Creative Sustainability - M.Sc. Degree in Economics and Business Administration 2022-2024

Programme studies 90 cr
Including Master’s thesis 30 cr
Electives 30 cr

The Creative Sustainability Master’s Programme (CS) provides students with the skills and knowledge to promote sustainable development through business. The linkages between business and sustainability are highly important in contemporary organizations, whether one wishes to be a sustainability specialist in business or a management professional operating in some other field.

Programme description

Complex sustainability challenges, such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, or poverty and inequality, call for new mindsets and skills. These mindsets should incorporate a systems-based view of the planet and the ability to work with professionals from different fields and cultures. Sustainability challenges require multi-level solutions that involve a wide range of stakeholders with often competing interests. The CS programme prepares students to respond to these challenges through its international and multidisciplinary learning platform in the fields of business, design and chemical engineering and material science.

The CS programme brings together students who are devoted to developing systemic solutions, working in multidisciplinary teams and challenging themselves with practical learning tasks. Creativity in the programme denotes a focus on fresh, holistic and emerging innovations and far-reaching alternative solutions. The studies include state-of-the-art knowledge about the interlinked environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of sustainability coupled with learning in practical projects conducted together with partner organizations.

The CS programme is organized jointly by the School of Business, the School of Arts, Design and Architecture and the School of Chemical Engineering. CS students who enter the programme via the School of Business graduate with a degree of Master of Science in Economics and Business Administration.

The two-year CS programme comprises a total of 120 ECTS credits, divided between compulsory joint Creative Sustainability studies, compulsory Management studies, elective studies which include a freely chosen minor subject, and a Master’s thesis. Students can also include in their degree studies conducted elsewhere at Aalto University or at other universities in Finland or abroad. More information about the course offerings is available on the programme website.

Learning outcomes

- **Multidisciplinary approach**: Students learn to combine knowledge and skills from different disciplines to co-create innovative solutions for real-life challenges and to promote transformations towards ecologically, economically and socially sustainable futures.
- **Systems thinking**: Students learn to use systems thinking to create new holistic understandings of complex situations and to problem-solve.
- **Sustainable use of materials**: Students understand basic scientific principles and processes of bioeconomy and circular economy, and are able to use analytical tools and develop solutions for sustainable resource use.
- **Design thinking**: Students learn to use tools and methods to support creativity and imagination and to facilitate dialogue and collaboration in design processes.
- **Sustainability management**: Students learn to develop, support and manage sustainability initiatives in businesses and other organizations and to work proactively to promote sustainable development through business.

Career prospects

Sustainability considerations arise in every organization and thus there are several possible career options for someone with expertise on sustainability in business. Sustainability specialists can work in multinational companies and other large organizations, as consultants, in start-ups and as entrepreneurs, or they may deal with sustainability issues in business from positions in NGOs or the public sector.

Figure 1. Possible professional identities and corresponding potential employment types of CS students

Programme directors

Professor Mikko Jalas, Director of the Creative Sustainability Programme (ARTS)

Senior University Lecturer Leena Lankoski, Creative Sustainability Programme Director at the School of Business

Programme Planning Officer

Kati Halminen

Additional information

Creative Sustainability programme website