

Case Study

Stewardship for Responsible Innovation in Food and Living Environment

Activity

In this Master course students design, in groups of 2 to 4 students, a responsible and innovative project that addresses a self-chosen challenge in the context of food and living environment, while receiving peer and coaching support. This gives the students the opportunity to experiment with how they can actively influence the future that they want to create. Through this exercise students learn, from their peers and from stakeholders, about stewardship for responsible innovation. Students are asked to learn by self-study, actively participate in the sessions and design and implement a 1-day responsible innovation project that has societal relevance.



Methodology

We are stimulating students to select a sustainability challenge they are passionate about and to connect their project to relevant societal actors. Students tackle the selected challenge responsibly, taking into account aspects related to anticipation, reflexivity, inclusiveness and responsiveness. While designing their projects, students explore their steward leadership competencies.

In the final exam presentations the students showcase their projects by reflecting back on how they are fostering responsible innovation through their project design and on their stewardship competencies.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students are expected to:

- be able to understand stewardship and responsible innovation concepts and features;
- be able to understand and have practiced stewardship and responsible innovation competencies;
- have initiated, implemented and evaluated a process of responsible innovation of their own choosing.



Conclusions

The students enrolled in the course appreciate the dynamic and participatory set-up of the course. Students also stated that the RRI approach trains them to carefully create sustainable innovations considering stakeholders involvement and considering various future scenarios. Further thinking and experimentation is needed about how to upscale the efforts beyond this course taking into account different learning needs of a big number of students in the context of very diverse study programmes.

Trainers' and Learners' profiles

This course is intended for students who like to learn to respond to our current sustainability challenges from a responsible innovation perspective.

The trainers role is to support the learners with appropriate resources and tools and offer an open ear for their learning process.

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