



in collaboration with



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Sustainable Horticultural Systems

Joint Certificate Program

Italy-Azerbaijan University Project

The Certificate Program is designed as a policy dialogue between different stakeholders in the agricultural and food sector of Azerbaijan and Italy. Representatives from the industry, government, and academia will interact and brainstorm to explore answers to pressing issues and challenges of local small and medium enterprises in the agri-food sector through policy, research and entrepreneurial response. Throughout the program the participants will be trained to look for modern solutions tailored to local context by drawing lessons from current global tendencies and best international practices.

Target audience

The program is intended for representatives across agri-food system including entrepreneurs, company executives, researchers and government representatives to enhance know-how in the horticultural sector while promoting an inter-disciplinary and holistic approach.

General objectives

- Identify short-term and long-term consequences of decision-making, involving different components of horticultural systems in Azerbaijan, at the national and international markets level
- Translate innovations into feasible business solutions
- Explore and generate new ideas in response to current and future challenges
- Use knowledge, ideas and technology to create new or improved products, services, processes, policies, business models or jobs
- Build an academic-business nexus, by applying cutting-edge research, processes and techniques towards new venture creation
- Transform practical experiences in the horticultural sector into research problems and challenges

Thematic areas

- Economics and policy for the management of horticultural systems
- Marketing and trade of horticultural products
- Precise and smart horticulture
- Innovative technologies for horticultural development
- Greenhouse and vertical farming systems
- Crop biotechnology
- Plant protection

- Applied breeding and sustainability in horticultural systems
- Intellectual property rights and plant variety protection of horticultural crops

Didactic approach and method

The Certificate Program aims to be an open discussion for all participants. Each session will cover specific thematic areas, agreed upon to balance the interests of different stakeholders and the two universities. Seminars will have an open structure to be as inclusive and participatory as possible. The topics will be addressed from an academic, governmental and entrepreneurial point of view. The modules include case studies and experiences from lecturers and entrepreneurs, inviting to an open discussion. At the end of each session, there will be a round table discussion with experts or the program will host high level luncheon guest speaker.

Format

The program is structured in 3 modules taught in the following format:

Baku module: February 19-23

The Baku module will be structured in five days including:

- Seminars with researchers and international professionals
- Professional workshops
- A focus on specific horticultural chains including: apples, potatoes, nuts, tomatoes
- A mini fair engaging Azerbaijani and Italian horticultural and machinery producers showcasing their products and practices
- B2B meetings among Azerbaijani and Italian horticultural and machinery producers

Asynchronous remote module (online): April 8-29

The online module provides lessons on remote basis, adopting the most possible participatory structure. Students will have the opportunity to follow the lessons asynchronously. The module will offer the opportunity to delve deeper in the broad topics introduced during the Baku module also on the basis of participant demand.

Bologna module: May 6 -10

The Bologna module will be structured in five days between Bologna and Rimini in the following manner:

- Seminars and workshops with researchers and international professionals
- R2B meetings with researchers of the University of Bologna and other organizations
- Company visits
- Professional workshops and dedicated events and visits at MACFRUT
- B2B meetings at MACFRUT

Tentative schedule

Baku module: February 19-23

- **February 19:** Opening and seminars
- **February 20:** Seminars/workshops
- **February 21:** Seminars/workshops
- **February 22:** Seminars/workshops
- **February 22:** *Field visits for Italian companies*
- **February 23:** Mini-fair with stands (a selected number of Azerbaijani and Italian companies), B2B meetings and professional workshops

Asynchronous remote module (online): April 8-29

Bologna module: May 6 -10

- **May 6:** Opening and visit to DISTAL labs and facilities
- **May 7:** R2B meetings and company visits
- **May 8:** R2B meetings and company visits
- **May 9:** Professional workshops, dedicated events and visits and B2B meetings at MACFRUT
- **May 10:** Professional workshops, dedicated events and visits and B2B meetings at MACFRUT

Take the opportunity! For junior participants it might be possible to extend the visit organizing a 2 weeks internship in an Italian company.

Language

The language of the program is English.

Award

Upon successful completion of the program, all participants will be awarded a joint Certificate by the ADA University and the University of Bologna.

Who can apply?

Experienced professionals, entrepreneurs and researchers in the area of horticultural system.

Cost

The fee of the entire program is 1500 AZN (800 euro).

50% discount is offered to researchers and professionals coming from academia. Participants are required to cover airfare and accomodation expenses of Bologna module. Travel related organizational facilitation to be provided by the organizers.

Please contact iau@ad.edu.az for more information and eligibility for discount.

Application:

All interested candidates must fill out this [Online Application form](#) before **February 1, 2024**.

Organized by

*School of Agricultural and Food Sciences, ADA University
Department of Agricultural and Food Sciences, University of Bologna*

In collaboration with

MACFRUT

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ITAZERCOM – Italy-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce

*CERMAC - Consortium for Internationalization of Italian Producers of Technologies and Products for
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