Fifth GDBC Thesis Award Digital Business

The importance of digitalization in business has increased significantly in recent years. These developments build on existing topics such as information systems and e-commerce, but also include more technological and methodological elements such as data science, block chain and artificial intelligence. Because of the importance of this field, the Groningen Digital Business Centre (GBDC) will again present the Digital Business Thesis Awards. This annual award is intended for graduate Master students of the University of Groningen who have written a thesis on a topic related to the field of digital business. The field of digital business is broadly interpreted. The topic can be related to all disciplines within business and management, including accounting, finance, HRM, innovation management, marketing, supply chain and operations.

Examples of dissertation topics include (but are not limited to):

- Business applications of AI and data science
- Business applications of robotics
- Advances in AI, data science, and digital technologies relevant to business
- Digital strategy and digital transformation of organizations
- Data readiness of organizations
- Digitalization and sustainability
- Smart industries
- Ethical and legal aspects of AI/data science
- IoT applications in business
- Robotics applications in organizations
- Online commerce, digital multi-channel management
- Communication in the digital business environment

Context and objectives

This prize is a continuation of the former Aart Bosman Prize and is made possible by a donation from Dr Gezinus Hidding (alumnus of the Faculty of Economics & Business, 1982). With this award, Dr Hidding, now Associate Professor at Loyola University of Chicago, wishes to pay tribute to his former tutor, Professor Aart Bosman (1930-2008). Professor Bosman was a professor at the University of Groningen and a pioneer and founder of information science in the Netherlands. The GDBC has taken over this initiative and will continue it under the name Thesis Award Digital Business.

The Thesis Award was created to stimulate the attention of students in academic education to digital business. With the Digital Business Thesis Award, the GDBC wants to encourage students to choose thesis topics in the field of digital business and to encourage them to contribute to the solution of digitally related business problems. With the Digital Business Thesis Award, the GDBC wants to show the broad possibilities and high quality of thesis projects in the field of digital business.

The Thesis Award 2024

The Thesis Award is presented annually. For the GDBC Digital Business Thesis Award of a particular year (e.g. 2024), the thesis must be completed in that year (2024) and defended in that year or in the first half of the next year (2025). In principle, three theses will be nominated. These three students are then invited to present their work at the annual GDBC event in December. In the end, of course, there will be a winner who will receive the Thesis Prize and a sum of 2000 euros. There are also honourable second and third prizes of 1000 and 500 euros.

Submissions

• Participation in the Thesis Award is open to all students who have recently graduated or are about to graduate from the University of Groningen (all faculties) and who have successfully completed their Master's thesis or thesis project in the relevant calendar year (2024) or at the beginning of this year (2025).

• The deadline for submission is 15 November 2025 for the Thesis Award 2024.

• The student or graduate must send the thesis as a PDF file by email to the GDBC: gdbc@rug.nl

• The submission for the Thesis Prize must be accompanied by the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number(s), e-mail address, date of birth of the author;
- Faculty, name of the study programme, title of the thesis, grade with which the thesis has been assessed and the (expected) date of graduation;
- Names, titles and e-mail addresses of thesis supervisor(s).

Process

Action	**Deadline**	**Actor**
Deadline hand-in thesis	November 15 2025	Students and supervisors
Assessments submitted theses	November 2025	Jury
Presentations nominee's and announcement winner Thesis Award Digital Business 2024 and the two runners' up	GDBC-Event (awards ceremony) in December 2025	All

Jury evaluation

The jury for the award is selected by the GDBC. Jury members are appointed by the GDBC Steering Group. The jury is composed of people from the GDBC network and from the field of digital business education. The jury consists of five members. Jury members are appointed for a maximum of four years. If a member of the jury is in any way involved in a submitted dissertation (e.g. nominating a dissertation or supervising a candidate's internship), he/she will not participate in the evaluation of that specific dissertation. The jury will decide on the three nominations and the final winner by majority vote. The jury is composed of the following persons:

• Representative of entrepreneurs;
• A representative of Samenwerking Noord;
• A representative of the Jantina Tammes School of the University of Groningen;
• A representative of the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Groningen;
• The director of the GDBC (chairman of the jury).

The jury will use the following evaluation criteria (with weighting factors)

a) Topic (30%) - Relevance to digital business practice, - Scientific relevance of the topic within digital business, - Originality.

b) Content (50%) - Clear problem analysis and questioning, - Good use of literature and theoretical foundations, - Correct use of methods and techniques, - Sound analysis and presentation of results, - Substantiated conclusions, - Relevant recommendations for practice and academia.

c) Style and presentation (20%) - Clear, readable writing style, - Good structure and organization of the paper, - Quality of presentation during the awards ceremony.