

“Training the world’s foremost experts and leaders in the Management of Technology”

Welcome!

This is the first annual newsletter of the EPFL Doctoral Program in Management of Technology (EDMT). It aims at informing alumni, prospective applicants, and current participants by highlighting recent events, achievements, and other newsworthy items.

Message from our Director

Here it is: Your very first EDMT Newsletter! Yara and Céline – in collaboration with EPFL Media-com Visual Communication and Alexandra – have all worked hard to make it happen just in time for the holiday season.



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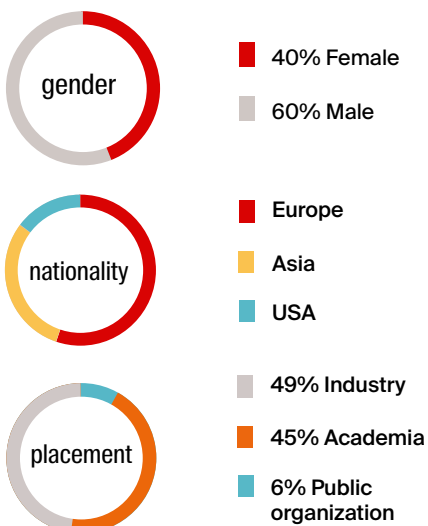
Wherever you might be now, I hope you still carry fond memories of your days at EPFL, taking classes, enjoying the view of the lake, meeting with your friends, and working hard at your thesis—experiencing the pleasures (and frustrations) of contributing to something new.

The year 2020 has been very special and unusual. One of our students, Kilian Schindler, tragically passed away before he could publicly defend his thesis. Needless to say that his doctoral title was awarded posthumously at a special event where his advisor, Prof. Daniel Kuhn, presented the work in his stead. In honor of his outstanding performance and charismatic presence in the program, the annual Kilian Schindler Excellence Award (funded by a generous family donation) will from now on be given every year to the author of an outstanding doctoral thesis, as assessed among all doctoral theses by a faculty committee. In this issue, you will find out who won this distinction for the first time. A second new academic recognition, the Thesis Distinction Award, was inaugurated at the EDMT this year as well (browse below to find the first winner). A faculty committee chooses the annual laureate from among all award-nominated doctoral theses. Both prizes will help us highlight and specially endorse outstanding achievements in the EDMT, which was hitherto not possible in this official form.

2020 will also be remembered, there can be no doubt, as the year of remote presence! Working from home, taking classes via Zoom, and passing online exams (including thesis defenses) have changed the “look and feel” of a PhD education, hopefully not forever. While the newfound virtual ways may have helped to bridge the gaps imposed by the inevitable social distance, they still tend to reduce the richness and personal touch of a “traditional” doctoral education, and we are all coming to terms with this new regime.

Enjoy the enclosed newsflash from your alma mater. Stay in touch, and most of all ... stay healthy!

EDMT in Brief (2020)



Applications **101**

Number of PhDs **37**

Our New Students



This fall, the EDMT Program admitted 12 new students:

- Dorsa Abdolhamidi joining the team of Thomas Weber (OES Chair)
- Nicolas Camenzind joining the team of Damir Filipovic (Swiss Finance Institute@EPFL)
- Onur Demiray joining the team of Ralf Seifert (TOM Chair) (from Jan 2021)
- Farzaneh Habibollahi joining the team of Marc Gruber (ENTC Chair)
- Jun Han joining the team of Thomas Weber (OES Chair)
- Tin Huynh joining the team of Claudia Binder (HERUS Lab)
- Fateme Jamshidi joining the team of Negar Kiyavash (BAN Chair)
- Wouter Jongeneel joining the team of Daniel Kuhn (RAO Chair)
- Gleb Kurovskiy joining the team of Luisa Lambertini (CFI Chair)
- Yves Rychener joining the team of Daniel Kuhn (RAO Chair) (from Jan 2021)
- Philipp Schneider joining the team of Thomas Weber (OES Chair)
- Andrea Xu joining the team of Semyon Malamud (Swiss Finance Institute@EPFL).

Theses Defended in 2020

The Shaping Effects of Innovation and Technology: From Micro Business Model Evolution to Macro Environment Sustainability

[Q. Lu](#) / [C. Tucci \(Dir.\)](#)

Assessing Technology Adoption in the European Air Traffic Management: The Cases of Virtual Centre and Flight-Centric Operations

[E. Zeki](#) / [M. Finger \(Dir.\)](#)

Institutions and Incentives in Knowledge Production and Diffusion: From Science to Innovation

[C. C. Ayoubi](#) / [D. Foray \(Dir.\)](#)

Metropolitan Innovation Systems: Inquiry into the Co-Evolving Relations between Industry, University and Government

[J. Shen](#) / [M. Finger](#) ; [M. Gruber \(Dir.\)](#)

Scalable Stochastic Optimization: Scenario Reduction with Guarantees

[K. Schindler](#) / [D. Kuhn \(Dir.\)](#)

The Organisation of Science: Topics, Incentives and Funding

[O. Ballester Gonzalez](#) / [G. J. A. de Rassenfosse \(Dir.\)](#)

Distributional Robustness in Mechanism Design

[C. Kocyigit](#) / [D. Kuhn \(Dir.\)](#)

Wasserstein Distributionally Robust Learning

[S. Shafieezadeh Abadeh](#) / [D. Kuhn \(Dir.\)](#)

The Triangular Value of Patents

[A. Neklyudova-Khairullina](#) / [C. Tucci \(Dir.\)](#)

Financing Biomedical Ventures – Myths and Realities

[J. S. Behrens](#) / [C. Tucci \(Dir.\)](#)

Testimonials



Farzaneh Habibollahi, EDMT PhD New Student

“The EDMT program allows you to follow your passion in research while keeping the real-world applications of your research as a key focus.

Joining this diverse group of researchers, in the past few months, I have been constantly learning through each conversation, collaboration or even daily catch-ups and have become more and more motivated in the journey that I am going to embark upon as a Ph.D. student.”



Philipp Schneider, EDMT PhD New Student

“The opportunity to work on the world’s most challenging problems in tech and innovation was one of the reasons I returned from industry to academia. Being in a unique interdisciplinary research environment at EPFL enables me to think about issues differently and helps me in developing my own research career journey. And if the EPFL community hadn’t already convinced me, then Switzerland and Lausanne definitely have!”

Maximilian Hofer, EDMT PhD Student since 2018

“Intangible assets increasingly drive the world of business: knowledge, data, patents, and so on. My name is Max, I am a third-year Ph.D. student, and I investigate intangible assets. My experience in the EDMT program has been exciting: I completed advanced computer science and strategic management courses at the beginning and now focus on my research agenda and teaching Master’s students.”



Yara Kayyali Elalem, EDMT PhD Student since 2018

“Joining the EDMT program at EPFL is very rewarding. Doing research and applying it to company data puts me into contact with many experts from both academia and industry. Teaching, which I am very passionate about, is also part of the program. I believe that a PhD at EDMT gives you the skills necessary to succeed in any future career path you choose, with additional perks of being part of a great multicultural and encouraging community.”

Paul van Baal, EDMT PhD Graduate in 2019, Policy Advisor at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy

“My research at EDMT focused on energy policy. I modeled their economic and environmental impact. Besides publishing my results in academic journals and at conferences, I also worked with companies and government agencies in an advisory position. I now work for the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate in the Netherlands, where I help evaluate, negotiate, and implement climate and energy policies at the European and national level.”





Charles Ayoubi, EDMT PhD Graduate in 2020, Research Fellow at Harvard Business School

"I decided to pursue a doctoral degree to quench my thirst for knowledge and the doctoral program in Management of Technology at EPFL (EDMT) was the perfect place for that. The environment is really ideal and I met some fantastic people. My PhD year at EPFL also allowed me to acquire the knowledge and skills that led me to continue my path as a research fellow at Harvard Business School."

List of awards

Kilian Schindler Excellence Award: [Cagil Kocyigit](#)

INFORMS Best Student Paper Competition in Finance: [Michael Mark](#)

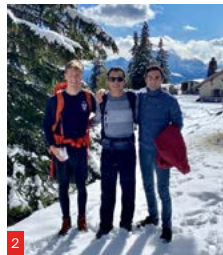
EDMT Thesis Distinction 2020 : [Soroosh Shafieezadeh-Abadeh](#)

MTE program Best Teaching Assistant Award: [Yara Kayyali Elalem](#)

EDMT Doctoral Committee

- Thomas Weber, Director
- Negar Kiyavash
- Kenneth Younge, Mentor
- Gaétan de Rassenfosse

EDMT Life in Pictures



1 Christmas Dinner

2 Weekend in Leysin

3 Rafting from Thun to Bern

4 Shopping in Covid times

5 Wine Tasting in Lavaux Vineyards

6 Secret Santa Dinner

7 Camping and Hiking in Arolla

8 Welcome Event for new PhD Students



In Memoriam

[Dr. Kilian Schindler \(1989-2020\)](#)

EDMT PhD Student
(2016-2020)

Important Dates

Application deadlines: **January 15 and April 15, 2021**

Start of the program: **September 15, 2021**

Next Research Day: **Spring 2021**

Program Core Courses (please refer to our official website for updated dates and information):

- MGT-418 Convex Optimization
- MGT-484 Applied Probability & Stochastic Processes
- MGT-581 Introduction to Econometrics
- MGT-621 Microeconomics
- MGT-644 B Computational Methods for Doctoral Research In Management

Stay in Touch

Thank you for keeping up with the EDMT Program!

Please share this newsletter via social media or by forwarding it as an email.

If you have recently been promoted, received honors or awards, or have other news, please email Céline at celine.cordey@epfl.ch. We would love to hear from you!

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Contributed to this issue: Ilona Ball, Céline Cordey, Yara Kayyali, Alexandra von Schack, Thomas Weber and the EPFL Communications Team.

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