University of Stuttgart
Institute of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Science (ENI)

Call for:
M A S T E R T H E S I S

Exploring the Role of Artificial Intelligence as a Co-Founder in Innovation Processes

Topic Description:
The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming not only business operations but also the way new ventures and innovations emerge. Recent developments in generative AI have introduced the possibility of AI acting not only as an external enabler of venture designs and ideas, but as a co-founder – playing an active role in ideation, decision-making, and business model development.
This research project will analyze existing applications of AI-driven innovation, assess its potential for co-founding roles, and explore how organizations can integrate AI into their entrepreneurial and corporate innovation strategies. The thesis will contribute to the understanding of human-AI collaboration in business creation and propose frameworks for leveraging AI in strategic decision-making, thereby contributing to the conceptualization and validation of new business opportunities.

This project will be co-sponsored and co-supervised by an external company. You may be eligible for financial compensation while working on this project.

Goals & Expected Contributions:
1. **Understanding AI's Role in Innovation** – Investigating how AI systems can contribute to the identification and development of new business opportunities.
2. **Assessing AI's Capabilities as a Co-Founder** – Analyzing AI's involvement in key entrepreneurial functions such as market analysis, ideation, product development, and strategic planning.
3. **Examining Human-AI Collaboration** – Exploring how AI interacts with human decision-makers and its impact on the innovation process.
4. **Developing a Framework for AI-Enabled Innovation** – Proposing a structured approach for organizations to integrate AI as a co-founder or strategic innovation partner.

Initial Readings:

- Boussioux, L., Lane, J. N., Zhang, M., Jacimovic, V., & Lakhani, K. R. (2024). The crowdless future? Generative AI and creative problem-solving. *Organization Science*, *35*(5). https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2023.18430
- Csaszar, F. A., Ketkar, H., & Kim, H. (2024). Artificial intelligence and strategic decision-making: Evidence from entrepreneurs and investors. *Strategy Science, 9*(4). https://doi.org/10.1287/stsc.2024.0190
- Davidsson, P., & Sufyan, M. (2023). What does AI think of AI as an external enabler (EE) of entrepreneurship? An assessment through and of the EE framework. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights, 20*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2023.e00413

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Your Profile:
This project is particularly suited for students with a background in both business and technology (e.g., Business Administration with a focus on Technology, Business Informatics, or related fields). However, applications from candidates with relevant expertise in artificial intelligence, digital transformation, or innovation management are also encouraged.

You can apply for this thesis call if you (are)…

- highly motivated to work in a structured way and in collaboration with industry partners.
- interested in the topic.
- creative and interested in learning new things, topics, and methods.
- have previously completed at least one course offered at ENI (or plan to do so during your thesis semester).

How to Apply:
Application deadline: 30.04.2025.
To apply, please prepare a max. 2-page exposé summarizing your proposed approach to the topic and a proposed preliminary overview of contents. Please also indicate if you have already completed a course at ENI and don't forget to add your contact details. You may submit your exposé via our website: https://www.eni.uni-stuttgart.de/en/teaching/Courses/Bachelor-and-Masterthesis/

If you have questions about this call, please reach out to ferran.giones@eni.uni-stuttgart.de

We are looking forward to working with you!