Hochschule für
Wirtschaft und Recht Berlin
Berlin School of Economics and Law

HWR Berlin Summer School 2027

Entrepreneurship and Innovation: Venture Creation

Overview
Ready to build something real? This course drops you straight into Berlin's startup scene and teaches you what you need to know when starting and growing a business in a dynamic market. Across two modules — "Entrepreneurship in Berlin" and "Design Thinking in Early-Stage Startup Development" — you'll learn to use AI responsibly as your creative co-pilot. No coding, no tech background needed. You won't just study startups: Work on real business models for real startups, and walk away with a design thinking portfolio you can apply anywhere.

Date
4 – 24 July 2027

Course Content
- Entrepreneurship in Berlin
- Design Thinking in early-stage startup development

The course programme also includes:
- Study visits to companies/startups
- Module on German culture and society from an intercultural perspective

Course Language
English. Proof of English proficiency (TOEFL iBT 90 or equivalent) is required.

Prerequisites
Advanced undergraduate students of all fields (after two years of study) and graduate students with good standing.

Number of Participants
20–25

Course Fees
€ 995 (without accommodation)
This includes tuition and programme fees, study visits, culture and leisure time programme.

Credits
- 6 ECTS: Entrepreneurship & Innovation Management Programme
- 1 ECTS: German culture & society module
- Up to 7 ECTS credits

Accommodation
- Student hotel (double room)
- Arrival 4 July (move-in), departure 24 July (move-out)
- Optional booking upon request

Culture and Leisure Time Programme
The summer school team offers participants a wide variety of cultural and social events in Berlin and surrounding area (e.g. museums, boat trip, palaces, trips to Potsdam and Sachsenhausen) about twice a week.

Registration Deadline
- 1 April 2027
- 15 March 2027 for nominated students from partner universities
- Early-Bird 10% by 10 March 2027

Contact, Enquiries and Registration
HWR Berlin Summer and Winter School
Email: summer@hwr-berlin.de
www.hwr-berlin.de/summerschools

Syllabus

Berlin is home to a flourishing startup scene and the HWR Berlin with its startup incubator, also plays a significant role in the city's entrepreneurial eco-system.

This course analyses key issues related to innovation and entrepreneurship from a German perspective. It offers students a strong grounding in how to start and grow a business in a dynamic marketplace using Berlin's vibrant startup scene as an example. This course will provide students with a practical and hands-on approach to innovation, and equip them with skills that are highly sought after in today's fast-paced and rapidly changing business environment. By the end of the course, students will have developed a portfolio of design thinking skills and experiences that they can apply to a wide range of problems and industries.

For a more detailed syllabus, please email summer@hwr-berlin.de

Lecturers

Prof. Dr. Sven Ripsas, Prof. Dr. Hannes Kübel, Christian Klang (HWR Lecturer)

Week 1

The first week introduces students to entrepreneurship as a structured yet iterative process of opportunity recognition, experimentation, and value creation.
The module combines conceptual foundations (entrepreneurial mindset, startup phases, and business models) with the exploration of the Berlin startup ecosystem.

Day	Entrepreneurship in Berlin
1	• Welcome Day
2	• Introduction • Entrepreneurial identity & mindset • Myths of entrepreneurship • The art of the start
3	• Phases of a startup • Startup Simulation
4	• Lean Startup • Problem solving & ideation • Video prototyping
5	• Lean canvas • Pitching • Assessment: Written test

Week 2 & 3

Week 2 and 3 build on the foundations of Week 1 and focus on human-centered innovation through design thinking and AI tools. Students work in interdisciplinary teams on real-world challenges. The course emphasizes deep user understanding, deep problem analysis in the market, experimentation and prototyping, and financial modelling. Through interviews, ideation workshops, prototyping, and testing, students experience how Design Thinking supports evidence-based product development in uncertain environments. By the end of the module, teams synthesize their insights into a first prototype, develop a financially sound business model and present their outcomes in a final project presentation and pitch their project to a jury.

Day	Design Thinking in Early-Stage Startup Development
1	• Kick-Off: Introduction, Organization, Startup Challenges & team building
2	• Problem statement, Persona
3	• Problem interviews, Point of view
4	• Opportunities, Ideation
5	• Prototyping I
Weekend	
6	• Prototyping with AI
7	• Testing
8	• Formulating assumptions about pricing, competition, and value creation
9	• Business modelling and financial modelling
10	• Presentation of project work

Weeks 1–3: Additional Module

German Culture and Society: Intercultural Perspectives
• Students will be exposed to various aspects of German culture and society through a series of site visits and reflective papers
• The reflective papers (one per study week) should be related to an aspect of German culture and society and/or students' intercultural experience

* Course content/lecturers may be subject to change

Last but not least: Get more out of your Summer School experience!
Combine this programme with our add-on politics module "The EU – Chances & Challenges for Political Integration"