

MSc Sustainable Business and Innovation Programme

1. Profile of the programme

The world faces huge sustainable development challenges and must rely on business to address these. How to feed the world in 2050, for instance? There are no obvious solutions for being profitable while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To meet SDGs, firms, markets and ecosystems need to transform, realizing organizational renewal, making effective use of data-driven and smart innovations, and re-aligning with partners in global and local value chains. Small or large, established or new, firms must rethink where they go and why. Businesses strategize, innovate, and reorganize to simultaneously meet needs of customers and stakeholders. Dynamic, complex challenges are paramount particularly in food and agribusiness. This MSc program offers you forefront insights from business sciences, providing a multi-disciplinary perspective on how firms, farms, markets and sectors transform to be part of sustainable solutions. You acquire knowledge, skills and competencies to become a manager, marketer, or entrepreneur that can run a business beyond the usual, making change for a sustainable future.

2. Unique selling points

- The program focusses on the future of sustainable business, including agribusiness.
- You get to understand innovation and transformation at all relevant business levels (business ecosystems, value chains, corporations, business models, product-market combinations, teams, personnel).
- You learn to approach business in an inter-disciplinary manner, related to the life sciences.
- You acquire the knowledge and skills, and develop competences suited to changemakers.
- You study business science for impact.

3. WU-BSc-programmes with unconditional admission

Students from the WUR BSc program BBC have unconditional admission to this MSc program.

4. Main target groups next to unconditionally admitted students

Students with a BSc degree in the broad domain of business sciences, e.g. including business economics, with the ambition to make a relevant contribution to the sustainability transition of the agri and food sectors.

Students with a BSc in technological domains of the life sciences, such as plant science, environmental science, food technology, and animal sciences, with an ambition to work in business, and who have taken courses on (agri)businesses during their BSc or followed a relevant premaster.

5. Admission requirements for students not unconditionally admissible

- a. At least 30 credits of courses in your BSc programme in one or more of the following disciplines: strategic management, innovation management, organizational behavior, industrial organization, marketing, sales, operations research, business economics, information technology, accounting and financial management,

- operations, logistics, facility management. Of these credits at least 15 credits in management and/or marketing.
- b. At least 10 ECTS in research methods in your BSc study that include data collection techniques, quantitative analysis, and preferably qualitative analysis techniques.
 - c. A motivation letter in which you explain how the completion of this academic program will help your personal and academic/professional development.
 - d. A GPA for the BSc study programme of at least 70% of the maximum scale.
 - e. Fluency in English, both written and spoken.

6. Information on the 30 credits specialization courses

Early in year 1 students lay the foundations for their programme with courses (1), (2) and (3). In the courses in period 5 and 6 integration takes place and preparation for year 2 in which students' own research projects are at center stage.

1. Business Theories & Sustainability (6 ECTS, based on existing course YSS32306, compulsory, period 1).

Which theories are underlying to the decisions that managers make on a daily basis? How instrumental are these ideas in a business that also aims to contribute to the SDGs? This course discusses the theories that have guided managers in their decisions for many decades on their potential to bring about sustainable solutions. The course also introduces you to recent ideas from management, marketing, and data-scientific literature on sustainable business. These ideas will then be used to analyze and evaluate sustainable business models on their commercial and societal potential and pitfalls.

2. Strategic marketing for market transformation (6 ECTS, new course, compulsory, period 1)

Sustainable transition requires a change in the rules of the game at the level of markets and business ecosystems. This course offers you the state of the art on the theories and tools that businesses have to influence buyers to make sustainable choices, such as new product and service-development, creating data-based choice environments, and engagement of stakeholders. It also discusses how these instruments are intertwined with the procurement activities of the business, and how these efforts can bring fundamental changes to the functioning of markets and systems. Next to the scientific literature you will discuss and analyze several business cases on these topics from companies at the forefront of sustainable change across the globe.

3. Leading and Organizing for Sustainability (6 ECTS, new course, compulsory, period 2)

Sustainability inevitably comes with organizational change, regardless of firm size, chain segment, or industry. Common instruments for renewal are project management, cross functional collaborations, etc. But how to prevent accountability to be a recipe for burn outs and static bureaucracies, but instead spur virtuous growth cycles? What characterizes change leaders that renew companies and markets? Reputed and frontier knowledge will be shared, and hold to test, from the areas of Organizational Behavior, Organizational Design, and Change Management.

4. Developing models for Business Transformation (6ECTS, new course, compulsory, period 5)

In this course, insights from the previous courses are integrated. Students will chose a concrete sustainability case offered by a company in the food, agri, or environmental domain, and will develop a solution for their problem in the form of a conceptual model. In small groups you work at the frontier of business theory, by scientifically and creatively integrating ideas from different lines of research, thus providing a new and unique solution for the problem case. As such, the course also prepares you to combine theories in your own thesis

and to reconcile different views in sustainable businesses that you may encounter during your internship or in your career.

5. Analytical methods (2x3 [=6] ECTS, new courses, period 6).

In modules of 3ECTS, students gather expertise on methods and techniques. The modules may include relevant qualitative techniques for data collection like interview protocols, focus group discussions, content analysis, and data analysis with Atlas.ti. Modules may also include quantitative techniques like simulations, social network analyses (Ucinet), data science techniques in market research, and advanced multivariate techniques for data analysis, like confirmatory factor analyses, structural equation models, and Partial Least Squares.

6. Critical Reflections on Business (6 ECTS, new course, compulsory, period 6).

This course will strengthen the critical thinking of students on businesses. It consists of three main components. First, it offers an overview of relevant ideas from philosophy and ethics. Second, students are requested to complete a number of individual assignments on the basis of which they reflect on the knowledge obtained in the first year (both from the compulsory courses that they took and the elective courses) as well as their personal development. Third, they will apply these ideas in groups of about eight students to a business case. These groups are intended to stay together in the second year as thesis rings. A presentation of the business case constitutes the completion of the first year.

7. Chair groups that offer a major thesis in this program

Business, Management and Organization (BMO), Marketing and Consumer Behaviour (MCB)