

## A workshop as diverse as its participants

L4T alumni use diversity as the foundation for tailored learning experiences.

The alumni network of the *Leading for Tomorrow* (L4T) program continues to grow—bringing with it an ever-wider range of perspectives, experiences, and professional realities. This diversity was both the starting point and the inspiration for this year's summer gathering in Berlin. Under the motto *Experimentation*, the program offered more freedom of design than ever before, with a clear focus on individualization. Instead of a fixed agenda, participants were free to curate their own program. The aim was to better reflect the alumni's varied backgrounds—and to embrace the idea that effective leadership always emerges with-in context.

The modern innovation loft of LaunchLabs in Berlin-Kreuzberg provided the ideal setting. The open two-level layout encouraged flexible group formats, creative working phases, and spontaneous conversations. Mobile whiteboards, rapid visualization tools, and digital platforms were in constant use. Berlin's central location made the event easily accessible for alumni from across Germany as well as Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Denmark.

### Exploring the *how* of leadership

The main workshop—designed by Aldona Kihl (osb Berlin)—focused on “the *how* of leadership,” responding to participants' wish to define their own priorities. On-site



This year's cross-cohort summer meeting of the L4T alumni took place on June 26 and 27 at the LaunchLabs in Berlin-Kreuzberg

support came from Simone Ostermann and Sebastian Passow. Instead of frontal instruction, participants could choose among three parallel workshops, each offered twice:

The topic *Collaborative Leadership* explored a leadership model tailored to the digital age [1]. A second workshop examined communication in leadership. Under the title *Listening and Leading with Questions*, participants practiced active listening and discovered why good questions can often be more effective than quick answers. The third focused on *feedback* as a central leadership tool. Through several hands-on exercises, participants tested practical methods

for delivering impactful feedback.

Each person could attend two of the three sessions. A shared discussion on corporate culture—highlighting best practices for navigating diverse organizational environments—rounded off the day.

### Alumni shape the program

A highlight once again was the second workshop day under the motto: *by alumni, for alumni*. Here, alumni designed their own workshop formats on 12 topics drawn from their professional lives—from start-ups to large corporations as well as freelancing. The most highly rated formats were offered once more in the



Work in small groups (left) and marketplace discussions with speakers (right)

in the evening as highlight sessions, including: *Vibe Coding*—where participants created their own apps without prior knowledge; *Painting Psychograms*—a visual method for recognizing behavioral patterns and inner tensions; *Inner Drivers*—understanding why we sometimes act against our convictions, and how to change that.

### The marketplace with guests

The marketplace remained a core element. In intensive small-group conversations, alumni engaged with guests from academia, industry, and politics. Among them: Sonja von Hodenberg (Carl Zeiss SMT GmbH), Jens Steinbrink (Charité Berlin), Hans Ketelaars (Neways), Stefan Brandstetter (Dectris), Stefan Puttnins (Jenoptik), and Jürgen Mlynek (Falling Walls Foundation).

Beyond the workshops, space for connection and exchange was es-

sential. Two networking evenings—fostered new relationships. Saturday mornings' breakfast offered time for reflection, fresh ideas, and farewells. In the evening, part of the group explored the Long Night of the Sciences at Berlin.

### A growing network

The L4T alumni network now counts 240 active members—a 17% increase over the previous year. It spans all eight cohorts (2017–2024), with two-thirds of the most recent class joining. Regional initiatives are also gaining momentum: meetings in Oberkochen, Munich, Dresden, and during Berlin Science Week are in the works.

Diversity is not an end in itself, but a resource—if put to use. The 2025 Summer Meeting (*Sommertreffen* in German) demonstrated the great potential of a diverse alumni community: for personal growth,

collegial exchange, and shared learning.

We thank the Wilhelm and Else Heraeus Foundation, the DPG office, osb Berlin, and the LaunchLabs team for their support.

L4T alumni who wish to get involved are encouraged to register at [Anmeldung.L4T-Network.org](https://Anmeldung.L4T-Network.org). More information about the next year's Summer Meeting 2026 is available at [Sommertreffen.L4T-Network.org](https://Sommertreffen.L4T-Network.org).

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on behalf of the organizing team

[1] K. Glatzel und T. Lieckweg, Collaborative Leadership, <https://doi.org/10.34157/9783648159750>