



About the School

Ant Bozkaya: a new chair paves the way to Silicon Valley and to global entrepreneurship!

BIOGRAPHY AND INTERVIEW

With this new chair, the School strengthens its global footprint, its entrepreneurial focus, and open the doors to Silicon Valley

— BRUNO VAN POTTELSBERGHE, DEAN OF SBS-EM

Biography

Ant Bozkaya is an economist, entrepreneur, and global business executive. He is a holder of the new chair of Global Entrepreneurship at the Solvay Brussels (ULB), where he is appointed as Professor of Management Practice. He has launched and teaches Solvay School's two popular **Executive MBA** courses: Global Entrepreneurship and Silicon Valley Immersion Week - an experiential learning offering in Silicon Valley for Solvay [Executive MBA](#) participants.

Ant works with companies worldwide on the development of new ventures and transformations for sustainable growth. He also advises governments on investments in the entrepreneurial capacities of their regions. Over the past 25 years, he has held multiple academic, corporate executive, and policy-related positions including at the Harvard Business School, Harvard Kennedy School, MIT Sloan School of Management,

University of California at Berkeley, and the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). Among other current positions, Ant is a Visiting Professor at Kyoto University and a Distinguished Fellow of the Berkeley Haas Entrepreneurship Program, University of California at Berkeley.

Much of Ant's work examines the ways in which financial intermediaries and institutional organizations impact the nature of innovation and entrepreneurship in a region. He is a recipient of the NBER Innovation Policy and the Economy Fellow Award. Ant has taught courses in the areas of corporate and innovation strategy, leadership, venture capital, and entrepreneurship - and received several distinctions in teaching.

Ant was founding President & CEO of Bilkent Technology, Healthcare, and Power Group in Turkey. Earlier in his career, he held senior positions in management consulting



in Sydney and London. He has served as an advisor, executive educator, and board member at dozens of companies around the world. Currently, he is a member of the board of directors at Eczacibasi Holding and Aksa Acrylic Group (a Dow Chemical joint venture company). Ant continues to advise startup ventures worldwide on their financing strategies and also works to promote evidence-based entrepreneurship and innovation policy in emerging countries.

Ant was awarded a Harvard University Fellowship in Science, Technology, and Public Policy to conduct his doctoral dissertation research and post-doctoral

studies jointly at Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard Business School, and **holds a Ph.D. in Economics, MS, and MBA, from ULB.** He hails from Istanbul and lives in San

Interview

TELL US MORE ABOUT THE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP COURSE.

More and more start-ups are being born global. **My courses in global entrepreneurship are about starting up a new venture and building a successful business by turning disruptive innovation into a competitive advantage.** By tapping resources or serving customers across nations, entrepreneurs can take on larger rivals, and chase global opportunities to create new products or services.

Building a start-up as a global business requires today's entrepreneurs to **think earlier and faster** in rapidly changing and increasingly complex global markets. **Entrepreneurs are no longer confined to a local geography** when building a new business—the world can be their market from day one. But building a start-up as a global business requires entrepreneurs with skills and strategy.

Inspired by my tenure during the past decade at MIT Sloan School and Harvard Business School, I developed the Global Entrepreneurship course **with real life examples from my research and based on my teaching/co-teaching with some of the most distinguished faculty.** The course, in a nutshell, equips entrepreneurs turning a viable opportunity into a focused strategy and well-defined business initiative. The topics include : developing an effective business plan; creating "pitches" to sell the idea to stakeholders; attracting the top talent and vital resources required; building the organization and capabilities needed; evolving the strategy, organization, and leadership model as the business grows; and recognizing and managing risk, while creating and measuring value.

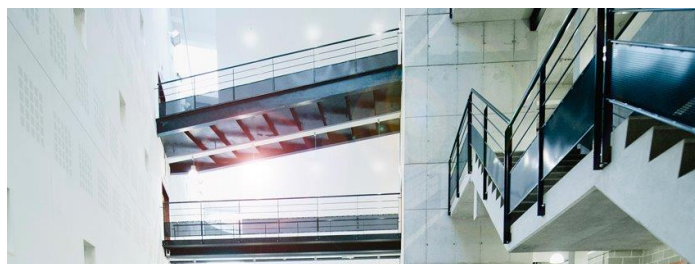
WHAT CAN STUDENTS EXPECT FROM YOUR COURSES?

I focus on **how companies explore new opportunities and generate growth.** One strand of my work considers the leadership and resources necessary to **identify, launch,**

Francisco. Ant is married and has two kids both attending Columbia University in the City of New York. He is a keen traveler; enjoys architectural tours, sailing, jazz

and sustain dynamic and enduring companies. My recent work at Kyoto University Graduate School of Management, for example, emphasizes leadership opportunities and aspects in global entrepreneurship. Likewise, I have been a member of the MIT Sloan School's flagship Global Entrepreneurship Lab (G-LAB) course faculty. This action-based course gave me a unique opportunity to work with start-up companies around the world with a group of 16-20 second-year MIT MBA students.

A second stream of my work focuses on understanding the drivers of financing constraints for start-ups. This strand considers how constraints by venture capital and angel investors across industries or regions impact the rate of growth of start-up ventures. This key part of entrepreneurial activity attracts many of my brilliant students who have been or considering entrepreneurship as an options setting up their ventures in the USA, South Africa, Finland, Turkey, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, Belgium or Japan.



The third stream of my work considers policy side of the technology entrepreneurship. Over the past decade, I have advised local and federal governments—Finland, USA, Turkey, and United Arab Emirates, to name a few about investments in their innovative and entrepreneurial capacities. Based on these policy-related works, I have lectured at Babson College's executive education programs **including the Driving Economic Growth through Entrepreneurship Ecosystems:** a Program for Public and Private Sector Leaders. My Solvay students - having the opportunity to study in Brussels, "the capital of Europe" - find

music, and continues to acquire a taste for wine.

this stream of studies interesting. Some of these students are already working in top-tier policy-making institutions both in Brussels and other capital cities of the European Union.

We're also launching a new "Silicon Valley Immersion Week" course for our MBA participants at Solvay. The objective of this innovative course is to stimulate "experience in learning" - balancing in-class teaching with fieldwork. It further aims to give our students a unique, on-the-ground look at the inner-workings of Silicon Valley - from startups and the venture capital world to the region's most successful companies.

WHAT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

I'm a late starter in academia. I returned to my graduate studies after some 20 years in corporate world. I also did my share of entrepreneurial activities. I was founding President & CEO of Bilkent Technology, Healthcare, and Power Group in Turkey. Earlier in my career, I held senior positions in management consulting in Sydney and London. Later, I have served as an advisor, executive, and board member at dozens of companies around the world.

A colleague at Harvard Business School, Prof. Daniel Isenberg, included a chapter about my pre-academia entrepreneurial ventures in his best-selling HBS Publishing book, "Worthless, Impossible and Stupid: How Contrarian Entrepreneurs Create and Capture Extraordinary Value."

I was proud when I was accepted to the Solvay's PhD program in Economics and Management Science. After my second year at Solvay, I was awarded a four-year Harvard University Science, Technology, and Public Policy Program Fellowship - directed by Dr John Holdren (Assistant to the President Obama for Science and Technology) - and had

the privilege to work jointly with Dr Josh Lerner (Harvard Business School) and Dr Lewis Branscomb (Harvard Kennedy School) for my doctoral and post-doctoral research.

I was also awarded the Innovation Policy and the Economy Fellowship at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

I'm also proud to work with some of the most distinguished people - Bruno van Pottelsberghe, Rich Lyons, Toby Stuart, Simon Johnson, Dan Isenberg, and Bill Kerr, to name a few - during my tenure at Harvard University, MIT Sloan School, Solvay, and UC Berkeley.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE YOUR RESEARCH WILL ACHIEVE?

Entrepreneurship is a crucial engine of global economic development. Future global leaders should understand this engine. As said, high-impact entrepreneurship is worldwide and many ventures launch today with a presence in multiple countries from day one. I hope my work helps to prepare future leaders to build successful new global ventures in today's increasingly challenging business landscape. Building a new business opportunity into a profitable enterprise requires vision.

WHAT DRIVES YOU?

I'm passionate about better learning and teaching the emerging business models such as Uber, AirBnB, Rocket Internet, etc. that global ventures pursue and differences in the extent to which these companies harness globalization directly into their core operations.

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE YOUR TEACHING STYLE? HOW WOULD STUDENTS DESCRIBE IT?

My version: lively, demanding, stimulating, and much fun!

"Eye-opening," "fabulous," "phenomenal" are some of the milder descriptions from my past evaluations. I require students taking active participation and learning in real time. A few who wouldn't describe live case studies as their forte find it demanding and not so motivating.

I guess I manage adapting my lectures, cases (most written by myself), and discussion to create a better learning experience to a

diversified group of students at some of the top-notch business schools from the USA to Japan and to Europe. These students represent truly global perspectives in a

I hope my work helps to prepare future leaders to build successful new global ventures in today's increasingly challenging business landscape.

stimulating environment in different regions of the world.

My teachings are practitioner-oriented. They place a high priority on developing practical knowledge, which means the insights and values required to make the entrepreneurial choice, and the skills and competencies to turn that choice into a successful international venture. **I use the case method to illustrate key lessons in entrepreneurship and how ideas make it—or as importantly, don't make it—into successful start-ups.**

In my courses **students will explore entrepreneurial strategies through lectures, analysis of case studies, and interactive discussions.** My primary aim in teaching is to make students better able to assess the challenges and risks associated with launching a start-up or taking a small business to the next level. Students will be required to utilize all of the conceptual and analytic tools they have learned from marketing, finance, strategy, etc., in order to make effective class participation and learning.

During the course, **students also will have the opportunity to work with guest speakers—entrepreneurs, practitioners, or faculty.**

In addition, executive MBA participants often offer a unique opportunity to « **learn together** ». They help faculty to create a better platform of learning and teaching enhancing student and faculty experience in entrepreneurship studies and practices. This is something I look forward to experiencing at Solvay with my executive MBA students.

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR PROUDEST MOMENTS WHILE TEACHING AT SOLVAY?

My proudest moments are **when my insights have propelled the careers of some of my most successful students.** My primary goal has been to increase the probability that

students will sometime in their careers make "the entrepreneurial choice," that is, decide to establish a new venture that either addresses a global opportunity, and/or has at least one important element of the venture which is global in nature.

FINALLY, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURS?

Build competencies to function effectively in global settings. Today's leaders must be able to simultaneously meet the challenges posed by increased competition, ongoing global innovation, and the need for growth. All entrepreneurs must be able to identify opportunities, gather resources, and strike deals. Make decisions based on evidence and analysis. Develop your soft skills like vision, leadership, and passion. Participating at Solvay [Executive MBA](#) and executive programs is a great step to start building practical competencies.

Have a passion. In my experience, passion is a key driver in start-up success.

Be curious. Curiosity often leads us to pursue a number of opportunities.

Do not fear failure. Start learning from your mistakes to help you make the most next time.

Work smart. Remember, an entrepreneur is a « jack of all trades » juggling many balls at once!

The rest...kismet!

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity. I'm very excited to be at Solvay and looking forward to meeting my brilliant Solvay students soon.
