

April 14th-18th 2026

Destination: Marrakech, Morocco

RETREAT OVERVIEW:

# An immersive leadership experience for the LSE community.



# An invitation to rediscover leadership through cultural immersion.

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This retreat brings together LSE alumni and leaders for four days of experiential learning in Marrakech. Through real-world negotiation, reflective dialogue, and connection with local culture, participants explore how influence, empathy, and adaptability shape impactful leadership.



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# Dates, Cost & Location

## Marrakech, Morocco

**Dates:** April 14th-18th 2026

**Setting:** Private riad in the Medina with exclusive use for the group.

**Cost per person:** £2500, including private room with ensuite bath, meals prepared by local chefs, local transport, excursions and facilitation. Excludes transportation to Morocco.

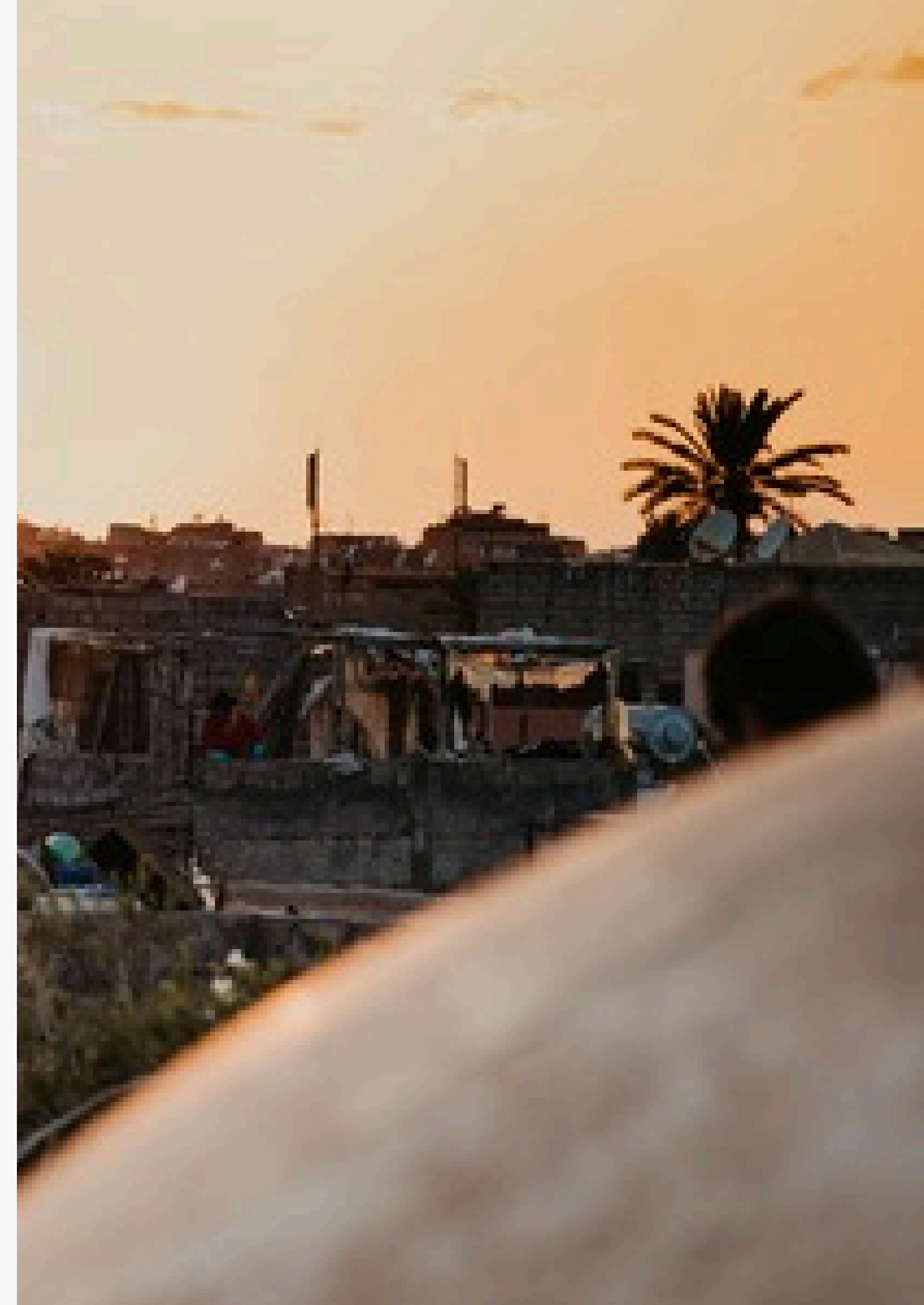
**Visa required?** Not required for UK, EU, or US citizens.

**COVID/Vax Restrictions?** Currently none.

**Climate:** 25°C average daytime temperatures in spring.


**Population:** 928,850

**Primary Languages:** Arabic, French, Amazigh, English



# Transportation & Accessibility

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- 01 Arrival to Marrakech Menara Airport (RAK).
  - 02 Group airport transfers provided on arrival and departure days.
  - 03 All ground transport for excursions and workshops included.

# Programme at a Glance



**An Immersive Learning Journey**

Over four transformative days, participants will experience Marrakech as both a classroom and a mirror for leadership. Guided sessions on confidence and presence set the foundation for authentic communication and influence. In the city's historic souks, participants put theory into practice through live negotiation challenges, learning to navigate complexity and emotion in real time. Beyond the marketplace, moments of stillness—a traditional hammam, dinner under desert skies, and a reflective hike in the Atlas Mountains—create space to integrate lessons on empathy, adaptability, and resilience. The final evening closes with an intimate fireside conversation with Simon Usifo, CEO of BBDO Germany, bringing real-world leadership perspective to everything learned. The result is a deeply human learning experience that sharpens instinct, strengthens leadership presence, and reconnects participants to purpose.

**Day 1 is arrival day, with a group dinner to kick off the programme.**

Day 1		Day 2		Day 3		Day 4		Day 5	
<b>Day #2</b>		<b>Day #3</b>		<b>Day #4</b>		<b>Day #5</b>			
Develop authentic confidence & presence through workshops and cultural observation in the souks.		Negotiation in the Souks: Apply negotiation theory through live practice with Marrakech tradespeople. Evening desert dinner under the stars.		Atlas Mountains hike exploring resilience and clarity. Afternoon session on empathetic leadership. Evening fireside with Simon Usifo, CEO of BBDO Germany.		Consolidate insights and next steps over a closing breakfast circle before departures.			



# Day #2 in Detail

## THE ART OF PRESENCE

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### Description

Day Two sets the foundation for the retreat, centering on leadership presence, confidence, and authentic communication. The morning begins with a facilitated workshop on vocal authority, influence, and nonverbal leadership cues. In the afternoon, participants embark on a guided exploration of Marrakech's souks with a local cultural interpreter, observing persuasion styles, hierarchy in trade, and cultural negotiation dynamics across three distinct sections: textiles, metalwork, and spices. The day concludes with dinner in the Medina and a facilitated reflection session on influence and communication across diverse settings.

### What is included

- Morning workshop: Confidence & Leadership Voice (90 minutes)
- Guided souk observation walk with cultural interpreter (2 hours)
- Lunch in Medina restaurant
- Group transport within Marrakech
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner (including dinner in the Medina)
- Evening reflection session



### What is not included (i.e. self-pay)

- Personal shopping in the souks
- Optional gratuities for local guides
- Beverages or extras outside of group meals

# Day #3 in Detail

## NEGOTIATION IN MOTION

### Description

Day Three brings negotiation theory to life in Marrakech's bustling marketplaces. The morning begins with a negotiation framework session covering value creation, reading emotion, building trust, and tactical empathy. Participants then move into active engagement with live negotiation challenges with local tradespeople at two distinct shops—one relationship-driven, one faster-paced—allowing them to test different approaches and reflect on personal style and strategy. The afternoon allows for integration and rest with optional traditional hammam experience and free exploration time. Late afternoon brings a session with LJ Silverman on Empathetic Leadership. The day concludes with a desert dinner under the stars in Agafay, where participants share key learnings on persuasion, adaptability, and leadership under uncertainty.

### What is included

- Morning negotiation framework session (60 minutes)
- Structured negotiation exercises with local tradespeople (2 hours)
- Group transport and translator support in the souks
- Empathetic Leadership session with LJ Silverman (60 minutes)
- Optional hammam experience
- Agafay Desert dinner with group reflections
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner

### What is not included (i.e. self-pay)

- Personal purchases during negotiation challenges
- Optional spa treatments beyond the included hammam
- Beverages or extras outside of group meals





# Day #4 in Detail

## RESILIENCE AND EMPATHY

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### Description

Day Four shifts the focus to reflection, endurance, and empathy in leadership. The morning begins with a guided hike in the Atlas Mountains (2.5 hours, gentle terrain suitable for all fitness levels), where participants explore resilience and clarity through guided reflection prompts on how leaders sustain energy, make decisions under pressure, and support others in uncertainty. A local guide shares stories of community leadership and adaptability. After a traditional village lunch in the mountains and return to Marrakech, the afternoon is free for personal exploration and rest. The evening brings an intimate 75-minute fireside conversation with Simon Usifo, CEO of BBDO Germany, on leadership, negotiation, and navigating high-stakes decisions. The retreat closes with a shared dinner and integration circle, capturing key insights and commitments for continued growth.

### What is included

- Guided hike in the Atlas Mountains with transport and local guide (2.5 hours)
- Traditional village lunch in the mountains
- Free afternoon in Marrakech
- Fireside conversation with Simon Usifo, CEO of BBDO Germany (75 minutes)
- Closing dinner and integration circle
- Breakfast, lunch, and closing dinner



### What is not included (i.e. self-pay)

- Optional gratuities for mountain guides
- Beverages or extras outside of group meals
- Personal expenses during free time

# Fireside Guest Speaker

## Simon Usifo

Join us for an intimate conversation with **Simon Usifo, CEO of BBDO Germany**, as he shares insights on:

- ✓ High-stakes negotiation and relationship-building
- ✓ Human-centric leadership in complex environments
- ✓ Resilience, empathy, and strategic influence
- ✓ Creativity as a problem-solving force in business

Simon has led transformative work for global brands including Coca-Cola, Audi, and Mercedes-Benz. His approach blends creative strategy with deep empathy

This fireside is designed as a candid exchange, not a lecture. Come ready with your questions and insights from the week.





# Accommodations

## Welcome to the Medina

Our private riad in the heart of the Medina offers quiet luxury, reflective spaces, and authentic Moroccan hospitality. Each participant enjoys a private room with ensuite bath. Meals are freshly prepared by local chefs, and the riad serves as both classroom and sanctuary for reflection.



## Learning Outcomes

In the souks, every interaction is a negotiation. In the desert, every silence teaches presence. This retreat invites leaders to step into unfamiliar spaces, listen differently, and lead with deeper empathy, clarity, and confidence.

- Strengthen negotiation and influence through hands-on cultural practice
- Build leadership presence
- Develop resilience and empathy under uncertainty
- Foster meaningful peer and alumni connections
- Return with renewed confidence and actionable tools

**“At first glance, the Marrakech Medina looks chaotic: lamps, rugs, leather, all *motion*. But underneath is a highly structured dance of give and take...It's one of the world's best classrooms for influence, value creation, and reading human behavior.”**

– Deborah Choi



# Meet your host: Deborah Choi.

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Deborah Choi is an entrepreneur, negotiation coach, and leadership facilitator who has built and led ventures across three continents. She is the Managing Director of Founderland, Europe's fastest-growing community for underrepresented founders, and has raised over €2M in philanthropic and venture funding to advance inclusive entrepreneurship.

A sought-after negotiation and leadership coach, Deborah has guided executives, founders, and investors through high-stakes conversations and complex decision-making. Her approach blends strategy and empathy, drawing on twenty years of business-building experience and a deep understanding of influence in cross-cultural contexts.

Based between Berlin and Marrakech, Deborah calls both cities home. Over the past decade, she has cultivated a rich local network of artisans, hosts, and cultural partners that anchor each retreat in authenticity and connection. Her facilitation style combines rigor with reflection, equipping participants to lead, negotiate, and communicate with clarity and confidence.







AGAFAY DESERT

# Questions?

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