

Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Sustainability

A two-week Spring Program in Paris

Immerse yourself in the heart of Paris and explore how innovation and entrepreneurship can drive sustainable transformation.



ESCP Paris Campus, in the heart of the city



May 17–30, 2026



45 hours of courses and company visits



6 ECTS / 3 US credits

Why join?

A unique and immersive learning experience combining innovative pedagogy, external awards, and an internationally renowned faculty, all within a rich, dynamic corporate and cultural ecosystem.

ESCP Short Program

Innovation & Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Impact

MAY 17 – 30, 2026

Character of the program – Innovating for Sustainable Impact

This intensive two-week summer program builds on TRANSFORM – Innovation & Entrepreneurship for Sustainability, created by Prof. Gorgi Krlev and distinguished by a Financial Times Responsible Business Education Award – guiding students from analyzing the biggest societal challenges of our time to developing entrepreneurial, impact-oriented solutions. It weaves together five core modules (Grand Challenges, Innovation, Strategy, Scaling, Impact) with the award-winning Improbable Seminar on Art Thinking (highly-commended by the Financial Times and shortlisted for the QS Reimagine Education Awards), and close collaboration with ESCP's Blue Factory incubator.

Participants work in diverse teams on real sustainability projects, designing innovative business models and venture ideas that combine profitability with measurable impact.

The program culminates in a final pitch where teams present their solutions and impact logic to an audience of experts, entrepreneurs and partners. A special emphasis lies on combining theory and cases, with 1:1 coaching of teams to develop their ventures and present their pitches.

Program contents

Module 1 – Sustainability Challenges: Why Today's Problems Need New Ventures

This module explores ecological and social “grand challenges” as complex, systemic issues that cut across sectors and geographies. Students link concrete problems to the Sustainable Development Goals and examine how companies, start-ups and mission-driven organizations operate within broader transition ecosystems. Using real cases, they identify where entrepreneurial initiatives and innovative business models can move beyond treating symptoms and start shifting systems.

Module 2 – Innovation: From Bold Ideas to Market-Ready Solutions

This module investigates how new products, services, processes and business models can address sustainability challenges in original and commercially viable ways.

Students engage with concepts such as open and frugal innovation, discovering how constraints and scarcity can spark highly creative, resource-efficient solutions.

They learn what it takes to move from early ideas and prototypes to solutions that customers, users and partners actually adopt.

Module 3 – Strategy: Designing Impact-Driven Business Models

Here, the focus is on crafting robust strategies and business model designs that align mission, value creation and economic viability. Participants clarify their value proposition, identify key partners and resources, and reflect on organizational forms that safeguard their purpose as they grow. Short cases from entrepreneurial practice illustrate strategic trade-offs between growth, control, investor expectations and long-term impact.

Module 4 – Scaling: Growing Ventures that Change Systems

This module examines what it means to grow in a way that maximizes positive impact and systemic change rather than only organizational size or revenue. Students compare different pathways – deepening products and services locally, replication, impact franchising, platforms and networks – and discuss their governance and resource implications. They apply these insights to their own projects and reflect on what an appropriate level and mode of scaling could look like for their venture.

Module 5 – Impact: Proving and Improving What Works

The final module develops a clear, practical understanding of social impact: what changes for whom, and how this can be evidenced in ways that matter for investors, partners and customers. Students work with elements such as theory of change, stakeholder mapping and outcome indicators, and critically discuss risks of “greenwashing” and “impact-overclaiming.” Each team sketches a simple, realistic impact-measurement and learning approach tailored to its project, feeding back into strategic and entrepreneurial decisions.

Improbable Seminar – Art Thinking for Radical Business Innovation

Over two days, the Improbable Seminar immerses participants in Art Thinking, a creative method that encourages them to “create the improbable with certainty” and to rethink how business can drive transformation. Guided by Prof. Sylvain Bureau holding the Improbable Chair by Galeries Lafayette, students adopt an artist’s mindset to challenge assumptions, embrace uncertainty and generate radically new concepts for sustainable ventures. Following a pioneering innovation pedagogy, participants design and present “improbable” artefacts or interventions that reframe their sustainability challenge and open unexpected solution spaces for their entrepreneurial projects.

ESCP Blue Factory – Incubating Entrepreneurial Solutions

ESCP’s Blue Factory, the school’s European start-up incubator, supports students and alumni from initial idea to international expansion across ESCP’s six campuses. It has generated 300+ companies, among them unicorns. During the program, Blue Factory experts share concrete founder stories, introduce key tools of entrepreneurial practice and provide structured feedback on teams’ business and impact models. Coaches help participants stress-test their venture logic, refine their go-to-market approach and strengthen their narrative in preparation for the final pitch.

Company and field visits – Learning from Pioneers on the Ground

Curated company and ecosystem visits immerse participants in Paris’s dynamic sustainability and innovation landscape. Visits will include organizations such as AXA Climate School (corporate sustainability and climate education), Station F (the world’s largest start-up campus), the EY ImpACT Lab (a future lab for systems transformation), the Convention des Entreprises pour le Climat (the biggest European association of companies across all sectors dedicated to sustainable transformations), energy company EDF (a pioneer in greening energy supply) and “Climate House” (a brand-new impact entrepreneurship hub in Paris). These visits provide direct exposure to how established firms, start-ups and coalitions experiment with new technologies, business models and partnerships for ecological and social transition, feeding back into the team’s own projects.

Faculty – World-Class Experts at the Frontier of Impact & Innovation

The program is delivered by an outstanding team of ESCP faculty and practitioners, led by Prof. Gorgi Krlev (academic lead of TRANSFORM and ESCP’s Associate Dean of Sustainability), experts in sustainability entrepreneurship such as Prof. Valentin Held, U.S. American impact entrepreneur and business leader Dr. Phil Glynn, and Blue Factory Director Maeva Tordo. The Improbable Seminar is led by Prof. Sylvain Bureau, Scientific Director of the Improbable Chair by Galeries Lafayette and creator of the Art Thinking methodology, whose work connects artists, entrepreneurs and companies to rethink business through creativity.

Together, they bring a rare combination of rigorous research, cutting-edge innovation pedagogy and deep experience with entrepreneurial ecosystems and creative industries.