

ESSEC launches the Business and Industry In Africa Chair, the first chair based on the Rabat campus, supported by Africa Global Logistics, ARISE IIP, and the IBL Group

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ESSEC Business School is strengthening its strategic presence in Africa by launching the Business and Industry in Africa Chair on the Rabat campus, supported by Africa Global Logistics, ARISE IIP, and the IBL Group. This new chair is the first at ESSEC to focus on a specific region, aiming to address the challenges and opportunities of industrialization and raw material transformation while striving to enhance Africa's position in the global value chain.

The chair's courses will kick off on January 13th, 2025, with an immersive field experience scheduled in Côte d'Ivoire in March 2025. Throughout the year, research projects and debates will take place, involving ESSEC's campuses in Paris, Cergy, and Singapore.

Under the guidance of Roméo Tédongap, Dean of Faculty, the Chair is co-directed by Professor Andrea Roncoroni, President of the Commodity & Energy Markets Association (CEMA), and Benoît Chervalier, an investment banker and Chairman of Business Europe's Africa Committee.

Vincenzo Vinzi, Dean and President of ESSEC, expressed his enthusiasm for this initiative, stating, "This chair, as the first ESSEC chair to have a regional focus, embodies ESSEC's pioneering and innovative spirit. By combining a global reach with campuses with strong local ties, the chair highlights our dedication to extending our impact across Africa as part of our Transcend strategy."

Offering students international experience and hands-on training

Courses will be delivered exclusively on the Rabat campus during the first term of each academic year. The program includes lectures, seminars, and industrial site visits. A field immersion in a sub-Saharan African country is also part of the curriculum, enabling students to gain practical, hands-on experience. In 2025, students will travel to Côte d'Ivoire to participate in a high-level program and work on real-world case studies.

The Chair is built on three pillars — business, industry, and education — and features a global program emphasizing collaboration, engagement, and professional development. Throughout the year, events will be organized in collaboration with ESSEC's extensive alumni network, providing students with unique opportunities to expand their network, enhance their skills, and enrich their academic and professional journey. The program concludes with a six-month internship, ensuring practical and immersive application of acquired knowledge. Through its partners, the Chair operates in all five sub-regions of the continent, covering a wide variety of sectors.

Benoît Chervalier, co-founder and executive director of the Chair, has worked in Africa for over 20 years and has taught the "Doing Business in Africa" course at ESSEC's Rabat campus since the campus was established. He explained, "The 9th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) calls for implementing sustainable industrial development. Industrialization and raw material transformation are fundamental pillars for African countries over the next decade to achieve the 'magic square' of economic transformation: value creation, job creation, strengthening national sovereignty in food, healthcare, energy, and industry, and reducing the global carbon footprint."

Khadija Komara, Director of Communications and Philanthropy at Africa Global Logistics, emphasized, "At Africa Global Logistics, we firmly believe that training young talent is essential for accelerating the development of the African continent. Through the ESSEC Business and Industry in Africa Chair, we aim to strengthen the link between academia and the professional world, thus supporting the next generation of committed leaders. To further our commitment, we are also providing scholarships to students, granting them access to this excellent program and reinforcing our vision of inclusive and sustainable development for Africa."

Gagan Guptan, President of ARISE IIP, confirmed that the company plans to play an active role: "Students will work on real-life projects from ARISE, allowing them to develop practical skills and understand on-the-ground realities. In turn, we will benefit from the insights and recommendations derived from their research, which will help us improve our strategies and operations across the continent."

Arnaud Lagesse, CEO of the IBL Group, concluded, "Supporting the ESSEC Business and Industry in Africa Chair aligns with our ambition to extend our footprint beyond Mauritius while fostering economic growth in the countries where we invest."

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If you would like more information, or to speak with someone from ESSEC Business School, please contact Georgina at georgina@bluesky-pr.com.

About ESSEC Business School

ESSEC, founded in 1907, is one of the world's top management schools and holds the "triple crown" accreditation from EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA. With 7,550 students; a faculty comprised of 169 full-time professors and 25 emeritus professors, in France and Singapore, recognized for both the quality and influence of their research; a wide range of management training programs; partnerships with the world's best universities; and a network of 71,000 alumni, ESSEC continues to foster a tradition of academic excellence and a spirit of openness in the fields of economics, social sciences and innovation. In 2005, ESSEC opened a campus in Asia. ESSEC's operations in Asia Pacific, strategically located in Singapore, present the perfect foothold for ESSEC to be part of the vibrant growth of Asia and to bring its expertise to the expanding region. Additionally, in 2017 ESSEC opened a new campus in Rabat, Morocco. ESSEC's international expansion allows students and professors to study and understand the economic forces at work in the different regions of the world.

About Africa Global Logistics (AGL)

AGL (Africa Global Logistics), the reference multimodal logistics operator in Africa, is part of the MSC family. With 23,000 employees in 49 countries, the company connects Africa to Africa and to the rest of the world. AGL relies on its 250 subsidiaries in Africa, Haiti and Timor to provide port, ocean, logistics and railway solutions. Connecting the number one integrated logistics network in Africa, AGL, to the global maritime transport leader, MSC, can accelerate the logistical transformation of the continent. Thanks to the strength of its network and its recognised professionalism, the MSC Group is strengthening the competitiveness and the connectivity of the continent in a context that is notable for the desire of African countries to implement the Continental Free Trade Area.

About ARISE Integrated Industrial Platforms (ARISE IIP)

ARISE Integrated Industrial Platforms (ARISE IIP) designs, finances, conceives and operates industrial ecosystems across Africa. We identify industrial gaps in African countries and design tailor-made solutions to enable the sustainable and local transformation of raw materials, boost exports, and promote trade. ARISE IIP is present in Gabon with the Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ), in Benin with the Glo-Djigbé Industrial Zone (GDIZ) and in Togo with the Adétikopé Industrial Platform (PIA). Our industrial zones in Côte d'Ivoire, Chad and few more are currently under development and will be mainly dedicated to the processing of local agricultural products. All of our industrial ecosystems include world-class integrated logistics services ensuring greater competitiveness. Through our industrial hubs, we seek to contribute to the development of more competitive economies and more equitable societies for tomorrow, helping achieve greater income equality in Africa.

About IBL

IBL's story is one of entrepreneurship, transformation and growth. It is also the story of the many people who have shaped the group over the past 190 years. From our origins in Mauritius' historic shipping and sugar industries in the 1830s, IBL has become one of the region's largest diversified groups. We work across nine clusters in 22 countries worldwide. IBL now has 37,950 team members, making us one of Mauritius' largest employers. We are answerable to over 12,500 shareholders.