



IEGSI

Institut Européen de Gouvernance
et de Stratégie Internationale

IEGSI EXECUTIVE ACADEMY · FOUNDING DOCUMENT

Executive Research Programmes

Applied research, strategic foresight and decision support
Annual “IEGSI Global Challenges” Programme · First edition 2026-2027

Reference: IEGSI/EA/2026-01-EN · July 2026

First cohort: intake of 5 October 2026

“Identify. Understand. Anticipate. Propose. Transform.”

AN ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR GOVERNANCE AND INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY

01 The framework

The IEGSI Executive Academy conducts executive research programmes dedicated to the production of knowledge directly usable by states, international organisations, public institutions, regional and local authorities, companies and development partners.

The programmes are developed with the European Centre for Research in Governance and International Strategy (CERGSi), the Scientific and Academic Research Commission, the International Scientific Committee, the International Expert Network and the International Journal of Governance, Strategy and Territories (RIGST).

Each programme is built around a strategic challenge set by the Institute or submitted by a partner institution. Research is conducted within international, multidisciplinary cohorts bringing together professionals, researchers, public officials and decision-makers. The output of every programme is intended to inform policy development, institutional reform, strategic planning and anticipatory governance.

The founding rule

At IEGSI, an award does not certify attendance. It recognises a contribution.

02 The IEGSI Method

Every executive research programme of the Institute follows one methodological framework, in eight steps.

Step	Content
I	Identification of a strategic challenge by the Scientific and Academic Research Commission.
II	Constitution of an international, multidisciplinary cohort.
III	Scientific supervision by an appointed supervisor and by the Institute's associated experts.
IV	Production of evidence-based recommendations.
V	Independent scientific assessment and defence before an international panel.
VI	Publication and dissemination to decision-makers and institutional partners.

Step	Content
VII	Integration into the IEGSI international applied knowledge base.
VIII	Contribution to public and institutional decision-making.

Research is not an end in itself: it is an instrument serving action. Every piece of work must lead to a concrete, documented, scientifically grounded proposal capable of informing a decision, supporting a reform, preventing a risk or contributing to the resolution of an identified problem.

03 The annual “IEGSI Global Challenges” Programme

Each year, the Scientific and Academic Research Commission sets, on a proposal from the International Scientific Committee, a series of priority strategic challenges. These challenges arise from major international transformations, from needs expressed by states, local authorities and partner organisations, from the work of CERGSI, and from emerging issues calling for foresight. Each applicant selects one challenge and joins the corresponding cohort.

First edition 2026-2027: the twelve challenges.

No.	Strategic challenge
01	Anticipatory capacity and anticipatory governance in public institutions
02	Governance of artificial intelligence and the digital transformation of public action
03	International talent attractiveness and science diplomacy
04	Climate resilience and sustainable territorial governance
05	Economic intelligence and economic security of organisations
06	Crisis governance and continuity of public action
07	Strategic sovereignty, critical dependencies and value chains
08	Development finance and the effectiveness of international aid
09	Public integrity, regulation and institutional trust
10	Europe-Africa cooperation and next-generation international partnerships
11	Territorial attractiveness and competitiveness in times of transition
12	Global governance, multilateralism and the recomposition of international balances

04 Two pathways, one standard

The Certificate and the Diploma share the same methodological framework and the same level of scientific demand. They differ in the horizon of the research: response for one, anticipation for the other. Both pathways open simultaneously at the intake of 5 October 2026.

	Executive Research Certificate	Executive Research Diploma
Purpose	Addressing today's challenges	Anticipating tomorrow's challenges
Nature of the research	Applied research on an existing issue calling for an operational response	Foresight research: scenarios, strategic modelling, recommendations
Duration	3 to 6 months	12 months minimum
Workload	20 ECTS credits, approximately 500 hours	60 ECTS credits, approximately 1,500 hours
Level	Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework	Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework, corresponding to master's level
Places, first cohort	25	15
Deliverables	Policy Brief, Policy Paper, Operational Framework, Strategic Roadmap, Governance Toolkit, institutional guidelines, strategic note	International White Paper, Strategic Foresight Report, Global Strategic Assessment, Future Governance Framework, International Policy Framework, innovative methodological framework
Validation	Scientific assessment of the contribution	Scientific assessment and defence before an international panel

Duration is not a criterion

The Diploma is not conferred at the end of a predefined period. It is conferred when the contribution meets the Institute's scientific, methodological and operational standards and demonstrates genuine potential for application or decision support.

05 Level, assessment and conferral

Level. Both pathways are designed according to the learning outcome descriptors of level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework, corresponding to master's level: mastery of highly specialised knowledge, capacity for autonomous research, ability to form judgements in complex and incomplete contexts, and communication of reasoned conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences alike. Workload is expressed in ECTS credits according to European conventions for measuring learner workload.

Supervision. Each participant is supervised by a scientific supervisor appointed upon admission, selected from the members of the International Scientific Committee, the researchers of CERGSI and the experts of the International Expert Network, according to the challenge selected.

Assessment. Contributions are assessed on scientific rigour, methodological quality, originality of analysis, relevance of recommendations, potential for application and contribution to the Institute's research missions. The Diploma contribution is defended before an international panel of three members, at least one of whom is external to the Institute.

Conferral and verification. Awards are conferred under the seal of the International Scientific Committee. Each award carries a unique number and is entered in the Institute's register of awards, consultable by any institution wishing to verify its authenticity.

06 A fully online framework

All programmes are conducted remotely. This choice is methodological before it is logistical.

- **The quality of a cohort rests on its diversity.** Comparative research on governance loses its value if its authors all come from a single continent. The online format makes it possible to bring together, within one cohort, a senior official from West Africa, a researcher from Latin America, an official from an international organisation and an executive from South-East Asia.
- **Merit does not depend on geography.** Admission rests on the application and on the quality of the research proposal, not on the ability to fund a stay in Europe. Selection is the more rigorous for it.
- **Research is conducted in the field.** Participants remain in post, in contact with the institutions and situations they study. Data is gathered where it is produced.
- **The cohort is the first network.** Peer exchanges, collaborative workshops and cross-cutting work form, from admission onwards, an international network of correspondents that outlasts the programme.

Teaching combines asynchronous learning, interactive virtual classes, collaborative workshops, individual scientific mentoring and international conferences.

07 For applicants

Profile. The programmes are addressed to public officials, diplomats, staff of international organisations, executives, consultants, researchers and doctoral candidates holding a master's-level qualification or significant professional experience in a field related to the challenge selected.

What participants take with them. A scientific contribution published under their own name, carrying a persistent digital identifier and therefore citable and referenceable; documented expertise on an international strategic issue; a network of correspondents across several continents; access to the Institute's knowledge base; the status of IEGSI Executive Fellow upon completion of the Diploma; and, for the most remarkable contributions, an invitation to join the International Expert Network.

Admission and calendar of the first edition.

First edition 2026-2027	
Applications	Open from July 2026
Deadline	11 September 2026
Admission decisions	Notified from 21 September 2026
Intake	5 October 2026, for both pathways
Application file	Curriculum vitae, three-page research proposal stating the challenge selected and the research question envisaged, letter of motivation, supporting evidence of qualifications and positions held
Submission	research@iegsi.eu · subject: [Executive Academy] Name – Pathway – Challenge selected
Programme fees	Set out in the call for applications of each edition

Admission is decided by the Scientific and Academic Research Commission. Cohorts are limited to fifteen participants for the Diploma and twenty-five for the Certificate, so as to guarantee individual scientific supervision of every contribution.

08 For supervisors and experts

Scientific supervision is provided by established researchers and practitioners, members of the International Scientific Committee, of CERGSI or of the International Expert Network. The supervisor guides the construction of the research question, validates the methodology, follows the production of the contribution and gives an opinion on its presentation before the panel.

This function opens access to the Institute's international cohorts, to co-authorship of the publications to which the supervisor contributes scientifically, to participation in international panels and to the work of the CERGSI research groups. Researchers, experts and practitioners wishing to take part in the supervision of the programmes may contact the General Secretariat: secretariat@iegsi.eu.

09 For institutions: IEGSI Challenge Partners

States, international organisations, regional and local authorities, universities, companies and civil society organisations may submit a strategic challenge to the annual Programme. Challenges selected by the Scientific and Academic Research Commission join the following edition and give rise to the constitution of an international cohort.

Submitting a strategic challenge			
What the institution provides	the	institution	A documented strategic challenge, access to the interlocutors and data required for the research, and the appointment of a correspondent
What the institution receives	the	institution	The cohort's deliverables, participation in the international panel, association with the publications and a presentation of the findings to its teams
What the institution does not fund			The programme itself: submitting a challenge is free of charge and entails no financial obligation
Submission window			From 1 September to 30 November each year, for the edition opening the following year
Address			partnerships@iegsi.eu · subject: [Challenge Partners] Institution – Challenge proposed

The Institute retains full scientific control of the work. Submitting a challenge confers no right of review over the conclusions of the research or over the substance of the recommendations made.

10 Beyond the award

Following scientific assessment, validated contributions may enrich the work of CERGSI, the Institute's Policy Papers and Strategic Reports, its foresight notes and white papers, as well as the IEGSI international applied knowledge base. This base progressively covers the principal issues of governance, strategy, diplomacy, development, innovation, security, resilience and public policy transformation. It is intended for public decision-makers, international organisations, local authorities, companies and institutional partners.

The authors of the most remarkable contributions may be invited to join the IEGSI International Expert Network and to be associated with expert groups, foresight work, publications or cooperation projects conducted by the Institute with its partners.

Editorial independence

Enrolment in a programme confers no right of publication. Any article submitted to RIGST is subject to the standard double-blind peer review procedure, with no submission or publication charges. Admission to the programmes and editorial assessment are two distinct and independent procedures.

11 Nature and standing of the awards

The Executive Research Certificate and the Executive Research Diploma are awards of the European Institute for Governance and International Strategy, conferred in collaboration with the European Centre for Research in Governance and International Strategy (CERGSi) and the International Expert Network, under the seal of the International Scientific Committee.

They attest to the production of a scientific contribution assessed against international research standards and the Institute's own requirements, and are designed according to the learning outcome descriptors of level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework, corresponding to master's level. As institutional awards, they are conferred under the scientific authority of the Institute and not under a national qualifications framework.

A degree is displayed. A publication is cited.

The standing of the award rests less on the certificate than on what it attests: a scientific contribution published under its author's name, carrying a persistent digital identifier, citable in a promotion file, an application or a competitive examination, verifiable at any time in the Institute's register of awards, and referenced in a knowledge base consulted by decision-makers. It is this output, and the international network that comes with it, that stays with its author throughout a career.

Information and applications: research@iegsi.eu · Scientific supervision: secretariat@iegsi.eu · Institutional challenges: partnerships@iegsi.eu · www.iegsi.eu. IEGSI is registered in the European Union Transparency Register (registration No. 3697297105186-20).

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The Scientific Committee

European Institute for Governance and International Strategy