

International
Master in

SDIT

(www.master-SDIT.it)

Strategic Design
for Innovation &
Transformation

A JOINT PROGRAMME
WITH

POLIMI GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF
MANAGEMENT

POLI.DESIGN
FOUNDED BY POLITECNICO DI MILANO

**There is a real need
to integrate and empower
design manager
in organization chart.**

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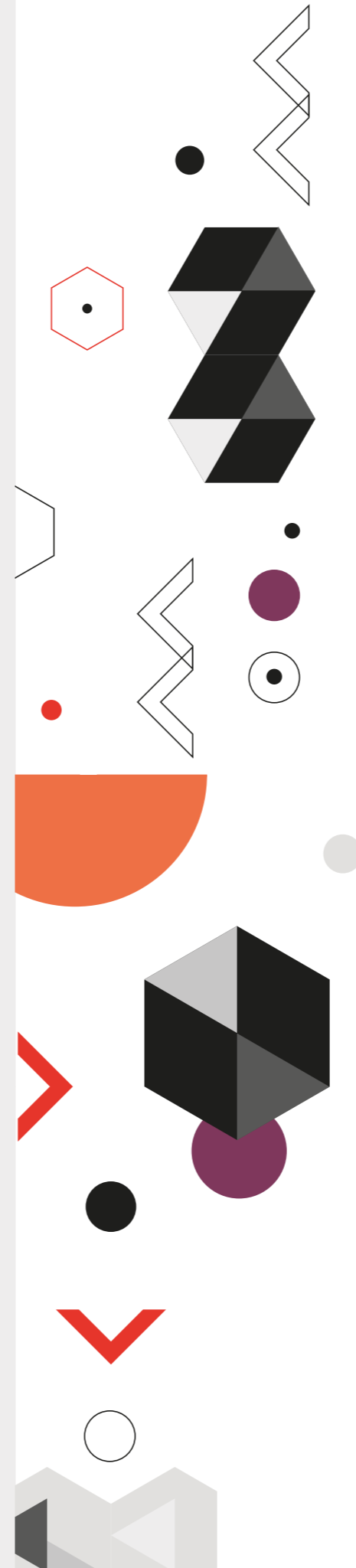


Welcome to SDIT

“A new breed of design leader can help companies unleash their business potentials by meaningful innovations.”

In a complex world awash with technology, fast-moving socio-cultural changes, and ultra-competitive business challenges, executives are asked to unlock a step change in business performance.

Envisioning **meaningful innovations**, leading **human-centric transformations**, and **engaging** employees through **responsible purposes** represent the ultimate goals to address.



The **SDIT** (the International Master in Strategic Design for Innovation and Transformation) aims to prepare designers and managers for navigating and driving the current complex challenges, which means being able to:

- ▶ **Imagine meaningful innovations** able to improve human wellbeing and to impact society;
- ▶ **Inspire colleagues and stakeholders** to pursue strategic transformation;
- ▶ **Lead** design projects activating virtuous employee engagement and breaking the culture of silos among different business areas;
- ▶ **Exploit the opportunities provided by digital technologies** through the interplay between artificial intelligence and human intuition as well as big and thick data;
- ▶ **Stimulate entrepreneurial mindsets** to activate and promote agile projects;
- ▶ **Organise** the creative process to favour integration with operations.



▶ The Uniqueness of the experience in 6 steps

- | | |
|---|---|
| ▶ The value of interacting with scholars internationally recognised for shaping the new theories of design management and design-driven innovation; | ▶ The possibility to challenge other participants in digital bootcamps that look at the grand-challenges that the global economy impose; |
| ▶ The opportunity to interact with design leaders who have made the success of several multinationals in the world of manufacturing, services, and strategic consulting; | ▶ The chance to get your hands dirty in workshops led by design challenges that combine product innovation with the need to transform organizations and people mind-set; |
| ▶ The benefit of developing professional skills through a digital experience built on POLIMI GSoM's innovative digital learning platform based on MICROSOFT technolog. | ▶ The advantage to leverage and enrich a network of design managers and leaders operating in global companies that see in design a competitive and transformative lever. |

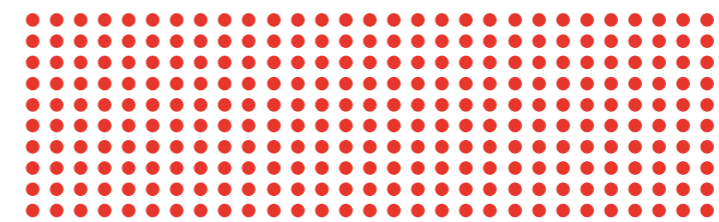
FACTS AND FIGURE ABOUT THE USE OF DESIGN IN ORGANIZATION

> 40%



More than 40% of the companies surveyed acknowledged as their greatest design weakness:

- To break down functional silos and integrate designers with other functions (facilitating a culture that may nurture cross-functional talent)
- To measure and drive design performance with the same rigor as revenues and costs (aiming at a more analytical design leadership).



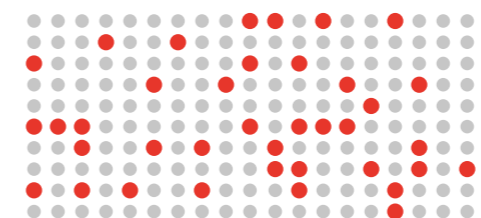
~ 300

Among 300 publicly listed companies tracked:

“The companies that performed best financially understood that design is a top-management issue, and assessed their design performance with the same rigor they used to track.”



Only 1 in 6 design leaders believes they are positioned to deliver their full potential value to the company.



20%

20% of the 200 design leaders in the research report directly to the CEO. Almost 50% perform partnering with the most influential senior executives in the corporation (C-suite).

< 50%



Fewer than half of design leaders feel their CEOs truly comprehend their role.

- CEOs must carefully incorporate the function of the senior designer into the rest of the top-team "ecosystem".
- Design-driven companies empower their design leaders to be catalysts for broad strategic transformation.



The International Master in Strategic Design for Innovation and Transformation (SDIT)

Big corporations and consultancies need to strategically blend market innovation and transformation processes, specifically **re-designing** the internal mode to conceive new products and business models. To tackle such big challenges, companies are intrigued by skillsets that combine strategy and design.

Indeed, the role of designers in corporations has dramatically changed over recent years and it is still evolving. At the same time, companies are looking for managers well equipped with a design attitude as a powerful tool to blend client and stakeholder perspectives with market opportunities, to envision strategic directions that leverage emerging behaviours, new socio-cultural trends and the opportunities provided by digital technologies.

To meet these growing needs, POLIMI Graduate School of Management, and POLI.design have jointly developed the International **Master in Strategic Design for Innovation and Transformation**, an 1-year programme structured in four main content blocks. The SDIT intends to involve executives who want to combine an investment in

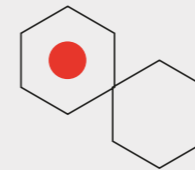
knowledge with their work commitments. The SDIT aims to train professionals and executives in combining design attitude and abilities with classical analytical-managerial skills. This entails planning, coordinating, and implementing consistent design operations and processes to meet the design direction, the strategic framework, and performance targets.

This programme includes a combination of different initiatives: face-to-face experiences such as company visits to meet innovation and design managers, a cultural tour to witness the Italian evolution of design, and a visit to professional Labs of modern masters of design. Furthermore, during the Master course, candidates will participate in two Digital Bootcamps: remote workshop sessions promoted by leading design-driven companies.



TOP 10 IN EUROPE

—
Online MBAs
QS Ranking 2026
and the Financial
Times



TOP 10 IN THE WORLD

—
QS Ranking 2026
POLITECNICO DI MILANO
Art&Design
category

POLIMI GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Created in 1979 as “Master in Ingegneria della Produzione” (Master in Production Engineering), and transformed in 1986 in a Consortium between Politecnico di Milano and many Italian institutions and several leading public and private industrial groups – mostly large multinational corporations – today, POLIMI Graduate School of Management is a non-for-profit Consortium Limited Company. For more than 40 years, the School has been attracting graduates interested in a managerial career in business or in public administration, together with companies wishing to enhance their organisation and strategies.

POLI.DESIGN

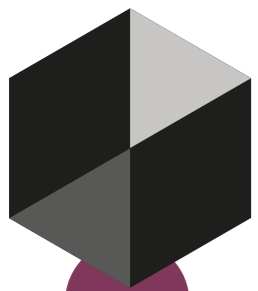
FOUNDED BY POLITECNICO DI MILANO

POLI.design is a center for postgraduate education at both national and international level and an integral part of the Politecnico di Milano Design System. Since 1999, we have built and continuously strengthened our educational offer around a project based learning approach, research, and polytechnic knowledge. From Specializing Master’s programs to Executive Courses and tailor made experiences for organizations, we deliver cross industry pathways that transfer the design mindset needed to drive transformation across different sectors.



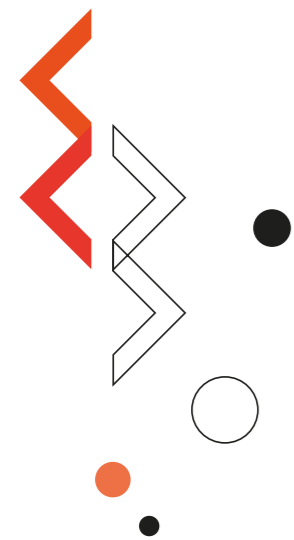
Profiles

A Master degree created to respond to a growing demand for design Managers and design Leaders.

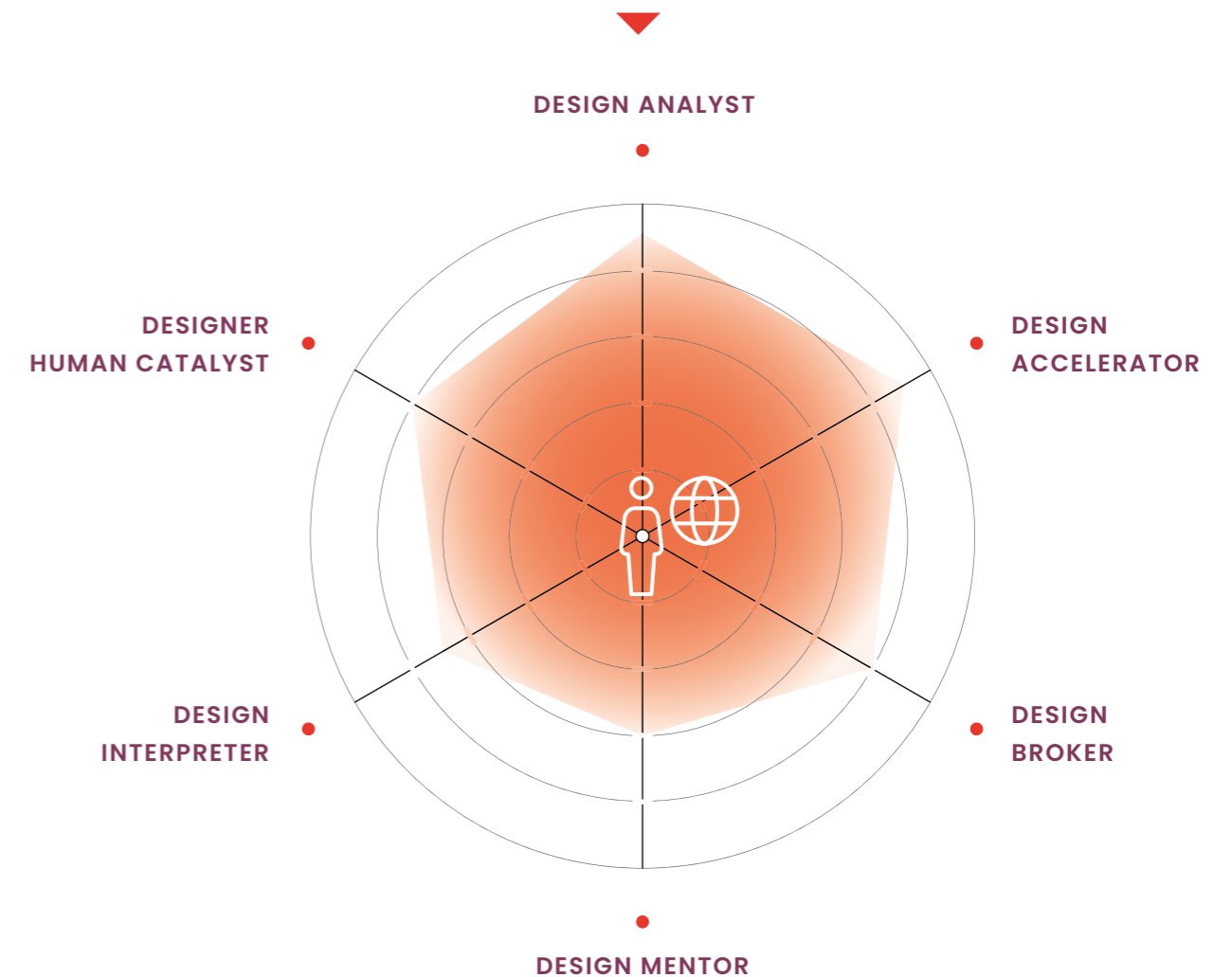


The research mapping around 40 companies permits delineating the various "Design Manager" profiles that big corporations and design consultancies are looking for nowadays.

Regardless of the most recurring job positions (labeled as Strategic Design Manager, Lead Design Strategist, Lead Design Researcher, Design OPS manager, Design Research accelerator), a set of common traits emerges, illustrating the most required accountabilities in this scope:



Our best recipe for a Design Manager looks like this:



DESIGN ANALYST to synthesize the vast amount of user-research data to provide insights, opportunities, and conceptual frames to develop innovation trajectories.

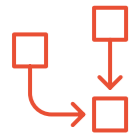
DESIGN ACCELERATOR to guarantee that the design, strategy, and production guardrails are satisfied;

DESIGN BROKER To act as a mediator and connect organizational silos.

DESIGN MENTOR To create traction and facilitate around a design direction in employee and stakeholders;

DESIGN INTERPRETER to translate data and related insights into tangible and engaging user stories.

DESIGN HUMAN CATALYST To identify human-centered problems, establish and execute research plans across qualitative and quantitative user research.



Programme structure



The “**Innovation and Design**” block interprets strategy making as a process strongly affected by the development of innovation and the role that design plays in the organisation. Mainly, it provides **an overview of strategy-making concepts related to a specific industrial setting** where creativity management and design represent key assets. Here, the idea of strategy making is interpreted through the lenses of design, where the concepts of “design-driven” innovation, the close link between planning and execution, and the human-centricity principles tend to update the classical and orthodox strategy-related constructs. On the other hand, the block treats **Corporate Entrepreneurship**

and **Organisation Transformation as fundamental components to sustain continuous renewal** and align the organisational posture to the strategic purposes. Strong emphasis will be placed on **the concept of Strategic Design** to bring strategic thinking down to the product-service system level. A deep-diving experience on how design-driven companies work is provided thanks to **innovation classes and design managers** who share their experiences with students. The group projects proposed by innovative companies and supported by them are part of the training programme and add a unique chance for students to work on real cases in close connection with design-driven companies.

* POLIMI Graduate School of Management reserves the right to change the titles and content of the courses before the start of the programme, ensuring the same level of quality. Students already enrolled in the programme will be informed promptly.

* During the Master programme, participants will take an examination on the date set for the submission of assignments.

The Programme is divided into 4 main content blocks and ends with a final project work.*

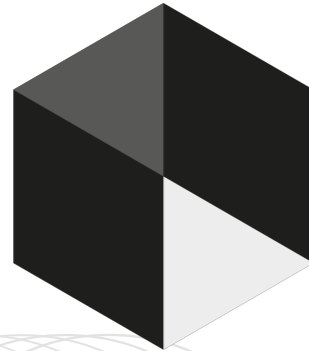
The “**Leadership and Engagement**” block provides an overview of theories and actional behaviours **to illustrate leadership to create a culture of innovation**, inspiring the team and stakeholders and activating a virtuous process of engagement across organisational silos. As has been recognised, unexpected obstacles and inertia are common in innovation and design projects. Here, designers and innovation managers are required to learn how to embrace complexity, identifying the key aspects underpinning a sound involvement of all the actors necessary to create the expected outcome. This part of the Master presents the **different nature of Leadership: effectively developing capabilities to manage change and innovation in organisational contexts**. The block connects Decision-Making approaches with an in-depth review of the constructs of Or-

ganisational Behaviour and Business Process Management. Furthermore, the conclusive part presents the overlapping area between Design culture and Organisational culture; the overview of the primary Design culture principles/pillars is presented as a means to nurture a culture of innovation in organisations by increasing employee engagement and their creative capacity. **Designing spaces** that facilitate interaction and the sparking of creativity, **conceiving an intangible infrastructure** that enables participation and inclusion, and **developing a culture oriented to “learn by failure”** are all part of that game. The block alternates theoretical lectures with **testimonials by design leaders** that will show how design culture penetrated a business culture adding new meanings, novel values, and actionable principles.

(Programme structure)

BLOCK

3

**DATA
and CREATIVITY**

The “Data and Creativity” block is hinged on the central theme of data. Over the last twenty years, the subject of data has profoundly changed how companies create strategies, generate innovations, and interface with users. While Big Data provides immediate market feedback on consumer preferences and trends, creativity often works with other data: it analyses the dataset differently from the way in which data mining systems can.

Creativity feeds on ‘weak’ data, peripheral data that is not collected globally, but derived from a specific context of use. It is data that some people call “weak”, but which

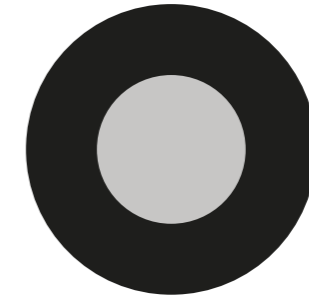
sparks creativity. After a general overview of the role of Big Data in innovation strategies and processes, the block will focus on how to conduct User research and gather qualitative data to generate valuable insights. Thus, the content will present how to transform services leveraging multiple data sources and how data can be grasped, organised and framed to support and induce creativity in the team. The Master explores the concept of a data-driven design through specific applications and the voice of innovation managers who run consulting projects where data plays a key role.

**FINAL PROJECT
WORK**

During the second half of the Master, participants are required to carry out a Project Work, which will be discussed at the end of the course. The objective of the Project Work is to develop a consultancy project with the support of the POLIMI Graduate School of Management Politecnico di Milano Faculty. Working closely with Politecnico di Milano professors and researchers, participants in the programme will have the opportunity to apply the tools and methods learned during the SDIT Master to tackle issues of interest to companies and build relationships of great value to their professional careers.

BLOCK

4

**DESIGN OPS and
TRANSFORMATION**

The “Design Ops and Transformation” block aims to break down the myth of the designer and his chaotic work outside the organisational rules and business procedures. In successful organisations, the development of the design process is planned and framed as a flow of operations where actors, activities, tools, and enablers of creativity have to be connected among themselves and with other parts of the organisation. According to that frame, creativity needs to govern the design process while considering the organisation’s purpose, the talents inside the organisation walls, the knowledge sharing

mechanism and the overall structure associated with the power flow. After an overview of open innovation and collaborative mechanisms logic, the block focuses on modern creative project management methodologies: agile methodologies, design methods and the organisational rules underlying UX/UI projects. The modules in this block articulate advanced didactic methods that see the cohabitation of the discussion of case studies, the development of group projects, and the introduction of some software related to the management of DesignOps.

**THE EXPERIENTIAL
NATURE
OF THE MASTER**

DIGITAL BOOTCAMP During the Master, there will be two sets of activities named “Digital Bootcamp”: workshop sessions (held remotely) that last three days (from Thursday to Saturday). Participants will face a specific design challenge promoted by leading design-driven companies. The intensive design sessions will be complemented by talks/thematic interventions by experts from different sectors.

F2F FACTORY/EXPERIENCE Moreover, during the Master, two face-to-face experiences will take place (one in Milan and another one abroad): participants will visit innovative businesses and meet design and innovation managers. In inspiring contexts, candidates will have different experiences: from visiting design organisations and Labs of modern masters to a cultural tour evoking the Italian evolution of design.



Timeline

BLOCKS

BLOCK 1
INNOVATION and DESIGN

1ST DIGITAL BOOTCAMP

I&D

FEBRUARY 2027

MAY

JUNE 2027

BLOCK 2
LEADERSHIP and ENGAGEMENT

1ST F2F FACTORY (ABROAD)

L&E

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER 2028

BLOCK 3
DATA and CREATIVITY

2ND DIGITAL BOOTCAMP

D&C

JANUARY

FEBRUARY 2028

BLOCK 4
DESIGN OPS and TRANSFORMATION

2ND F2F FACTORY (ITALY)

D&T

APRIL

APRIL

Project Work

MODULES

- Innovation and Design for Transformation
- Corporate Strategy and Entrepreneurship
- Design Thinking and Strategic Design

- Leadership and Organizational Behaviour
- Business Process and Digital Transformation
- Design in Organization

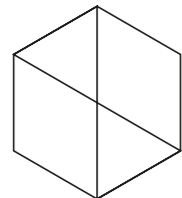
- Design and Creativity Methods
- Design through GenAI and Big Data

- Open and Platform Innovation
- Agile Innovation and Design Ops
- Service and UX/UI Design



Digital Innovation Experience

SDIT students' digital experience revolves around an innovative digital learning platform developed by POLIMI Graduate School of Management on MICROSOFT technology.



Individual productivity and collaboration tools have been integrated, including Outlook, OneDrive, Sharepoint, Teams, and other Office 365 applications in a user-friendly environment that allows participants to have an innovative digital experience, introducing for the first time the concepts of smart working in a training context.

THE ADVANTAGES TO BE FLEX

- ▶ Join the POLIMI Graduate School of Management digital learning experience, started in 2014 and developed in all our programs;
- ▶ Accessing pre-recorded video content and additional multimedia content;
- ▶ Participating actively in video discussion sessions and workgroups moderated by the teacher;
- ▶ Interacting with other students working with them on assignments and one-to-one with the faculty;
- ▶ Catching up on all live recorded lessons available in the following days in the digital learning platform library.

All this can be done from anywhere and using any kind of digital device

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AN INNOVATIVE DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM

POLIMI Graduate School of Management, is ranked among the Top Ten Online MBAs in Europe by both the Financial Times and QS 2026 Rankings, as well as the only Italian to have received the EOCCS certification for digital learning courses.





Weekly agenda

A typical week for our students is structured as follows:

WEEK type A

Video Clips available on the Digital Platform (max 16)

+

One Live session (2,5 hours)

or

WEEK type B

Two live sessions (2,5 hours each)

Each course will last 2 weeks

and can combine the 2 structures ^(A+B)

or include 2 live sessions for each week ^(B+B).

Live sessions are held online on

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7.00 until 9.30 PM CET.



Career Development

SDIT students can benefit from the support of the Career Development Center (CDC), which organises a series of activities designed to work on their personal branding and to build a solid professional network. The services offered in the field of Career Management, Networking with Companies and Careers Workshops are numerous, and involve students in a series of networking opportunities:

CAREER MANAGEMENT Access to experiential tools and labs to learn the main selection procedures adopted by employers and headhunters, for the effective management of career development processes.

NETWORKING EVENTS Participation in events such as Round Tables, which are structured to increase the opportunities for knowledge of the labour market and to facilitate business networking at 360°.

CAREER WORKSHOPS & LABS Career Planning & Strategy seminars aimed at developing the abilities and soft skills necessary for successfully facing the current world of work.

- • VMOCK, personalised feedback for the development of an effective and optimised CV;
- • Global Career Network Websites (privileged access to international portals to gather information about industries, trends, international recruiters and international job boards);
- • The POLIMI Graduate School of Management Job Board, which compiles job opportunities for students and alumni;
- • Career Counselling: on-demand discussion with a Career Consultant with the aim of offering students professional orientation in the job market for their career.



SDIT Ambassadors



ROBERTO BATTAGLIA
Chief Operating Officer
@ AIRC Foundation



MARZIA BATTAGLIA
Design Manager
@ Assist Digital



DEBORA BOTTA
Design Manager,
Author and Speaker



CAMILLA MIGNANI
Service Designer & UX/UI
Chapter Lead
@ Vodafone



LORENZO RUGGIERI
Expert Associate
Partner, Innovation
@ Bain & Company



MARCO SAMMARIA
Head of Digital Design
& Intelligence
@ Unipolsai S.P.A



IVAN MASSIMILIANO CARDACI
Head of Intellera SHAPE
Design Studio
@ Intellera Consulting



ALESSANDRO CONFALONIERI
Design Director
@ Frog – Part of Capgemini
Invent



MONICA DALLA RIVA
Vice President
Design & CX
@ Deutsche Telekom



SILVIA MAGNANINI
Senior Project Manager
& Service Designer
@ Logotel



ALBERT SHUM
Corporate Vice President
of Design (retire)
@ Microsoft



FEDERICA FALCINI
Customer Experience
Manager
@ HERA



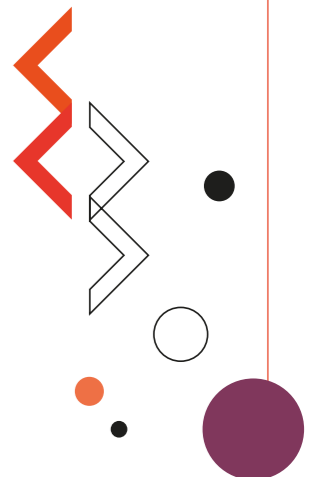
ALESSANDRA FIDANZI
Head of Digital Factory and
Center of Excellence
@ ENI



MARCO GIGLIO
Managing Director
@ BCG X



ANTONIO GRILLO
Executive Design Director
@ Tangity





Admission

Admission to the International Master in Strategic Design for Innovation and Transformation takes place on a rolling basis. Admissions requirements: **Bachelor's degree in any discipline; work experience.** Enrolment is once a year, with the programme beginning in February. Applicants will be required to sit a Video Interview online.

HOW TO APPLY

- Application form (<https://apply.gsom.polimi.it/signup>)
- Application fee (€100)
- CV or resume in English
- University degrees and transcripts
- Motivational letter
- Reference letter(s) (not mandatory)
- Copy of valid passport
- Digital passport-sized picture

FEES

The SDIT participation fee is **€ 21,000** (VAT exempt) for students participating on a **personal basis**, and **€ 24,000** (VAT exempt) for attendance supported **by companies or by freelance professionals. Contributions to the study are available.** The cost of the 2 face-to-face experiences is included in the tuition fee with the exclusion of living expenses (travel, accommodation, lunch and dinner).



CONTACT DETAILS

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