



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

Small Business Development

Course Code	E_IBK3_SBD
Credits	6
Period	P5
Course Level	300
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	School of Business and Economics
Course Coordinator	drs. A.C. Guldemon
Examiner	drs. A.C. Guldemon
Teaching Staff	drs. G.J. Beekman MA, drs. A.C. Guldemon
Teaching method(s)	Seminar, Instruction course, Lecture

Course Objective

SBD 3.5 specifically addresses the Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) phenomenon.

How are general trends and specific strategic issues and theories different (or: the same) when it comes to starting, growing and managing small businesses. This starts naturally with the birth of a startup and the development towards an established business and further growth, stagnation or demise as the business gets older. But the context is also relevant being it a certain industry or a country like Amazon.com in the tech world and an electronics store on a market in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

The course is part of the Bachelor Specialisation Entrepreneurship and could lead to a Masters in Business Administration or a Masters in Entrepreneurship. This shows in the topics covered, the papers used, the guest lectures and the assignments. Essential papers of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Strategy and Organization are presented within the context of SME's.

Academic & research skills:

- argumentation – being able to argue the topics involved.
- application – applying acquired knowledge to business situations like starting a business
- analysis – examining and understanding problems from different perspectives

Bridging theory and practice:

- has fundamental knowledge about the those disciplines relevant to the fields of entrepreneurship, strategy and organization
- has specialised, in-depth knowledge and insights in the field of business development
- is able to apply theoretical knowledge in a specific business situation
- is encouraged to actively experience the chosen field in real-life during the study

Many students participating in this course want to start and own a business. Some others want to find out if running a small business is for them, if that is a role they could take. They want to learn what makes a small business work well and what it means for the owner/manager to run a small business. They especially want to know about the factors that make a small business fail or succeed. They also Exchange students sometimes pick this course to learn about business in one period.

With regards to theory this course builds upon courses like Organization Theory, International- Strategy, Organisation Behaviour and Human Resource Management. With regards to the research and fieldwork to be done, this course most specifically builds on Business Research Methods I (BK and IBA), Business Research Methods II (BK and IBA) and uses the learnings and experience from the Integrative Research Project (BK and IBA) in the second year. The students will employ previously learned qualitative research skills to research into SME cases and their own startup case.

Course Content

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's) are facing tremendous challenges, with the ongoing digitalization and globalization today's world of business is facing. Next to the distinction in terms of size, SME businesses can also be distinguished on the basis of their qualitative characteristics, such as the crucial role of the owner-manager, the strong local and regional focus and the presence of family in the business.

Topics covered:

The role of small business in the economy is covered. The theory and practice of the startup will also be covered. Aspects of growth and development will be covered such as planning, organizing, strategizing and leading small organizations. Different aspects of innovation both in theory and practice will be part of the course. Small business in a third world, resource poor, context will be explained. Cases focussing on the numbers and finance of a small business will be part of the classes. This course offers a balance between theory, research and practice within the frame of small business.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Lectures with a focus on learning to apply the knowledge Instruction Lectures with teaching cases and documentaries Tutorials with a focus on building a business and solving business problems.

Method of Assessment

Individual and group assessment

Literature

- Scarborough, N. M. (2015). Entrepreneurship and effective small business management, global edition (11th ed.). Pearson.
- Other academic papers and book chapters, to be announced

Additional Information Target Audience

- Students interested in the development of smaller organisations like startups, NGO's, SME's and family businesses.
- Students interested in starting or owning or taking over a business
- Students interested in continuing their studies in business, strategy, organisation and entrepreneurship

Explanation Canvas

Canvas is used.

Recommended background knowledge

BK:

1.1 Management & Organisatie; 2.1 Strategie; 2.4 KWALO; 2.5 KWANO ; 2.5 Strategisch Ondernemerschap;

IBA:

1.2 Organization Theory; 1.3 Academic Skills; 2.2 International Strategy; 2.4 BRM I; 2.5 BRM II.

Exchange students: A social sciences research methods course