



EF Global Challenge Honors Program

Fall 2025

Academic Learning, Applied Research, and Student Impact

A look back at our inaugural cohort

Program Overview

The EF Global Challenge Honors Semester is an immersive, honors-level academic program designed to engage high-achieving undergraduate students in interdisciplinary inquiry, ethical leadership, and applied problem-solving across global contexts.

During the Fall 2025 inaugural cohort, students studied and conducted applied work in Spain and Sweden, combining university coursework, experiential learning, and a signature design-thinking capstone focused on social impact. This high-impact program intentionally integrates classroom learning with field-based inquiry, cross-cultural collaboration, and sustained reflection, aligning with established high-impact educational practices in honors education and global learning.





STUDY ABROAD

Academic Structure & Partners

Students began in Málaga with orientation and a 3-week intensive Spanish immersion at EF's Language Center, followed by a field study to Morocco, exploring the relationship between Morocco and Spain and the influence of Islamic culture and religion on the region. Students settled into their semester and academic coursework in Granada before heading to Sweden for their capstone presentations during Nobel Week in December. These multi-layered experiences were supported by EF's distinguished academic partners, including:

NOBEL PRIZE MUSEUM

UNIVERSITAS GRANATENSIS 1531

Together, these partners provided disciplinary depth, applied learning frameworks, and exposure to global thought leadership.



Core Learning Outcomes

Across the semester, students demonstrated growth in the following areas:

- Applied research and inquiry grounded in real-world global challenges
- Interdisciplinary analysis across social sciences, business, health, and policy
- Ethical and inclusive leadership with attention to equity and stakeholder engagement
- Intercultural competence and Spanish language fluency developed through sustained immersion
- Team-based approach to communicating complex ideas through presentations and written work



Signature Course:

Lessons from Nobel

At the academic core of the program was “Lessons from Nobel: Design Thinking and Leadership for Social Impact,” co-taught, in English, by distinguished faculty from Hult International Business School and the University of Granada to a combined cohort of high performing EF students from U.S. colleges and universities, and highly motivated undergraduate students carefully selected by the University of Granada. Working in cross-cultural teams, students applied design-thinking methodologies to develop prototype solutions aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The course culminated in capstone presentations delivered during Nobel Week in Sweden.



Capstone Projects

Applied Inquiry in Action

The journey ended in the most inspiring way possible, in Stockholm and Gothenburg, Sweden, coinciding with Nobel Week and The Nobel Dialogues, where students presented their final projects in a truly unique context.



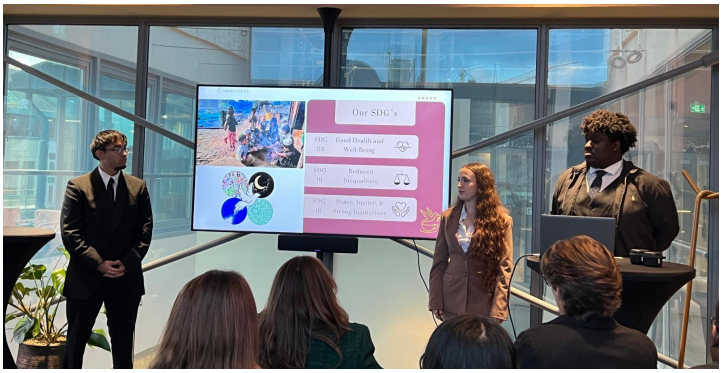
MyGreat Helper

MyGreat Helper addresses systemic barriers faced by non-EU immigrants navigating essential services in Spain. Students proposed a multilingual digital platform that centralizes access to legal support, housing, language learning, and employment, supported by a two-way rating system to ensure trust and accountability. The project highlights how user-centered technology can strengthen immigrant integration and labor market participation.



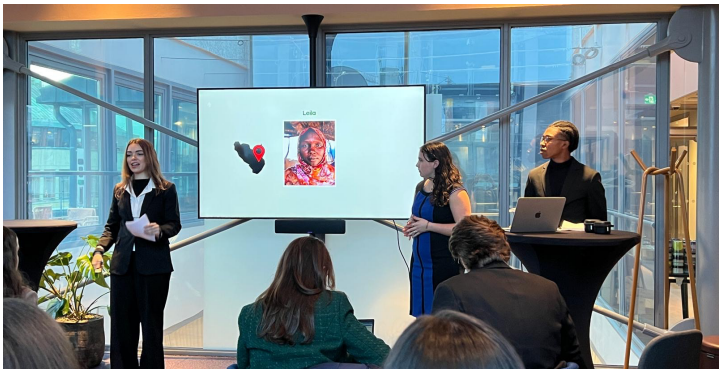
Project Anchor

Project Anchor addresses interconnected challenges of immigrant labor instability and rural depopulation in Spain. Students proposed a social enterprise model that provides immigrants with stable employment and housing in underpopulated rural communities, supporting economic revitalization and environmental land management. The project integrates ethical employment practices, stakeholder engagement, and financial modeling to demonstrate scalable social impact.



Project H.E.A.L. Justice

Project H.E.A.L. Justice proposes a mission-driven social enterprise designed to improve healthcare access and economic opportunity for Rohingya refugee communities. Anchored in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the project links ethically sourced consumer products to direct investment in mobile health clinics, workforce training, and advocacy. Students combined public health, human rights, and business frameworks to model pathways from aid dependency to long-term self-sufficiency.



Harvest to Hydrate

Harvest to Hydrate proposes a circular economy solution that converts restaurant food waste into renewable energy and fertilizer through on-site bio-conversion technology. The model links local waste reduction to global humanitarian impact by supporting clean water infrastructure in water-insecure refugee communities. Students integrated sustainability, financial viability, and impact measurement to demonstrate scalable environmental and social outcomes.



From our partners

"Reading the students' personal development journals and their self-evaluations and peer reviews has reminded me why we work in higher education. The opportunity to not just teach, but shape minds and mindsets and influence young people to make more positive decisions in their careers and their lives is, perhaps, the most important thing we can do in life."

- Ronan Gruenbaum, *Hult International Business School*



"Some teaching experiences stay with you forever. I loved seeing how students combined design thinking, leadership, empathy and social marketing to turn concern into action -- and ideas into projects with real social purpose."

- Juan Miguel Rey Pino, *Universidad de Granada*





Student Testimonials

“It’s been great travel experience: Morocco was beautiful, and Granada is a lovely city. The CLM and Nobel class have been a great setting for classes at the perfect level for me and I am learning a lot of applicable skills. I love the school and have had a great time seeing the history of Spain inside and outside of the classroom.” — Bentley University

“I believe the relationships I built genuinely helped me to grow as a person and empathize. The environment and program were key to showing me new perspectives and developing.” — Bentley University

“Not only am I learning how to deal with the people in this program while also navigating a new culture, I’m also curating and building experiences that I’m going to be able to carry with me for the rest of my life, no matter what situations I am in, whether that be in medical school when I get there, corporate business situations, or even something more like building a family.” — North Carolina A&T

“Studying abroad has also given me a heightened level of independence. I now feel confident in my ability to navigate unfamiliar situations and take initiative. This experience has provided me with a clearer vision of who I am as a person and what I want from life, both professionally and personally, and it has been one of the most transformative decisions of my undergraduate career." — North Carolina A&T



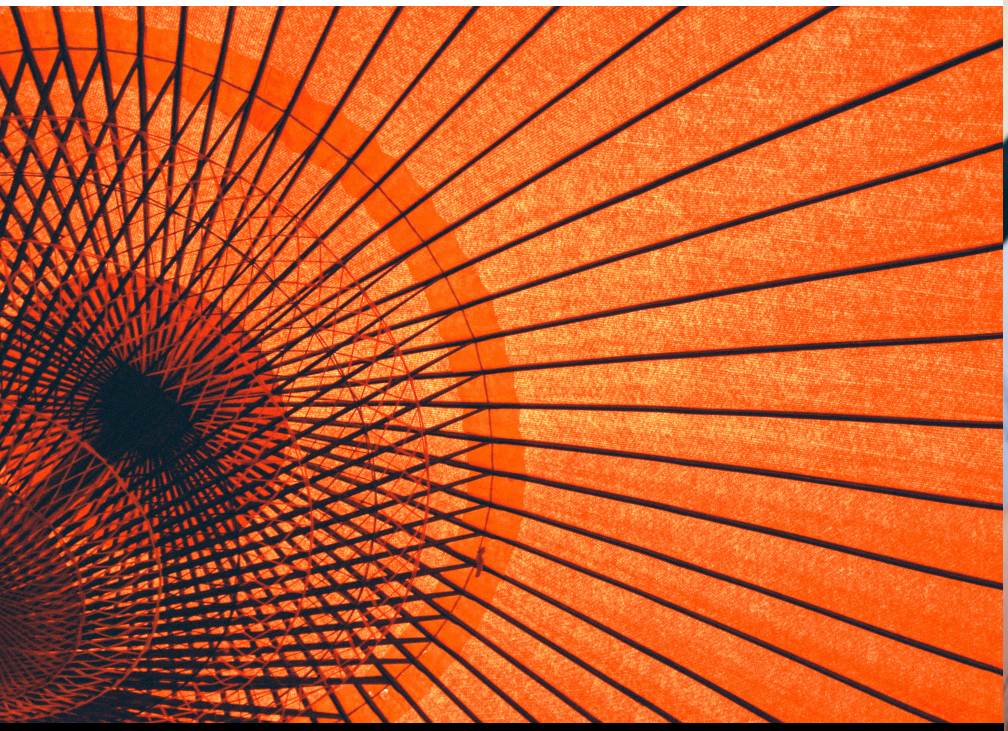




STUDY ABROAD

It's nice to meet you.

We've spent the last 60 years creating learning opportunities and travel experiences that change lives and open a world of possibilities. EF employs 52,000 educators, staff, and guides in 654 schools and offices worldwide.





Let's connect!

Learn more about adding this program to your study abroad portfolio by reaching out to us at kate.murphy@ef.edu

You can also nominate your students to apply for the Fall 2026 program by April 1st at ef.edu/gchs