

IULM Talent & Creativity Challenge - 3rd edition

By definition, the university is a place for intellectual challenge. Learning means testing oneself, widening one's gaze, and opening one's mind.

The secret of our university is the continuous and close dialogue between different sensibilities, between economic and humanistic disciplines. Our university cultivates the idea that 'know-how' and 'knowledge' should go hand in hand. This is the secret of our students' training, which requires them to be capable of critical and creative thinking and have a trained mindset ready to grasp the transformations of the world around them.

With this in mind, for the third time, IULM is outlining a way for students to test their talent and creativity by participating in the third edition of the IULM Talent & Creativity Challenge by submitting a creative product for one of the proposed categories. A jury of professors and professionals will decide the winner for each category.

All students regularly enrolled in a Bachelor's, Master's or University Master's degree programme, and those who have graduated as of the July 2023 graduation session, may participate individually or in groups. Applications can be made in no more than three categories.

This [link](#) provides details for uploading projects, which should take place between **3 February 2025 and 7 March 2025**.

If you have any questions, please email talent@iulm.it

The winners in each category will receive a cash prize (ranging from €1,000 to €3,000, at the sole discretion of the jury, considering the production effort put into realising the requested product).

1. Short film

Participants should produce a fiction short film lasting less than 5 minutes. Any technique, as well as any genre, is allowed. The work should have been made after July 2023.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Gianni Canova

2. Short Story

Participants should write a literary short story of no more than 20,000 characters (including spaces) that sets out the word of the year in a comic key.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Paolo Giovannetti

3. Commercial

IULM STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE: To devise and realise a commercial with a maximum duration of 60 seconds, the theme of which is the launch of IULM STRATEGY.

IULM STRATEGY is a strategy game for PC and/or consoles (historical references could be Civilization or Age of Empires or similar). But instead of founding cities and empires, one should found an advertising agency, make it fight against competitors, defend it from dangers and help it grow in the inhospitable contemporary scenario.

Disclaimer: IULM STRATEGY is an imaginary product.

Proposals should start from the concept and then be realised using whatever device is available, including a smartphone.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Dr. Guido Cornara

4. Translation of a literary text

Participants should produce an Italian translation of the text by Steve Rasnic Tem from the short story 'At Play in the Fields' (2011).

After years of repetition, waking up in some altered state had become the expected outcome of long, uninterrupted slumber. Since childhood, Tom had come to think of sleep as practically a means of transportation. If ill or depressed he'd take to his bed for that healing power of sleep, reviving at some point forward in time, in a better place, a healthier frame of mind.

So when he regained consciousness this time in a brilliant haze of light he was not extremely concerned, even when he saw an enormous plant maybe eight feet tall—some sort of succulent bromeliad, he believed—moving about in the room, its long fleshy leaves touching tables and racks, picking up bottles and tools, its flexible stamen waving. Near the top of the plant the leaves

had widened into shoulders, where some sort of brightly-lit chandelier was mounted.

Clearly he should have screamed, or been overwhelmed by anxiety, and in some compartment of his mind he was. But the trauma was muted, the terror inaccessible.

The plant waved a cluster of long filaments in Tom's direction, emitting a high-pitched, scraping sound. Now feeling the beginnings of concern, he attempted to escape. But he appeared to be paralyzed, his limbs oblivious to urgent commands. He wasn't strong enough to even cover his ears.

The scraping ceased. "I apologize," said a voice inside his head. "I had not activated your implant." Tom managed to twist his neck slightly in order to find the source of the voice, whether a presence or some visible speaker grille. He found nothing, but noticed that the handles on the tools, the vessels on the tables, were distorted, as if melted. He was hallucinating, then. Maybe he'd eaten something toxic. The plant moved with unbelievable rapidity, as an octopus had moved across the ocean floor in a nature documentary he'd seen recently, and now leaned over him.

[...] Tom took a deep breath and looked around. The room appeared sterile, and there were recognizable tubes, containers, liquids, instruments—with handles and other attachments distorted and unlike anything he'd ever seen before. But they made a kind of sense, given the nature of the creature before him, who gave an impression of floating on a mop of fine

roots. He understood now that this plant—thing was in constant, subtle movement—its leaves, stems—gently flowing, changing shape in a way that emphasized this impression of floating.

"You were suspended."

"What? What do you mean?"

"You were placed in a state ... cannot translate ... cannot translate. You were placed in a condition of suspended animation. The technology was primitive then, but there have been... cannot translate. There have been survivors. Cannot translate. Did they make promises to you concerning the eventual outcome?" "What? No ... I told you. It was just supposed to be a simple procedure. No one said anything about suspended animation or anything like that." [...]

"I know that sounds harsh, but sometimes you have to step back, view history with a bit of perspective. That's what I used to do—I taught high school history. There were too many people, and with the droughts, the infestations, many crops were lost. People came up from Latin America looking for food—Mexico was just a rest stop. Refugees were pouring out of Asia into Europe, away from flooded coastal cities everywhere. No way could all those people be fed. The fields were empty, and then the fields were filled with bodies. They deserved better. My father would have agreed with that much. People deserve better."

"Your father thought you deserved better. So he sent you forward—."

"To where?" Anxiety was beginning to fill him. "To when? When is this?" "Cannot translate. Cannot translate," the plant's heavy leaves rose and fell, rhythmic and graceful as some deep jungle ballerina. "To here. To now."

It was easier just to imagine yourself a new person than to attempt to adjust, carrying around the old self's vague memories, as if you'd read them in a book. "Therapy has been performed" according to the implanted translator, but details were untranslatable, answered instead by a series of random sounds. It bothered him, certainly, to have been tampered with, and to wake up owing someone for his revival. But it was all the life he had. Loss and displacement aside, the most difficult thing that first year was coping with the apparent limits of the translator. Although the quality improved, there were always gaps where a lengthy period of attempted communication resulted in a disappointingly blunt "cannot translate," or worse, absolute silence. [...]

From the patch directly in front of him, he picked up a small metallic jar and was looking at it when broad hands attached to skinny arms snatched it away. [...] A rhythmic crunching noise surprised him. One of his fellow assistants was jogging across the debris field toward him. "The name's Franklin!" the man shouted. [...]

"Do you know when this is?" Tom asked eagerly. Franklin laughed. "Sorry. No, I don't think any of us do. 'Cannot translate,' which is what they say if there's something they don't want you to know."

"I don't think my companion would lie—I don't think he even can."

"But he can leave out the details, or say nothing at all. Surely he's like all the other flowers in this petunia patch, and you get these long, silent, brooding spells?"

"Well, yes. But there's no way for us to know what that silence actually means, or how it functions for them. They're not plants, by the way." [...]

During the next few months Tom became obsessed with the complexities of reconstituting a vanished world from its pieces—his world, and that world which had evolved into being while he slept.

[...]

"My father believed every human being deserved two things—meaningful work and a home to live in or come back to when the world felt unsafe. My mother tended to agree but her practical nature told her that not everyone got what they deserved, and when survival was at stake self-fulfilment was a luxury. The fact that they never managed to own their own home caused my father great shame. [...]

"But he was determined that one day we would have a house of our own and toward that end he found what he thought was the perfect front door. On a demolition job he discovered this thick door with carved panels and an elaborate brass doorknob. He took it home to our little rented duplex and leaned it against the wall and announced to the family that we were going to have a great house someday and that this would be the front door.

"The next morning he replaced the door to the duplex with this new one. It didn't quite fit and he had to trim it and make some adjustments to the frame. He had an extra key made and gave it to the owner because, of course, it was actually his house. The owner wasn't very happy but my dad could be pretty charming.

"From then on, wherever we moved my father carried that door. Sometimes he had to cut it to fit a smaller opening and sometimes he had to add lumber to one end to widen it or make it taller. After a few years with all those alterations it didn't look so elegant, but it was still strong, and it was our door. I'm sure we were evicted more than once because of it, but he was stubborn. I think the uglier it became, the more he liked it.

"Dad used to tell me stories about early civilizations, about the night watch, and how people would lock themselves in at night behind a good door to protect themselves from wild animals and thieves. [...] My father desperately wanted to make his mark but didn't know how. He said we should leave behind more than a few scattered bones in a field, that we all deserved better. He thought you should feel that your limited time here mattered. That you had opened doors.

"For me the worst thing about those last few years of my old life was that mattering didn't seem possible anymore. It appeared to be too late to make a difference. Has that changed? Can you tell me that?" For a long time Tom waited there by that beautiful, unknowable alien thing. The answer finally came, faintly, as if across some vast distance.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Mara Logaldo

5. Audiovisual translation

Participants can choose one of the following options:

1) Produce the Italian subtitles for the short film Soul Office (Ryan Loughran, 2021) and save them as an SRT file (SubRip File Format). The subtitles should be numbered and synchronised with the dialogues; therefore, they should be complete with time code in/out. They should also respect all the rules of condensation, segmentation, and formatting (italics, upper/lower case). The maximum number of characters per line allowed is 40, and the reading time is 15 characters per second. N.B.

a) The attached English srt. file should only serve as a trace, and it may contain errors;

b) if you have problems uploading the srt. file, follow the instructions in point 3 at

<https://iulm.sharepoint.com/sites/IULMTalent23/SitePages/Traduzione%20audiovisiva.aspx>:->

documentation (file size greater than 1GB) -> upload the file to OneDrive and copy the link in point 4 -> Project Notes.

2) produce the script for dubbing the short film Soul Office (Ryan Loughran, 2021) by producing a Word file. The adaptation should contain an initial page with the film title and name of the adaptor, a page with synopsis and signs, and a page with a list of characters and voices; dialogue lines will be preceded by character name and time code in (minutes and seconds, e.g., 02:35); use the necessary indications (on-screen, off-screen, etc.) following the abbreviations available on the AIDAC website. For example:

(FC): Fuori Campo (Out-of-Field)

(IC): In Campo (In Field)

(SOVR): Sovrapposizione (quando un personaggio parla contemporaneamente a un altro) (Overlap - when one character speaks at the same time as another)

(RIS.): Risatina (Giggle)

(DS): Di Spalle (quando le labbra del personaggio non sono visibili) (Behind - when the character's lips are not visible)

(SM): Sul Muto (battuta inesistente nel sonoro originale) (On Mute - joke that did not exist in the original sound)

(FIATO): Emissione forzata di fiato (Forced emission of breath)

(VERSO): Indica un verso umano; altrimenti, per es., (GRIDA) (RIDE) (PIANGE) (Indicates a human noise; otherwise, e.g. (SCREAMS) (LAUGHS) (CRIES))

Each page should contain a maximum of 20 lines and should be numbered.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Mara Logaldo

6. Review

Participants should write a review of a film released in the last three years. The review should be no longer than 2000 characters (including spaces) and sent in docx format. At the top of the file, indicate the original and Italian title of the film, the director, and the year of release.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Fabio Vittorini

7. Book trailer

Participants should produce a promotional video that encourages the reading of a published narrative text, either Italian or foreign, classic or contemporary. The video should be less than 2 minutes long. Any technique, as well as the choice of genre and expressive register, is allowed. The book trailer should have

been produced after May 2023.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Gianni Canova

8. Photography

Participants should produce a photo shoot inspired by the Word of the Year 2025:

STRATEGY. The theme can be developed from a personal perspective, using any medium, technique and style. Photos may be in colour or black and white and can be graphically manipulated. Photos taken in both landscape and portrait formats will be accepted. There are no creative or stylistic restrictions.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Dr. Fabio Liggeri

9. Radio Format

Participants should submit an original audio series of 6-10 episodes, 15-30 minutes each, conceived as a radio format or a podcast, of information or fiction, which recounts an event of transformation and change that has occurred in the past, is currently in progress or is desirable in the future. The slant may be journalistic and linked to current events, in-depth in a documentary style, or a narrative of invention more or less inspired by real cases. A 3-10 page written project with concept and description of the series and the individual episodes, the production (audio file in mp3 or wav format) of the first episode or a 5/10 minute demo is required.

The concept, structure, writing, voices, sound material, and sound design will be assessed.

Special attention will be paid to the presence and use of storytelling elements characteristic of a purely audio medium.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Dr. Gaia Varon

10. TV Format

The applicant (individual or group) should outline the concept of a teen TV series aimed at a young audience.

The material to be presented should consist of:

- concept of the series (max. 200 words)*
- list and description of the characters*
- description of the setting and locations*
- format (number of episodes planned, length of single episode)*

A video trailer of the series, lasting max. 30 seconds, may also be submitted if desired.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Daniela Cardini

11. Tourism Communication

Sustainability is an essential value for Generation Z, but companies struggle to communicate it. Tourism companies are also facing this challenge, as they face the difficulty of leveraging marketing that seeks to change guest behaviour.

Italy is a first-class destination that has been well-established on the international market for decades. Despite its long tradition in tourism and investment in sustainability issues, little has been done to

communicate with Generation Z.

- How can the sustainability of Italy's tourism offering be communicated to attract a target group of tourists in their twenties and thirties?*
 - How can sustainability practices that entail sacrifices for guests be communicated effectively?*
 - What are the value elements around which messages should be built?*
 - With which languages and which tools?*
 - What are the opportunities for communicating new sustainable experiences in light of the needs and motivations of this specific target group? To answer these questions, the following will be presented:*
 - Campaign projects on the digital communication ecosystem*
 - Gaming projects*
 - Influencer marketing projects*
 - Partnership projects with public and private entities*
 - Other cross-media communication activities also through the production of audio and video content*
- COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Anna Scuttari

12. Exhibition Concept

Participants are required to develop an exhibition project inspired by the Word of the Year: Strategy. The presentation dossier submitted for evaluation should include the title and concept of the exhibition, selection of the works on show (titles, images, possible provenance), explanation of the exhibition layout, hypotheses for the set up of the virtual space, in-depth examination of the production and communication of the exhibition, description and planning of an agenda of possible significant events linked to the exhibition, and other helpful information for understanding the proposal.

The dossier should be accompanied by a visual or audiovisual file that presents and visualises the project.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Vincenzo Trione

13. Marketing Campaign

IULM Store Experience Challenge: rethinking the IULM Store at the centre of university life

The challenge invites students to redesign the IULM Store, transforming it into an optimised and strategic space capable of attracting and engaging the university community. In addition to rethinking layout and merchandising, the project should outline innovative strategies for integrating the store into students' everyday lives and maximising its usefulness and attractiveness.

1. Redefining the concept of the IULM Store as a student hub

Participants should outline a new concept that makes the store central to students' lives, generating interest and involvement. The concept should also include digital extensions, offering practical solutions for academic life and introducing an innovative offering with social value.

2. Strategies to attract and incentivise use of the store

A key aspect of the contest will be to develop ideas to attract students to the store and incentivise their use through:

- Promotions and incentives: Special offers, loyalty rewards or discounts dedicated to students.*
- Digital campaigns: Eye-catching content on social media (Instagram, TikTok) to promote products and*

services.

- *Collaboration with internal channels: Involve platforms such as Radio IULM for promotions or dedicated messages.*

3. Design the store layout and merchandising

The challenge includes rethinking the physical layout of the store to optimise space and improve the student experience:

- *Functional layout: Create a fluid and accessible organisation even at busy times.*
- *Digital integration: Incorporate technological elements such as interactive screens or QR codes for a modern and engaging experience.*
- *Strategic merchandising: Enhance the most relevant or innovative product categories through creative and well-positioned displays.*

4. Devise an integrated communication campaign

The communication campaign should emphasise the store's novelties and benefits, actively involving the university community. It could include:

- *Social media: Promotions, short videos and interactive content for platforms like Instagram and TikTok.*
- *IULM Radio: Dedicated spots or messages promoting the new store experience.*
- *Internal billboards: Posters and information materials at strategic points around the university and in the store itself.*

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Francesco Massara

14. Communication Project for a Fashion or Design Product

Candidates should present a communication project related to fashion or design. The project may consist of a poster, press ad, or a 30-second video designed for social media.

The verbal-visual project (image or video) should be accompanied by a project brief, which should be structured around the following points:

- 1. The presentation of the fashion or design object on which the communication project will focus.*
- 2. The concept from which the creative idea is developed.*
- 3. The motivation for the chosen format and the channels on which the product/service communication will be distributed.*
- 4. The explanation of the eventual choice of endorser/influencer/content creator.*
- 5. Explanation of the chosen line of storytelling, if any.*
- 6. The explanation of the target audience of the communication.*
- 7. An indication of the product's value universe and how it is made explicit by the proposed communication.*
- 8. Which positioning will be achieved (luxury, premium, mass) and why.*

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Mauro Ferraresi

15. Sustainable Eco Project for IULM

The creative contest aims to design innovative, practical and measurable initiatives linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda aimed at improving and consolidating Università IULM's journey in the field of sustainability.

Participants are invited to devise projects to improve IULM's daily practices related to the SDGs'

environmental and/or social dimensions and promote IULM as a sustainable innovation model in the national and international landscape.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Practical innovation:

- The project should outline concrete initiatives and solutions to improve daily practices on campus regarding the SDGs' environmental and/or social dimensions. This is also in collaboration with start-ups, companies, public bodies, and non-governmental organisations committed to sustainability issues.

2. Impact and its measurability:

Each project should clearly identify the specific aspect(s) it intends to solve or improve, its relevance, and how it can contribute to tangible improvement.

- Clear definition of objectives and expected results

- Presence and appropriateness of tools and metrics for monitoring project impact

3. Promotion and community involvement:

The project should include adequate promotion/communication tools to engage the university community and the surrounding area and promote a sense of shared responsibility for sustainability.

4. Consistency with the SDGs:

- Relevance and connection to one or more SDGs.

5. Creativity and feasibility

- Originality of the idea and practical feasibility.

Each project should include:

- A detailed description of the idea.

- An analysis of the aspect being dealt with and the SDG(s) being addressed.

- Clear and measurable objectives and impact.

- A plan for promotion and community involvement.

- An indicative budget.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Federica Ricceri

16. Start-Up Project

Participants should present a project for creating a new business activity, including a business plan, under sustainability conditions, following the best practices indicated by ESG parameters. They should particularly focus on communication, the cultural and creative industries characteristic of Made in Italy, tourism, and the use of cultural heritage. This can also be done in teams with non-IULM students or talents.

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Angelo Miglietta

17. AI applications for inclusion

Participants should design an application (app, web platform, totem or other type of interface) aimed at helping students in their university study activities.

Participants should produce a presentation or paper containing the following aspects:

- scenario analysis and possible benchmarks

- definition of the need and pain point on which the solution being designed will operate - modelling of the application, including the various AI components that may be used

- *benefits brought to students by the solution to enhance their study activities*
- *estimate of the complexity of production and any problems to be resolved (organisational, management, regulatory, etc.)*
- *rough estimate of production time and costs*

COORDINATOR and PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Guido Di Fraia

18. Theatre

Participants should present a theatre direction plan based on a text of their choice. The direction plan should consist of the play text, director's notes, set design, lighting plan, costumes, and music, if any.

COORDINATOR AND PRESIDENT OF THE JURY: Prof. Valentina Garavaglia