

ESMT Berlin elevates its sustainability focus

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ESMT Berlin, a leader in innovative business education, is significantly expanding its sustainability focus across all facets of the international business school. Building upon a decade of highly successful sustainability initiatives, it is bringing together its diverse and effective programmes under one roof: the ESMT Institute for Sustainable Transformation (<https://esmt.berlin/faculty-research/institutes/institute-sustainable-transformation>). The institute will bundle the business school's sustainability activities in the areas of research, teaching, and outreach, thus amplifying their impact and fostering responsible leadership practices that benefit individuals, businesses, and society at large.

The ESMT Institute for Sustainable Transformation is at the forefront of addressing real-world environmental, social, and governance (ESG) challenges through rigorous academic research. The institute's academic pedigree is strengthened through the expertise of its leading researchers: ESMT President Jörg Rocholl, the Deutsche Bank professor in sustainable finance, and ESMT Dean of Faculty and Research Per Olsson, the DHL Group professor in sustainable accounting. Their combined knowledge and leadership underscore the institute's commitment to developing impactful solutions and advancing the field of sustainable business practices.

"ESMT is committed to driving positive change through research, education, and collaboration. The establishment of this institute marks a pivotal step in enhancing our capacity to effect substantial and enduring impact," says Jörg Rocholl.

The expansion of research in the institute will include additional chaired professorships, as well as the establishment of a research fund for school-wide sustainability projects aimed at influencing policy and creating a positive societal impact. The institute also plans to extend its collaborations with universities and businesses worldwide to cooperate on action-oriented and research-based sustainability projects.

This endeavour will build upon and enrich the institute's active involvement in ABIS – The Academy of Business in Society, a global network that unites academic institutions and companies in their collective effort to drive significant advancements in sustainable development. ESMT is also actively collaborating with the Global Network for Advanced Management, an exclusive network of top business schools from around the world, to integrate sustainability into business school curricula on a wider scale, focusing on equipping future leaders with the knowledge and skills to champion sustainable practices in the evolving global business landscape.

As part of its commitment to sustainability, ESMT embeds environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles into its curriculum, with approximately 30 percent of its lectures delving into topics related to sustainability. Full-time MBA and master students take part in five-week social impact projects, where they gain hands-on experiences and practically apply sustainability principles in chosen non-profit organisations, further reinforcing the school's commitment to cultivating responsible leaders and environmental stewardship.

Students may also apply to participate in the VALI Sustainability Bootcamp at ESMT, a programme aimed at entrepreneurs whose startup ideas will contribute to one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the UN. The ESMT Institute for Sustainable Transformation will not only continue to support the continual integration of ESG in the degree programme curriculum, but it will also expand its offering of customised and open executive education programmes and employee upskilling on sustainability. Its first open enrolment programme on sustainability Leading Sustainable Business Transformation, scheduled for November 2024, will impart practical knowledge and skills crucial for driving sustainable change in organisations.

Sustainability outreach plays an important role at ESMT. Students, faculty, and staff members work together as sustainability ambassadors, supported by the sustainable transformation institute and the internationally honoured ESMT Net Impact chapter. As a business school, ESMT is committed to minimising its carbon footprint and has pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030, a goal that the Institute for Sustainable Transformation actively supports.

As an important step, the school has installed the largest photovoltaic system in the centre of Berlin on its roof. When connected to the electricity grid in early 2024, the system will cover about 25 percent of the school's electricity needs. ESMT will also purchase only green electricity for the remainder of its electricity needs. This decision underscores its dedication to environmental sustainability and responsible resource management.

The ESMT Institute for Sustainable Transformation also offers various awareness-raising initiatives on the new sustainability challenge of biodiversity loss, as well as thought leadership on sustainability via its long-standing network of Sustainable Business Roundtable. Established in 2011, the Sustainable Business Roundtable is made up of prominent international organisations such as Accenture, ams Osram, Bain & Company, BNP Paribas, Deutsche Bank, DHL Group, E.ON, Evonik, GfK, H&M, ING, McDonald's, Merck, Mitsui, P&G, pwc, Quadriga Capital, Schwarz Group, Siemens, Tech Mahindra, Telekom, UniCredit, and Volkswagen.

"The ESMT Institute for Sustainable Transformation is set to make a substantial impact, educating leaders and organisations and guiding them towards a more responsible and sustainable future," says Joanna Radeke, executive director of the institute. "We look forward to accelerating our work with companies and cooperating with them to solve their most pressing sustainability challenges."

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For more information, or to speak with Jörg Rocholl or Joanna Radeke, please contact Kyle Grizzell from BlueSky Education on +44 (0) 1582 790709 or kyle@bluesky-pr.com