

Sole MED Bioeconomy Startup Creation Lab

Call for participants

Sole Med Bioeconomy STARTUP CREATION LAB (SUCL) is the **free pre-incubation program** funded by the Interreg Euro-MED program, within the Sole MED project (CUP: F75C25000050006), and implemented by the University of Ferrara, in collaboration with the Municipality of Ferrara.

The SUCL aims to spread knowledge and entrepreneurial culture among young people, support the creation of startups in the **bioeconomy**, stimulate innovation in the territorial production fabric, and connect participants with universities, firms, and the innovation ecosystem.

Program duration

The entrepreneurship training program has a total duration of 62 hours and will take place **from October 2026 to January 2027**, divided into **21 meetings**.

The meetings will be held mainly **in-person**, with the possibility of attending **up to a maximum of 3 meetings remotely**.

In-person meetings will be held at the **Municipal Residence** - Piazza del Municipio, 2, 44121 Ferrara.

The program

Phase I – Theoretical foundations (15 hours)

In this phase, participants develop entrepreneurial culture and an in-depth understanding of the bioeconomy sector. Lecture contents include:

- Kick-off and orientation
- What is a startup: traditional business vs. startup

- Innovation
- Circular economy and bioeconomy
- Bioeconomy and territorial specificities

Phase II – Startup development (30 hours)

In this phase, participants acquire tools to build and validate their business model.

Lecture contents include:

- Business Model Canvas for green businesses
- Design Thinking for sustainability challenges
- Lean Startup methodology
- Market analysis and validation
- Digital marketing for green startups
- Financial planning
- Funding opportunities
- Legal framework for bio-businesses
- Agile project management
- Sustainable supply chain design

Phase III – Application and implementation (17 hours)

In the final phase, participants, individually or in teams, transform their idea into a structured business project. Lecture contents include:

- Workshop on Business Plan development
- Prototyping and rapid prototyping
- How to pitch
- Mentoring – first cycle
- Mentoring – second cycle
- Demo Day – final project presentation

Projects will be presented during the **DEMO DAY** through a pitch session. Furthermore, the best pitch will have the opportunity to present its project in the transnational session at the final Sole MED project event to be held in Ferrara in May 2027.

Requirements, terms, and application methods

A maximum of 30 participants will be admitted.

Young people between 18 and 30 years old can apply: university students, recent graduates, young professionals, and aspiring entrepreneurs, interested in developing a business idea related to the bioeconomy.

The possibility of awarding university credits (CFUs) to students enrolled at the University of Ferrara is currently under review by the relevant academic bodies.

Applications can be submitted from the **27th of July 2026**, and **by the 18th of September 2026**, through the following form: <https://forms.gle/Qd5ZZtnGYDsgU8gd8>

Applications submitted through other methods or received after the deadline will not be considered eligible.

Selection

Should the number of applications exceed the available places, candidates will be selected by a duly appointed Evaluation Committee on the basis of the following criteria:

- submission of a business idea as part of the application;
- relevance of the candidate's educational background and previous experience to the proposed business idea.

In the event of equal scores, priority will be given to the younger candidate.

The list of admitted candidates will be published on the University website.

Successful applicants will also be notified by email at the address provided during the application process.

Confidentiality and intellectual property

Given the educational nature of the program, it is not possible to foresee if and what industrial or intellectual property rights may arise from the activities carried out within the project. The business ideas presented remain the property of the proponents.

Processing of Personal Data

Pursuant to Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) and Italian Legislative Decree No. 196/2003, as subsequently amended, the personal data provided by applicants will be processed by the University of Ferrara, in its capacity as Data Controller, solely for purposes related to the administration of this selection procedure.

Person Responsible for the Procedure

The person responsible for the procedure is Dr Silvia Tassinari, Administrative Office of the Department of Economics and Management – tel. +39 0532 293172 – email: silvia.tassinari@unife.it.

Contacts

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