

Grounded in TUM's technological and entrepreneurial ecosystem, TUM School of Management educates responsible talents and pursues relevant research to advance innovation-based businesses and societies in Germany, Europe, and the world. At our Garching-based Entrepreneurship Research Institute (ERI), scientists from various disciplines contribute to entrepreneurship research as an emerging and important area at the intersection of business, economics, and psychology. We aim to help develop this field and improve our understanding of entrepreneurial individuals and organizations. We are looking for a

Final Thesis (Bachelor or Master)

Character Development in Entrepreneurship Education

Context

Entrepreneurship education has traditionally focused on developing functional competencies such as opportunity recognition, business modeling, and financial planning. However, there is growing recognition that entrepreneurial success is not solely driven by technical skills, but also by founders' character traits, including integrity, resilience, judgment, and responsibility.

Courses such as "Principled Entrepreneurial Decision Making" (offered at Stanford and TUM) explicitly aim to shape these character dimensions by exposing students to ethical dilemmas, values-based reflection, and principled leadership frameworks. Despite increasing adoption of such courses, empirical evidence on their impact remains limited.

Research question

What is the influence of entrepreneurship education on the character development of aspiring entrepreneurs?

Suggested method

Qualitative research: Conduct semi-structured interviews with faculty members

Thesis objective and possible approach

This thesis aims to explore how entrepreneurship education contributes to character formation in aspiring entrepreneurs, and to develop a structured understanding of its mechanisms and outcomes.

Specifically, the thesis will:

- Identify key character traits relevant for entrepreneurial success and ethical decision-making
- Analyze how educational interventions (e.g., principled decision-making frameworks, case discussions) influence these traits
- Examine changes in decision-making behavior, particularly under uncertainty and ethical trade-offs
- Investigate participants' lived experiences, including moments where course principles shaped real-world actions
- Assess the perceived long-term impact of such courses on entrepreneurial mindset and leadership style
- Develop a conceptual framework linking entrepreneurship education, character development, and decision outcomes

Prerequisites and required skills

- Fluent in English (spoken and written)
- Solid knowledge of conducting interviews and interview coding OR solid knowledge of quantitative data analysis using survey data
- High analytical skills
- Great self-organization skills and ability to work with a large amount of data
- Willingness to work independently and reliably

Our offering

- Substantial supervision and guidance during the thesis project
- Insights into research and teaching activities at our institute and entrepreneurial education and support activities at TUM (particularly valuable when considering pursuing a PhD or planning to engage in own entrepreneurial endeavors)

Application

Please send your application (CV, current transcript of records, and motivation letter) by the 3rd of May 2026 to david.nawrath@tum.de and dominik.welcher@unternehmertum.de

For further questions, please get in touch with David Nawrath via david.nawrath@tum.de

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