



# Master Courses

## 2024-25



**Master Universitario di I Livello in**  
**“Open Innovation & Youth Entrepreneurship**  
**in the Mediterranean Agrifood Sector ”**  
jointly organised with LUM University - Giuseppe Degennaro



Academic Year 2024-2025



## Master Description

The international I Level Master's program in **Open Innovation & Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Agrifood Sector**, organized by **CIHEAM Bari** in collaboration with **LUM "Giuseppe Degennaro" University** and prestigious partners such as Almacube, BUSINESSMED, and UNIMED, offers an intensive one-year program aimed at training a new generation of innovation managers in the Mediterranean agrifood sector.

The program is structured into weekly modules that combine theory and practice, addressing key topics such as **entrepreneurship and startup mindset**, **business model design for continuous innovation**, **agile methods and change management**, **Living Lab approach**, **social innovation**, and **communication marketing & storytelling**. Special emphasis is placed on **Trends & Innovation in Agrifood** and **sustainability**, exploring the impact of emerging technologies and sustainable practices across the agrifood value chain with a focus on health, energy efficiency, renewable resources, and circular economy principles.

Students have the opportunity to work on real business cases in collaboration with industrial partners, applying **Open Innovation methodologies** such as **Design Thinking**, to develop innovative solutions. The program culminates in an internship and developing and discussing a final thesis, providing participants with hands-on professional experience.

At the end of the Master's program, graduates will be qualified for roles such as **innovation managers**, and **innovation brokers**, capable of fostering technology transfer processes and managing innovative projects within organizations and startups. This program is designed to enhance young people's employability, encouraging their active involvement in the economic development of Mediterranean regions through an innovative and sustainable approach to the agrifood sector.



## Master Program

UNITS	MODULES		CREDITS		DATES
UNIT I	1	Startup & Entrepreneurial Mindset	3,8	7,6	13 - 17 Jan
	2	Open Innovation & Innovative Corporate Mindset	3,8		20 - 24 Jan
UNIT II	3	Innovation In Agrifood I	3,8	7,6	27 - 31 Jan
	4	Innovation In Agrifood II	3,8		03 - 07 Jan
UNIT III	5	Social Innovation for Local Communities	3,8	7,6	10 - 14 Feb
	6	Corporate Sustainability: Managerial & Financial Tools	3,8		17 - 21 Feb
UNIT IV	7	Business Model Design for Continuous Innovation	3,8	7,6	24 - 28 Feb
	8	Business Model Design for Continuous Innovation (Practice with Companies)	3,8		03 - 07 Mar
UNIT V	9	Team Building	1,05	2,1	10 - 11 Mar
	10	Living Lab approach	1,05		12 - 14 Mar
UNIT VI	11	Agile Methods & Change Management	3,8	7,6	17 - 21 Mar
	12	Speculative Design, Future Foresight & System Thinking	3,8		24 - 28 Mar
UNIT VII	13	Digital Innovation & Green Smart Factory	3,8	7,6	31 Mar - 04 Apr
	14	Communication, Marketing & Storytelling	3,8		07 - 11 Apr
UNIT VIII	15	Project Work pt.1: <i>Design Thinking approach</i>	4,1	12,3	21 Apr 16 May
	16	Project Work pt.2: <i>Solution, Prototyping &amp; Validation</i>	4,1		19 May 06 Jun
	17	Project Work pt.3: <i>Case Development</i>	4,1		09 Jun 04 Jul



## Module Description

### UNIT I

#### MODULE 1

##### STARTUP & ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

### General Description

This module explores the theoretical foundations and practical aspects of creating innovative startups in the Mediterranean agrifood sector. Students will develop essential skills to tackle entrepreneurial challenges, from defining innovation to building collaborative ecosystems that enhance success. Through simulations and practical activities, the module covers every stage of a startup's lifecycle: ideation, prototyping, launch, and growth. It also examines critical success factors and common pitfalls, alongside evaluating the roles of key actors such as governments, financial institutions, and educational systems. The goal is to promote a strategic, sustainable, and collaborative approach among students.

### AIMS

- ❖ Equip students with tools and methodologies to analyse and understand the dynamics of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- ❖ Facilitate the practical application of theoretical concepts through realistic entrepreneurial simulations
- ❖ Examine the features of an effective entrepreneurial ecosystem, highlighting the roles and interactions of key stakeholders.
- ❖ Cultivate a critical mindset focused on problem-solving and identifying innovative opportunities.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the module, students will be able to:

- ✓ Analyse and define key concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship applied to the agrifood sector.
- ✓ Plan and simulate every stage of a startup's lifecycle, from conception to expansion.
- ✓ Identify the primary success factors and challenges affecting the sustainability of innovative enterprises.
- ✓ Design collaborative relationships between public and private actors within entrepreneurial ecosystems.



## MODULE 2:

### OPEN INNOVATION & INNOVATIVE CORPORATE MINDSET

Open Innovation, as theorized by Henry Chesbrough, represents a crucial strategic approach for companies aiming to integrate sustainability into their operations and promote economic growth in an increasingly ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance)-focused context. This model encourages collaboration among various entities, such as startups, universities, and organizations, to develop innovative solutions that address environmental and social challenges. By implementing Open Innovation practices, companies can access new ideas and technologies that not only enhance their competitiveness but also contribute to achieving sustainability goals and meeting stakeholder expectations regarding social responsibility. In this way, Open Innovation becomes a catalyst for sustainable innovation, enabling businesses to generate positive and lasting impacts within their ecosystem.

#### *AIMS*

- ❖ Highlight the importance of Open Innovation as a tool for addressing sustainability challenges and integrating ESG principles into business strategies.
- ❖ Introduce Open Innovation models and their role in promoting collaboration among different entities to develop innovative solutions.
- ❖ Explore methodologies for implementing Open Innovation practices that respond to environmental and social needs.
- ❖ Demonstrate how Open Innovation can contribute to creating sustainable business models capable of generating long-term value.

#### *LEARNING OUTCOMES*

By the end of the module, participants will be able to:

- ✓ Understand how Open Innovation principles and ESG aspects influence sustainable business practices.
- ✓ Recognize the importance of collaboration among companies, startups, and universities in the context of sustainable innovation.
- ✓ Identify opportunities to implement Open Innovation practices that address sustainability challenges.
- ✓ Design innovative business models that integrate ESG principles and promote responsible economic growth.



## UNIT II

### MODULE 3 e 4:

#### INNOVATION IN AGRIFOOD I e II - TRENDS IN AGRIFOOD

##### General Description

The module is structured as a combination of lectures, study visits, and fieldwork, offering a practical and multidisciplinary approach. During this module, various professors will take turns addressing specific topics, aiming to explore in depth the main aspects of the agrifood sector from an innovation perspective. Technical visits will be organised at partner companies of the master's program and entities that directly apply the innovations discussed during the lectures.

The main topics covered include:

- Food Trends and Food Innovations, with a particular focus on trends and new technologies in the Agrifood sector.
- Value Chain and Short Chain, analyzing local agricultural markets, short supply chain models, and the reality of Farmer Markets in Italy.
- Transition of Food Systems, with a focus on Food Policy and food policies for sustainable development.
- Digitalization in Agriculture, Precision Farming, and Decision Support Systems, aimed at improving efficiency and productivity in agricultural enterprises.
- Soil Fertility, Organic Farming, and Phytosanitary Aspects, exploring sustainable and innovative practices for soil management and crop health.
- Innovations in Sustainable Water Resource Management and Agrivoltaics, evaluating integrated solutions for environmental protection and natural resource optimization.

##### AIMS

The module aims to highlight the key aspects affecting the agrifood sector, addressing them from an innovation perspective across all major fields. Students will have the opportunity to understand how emerging technologies and food policies can transform supply chains, support sustainability, and promote new entrepreneurial models.

- ❖ Understand the main dynamics and opportunities open innovation offers in the agrifood sector.
- ❖ Analyze challenges related to food security, climate change, and sustainability in the Mediterranean context.
- ❖ Provide students with tools and methodologies to develop innovative entrepreneurial ideas, from concept to prototyping, based on the analysis of current agrifood trends.
- ❖ Promote knowledge of emerging technologies, such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, and precision farming, applied to the agrifood sector.
- ❖ Encourage collaboration among key players in the agrifood system: businesses, public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and local communities.



### LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the module, students will be able to:

- ✓ Analyze and interpret key innovation trends in the agrifood sector, with a focus on the Mediterranean context.
- ✓ Identify and evaluate innovative entrepreneurial opportunities that address concrete problems in the agrifood sector.
- ✓ Develop strategies integrating emerging technologies to improve productivity and sustainability in agrifood supply chains.
- ✓ Critically reflect on the role of public policies and cross-sectoral partnerships in developing resilient and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems.

## UNIT III

### MODULE 5:

#### SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

#### General Description

Young leaders of today are not only the key to driving change but also the driving force behind innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. What they need are the right tools, a supportive network, a clear vision, and ample opportunities for growth and development. This course is designed to inspire and empower young leaders, enabling them to unlock their full potential and make a tangible impact in the world. It provides participants with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to connect deeply with their purpose while equipping them to tackle the real-world challenges faced by social enterprises and businesses. Through a combination of theoretical learning, practical experiences, and exposure to successful social entrepreneurs, the course fosters an entrepreneurial mindset that drives positive change. Participants will not only gain a solid understanding of the complexities of social entrepreneurship but will also be guided through methodologies and frameworks that help transform innovative ideas into viable, sustainable business solutions.

#### AIMS

The course will guide students through a Roadmap to Social Innovation, covering nine key topics across four perspectives of social entrepreneurship (WHO, WHY, WHAT, HOW). It will help students understand the steps needed to build a social enterprise that combines impact with business. Students will learn how to identify social challenges, define a clear Vision and Mission, and develop solutions, products, or services. The course will focus on aligning personal and professional goals, finding purpose, and connecting it to social impact. Students will gain practical skills for growing a social business, including problem-solving, creativity, scaling, and building alliances. They will also master communication skills to effectively pitch and present their ideas, using real case studies to design social business models and collaborate with peers.



## LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course will define how to:

- ✓ Find your purpose and align personal and professional goals to boost motivation.
- ✓ Connect purpose to social impact, work remotely, lead effectively, and define a clear vision for your social business ideas.
- ✓ Grow your social business project by learning tools and skills for social entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Define and solve problems, enhance creativity, and scale social business ideas by analyzing social challenges, focusing on the problem to be solved, formulating the Vision and Mission Statement, defining solutions, crafting products or services, creating alliances to enhance impact, and building social business models that can grow through scaling, replication, and transfer.
- ✓ Communicate your impact effectively.
- ✓ Build lean presentations and improve pitching skills.
- ✓ Collaborate with peers to design social business models using real case studies.
- ✓ Master pitch fundamentals, storytelling for impact, and communication techniques.

## MODULE 6:

### CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY: MANAGERIAL & FINANCIAL TOOLS

#### General Description:

This module explores the intersection of corporate strategy and sustainability, focusing on managerial and financial tools essential for integrating sustainable practices into business operations. It highlights the strategic shift from shareholder value to stakeholder value, providing insights into corporate sustainability frameworks, stakeholder engagement, and materiality assessment processes. In addition, it focuses on operations management as a source of control and performance and discusses the concept of controlling the quality of products and services. By emphasizing the triple bottom line approach (economic, environmental, and social dimensions), the module prepares students to address global sustainability challenges through innovative management strategies, developing an original social innovation project.

#### AIMS

- ❖ Provide students with a comprehensive understanding of corporate sustainability and the tools to manage and finance sustainable strategies effectively.
- ❖ The evolution of corporate sustainability and its distinction from corporate social responsibility (CSR).
- ❖ Managerial approaches to stakeholder engagement and mapping.
- ❖ Financial instruments and frameworks for sustainability.
- ❖ Processes for materiality assessment and its integration into reporting.
- ❖ Strategies for aligning corporate goals with sustainable development objectives.
- ❖ A set of operational processes working together to deliver a product that conforms to a predefined quality standard.
- ❖ The design of control and measurement systems to reach sustainable performances.





## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn:

- ✓ How to implement stakeholder engagement strategies effectively, including mapping and prioritization.
- ✓ The role of materiality assessments in sustainability reporting
- ✓ The Integration of economic, social, and environmental dimensions into corporate strategy.
- ✓ To Develop a Social Innovation Project
- ✓ To Describe the transformation process model of operations management
- ✓ How operations management can contribute to competitiveness and sustainability
- ✓ To Distinguish between operational processes
- ✓ To Understand 'quality' in the context of the operations and think clearly to evaluate these management practices and theories
- ✓ To Define control, why it is an essential activity in managing and give examples of the generic control process
- ✓ Compare strategies and tactics for control and explain how context may affect choice

## UNIT IV

### MODULE 7 and 8:

#### BUSINESS MODEL DESIGN FOR CONTINUOUS INNOVATION

### General Description

The course spans over two weeks and is structured into four parts, combining lectures with hands-on team workshops and practical work with real companies. The first part covers the fundamentals of strategic innovation and methodologies for business model design, including topics such as strategic market orientation, sources of entrepreneurial ideas, innovation processes, and entrepreneurial management. The second part focuses on design-thinking tools for innovative business models (e.g., business model canvas, value proposition canvas), the evolution of business models in Industry 4.0, and the patterns of 4.0 business model design. Key concepts include the 4.0 business model canvas, unbundling and long tail business models, two-sided and multi-sided platforms, epicenters of innovation, ideation, and prototyping. The third part emphasizes practical application, with team projects aimed at creating innovative business models for startups or established companies (corporate entrepreneurship). The fourth part focuses on real-time applications of the lessons learned in the previous parts of the module, where students will be required to identify areas of improvement of business models of existing companies.

### AIMS

The course aims to:

- ❖ Explore the phases, challenges and tools for developing innovative business models.
- ❖ Map and analyze the structure of business models.
- ❖ Study advanced business model design tools suited to complex entrepreneurial contexts.



- ❖ Apply the methodologies on real cases by interacting with existing companies and providing them with elements to improve their business models.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will gain an understanding of business models and their components. By the end of the course, they will be able to address the challenges companies face when designing and implementing new models, particularly in response to technological changes or sectoral shifts. Students will be equipped to create innovative models for established companies or startups, assess the conditions for success, and evaluate how different models can reshape competitive dynamics. They will also learn to communicate business model features and their innovative elements effectively and professionally.

## UNIT V

### MODULO 9

#### TEAM BUILDING

#### General Description:

Teams are critical drivers of innovation, requiring strong leadership, collaboration, and self-awareness to achieve their full potential. This module blends individual self-branding and team-building practices with decision-making, creativity, and feedback techniques to prepare participants for future project work. Through a mix of theoretical insights and experiential learning, participants will strengthen their interpersonal and collaborative skills in Open Innovation contexts.

### AIMS

- ❖ Develop self-awareness and self-branding to define individual contributions to a team
- ❖ Explore team roles and dynamics to foster collaboration and effective leadership
- ❖ Build decision-making skills for innovative and efficient teamwork
- ❖ Enhance creativity and feedback processes to improve team performance
- ❖ Establish strategies for sustainable collaboration in diverse groups.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:

- ✓ Define and communicate their strengths through self-branding;
- ✓ Understand and apply principles of leadership and collaboration in team settings;
- ✓ Use structured methods for team decision-making and problem-solving;
- ✓ Facilitate creative and innovative processes within teams;
- ✓ Give and receive feedback constructively to strengthen team dynamics.



## MODULO 10

### LIVING LAB APPROACH

#### General Description

This module explores the Living Lab approach as open innovation ecosystems based on co-creation in real-life contexts. Organized by ENOLL, the module provides an overview of the methodologies used to integrate research and innovation activities into communities, focusing on the Mediterranean agrifood sector. Through practical exercises and case studies, participants will learn how to design and manage Living Labs that foster collaboration among citizens, companies, academic institutions, and public authorities. Special attention will be given to applying the quadruple helix model, ensuring the sustainability of Living Labs, and addressing the complex challenges of agrifood systems.

#### AIMS

- ❖ Provide practical tools to understand and apply the Living Lab concept in the agrifood sector.
- ❖ Develop stakeholder engagement skills, including citizens, businesses, and institutions.
- ❖ Deepen knowledge of governance models in Living Labs to ensure sustainability and impact.
- ❖ Introduce evaluation methods to measure the effectiveness and outcomes of Living Labs.
- ❖ Foster a mindset oriented towards open innovation and participatory co-creation.

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the module, participants will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the fundamental characteristics of a Living Lab, distinguishing it from other innovation platforms.
- ✓ Apply tools such as SWOT analysis, stakeholder mapping, and the Business Model Canvas to Living Lab projects.
- ✓ Design co-creation processes and participatory governance, leveraging contributions from different actors of the quadruple helix.
- ✓ Analyze and manage challenges related to the economic and operational sustainability of a Living Lab.
- ✓ Develop innovative solutions to complex problems in the agrifood sector, ensuring inclusivity and effectiveness in their activities.



## UNIT VI

### MODULE 11

#### AGILE METHODS & CHANGE MANAGEMENT

##### General Description:

In a rapidly evolving global landscape marked by technological disruption and organizational transformation, traditional work methods are no longer sufficient. Agile methodologies offer a vital framework for navigating uncertainty, fostering resilience, and turning challenges into opportunities. Agility is more than a skill, it is a mindset that enables professionals to adapt quickly, solve complex problems, collaborate effectively, and embrace continuous learning. In the agri-food sector, this adaptability is essential for addressing challenges like climate change, technological advancements, volatile markets, and shifting consumer demands. By adopting agile approaches, entrepreneurs, scientists, and farmers can pivot strategies, integrate innovative solutions, and thrive in an unpredictable environment, driving sustainable growth in one of the world's most critical industries.

##### AIMS:

- ❖ Deconstruct traditional work paradigms to foster an agile and flexible approach.
- ❖ Deliver advanced skills for managing complexity and uncertainty.
- ❖ Develop a mindset oriented toward continuous learning and iterative improvement.
- ❖ Provide practical tools to implement agile methodologies in agri-food contexts.
- ❖ Explore the philosophical and applied foundations of innovative methodologies.

##### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the module, participants will be able to:

- ✓ Critically analyze personal and organizational work approaches.
- ✓ Apply agile methodologies to complex professional scenarios.
- ✓ Develop strategies for rapid adaptation and continuous learning.
- ✓ Mitigate cognitive biases that hinder innovation.
- ✓ Create collaborative frameworks to enhance team resilience.
- ✓ Design iterative processes to address emerging challenges in dynamic contexts.



## MODULO 12

### SPECULATIVE DESIGN, FUTURE FORESIGHT & SYSTEM THINKING

#### General Description:

The module will provide an in-depth exploration of strategic foresight concepts as they relate to the food and beverage sector, offering participants a comprehensive understanding of how to navigate and anticipate future market developments. Specifically, it will focus on key theories and methodologies designed to define and analyze market scenarios, particularly during periods characterized by socio-economic turbulence and uncertainty. By addressing these challenges, the module aims to equip participants with the skills needed to make informed, forward-looking decisions. A central focus will be on examining macro trends that influence the entire supply chain, such as shifts in consumer behaviour, technological advancements, and global sustainability efforts. Additionally, the module will delve into more specific, sector-related trends that are reshaping the industry, including changes in food production, distribution, and consumption patterns. To complement this, participants will gain hands-on experience with tools for qualitative market analysis. These tools will enable them to evaluate complex market dynamics, identify emerging opportunities, and develop innovative strategies for adaptation. By the end of the module, participants will be better prepared to address the evolving needs of the industry and to anticipate challenges that may arise in a rapidly changing global context.

#### AIMS

- ❖ Transmit a scenario thinking mindset, tools and methodology.
- ❖ Evaluate market research-oriented to a scenario approach.
- ❖ A scenario thinking thanks to an 8 steps mindset
- ❖ Tools and methods, in particular qualitative one
- ❖ Macro trends and specific trends related to the agrifood sector
- ❖ Help students apply what has been transmitted during lessons

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn:

- ✓ Qualitative market research, in particular ethnographic approach and the importance of small data
- ✓ Data analysis according to specific theoretical framework “foresight”
- ✓ Scenario definition using a narrative style approach.



## UNIT VII

### MODULO 13

#### DIGITAL INNOVATION & GREEN SMART FACTORY

##### General Description

The module focuses on digital innovation and sustainability in the Mediterranean agrifood sector, exploring how technology can transform businesses toward agility, speed, and resilience. Participants will delve into the concepts of Industry 4.0, Internet of Things (IoT), and enabling technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Digital Twins. Through an integrated analysis of business strategy and innovation management, the module examines the opportunities offered by digitalization to enhance competitiveness, mitigate risks, and promote sustainability. Practical insights will be provided on how to rethink business models, optimize production processes, and adopt additive manufacturing technologies. Workshops and interactive sessions will guide students in understanding innovative solutions applicable to the sector.

##### AIMS

- ❖ Provide an in-depth understanding of how digital technologies can support sustainability and innovation.
- ❖ Explore strategic and technical tools to transform businesses into “Smart Factories.”
- ❖ Present the risks and opportunities of digitalization in corporate and agricultural contexts.
- ❖ Develop skills to integrate enabling technologies such as IoT, Digital Twins, and AR/VR into business strategies.

##### Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module, participants will be able to:

- ✓ Identify Industry 4.0 technologies to enhance operational efficiency and sustainability.
- ✓ Analyze the risks and opportunities associated with digitalization and the adoption of new business models.
- ✓ Design business strategies that incorporate digital innovations and smart technologies.
- ✓ Understand the interactive behavior of Digital Twins to simulate and optimize real-world production processes.
- ✓ Combine immersive technologies (AR/VR) and additive manufacturing to innovate products and services.



## MODULO 14

### COMMUNICATION, MARKETING & STORYTELLING

#### General Description:

This module equips participants with the skills to create compelling value propositions, focusing on the agri-food sector and blending tradition with innovation to meet modern market demands. It covers essential topics such as market research, consumer behaviour, branding strategies, communication techniques, and the use of digital tools to enhance market reach. Special attention is given to integrating emerging trends into marketing strategies while preserving traditional values. Participants will also explore the entire supply chain, analyzing the roles of producers, distributors, and retailers within a sustainable framework, emphasizing ethical practices, environmental considerations, and socially conscious consumer expectations.

The module includes hands-on activities such as laboratory sessions, company tours, and a team project. These practical experiences bridge theory and real-world application, enabling students to experiment with marketing tools, observe supply chain operations, and develop innovative solutions. The final team project integrates knowledge gained throughout the course, fostering collaboration, critical thinking, and practical problem-solving skills.

#### AIMS

- ❖ Provide students with the knowledge, skills, and practical tools to develop innovative and sustainable marketing strategies, with a specific focus on the agri-food sector.
- ❖ The knowledge and tools to develop effective value propositions, with a focus on the agri-food sector.
- ❖ The integration of tradition and innovation to create sustainable marketing strategies.
- ❖ A comprehensive understanding of the entire marketing process, from consumer behaviour to branding and communication.
- ❖ The role of supply chain actors and their contributions to sustainable value creation.
- ❖ Laboratory activities, company visits, and real-world applications.
- ❖ Teamwork and practical problem-solving skills through a collaborative final project.



## UNIT VIII

### PROJECT WORK/INTERNSHIP

The project work phase of the International I Level Master in Open Innovation & Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Agrifood Sector at CIHEAM Bari serves as a cornerstone of the educational experience. A true curricular internship carried out in close collaboration with the Master's partner companies, focused on solving real business cases through the design of innovative and sustainable solutions.

This initiative combines advanced methodologies with hands-on practice to empower students to tackle real-world challenges in the agrifood sector through innovation, entrepreneurship, and collaboration with companies and stakeholders.

The Project Work is structured around two key methodologies: Design Thinking and Lean Startup.

These approaches guide students in exploring the complex dynamics of innovation in the agrifood sector, emphasizing user-centric solutions, rapid prototyping, and continuous validation of ideas:

- Design Thinking focuses on the early stages of innovation, where students immerse themselves in understanding the needs and experiences of stakeholders through empathetic research methods. By conducting interviews, workshops, and observations, participants generate creative ideas tailored to the challenges faced by agrifood companies.
- Prototyping and Validation methodology complements this by equipping students with tools to quickly test and validate solutions in real market conditions. Students develop Minimum Viable Products (MVPs), gather quantitative and qualitative data, and refine their proposals based on user feedback, ensuring practicality and sustainability.

Through this iterative and data-driven approach, students not only learn to navigate the complexities of the agrifood industry but also create meaningful impact by delivering actionable solutions to businesses. The Project Work is further enriched by structured team dynamics, with regular milestones, coaching sessions, and company interactions designed to simulate real-world innovation processes.

#### AIMS

The Project Work aims to:

- ❖ Cultivate expertise in innovation methodologies: equip students with practical knowledge and skills in using Design Thinking and Lean Startup to address complex business problems.
- ❖ Foster industry collaboration: create direct engagement between students and companies, facilitating an exchange of knowledge, ideas, and solutions tailored to real business needs.
- ❖ Develop leadership and entrepreneurial skills: encourage students to lead multidisciplinary teams, manage project milestones, and adapt to dynamic market conditions.
- ❖ Promote sustainable and impactful solutions: ensure that outcomes align with ethical and environmental standards, meeting the expectations of socially conscious stakeholders in the agrifood sector.
- ❖ Build practical competencies for professional growth: prepare students for strategic roles in innovation management, entrepreneurship, and consulting within agrifood industries.





## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By completing the Project Work, students will achieve the following outcomes:

- ✓ Comprehensive problem analysis: master the ability to identify and define innovation challenges within the agrifood sector through structured methods, including stakeholder mapping, market research, and customer discovery.
- ✓ Innovative solution design: learn to ideate, prototype, and test solutions that address user needs and align with company objectives, leveraging creativity and analytical thinking.
- ✓ Effective application of methodologies: gain hands-on experience in applying Design Thinking and Lean Startup principles, bridging the gap between theory and practice.
- ✓ Data-driven decision-making: develop the skills to collect, analyze, and use feedback to refine and validate solutions, ensuring their feasibility and market potential.
- ✓ Team collaboration and leadership: enhance interpersonal and managerial abilities by working in multidisciplinary teams, navigating group dynamics, and coordinating with business stakeholders.
- ✓ Professional presentation skills: demonstrate the ability to communicate and defend project results effectively, delivering comprehensive business cases that showcase innovation and strategic value.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAM

- Immersive industry experience: regular company visits, stakeholder interviews, and co-creation workshops provide students with a deep understanding of real-world challenges and opportunities.
- Guided project milestones: students follow a structured timeline with specific deliverables at each phase, ensuring continuous progress and alignment with company expectations.
- Emphasis on sustainability: projects are designed to meet modern demands for ethical practices, environmental consciousness, and sustainable development in the agrifood sector.
- Final business case presentation: each team delivers a comprehensive proposal to partner companies and stakeholders, showcasing the innovation process, results, and recommendations.