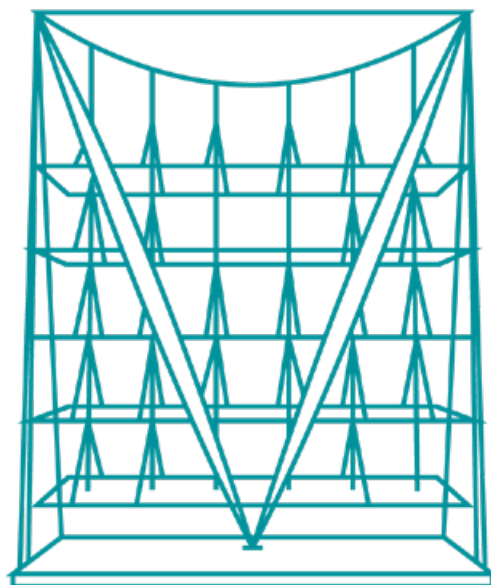




FURNITURE DESIGN

LEARNING FROM THE ITALIAN EXPERIENCE

XII EDITION - JUNE 2026



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LEARNING FROM THE ITALIAN EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTION TO FURNITURE DESIGN

The Masters programme in furniture design aims to illustrate the drivers of success of Italian design, showing its culture, values and identity. The competitive advantage of companies in today's markets relies more and more on intangible and symbolic values, and design is one of the most critical among them. Italy has a longstanding tradition in design. Design is not only a technical function able to generate value for the industry, but a cultural phenomenon that is part of the daily life of people, in particular in some areas of the Country. In Italy the interest in design harks back to the past, and is rooted in the history of art, craftsmanship and architecture. The core of the program is focused on the knowledge generated from the advantageous relationships instilled between the Italian production system and the network of professions involved in design. The Master sets its cultural roots in the "Italian model" and the relationship between enterprise and design, while also aiming to develop new knowledge and innovation in responding to the challenges posed by technological, social and market changes. The program's structure takes on a systemic vision of the role of design in the furniture industry, teaming new fields of interest to the traditional focus on product development, along with the growing importance of brands and its tangible and intangible elements of expression.

THE ITALIAN FURNITURE INDUSTRY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH DESIGN

The Masters programme is based on the ability of Italian companies to make design a fundamental lever of competitive advantage and a structural element of corporate culture. The extraordinary relationship between the Italian manufacturing system and design skills is at the heart of the training project.



TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Master Course is to provide designers with specialized skills in the field of furniture design, teaching them to respond to the changes and transformations occurring in the industry's production systems and markets by using the most advanced relationship models of integrating the product development processes with market dynamics and technological advancements. The program furthermore seeks to complete the training of professionals in industry working in R&D, marketing and brand management departments and provide them with the ability to understand and manage design as a lever of competitive advantage.

STRUCTURE OF THE MASTERS PROGRAMME:

- Introductory and specialized lessons, entrusted to a highly qualified faculty, composed of teachers from the Politecnico di Milano, professionals from the industry and experts from the business world.
- Seminars and meetings with designers and companies that will bring participants into direct contact with the protagonists of Italian design.
- Project work in small teams starting from project briefs from partner companies with the support of professionals and experts from within the industry.
- Professional experience by way of internship at companies and professional studios (minimum 300 hours), with the aim of experimenting and expanding the skills acquired during the Master.



THE PARTNER COMPANIES

The master is supported by some of the most significant Italian furniture companies and institutions.

The partner companies operate in a variety of Italian market sectors and sub-sectors, providing knowledge within a broad spectrum of technologies and business models.

COMPANIES



STUDIOS

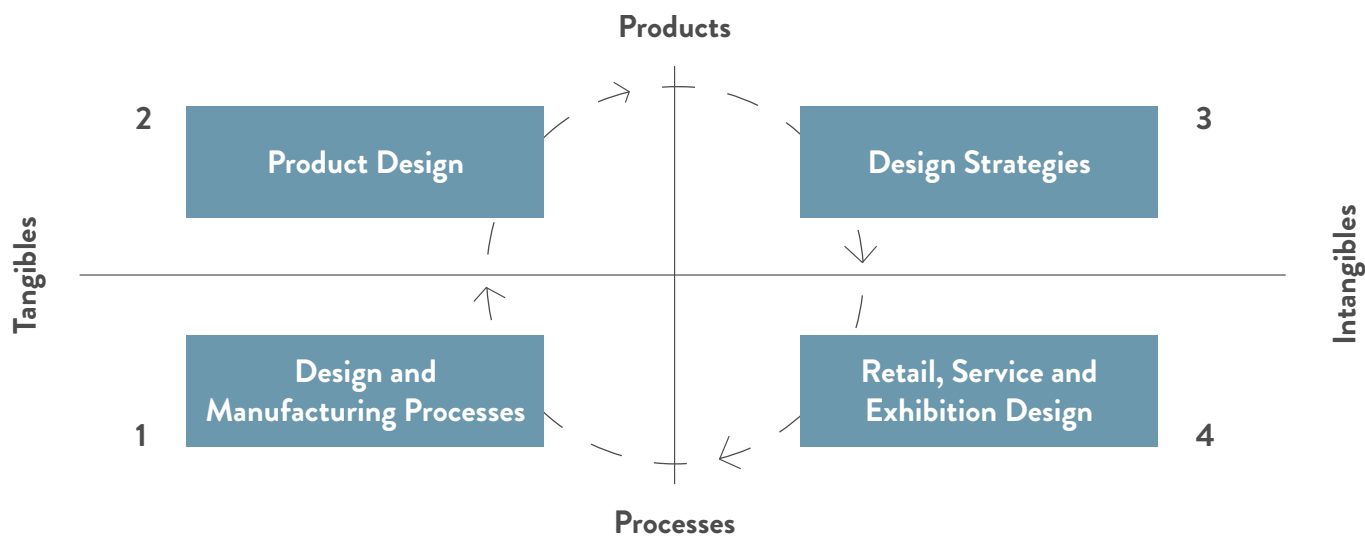


Francesco Faccin



TEACHING MODULES

The program is delivered through company visits, lectures, testimonials, case studies and project work according to the following teaching modules:

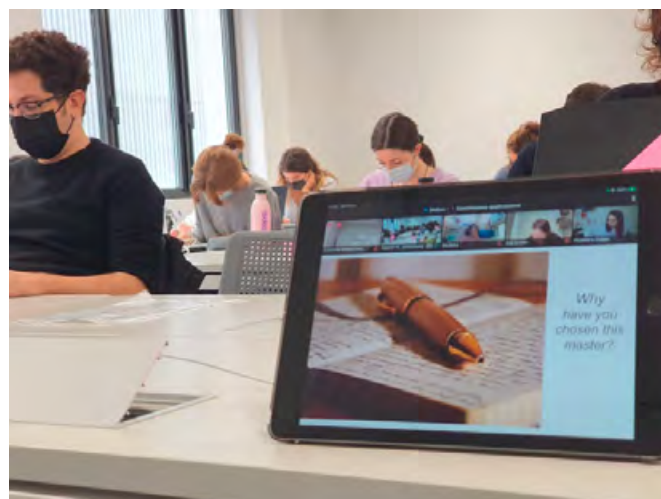


PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT PATH

The proposed training method is based on the methodology of group coaching and the learning by doing approach through role play and interactive and engaging exercises. The goal is to allow people to leave their comfort zone on the way. In this way, people will be able to increase skills, awareness and co-creation, putting in place a real exercise of team cohesion and of the fundamental skills to be competitive in the market.

PERSONAL DESIGN PORTFOLIO

The activity aims at supporting the students in the preparation of their personal design portfolio, providing guidance on how to make it more interesting and impactful.



MODULE 1:

Introduction to Italian Design, Technologies and Materials

The course combines a short cycle of lectures meant at providing an overview of the history of contemporary Italian design and a short cycle of lectures meant to introduce the basics of technologies and materials in the furniture sector. The latter offers an overview of the main production cycles and models in the furniture industry and introduces the familiarity of product engineering for designers, as well as notions about environmental sustainability and tools for its management.



Italian Furniture Design and Manufacturing

The course aims at providing an understanding of the relationship between designers and Italian furniture companies. It will illustrate, by way of case studies and seminars with designers and companies, the use of advanced manufacturing knowledge to create added value, and advanced customer-supplier relationships as traits of characterization of the Italian production model.

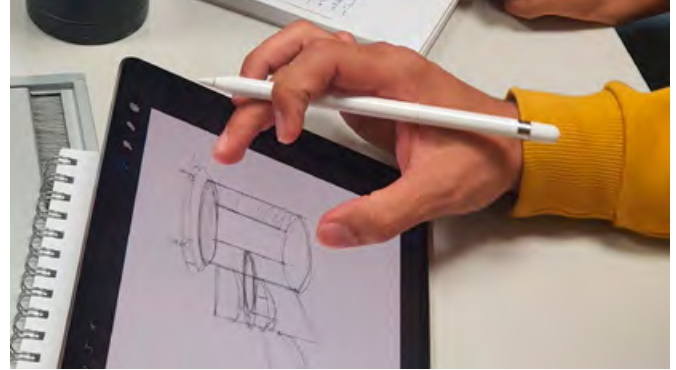
3D Modeling and Rendering

The course introduces 3D modeling and rendering tools and techniques for product design, based on the most used software programs. Teaching will be based on introductory lectures and practical skills.

Freehand Sketching

The crash course will give or refine freehand drawing and sketching skills, which are particularly helpful in the ideation phase, as well as during the interaction with clients, companies and suppliers.

MODULE 2:



PRODUCT DESIGN AND ENGINEERING MODULE

The module introduces product development processes and tools through a learning-by-doing approach.

Courses are conceived as design workshops that offer the opportunity to develop new products, linked to the concrete needs of companies, which provide design briefs and support during project development.

Workshop 1: Design for Manufacturing

The course provides an overview of the problems connected to the optimization of manufacturing of newly designed products. It is primarily focused on design for manufacturing and introduces approaches for the early detection of manufacturability issues (simultaneous engineering), as well as practical tools.

Workshop 2: Ideas and Concept Design

The course focuses on the initial stages of the innovation process. It proposes a practical exercise that starts with a design brief, passes through a phase of context analysis (socio-technical and competitive landscape, opportunities and constraints) and concludes with the development of innovative conceptual solutions.





Design for Sustainability and Circular Economy

This short cycle of lectures will introduce principles and tools for Design for Sustainability, that are becoming ever more important to sustain Circular Economy and combine economic, social and ethical values.

Shapes, Surfaces and Colours

The course aims at providing skills for the integrated management of shape, color and finishing in the furniture field. It introduces CMF (Color, Finish and Material) design as a new area of expertise in the furniture industry.

Sketch Modeling

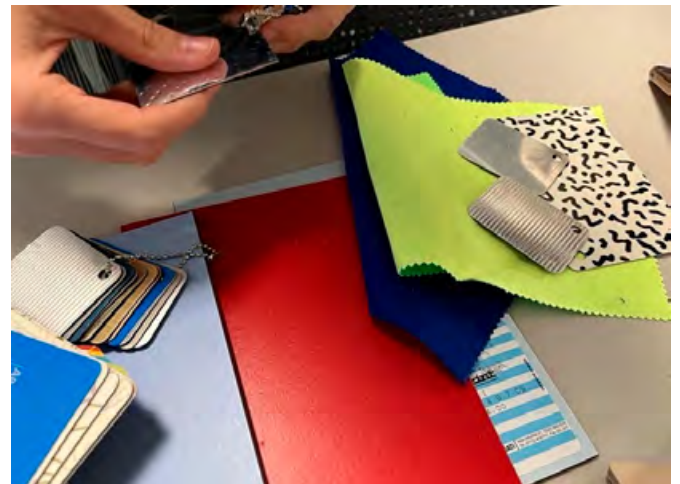
These highly interactive and hands-on activities will introduce sketch modelling techniques, which will be of help in giving shape to new products, verifying technical aspects and solutions, studying proportions etc.

Workshop 3: New Product Development

The course focuses on the development of new products, linked to the concrete needs of partner companies, who provide briefings and support for students during project development. It aims at developing the capacity to manage design requirements and product development tools within a learning-by-doing framework.

Workshop 4: Product Engineering

The course provides an overview of the issues and tools related to detailed design, including physical and digital prototyping. The course is primarily focused on the final steps of the design process and aims at developing the capacity of designers to anticipate engineering problems and manage the collaboration with technicians and suppliers operating in the furniture manufacturing process.



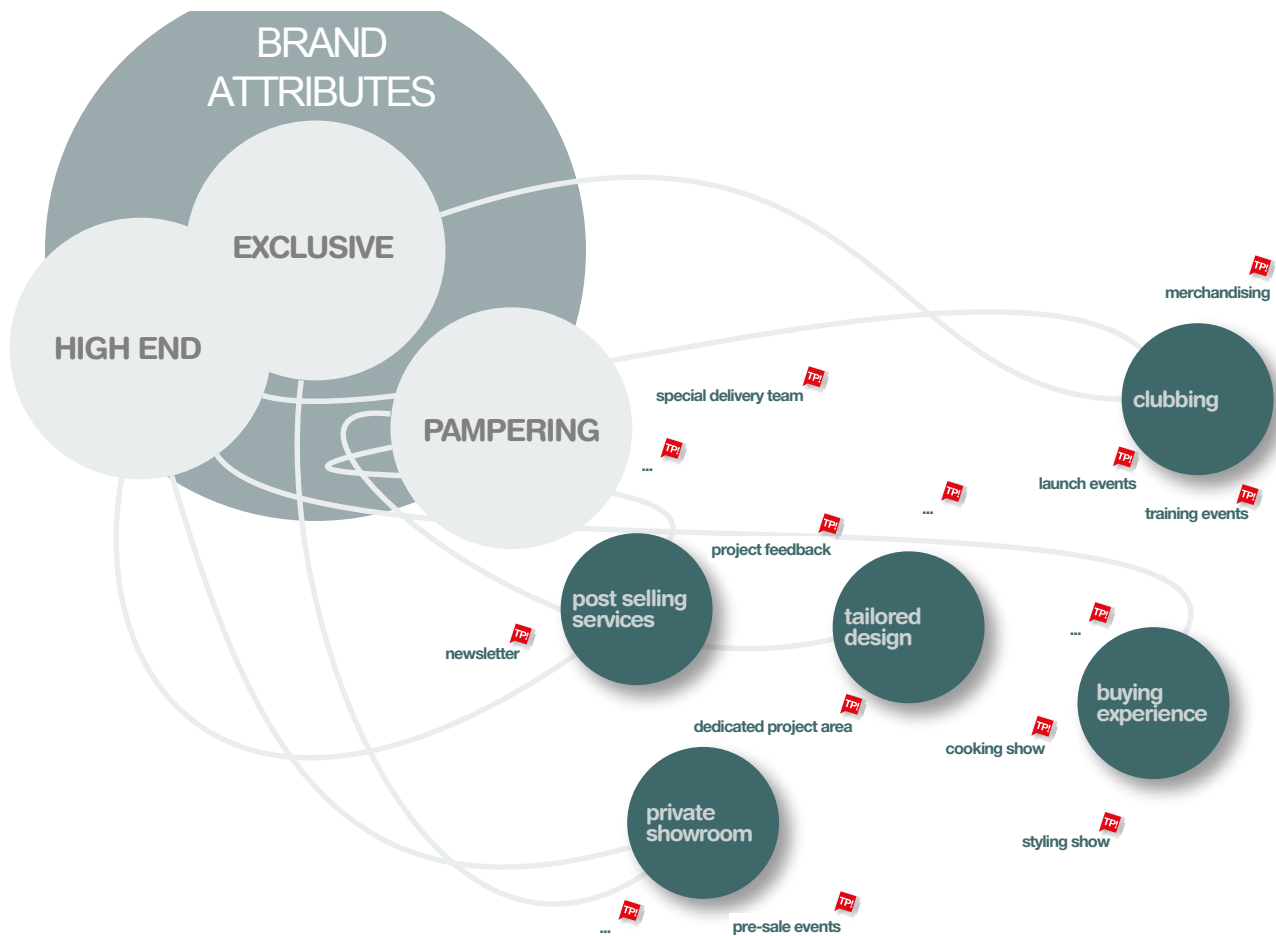
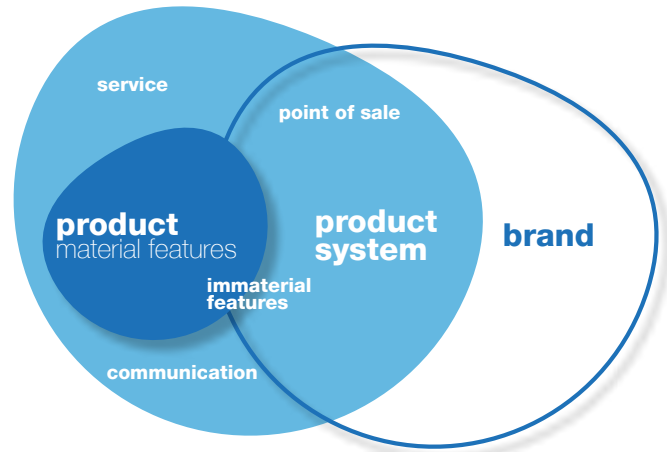
MODULE 3:

Design Strategies Module

The module introduces design direction and design management principles, and combines brand positioning and identity with its elements of expression (product portfolio, brand presence at points of sale and communication tools). Moreover, the module introduces the strategies and tools for digital media management and the issues and perspectives of digital distribution channels.

Design and Brand Direction

The course introduces strategic design, design direction and management approaches and tools. It will provide an understanding of the logics behind brand positioning and brand identity management, working towards a coherent design of the elements of brand expression. Lectures and case studies will be complemented with an exercise, in which students will be asked to give shape to an innovation strategy, based on the “Ten Types of Innovation” framework.



MODULE 4:

Communication, Retail, Service and Exhibition Design Module

The module introduces retail issues (channels, presence formats, etc.), sales organization (layout, atmosphere, etc.), user experience design (service and experience design), and the integration between tangible and digital channels in furniture retail.

Digital Media and E-commerce

The course introduces strategies and tools for managing digital media.

By using real-life case studies, the course provides an overview of the most relevant issues and perspectives of digital distribution channels in the furniture sector and beyond.

Retail, Service and Exhibition Design

The course introduces retail issues (channel types, presence format etc.), sales organization (layout, atmosphere, styling etc.), service design (service and experience design) and the integration of tangible and digital experience design. It includes lessons, seminars, site visits and targeted design exercises.



EXTRA-DIDACTIC ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION IN DESIGN EVENTS

Milan is the most thriving city for design. Attending the course will give the opportunity to take part in hundreds of events in museums, centres, showrooms, universities and other places.

PARTECIPATION IN THE MILAN DESIGN WEEK: SALONE AND FUORISALONE

The Salone del Mobile held in Milano is the most important furniture exhibitions in the world, with a vast array of exhibitions that integrates quality and creativity. The 2018 edition had 386,000 attendees, over the 6 days, from 181 different countries. The Masters programme proposes an exciting and instructive visit to Salone and Fuorisalone as a part of the learning experience.

INTERNSHIP

350 hours of professionalizing projects or 350 hours of curriculum internships at companies and professional studios, with the aim of experimenting and expanding the skills acquired during the Master in the world of work. The final exam consists in the development and presentation of an elaborate in which the candidate will express the experience gained during the curricular internship and all the master activities and developed projects.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Timing

June 2026 - August 2027

Attendance is mandatory for at least 75% of the programme activities.

Language

The Specializing Master is entirely taught in English.

Place

The programme will take place at POLI.design, via Don Giovanni Verità 25, Milano, Campus Bovisa.

Fees

The cost of the University Specializing Master's programme is € 15.500 broken down as follows:

- € 500,00 – enrolment fee to be paid to the Politecnico di Milano, no later than 30 days before the starting date following the procedures that POLI.design will specify;
- € 15.000 – participation fee for the University Master's Course to be paid to POLI.design following the procedures that will be specified upon admission.

Application

Required documents:

- Application form duly filled out in all its parts
- Updated Curriculum Vitae;
- Motivation letter;
- Portfolio;
- Copy of the academic certificate to certificate detailing the marks obtained for each examination, or the Diploma Supplement;
- A copy of the student's identity document. ID card (EU citizens) or passport (Non-EU citizens).

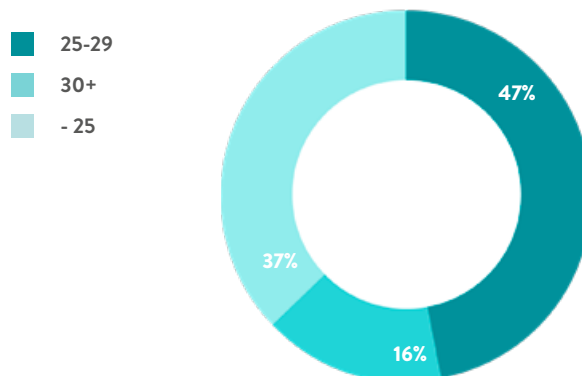
The selection process includes a motivational interview via Zoom with the Scientific Coordinator and the Didactic Coordinator of the master that will take place after we receive the application documents. Candidates who wish to apply to the Specializing Master in Furniture Design should click on this [link](#).

Follow us on social media:

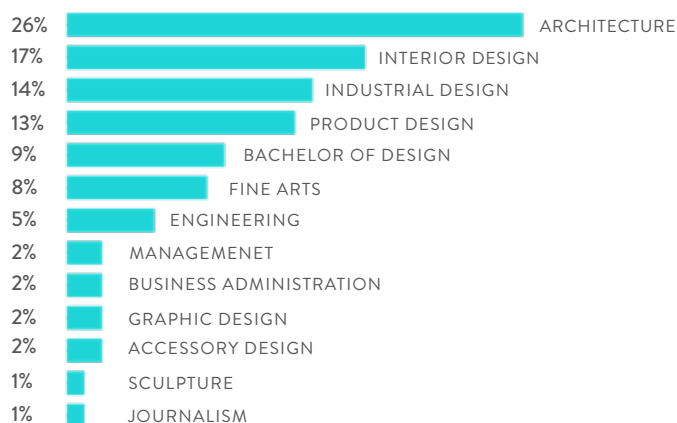


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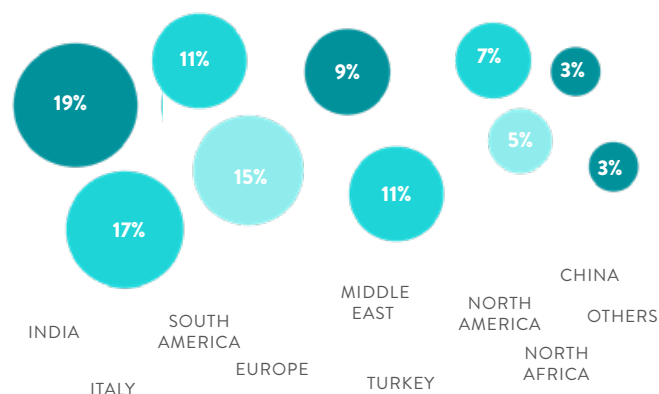
Age clusters



Student profiles



Student countries



polidesign.net/en/formazione/product-design/master--furniture-design/

POLI.design

Società consortile a responsabilità limitata
Campus Bovisa, Via Don Giovanni
Verità, 25

Elisa Piccini

Training Office
T. +39 02 2399 5911
request info on the master's webpage
