (SBRT) and the Climate Governance Initiative Germany. The SBRT, a peer-to-peer learning network of 20 international companies founded at ESMT in 2011, convenes twice a year and combines academic insights with best-practice experience. In March of this year, ESMT joined forces with partners from government (German Council for Sustainable Development) and industry (Board Academy e.V.) to establish the German chapter of the World Economic Forum’s Climate Governance Initiative. Its goal is to equip non-executive director members with the skills and knowledge necessary to address climate change at board level.

“On our innovation and sustainability platform FUTURY, we have been teaching young talents to become drivers of sustainable transformation for years,” says Holger Follmann, Chair of the Werte-Stiftung. “We look forward to using this experience in order to frame sustainability topics together with ESMT and corporate partners, to develop educational programs for students, and to simply get people excited about sustainability.”

Jörg Rocholl, President of ESMT, comments, “Future-oriented, responsible, and sustainable economic growth are core elements of research and teaching at ESMT Berlin. With this initiative, we will fill a gap in sustainability education and transformation and become a frontrunner in developing scientific, applicable knowledge and experiential learning formats on sustainability.”

About ESMT Berlin

ESMT Berlin is the highest ranked business school in Germany and Top 10 in Europe. Founded by 25 leading global companies, ESMT offers master’s, MBA, and PhD programs, as well as executive education on its campus in Berlin, in locations around the world, online, and in online blended format. Focusing on leadership, innovation, and analytics, its diverse faculty publishes outstanding research in top academic journals. Additionally, the international business school provides an interdisciplinary platform for discourse between politics, business, and academia. ESMT is a non-profit private institution of higher education, accredited by AACSB, AMBA, EQUIS, and FIBAA, and is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion across all its activities and communities. www.esmt.berlin

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