



Fakultät für Design und Künste
Facoltà di Design e Arti
Faculty of Design and Art

Master in Eco-Social Design

2026/27



At a glance

Degree class: LM-12
ECTS credits: 120
Duration of the course: 2 years
Courses will be taught in: English
Places available: 25 EU + 10 non-EU
Campus: Bozen-Bolzano
Tuition fees: ca. € 1200 per year

Course description

Eco-Social Design is not only about more eco-efficient products and services but is striving for future-viable modes of production, consumption and life – for sustainable economies and cultures. Based on these general aims and values the design of products, spaces, processes, interactive applications and transmedia communication is understood as an integrated task. Design as a catalyst of desirable and necessary change.

With your projects, you try to approach today's issues effectively by (co-)designing concrete future-viable practices today and visions for tomorrow. You are encouraged to experiment with existing and emerging practices of collaboration and co-creation. The overarching goal is to encourage a good life for all! – humans, other living beings all over the planet now and in the future. Additionally, to this web page, you can get more insights by this presentation (PDF) and on our blog.

Online Info Sessions

We offer online information sessions in the coming months during which the master programme will be presented and where interested students can address their questions to professors and students. The Info Sessions take place on the following days:

- Wednesday, 18 March 2026, 10:00 (CET): register here

Holistic thinking as a basis for effective design

You will learn how to use instruments of diverse design practices and research combined with perspectives and competencies derived from social sciences and economics, and from sectors such as business, activism, technology and craft. This equips you to develop your ways to approach complex issues with reflection, creativity and pragmatism.

You have the possibility to set your personal focus, by choosing what to deepen within the rich set of design disciplines and sciences offered in the study program.

The Study Offer as an Arena

During the **first semester**, you do a project starting off from a given local and provincial context. The aim is to create a shared basis for team/group work preparing you for more complex projects, to stimulate inspiration, and to facilitate your landing in unibz and the environs of Bozen-Bolzano. It is also an opportunity to meet the diverse network of students, teachers and external partners.

In the **second semester**, you develop an **autonomous project**, in teams or individually, together with external partners you choose. Throughout the course of studies, you will select courses from the areas '**Observe, Analyse & Apply**' and '**Make & Intervene**'. The former provide you with theoretical foundations, critical thinking and methods from the social and economic sciences. Through the latter, you will learn how to use tools and techniques for your creative work as a designer. Experienced designers, with various specializations, will support you with the development of your project along two lines: object-space-services and communication-interaction-services. The course in **Design Research** supports your project development and teaches basic approaches and methods of the field. All other courses you choose can

contribute to the development of your project, too. If you want to extend your study plan further, you can choose courses from other faculties.

During the course of study **short seminars** are also offered:

- Cooperatives (funding and running a democratic and socio-ecological business)
- Transformative Work as a Livelihood
- Project Funding for Eco-Social Designers

In the **third semester**, you carry out research through design and creative experimentation on a topic of your choice that acts as a foundation for your final thesis project. The integrated course in Design Research will be particularly helpful in this semester. This development process is accompanied by the '**Master Colloquia**', during which you discuss your work-in-progress with teachers and with experts from outside the university.

In the **fourth and last semester**, you will focus on your **final project** including a comprehensive **written thesis**.

Study Plan - Master in Eco-social Design

Projects

15 CP Project 1 in Eco-Social Design

12 CP Design 1

3 CP Design Research related to project 1

15 CP Project 2 in Eco-Social Design

12 CP Design 2

3 CP Design Research related to project 2

15 CP Thesis Project Phase 1: Research through Design, Exploration and Experimentation

(A)*

9 CP Design 3

6 CP Sociological Design Research

15 CP Thesis Project Phase 1: Research through Design, Exploration and Experimentation

(B)*

9 CP Design 3

6 CP Designing through ethnography

Courses in the Area "Make and Intervene"

6 CP Emancipatory Digital Transformation

1 Mandatory Course to be chosen among the following:

6 CP Moderation and Participation

6 CP Service and Policy Design

1 Mandatory Course to be chosen among the following:

6 CP Design and Production

6 CP Design and Materials

6 CP Information Design and Visual Storytelling

Courses in the Area "Observe, Analyse and Apply"

3 Mandatory Courses to be chosen among the following:

6 CP Media Studies

6 CP Social Studies of Design and Culture

6 CP Ecosocial Economics

6 CP Political Ecology

6 CP Environmental Anthropology

- 3 CP English 1 – Language Course
- 12 CP Free Choice Courses**
- 6 CP Seminars***
- 18 CP Degree Thesis****

Technical Workshop Courses*****

- 0 CP Carpentry Workshop
- 0 CP Metal Workshop
- 0 CP Plastics Workshop
- 0 CP Digital Modelling Workshop
- 0 CP Print Workshop
- 0 CP Cutting and Binding Workshop
- 0 CP Photography Workshop
- 0 CP Video Workshop
- 0 CP Assembly Space (Bankraum)
- 0 CP Surface Treatment Workshop
- 0 CP Glass Workshop

*** Thesis Project Phase 1**

Students have to choose 1 Thesis Project Phase among (A) or (B).

**** Free Choice Courses**

Students have to choose free choice courses for a total amount of 12 credit points. These courses may be chosen among those offered by the Faculty of Design and Art and/or those of the other faculties of unibz. At the beginning of each academic year, the Faculty announces which courses are offered and recognised as free choice.

***** Seminars**

During the 4 semesters, students must attend 3 seminars which provide useful knowledge for the introduction in to the job market, among the offered ones, for a total of 6 credits. Attendance of the seminars is compulsory and foresees a pass/fail test.

****** Degree Thesis**

In the fourth semester, you develop a final project as your master's degree. You can choose your project. Your work is overseen by a thesis supervisor and a co-supervisor. You present and discuss it in front of a commission.

******* Technical Workshop Courses**

Students must take at least 3 technical workshop courses (specialisation courses) in the course of their studies.

The Faculty's Projects Archive and Projects Archive is an online platform offering a general overview

of the works created by our students since 2018 in the two Majors in Design, the Major in Art and the Master in Eco-Social Design. For the projects before 2022 please see the Portfolio page.

Facilities and study environment

The spacious and sunny ateliers are open spaces for creative development and collaboration. Here you work in teams on your projects, in constant exchange with other students and the teachers. Supervision and constant consultation with experts and stakeholders is a crucial part of this study programme.

Our superbly equipped workshops offer a wide range of technologies for your design work, such as workshops for wood, metal, plastic, materials, digital modelling, plaster and mold making, surface treatment, printing (screen, tampon and high pressure), paper and bookbinding, photography, video and access to the Fab Lab BITZ.

Exchange programmes and internships

Currently we offer exchange programmes with partner universities all over the world and we are part of a large network of collaboration with employers in Italy and abroad where you can undertake your internship. However, this study programme does not require a compulsory internship.

Supervision and constant consultation with experts and stakeholders is a crucial part of this study programme.

Career opportunities

The MA Eco-Social Design supports students to invent and co-develop the professional practice that fits with them and with today's realities, challenges and potentials.

The variety of jobs in the traditional domain of design is already very broad and continues to expand. Eco-Social Design offers the possibility to set up your own design agency, work for interdisciplinary design agencies and/or collaborate with partners who are committed to environmental, social and political progress, such as NGOs, foundations, and public institutions, citizen groups, cooperatives and social enterprises. The expanding market of organic, eco-friendly and ethical products and services, the sharing economy and other innovative "alternative economies" create emergent fields for work opportunities to our graduates. For example, Community Economies and Commoning provide exciting contexts to contribute to, and to benefit from, new modes of work, production and consumption.

Well prepared and ready for the job market. On the website of AlmaLaurea you can check statistical data about graduates' satisfaction and their employability.



Master in Eco-Social Design

2026/27

Application and Admission

You can find all you need to know in order to apply and gain admission to this study programme by browsing through the information below.

Deadlines and important dates

Early Bird Application

Application: 02/03 - 28/04/2026 (by noon local time)

Language exams (online): 16/03/2026 (registration: 02 - 09/03/2026) and 16 - 17 and 20 - 21/04/2026 (registration: 24/03 - 08/04/2026)

Interview (online): 14/05/2026

Publication of ranking lists: by 27/05/2026

Payment of the 1st instalment of the tuition fees: by 05/06/2026 (by noon local time)

Enrolment: from 10/07 - 13/10/2026 (by noon local time)

Late Application (only for EU citizens)

Application: 28/05 - 02/07/2026 (by noon local time)

Language exams (online): 22 - 26/06/2026 (registration: 28/05 - 15/06/2026)

Interview (online): 15/07/2026

Publication of ranking lists: by 23/07/2026

Payment of the 1st instalment of the tuition fees: by 06/08/2026 (by noon local time)

Enrolment: from publication of the ranking list until 13/10/2026 (by noon local time)

Preparatory courses and Freshers Days

Freshers Days: 28 - 29/09/2026

1st semester

Classes: 28/09 - 23/12/2026

Holidays: 24/12/2026 - 06/01/2027

Classes: 07 - 23/01/2027

Exams: 25/01 - 20/02/2027

2nd semester

Classes: 01/03 - 25/03/2027

Holidays: 26 - 29/03/2027

Classes: 30/03 - 12/06/2027

Exams: 14/06 - 10/07/2027

Autumn session

Exams: 23/08 - 25/09/2027

Available places

EU citizens and citizens given parity of treatment

Early Bird Application: 15

Late Application: 10

Non-EU citizens (living abroad)

Early Bird Application: 10

Entry requirements

In order to gain admission to this programme you need a bachelor degree in one of the following Italian degree classes:

- M.D. 270/04:
 - L-4 Disegno industriale
 - L-17 Scienze dell'Architettura
 - L-21 Scienze della pianificazione territoriale, urbanistica, paesaggistica e ambientale
- M.D. 509/99:
 - 42 Disegno industriale
 - 04 Scienze dell'architettura e dell'ingegneria edile
 - 07 Urbanistica e scienza della pianificazione territoriale, urbanistica, paesaggistica e ambientale
- If you have another Italian degree, you need 10 credit points in the following scientific disciplinary sectors:
 - ICAR/13 Industrial Design
 - ICAR/14 Architectural and Urban Composition
 - ICAR/15 Landscape Design
 - ICAR/16 Interior and Decorative Architecture
 - ICAR/17 Representation of Architecture
 - ICAR/21 Urban design and landscape
 - L-ART/06 Cinema, photography and television
 - ING-INF/05 Information processing systems
 - INF-01 Informatics

If you have a degree from the Italian old system (prior to D.M. 509/99), or a title from another degree, or a degree obtained abroad*, the selection committee will examine your career to determine your eligibility for admission.

(*) Italian citizen who have obtained their degree abroad must also have a secondary school

leaving qualification.

If you have not yet graduated at the time of application:

You can apply, but you will be admitted conditionally and need to submit your diploma by the enrolment deadline.

If you graduate after the enrolment deadline:

You cannot enrol and you will lose your place, which will be offered to the subsequent applicant in the ranking list. In this case you should not pay the tuition fees to secure your admission. You will be able to submit a late enrolment request and, only if there still are available places, you can enrol by 12 December 2025.

To be admitted you must fulfil the language requirements indicated in the section “Language requirements”.

According to national regulations, simultaneous enrolment in a maximum of 2 programmes is possible (however, the two programmes must not belong to the same class, e.g., LM-69/LM-69 and must differ for at least 2/3 of the course contents).

Language requirements

The official teaching language is English. Therefore, the following language requirements apply, otherwise you will be excluded from the admission procedure:

Entry level (to gain admission)

English: B2

The levels of the Common European Framework of Reference apply.

You can demonstrate your language proficiency in the application portal (in the section “upload language certificates” and/or “enrol for language exams”) after you have created an application in the section “create/manage applications”.

- In case your final certificate has been awarded by an **Italian** public institution, you need to submit a self-declaration.
- In case your final certificate has been awarded by a **foreign** public institution, you need to upload diploma scanned copy of the original.

You can demonstrate language proficiency through:

1. **the main teaching language in your final high school year**, if English (recognised as C1).
Foreign qualifications: If the main teaching language is not clearly stated on your high school diploma, please also upload a letter/document issued by your high school stating the medium of instruction.
2. **a bachelor or master degree** in English (recognised as C1). unibz graduates must upload the language certificates obtained and/or declare that they have passed language exams at the unibz Language Centre (B2, B2+ or C1). **Foreign qualifications:** If the teaching language is not clearly stated on your University degree, please also upload a letter/document issued by your University stating the medium of instruction during your studies.
3. **a recognised language certificate** (see the list of recognised certificates) If you cannot

upload the certificates, you can send them by e-mail as PDF files or deliver them in person to the Language Centre by the application deadline (see "Deadlines" section).

4. **language exams organised by the unibz Language Centre.** You can register for these exams online through the application portal (in the section "enrol for language exams") after you have filled out your application in the section "create/manage applications". The registration periods are indicated in the "Deadlines" section. If you start your application outside a language exams registration period, you must return to the portal during one of the periods indicated above in order to register for an exam. Information regarding the structure of the language proficiency exams, their duration, their administration, and typical processing time for the publication of the results can be found on the following webpage.

For information on studying in three languages also visit the following page.

Online application

Your application must be submitted online through the Application Portal. The deadlines are indicated in the "Deadlines" section.

- You need to create an account and upload a valid ID card or passport (front/back). Please note: if your document is invalid, incomplete or unreadable, you will be excluded from the admission procedure;
- Fill in the online form and upload the attachments listed under "Admission procedure";
- If you gained your qualification abroad, you must also upload the diploma of your qualification: if you are not yet in possession of the diploma, you'll need to upload it upon enrolment;
- Complete and submit the online application by the deadline. Once the application has been sent, it cannot be modified. Filled-in forms which have not been sent correctly will not be taken into consideration.

Please note: Mendacious declarations will be criminally prosecuted and will result in the automatic exclusion from the ranking list.

EU-Citizens and equivalent

You might apply for more than one study programme. If you are excluded in the first session, you might apply again in the second one.

Considered as equivalent are:

1. Citizens from Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, San Marino and the Vatican City State;
2. Non-EU citizens with a valid permit to stay in Italy (see article 39, paragraph 5 of decree no. 286 of 25.07.1998: "**permesso di soggiorno**" (residence permit) for work, family reasons, political or humanitarian asylum, religious reasons). In this case, you apply directly to the University as described above and must submit a copy of your valid permit to stay. A permit to stay for study reasons or a visa for tourism is **not valid**. If the permit has expired, you must attach a renewal request. **Please note** that if you do not upload the permit in the application portal, you will be automatically considered a non-EU citizen living abroad and therefore subject to the admission procedure through the Italian

authorities in your country of origin.

Non-EU-Citizens (living outside of Italy)

Only one application period is offered. After the deadline it is not possible to apply anymore.
Application fee: € 50.

Once the ranking list has been published, if you have gained admission, secure it by paying the first instalment and then start your visa application on the University portal. The application on University is mandatory, otherwise you will not be allowed to enrol. On University you can apply for one study programme only.

Admission procedure

The admission procedure includes two stages:

Stage 1: Evaluation of the documents

The first step is an evaluation of the documents that must be uploaded by the respective application deadline.

Selection criteria of stage 1:

- Portfolio: **max 20 points**
- outline of a project proposal: **max 20 points**
- In order to be eligible for the second stage, you must have obtained **at least 20 points**.

The following documents need to be uploaded in the application portal:

1. academic background:

- **if graduated in Italy:** diploma supplement or substitute-declaration (following the Italian D.P.R. no. 445/2000) of the degree awarded, final grade, exams passed with corresponding grade, the dates in which the exams were passed, the credit points, the subject areas, and the teaching hours;
- **if graduated abroad:** diploma supplement or final degree certificate issued by the foreign university (to be translated into English if in a language other than Italian, German or English) detailing the final mark, exams passed as well as corresponding grades, the dates in which the exams were passed, the credit points, and the teaching hours. A description of the contents of single courses is recommended; it is advisable to attach a declaration of value or similar document by the university with the indication of the lowest grade needed in order to achieve the degree as well as the highest mark obtainable;
- **if not graduated yet:** please upload the list of your passed exams (see the section entitled "Confirmation of Study Place and Enrolment").

2. curriculum vitae in English (pdf);

3. outline of a project proposal (pdf), on which you would want to work for a semester. In max. two A4 pages, the main points must be explained and visualized concisely and appealingly. You may include text, images, graphics, etc. The required language is English;

The project outline should describe and contain:

- Ecological and social relevance and potential transformation
- Creative thinking (we appreciate unconventional ideas and approaches)
- Framing and quality of the visual storytelling (we want to understand quickly the essentials, and still get an idea of the profound thinking behind)
- Tangible project idea(s) (we do not expect perfect solutions, but concrete proposals)

4. portfolio in English (pdf) max file size 20 MB

Please submit a fully illustrated and written portfolio as a PDF only. You can, of course, add links to external websites; however, ensure that this is for audio-visual material or material that the commission cannot otherwise consult via a PDF document. Note that the commission reserves the right to decline a portfolio that is not readily accessible to them.

It can contain also non-design projects in relevant fields (activism, social work, culture, volunteering, etc.)

The works in the portfolio should show:

- the ecological and social relevance and potential transformation
- Innovative and creative thinking
- Formal design qualities (aesthetics, functionality, details)
- Framing and quality of the (visual) storytelling

Based on the documents received, the commission will decide, after judging the attitude and experience, which applicants will be admitted to the second stage of the admission process.

Stage 2: Interview

Max. 20 points

The second stage consists in an online interview designed to have a dialogue to get a deeper understanding on the candidate's ideas, experiences, motivations and points of view.

In the interview we will discuss:

- Experience in the field of the study programme:
- Inter- and transdisciplinary experiences
- Innovative and creative thinking
- Ability to work in a team
- Ability to discuss and to reflect critically

Candidates must achieve a minimum score of 30/60 total points to be eligible for the enrolment.

Priority criteria

In the event of equal total points, priority shall be given in the following order:

- score obtained for the draft project proposal
- score obtained for the interview
- score obtained for the portfolio

Only in case of equal scores, the youngest candidate will be chosen.

Ranking lists

The Admission Committee will only evaluate the documents uploaded in the portal by the application deadline. The ranking lists with the admitted students will be published here: <https://www.unibz.it/en/applicants/ranking-lists/> and are only valid for the respective academic year.

Secure your admission and enrolment

If you have been admitted to more than one study programme, you can secure your admission for a maximum of 2 programmes by paying the designated rate twice. By confirming your place, you renounce admission to the other programmes.

1. Choose the study programme and pay the fees (to secure your admission) in the application portal.

The deadlines are indicated in the “Deadlines” section.

If you do not meet this deadline, you will automatically be excluded and the next applicant in the ranking list will be admitted.

For EU citizens and citizens given parity of treatment only: any remaining places of the early bird application, will be offered in the late application.

Please note: Paying university fees does not confer student status, which is only obtained by enrolling. If you pay but do not enrol, you are not entitled to a refund, except for non-EU applicants living abroad who do not obtain the necessary documents for enrolment from the Italian authorities in their country.

2. Enrol online in the application portal.

The deadlines are indicated in the “Deadlines” section.

Enrolment is recommended as early as possible, so you have the possibility to upload incomplete documents before the deadline.

If you do not meet the enrolment deadline, you will be excluded and the next applicant in the ranking list will be admitted.

Admission with reservation:

If you do not have the required academic qualification, you will be given a conditional offer for a study place and you must submit your qualification upon enrolment. If you achieve your qualification after the enrolment deadline, you cannot enrol, and you will lose your place which will be offered to the subsequent applicant in the ranking list. **Advice:** If you achieve your qualification after the enrolment deadline, you should not pay the tuition fees to confirm the study place. You will be able to submit a late enrolment request and, only if there are study places still available, you can enrol by 11 December 2026.

Students intending to transfer from another Italian University to unibz must submit to the Student Office - at the beginning of the academic year - a copy of the transfer application presented at the university of provenance.

3. If you have a foreign university degree, during enrolment you must upload:

- degree diploma of your Bachelor
- official translation of your degree into Italian (not necessary if the documents have been issued in German or English)
- Diploma supplement, where it must be indicated: that you have achieved at least 180 credit points (ECTS) and that the qualification gives access to a master programme

Depending on the foreign education system your degree belongs to, you must also upload:

a) EU countries, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein:

- Statement of **Correspondence** of your Bachelor degree, to be downloaded from the ARDI - Automatic Recognition Database – Italy

b) Non-EU countries that are signatories to the Lisbon Convention:

- Statement of **Correspondence** of your Bachelor degree, to be downloaded from the ARDI - Automatic Recognition Database – Italy **and**
- Statement of **Verification** of your Bachelor degree, issued by the Italian Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence (CIMEA)

c) Non-EU countries that are not signatories of the Lisbon Convention:

- Statement of **Comparability** of your Bachelor degree, issued by the Italian Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence (CIMEA) **and**
- Statement of **Verification** of your Bachelor degree, issued by the Italian Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence (CIMEA)

unibz performs the necessary checks on your foreign qualification and in case of doubt reserves the right to request additional documents.

Please note that if you do not possess a valid admission qualification, you can be excluded with Rector's decree even after enrolment.

If you are a non-EU citizen living abroad:

If you are eligible for admission (check the ranking lists) and have also applied on University, the Italian Authorities in your own country will issue you the entry visa for studies/university.

This will allow you to arrive in Italy to enrol for the study programme that you have applied for, after passing the admission procedure.

According to Italian law, within 8 working days of your arrival in Italy, you must have applied for the residence permit: as soon as you arrive, get in touch with the Advisory Service and you will be given the necessary information for starting the procedure.

Once you will obtain your residence permit (permesso di soggiorno), you have to hand it in at the Student Office personally or via e-mail.

Tuition fees

Fees amount to € 1200

- **1st instalment (€ 600):** includes the revenue stamp of € 16.

- **2nd instalment (€ 600):** must be paid by March of the following year

Delayed payment of the second instalment will result in a fine being levied. If you have not paid the tuition fees, you will be unable to take exams and will not be able to transfer to other universities or other study programmes.

If you drop out of a programme, interrupt your studies or are excluded from studies, you are not entitled to reimbursement of the fees.

Exemption from the tuition fees is granted to:

- Students with a disability recognized under article 3, paragraph 1, of Law No 104/1992, or with a disability up to or exceeding 66%: the disability certificate, issued by the health authorities, must be handed in at the beginning of the academic year.
- Foreign students who have been granted a scholarship from the Italian government.

Students who benefit from a scholarship granted by the Autonomous Province of Bozen-Bolzano are entitled to receive a refund of the tuition fees.

Recognition of credit points from previous studies

Credit points from previous university studies can only be recognised **after enrolment** if the exams taken at the university of provenance are equivalent in content to those offered at unibz.

The Advisory Service provides support regarding your choice of study. In many cases a simple call or a short request is enough to get the relevant information (Tel. +39 0471 012100).

Photography: Stefania Zanetti, Andrea Dieck | Illustration: Insa Keilbach, Giulia Bencini | Infographics: Lisa Borgenheimer ('Arena' based on an idea of Alvisè Mattozzi)

Advisory Service

Universitätsplatz 1 - piazza
Università, 1
Italy - 39100, Bozen-Bolzano
Tel +39 0471 012100
apply@unibz.it

Opening Hours

Tuesdays: 14:00-16:00
Thursdays: 10:00-12:00

Alternatively, you may call us
throughout the week or book an
online appointment