

Summer School in Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Innovation (SEI)

Overview

The ENHANCE Summer School in sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation (SEI) is a training that spans June to August, involving digital sessions, independent work, and culminating in a one-week intensive education organized on campus at Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden as part of the ENHANCE alliance. The ENHANCE alliance is supported and funded by the EU Erasmus+ initiative. Before and after the intensive week, students carry out academic research individually and in teams, with the aim of creating value for others. The Summer School aims to increase the students' awareness and ability to consider, reflect, and even act upon entrepreneurship and innovation through the lens of sustainability. This provides the students with knowledge and decision-making logics that facilitate translating innovative ideas into viable, sustainable entrepreneurial initiatives, and bring the notion of sustainability to their practices.

The Summer School addresses sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation from a technical university perspective, considering research, policy and practice perspectives, and impact across disciplines. The main emphasis will be on tackling the challenges of engaging in sustainable activities related to developing ideas, strategies that can alleviate some of these challenges, and the tools and methods that can be used to facilitate the process. A blend of lectures and project works provides a full and varied program. Students will take part in a class-wide academic research endeavor involving interviews with sustainable entrepreneurs around Europe, peer to peer exchange, and classroom exercises and discussion. After the successful completion and evaluation of the course, participants receive a certificate worth 6-7.5 ECTS credits (depending on the credit system of each university).

Learning outcomes

On completing the Summer School, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the intersection of entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainability, including increase ability to interpret how businesses react to sustainability in their respective economic and political environments.
- Develop ability to determine prioritized action towards tackling sustainability concerns in the consequent stages of innovation and entrepreneurial development and relative to contextual specificity.
- Demonstrate ability to assess and analyze global and systemic sustainability challenges and trade-offs in economic, social, and environmental domains that affect businesses.
- Demonstrate understanding of key challenges and opportunities regarding stakeholder engagement and sustainable strategy development.
- Demonstrate awareness of greenwashing and determine how to differentiate between viable and non-viable sustainable action.

Content

- Sustainability tools and theories to address economic, social, and environmental issues, both independently and collaboratively
- Stages of value creation for others, incorporating technical components
- Organizing innovative processes in line with sustainable goals
- Contextual analysis of sustainability concerns
- Cultural and political impact of sustainability

Time and place

The Summer School comprises three periods:

- **Preparation (15 June to 18 August 2023):** students will interview a sustainable entrepreneur, following an interview guide provided to them. Students are paired with another student to discuss their insights. They then join the pre-assigned groups and synthesize their learning. There will be two online sessions during this period.
- **In-person sessions (21 August to 25 August 2023):** Monday to Thursday from 9-16, lectures in the morning and workshops in the afternoon on campus in Gothenburg. On Friday a field trip is organized and the second period concludes with some social activity.
- **Final assignment (28 August to 29 September 2023):** students will put together the insights they gathered from readings, lectures, student-led workshops, the synthesis of their interviews, and their group work to form their final assignment. The final assignment can be a website, a wiki, a traditional hand-in, a video, a podcast, an Instagram page, a Twitter thread, a practical guide, or even a plan for consultancy.

Forms of assessment

Oral presentations, written reports, peer-to-peer feedback, and self-reflection assignments.

General requirements

To be eligible to apply, the students must be enrolled at a master's or doctoral level program, have completed at least one semester, and have at least one semester left of their studies at one of the ENHANCE partner universities before the start of the Summer School. A CEFR B2 English proficiency level is expected, although no formal certificate is required.

How to apply

A motivational letter of 300-500 words, as clear as possible, where the applicants describe 1) a quick personal background, 2) why they want to participate in this Summer School, and 3) what they will plan to do with their newly acquired knowledge. Applicants are expected to make connections between their studies and the topics of entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainability. The applications must be submitted to the designated staff at each university. Once the application deadline has passed, there will be a local selection process and the admitted students will be notified by 8 May 2023. Students are expected to register in Chalmers system by 22 May 2023 through the link that will be provided upon admission. Important to note that this Summer School is NOT a typical 'venture creation course' ending with a pitch session.

Cost

There is no cost for participation. Instead, the students will be reimbursed € 350 for travel and accommodation and € 58 per diem by their university.

Deadline for application

24 April 2023

For inquiries, contact your local coordinator or yashar.mansoori@chalmers.se

Testimonials from the past edition of the ENHANCE Summer School

“It was one of the best experiences of my life, both on an intellectual and a human level. Spending a week with talented like-minded people, learning, debating, and discussing sustainability issues (and other issues after finishing the course) made me feel the joy of an ancient Greek philosopher in the agora, dedicating all his time in pursuit of the truth. My perspective on sustainability changed completely and I consequently had to revise some of my life priorities. I made a lot of friends, connections, and memories that will stay with me forever.”

“It was honestly the best time I've had in the last three years. If there was a follow-up event, I would definitely be there”

“I thought it was a really cool experience! It opened my horizons and at the same time deepened my understanding about sustainable entrepreneurship and I love the exchange between the different disciplines and countries”

“I learned a lot for someone who doesn't do anything business related. I loved the whole topic of sustainability and it was great for me to realize how this is being implemented in different fields”

“I've been to other summer schools and this has been the most interesting and well organized by far. It was a great experience meeting fellow students from all over the world and I know it will be relevant in the development of my PhD”