UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Management and Sustainable Innovation

2627-2-F6303M012

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding (DdD1)
The course provides advanced knowledge of models and tools for sustainability-oriented management, focusing on shared value, social innovation, and impact measurement. Students will become familiar with hybrid public-private partnerships and sustainability frameworks (SDGs, ESG), using real-world cases and emerging practices from various institutional settings.

Applying knowledge and understanding (DdD2)
Students apply the theoretical tools acquired through a project-based learning process called the Impact Challenge. The work includes the design of a Theory of Change, selection of impact metrics (including SROI), data collection and analysis, and the formulation of actionable recommendations. The course enhances problem-solving skills and the ability to design strategies for sustainable innovation.

Making judgements (DdD3)
Through discussion, case analysis and structured feedback, students are encouraged to critically assess strategic options, evaluate sustainability practices, and formulate evidence-based solutions in complex and multi-stakeholder environments. Real-life case studies from business, social enterprises, and public organizations support the development of critical thinking.

Communication skills (DdD4)
Students will improve their oral and written communication skills through project presentations and discussions. The course promotes active participation and peer-to-peer dialogue, with an emphasis on clarity, conciseness, and the ability to communicate with diverse audiences using narrative and visual tools.

Learning skills (DdD5)
The course promotes autonomous learning through readings, case studies, collaborative work, and peer review. Students are encouraged to build a personal learning path by exploring real-world cases, international policy frameworks, and critical reflections on managerial practices. The aim is to enable lifelong learning and critical engagement with sustainability and innovation.

Contents

The course is organized into four thematic modules:

1. Impact Measurement

- Shared value and sustainability
- Theory of Change
- Impact metrics and SROI
- Impact data collection and analysis

2. Social Innovation and the Impact Challenge

- Foundations of social innovation
- Systems thinking and transformative change
- Launch and development of the Impact Challenge

3. Public-Private Partnerships

- Social Impact Bonds and outcomes-based finance
- Co-production and collaborative governance
- Cultural ecosystems and social innovation

4. Sustainable Business Models

- ESG and SDG frameworks
- Regenerative and sustainable business models
- ESG in public procurement
- Community cooperatives and local development models

Detailed program

The course runs from September to December 2026, with sessions on Mondays (3:30–5:30 PM) and Tuesdays (3:30–6:30 PM). Teaching activities take place in person (U6-40 with Podium [AGORA', former U6]), with up to 30% of hours deliverable online, either synchronously or asynchronously.

Tuesday, September 22, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, September 28, 2026 (2 hours) — online
Tuesday, September 29, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, October 5, 2026 (2 hours) — in person
Tuesday, October 6, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, October 12, 2026 (2 hours) — online
Monday, October 19, 2026 (2 hours) — in person
Tuesday, October 20, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, October 26, 2026 (2 hours) — online
Tuesday, October 27, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, November 2, 2026 (2 hours) — online
Tuesday, November 3, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, November 9, 2026 (2 hours) — online

Tuesday, November 10, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, November 16, 2026 (2 hours) — online
Tuesday, November 17, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Monday, November 23, 2026 (2 hours) — online
Tuesday, December 1, 2026 (3 hours) — in person
Tuesday, December 15, 2026 (3 hours) — in person, group project presentations

Possible make-up sessions in case of rescheduling: October 13, November 24, November 30 and December 14, 2026.

Prerequisites

Teaching methods

Lectures (in-person and online) – Expository teaching (DE)

Interactive workshops and labs – Interactive teaching (DI)

Group work and collaborative assignments (Impact Challenge)

Guest speakers and real-world case presentations

Up to 30% of the hours may be delivered remotely (synchronous or asynchronous)

Assessment methods

Attending students:

Final written or oral exam (60%) to assess theoretical knowledge and critical reasoning

Impact Challenge project (40%), evaluated on methodological coherence, analytical quality, communication effectiveness, and teamwork skills. The project will be presented in the final session.

Non-attending students:

Final oral exam (100%), covering course materials and additional readings made available on the platform.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

All readings (academic papers, policy briefs, case studies, and slides) will be provided through the e-learning platform. No mandatory textbook is required.

Semester

first semester

Teaching language

English

Sustainable Development Goals

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS