



**UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI TRIESTE**

A.A. 2026-2027

FIRST-LEVEL UNIVERSITY POST GRADUATE MASTER IN COFFEE

ECONOMICS AND SCIENCE "ERNESTO ILLY"

16TH EDITION

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TRIESTE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ART. 3, PARAGRAPH 9 OF MINISTERIAL DECREE NO. 270 OF OCTOBER 22, 2004, AND PURSUANT TO THE REGULATIONS GOVERNING FIRST AND SECOND LEVEL UNIVERSITY MASTER'S PROGRAMS, ADVANCED TRAINING COURSES, AND CONTINUING AND RECURRENT HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES, THE FIRST LEVEL UNIVERSITY MASTER'S PROGRAM IN COFFEE ECONOMICS AND SCIENCE "ERNESTO ILLY" (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE "MASTER'S PROGRAM") IS BEING LAUNCHED FOR THE 2026-2027 ACADEMIC YEAR.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The Master's program aims to provide specialized academic and professional training covering the biological, agronomic, technological, and economic aspects involved in the journey from the coffee plant to the final product. Grounded in a consistent multidisciplinary approach, the program is unified by a commitment to quality and ethics across every stage of production and commercialization. Designed for graduates interested in the entire supply chain—including those from green coffee-producing countries—the program is structured around three specific thematic areas: biological-agronomic, technological, and economic-managerial. The Master's program draws direct inspiration from the ethical values and the scientific and managerial approach of Ernesto Illy, embracing his cultural legacy and bearing his name as a symbolic tribute..

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

The Master's program develops multifaceted, multidisciplinary professional profiles aligned with the demands of the entire coffee supply chain. In this regard, the program addresses the needs of companies and institutions involved in the upstream stages of the chain—ranging from plant cultivation to the initial processing of green coffee—as well as those operating in intermediate stages (traders, logistics companies) and downstream sectors (roasters and distributors). The professional profiles cultivated by the program encompass multidisciplinary and cross-functional competencies, combining managerial skills with technical-scientific expertise. This blend of skills reflects the requirements of the global coffee sector and is fostered by a training program considered unique on an international level, as evidenced by the recruitment and placement results achieved in previous editions



DURATION AND ACADEMIC CREDITS (CFU)

The Master's program lasts one year and comprises:

- 428 hours of classroom instruction;
- 1,500 hours of total academic workload, including independent study and the preparation of the final thesis;
- 60 recognized CFU (University Educational Credits);
- No internship or work placement is included.

QUALIFICATION AWARDED

Students who have attended the educational activities, completed any required internships, and passed both any interim assessments and the final examination will be awarded the title of First-Level University Master in "Ernesto Illy" Coffee Economics and Science.

LANGUAGE AND TEACHING METHOD

Instruction is conducted in English. 70% of the teaching activities are delivered via synchronous remote sessions, while the remaining 30% are held in person.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory for 70% of the total teaching hours.

DURATION AND SCHEDULE

The course runs for one year, from January 2027 to December 2027. The Master's program is delivered in a "blended" format (combining remote and in-person components). During the remote phases, classes take place throughout the week; sessions vary in duration and are scheduled to accommodate participants joining from all continents. Classes are held three or four times a week.

During the residential phases in Trieste, the schedule allows for other curricular activities—such as workshops, project work, and seminars—to take place alongside regular classes.

FINAL PROJECT

The final assessment will consist of a project work activity carried out under the supervision of a Master's program faculty member, focusing on one of the subjects covered during the course. The topics for the project work will be defined by the Master's Program Board and assigned by the Board to the supervisors. When defining these projects—and taking into



account input from supporting organizations—priority will be given to themes that are cross-disciplinary, multidisciplinary, and applied in nature. The project work will be an integral part of the curriculum, constituting a 3-ECTS credit module. The project work will be graded on a scale of thirty by the supervising faculty member. The final Master's grade will be determined by the Master's Program Board as a weighted average of the exam results and the project work grade; this may be supplemented by additional points (up to a maximum of 8) to reflect the overall quality of the student's educational path, as assessed collectively by the Board.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To enroll in the "Ernesto Illy" First-Level Master's Program in Coffee Economics and Science, candidates must hold:

- a three-year university degree (or an equivalent qualification obtained abroad) in a field belonging to the Scientific-Technological or Humanities-Social Sciences areas, as defined by current regulations or equivalent degrees under the previous university system.

Admission is also open to candidates holding a degree other than those specified above (provided it is of the same level) whose academic background is deemed suitable by the Master's Program Board.

For foreign qualifications that have not yet been officially declared equivalent to an Italian degree, the Master's Program Board will assess their equivalence to an Italian degree solely for the purpose of admission to the program. To verify that candidates meet the admission requirements, the Board may also assess the suitability of the candidate's academic preparation.

Documented proficiency in the English language is also required. This will be assessed according to the procedures established by the Master's Program Board.

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

* Please refer to Section 2 of the Consolidated Call for Applications for University Master's Programmes – Academic Year 2026/2027. Only applications accompanied by all required documentation will be considered.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Master's program is open to participants from all over the world, including developing (producing) countries. To encourage the widest possible participation, the Ernesto Illy Foundation and illycaffè directly cover a significant portion of the program's operating costs,



as well as participants' room and board. This enables a substantial number of participants to attend the training activities (including those held in Trieste) without paying the full tuition fee.

Based on the funding made available in advance by the Foundation and illycaffè, the Master's Program Board determines the number of tuition-free and partial-tuition (50%) places each year.

These "subsidized" places are awarded based on criteria that primarily consider the candidates' countries of origin, bearing in mind that a key factor in the program's success is ensuring comprehensive representation across the coffee supply chain.

For tuition-free places, the Illy Foundation and illycaffè cover the minimum fee required by the organizing universities for admission to Master's-level courses, including the regional tax.

The number of non-subsidized places is determined by the remainder, up to a maximum class size of 30 participants. In these cases, admitted students are required to pay the full participation fee. Regardless of the final number of participants—within the minimum (10) and maximum (30) range—or the number of subsidized places, the Illy Foundation and illycaffè guarantee full coverage of the program's expenses through their contributions.

Admission to the Master's program will therefore be based on a two-part selection process:

- Assessment of eligibility to participate in the Master's program, based on procedures and criteria established by the Master's Program Board, which will be announced prior to the selection process (see below).
- Assessment of eligibility for preferential admission terms, based on criteria defined by the Master's Program Board, which will be announced prior to the selection process (see below).

Based on the results of both selection stages, the Master's Program Board will draw up a single ranked list, which will be made public in accordance with legal requirements.

The admission process will consist of:

Selection 1: Analysis of the candidate's academic and professional CV and any qualifications submitted.

Selection 2: Application of the criteria from Selection 1, plus consideration of the candidate's geographical background and motivation letter.



Objective criteria for evaluating qualifications and/or selection assessments:

- Type of academic studies in relation to the Master's curriculum
- Previous professional experience related to the coffee industry
- Publications (including non-academic ones) related to the coffee industry
- Alignment of the motivation letter with the Master's educational objectives
- Geographical background, with preference given to coffee-producing countries

The minimum score required to pass the admission assessment is 6/10 points for both types of selection. Ranked lists will be drawn up based on this score, determining both admission to the Master's program and eligibility for fee reductions.

For the evaluation of qualifications, candidates must attach all necessary documentation — accompanied by the required forms (specifically, the "qualifications summary form" available on the Master's program website) — to the online application.

CRITERIA FOR RANKING CANDIDATES IN THE EVENT OF A TIE

In the event of a tie in scores, priority in the ranking list will be determined by the order in which applications were submitted.

ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS NEARING GRADUATION

* Please refer to Point 3 of the Consolidated Call for Applications for University Master's Programmes – Academic Year 2026/2027.

AVAILABLE PLACES

The Master's programme has a maximum capacity of **30** participants.

The minimum number of participants required to activate the programme is **10**.

A maximum of 2 auditors may be admitted.

There are no places with reduced fees for UNITS employees.

PARTICIPATION FEE: MAXIMUM €15,000.00

- 1st installment: \ due date: by the enrollment deadline
- 2nd installment: \ due date: 27/04/2027



A €16.00 stamp duty must be added to the all-inclusive fee; this will be billed together with the 1st installment.

ADMISSION FEE: €40.00

Non-refundable; payable via PagoPA by 20/10/2026 upon submission of the application for admission.

Failure to pay the fee will result in exclusion from the selection process and any potential admission to the Master's program.

ADMINISTRATION

The Master's program administration is based at the Department of Economic, Business, Mathematical and Statistical Sciences (DEAMS).

The Master's Director is Prof. Giorgio Valentinuz; tel. 040 5587917; email:

giorgio.valentinuz@deams.units.it

INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (FEES AND CONTRIBUTIONS, REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT, CERTIFICATES, WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDIES, ENROLLMENT BEYOND THE STANDARD DURATION, UNIVERSITY, ETC.)

Teaching Services Sector – Post-Graduate Office

Piazzale Europa, 1 - 34127 Trieste (Italy)

PEC (Certified Email) ateneo@pec.units.it

Email master@amm.units.it

Web www.units.it/master

Telephone Helpline

Monday to Thursday, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

040/5583094

INFORMATION ON TEACHING (SCHEDULES, CLASSROOMS, AND LESSON FORMATS)

Academic Office, Department of Economics, Business, Mathematics and Statistics (DEAMS):
economia.studenti@amm.units.it ; 040 558 2896.



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Alternatively, contact the Course Administration:

Prof. Giorgio Valentinuz: 040 5587917; email: giorgio.valentinuz@deams.units.it

INFORMATION ON DIPLOMA ISSUANCE

diplomilaurea@amm.units.it

Telephone service

Monday to Thursday, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

040/5582945

In-person office services are available by appointment only.

Translated using artificial intelligence

COURSES

ACADEMIC PROGRAMME STRUCTURE							
DENOMINAZIONE ATTIVITÀ DIDATTICA	SETTORE SCIENTIFICO DISCIPLINARE	CFU	N. ORE TOT.	N. ORE DIDATTICA FRONTALE	TIPO ATTIVITÀ • Lezione • Tirocinio • Stage • Laboratorio • Seminario	TIPO ESAME • Scritto • Orale • Pratico	TIPO VALUTAZIONE
Botanica e Fisiologia del caffè – Coffee Botany and Physiology	BIOS-02/A	3	75	20		scritto e orale	Voto finale in 30esimi
Systematic of Coffea genus. Morphological and anatomical characteristics of the coffee plant. Phenological stages of the coffee plant: germination, development, flowering, fruit development and maturation. General and environmental physiological aspects of the coffee plant. Classical propagation techniques and micro-propagation techniques of the coffee plant. Secondary metabolites in coffee fruits: synthesis, accumulation and effects on human health. Biotic and abiotic degradation (pre- and post-coffee harvest).	BIOS-02/A			10	Lezione		
	BIOS-02/A			5	Lezione		
				2	Laboratorio		
				3	Seminario		
			0				
Genetica della pianta del caffè – Coffee Genetics	BIOS-14/A	4	100	32		scritto e orale	Voto finale in 30esimi
Genes and environment. The Coffea Canephora genome; The genome of Arabica; Differentiation Arabica-Robusta. Self-fertility and self-sterility. Varieties of Arabica and genetic diversity. Molecular methods for the traceability. Genetic base and bean quality. Breeding new varieties.	BIOS-14/A			8	Lezione		
	BIOS-14/A			8	Lezione		
				8	Lezione + Laboratorio		
				4	Seminario		
				4	Seminario		
			0				
Coltivazione della Pianta di Caffè e Climate Change - Coffee Cultivation and Climate Change	AGRI-02/A	8	200	74		scritto	Voto finale in 30esimi
Physical-chemical properties of tropical soils. Tropical soil degradation. Effects of soil management on biological fertility and recycling of crop residues and organic wastes. Principles of the coffee plant mineral nutrition and plant responses to nutrient deficiency or toxicity. Fertilizer use and management. Action mechanisms, metabolic breakdown in plants and fate in the soil of the main pesticides. Weed control. Coffee plant protection: principles of integrated control. Insect and pest control. Fungi, bacteria and virus control. Physical, biological and geochemical processes responsible for and resulting from climate change. Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation. Land Use and the Carbon Cycle. Agricultural Water Management. Innovation in coffee farming. Crop evaluation. Manual harvest. Mechanical harvest. Picking from the ground. Postharvest selection. Crop quality. Raw bean processing: dry, wet and semi-wet processing. Process influences on coffee quality. Cleaning and sorting processing. Storage, packaging, logistics and transportation of raw coffee. Raw bean defects and their origins. The latest on coffee wet and dry mill designs. Graded coffee trading (explain the difference grading systems in the coffee trade). Mapping coffee production according to cup profiles.	AGRI-02/A			6	Lezione		
	AGRI-06/B			4	Lezione		
	AGRI-06/B			4	Lezione		
				6	Lezione		
				6	Lezione		
				6	Lezione		
				8	Lezione		
				2	Laboratorio		
				6	Laboratorio		
				4	Seminario		
				14	Laboratorio		
				4	Seminario		



				4	Seminario		
I Processi Industriali del Caffè - Coffee Industrial Process	AGRI-07/A	6	150	77		scritto	Voto finale in 30esimi
Preliminary operations: cleaning, hulling, grading and electronic sorting. Basic principles of heat and mass transport. Decaffeination process: methods and industrial machinery. Roasting process. Roasting methods, industrial roasting equipment. Grinding process. Chemical, physical and structural changes of grain. Packaging, chemical-physical changes during packaging, roasted product shelf-life. Other products: pods, capsule and 'ready-to-drink'; Food safety and relevant hazards; HACCP methodology; EU legislation architecture. Blending techniques (pre & after roasting). Extraction methods: infusion and percolation. Chemical and physical characteristics of brewed coffee. Preparation methods and characterization: filter, moka, espresso. Brewing machines and main control parameters. Espresso definition. Other preparations. Physiology of perception, chemical senses: taste and olfaction. Cognitive processes. Introduction to sensory analysis. Sensory analysis typology and goals: filter coffee, espresso and moka cupping. Main chemical-physical methodologies of analysis to characterize coffee. Evaluations of different origins. Evaluation of raw coffee defects and off-flavors. Chemical characterization techniques: volatile, non-volatile compounds.	AGRI-07/A			20	Lezione		
				5	Lezione/Laboratorio		
				4	Lezione/Laboratorio		
				5	Lezione/Laboratorio		
				26	Laboratorio		
				6	Laboratorio		
				3	Laboratorio		
				4	seminario		
				4	Laboratorio/seminario		
Mercati del caffè verde e sviluppo sostenibile - Green Coffee Markets and Sustainable Development	ECON-02/A	8	200	44		scritto e orale	Voto finale in 30esimi
World patterns in production and consumption. Fields of economics; Basic issues about Development; Comparing benefit and cost; The demand curve; The Supply curve; Sustainable Development; Coffee price differences and basic price analysis; Market analysis; Cost elasticity and transfer mechanism in coffee markets; The agroindustrial systems and Global coffee market; International commodity markets. Coffee marketing boards and commodity market reforms. Sustainable coffee production; How to increase production, yields and export availability of sustainably grown coffee. How to implement standards to improve access to finance for farmers and mitigate the effects of climate change. Sustainability in the agriculture and food sectors; Sustainability in the coffee value chain; Standards & certification in the coffee sector; Certified markets and impacts on farmers. Blockchain.	ECON-02/A			20	Lezione		
				4	Seminario		
				20	Lezione		
Gestione della Complessità e delle reti di fornitura e distribuzione: - Complexity and Coffee Supply Chain Management	IEGE-01/A	11	275	75		scritto e orale	Voto finale in 30esimi
	IEGE-01/A			10	Lezione		



The sourcing process, supplier evaluation and selection, buyer-supplier partnership, the organization of purchasing activities, centralization and decentralization of purchasing responsibilities. Supply network design and material management. Setting Quality Standards. ISO certification. Six Sigma. The balanced scorecard. The Quality Function Deployment (QFD). Benchmarking. The Failure Mode and Effect Analysis (FMEA). Corporate responsibility and responsible procurement. Complex systems: main features. Complexity principles. Complexity principles applied to economics. Fundamentals of business dynamics. Innovation and types; Disruptive innovation; Open innovation model; User innovation; Diffusion of innovation; Knowledge creation platforms; Multisided platforms. How to study feasibility; manage an innovation project.	IEGE-01/A			8	Lezione		
	IEGE-01/A			4	Lezione		
				4	Lezione		
				4	Lezione		
				11	Lezione		
				12	Lezione		
				6	Seminario		
				2	Laboratorio		
				4	Seminario		
				4	Seminario		
				4	Seminario		
				2	Seminario		
Marketing: modelli di consumo e canali di distribuzione - Market consumption models and distribution channels	ECON-07/A	7	175	44		scritto e orale	
Geographical markets and purchasing/consumption habits. Consumption typologies of roasted coffee. The purchasing process and consumption experience. The factors influencing the purchasing/consumption process. Marketing management and marketing planning. Experiential marketing. Product decisions: global products and services; standardization versus adaptation; product features and perception; branding decisions in international markets. Pricing decisions. Direct and indirect distribution channels. Types of channel intermediaries; Retail and Ho.Re.Ca. channels (Hotel, Restaurant, Coffee bar and Catering channels); franchising; branded coffee shops and e-commerce. Pricing and final decisions; Culture and retail in a Global environment; Managing price; Relationship and brand management; Managing expenses; Break even analysis. Selling techniques for the various distribution channels. Worldwide market consumption patterns in coffee presentations and cup profiles (what type of coffee preparations do certain markets prefer in order to better cater that specific market). Digital marketing . Specialty coffees markets.	ECON-07/A			20	Lezione		
				8	Lezione		
				8	Lezione		
				2	Seminario		
				2	Seminario		
				4	Seminario		
Strategie competitive nel settore del caffè - Competitive strategies in the coffee industry	ECON-07/A	4	100	32		scritto	
Strategy; Strategy as Business Model; The Strategy Diamond; Measuring Success. Strategy as Value Management; Strategy as alignment to the environment; Linking Strategy to Performance and Competition; Five forces model and its applications; Business and Corporate Strategies, strategies for Growth; Diversification and portfolio matrixes; M&As and Alliances; Strategic Outsourcing and Vertical Integration; Strategy evaluation criteria; A Dynamic	ECON-07/A			20	Lezione		
				2	Seminario		
				2	Seminario		
				8	Seminario		



View of Strategy: from Decline to Innovation; Strategic Decision Making. Export Management: Distributor selection and management; The internationalization concept; The competitive environment; The Export Customer Service; The annual Business plan; The Distribution agreement; Pricing (Price List/ Business Conditions); Brand Management and Trade Marketing. Women in the changing world of workforce. Real export cases/examples on both small and big companies.							
Tecniche di trading e risk management - Trading techniques and risk management	ECON-09/A	6	150	30		scritto e orale	
Risks in the coffee business and their management; The volatility of coffee prices, speculation and fundamentals in commodity markets. Hedging (cases); Deciding to Hedge Commodity Price Risk; Coffee futures margin and leverage; Option Basics (Financial Option, Call option, Put option, Option writer); Risk transfer; Evaluating coffee price risk exposure. Price risk management in practice: standard futures and options in the coffee market, over-the-counter market and mixed products. Risk management process and value creation; Classes of assets and of liabilities; Income Statement and Balance Sheet; Cash cycle; Business and financial risk; Physical Trading; Trading techniques & Decommoditization; Futures Trading.	ECON-09/A			12	Lezione		
				8	Lezione		
				10	Lezione		
			0				
Project Work	-	3	75		-	scritto	
Tirocinio (descrizione dettagliata)			0				
Stages			0				
Prova finale	-		0	-	-	Tesi e dissertazione	Voto finale in centodecimi
TOTALE ORE E CFU COMPLESSIVI	-	60	1500	428			