



# PhD in INGEGNERIA GESTIONALE / MANAGEMENT ENGINEERING - 38th cycle

**PARTENARIATO PNRR Research Field: PLATFORM THINKING TO ENABLE SUSTAINABLE  
AND CIRCULAR BUSINESS MODELS FOR THE MILAN FASHION AND LUXURY  
ECOSYSTEM**

**Monthly net income of PhDscholarship (max 36 months)**

**€ 1450.0**

In case of a change of the welfare rates during the three-year period, the amount could be modified.

## Context of the research activity

**Motivation and objectives of the research  
in this field**

The fashion, luxury, and design system represent international excellence in the Milan and Lombardy area. It is a highly competitive ecosystem, based on both large and small-size firms, a strong connection to the territory, the construction of networks between companies and production subsystems, and the ability to integrate codifiable and transferable knowledge with tacit and contextual expertise.

In this context, it is essential to facilitate the transition towards new business models, based on supply chains guided by sustainability and circularity principles. How to design these business models and how develop them is still largely unknown and we propose to tackle it leveraging a Platform Thinking approach.

A multistakeholder platform approach able to connect different actors of the supply chain with customers, institutions and local entities has the potentiality to be a highly successful and scalable approach.

The main goal of the research is to study platform dynamics and platform thinking to propose a model to promote sustainable, circular and effective business models for the Milan fashion industry (possibly replicable elsewhere in the future). Over the last two decades, platforms have transformed the way, we search for information (e.g., Google), buy goods (e.g., Amazon), consume news and media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) and travel and move around (e.g., Airbnb, Booking.com,



	<p>Uber and TripAdvisor).</p> <p>Consequently, it is one of the most discussed topics in the tech and management literature (see Parker et al., 2016, Gawer and Cusumano, 2014). Scholars explain this phenomenon as ‘the power of platforms’, defined as an innovative business model that relies on digital technologies to assemble people, knowledge and companies in an interactive ecosystem where value can be created, captured and shared.</p> <p>More specifically, two-sided platforms are defined as intermediary platforms that link two groups of customers and generate indirect network externalities (Rochet &amp; Tirole, 2003), like in the case of Uber (with drivers and riders) or Airbnb (with hosts and travellers), to become multisided platforms when there are more than two sets of customers (Trabucchi &amp; Buganza, 2020).</p> <p>Building on previous research, through this project, the researchers envisage the development of frameworks to design and promote a sustainable, circular and effective business model leveraging on the significant assets of the Milan Fashion Industry.</p>
<p><b>Methods and techniques that will be developed and used to carry out the research</b></p>	<p>The research process will join a theoretical approach with a more action-based one.</p> <p>The project will be organized as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) literature review: Execution of an extensive, and systematic literature review with the aim of finding examples or prodromes of Platform Thinking into several literature domains encompassing sustainability, circular economy, ecosystems, retail ad experiential marketing.</li> <li>2) model development: development of a model to both design the new platform-based ecosystem and its implementation, with particular focus on when and how to engage the different sides in order to tackle the so-called chicken-and-egg paradox.</li> <li>3) Action Research: Collaborating with companies, institutions and customers the research will support all the engaged partners to look for their idle-assets to be shared and to start an experimental platform to promote a sustainable, circular and effective business model leveraging on the significant assets of the Milan Fashion Industry.</li> </ol>



	<p>4) Development of training programs: Development of courses and programs (targeting firms and professionals along the entire value chain) aimed at transferring the skills required to create, diffuse, and maintain sustainable/circular business models, and at avoiding delays and failures due to socio-cultural motivations (including ethical and inclusion issues).</p>
Educational objectives	<p>In the context of “Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza (PNRR)”, this scholarship promotes the competence required by the challenges of sustainability in the fashion and luxury sector, with specific focus on creating a Sustainable and Circular platform-based model. At the end of the PhD program, the candidate will develop the following skills:</p> <p><b>-Literature search skills:</b> Ability to carry out an extensive literature review, and to use the results to support applied research: based on the outcomes of the literature review, the research group will support applied research through laboratories and infrastructures for prototyping and testing the digital platforms and the ecosystems by cross-disciplinary teams.</p> <p><b>-Research Design skills:</b> e.g. Ability to design and carryout a idle asset analysis of companies and critical requirements: interviews, needs analysis, survey based research ...</p> <p><b>-Organizational skills,</b> e.g. organizing Hackathons with students and industry experts to develop groundbreaking circular economy models, or organizing awards and competitions for innovative ideas and startups in sustainable fashion and luxury.</p> <p><b>-Educational designer skills,</b> e.g. The ability to design training programs for different audiences (innovation managers in the Fashion industry, designers, retail managers, ) both in terms of contents and in terms of instructional design and delivery interaction</p>
Job opportunities	<p>The first area of employment is connected with the development of the widest both digital and physical platform: the number of companies that may be interested in accessing—either directly or indirectly—such a platform is incredibly wide: large fashion-luxury brands, independent</p>



	<p>designers, suppliers along the supply chain (eg. Textile companies, tanneries, ...), packaging suppliers, labs working on the development of new materials, or startups proposing their innovative solutions, ...</p> <p>At a more strategic level, the expertise developed in the PhD can be exploited in a consultancy job, helping fashion and luxury firms develop innovative and sustainable retailing strategies and formats aimed at regenerating the urban landscape, enhancing cultural heritage (e.g., use of digitized historical archives), and harmonizing different forms of physical/digital retailing sustainable and circular supply chains.</p> <p>A further area of interest is related with the goal of developing and executing creative formats for cultural diffusion, such as educational video-games, digital Apps, a possible dedicated website, MOOCs, physical/digital expositions, and experiential labs where customers interact with professionals in watching, repairing and making objects. These activities will be aimed at:</p> <p>(a) enhancing end-consumers' awareness, appreciation, and involvement in sustainability and the circular economy, gender parity, inclusion, and the preservation of heritage-related assets;</p> <p>(b) showcasing manual work and revitalizing the "pride of craftsmanship", in particular among younger generations, attracting them to educational initiatives to develop related skills and employability</p>
<b>Composition of the research group</b>	3 Full Professors 0 Associated Professors 7 Assistant Professors 3 PhD Students
<b>Name of the research directors</b>	Prof. Tommaso Baganza, Prof. Alessandro Brun

<b>Contacts</b>
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<b>Additional support - Financial aid per PhD student per year (gross amount)</b>	
<b>Housing - Foreign Students</b>	--
<b>Housing - Out-of-town residents (more than 80Km out of Milano)</b>	--



Scholarship Increase for a period abroad	
Amount monthly	725.0 €
By number of months	6

**Additional information: educational activity, teaching assistantship, computer availability, desk availability, any other information**

The PhD candidate will have the opportunity to attend courses on Management Engineering research methods and innovation management at Politecnico di Milano and other Universities and research centers.

They will be continuously supervised by the research director through meetings and will receive feedbacks on their intermediate results during regular meetings with the Doctorate board and scientific conferences.

The public speaking and effective communication skills will be improved through the engagement in teaching and communication activities, which are seen as a major opportunity to practice with dissemination of own and other relevant research results.

They will be provided with desk and office facilities at the department of management engineering. Remote working is welcome but the presence in the department facilities is considered important to accelerate the research skills through the research community and the colleagues.

CUP: D43C22001410007

Decreto Direttoriale Avviso:

D.D. 3277 del 30/12/2022 Avviso pubblico per la presentazione di Proposte di intervento per la creazione di 12 Ecosistemi dell'innovazione sul territorio nazionale da finanziare nell'ambito del Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza, Missione 4 Componente 2 Investimento 1.5 - Creazione e rafforzamento di ecosistemi dell'innovazione, costruzione di leader territoriali di R&S - finanziato dall'Unione europea - NextGenerationEU.

Decreto di concessione: D.D. 1052 del 23/06/2022