

**Postgraduate Certificate:  
Circular economy –  
business and legal  
frameworks and  
opportunities**

Take the leap to a future-proof  
circular business



## Why this programme?

Does your organisation want to take the leap to a future-proof circular business, but do you lack sufficient knowledge and skills on how to get started or scale up?

The need for a sustainable transformation of our economy and society as a whole has gained more widespread acceptance in recent years, thanks to new scientific insights and the ever increasing prominent (consequences of) climate change.

Moreover, multiple geo-political events made the urge for fundamental transitions in sustainable raw material management, food and energy supply clearly tangible. Sustainability is or should be high on the agenda of every organisation. Sustainable products, processes and services evolve into the new mainstream.

Circular economy is to become the norm in the near future for companies to be resilient and ensure their existence in a sustainable way (i.e. ecologically, economically and socially). The new 'Circular Economy Action Plan' is therefore an essential part of the European Commission's European Green Deal.

Developing circular business models, products and services is vital in the transition to a more sustainable, resilient economy, society and planet.

The Postgraduate Certificate **Circular economy - business and legal frameworks and opportunities** has been designed specifically for you to acquire solid academic and applied interdisciplinary knowledge in the different strategies, opportunities and challenges to establish and implement a circular business model, as well as an introduction to recent developments in sustainable/circular materials and products.

This programme runs jointly with the postgraduate programme *Sustainable polymers in a circular economy*.

[Read more](#)

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- You **gain broad multidisciplinary insights** in the diverse aspects of circular economy as well as their interdependencies and impacts: economic, legal, political, societal and technical.
- You are first in line to get to know the **most recent evolutions and developments** within the multiple circular economy expertise domains from a team of lecturers from both **academia and industry**.
- Practical knowledge is facilitated through **company visits and workshops**.
- You are challenged to address the development or evaluation of a circular business model from the principle of **systems thinking**, considering the entire value chain and all stakeholders.
- You learn how to **implement** new circular strategies or solutions in your organisation.
- You are able to make informed decisions and **define well-considered solutions** for the circular business challenges in your own practice.
- You **enlarge your professional network** through interaction with fellow participants from different sectors and with the lecturers from both academia and industry.

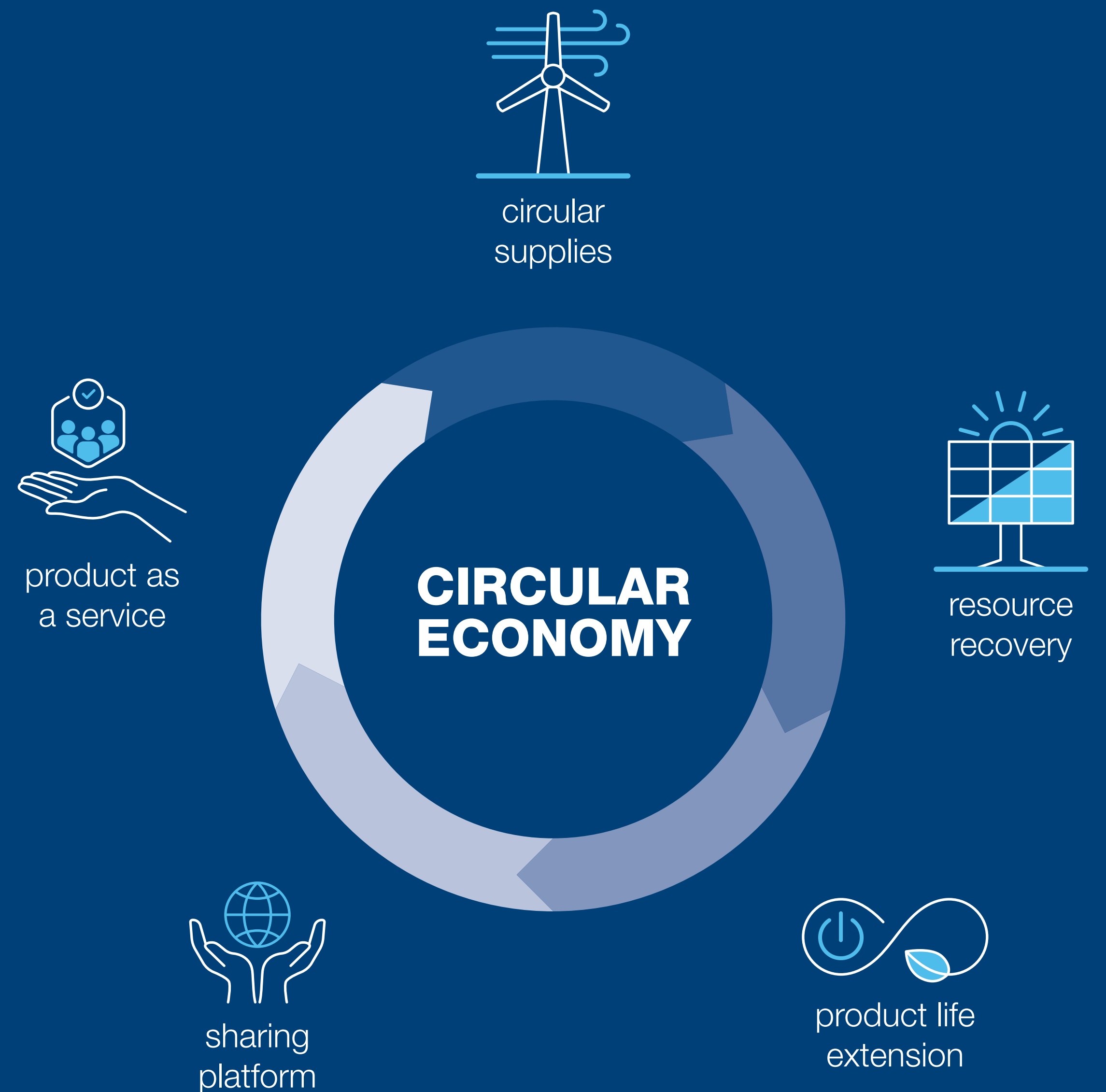
## For whom?

The programme aims at professionals seeking to expand their knowledge of circular economy and sustainable circular strategies.

Sustainability transitions require a holistic approach, where solving these 'wicked problems' must be tackled from a systems perspective to achieve a global positive impact. This programme offers a balanced, interdisciplinary content addressing circular economy from different perspectives, appealing to different economic and legal profiles within the various departments of an organisation.

The programme specifically caters to participants with a certain degree of decision-making power within their organisation to actively contribute to the transition to a circular economy, including but not limited to: financial manager, product manager, operations manager, sales manager, purchase manager, legal/compliance manager, corporate lawyer, audit manager, sustainability manager.

In general, participants with a master's degree and 3-5 years' experience will be admitted. If you hold a bachelor's degree or recently graduated as a master, you are also welcome to apply to the programme by submitting your CV and motivation letter to demonstrate you have the necessary background. The programme committee will assess your application.



# PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme consists of 2 modules and a closing thesis (paper), integrating the knowledge acquired in the different courses.

## MODULE 1: A HOLISTIC VIEW ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY

This module offers a broad, multidisciplinary perspective on circular economy. It starts with a general introduction to circular economy as a means to achieve sustainability goals, followed by several chapters each addressing a specific aspect of circular economy, i.e. business-economic, legal, policy, social, and technical.

### WHAT IS CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

- Why circular economy?
- Circular economy vs. sustainability
- Circular/system thinking
- How to transition towards a circular economy?

### BUSINESS ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- Circular business models
- Circular corporate models
- Circular procurement
- Corporate identity and culture; change management
- Circular business development
- Corporate communication on sustainability

### LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- European and (inter)national legislative and standardization frameworks
- Contractual opportunities and challenges in circular business models

### POLICY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

- Circular economy policy
- Consumer readiness for circular economy
- Impact of circular economy on the labour market
- Social impact of circular economy (just transition)

### HOW TO MONITOR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

- Indicators of circularity
- Impact measurement of circularity
- Digital technologies as enabler for a circular economy

### CIRCULAR MATERIALS AND PRODUCTS

- Sustainable (raw) materials
- Circularity of materials
- Bio-based and biodegradable polymer materials

## MODULE 2: ECONOMIC AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

This module offers in-depth knowledge through specialised courses in the economic, financial and legal frameworks and models of circular economy and their impact on circular business models, as well as in corporate governance and its relation to sustainability.

### ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- Economic models and policy
- End of life; Extended producer responsibility
- Valuation within the circular economy
- Financing of circular business models (legislation and in practice)

### LEGAL ASPECTS OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- Overall legislative framework: as is & to be
- Green washing; labels and certification (product/service level)
- Waste law
- Contractual rights, obligations and liabilities in circular business models
- Circular procurement: legal context
- Accounting and fiscal aspects of circular economy: legal context
- Industrial testimonials

### CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

- Corporate governance and sustainability due diligence
- Sustainability reporting
- Sustainability labels and certification (company level)
- Industrial testimonials

## EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATE

The evaluation will be based on your active participation during the sessions and (group) exercises as well as on your thesis (in Dutch or English) and your presentation of it to the examination jury.

Upon successful completion of the programme, you receive the Postgraduate Certificate *Circular economy – business and legal frameworks and opportunities*, awarded by KU Leuven. The programme contains 21 ECTS.

## PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

The programme committee supervises and guarantees the qualitative, scientific and practice-oriented nature of the programme.

- Prof. dr. Frederik Desplentere
- Prof. dr. Bart Goderis
- Prof. dr. Dorothy Gruyaert
- Prof. dr. Bert Keirsbilck
- Prof. dr. Wim Malfait
- Ann Peeters (Agoria)
- Dr. Céline Platteau
- Prof. dr. Sandra Rousseau
- Prof. dr. Evelyne Terryn
- Prof. dr. ir. Wim Thielemans
- Prof. dr. ir. Karel Van Acker
- Prof. dr. Veerle Vandeginste
- Saskia Walraedt (essenscia)

## PARTNERS

This programma is organised by

- Faculty of Law and Criminology
- Faculty of Economics and Business
- Faculty of Engineering Technology
- Faculty of Engineering Science

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### COURSE SCHEDULE

The programme runs from October until June, with Module 1 in the first semester (Oct – Dec) and Module 2 in the second semester (Feb – June). Sessions are taught in English and scheduled on Thursdays from 1:30 pm until 8:30 pm.

### LOCATION

- 2023-2024: KU Leuven Kulak (Kortrijk)
- 2024-2025: KU Leuven (Leuven)

### REGISTRATION

Register via [puc.kuleuven.be](https://puc.kuleuven.be)  
Registration fee is € 5500

Included: participation to the lessons, digital course material, catering and insurance. You also receive a KU Leuven student's card.

Save on your registration by using the kmo-portefeuille (Theme: 'duurzaamheid' – advice: 'efficiënt materiaal gebruik'). More information on [kmo-portefeuille.be](https://kmo-portefeuille.be).

This programme is eligible for educational leave by the Flemish Government and the Brussels-Capital Region.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Programme manager: Céline Platteau

#### Postuniversitair Centrum

KU Leuven Kulak  
Etienne Sabbelaan 53 bus 7643, 8500 Kortrijk  
[puc@kuleuven.be](mailto:puc@kuleuven.be)  
+32 56 24 61 84

