



# Alumni Network Charter

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From the heart of Europe, we create and impart new knowledge to advance business and society. We develop entrepreneurial leaders who think globally and act responsibly.

Berlin, October 2011  
Updated March 2018

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# ESMT Alumni Network Charter

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## 1. Preamble

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ESMT Berlin (School hereinafter) is an international business school in Berlin, Germany. Graduates and students of the ESMT degree programs, past participants of executive education programs, and faculty have identified the need for an association for the purposes of promoting mutually beneficial development activities.

The association will be known as the “ESMT Alumni Network” (Network hereinafter).

The Network ensures that the ESMT experience does not end on the last program day. It conducts activities that meet the professional development needs of members, represents alumni interests to the School, provides a mechanism for members to maintain contact with each other and with current students, and strengthens ESMT within the business and university communities as an institution of learning excellence and academic distinction.

## 2. Status and Affiliation

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The School applies a broad community concept of “alumni” in defining membership in the ESMT Alumni Network. It is a voluntary association without legal entity, composed of past graduates and currently enrolled participants of the ESMT degree programs (currently Full-time, Executive MBA, and Master’s in Management (MIM)) and past participants of executive education programs in good standing, collectively referred to as the Alumni.

Members can gain lifetime affiliation to the Network

- by virtue of having graduated from a degree programs of ESMT, taken into the alumni directory by the School automatically; or
- by choosing to be associated with the Alumni Network, after the completion of a non-degree executive education program and requesting that the School record them in the alumni directory.

## 3. Mission

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As the ESMT Alumni Network, our mission is to strengthen the bonds of fellowship among ourselves and with the School, in particular by

- fostering alumni interaction and a vibrant community for the development of its members,
- supporting the achievement of professional objectives of students and graduates through mentoring, coaching, professional networking, and scholarships,
- supporting the advancement of ESMT through advocacy, engagement, and other activities.

Members are expected to contribute to the network by staying connected and offering support to the ESMT Alumni Network.

#### **4. Code of Conduct Statement**

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As members of the ESMT Alumni Network we shall, in our personal behavior, respect the mission of ESMT, support the achievement of the Network's mission, and comply with ethical standards of society. A violation of the ethical code of conduct shall terminate the status of being affiliated to the Network.

We shall uphold the highest standard of ethical behavior and personal conduct at all times. We shall bear responsibility for conducting ourselves in such a way as to represent ESMT and the Alumni Network in the most favorable light at all times. We value diversity and the European spirit of democracy. We have the responsibility to uphold and enforce the ESMT alumni code of conduct and are asked to report any violations or concerns to ESMT, particularly harassment and discrimination.

#### **5. Alumni Support**

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The Alumni Network is not only a community for its own members but a key source of powerful support for the future development of the School. Members of the Alumni Network undertake to serve their School in many different ways, for example:

- Acting as general ambassador of the brand
- Supporting marketing events such as MBA Fairs and candidate interviews
- Offering job opportunities to graduates
- Recommending programs to their networks
- Acting as point of contact for applicants
- Referring potential candidates to the School
- Giving financially
- Providing opportunities for MBA consulting projects
- Mentoring MBA and MIM students
- Actively volunteering to support Alumni Network activities

#### **6. Alumni Council and Officers**

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The ESMT Alumni Network is governed by the Alumni Council in close cooperation with the School's management. The Council serves as a bridge, communicating the interests and concerns of ESMT alumni to the School and proposing action to enhance the well-being of the alumni. The Council also serves as an "engine", leading key initiatives and driving volunteer activities of the ESMT Alumni Network worldwide. Council officers, through their active involvement and by fostering a culture of lifelong support and belonging, also serve as role models for all members of the Alumni Network.

Alumni affairs are discussed between the Alumni Council and the School at least twice a year, one of which occasions should be in person, if possible.

General responsibilities of officers of the Alumni Council include:

- Actively participating in Council meetings either in person or via telephone/video conference;
- Maintaining contact with other Council members in between meetings;
- Driving (through the accountable Coordinators) the formation and vibrant activity of chapters and clubs;
- Promoting the role of Class Representatives;
- Maintaining a dialogue with the ESMT alumni community and with the School;

- Acting as representatives of the Alumni Network and speaking responsibly about issues of concern to all alumni and the School;
- Supporting the School’s fundraising efforts.

The profile of a “typical” Council officer is as follows:

- An active volunteer;
- A person who has been active in various alumni activities and services (e.g. facilitating class reunion, coordinating regional chapter, supporting career services, fundraising) and is informed about the School;
- Someone who is open to ideas of others and is ready to contribute with substantive input on alumni-related issues;
- A person who is willing to proudly represent the Alumni Network and the School at large.

The Council consists of three officers: the ESMT Alumni President, the Past President and the President-Elect, who define their specific roles and focus areas at their discretion.

The current President is ultimately responsible for organizing alumni initiatives and linking them to the School. In particular, the President, with the involvement of other Council members, shall prepare and communicate to the School and the network members an annual Alumni Engagement Plan setting out priorities for the year, including requirements for volunteers and other resources, and an end-of-term report on the achievements during his or her term.

The Alumni Council, through its representative (e.g., the current or past president) shall be invited to meetings of any advisory bodies discussing degree program improvements (such as a "degree programs advisory council") if and when such body is formed and operational.

All members are eligible to be elected President except for current (not yet graduated) students of degree programs. Every member, including currently enrolled students, has a right to vote. Details of the election process are defined in the Appendix.

The President is elected bi-annually. After the election, the President Elect sits on the Alumni Council for two years, assumes presidency in the subsequent period of two years, and continues serving as Past President in the last two years, as indicated in the table below:

<i>Officers of Alumni Council</i>	<i>Period of service</i>
President Elect	Year 1-2
President	Year 3-4
Past President	Year 5-6

Should the President be temporarily unable to fulfill his or her obligations, the Past President assumes presidency.

As the Alumni Council officers represent ESMT, in order to be able to protect its legal and market interests the School reserves the right to remove from office any member of the Council by revoking its endorsement.

All members of the Alumni Council are volunteers who do not receive monetary compensation from any source or, as a default but allowing for occasional exceptions upon the School’s initiative, reimbursement for potential expenses. As of January 2017, each Alumni Council member will receive compensation for one roundtrip to Berlin and one night’s accommodation for the purpose of a face to face meeting with the ESMT Alumni Relations Office.

The Alumni Council may be strengthened, upon their own discretion, with advisors and volunteers leading specific areas of the Alumni Engagement Plan, whose area of activity should be clearly designated and communicated to the School. In particular, a “Strategic Advisory Group” (SAG) is established with the purpose of providing feedback and advice to the Alumni Council, help building the Alumni Network with high-profile connections, and acting as high-profile ambassadors of the Alumni Network themselves. Specifically, SAG members are also asked to help identify and support new Regional Chapter or Club Coordinators in their establishment of a new Club or Chapter. SAG members are appointed by the President of the Alumni Council with the support of other Alumni Council members, seeking representation from alumni of all program types, namely Full-time MBA, Executive MBA, Master’s in Management and Executive Education. Their term shall end with that of the President inviting them, can be terminated by the SAG member or the Alumni Council at any time without prior notice, and can also be renewed by the next President. Members are expected to provide input into the development of the annual Alumni Engagement Plan, coordinate their efforts closely with the Alumni Council (and School as applicable), and support the strengthening of a vibrant Alumni Network.

The Council shall solicit volunteers from the network as Alumni Initiative Leaders when needed to support the implementation of the Alumni Engagement Plan in specific areas, e.g. through the formation of task forces. Each task force shall have a designated volunteer who coordinates the activities of the task force and reports to the Alumni Council. Volunteers may be relieved or re-engaged by the Alumni Council following the elections of the Council and based on the new Alumni Engagement Plan as well as the volunteers’ willingness to continue serving. These organizational items shall also be communicated to the School and the Network.

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## **7. Administration**

There is no independent standing secretariat for the Alumni Network. The President, with support from other members, shall ensure effective documentation and communication of activities in close collaboration with the School in issues that are beyond the scope of self-governing alumni initiatives.

Activities that require large-scale administration, such as conducting the election process and administering alumni surveys, are supported by the staff of the School.

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## **8. Finances**

There is no annual fee charged to members of the ESMT Alumni Network. Events organized by the School, such as the Alumni Network Annual Meeting, are subsidized by the School. Self-organized initiatives are funded through a combination of voluntary donations from members and third parties as well as personal contributions. No initiatives shall be taken and no events shall be organized without ensuring proper funding.

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## **9. Communication, Alumni Portal, and Social Networks**

The School’s website ([esmt.org](http://esmt.org)), the Alumni Portal ([esmtalumni.org](http://esmtalumni.org), login required), and regular newsletters are the central tools for disseminating information from the School and from the Alumni Council toward members. In addition, the Alumni Network Annual meeting provides an opportunity to communicate with and among the community.

There is an ESMT Alumni Portal in place, accessible at <http://esmtalumni.org>.

The Alumni Portal is a secured network solely accessible by ESMT alumni, interested faculty, and relevant staff. It provides an online community for members of the Alumni Network to keep each other informed of

upcoming events, post developments, and update their online profiles. Furthermore, the Portal serves the purpose of disseminating information by the school to the members, facilitating networking through access to a members' directory, and providing an overview of benefits and services. The Alumni Portal gives users three options for registering: via LinkedIn, Facebook, or by using their e-mail addresses. A free downloadable app is available for mobile phones.

The regular Alumni Newsletter (normally issued monthly) is sent using e-mail addresses provided by alumni via the Alumni Portal or through communication with the Alumni Relations office. Because data protection considerations mean that the School is unable to provide the Alumni Network with e-mail distribution lists, the Alumni Council as well as Club and Chapter Coordinators use the Alumni Newsletter as the primary source for announcing events. As such, it is strongly advised that members of the Alumni Network keep their e-mail address up to date in the Portal and read the Alumni Newsletter.

The School provides the Alumni Council with an e-mail address in the format of Alumni.Council@esmt.org, to which all issues related to the internal affairs of the network members shall be addressed.

All members of the Alumni Network are strongly encouraged to inform the School of new information and happenings. Alumni can make an important contribution to maintaining a vibrant community by keeping their contact details on the Portal up-to-date, sending Alumni Relations personal updates by email, sharing success stories, and informing the school of chapter and club events.

## 10. Chapters and Clubs

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Members are encouraged to facilitate the achievement of the alumni mission by maintaining close relationship with former class members as well as forming regional chapters and clubs based on shared interest. Local chapters and clubs formally associated with ESMT can only be established with prior endorsement by the School. They are expected to be self-organizing and adhere to the principles set out in the Mission of this Charter. Each chapter and club shall appoint a Coordinator to facilitate interaction with the Alumni Council and the broader Network and to ensure regular communication with the School.

Regional Alumni Chapters are regional segments of the Alumni Network, providing a platform for alumni in the same city or region to connect, run events, and support professional networking and development.

Alumni Clubs are based on special shared interest in topical issues (for example, women in leadership), certain industries and sectors (for example, entrepreneurship, investment, energy sector), etc. As of 2017, clubs that share interests with clubs run by the MBA class (currently, the Entrepreneurship Club, the Investment Club, and the Social Impact Club) will be combined with the alumni clubs to encourage cooperation and networking opportunities between the two groups.

A special "Club" may be formed within a single company to pursue the mission of the Alumni Network.

All chapters and clubs must have a designated Coordinator, responsible for the activities of the organization and for keeping contact with the School.

Naming such organizations shall be as follows:

- "ESMT Alumni ..... Chapter" (e.g., ESMT Alumni Munich Chapter" or "ESMT Alumni Rhein-Ruhr Chapter", or "ESMT Alumni North America Chapter");
- "ESMT Alumni ..... Club" (e.g. ESMT Alumni Entrepreneurship Club", or "ESMT Alumni Investments Club").

For chapters and clubs to be established and to operate as official parts of the Alumni Network, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- A chapter or club must have at least 10 founding members who, in writing, expressing their intentions to run such an organization to Alumni Relations, name the first Coordinator, and outline their specific purpose;
- Following coordination as deemed necessary (for example, to ensure there is no overlap in regional scope with another chapter), and after alignment with the Alumni Council, approval for the establishment of a new chapter or club will be granted by the School;
- Each chapter or club should name one coordinator who serves as the main contact for ESMT and the ESMT Alumni Network;
- The coordinator is responsible for maintaining a register of members, ensuring their active involvement in the activities of the organization, and keeping ESMT and the Alumni Council informed of events and other activities of the chapter or club;
- Chapters and clubs are required to inform Alumni Relations of their events (date, venue, purpose, contact of organizer) and major online activities in advance of any formal communication, which the School, when appropriate, will further promote through the Alumni Portal, Alumni Newsletter, and other means of communication;
- The School, in coordination with the Alumni Council, reserves the right to veto club or chapter activities which are not congruent with the mission of the Network or which may be counterproductive with other School or Alumni Network initiatives or interests;
- Chapters and clubs are welcome to create an informal layer of support (e.g., event organizers) amongst their members; however; the coordinator remains accountable for ensuring proper coordination and planning of collaboration and events;
- The main point of contact for the coordinators at ESMT is Alumni Relations ([alumni@esmt.org](mailto:alumni@esmt.org)). Alumni Relations can support chapter and club coordinators by providing updates about the School for sharing at events, checking if a representative of the School may be able to attend events in person, advising on sensitive matters which may require prior coordination with the School (see also Article 13), aligning the timing of chapter or club events to ensure no overlap with other ESMT activities or to purposefully align an event with another ESMT event to gain synergies (e.g. ESMT presence at a nearby MBA fair or faculty conference), facilitating links to ESMT Faculty or Administration, and providing contacts for MBA sister clubs.
- While chapters and clubs are advised not to be over-ambitious regarding the frequency and intensity of their activities, they are expected to sustain a certain level of commitment by their members. A chapter or club shall be dissolved in the case of a lack of sufficient engagement of its members as reflected in no or insufficiently frequent activity, or in the case of failing to keep the Alumni Council and the school updated about its activities, as assessed by the Alumni Council and the School in discussion with the coordinator.

## **11. Live Events**

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Live events of the Alumni Network include the Alumni Network Annual Meeting on the ESMT campus, class reunions, and events organized by chapters and clubs.

The Alumni Network Annual Meeting takes place once a year, currently in June, with the purpose of bringing together the entire member body on campus for a full day of professional development, re-connecting with the School and peers, connecting past program participants with current students, and networking. The occasion also presents an opportunity to discuss business matters of the Alumni Network in a town-hall format. The agenda and detailed program of the Alumni Day is developed in coordination between the School and the Alumni Council. The event is currently fully subsidized by the School.

MBA, EMBA, and MIM alumni classes are encouraged to hold reunions in five-year increments from the year of graduation (i.e. a class graduating in 2012 would have reunions in 2017, 2022, 2027 and so forth). Each class is advised to name a Class Representative, for a term of their choice but preferably for five years,

who will be responsible for organizing the next official class reunion, and communicate their name to Alumni Relations. Class Representatives are expected to perform the following important functions:

- Help Alumni Relations maintain accurate contact information for their classmates;
- Notify Alumni Relations of relevant news items from the class of which the School may not be aware;
- Keep classmates informed of school- and alumni-related events;
- Lead the planning of the next class reunion (to take place in 5-year increments starting with years following graduation);
- Support the organization of all class-related gatherings in non-reunion years;
- Identify classmates to serve as career mentors, event and classroom speakers, and for other relevant opportunities;
- Personally promote fundraising opportunities among classmates and drive class participation.

Classes are encouraged to hold five-year reunions in Berlin to coincide with the Alumni Network Annual Meeting. Reunion planning should generally start with coordinating between the School and class one year prior to the event. The School can support the Class Representatives and their helpers from the class with organizing five-year reunions, for which the School also provides the meeting venue on campus and faculty speakers. Requested services from external suppliers are provided at cost. The School is unable to provide facilities on campus for reunions outside of the official Class Reunions free of charge. ESMT faculty and staff are delighted to attend reunions at external locations whenever possible.

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## **12. Alumni Network Fellowship**

In line with the Mission of the ESMT Alumni Network, the ESMT Alumni Network Fellowship has been established, funded in part by donations from the Alumni Network, and matched and administered by the School in accordance with eligibility criteria set by the Alumni Council. The purpose of this scholarship is to provide monetary support to a promising candidate with leadership potential from the non-profit sector to pursue studies in one of the ESMT MBA degree programs. Upon request by the Alumni Council, a volunteer from the Alumni Network shall work with the School to promote fundraising (e.g., at the Alumni Network Annual Meeting, reunions, word of mouth), to monitor and communicate funding status to the Alumni Council and the Network, and to join a Council member in meeting shortlisted Fellowship candidates, coordinating with the School's Admissions Office throughout the process.

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## **13. Brand Protection**

ESMT reserves the right to protect its brand including, *inter alia*, the prohibition of using ESMT's name and logo in external communication (beyond the Alumni Network itself) by members of the Alumni Network without prior consent and approval by the school obtained through Alumni Relations.

No separate brand identity of the Alumni Network or any of its bodies, including the Alumni Council, Chapters and Clubs, shall be developed.

Prior to their communication with the media on behalf of the Alumni Network, members are requested to seek alignment with the School's branding through Alumni Relations.

ESMT-branded material can be provided upon request by Alumni Relations including, for example, nametags, PowerPoint templates, and program brochures. Stationary will only be provided if correspondence with third parties is not conducted through Alumni Relations and the content of communication on ESMT-branded stationary has been approved.

## 14. Amendments

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Amendments to this Charter can be made through an agreement between ESMT’s management, currently represented by the Dean of Degree Programs, and the Alumni Council in representation of the Alumni Network after seeking consent from their respective constituencies as appropriate.

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Berlin, January 31, 2017

ESMT Alumni Council

Coordinated with, and endorsed by  
ESMT European School of  
Management and Technology

Oliver Hasse  
President

Prof. Zoltán Antal-Mokos, Ph.D.  
Dean of Degree Programs

Andrea Oleksyn-Brandes  
Alumni Relations

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## Appendix: Alumni President Election Procedure

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### 15. Eligibility, Service Terms and Election Frequency

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All members of the ESMT alumni community in good standing, including current MBA, Executive MBA, and MIM students, are eligible to submit nominations and vote. All members of the ESMT alumni community except current students of said degree programs may be nominated and elected for President.

The President of the Alumni Network shall be elected bi-annually, for

- A two-year term as President Elect
- A subsequent two-year term as President, and
- A final two-year term as Past President.

The Alumni Council shall be made up of the incumbent post-holders of President Elect, President, and Past President. Past Presidents are eligible to run for President Elect upon completion of their term.

### 16. Election Process

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The election takes place in two rounds: nominations and voting.

Nominations are sought through an electronic survey from Alumni Network members who registered themselves on the Alumni Portal. Self-nominations are also accepted as a welcome sign of dedication to service.

During the nomination period of at least two weeks, names of the nominees will be published on the Alumni Portal. Nominees will be asked to provide a photo and publish a short statement about themselves, their agenda priorities if elected, and their past history of volunteer support for the School and/or active

engagement in the Alumni Network. Posting a nominee statement indicates their explicit acceptance of the nomination and a willingness to serve for the full term of six years as described above. Without posting such statement, a candidate will not enter the voting round. In case of more than five nominees, a preliminary round of voting is conducted to establish a short list of candidates.

Whenever possible, the process shall be scheduled so that shortlisted candidates have the opportunity to personally present their ideas to the alumni community during the Alumni Network Annual Meeting.

Shortlisted candidates will enter the voting round which will be conducted electronically over a period of at least two weeks. Please note that to ensure voting eligibility and that only one vote per person is submitted, voters will be asked to submit their name. This information will be kept completely confidential and deleted as soon as said eligibility check has been ensured under the supervision of ESMT Corporate and Legal Affairs.

ESMT provides technical support for conducting the entire process.

### **17. Validity of Votes, Election, and Results**

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All unambiguous nominations and votes submitted in observation of eligibility criteria set out above shall be considered valid.

Regardless of the number of votes in total (voting turnout), an election and its results are valid if the election results in one person gaining more votes than any other candidate (simple majority).

### **18. End of Service Term**

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The term of the President ends if any of the following events occurs (also applicable to President Elect and Past President):

- The President becomes incapable of fulfilling his or her duties (due to illness, death);
- The President submits resignation due to conflict of interest or other stated reason;
- The President's removal is initiated unanimously by all other members of the Alumni Council;
- The President is removed from office by ESMT, after informing other members of the Alumni Council and in agreement with them unless confidentiality or personal rights prohibit full disclosure of reasons, due to breach of confidentiality, conflict of interest, violation of the alumni code of conduct, or loss of status of alumni in good standing.

### **19. Substitution and Succession**

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In case of becoming temporarily incapable of fulfilling his or her duty, the President is temporarily replaced by the Past President.

The President is succeeded, under normal circumstance as well as in case of resignation or removal from office, by the President Elect.

If any of the President Elect, the President, or the President leaves office prior to the scheduled end of their service, a new election shall be conducted at the earliest convenient date and not later than within 12 months.

Generally, ESMT alumni can only become members of the Alumni Council through elections. Under exceptional circumstances, elected Alumni Council members may - after consulting with ESMT's management - co-opt alumni to temporarily join the Alumni Council. Such exceptional circumstances exist if elected Alumni Council members request their demission or are permanently unable to fulfil their duties and resign from their post. The Alumni Council internally determines the roles of the nominated members. Co-opted members of the Alumni Council may serve in their roles until the next regular elections, which should take place two years after the previous elections at the very latest, and during which they can be elected into the Alumni Council as regular members.

Should, during an electoral term, two or all members of the Alumni Council be replaced by co-opted members, the Alumni Council can decide to ask the Alumni Network for a vote of confidence to continue its work during the next regular elections. If a minimum of 50% of the votes received approve the Alumni Council, co-opted members of the Alumni Council become elected members and a new two-year term begins. Should a 50% quorum not be reached, vacant posts will be filled by individually elected candidates.

Should the entire Council request demission during the same election cycle, the last elected members to step down will have to call for elections for all posts to be held within two months of the receipt of the demission request. To ensure continuity, an acting president may be appointed until elections are held.