

WINTERCIRCUS
ACADEMY

POWERED BY
V
VLERICK
BUSINESS SCHOOL

ENGINEERING LEADERSHIP.

WHERE TOMORROW'S TECH LEADERS
LEARN FROM TODAY'S BEST.

2026 BROCHURE



THE FUTURE WON'T WAIT.

As scale-ups grow, software architecture, AI adoption and cloud scalability become more complex. Decisions need to be made even faster, with less margin for error. Without experienced leadership? Speed turns into friction.

This program helps engineering leaders stay ahead of growth – not chase it.

FRAMEWORKS MEET REAL-WORLD CASES

Wintercircus Academy is created to address the lack of relevant business education within the tech industry.

The hybrid business school combines cutting-edge cases from the Wintercircus network with the academic frameworks of Vlerick Business School. Through hands-on exercises and discussions, experts from disruptive companies teach what actually works... and what to avoid.

WITH EXPERTS FROM



POWERED BY



LEARN FROM THE BEST IN TECH

For this program, we've carefully selected 10 speakers who are leading their field and actively operating at scale. They've made the decisions, faced the trade-offs and learned the hard lessons, and they're here to share what actually matters.



DANILO MACHADO
Director of Engineering at SeatGeek



TOM VAN DEN BOSCH
CEO at IT'S ME



SHANNA DEGRYSE
Enterprise Architect at Bain



MATHIAS VERHOEVEN
CTO AT LIGHTHOUSE



PATRICK DEBOIS
Originator of the term DevOps



MAARTEN DE ROECK
Product & Design Lead at InThePocket



DIETER WACHTERS
Director of Engineering at Collibra



JAN VAN HOECKE
VP Product at iManage



BRAM DE GEYTER
VP Product & Engineering at Showpad



YASAMIN KARIMI
Chief Product Officer at Techwolf

10 SESSIONS 10 NEW SUPERPOWERS

Our program is structured around three essential pillars in which you explore how emerging tech—from AI to cloud-native systems—is reshaping software. You'll learn how to lead through technical change, design scalable systems, and build engineering cultures that grow with you.

I. ARCHITECTURE & SCALABILITY

- 1. From Legacy Systems to Cloud Native
- 2. Architecture at Every Stage
- 3. Technology Choices That Scale
- 4. Simplicity: Designing for Scale

II. PERFORMANCE & SECURITY

- 5. Performance & Observability
- 6. Security and Multi-Tenancy

III. USER-CENTRIC INNOVATION & LEADERSHIP

- 7. AI Integration
- 8. Scalable UX
- 9. Scaling Engineering Organizations
- 10. Future Trends in Software Architecture

TURNING TECHNICAL VISION INTO ORGANISATIONAL BUY-IN

Shanna Degryse
Enterprise Architect at Bain

SESSION 1



March 20

ARCHITECTURE AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF A COMPANY: SCALE-UP VS. ENTERPRISE

Mathias Verhoeven
CTO at Lighthouse

SESSION 2



April 24

TECHNOLOGY CHOICES: IMPACT OF TRADE-OFFS

Danilo Machado
Director of Engineering at SeatGeek

SESSION 3



May 22

HOW TO DESIGN FOR SCALE: THE STORY OF “SIMPLEXITY”

Tom Van Den Bosch
CEO at itsme

SESSION 4

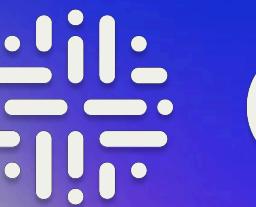
itsme

June 12

HIGH-PERFORMANCE AND OBSERVABILITY: BUILDING RESILIENT, ROBUST SYSTEMS

Dieter Wachters
Senior Director of Engineering

SESSION 5

 Collibra

September 18

SECURITY AND MULTI-TENANCY: MANAGING RISKS IN MODERN ARCHITECTURES

Jan Van Hoecke
VP Product at iManage

SESSION 6

iManage

May 22

INTEGRATING AGENTS: PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR AI ADOPTION

Patrick Debois

Originator of the term “DevOps”

SESSION 7

THE IMPORTANCE OF UX IN SCALABLE SYSTEMS

Maarten De Roeck

Product & Design Lead at In The Pocket

SESSION 8

In
the
Pocket

October - date TBC

BUILDING AND SCALING ENGINEERING ORGANIZATIONS

Bram De Geyter

VP Product & Engineering at Showpad

SESSION 9

 Showpad

December - date TBC

FUTURE TRENDS IN SOFTWARE ARCHITECTURE

Yasamin Karimi

Chief Product Officer at TechWolf

SESSION 10

TECHWOLF

ALL CUSTOMIZED TO YOUR NEEDS.

Every company has its own challenges. That's why we take the time to understand your specific needs beforehand. During a 1-on-1 intake interview with Academy management, we align on your goals, context and leadership challenges.

All classes are in person, allowing experts to then tap into your unique context whenever it's relevant.

HEARD IN CLASS

“Great to meet peers and take home concepts we can immediately test with our team.”

“Real stories you can truly relate to.”

“Very practical, keep up the good work.”

“Lecturers are great people with tons of experience.”

Participants gave the classes an overall quality score of

4.5/5



WHO TYPE OF PROFILES SHOULD ATTEND?

This program is tailored for experienced technology leaders navigating fast growth, complexity, or transformation:

- ★ Engineering Executives
- ★ Principal Software Architects
- ★ Product & Tech Leaders
- ★ Innovation Decision Makers
- ★ Transformation Leaders
- ★ Platform Operators & Product Execs

PRICING

Standard: €14,000 per person

— apply until full.

Early Bird: €12,000 per person

— apply by February 28

Scale-Up Duo: €9,000 per person

— valid for max. 2 participants from the same scale-up.*

30% discount for SMEs:

all Wintercircus Academy programs are eligible for the SME e-wallet. This means you can receive up to 30% discount when investing in training that helps your business grow.

10% Wintercircus Collective Discount:

on any price tier — available to members of the Wintercircus Collective.

*a tech-driven hi-growth product company, with 10–200 employees and annual revenue between €10M and €50M.

Prices are VAT exclusive.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- ★ 1-on-1 intake interview with Academy management to align goals and challenges.
- ★ 10 in-person expert-led sessions from September to June.
- ★ All study materials, including expert slides, use cases, and post-session digests.
- ★ Networking that matters — from our New Year Meetup, Backstage Wintercircus tour and intimate Boardroom Dinner to the final Graduation Celebration.
- ★ Healthy food and drinks provided at each session.
- ★ Official certificate of completion.
- ★ Build a strong network of peer tech leaders through class room exchange and energizing Wintercircus moments.



IN THE HEART OF GHENT'S TECH ECOSYSTEM.

All sessions are live, in-person hosted at the iconic Wintercircus in Ghent. Each three hour session combines top expertise, interaction, and real-world insights based on the intake interviews.

- **10 monthly sessions from March 2026 to Februari 2027**
- **Held every third Thursday or Friday morning**
- **Max 25 participants per session**

WHAT SESSIONS LOOK LIKE.

Experience & War Stories

A deep dive into real-world decisions, trade-offs and lessons learned from experienced operators.

Live Q&A

A participant-driven discussion connecting the case to individual contexts and cross-company challenges.





1 | ONLINE APPLICATION

Upload your CV, explain your motivation, and describe a key engineering or technical challenge you're currently facing.

2 | A PERSONAL CONVERSATION

A live, 1-hour intake interview with the program lead, discussing your challenges. This ensures a highly relevant and engaging journey from day one.

3 | CONFIRMATION & REGISTRATION

A formal registration form to confirm your individual seat in the program. Upon confirmation, we'll issue the invoice with a standard payment term of 30 calendar days. Your spot is fully secured once payment is received.

LET'S BUILD YOUR FUTURE – TOGETHER.

Want to future-proof your architecture, grow your engineering leadership, and join Europe's most vibrant tech community?



Get in touch:

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