

EuroFM STUDENT CHALLENGE 2027

25 Years of FM: From Foundations to Frontiers

EuroFM Conference 2027 · 18–20 February 2027
University of Applied Sciences Kufstein Tirol, Austria



Background

2027 marks 25 years of EuroFM research and 30 years of Facility Management education at FH Kufstein Tirol. Under the conference theme “Quarter of a Century in FM Research – Foundations and Frontiers”, this year’s Student Challenge invites teams to look back at what has shaped the profession over the last 25 years and look ahead to where it is heading next, especially in regions now driving new growth in the built environment.

The Challenge

In international teams, you will investigate how Facility Management has evolved over the past quarter century in the Western world, and use that understanding to explore what the next 25 years may look like in fast-growing markets such as (but not limited to) Africa and Asia. Your findings come together in a single infographic: one page that tells the story of FM’s past, present, and next frontier.

Part 1 Foundations: 25 Years of Change (desk + field research)

- Map the major shifts in FM in Europe/North America since c. 2000 — e.g. outsourcing and the rise of IFM, digitalisation and smart buildings, sustainability and ESG, hybrid work and workplace experience, professionalisation of the discipline.
- Identify which changes had the biggest real-world impact on how buildings and services are managed, and why.
- Conduct at least 2 interviews with experienced (“older generation”) FM professionals or academics who have witnessed this evolution first-hand. Ask what has genuinely changed, what surprised them, and what they wish younger professionals understood.

Part 2 Frontiers: The Next 25 Years

- Research the current state of FM in one region outside Western Europe/North America — e.g. an African or Asian market of your choice.
- Identify what stage of development FM is at there now, and which of the “Western” 25-year lessons are (or are not) relevant to how the field may develop there.
- Formulate 2–3 grounded predictions for where FM is heading globally over the next 25 years.

Part 3 Live Input & Synthesis (at the conference)

Bring your research to Kufstein and sharpen it with live input before turning it into one compelling infographic, during dedicated challenge sessions built into the programme.

- Conduct at least 5 short “mini interviews” during the conference with delegates, speakers or professionals you meet asking for their personal prediction on where FM is heading in the next 25 years.
- And/or draw on insights from at least 2 presentations or sessions you attend, especially where they touch on the future of the profession.
- Use this live input explicitly in your final recommendation: does it confirm, challenge or sharpen the predictions from your pre-event research? Your infographic and pitch should show that link.

A short 5 minute pitch to a jury and fellow delegates follows.

How it Works

Phase	What happens
Team formation	Groups of 4–5 bachelor/master students, mixed nationalities and study backgrounds where possible. Registration opens well before the conference; details via your EuroFM contact.
Pre-event research	Weeks before the conference: teams complete Parts 1 and 2 remotely and submit a short research dossier (max. 4–5 pages) as the evidence base for the infographic.
At the conference	Alongside the regular programme, teams gather at least 2 mini interviews and/or session takeaways on the future of FM, then use scheduled working blocks (not full days) to finalise the infographic and pitch. The rest of the conference: keynotes, workshops, networking, social events is yours to enjoy.
Deliverables	(1) Research dossier, submitted before arrival. (2) One A1/A0 infographic, finished on-site, incorporating live conference input. (3) A short (5 min) pitch to a jury and audience.

Assessment Criteria

- **Research rigour** – Quality and depth of the desk and field research (incl. interviews)
- **Insight** – A believable, well-argued link between the past 25 years and the next 25
- **Originality** – Fresh, non-obvious perspective, especially on the Africa/Asia outlook
- **Live integration** – Clear, meaningful use of on-site mini interviews and/or session takeaways in shaping the final recommendation
- **Visual clarity** – Design, storytelling and readability of the infographic
- **Pitch** – Confidence, clarity and ability to field questions

Suggested Timeline

~10 weeks before	Teams formed and confirmed; kick-off briefing with challenge coordinators.
~8–4 weeks before	Desk research (Parts 1 & 2) and interviews conducted; first findings shared with coordinators for feedback.
~1 week before	Research dossier finalised and submitted.
At the conference	Gather mini interviews and session takeaways alongside the regular programme; working blocks to build the infographic, weave in this live input, and rehearse the pitch; pitches on the final day.

How to Apply

Interested? Apply by sending your motivation letter to pleun@eurofm.org, explaining why you want to take part and what you hope to bring to the challenge. There are two deadlines to accommodate visa lead times:

- 1 October for non-EU students who require a visa (maximum 5 spots), and
- 1 December for EU students (maximum 15 spots). Apply early, as spots are limited and allocated per deadline.

Practical Notes

- Open to bachelor and master students in FM and related fields.
- Space and basic design support for building the infographic will be provided on-site.
- Exact deadlines, jury composition and prizes will be confirmed by the EuroFM Student Challenge committee closer to the event.

Questions? Contact your EuroFM Student Challenge coordinator or check eurofm.org/conference for the latest details.

