

Press release

Berlin, October 15, 2025

Creative Destruction Lab Berlin launches new stream in defense technologies

The DEEP – Institute of Deep Tech Innovation at ESMT Berlin is expanding the German offering of Creative Destruction Lab (CDL) with a new Defence Stream. Each year, the stream will support up to 25 science-based startups developing and commercializing dual-use technologies.

[CDL-Berlin](#) is part of the international, nonprofit CDL network. It supports early-stage, science- and technology-based startups through a structured nine-month mentoring program led by experienced entrepreneurs, investors, and scientists and helps founders to develop and scale their technologies. The new stream addresses a critical gap between technological innovation and practical application in the defense sector. Participating startups gain access to an international network of experts from academia, industry, investment, and operational practice.

The introduction of the Defence Stream comes at a time of increasing geopolitical tensions and shifting security priorities, as NATO partner countries seek more agile innovation models. “By bringing CDL Defence to Germany, right ahead of the Munich Security Conference, we connect ventures not only with Europe’s world-class industry and startup ecosystem, but also with the very heart of global security dialogue. This unique position allows startups to build deep-tech solutions with trusted partners, scale within Europe’s innovation ecosystem, and engage directly with decision-makers shaping the future of defence and security,” says Thorsten Lambertus, Managing Director of the [DEEP – Institute of Deep Tech Innovation](#) at ESMT Berlin and Site Lead of CDL-Berlin.

CDL Defence is a global initiative involving eight other CDL sites in addition to Berlin: Toronto, Vancouver, Rockies, Atlantic, Montreal, Estonia, London, and Milan. The first cohort will begin with a virtual bootcamp at the end of October 2025, followed by mentoring sessions in Halifax, Munich, and Toronto.

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

Press contact

Lennart Richter

Press Spokesperson

Phone: +49 160 552 139 3

lennart.richter@esmt.org