

# HEC Paris Business School opens a new Center dedicated to Family Business in partnership with the Dieter Schwarz Foundation

*The Dieter Schwarz Foundation Center for Family Business will focus on deepening the understanding of the unique dynamics of family businesses across Europe and their contributions to sustainable prosperity. It will serve as a hub for both pioneering research and the development of tailored educational programs and tools, equipping students, business leaders and policymakers to foster family businesses' contribution to the economy and society.*

The Dieter Schwarz Foundation is a fundraising charitable corporation committed to encouraging science, research, and education. Its support will enable the Center for Family Business to develop innovative research and educational programs to understand and navigate the specificities of family business governance, culture, values, talent management and entrepreneurship.

The creation of this center is the second step of a broader partnership between HEC Paris Business School, the HEC Foundation and the Dieter Schwarz Foundation, which started in 2020 and has already enabled several projects to come to life, such as setting up two research Chairs and the [launch of the Creative Destruction Lab \(CDL\) Next Generation Computing](#) stream in collaboration with the Institute for Deep Tech Innovation (DEEP) at ESMT Berlin.

The Center will focus on:

- **Thinking:** by conducting interdisciplinary research on family businesses and sharing it through conferences, reaching beyond academic circles to engage policymakers, business leaders, owners of family enterprises, and the wider community interested in this topic, to foster rich discussions and knowledge exchange.
- **Teaching:** by promoting the development of new courses and tools focused on family business and related fields, and by encouraging and supporting faculty to create new teaching materials – case studies, quantitative and behavioral simulations, experiential

learning exercises – focusing on European family firms, particularly in Germany and France.

- **Acting:** by leveraging the existing HEC Paris ecosystem to study the incubation and acceleration phases of family businesses. It aims to become a premier hub for educating students interested in creating new enduring ventures, as well as for family business entrepreneurs and managers worldwide. An exchange platform dedicated to the French and German family business ecosystems will be established, providing a forum for researchers, owners, managers, students, policymakers, and other stakeholders to connect and discuss critical issues impacting operations and governance, as well as broader macroeconomic and societal challenges.

The Dieter Schwarz Foundation Center for Family Business will function as a standalone Center, fully integrated into the HEC Paris academic and business ecosystem. It will also benefit from HEC Paris' extensive network of business leaders, policymakers, and influential alumni, ensuring that its research and educational programs are both relevant and impactful.

Dr. Cécile de Lisle, Executive Director of the Dieter Schwarz Foundation Center for Family Business, says: *"The Center will strive to better understand, teach, and promote the contribution of family businesses to sustainable prosperity. It will deepen our understanding of how this form of governance with a human face, focusing on long-term, contributes to a resilient and responsible economy that values both local territories and people."*

Prof. Reinhold R. Geilsdoerfer, CEO of the Dieter Schwarz Foundation, adds: *"Family businesses are the backbone of many European economies, and it is essential that we support their growth and development. The Dieter Schwarz Foundation Center for Family Business will provide a unique platform for research, education, and exchange, and we are proud to be a part of this initiative. We look forward to seeing the impact that this center will have on the family business community in Europe and beyond."*

#### **About the Dieter Schwarz Foundation:**

Education and science are essential for developing and making the country viable. For this reason, the Dieter Schwarz Foundation has set itself the goal of building on these pillars and of promoting life-long learning. The current focus is on the Heilbronn Bildungscampus, the Innovationpark Artificial Intelligence (IPAI) and on the experimenta science centre, which is also based in Heilbronn and allows visitors to experience science and technology at first hand and with all their senses.

#### **About HEC Paris Business School:**

Founded in 1881, HEC Paris is a leading European Business School. Its ambition is to positively impact both businesses and society thanks to its three-pronged approach **"Think, Teach, Act"** and thus to contribute to a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous world.

With 178 research professors from all around the world producing and teaching unique knowledge to **more than 4,500 students from 135 different countries**, the HEC Paris campus serves as a real laboratory for innovation and exchange which is open to the world's diversity and challenges.

Inspired by its 5 core values -**Excellence, Curiosity, Entrepreneurial spirit, Diversity and Responsibility**- HEC Paris offers a complete range of training courses for the leaders of tomorrow: Bachelor, the Pre-Experience Program, specialized masters, MSc, the Summer School, the MBA, the Executive MBA, the

TRIUM Global Executive MBA, the PhD, as well as a wide variety of programs targeted to leaders and managers.

**About the HEC Foundation:**

The HEC Foundation is a recognized public-interest foundation created in 1972 that contributes to the development of strategic academic projects at HEC Paris like entrepreneurship, innovation, research, social responsibility and makes the institution's outstanding programs accessible to the greatest number of people.

Thanks to the support of alumni and friends of HEC, corporate partners and foundations, in France and abroad, the HEC Foundation makes a decisive contribution to the development of HEC Paris and helps to reinforce social inclusion and international diversity. In 2024, more than €17M have been allocated to the School's strategic projects.

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