



Press release

Berlin, May 5, 2025

ESMT Berlin becomes an innovation partner of the ECB for the digital euro

ESMT Berlin has been selected as a Pioneer Innovation Partner by the European Central Bank (ECB) to develop innovative functionalities related to the digital euro. As part of this collaboration, the business school will establish the Digital Euro Hub platform.

Beyond simple consumer payments, the ECB initiative aims to explore the potential of the digital euro for businesses across industries and trade sectors. The newly created Digital Euro Hub will serve as a platform for simulating programmed payments with the digital euro and testing smart contracts. Companies interested in leveraging and testing the new platform [are invited](#) to participate in the project. Unlike conventional payments, digital currencies can be programmed to automatically trigger payments once a specific service has been fulfilled. Self-executing programs determine this using digital signals—for example, once an ordered product is delivered to the buyer, the system automatically releases the payment. By digitizing invoicing and payment processes, associated workflows become more efficient and secure.

The ECB's Pioneer Innovation Partner program focuses on three key objectives:

- Demonstrating the technical implementation of digital euro payments.
- Providing a platform where participants can interact with simulated digital euro interfaces.
- Exploring additional use cases, ideas, and visions for the further development of the digital euro.

Issued directly by the ECB, the digital euro is intended to complement cash and establish itself as a secure and stable means of payment in an increasingly digital world. The ECB is currently evaluating various technological approaches, including blockchain technology and other distributed ledger technologies (DLT) for smart contracts. To ensure data privacy compliance, new mechanisms are being developed to balance anonymity and security in line with legal requirements.

“As a selected Pioneer Innovation Partner of the ECB, we have the opportunity to actively contribute to creating real economic value through the digital euro. With our expertise in digital transformation and financial technology, we aim to develop innovative, practical solutions that support the successful introduction of the digital euro,” says Joachim Wuermeling, executive in residence at ESMT Berlin.

Selected partners include banks, payment service providers, fintech companies, research institutions, and technology experts, in addition to ESMT Berlin.

About ESMT Berlin

ESMT Berlin is a leading global business school with its campus in the heart of Berlin. Founded by 25 global companies, ESMT offers master, 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 with the right to grant PhDs and is accredited by AACSB, AMBA, EQUIS, and ZEvA. It is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion across all its activities and communities. [esmt.berlin](https://www.esmt.berlin)

Press contact

Lennart Richter

Press Spokesperson

Phone: +49 160 552 139 3

lennart.richter@esmt.org