



Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes

CIHEAM BARI

Press release

11 June 2024

**GROWING TALENTS: A NEW GENERATION OF INNOVATION
MANAGERS 4 GREEN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM**

**Launch of the 1st Level International Master
Open Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Green Sector**

12 June 2024 | University of Agriculture, Tirana (Albania), 11.00 a.m.

The University of Agriculture in Tirana (Albania) will host the inaugural event for the 1st Level International Master in Open Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Green Sector on 12 June 2024 at 11 am. This new academic programme is a significant investment in the skills of young people, to steer the process of building innovation ecosystems and support a greener and more competitive transition of local economic systems in Albania.

It is a first step to train future innovation managers who will be the champions of new approaches and methodologies in building innovation ecosystems through the involvement of public institutions and business support organisations.

The initiative is promoted by an international partnership between the University of Agriculture of Tirana, LUM University "Giuseppe Degennaro" of Bari, CIHEAM and CIHEAM Bari, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, with the support of Intesa Sanpaolo Bank Albania under the auspices of the Apulia Region, the Albanian Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Master's objective is to educate a new generation of innovation managers, facilitate the establishment of start-ups, and encourage private companies to participate in the green transition process towards innovative business models.

Additionally, the initiative aims to involve students from the Balkan countries, thereby strengthening the geopolitical and social value of the initiative. The programme also seeks to provide attractive employment opportunities to young people from Albania and the Balkans serving their territories and local economies. Furthermore, it offers a double degree that is valid for Albania and Italy/EU, thanks to the collaboration between the University of Agriculture in Tirana and LUM University in Italy.

The inaugural event, entitled "The Future is young. Changing mindsets to deal with change!" will be opened by Damiano Petruzzella, CIHEAM Bari. Welcome addresses

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will be delivered by Fatbardh Sallaku, Rector of the Agricultural University of Tirana, Antonello Garzoni, Rector of LUM, Maurizio Raeli, Director of CIHEAM Bari, Alessandro D'Oria, Director of Intesa Sanpaolo Bank Albania, and Teodoro Miano, Secretary General of CIHEAM.

Institutional speeches will follow: Ogerta Manastirliu, Minister of Education, Sports and Youth; Anila Denaj, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development; Arjan Ymeri, Director of Startup Albania; Silvia Visciano, Puglia Region.

Frida Krifca, President of CIHEAM, will draw the conclusions. The meeting will be chaired by Erinda Lika, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agriculture in Tirana. A cooperation agreement for the implementation of the 1st Level International Master in Open Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Green Sector will be signed in the margins of the meeting between the University of Agriculture of Tirana, LUM University, CIHEAM Bari and CIHEAM General Secretariat.

The Master's programme and the training of innovation managers are the starting point for the development of an innovation ecosystem in Albania aimed at the green transition. This model aims at strengthening and qualifying incubators, promoting activities to empower local start-ups and collaborating with businesses, in synergy with the Startup Albania Agency, with which CIHEAM Bari has formalised a cooperation agreement.

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