

The cultural dimension of sustainability



What is the role of culture in the global challenges we are facing?

The UN's 2030 Agenda has established 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 Targets to set a clear and internationally agreed course, decisively guiding the action of institutions and the commitment of research.

Culture is directly and indirectly reflected in all the Sustainable Development Goals, but particularly in the challenges related to quality education (SDG 4), sustainable cities (SDG 11) and decent work (SDG 8).



Culture is in fact a result multiplier as it encourages people to think in terms of the community, devising long-term strategies that could not be implemented simply by gaining technical skills.

It is fundamentally important, therefore, to foster education that provides the degree of knowledge and awareness needed to make change possible.

Just like **healthy and sustainable food and food systems, culture** is a **prerequisite of the whole 2030 Agenda**. Likewise, the **new generation of professionals and researchers** is one of the **most strategic drivers** for building sustainable development.



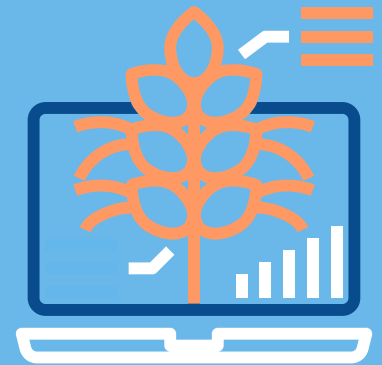
Seeds was set up with the aim of promoting research that contributes to the growth of a culture based on sustainability, starting with food.

Learning from food

Food is not a commodity, it contains a universal value that can be interpreted in a nutritional, cultural, environmental and economic sense.

The universal value of food is specifically the inspiration behind **Seeds**, an area entirely dedicated to the topic of education for sustainability through food. It is committed to **offering new cross-disciplinary study pathways** dedicated to **young professionals and researchers** looking

to gain a better understanding of **the interconnections between individual, social and environmental health**, interested in thinking **about the concept of circularity of resources** and **keen to build sustainable development models** that consider the behavior of every individual.



By starting with food choices we can demonstrate how informed and rational changes can be made that begin with personal habits and achieve a positive impact on a global scale.

We can therefore show how **individuals can each make a difference** if they have the information they need and are able to translate it into a new **mentality** and therefore a new

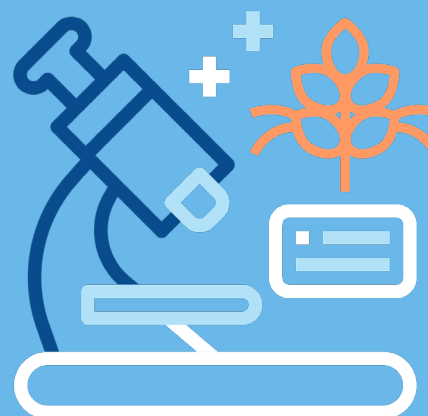
attitude towards their local area, community and resources. It is a **constant learning** process which, once triggered, can continue by **sharing** new data and experiences.

From learning to change-making

Promoting research in the field of food and environmental sustainability first of all requires people to be given an opportunity to take action. In order to achieve concrete results, research in fact needs to be put to the test, advancing from theory and finding spaces and opportunities to test the suggested solutions, in order to offer new responses to nutritional, social, economic and environmental challenges.

These opportunities allow us to **proceed from knowledge to change**, showing people the results that can be achieved through more **informed and responsible food choices**, measuring the impacts and testing innovative applications.

Sharing these practices is one of the best tools available for **young people** to become **active agents of change** and trigger an important **virtuous circle**: demonstrating the effectiveness of alternative behaviors, inspiring a new vision of food and sustainability, and ensuring that every person involved in one of these projects becomes in turn an agent of change, involving new communities and new territories.



For this very reason, Seeds relies on important collaborations and partnerships to support the concept of continuous education, offering young researchers the opportunity to access cross-disciplinary pathways based on teamwork, discussion and sharing experiences, research and case studies.



Food teaches sustainability

Seeds stands out for its ability to offer young people opportunities to meet and hold discussions using tools and initiatives divided into three areas of intervention distinguished by objective.



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Offering tools for university training with high professional skills

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Supporting the role of young people in global challenges

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Making university study more relevant to the needs of young people



01



Offering tools for university training with high professional skills

MOOC “Sustainable food systems: a Mediterranean perspective”



SDGacademy

This MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) is a free digital toolkit dedicated to teachers and educators, university students, professionals and policy makers interested in understanding the complexities of food and environmental sustainability.

It consists of video lessons, documents and tests, in English and with transcripts in Italian and French, thanks to the collaboration with the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and SDG Academy. The aim of the course is to reflect on the challenges for the farming sector in the Mediterranean area, framing the global challenges in the context of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.



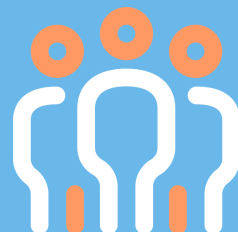


Award

This MOOC was awarded the **“Sustainable PA prize”** in 2018. During the PA Forum, an event dedicated to innovation in Public Administration, it was in fact selected from among the 100 projects that stood out for their ability to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.



02



Supporting the role of young people in global challenges



BCFN YES! – Young Earth Solutions

International competition aimed at young university students and Ph.D students (2012-2014) and doctoral students and researchers (2015-2018), which supported and rewarded the best projects on the topic of food sustainability, supporting innovation and multidisciplinary. The aim of the competition was to encourage new ideas and promote research, cultivating a long-term collaboration through the Alumni group that brought together the finalists from the various competitions.





Youth Manifesto

A manifesto drawn up by 80 young people who came together in Parma to discuss and offer solutions for the three paradoxes of food identified by the Barilla Foundation. The document was presented to institutions, including the Italian Minister of Agriculture Maurizio Martina, as well as numerous representatives from various countries, on the occasion of Expo Milan 2015.



BCFN Empowering Youth

Preparatory work for the Barilla Foundation's Annual Forum, organized to encourage young people to get involved, through face-to-face and online meetings, in various aspects of food sustainability, including the Common Agricultural Policies and the food professions.



03



Making university study more relevant to the needs of young people

A module designed for university lecturers that identifies challenges and good practices as drivers for learning about the complexity of food sustainability.

The toolkit is based on the results gathered by the Food Sustainability Index, a study carried out in collaboration with the Economist Intelligence Unit that analyzes nutritional challenges, the sustainability of agricultural systems and food waste in 67 countries around the world. The module also includes a handbook that shows lecturers how to use the data, and various multimedia materials for further study.

FSI Edu – The Food Sustainable Index as an educational tool



Award

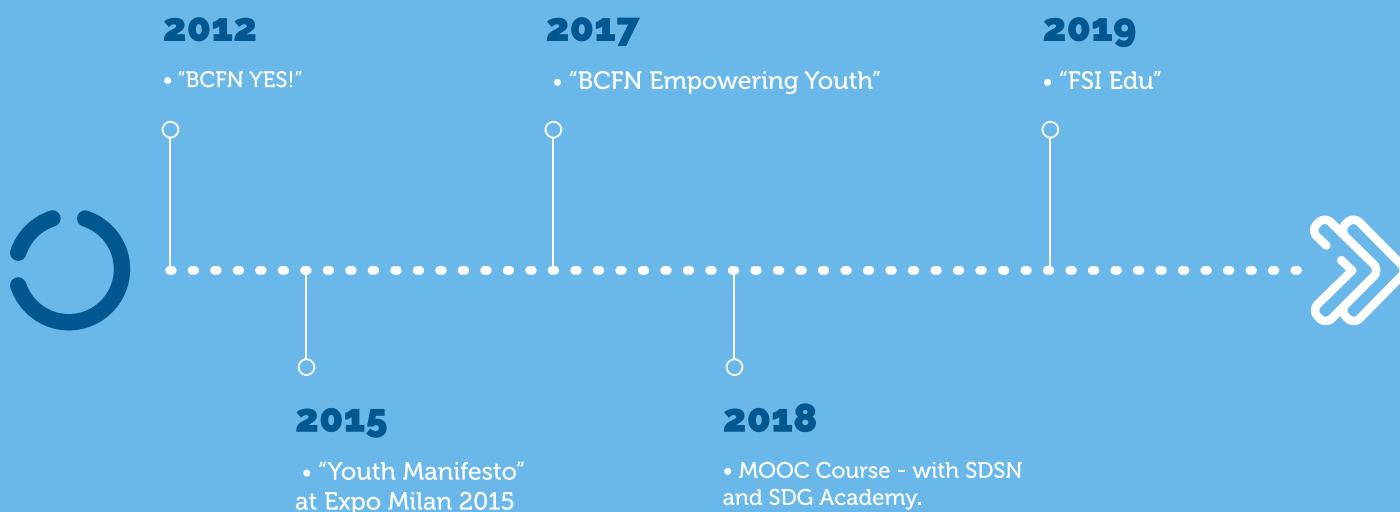
The project awarded the "ASFS Award for Food Studies Pedagogy" to Sonia Massari (team leader) Francesca Allievi, and Francesca Recanati - Roma Tre University, ISIA Roma Design School, JAMK University of Applied Sciences, BCFN Foundation with "International Design Thinking co-teaching sessions on Food Sustainability and Empathy (with a creative use of FSI Edu-toolkit)".



Per imparare la complessità dei sistemi alimentari

Our path

Our commitment to educating about sustainability through food and contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda began in 2012. A path full of important experiences, which have allowed the project to grow and become increasingly complete and reliable.



Partner

**A long, intense and meaningful journey
that has relied on the collaboration of
important partners.**



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