



# Solvay Credited Internship

*Interview with Lina Frank, a second year Master student in Management Science who undertook her CIP at “adelphi”, a German independent think tank!*



## Lina Frank

Lina Frank is a second year Master student of the Solvay Brussels School - ULB. She gained useful quantitative and qualitative skills during her Bachelor program in Economics, through courses such as Finance, Econometrics and Micro- and Macroeconomics. She chose the Social Responsibility track in the Management Science Master program, with courses in Social Enterprises, Sustainable Development and Business Ethics, which greatly align with her desire to work in the Development sector. Her 5-year experience as a volunteer in a Belgian NGO for development education drove her to do an internship in Sustainable Business at adelphi in Germany. Currently she still supports adelphi projects remotely.

## About Lina's Credited Internship

As part of the Solvay Brussels School Credited Internship Program, I worked as a Project Assistant for adelphi, a leading German independent think tank and public policy consultancy on climate, environment and development. adelphi is the hosting partner of the SEED initiative for action on sustainable development and the green economy, a global partnership founded by UNDP, UNEP and IUCN. SEED's programmes are based on the understanding that supporting green and inclusive small and growing enterprises is crucial to tackle social and environmental issues and contribute to sustainable development. SEED mainly implements several enterprise support services and runs the annual SEED Awards for Entrepreneurship in Sustainable Development to identify promising innovative eco-inclusive enterprises in developing or emerging economies.

## Credited Internship at SBS-EM

The CIP is a program organized for Master students in order to help them further prepare to enter the job market after graduation.

This internship is made for students in 4 majors of Business Economics, Management Science and Business Engineering and Economic Analysis & European Policy.

**Duration:** One semester (min 16 weeks) up to 6 months (24 weeks), Full-time

**When:** First or second semester, second year of Master education

[More information here](#)

[Contact for CIP](#)

During my time at SEED, I was mainly involved in the **replication of eco-inclusive enterprises**<sup>1</sup>. I significantly contributed to the development and implementation of the **Replicator programme**, which SEED launched in 2016 and aims at scaling the impact of social and environmental entrepreneurship by providing support for the replication of proven business models. I was involved in the programme process organisation and elaborated tools for the analysis of originator's enterprise models. Later on, I was in charge of analysing business models to conceptualise the core elements and summarize them into workbooks that will be used by potential adopters of the model to implement and adapt it to another region facing the same challenges.

Another predominant task was contributing to writing SEED's first **White Paper about supporting the replication of eco-inclusive enterprises** bearing the title "Collaboration for Impact – Building the Ecosystem for Replication Support Services". The aim of this White Paper is to conceptualise and advocate SEED's vision on replication support services, encouraging collaboration between different actors to strengthen the support ecosystem for enterprises engaging in replication.

Beyond replication, I spent quite some time working on the **Clean Technology and Cleaner Production** topic. Within the frame of this

subject, I was heavily involved in a project adelphi implements in collaboration with a partner institution based in the Philippines. My task was to co-develop a tailored capacity-building workshop toolkit for Financial Institutions in Asia that are interested in developing a targeted financial product for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) engaging in Cleaner Production and Clean Technologies.

I also worked on a project to pursue collaboration opportunities **addressing SMEs' financing challenges** at every growth stage by providing a holistic approach through tailored financing instruments and a risk-sharing facility. This is a subject that particularly has triggered my interest, and in which I would like to dive deeper into - why not in the context of a job?

The internship was a great opportunity to acquire relevant knowledge in the Sustainable Business field. I found it particularly interesting to get insight into green and inclusive business because I could understand the crucial role of the private sector to offer locally-driven sustainable products and services based on customer needs to address the lack of income opportunities, social problems like health issues, or environmental problems like pollution and inefficient waste management.

## Interview

### CAN YOU GIVE A SNAPSHOT ON YOUR PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AT ADELPHI?

During my internship I was able to apply some theoretical concepts I had acquired from courses at Solvay, for example my Strategy course. However, the concepts I used strongly needed to be adapted to the context. For example, the development of the Cleantech Financial Product Development Toolkit for financial institutions in Asia required me to develop a strategic process that would encourage banks to broaden their product portfolio to include a financial product specifically dedicated to enterprises engaging in cleaner production or clean technologies. In order to achieve this, I had to conceptualize from a strategic perspective the way banks would develop a new product and create tools for these banks to consider different aspects of this innovative process.

In my opinion, on top of some very valuable basic knowledge in key disciplines (finance, strategy, management), the most important take-away from my education at Solvay is a methodical and rigorous way of working. This essential know-how came in very handy as I had to deal with several new topics and this was very valued by the team I worked with.



### WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOU ENCOUNTERED?

A main challenge I faced at SEED was the iterative way of working. Indeed, all deliverables and outputs that are produced go through several phases or versions. Usually, a first draft is produced or several approaches are suggested, and the output goes through several rounds of reviewing and discussing until a "final" version is produced. Although it could have been published or used in workshops, it is very likely to undergo further improvements and changes, based on internal and external feedback. This iterative way of working indeed requires a bit of getting used to because one has to expect that an output will always face

<sup>1</sup> Eco-inclusive enterprises, or social and environmental enterprises, focus on developing market-based solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges faced by communities in the region they

operate. Eco-inclusive enterprises work along the triple bottom line: aligning social, environmental and financial objectives.

some (constructive) critics from colleagues, and that a task is never completely “finished” as the output is likely to be subject to changes. Retrospectively, I find that this methodology is very beneficial and delivers high-quality, multi-sided results.

**CAN YOU GIVE US A CAREER REFLECTION?**

The internship at adelphi in the SEED Initiative aligns with my professional goals because it brings together the right mix of topics, approaches, methodologies and focus, and enabled me to experience the NGO and international institution environment as well as some aspects of the consultancy context. Working for SEED has triggered my interest in Sustainability Entrepreneurship and Green and Inclusive Business, and the knowledge and skills I acquired in relation to this topic are especially relevant for my professional development. Indeed, I would

consider working in this field because the approach motivates me: trying to solve pressing social and environmental problems and working towards poverty reduction with sustainable market-based solutions.

**FINALLY, DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE CONSIDERING A CREDITED INTERNSHIP?**

The CIP can really open some doors to your future career in the field that you are passionate about, and can direct you in the way to approach your professional development. You learn a lot from the job itself and the tasks you perform - and you get the chance to apply your skills in a real-world setting. But you are also enriched by the people you work with who can provide you with valuable insights about yourself and your career path.