Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Scaling-up
Course Code	25572
Course Title Additional	
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	ECON-07/A
Language	English
Degree Course	Master in Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	Dott. Benedikt Unger, Benedikt.Unger@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/academic-staff/person/41040
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	2
CP	6
Teaching Hours	36
Lab Hours	-
Individual Study Hours	-
Planned Office Hours	18
Contents Summary	• The course offers a structured introduction to the topic of scaling-up, grounded in current academic research and industry practice. • It discusses the opportunities and challenges of scaling, covering strategies, methods, and tools for managing scaling processes as well as the human side of scaling, including leadership, culture, and teams. • It mainly takes the perspective of scaling ventures (i.e., scale-ups), while also considering the transferability of scaling knowledge to other ecosystem actors such as established firms. • Special attention is given to the role of scale-ups within the

	broader entrepreneurial ecosystem, their interaction with other actors, including a specific European perspective on scaling and competitiveness. • The course combines frontal lectures, practice insights, case-based discussions, and group projects to foster both theoretical understanding and practical skills.
Course Topics	- Scale-ups, Scaling, Scalability – Definitions, typologies & theoretical lenses - Where are the Scaling Opportunities? – Understanding disruption & other paths to growth - Growing Without Imploding – Challenges, methods & tools - Managing the Human Side of Scaling – Leadership, culture & teams - Scaling in Established Contexts – A (European) ecosystem perspective on scaling - Scaling-up in Practice – Case studies & synthesis
Keywords	
Recommended Prerequisites	
Propaedeutic Courses	
Teaching Format	Frontal lectures, exercises, and team-based project work
Mandatory Attendance	
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (ILO) ILO 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING ILO 1.a The student acquires advanced knowledge and understanding of the models and tools of economic-business analysis for starting a new company, with particular focus on identifying new market opportunities, accessing and obtaining economic-financial resources, as well as technological and organizational skills for the development of the company; ILO 1.b The student acquires advanced knowledge and understanding of the models and tools of economic-business analysis for the management of a new enterprise, from the financial and organisational point of view and with respect to the dynamics of growth and development; ILO 1.c The student acquires advanced knowledge and understanding of the theories and tools for the economic analysis of business decisions;

	ILO 1.d The student acquires knowledge and understanding of theories and tools for the economic analysis of the market, at the level of the individual enterprise and the supply system; ILO 1.e The student acquires advanced knowledge and understanding of models for new product development and innovation management within enterprises; ILO 1.f The student acquires advanced knowledge and understanding of business analysis tools and solutions for the development of innovations and organisational knowledge; ILO 2: ABILITY TO APPLY KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING ILO 2.a Ability to acquire and select information that may be relevant from an entrepreneurial point of view, also in economic-productive contexts different from those studied; ILO 2.b Ability to analyse the combination of market opportunities and resources of the enterprise and to identify entrepreneurial formulas, also with the elaboration of original, compatible and sustainable solutions and combinations; ILO 2.c Ability to select business economics models, suitable for the appropriate analysis of a specific economic-social and productive context ILO 2.d Ability to select the tools for the strategy and management of the enterprise, consistent with the enterprise economy models considered appropriate; ILO 2.e Ability to assess the potential and sustainability of new business projects (business plan), from a multidisciplinary (economic, business and legal) perspective; ILO 2.f Ability to evaluate the entrepreneurial potential associated with the development of an innovation by a company (learning area 2); ILO 2.g Ability to propose and implement strategic and operational courses of action conducive to the creation of a new enterprise; ILO 2.h Ability to acquire and select relevant information to frame cases of innovation (product, service, social, managerial organisational), also different from the studied contexts; ILO 2.i Ability to propose and implement strategic and operational courses of action to foster the development of innovations by a company; LO 2.l Ability to assess the potential of an innovation within existing companies compared to the creation of a new company

	(e.g., intrapreneurship, open innovation, etc.). ILO 3: AUTONOMY OF JUDGEMENT ILO 3.a Acquire the ability to analyse complex entrepreneurial problems, such as the elaboration and evaluation of an entrepreneurial project (business plan) or the development of a new product; ILO 3.b Acquire the ability to make predictions, such as analysing the future consequences of entrepreneurial, managerial and operational choice; ILO 3.c Autonomy of judgement is developed in the training activities carried out for the preparation of the thesis, as well as in the exercises that accompany the lectures and that involve group discussions and the comparison of individual analyses carried out by students in preparation for the lecture. ILO 4: COMMUNICATION SKILLS ILO 4.a Acquire the ability to describe and communicate in an intercultural context, in a clear and precise manner, problematic situations typical of the management of a new enterprise and the development of innovation, such as, for example, the conditions for the validation of a problem or solution, the prospects and risks associated with a business model or an innovation project. The development of communication competences assumes heterogeneous situations such as, for example, the presence of internal stakeholders (e.g. colleagues, managers, owners), or external stakeholders (e.g. potential investors, suppliers and other business partners) and the ability to sustain an adversarial process; ILO 4.b The achievement of these objectives is assessed in the course of the training activities already mentioned, as well as in the discussion of the final thesis. ILO 5: LEARNING SKILLS ILO 5.a Acquire the ability to study independently, to prepare summaries; ILO 5.b Acquire the ability to identify thematic connections and to establish relationships between different cases and contexts of analysis; ILO 5.c Acquire the ability to frame a new problem systematically and to generate appropriate taxonomie; ILO 5.d Acquire the ability to develop general models from the

	phenomena studied.
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	Knowledge and understanding: The students grasp the most important and practice-relevant knowledge of companies in the scale-up phase and the ongoing transition and the associated opportunities and challenges. The students have a systematic understanding of this content, are able to integrate this knowledge and are familiar with the current state of research and industry development on the subject. They are additionally able to critically assess the transferability of scaling knowledge to established organizational contexts and reflect on the role of scale-ups within broader organizational ecosystems including their interaction with other ecosystem members. Applying knowledge and understanding: Students are able to critically apply theoretical frameworks and practical tools to real-world scale-up challenges. They work in teams to analyze complex scaling scenarios, identify core issues, and develop context-specific solutions. They are able to motivate their choices, explain trade-offs, and communicate the rationale behind their solutions in a structured and coherent way, based on the learned frameworks and practice insights. Making judgments: The students can deal with the complexity of the challenges in managing scale-ups. They can assess company strategies in a qualified manner and reflect on them critically including ethical dimensions. Communication skills: Students will be able to communicate their knowledge of scale-ups to both lay and professional audiences. In doing so, they can logically and coherently weigh up, argue for, and explain their decisions. Learning skills: Students know the most important sources of reliable and up-to-date knowledge on scale-ups. This enables them to learn new things independently and to critically situate the transition from a startup to a more mature company within relevant theoretical and practical frameworks. The knowledge acquired in the course is organized in such a flexible way that they are able to link new contents and trends in this field to the existing knowledge and thus comprehend and apply them.

Assessment	For attending students: The achievement of the learning objectives is assessed through three outcome measures: • Written exam (45%): A written exam is designed to measure the knowledge of the contents and their deeper comprehension (ILO 1.a–1.f, ILO 2.a–2.f, ILO 3.a–3.b) • Project work (45%): Students will directly apply the knowledge and skills learned to an given task (opportunity or challenge induced by facing the scale-up phase; presented in form of a case-study). The rigors of this team-based project work go beyond mere application of what has been learned and require the development of a new mix of activities, course prepared but now self-directed learning of tools and their application, and critical judgment of various approaches. The results presented (powerpoint-based). (ILO 2.b–2.l, ILO 3.a–3.b, ILO 4.a, ILO 5.b–5.d) • Class participation (10%): Assessment of participation in class and accompanying project units will relate to oral and written (e.g., team discussions) contributions by students. This includes critical reflection, guided discussion, synthesis, and further development of course content. (ILO 3.c, ILO 4.a–4.b, ILO 5.a–5.b) For non-attending students: The achievement of the learning objectives is assessed through a single outcome measure: • Written exam (100%): A written exam is designed to measure both the knowledge of the contents and their deeper comprehension as well as the application of what has been learned. (ILO 1.a–1.f, ILO 2.a–2.f, ILO 3.a–3.b) NOTE: Project work and classroom contributions are valid for 1 academic year and cannot be carried over beyond that time-frame.
Evaluation Criteria	For attending students: The final grade results from the addition of the following partial achievements (1) Written exam (45%), (2) Project work (45%), (3) Class participation (10%). The following evaluation criteria are essential for the assessment: • Correctness and reliability of the statements • Structure and clarity of the statements • Logic and coherence of the statements • Integration and interconnectedness of the learned content

	• Quality and extent of the research • Choice and application of the learned content • Quality, applicability, and innovativeness of the results • Activity and proactivity regarding the contributions For non-attending students: The final grade results from the (1) Written exam (100%). The following evaluation criteria are essential for the assessment: • Correctness and reliability of the statements • Structure and clarity of the statements • Logic and coherence of the statements • Integration and interconnectedness of the learned content • Choice and application of the learned content • Quality, applicability, and innovativeness of the results
Required Readings	• Coviello, N., Autio, E., Nambisan, S., Patzelt, H., & Thomas, L. D. (2024). Organizational scaling, scalability, and scale-up: Definitional harmonization and a research agenda. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *39*(5), 106419. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2024.106419 • Jansen, J.J.P., Heavey, C., Mom, T.J.M., Simsek, Z. and Zahra, S.A. (2023), Scaling-up: Building, Leading and Sustaining Rapid Growth Over Time. J. Manage. Stud., 60: 581-604. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12910 • DeSantola, A., & Gulati, R. (2017). Scaling: Organizing and growth in entrepreneurial ventures. Academy of Management Annals, 11(2), 640–668. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2015.0125 • Christensen, C. M. (1997). *The innovator's dilemma: When new technologies cause great firms to fail*. Harvard Business Review Press. • Pahnke, E. C., Katila, R., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (2015). Who takes you to the dance? How partners' institutional logics influence innovation in young firms. Administrative Science Quarterly, 60(4), 596–633. https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839215592913 • European Commission. (2025). The EU startup and scaleup strategy: Choose Europe to start and scale (COM(2025) 270 final). Brussels, 28 May 2025. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0270 • Draghi, M. (2024). *The future of European competitiveness – Part A: A competitiveness strategy for Europe*. European Commission. https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/97e481fd-2dc3-412d-be4c-f152a8232961_en

	Note: This is a core selection - all further recommended readings will be communicated during the course. Non-attending students, if any, are asked to contact the lecturer for a complete reading list for their exam preparation. Please register for office hours with the lecturer in advance via mail.
Supplementary Readings	Will be announced during class.
Further Information	- Students are kindly asked to register for office hours in advance via email (benedikt.unger@unibz.it) to allow for adequate preparation on both sides. - This syllabus has been updated for the academic year 2026/27.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Decent work and economic growth, Partnerships fot the goals, Industry, innovation and infrastructure