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SKEMA Business School launches its 2025 Hackathon



From 8 to 12 September 2025, SKEMA Business School will host the latest edition of its annual Hackathon across its Paris, Lille and Sophia Antipolis campuses. This year, first-year Master in Management (Programme Grande École) students will take on an unprecedented challenge: to identify their “purpose” and lay the first foundations of their academic, professional, and personal journey.

Another innovation this year: students will be trained in critical thinking through a partnership with Cogito.

Organised simultaneously across three campuses, this back-to-school Hackathon, on the theme “purpose”, aims to place students at the heart of SKEMA’s educational project, supporting them from day one in a journey of introspection and innovation.

Over the course of the week, more than 700 third-year undergraduate students will alternate between introspection workshops, co-creation sessions, training on generative artificial intelligence, and collaborative challenges. Guided by coaching teams, they will be tasked with designing an innovative application to assist future students in their own introspection journey.

The winning team, selected by a panel of experts from diverse fields, will have its application developed and integrated into SKEMA’s student experience.

Beyond its creative aspect, the Hackathon resonates with the “CV projectif”, a signature exercise during admissions interviews for SKEMA’s Master in Management (PGE). In this exercise, candidates are invited to envision their ideal career path ten years into the future and express their personal and professional aspirations. The Hackathon extends this approach: it challenges admitted students to confront their projects with introspection tools, collective intelligence, and technological innovation, to bring their ambitions to life.

“At a time when a quarter of French youth are considered to be suffering from depression, we want to help each student identify their talents, better understand their inner resources, and align their academic and professional ambitions with what truly drives them. This Hackathon is not just a week of collective innovation exercises: it is a foundational moment, offering each of our students the opportunity to discover themselves, build solid reference points, optimise their learning at SKEMA, and better prepare to tackle the challenges of tomorrow,” explains **Marine Hadengue, a Professor of Management at SKEMA and the Hackathon’s Coordinator**.

New educational partnership with Cogito

For the 2025 intake, SKEMA Business School is innovating by establishing an educational partnership with Cogito for its Master in Management (PGE) programme to train students in critical thinking.

For the first time in a management school, all third-year PGE students will follow Cogito’s “Esprit Critique Initial” pathway. This 20-hour training course on critical thinking has been designed by Cogito’s team of researchers and educators, under the direction of Elsa Grimberg, in collaboration with “L’Esprit Critique”, the popular YouTube channel created by Alexis Bellas, which boasts over 2 million followers.

Combining academic rigour with high-quality knowledge dissemination, Cogito offers a progressive intellectual programme and practical training based on a variety of real-world examples.

“Thinking clearly is not a matter of intuition — it’s a demanding skill that must be cultivated. Our ambition is to train students who are capable of turning uncertainty into informed decisions,” emphasises **Sylvie Jean, Director of the Master in Management (Programme Grande École)**.

With such a plan, SKEMA reinforces its ambition: to prepare students to navigate a complex, uncertain, and information-saturated world by equipping them with the tools to analyse, debate, and make decisions methodically and ethically.

Developing key skills for tomorrow

Beyond these highlights, the goal is clear: to help students develop essential skills: introspection, critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, and the ethical use of AI technologies while enhancing their CVs and revealing their unique talents and aspirations.

The 2025 intake promises to be a foundational milestone for new Master in Management students, marking the start of an academic and personal journey within a school that places the quest for meaning at the core of its educational model.

About SKEMA Business School

With 11,000 students from over 130 nationalities, 190 professors, and 63,000 alumni in 145 countries, SKEMA Business School is a global education and research institution that develops committed talent to sustainably transform the world. The hybridisation of social sciences and data sciences is at the heart of its model, and global exposure is its operational mode.

Multi-accredited (AACSB, EQUIS, EFMD Accredited EMBA), the school is recognised worldwide for its research, its more than 70 excellent programmes, and its international multi-campus structure across six countries: South Africa, Brazil, Canada, China, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and France.

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