Innovation & Entrepreneurship (I&E):
Purpose-Driven Entrepreneurship: Social and Rural Ventures

Course Syllabus

Summer Semester 2026 |
04.05. – 01.06.2026

Aims

- Introduce students to the foundations of social and rural entrepreneurship, highlighting their role in addressing social and environmental challenges.
- Develop students' ability to identify and analyze opportunities for entrepreneurial initiatives with social impact in both urban and rural contexts.
- Develop students' understanding of institutional support mechanisms for rural entrepreneurship, including funding structures, policy frameworks, and the role of public and private stakeholders.
- Provide practical tools to design sustainable business models, including the Business Model Canvas and the Social Business Model Canvas.
- Enhance students' understanding of impact measurement and communication, focusing on social, environmental, and economic value creation.
- Foster an entrepreneurial mindset oriented towards purpose and sustainability, encouraging critical thinking and innovation.

Description

Have you ever thought about starting a business? Have you considered the impact you could create if you did?

In this course, we will explore the world of social and rural entrepreneurship, where ventures pursue a dual purpose that creates value beyond economic profit. You will learn how to identify entrepreneurial opportunities, design sustainable business models, and communicate and measure the impact of your initiatives.

You will also learn from real-world examples of sustainable entrepreneurs and begin developing your own business idea, applying the concepts and tools introduced throughout the course.

Learning Outcomes

- Explain the key concepts and principles of social and rural entrepreneurship, including the triple bottom line and the role of sustainability.
- Identify and critically analyze social and environmental challenges, recognizing opportunities for entrepreneurial solutions in both urban and rural contexts.
- Apply design thinking approaches to understand stakeholder needs and define relevant entrepreneurial problems.
- Analyze institutional support mechanisms for rural entrepreneurship, including top-down and bottom-up funding approaches, and evaluate the role of stakeholders in supporting entrepreneurial initiatives.

- Design and develop sustainable business models using tools such as the Business Model Canvas and the Social Business Model Canvas.
- Evaluate different models of social entrepreneurship and assess their applicability in real-world contexts.
- Measure and communicate the social, environmental, and economic impact of entrepreneurial initiatives using appropriate indicators and frameworks.
- Develop and present a viable social venture proposal, clearly articulating the problem, solution, business model, and expected impact.

Participants
The course is open to participants from Academia (Professors, Bachelor, Master and Doctoral Students and Staff), Industry, Government and the public sector.

Language of Instruction
The course is offered in the *English* language; thus, good knowledge of the English language is necessary for effective participation and successful completion of the course.

Teaching Mode
Online (synchronous sessions and asynchronous lectures)

Course Access
- Course pre-registration is made via the relevant Moodle page for the course. As soon as a participant is accepted to the course, an email with all access information will be sent to the participant's electronic mailbox.
- Online, synchronous sessions will be hosted in the Zoom meeting platform and all educational and informational material, assignment instructions and grading will be completed via the EURECA-PRO LMS Moodle and Zoom platforms.

Topics
- The topics covered in the I&E Sustainable Innovation and Entrepreneurship course: Purpose-Driven Entrepreneurship: Social and Rural Ventures include:
  1. Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship
  2. Identifying Opportunities in Social Entrepreneurship
  3. Introduction to Rural Entrepreneurship
  4. Aid Programs for Rural Entrepreneurship
  5. Business Model Canvas
  6. Business Models in Social Entrepreneurship
  7. Measuring and Communicating Impact
  8. Interview with a Social Entrepreneur
- Lectures (1–8) will be available asynchronously in Moodle for self-paced access, while different exercises and an integrative final project will be discussed and assessed synchronously via Zoom.

Attendance and Participation
- The course is comprised of eight (8) asynchronous lectures (totalling 2 hours) and additional five (5) synchronous sessions (in total, 8 hours) for presenting the course, discussing practical exercises and assessing an integrative final project.

- ≥ 70% attendance total in the five (5) synchronous sessions is required to earn the Certificate of Attendance and fulfil the attendance requirement for the 1 ECTS
- Participants attendance is timed and recorded on an individual basis, based on Zoom access and exit.

Grading and Awards

1. To earn **1 ECTS** (ECTS for **EURECA-PRO students** *only*) and the **Certificate of Completion** it is required to fulfill the following criteria:
   a. *≥ 70% cumulative attendance in all five (5) synchronous sessions* (*30% of class grade*)
   b. *≥ 70% in an integrative final project (70% of class grade)*
2. **Certificate of Attendance** will be awarded to all participants with *≥ 70% cumulative attendance in all five (5) synchronous sessions.*

Course Assignment

- The integrative final project comprises 70% of the total class grade towards earning the 1 ECTS (EURECA-PRO students only) and the Certificate of Completion.
- Detailed information on the Assignment and its grading is provided in the relevant Course Assignment Rubric.
- The students will have to prepare a pitch presentation of 5 minutes maximum, where they identify the entrepreneurship challenge, the proposed solution, the sustainable business model proposal, whether it will be developed in an urban or rural setting and a measure of their potential impact.
- The **Course Assignment** must be presented in a synchronous session **on Monday, June 1st, 2026**.

Course Evaluation

Following the completion of each lecture, the participants are kindly asked to evaluate that lecture. Also, at the end of the course, the participants are kindly asked to complete a questionnaire for the overall evaluation of the course.