

Press release

Berlin, September 16, 2025

New Chair at ESMT Berlin: Henry Sauermann appointed TEAM GLOBAL Chair for Disruptive Innovation

The endowed chair was established through the support of TEAM GLOBAL, the technology holding founded by Berlin-based entrepreneur Lukasz Gadowski. With the appointment of Henry Sauermann, an internationally renowned scholar takes on a key role at the intersection of technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

The TEAM GLOBAL Chair will play a central role in the master programs and executive education of ESMT Berlin, working closely with Vali, the entrepreneurship hub at ESMT, to strengthen the connection between academia, the start-up ecosystem, and entrepreneurial practice.

Professor [Henry Sauermann](#) assumes the chair with the support of Professor [David Robinson](#) of Duke University. As a distinguished affiliated professor at ESMT, Robinson brings expertise in private equity, venture capital, and entrepreneurial finance. His involvement highlights the international orientation of the chair.

“The endowed chair will help turn scientific ideas into solutions with impact far beyond our campus,” emphasized Jörg Rocholl, president of ESMT Berlin. “We thank Lukasz Gadowski and TEAM GLOBAL for their generous support, which enables us to further advance innovation in all its dimensions.”

“An innovation is disruptive when it does not merely make something a little better, but raises it to an entirely new level,” said Lukasz Gadowski, founder of TEAM GLOBAL. “Examples include the transition from horse-drawn carriages to the automobile or, today, from search engines to artificial intelligence. Similarly, the introduction of compulsory schooling or bureaucracy was disruptive in its time. The chair will conduct research and teaching in this field, inspiring and empowering students, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and society. What elevates civilization to the next level, and how do we contribute to it?”

“This appointment is a great honor,” commented Henry Sauermann. “I look forward to further strengthening the role of ESMT as a center for disruptive innovation, by translating fundamental research into teaching and into practical support for innovators who seek to shape business and society sustainably.”

Henry Sauermann has been professor of strategy at ESMT since 2017. His research focuses on the motivations and incentives of scientists and their role in innovation and entrepreneurial processes. He also studies how new models of knowledge generation create breakthrough innovations of both scientific and societal value. His articles have been published in leading journals, including Science, Management Science, and PNAS. A recently published book, [How and When to Involve Crowds in Scientific Research](#) (Sauermann, Poetz, 2025), provides practical insights to a broad audience.

The official inauguration of the endowed chair took place on September 15, 2025, on the ESMT campus. In addition to keynote speakers Jörg Kukies and Ann-Kristin Achleitner, numerous distinguished guests from politics, academia, and business attended the event.

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)

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