

Press release

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Call for applications: BMW Group and ESMT Berlin launch next round of the Change Maker Fellowship

The partnership between the BMW Group and ESMT Berlin enters its fifth year. In 2026, the BMW Group Change Maker Fellowship will once again support future leaders who want to actively shape digital transformation. The fellowships are available for ESMT's Full-time MBA and MSc programs as well as the Global Online MBA.

For the upcoming academic year, eight fellowships will be awarded:

- two fellowships for the Full-time MBA (January 2027 intake)
- two fellowships for the MSc programs (September 2026 intake)
- four fellowships for the Global Online MBA (October 2026 intake)

The initiative reflects the shared ambition of the BMW Group and ESMT Berlin to identify promising talent and prepare responsible leaders who drive positive change in business and society.

“We are proud to be entering the fifth year of our partnership with ESMT. Especially now, we need leaders who take responsibility and use technology and digitalization to shape the future. Responsible leadership is deeply rooted at BMW – for us, responsibility means seeking solutions to societal challenges and bringing our people with us on that journey,” says Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, responsible for People and Real Estate, and Labor Relations Director.

The BMW Group Change Maker Fellowship is aimed at candidates with a strong STEM background who want to complement their technical expertise with a management education. The programs combine technological know-how with leadership and business skills, preparing participants to take on responsibility in digital innovation and actively shape the future of the mobility ecosystem.

The BMW Group employs more than 10,000 IT and software experts worldwide and operates a global network of IT hubs in Germany, India, Portugal, Romania, Brazil, China, the United States, and South Africa. Reflecting this footprint, the 2026 Change Maker Fellowships are open to applicants from countries with BMW Group IT hubs.

ESMT President Jörg Rocholl says, “We thank BMW Group for its sustained partnership in advancing this initiative. Digital transformation and artificial intelligence are changing the capabilities required in leadership roles. The Change Maker Fellowship brings together technological backgrounds and management education to prepare participants for responsibility in this evolving environment.”

The BMW Group Change Maker Fellowship is open to candidates with a strong quantitative or technology-focused background. Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree in a related field or have current work experience in areas such as computer science, IT, automation, or digitalization. They must also meet the admission requirements of the respective ESMT program.

Applications are open exclusively to citizens or permanent residents of the following countries: Germany, India, Portugal, Romania, Brazil, China, the United States, and South Africa. Individuals with recognized refugee status in Germany are also eligible. For the Full-time MBA and MSc programs, applicants must not be older than 30 on September 1, 2026.

As part of the application process, candidates will be asked to answer the following question: “The BMW Group actively shapes the future of mobility: what aspect of a digital future fascinates you most, and why?”

More information about the fellowship and the application process is available [here](#).

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)

About the BMW Group

With its four brands, BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world’s leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2025, the BMW Group sold 2.46 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,500 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2025 was € 10.2 billion on revenues amounting to € 133,5 billion. As of 31 December 2025, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,540 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of the BMW Group’s corporate strategy and covers all products – from the supply chain through production to the end of their useful life.

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