



XI Consiliatura 2023-2028



Corporate Academies: A Strategic Driver of National Productivity

Italy – National Productivity Board

Working Paper

No. 4, September 2026



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CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE

DELL'ECONOMIA E DEL LAVORO

CNEL Working Papers

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Managing Director

Renato Brunetta – *President of CNEL*

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Corporate Academies and Human Capital

The Capitalisation of Training Intangibles and the Role of Corporate Academies in Reducing Organisational Misallocation

*Pasquale Lucio Scandizzo*¹

Corporate Academies and Human Capital.

The Capitalisation of Training Intangibles and the Role of Corporate Academies in Reducing Organisational Misallocation

Pasquale Lucio Scandizzo

1. The Point of Convergence: Human Capital and Job Quality

Corporate Academies represent the point of convergence between human capital theory and the theory of job quality. Within the former, the central issue, ever since Becker's seminal formulation (1964), is that the formation of human capital involves both the firm and the worker, who nonetheless compete to secure the largest share of the economic returns generated by the investment. This competition is inherently asymmetric: workers bear training costs in terms of time, effort and, in some cases, foregone earnings, whereas firms incur the direct costs of organising and delivering training while enjoying greater bargaining power in determining who ultimately captures the returns on investment. Becker's distinction between general training, which is transferable across firms and therefore rewarded in the labour market, and firm-specific training, embedded in the routines and procedures of a particular enterprise, provides the structural basis for determining which party has the incentive to finance which type of investment. Because workers cannot use their human capital as collateral, and firms cannot prevent employees from taking with them the general skills that the firm has financed, the market for training is systematically undersupplied relative to the socially optimal level.

Subsequent scholars have progressively qualified the sharpness of this distinction. Acemoglu and Pischke (1998, 1999) demonstrated that, under conditions of labour market imperfections—including asymmetric information regarding worker productivity, mobility costs and local

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monopsony power—firms have incentives to finance even general training, provided that they are able to keep wages below the marginal productivity of trained workers. Such wage compression becomes easier the less liquid the labour market is and the less visible the acquired training is to competing employers. Corporate Academies operate precisely within this space. They produce a combination of general training, which is certifiable, portable and transferable across employers, and firm-specific training, embedded in the processes, organisational language and corporate culture of a particular enterprise. The balance between these two components reflects strategic decisions made by the firm, which do not necessarily coincide either with the interests of employees or with the socially optimal allocation of training resources.

Within the theory of job quality, firms use employee satisfaction not only as a means of enhancing productivity but also as an instrument for fostering retention, thereby reducing the likelihood that competing firms will attract their most valuable employees. In *Rewarding Work* (1997), Edmund Phelps, in particular, develops the concept of work as an activity capable of generating endogenous satisfaction, whose motivational force derives from self-realisation and from its capacity to confer social dignity and meaning throughout the worker's life cycle. From this perspective, training is not merely an investment in productivity; it is a constitutive element of professional identity that cannot be reduced to a contractual transaction without sacrificing something essential. Management approaches that treat training simply as a cost variable to be optimised in response to short-term business conditions ultimately destroy not only human capital but also motivation, organisational commitment and trust—resources that require far longer to rebuild than to erode.

2. Human Capital Accumulation: A Self-Reinforcing Fund

Unlike physical capital, the accumulation of human capital displays distinctive characteristics that transcend firm-level processes and give rise to fundamental challenges for training activities. First, although it requires an immediate commitment of resources in anticipation of future benefits, human capital accumulation more closely resembles a self-reinforcing fund that develops through a process crossing a technological frontier, in the sense defined by Georgescu-Roegen, rather than a stock requiring continuous or periodic external replenishment, as is the case with machinery or production facilities. Knowledge accumulates through

stratification: each new competence is built upon pre-existing cognitive structures, amplifying their scope in a non-linear manner and generating complementarities that multiply the returns to training investments to an extent that conventional input measures—including training hours, expenditure on instruction, and the number of participants—are unable to capture.

Second, human capital forms part of a broader community of knowledge and competences that extends beyond individual accumulation to generate forms of social and organisational capital, themselves largely the outcome of endogenous processes that are difficult to direct through managerial intervention. Within this framework, job quality depends in complex ways upon characteristics that only partially coincide with the apparent levels of competence generated by formal training programmes. Rather, it reflects the worker's entire trajectory of learning throughout the life course, including qualities that can only be indirectly fostered through structured educational initiatives: adaptability, the capacity to deal with non-codified situations, and the intrinsic dignity and satisfaction derived from work as a primary vehicle of social participation and self-realisation.

This collective and stratified dimension of cognitive accumulation corresponds precisely to what the economic literature identifies as organisational capital, a concept that is distinct from, albeit closely related to, individual human capital. Lev and Radhakrishnan (2005), followed by Eisefeldt and Papanikolaou (2013), demonstrate that organisational capital—understood as the knowledge embedded in an enterprise's routines, processes and shared mental models—constitutes a separate factor of production, characterised by measurable returns and by its own dynamics of accumulation and depreciation. Corporate Academies represent one of the principal institutional mechanisms through which such capital is generated: by codifying tacit knowledge, developing common organisational languages, standardising practices, and enabling forms of decentralised decision-making that presuppose a shared foundation of competences. Yet this capital remains largely invisible in corporate financial statements and in national accounting systems, with consequences that extend beyond measurement to the structure of incentives themselves.

3. Cultural Consumption as a Factor of Production: Accumulation, Chaos and Non-Linear Dynamics

The perspective introduced by Georgescu-Roegen concerning the self-reinforcing nature of human capital finds a rigorous formal development in the theory of cultural consumption as an input into the aggregate production function. In a study anticipating many of the insights later developed in the literature on intangible assets, Scandizzo (1993) demonstrates that when consumption includes a significant cultural component—that is, when the act of consumption simultaneously generates immediate utility while increasing the stock of experience and knowledge—the dynamic structure of the optimal growth problem differs fundamentally from that of the standard neoclassical model.

The central mechanism is a double feedback relationship between consumption and accumulation. On the one hand, cultural consumption enters directly into the production function with a positive marginal productivity, because it contributes to the stock of knowledge underpinning productive capacity. On the other hand, the accumulated stock enters the utility function as a complement to current consumption, thereby increasing the satisfaction derived from any given level of future consumption. Formally, this framework closely resembles the function performed by Corporate Academies: training is not merely a cost that diverts resources from immediate production, but an investment that simultaneously enhances workers' productivity and enriches the quality of the work experience itself, thereby generating precisely the complementarities between stocks and flows described by the theoretical model.

The formal conclusion of this framework is both striking and of considerable practical significance. The double feedback structure introduces an element of intrinsic instability into the optimal trajectory, which can be classified as chaotic behaviour in the sense developed by Li and Yorke. Under conditions of cultural accumulation, the optimal growth path is neither monotonic nor convergent towards a stable steady state. Rather, it requires the strategic planning of phases of intensive consumption followed by phases of restraint, periods of over-investment followed by disinvestment, according to a cyclical pattern of variable duration. From the perspective of training policy, this result suggests that Corporate Academies should not conceive their programmes as regular and gradual

distributions of competences, but rather as intensive and discontinuous interventions calibrated to the complementarities between the existing stock of organisational capital and the flow of newly generated knowledge. Consequently, the logic of continuous modular training—currently predominant among the Academies documented in this volume—could usefully be complemented by extraordinary training programmes linked to emerging innovation processes and to new horizons of employee engagement, thereby maximising the long-term value of training investments.

This conclusion is directly connected to the issue of organisational capital as a distinct analytical category. Organisational capital does not accumulate in a linear and continuous fashion but rather through thresholds and discontinuities. Consequently, training programmes capable of accommodating the non-linear structure of organisational learning are likely to prove particularly effective. The "modified golden rule" emerging from the model establishes that the marginal product of capital should exceed the level implied by the conventional golden rule by an amount equal to the rate at which consumption, considered simultaneously as a stock and as a flow, is substitutable from the standpoint of individual welfare. Measuring such a condition requires outcome-based metrics that Corporate Academies do not currently produce but could usefully develop in the future.

4. The Existential Dimension: Sen and the Capability Approach

In this regard, the work of Amartya Sen provides a fundamental point of reference through his distinction between capabilities and functionings. Capabilities refer to the substantive opportunities and freedoms that individuals possess and continuously develop throughout their lives, whereas functionings concern the actual realisation of those capabilities as part of the broader existential process of self-fulfilment. Within this framework, training emerges as an integral component of a personal life project that encompasses not only the individual worker but also his or her family, the community in which he or she lives, and society as a whole. It develops alongside, and is necessarily embedded within, broader cultural processes that govern access to, and inclusion in, public goods as well as the wider forms of social and civic participation that characterise human communities.

Training is therefore a crucial instrument for the creation and distribution of wealth in a modern society, both in its tangible and intangible forms, because it ultimately shapes individuals' participation in economic and political life through a micro-macroeconomic nexus that reproduces the fundamental dialectic of the market economy within an open society. From this perspective, reducing training to a matter of corporate efficiency, although legitimate within its own limited scope, overlooks its deeper dimension: namely, that training constitutes a right, a condition of economic citizenship, and an instrument of intergenerational equity. As documented by many of the contributions included in this volume, Corporate Academies that extend their activities to local communities, schools, universities and workers employed throughout external supply chains increasingly approximate this broader function, evolving from instruments of internal organisational efficiency into semi-public cognitive infrastructures.

The Senian perspective introduces an unavoidable tension. Expanding capabilities through corporate training is unquestionably a desirable objective, yet its achievement depends on the structure of training provision, on who determines its content, and on the objectives pursued. Training designed exclusively to meet the firm's immediate production requirements may enhance certain operational skills while simultaneously restricting workers' capabilities in Sen's sense—that is, by narrowing their scope for occupational choice and diminishing their ability to envisage alternative career trajectories. This tension cannot be resolved in the abstract; rather, it depends upon the concrete ways in which Corporate Academies are designed and governed.

5. The Firm as a Coasian Node: Training as an Extended Contract

Against this background, Corporate Academies perform an important function in integrating learning processes with the pursuit of corporate objectives such as efficiency and value creation. These objectives include, in particular, the search for dynamic equilibria in response to the challenge of the creative destruction generated by technological progress within the firm as a repository of specialised and competitive knowledge and competences. In this context, corporate training programmes may be interpreted as an extension of the Coasian process through which relationships between capital and labour are concentrated within the firm as an efficient nexus of

contracts, according to a model of hierarchical coordination that internalises both organisational functions and objectives. Coase (1988) demonstrated that the very existence of the firm reflects an attempt to reorganise exchanges as an alternative to market transactions by economising on transaction costs. Corporate training may therefore be understood as a further extension of this logic into the domain of human capital formation, where market transaction costs are particularly high owing to information asymmetries and contractual incompleteness. From this perspective, the neo-institutionalist framework developed by North (1990), emphasising the dependence of economic performance upon the quality of both formal and informal institutions and contractual arrangements, provides the most appropriate context for understanding why organisational training tends to generate heterogeneous returns across economic systems characterised by different institutional structures.

Corporate training may therefore be regarded as a natural extension of the firm's activities into the domain of human capital formation. At the same time, it entails an enlightened extension of the employment relationship towards a longer-term horizon and towards forms of job quality capable of ensuring greater stability, satisfaction and dignity for workers. From this perspective, firms that invest systematically in training do more than optimise their stock of competences: they implicitly redesign the structure of the employment contract by incorporating commitments to professional development that foster employee loyalty, reduce staff turnover and, crucially, diminish workers' uncertainty regarding their future career paths. This is achieved by expanding the real options available to both employees and firms in terms of flexibility, organisational development, growth potential and adaptability. These effects possess genuine economic value, even though they remain largely invisible to conventional measures of productivity.

This interpretation, however, is subject to an important limitation. Coasian internalisation is efficient only when market transaction costs exceed the costs of hierarchical coordination. In the field of training, this condition does not always hold. The positive externalities generated by training—which benefit the productive system as a whole through knowledge spillovers, the mobility of skilled workers, and the diffusion of best practices—can be internalised only partially by individual firms. As a consequence, firms have limited incentives to invest autonomously in training, resulting in a structural under-provision of training relative to the

socially optimal level, a market failure that private Corporate Academies can only partially correct. This provides the theoretical justification for public policies supporting corporate training. Instruments such as the New Skills Fund (*Fondo Nuove Competenze*) and financing provided through the European Social Fund should therefore not be regarded as market distortions but rather as corrective measures addressing a well-documented market failure.

6. The Delegation Problem and Its Risks

At the same time, as with all contractual relationships—albeit with particular intensity and complexity in this context—training is based upon a relationship of delegation that creates an asymmetry between the worker, as principal, and management, as the delegated agent responsible for designing and managing training activities. This asymmetry gives rise to the difficult alignment of the interests of the two parties and to the risk of divergence between the objectives of the principal—the worker—and those of the agent—corporate management. From the perspective of the economics of information, this is a classic principal–agent problem, in which the principal is unable fully to observe or verify the agent's decisions concerning the quality, relevance and temporal orientation of the training programmes provided.

This risk manifests itself in several ways. First, management may naturally tend to prioritise learning processes that generate competences of immediate operational relevance, capable of being rapidly deployed in the market while effectively incorporating the outcomes of technological progress in ways that enhance competitiveness. From the worker's perspective, however, such learning processes are not necessarily those that contribute most effectively to the accumulation of long-term competences or, above all, to the development of broader capacities for intellectual and cultural growth. This potential divergence is further exacerbated by the systematic lack of rigorous evaluation of training outcomes. In the contributions collected in this volume, the assessment of impact almost invariably stops at process metrics—such as training hours delivered, numbers of participants, and satisfaction indicators—without ever reaching the outcome metrics required by the evaluation literature, including changes in individual productivity, relative wages, occupational mobility, and organisational innovation attributable to training. This deficiency is not merely technical but structural: it reflects the absence of a counterfactual

element in the evaluation practices of Corporate Academies, that is, the inability to answer the fundamental question of what would have occurred in the absence of the training intervention.

The issue of organisational capital also raises a further frontier in understanding training as an endogenous activity within the firm conceived as a nexus of contracts. The integration of individual human capital with organisational capabilities, participation and firm-level synergies generates economies and externalities that are themselves closely associated with principal-agent problems. On the one hand, workers who embody increasing amounts of organisational capital become progressively more integral to the firm's competitive capabilities, productivity and long-term success. This strengthens the incentive to use training programmes as instruments for retaining the most capable employees. At the same time, however, it may give rise to a form of compositional fallacy by discouraging productivity spillovers and innovation diffusion across industries and throughout the wider economic system. Reduced mobility among highly skilled workers, together with the organisational capital embodied in them, may therefore produce adverse outcomes by concentrating the most talented human resources within a limited number of sectors and, within those sectors, in a relatively small number of firms. The transformation of advanced economies towards knowledge-intensive service sectors may further intensify this dichotomy, reinforcing the dynamics associated with Baumol's cost disease, a regressive pattern of firm demography, and an increasingly oligopolistic evolution of the productive system towards a superstar economy, characterised by growing inequalities both in creative capacity and in the appropriation of the value generated.

A further divergence may arise through the so-called competency trap, resulting from the tendency of corporate training programmes to concentrate on improving workers' performance within the firm's existing domains of expertise and apparent competitive advantage. This type of trap is particularly insidious for both firms and workers, as it may render both captive to an organisational culture incapable of envisaging radical innovations that transcend accumulated experience. Levitt and March (1988), followed by Levinthal and March (1993), formalised this dynamic through the distinction between exploitation, understood as the utilisation and refinement of existing competences, and exploration, understood as the search for fundamentally new competences. Organisations display a structural tendency to privilege exploitation because its returns are more

certain, more immediate and more readily observable, whereas the returns to exploration are uncertain, deferred and difficult to attribute. The more structured Corporate Academies—characterised by standardised curricula, proprietary learning platforms and homogeneous internal faculties—are particularly vulnerable to this tendency. A virtual reality simulator that teaches existing procedures more efficiently remains an instrument of incremental rather than transformative learning.

As in all delegation relationships, the firm—or its management acting as agent—may exercise a range of discretionary choices at the expense of the principal. Workers are, to some extent, compelled to bear the consequences of such decisions, although they may also seek to mitigate their potential adverse effects. From this perspective, learning processes are especially vulnerable to economic fluctuations, to changes in the firm's competitive position, and to the opportunistic behaviour of management, trainers and even participants themselves. The reduction of investment in training during periods of economic downturn—a pattern documented across Italian manufacturing firms—is the clearest manifestation of this delegation problem. Under short-term pressures, management sacrifices a long-term asset that does not appear as such in the balance sheet precisely because it is not capitalised.

7. Skills Polarisation, Baumol Dynamics and the Systemic Distributional Challenge

The process described in the preceding sections does not unfold within a stationary equilibrium but rather within an economic system undergoing profound structural transformations that alter the demand for skills in an asymmetric and potentially irreversible manner. Paganetto and Scandizzo (2018) demonstrate that the polarisation of skill levels in the labour market is not a transitory phenomenon associated with specific technological shocks but the stable outcome of three converging dynamics: the evolution of the firm's organisational model from the Taylorist-Fordist paradigm towards a flexible modular structure based on outsourcing and offshoring; the extension and fragmentation of global value chains; and the redistribution of comparative advantages brought about by the digital revolution and the diffusion of the Internet.

The macroeconomic consequence of these developments is a dual structure of labour demand that expands at the two extremes of the skill distribution

while contracting in the middle. Workers possessing intermediate-level skills—those performing routine tasks that can be codified and are therefore susceptible to automation or externalisation—are systematically displaced from production in the most dynamic sectors. At the same time, both the highly skilled segment and the low-skilled segment concentrated in personal services and retail trade continue to expand. Paganetto and Scandizzo formalise this dynamic through a real-options model in which firms determine their degree of participation in the new economy by comparing the expected value of alternative development paths. The resulting framework constitutes a dynamic version of Baumol's cost disease: sectors experiencing rapid productivity growth shed labour, while displaced workers are reallocated towards sectors characterised by low productivity and low skill intensity, thereby generating a structural polarisation that market mechanisms alone do not automatically correct. This conclusion is corroborated empirically by Acemoglu and Restrepo (2022), who estimate that between 50 and 70 per cent of the changes in the structure of wages in the United States over the past four decades can be attributed to the relative decline of workers specialised in routine tasks within the sectors most exposed to automation.

These findings have direct implications for the assessment of Corporate Academies. The Academies documented in this volume operate predominantly within frontier firms, namely those identified by Paganetto and Scandizzo as participants in the high-return, high-volatility segments of the new economy. The training they provide strengthens the competences that enable workers to remain within this segment, thereby avoiding downward movement towards the lower end of the skills distribution. This constitutes a genuine contribution to productivity and to the reduction of internal organisational misallocation. Nevertheless, the model developed by Paganetto and Scandizzo suggests that the aggregate benefit may be smaller than the sum of the individual benefits. Firms investing most intensively in advanced training attract and retain the most highly qualified workers, thereby reducing the availability of these profiles for the remainder of the productive system, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises that lack the scale necessary to establish Corporate Academies of their own. Formally, the parameter representing the return on traditional activities as a function of the rate of participation in the new economy may exhibit a negative second derivative. Beyond a certain concentration of advanced competences within frontier firms,

aggregate productivity gains begin to diminish because complementary sectors no longer possess the human resources required to absorb technological spillovers.

This systemic distributional challenge has deep theoretical roots in the analysis of labour markets developed by Brunetta. In *La fine della società dei salariati* (*The End of the Wage-Earner Society*, 1994), Brunetta anticipated with remarkable foresight a diagnosis that subsequent literature would later formalise: employment creation in advanced economies increasingly occurs at the margins of the traditional wage-based employment system through forms of self-employment, quasi-subordinate work and flexible labour arrangements that multiply employment positions without necessarily improving job quality or strengthening the capacity of work to generate stable careers and sustained processes of skills accumulation over the long term. Earlier, in *Disoccupazione, isteresi e irreversibilità* (*Unemployment, Hysteresis and Irreversibility*, 1992), Brunetta had already demonstrated that labour market dynamics are characterised by path dependence and irreversibility: negative employment shocks, such as those generated by the automation of medium-skilled occupations, do not self-correct in the short run but instead leave persistent effects on occupational structures and wage distributions.

This analysis converges with the findings of Paganetto and Scandizzo in suggesting that skills polarisation is not merely a question of individual skills adequacy but a structural challenge affecting the training system as a whole. Corporate Academies can contribute to reducing polarisation if they operate as open infrastructures capable of transferring knowledge and competences throughout supply chains, to small and medium-sized enterprises, and to workers occupying the intermediate segment of the labour market who are most exposed to technological displacement. If, on the other hand, they confine themselves to strengthening the competences of workers who already belong to the highly skilled segment, they risk accelerating the dual dynamics described in the two studies, contributing to the concentration of cognitive resources within frontier firms and to the impoverishment of the organisational capital distributed throughout the rest of the productive system. The institutional response to this dilemma requires a reconfiguration of training policies that goes beyond subsidising individual firms and moves towards forms of public-private co-investment in intermediate-level skills, which are simultaneously the most vulnerable

to technological substitution and the least served by existing Corporate Academies.

8. Organisational Misallocation: Towards a New Analytical Category

The title of this essay calls for an explicit articulation of the concept of organisational misallocation, a term that has not yet become established within the literature but can be reconstructed by bringing together several converging strands of research that have rarely been examined in conjunction. Misallocation, in the sense developed by Hsieh and Klenow (2009), measures the dispersion of the marginal products of production factors across firms within the same industry. In the presence of market frictions, capital and labour fail to flow towards their most productive uses, thereby generating a gap in total factor productivity that is both measurable and, in principle, remediable. For Italy, Calligaris et al. (2018) estimate a level of misallocation consistently above the European average, concentrated in small and medium-sized enterprises and in sectors characterised by low technological intensity. They further show that the increase in misallocation has occurred predominantly within sectors rather than between them, especially in those industries where the global technological frontier has advanced most rapidly.

The Hsieh–Klenow framework, however, measures misallocation across firms, not within firms. Internal organisational misallocation concerns the inefficient allocation of competences across organisational functions, the concentration of knowledge within non-communicating silos, and the concentration of decision-making authority at hierarchical levels lacking the competences required to exercise it effectively. Bloom, Sadun and Van Reenen (2012) demonstrate that firms adopting greater delegation achieve higher productivity, and that this relationship is mediated by the availability of local human capital: firms decentralise decision-making only when managers and employees possess the competences necessary to exercise autonomy effectively. Related evidence from the World Management Survey (Bloom and Van Reenen, 2010) documents an enormous dispersion in managerial practices across firms, even within the same country and industry. In Italy, this gap is particularly pronounced, with a long tail of poorly managed firms that is virtually absent in countries such as the United States and Germany. Organisational training should therefore be understood not merely as an investment in technical

competences but as a prerequisite for the adoption of more efficient organisational structures. From this perspective, Corporate Academies that develop distributed managerial capabilities, codify tacit knowledge, and standardise operational practices are effectively reducing internal organisational misallocation, even though they rarely employ this terminology to describe their activities.

A third form of misallocation is also relevant, namely the system-wide misallocation of skills. A significant proportion of highly qualified workers are employed in low-productivity firms that are unable fully to exploit the competences available to them. Andrews, Criscuolo and Gal (2016) show that the productivity gap between firms operating at the technological frontier and the rest of the business population has widened over recent decades, and that the slow diffusion of technologies and organisational practices from frontier firms to the remainder of the economy constitutes the principal mechanism underlying this divergence. By definition, the Corporate Academies of large industrial groups operate close to this technological frontier. They may therefore contribute to reducing this gap through collaboration with universities, Higher Technological Institutes (ITS), local institutions and supply-chain networks, or alternatively amplify it if they concentrate advanced competences within organisations that are already the most productive. Which of these two effects ultimately prevails is determined not by the intrinsic characteristics of Corporate Academies themselves but by the choices governing their openness and institutional design. Current policy and academic debate has yet to develop sufficient awareness of this fundamental dualism.

9. The Statistical and Economic Limbo of Training

Returning to the issue of human capital accumulation, it is important to emphasise that training continues to occupy an ambiguous position not only as a corporate activity but also as a component of the broader economic system. Research and development (R&D) has become relatively well integrated into capitalisation processes, both in accounting practice and in macroeconomic planning. The European System of Accounts (ESA 2010) recognises R&D expenditure as investment and therefore includes it in GDP, acknowledging that it generates a stock of knowledge with a useful life extending over multiple years. No equivalent transition has yet occurred for training activities. They remain in a statistical and economic limbo: they constitute corporate activities requiring the commitment of

resources whose returns materialise only over time, yet they are neither explicitly recognised nor financed as genuine forms of intangible capital formation.

The consequences of this limbo are numerous and mutually reinforcing. At the macroeconomic level, GDP understates the value added generated by the knowledge economy insofar as investments in training are not capitalised. At the same time, total factor productivity is simultaneously overstated as a residual—because intangible inputs are omitted from the denominator—and understated in terms of its actual growth. At the microeconomic level, firms investing in training are unable to record these expenditures as assets on their balance sheets. Consequently, during periods of financial pressure, training is among the first expenditures to be reduced, precisely because it is treated as a cost rather than as an asset deserving preservation. From the perspective of finance, training investments cannot be used as collateral for access to credit, thereby placing knowledge-intensive firms at a disadvantage relative to capital-intensive firms in accessing capital markets.

This condition of accounting ambiguity extends beyond training narrowly understood and reflects a broader theoretical difficulty concerning the manner in which economics evaluates uncertainty and intangible assets within the framework of cost-benefit analysis. Pennisi and Scandizzo (2003, 2004) demonstrate that the traditional approach to social cost-benefit analysis, developed in the OECD and UNIDO manuals of the 1970s (Dasgupta, Sen and Marglin, 1972), treats value primarily as a discounted flow of future income, systematically neglecting the stock dimension of value together with those components associated with uncertainty and contingent rights. This methodological limitation is far from irrelevant to the issue of capitalising training investments. Training provided through a Corporate Academy generates not only future productivity flows but also stocks of contingent rights—that is, options acquired by both workers and firms over the range of future actions made possible by investments in competences. In the terminology introduced by Arrow and Fisher (1974), this stock possesses the structure of a *quasi-option value*: the expected value of information that will become available in the future once the accumulated stock of competences enables productive opportunities, which are not yet observable today, to be identified. Treating such a stock as a current-period expense is equivalent, in the language of real options theory, to exercising prematurely an option that ought instead to remain open.

The framework developed by Pennisi and Scandizzo builds upon Coase's conception of the firm as a nexus of contracts and extends it to the problem of public evaluation. Every policy, programme or project is not merely an instrument for achieving optimisation with respect to a given set of objectives; it also creates and destroys opportunities for a plurality of stakeholders whose rights are heterogeneous and frequently incompatible. Applied to Corporate Academies, this framework suggests that evaluating the impact of training cannot be confined to measuring the flows of individual productivity attributable to training programmes. Rather, it must identify the entire range of opportunities that training opens or forecloses for the different actors involved: the worker who acquires either transferable competences or, conversely, highly specific and non-transferable skills; the firm that internalises organisational capital, thereby withdrawing it from the market; and the productive system that either benefits—or fails to benefit—from knowledge spillovers depending upon the degree of openness adopted by the Academy. The contingent wealth generated by a training programme is therefore substantially broader than its immediate private return and considerably more difficult to measure using the process indicators that currently dominate evaluation practices. This is not an argument against measurement but rather in favour of a more sophisticated evaluation methodology capable of estimating the value of the options that training creates with respect to the future choices available to both firms and workers, including, as suggested by Sen (1999), those that expand capabilities in ways that cannot be immediately expressed in monetary terms.

Corrado, Hulten and Sichel (2005, 2009) have provided the principal framework for the systematic capitalisation of intangible assets by including firm-specific training, organisational practices and brand capital within the broader category of economic competencies. Applying this framework to European data, the EU KLEMS and INTANProd databases document a persistent gap for Italy in the capitalisation of organisational intangibles relative to Germany, France and the European average. Italian firms invest comparatively less in organisational and training capital, and a substantial proportion of those investments is not recognised as such in financial accounts. Bontadini et al. (2023) estimate that a significant share of the total factor productivity gap between Italy and Germany can be explained by this asymmetry in capitalisation, implying that part of Italy's productivity problem is, in reality, a measurement problem that

nonetheless produces tangible effects on investment decisions. De la Fuente and Ciccone (2003) demonstrate, for the EU-15 countries, that the financial return on human capital—estimated indirectly through wage differentials—is consistently higher than the return on physical capital. This implies that the persistent undercapitalisation of training-related intangible assets is not merely an accounting anomaly but a significant constraint on long-term economic growth.

10. Artificial Intelligence and Hybrid Capital

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has brought to the fore a new challenge that encompasses capital formation but extends well beyond the creation of new autonomous competences. This challenge concerns the development of complementary capabilities linking human expertise and artificial intelligence, giving rise to what may be described as a new form of intangible capital composed of a combination of human capital and AI. This unprecedented form appears to signal the emergence of a hybrid factor of production, based on integrated competences and on the capacity for effective collaboration between human labour and AI systems.

Brynjolfsson, Li and Raymond (2025) provide empirical evidence showing that the productivity gains associated with the adoption of generative AI depend critically on the availability of these forms of cognitive complementarity. Organisations capable of integrating the capabilities of AI systems with those of their workforce achieve substantially higher returns than those that treat AI either as a substitute for labour or as an autonomous technological instrument. This complementarity is organisational rather than technological in nature. It requires workers to understand the logic, limitations and potential of the AI systems with which they interact; to formulate problems in ways that fully exploit those systems' capabilities; and to maintain critical oversight of their outputs—what recent scholarship has termed AI literacy or cognitive supervision. As documented in this volume through the experiences of Enel, TIM, Epicode and Pragma, Corporate Academies investing in such programmes are generating a form of intangible capital that cannot be reduced either to traditional human capital or to the physical capital embodied in AI systems themselves.

The AI productivity paradox—namely, the persistent lag between the diffusion of AI technologies and the productivity gains observed in aggregate data—is to a large extent explained by the investment required

in these complementary intangible assets. Although such investments remain invisible in conventional accounts, they constitute the essential precondition for achieving the efficiency gains promised by the technology. In this sense, Corporate Academies investing in AI literacy and cognitive supervision are not merely providing ancillary training; they are building the organisational foundations without which investment in AI remains largely unproductive. This development is likely to require a profound rethinking of training itself. Future learning processes will need to involve both human agents and AI systems simultaneously, within a framework of progressive integration and reciprocal interaction, thereby redefining the very notion of competence as an attribute not of the isolated individual but of the human-machine system as a whole.

From the perspective of measurement, this development raises challenges that go well beyond those already associated with traditional training-related intangible assets. Hybrid human-AI capital cannot be attributed exclusively either to the individual or to the AI system, but rather to the interface between them. At present, no accounting conventions, estimation methodologies or statistical indicators exist for this category. It therefore constitutes an open field of research, one that Corporate Academies are already helping to populate empirically, often without being fully aware that they are operating at the forefront of a measurement problem that economic science has yet to resolve. In the terminology proposed by Pennisi and Scandizzo (2004), training in generative AI creates a new category of real options: not options based upon already defined competences, but options relating to spaces of action that will emerge only through the interaction between human capabilities and AI systems, whose expected value depends upon the speed with which organisations succeed in adapting their collective cognitive structures to the new technological paradigm.

11. Conclusions: Towards an Integrated Theoretical Framework

Corporate Academies perform a function that is both economically more significant and theoretically more complex than their own self-representation—necessarily oriented towards institutional communication and the dissemination of practical experience—is able to convey. They operate simultaneously as mechanisms for the capitalisation of training-related and organisational intangible assets, as instruments for reducing

internal organisational misallocation, and as cognitive infrastructures capable of generating systemic knowledge spillovers. These three functions are analytically distinct yet empirically intertwined. Only an integrated theoretical framework capable of encompassing them simultaneously makes it possible to assess their contribution to system-wide productivity in a manner that is both rigorous and free from self-referential bias.

Constructing such a framework requires Corporate Academies to adopt impact evaluation methodologies that move beyond process indicators—including training hours delivered, numbers of participants and satisfaction ratings—in order to measure changes in individual and organisational productivity that are genuinely attributable to training, drawing upon the counterfactual methods now well established in the programme evaluation literature. It also requires accounting systems, at both corporate and national levels, to recognise organisational training for what it truly is: an investment in intangible capital with a multi-year useful life, rather than a current-period operating expense. Finally, it requires the governance choices underlying Corporate Academies—namely, who determines training content, for what purposes, and with what degree of openness towards external stakeholders—to be consciously oriented towards maximising not only the firm's internal efficiency but also the social return on training investment, encompassing the positive externalities generated for workers, supply chains, local communities and the productive system as a whole.

Only under these conditions will Corporate Academies be able legitimately to claim the status of essential infrastructures for the country's future productivity—not as an institutional slogan, but as a proposition grounded in robust theory and capable of empirical verification.

BOX — Corporate Academies and Industrial Relations: Extended Collective Bargaining, Stakeholding, Rights and Hybrid Capital in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

1. A Contested Boundary: Industrial Relations, Human Resource Management and Corporate Academies

The phenomenon of Corporate Academies has generated considerable debate regarding both their effectiveness and their current and potential contribution to industrial relations. These controversies stem from an empirically grounded observation: in their present configuration, Corporate Academies are predominantly private infrastructures for the governance of skills, built around corporate strategy, employer branding and productivity, and only rarely connected with collective bargaining, the occupational classification and grading systems established by National Collective Labour Agreements (CCNLs), bilateral institutions, or the public certification of competences. This description, however, does not justify the conclusion that Corporate Academies represent the antithesis of industrial relations. Rather, it suggests that industrial relations have thus far failed to engage with a phenomenon that is reshaping the structure of human capital within firms. The distinction is significant. One thing is what Corporate Academies are today; quite another is what they could become if the collective bargaining system were to embrace and govern them instead of ignoring them.

These controversies also reflect a long-standing disciplinary debate with far-reaching and by no means neutral implications. Kaufman (2001) documents that, until the 1960s, Human Resource Management (HRM) was generally regarded as a sub-discipline of industrial relations before progressively emancipating itself to become an autonomous—and, in many cases, competing—field of inquiry and practice. This process of separation was not neutral. It shifted corporate training from the sphere of collective bargaining into that of managerial discretion, effectively delegating responsibility for training to management, reducing workers' participation, and rendering the distributive dimension of training investment largely invisible. When Dunlop (1958) defined the industrial relations system as a set of actors, contexts and rules governing employment, he implicitly included training among the processes capable of being regulated by that

system. Its gradual displacement into the domain of HRM created a regulatory vacuum that Corporate Academies subsequently occupied without the social partners claiming responsibility for governing them.

Freeman and Medoff (1984), in distinguishing between the two faces of trade unionism—the monopoly face and the collective **voice** function—demonstrated that the voice function is particularly important in domains where market mechanisms generate informational asymmetries that cannot readily be corrected through individual exit. Corporate training constitutes precisely such a domain. Workers do not possess complete information regarding the content of training programmes, their expected returns, or the transferability of the competences they generate. To argue that Corporate Academies belong exclusively to HRM rather than to industrial relations is therefore to relinquish the voice function precisely in the area where it is most necessary: one in which the parties acquire real options in the absence of explicit delegation and where collective representation is essential to counterbalance informational asymmetries.

2. Training as Extended Collective Bargaining

Beginning with Coase (1988), the economic theory of the firm has interpreted the firm as a nexus of contracts that economises on the transaction costs associated with market exchange. Within this framework, corporate training is not an ancillary activity external to the contractual relationships constituting the firm; rather, it is itself a form of contract—more or less implicit, yet economically binding—between the enterprise and the worker.

This contract possesses an inherently problematic structure and is frequently the object of implicit or explicit negotiation between the parties concerned. Typically, the firm undertakes to invest in the worker's professional development, while the worker commits to making the acquired competences available to the firm. As a critical component of this negotiation, workers may be required to accept, at least temporarily, remuneration below their marginal productivity. Acemoglu and Pischke (1998, 1999) demonstrate that such an arrangement is economically rational under conditions of labour market imperfections: firms have incentives to finance even general training when they enjoy an informational advantage over competing employers regarding the competences of their workforce.

This implicit training contract is precisely the domain in which industrial relations ought to intervene. Left outside the scope of collective bargaining, the implicit contract tends to become structurally asymmetric in favour of the firm: training content is defined unilaterally; the competences produced are neither formally certified nor readily transferable; and the returns on training investment are captured predominantly by the employer. Making this contract explicit through collective bargaining means redistributing the returns to training between firms and workers, increasing transparency, and reducing workers' cognitive dependence upon the enterprise providing the training.

3. The Firm as a Coasian Nexus, Stakeholding and Entitlement Rights

Within the firm conceived as a nexus of contracts, training generates a distinctive form of value: organisational capital, namely the knowledge embedded in routines, processes and shared mental models that belongs not to individual employees but to the organisation as a whole. Eisfeldt and Papanikolaou (2013) demonstrate that this capital is embodied in key employees and that its creation gives rise to legitimate claims on the part of both shareholders and workers. Such claims may, however, generate conflicts arising from the fact that workers' rights depend both upon explicit contractual provisions—with varying degrees of enforceability—and upon the dynamic equilibrium among stakeholders, determined over time by their respective bargaining power within the evolution of the firm and the broader institutional framework.

This framework of shared claims requires, in order to be fully understood, a theoretical extension beyond the traditional notion of contractual rights. Scandizzo (2025) argues that every entitlement is, by its very nature, a real option. The act of assigning a right is equivalent to writing an option: it removes a sphere of discretion from a previously shared field of decision-making and assigns it to a specific holder. The holder acquires the right—but not the obligation—to exercise that discretion irreversibly under conditions of uncertainty, while those whose freedom within the shared decision space is correspondingly reduced assume the correlated short position. Applied to workers participating in corporate training, this framework has precise implications. Workers are not merely bearers of competences to be enhanced; they are holders of an entitlement over the organisational capital that they co-produce. That entitlement possesses the

characteristics of a real option whose value depends upon the irreversibility of the training investment, the uncertainty surrounding its future returns, and the holder's discretion in deciding when and how to exercise it.

Within this context, the distinction introduced by Calabresi and Melamed (1972) between property rules and liability rules acquires renewed significance for industrial relations. A property rule protects the holder's prospective discretion from within the boundaries of the entitlement itself, preventing training and acquired competences from being appropriated without consent. A liability rule, by contrast, values that discretion retrospectively and from outside those boundaries by compensating the worker whenever another party exercises discretion that adversely affects the worker's position. Industrial relations perform precisely this protective function. They ensure that workers, as producers of organisational capital and holders of entitlements over that capital, possess both property-rule protection—the right to participate in decisions concerning training—and liability-rule protection—the right to compensation whenever corporate decisions diminish the value of their investment in competences.

This structure of extended rights provides the theoretical foundation for understanding Corporate Academies as instruments of extended stakeholding and of the expansion of workers' entitlements. Employees participating in training programmes are not merely inputs to be optimised; they are stakeholders contributing to the creation of a collective asset and are therefore entitled to participate both in its design and in the distribution of the returns it generates. From this perspective, collective bargaining is not external to Corporate Academies. Rather, it constitutes the mechanism through which workers' participation in the governance of the asset co-produced with other stakeholders is made explicit, negotiated and guaranteed, and through which their entitlements are defined, protected and rendered transferable.

Several European experiences already anticipate this model. In Germany, Works Councils (*Betriebsräte*) enjoy co-determination rights over corporate training plans under the *Betriebsverfassungsgesetz* (Works Constitution Act). In France, the *Compte Personnel de Formation* (CPF) transforms training rights into an individual entitlement held by the worker, thereby disconnecting them from managerial discretion. In both cases, industrial relations have operated precisely in the manner envisaged by Calabresi and Melamed: they have transformed a position of mere

liberty, exposed to another party's discretion, into a protected entitlement by providing workers with both property-rule protection—through prior participation in decisions concerning training content—and liability-rule protection—through compensation whenever acquired competences lose value.

4. Hybrid Capital in the Age of AI: Entitlements in an Uncharted Domain

The introduction of generative artificial intelligence into firms creates a new dimension of the problem, making contractual governance of training even more urgent. Brynjolfsson, Li and Raymond (2025) show that productivity gains from AI depend upon the existence of cognitive complementarities between workers and AI systems: organisations capable of integrating human capabilities with those of AI achieve substantially higher returns than those treating AI merely as a substitute for labour. This complementarity is organisational rather than technological in nature and requires specific investments in training that the literature identifies as human-machine hybrid capital: an asset attributable neither exclusively to the worker nor exclusively to the AI system, but rather to the interface between the two.

Hybrid capital confronts industrial relations with an entirely new question of entitlements. In Scandizzo's (2025) framework, the shared field of decision-making from which this new form of capital is extracted had, until very recently, not been subject to any form of selective appropriation. It constituted a technological *commons* in which no party possessed clearly defined rights. The adoption of AI within firms is precisely the act of extraction that creates entitlements over this *commons*: it determines who has the right to exercise discretion over the use of AI systems, the data that feed them, the outputs they generate, and the productivity gains deriving from them. If this process of extraction takes place exclusively within the domain of corporate HRM, the residual discretion remains entirely with the firm, while workers occupy what Hohfeld describes as a position of mere liberty—lacking any right that another party is legally or institutionally bound to respect. By contrast, if industrial relations participate in defining entitlements over hybrid capital, workers acquire a long position in the training option, together with the corresponding obligations imposed upon the firm that delimit the exercise of its discretion.

Acemoglu and Restrepo (2022) demonstrate that the direction of automation is determined not by technology itself but by the organisational choices accompanying its adoption, and that these choices depend critically upon the structure of industrial relations. Systems characterised by strong trade union **voice** tend to direct AI towards enhancing workers' capabilities, whereas systems with weak voice are more likely to orient AI towards task substitution. In terms of entitlements, this means that the structure of industrial relations determines who exercises discretion over the technological commons created by AI: a robust system of collective bargaining distributes that discretion among multiple stakeholders, whereas a weak system concentrates it exclusively in the hands of the firm.

Training in generative AI is therefore not merely a matter of technical updating. It is the mechanism through which workers acquire the informational discretion necessary to exercise their rights over hybrid capital. Workers who do not understand the logic, limitations and potential of the AI systems with which they interact are incapable of exercising either voice or effective oversight. In Scandizzo's analysis (2025), they occupy the position of holders of merely nominal rights devoid of real effectiveness – the same situation that Sen (1981) described with respect to individuals possessing the formal right to food but lacking effective command over it. AI training is thus the mechanism that transforms a nominal right into effective command.

The crucial point is that the hybrid capital generated through AI training possesses characteristics that intensify the asymmetries already inherent in the implicit training contract. It is, to a large extent, non-transferable: the cognitive complementarities developed around a proprietary AI system cannot readily be utilised if the worker changes employer or if the firm adopts a different platform. It cannot be certified using existing instruments: professional qualifications and the occupational classification systems established by Italian National Collective Labour Agreements (CCNLs) do not yet recognise cognitive supervision of AI as a formally identifiable competence. Moreover, it is subject to rapid obsolescence: the pace at which AI models evolve is such that competences acquired today may become obsolete within a matter of months. In the language of real options theory, this implies that workers' rights over hybrid capital possess an exercise value that depreciates rapidly and, in the absence of contractual mechanisms ensuring continuous updating, effectively expires before workers are able fully to realise its value.

5. What Is Missing and What Is Possible: Towards Collective Bargaining over Training Entitlements

The logic of entitlements as real options suggests that the objective of industrial relations in the field of training should not be confined to the defensive protection of workers against abuses and asymmetries. Rather, it should extend to the active expansion of workers' discretionary rights over the organisational and hybrid capital that they co-produce. The distinction is fundamental. Defensive protection safeguards existing positions; the expansion of rights enlarges the sphere of property-rule protection in favour of workers by removing from the corporate commons those areas of discretion that are currently left entirely to managerial determination.

Within the Italian system, three essential elements are currently missing that would make such an expansion possible. The first is the integration of Corporate Academy training pathways with the occupational classification and grading systems established by the National Collective Labour Agreements (CCNLs). Competences developed internally that do not translate into recognised contractual advancement amount to a merely nominal right lacking effective substance, while allowing the returns on training investment to be captured entirely by the firm. The second is the public certification of competences, including those associated with AI supervision. Without such certification, the organisational and hybrid capital generated by Corporate Academies remains recognised only within the enterprise itself, leaving workers who change employer at risk of losing a substantial portion of the value of the training they have received because the rights they have acquired are not transferable. The third element is joint governance of Corporate Academies, extending not only to traditional training content but, above all, to programmes supporting AI adoption. Bilateral bodies and joint labour-management institutions should perform a shared carving function with respect to rights over hybrid capital, determining who exercises discretion over which aspects of that capital, under what limitations, and with what obligations of compensation whenever such discretion is exercised to the detriment of workers.

These three developments do not require dismantling existing Corporate Academies, nor do they imply subjecting them to forms of trade union oversight that would undermine their operational flexibility. Rather, they require extending the scope of collective bargaining to a domain—the production of organisational and hybrid human capital—that is currently

left almost entirely to managerial discretion. Artificial intelligence does not diminish the importance of industrial relations; it amplifies it by introducing into the relationship between firms and workers a new technological *commons* over which entitlements have not yet been defined. The definition of those rights constitutes the fundamental task that industrial relations must undertake in the years ahead. Industrial relations capable of governing this domain do more than protect existing rights: they expand them, becoming most relevant precisely at the moment when technological change opens new areas of discretion that no stakeholder has yet formally claimed.

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Corporate Academies of Major Industrial Groups

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The Role of Corporate Academies in Orchestrating Local Learning Ecosystems

Laura Deitinger – President of Assoknowledge

This contribution has been developed with the aim of illustrating the role that Corporate Academies currently play in supporting the productivity of the national economic system. Its purpose is not to compile a sequence of corporate experiences, nor to provide a descriptive overview of learning initiatives. Rather, it seeks to demonstrate how Corporate Academies have become strategic actors within organisations and local ecosystems, capable of transforming innovation into competencies, technologies into organisational capabilities, learning into productivity, and human capital into competitive advantage.

This section is edited by Assoknowledge, the employers' association within Confindustria SIT representing Corporate Academies, as part of its institutional collaboration with the National Council for Economics and Labour (CNEL). It is published in the *CNEL Working Papers* series as part of the studies promoted by the National Productivity Board. This context is particularly significant, as it positions the contribution within the broader national debate on productivity – a subject that cannot be understood solely through economic, technological, or organisational perspectives. This section also allows to complement institutional, scientific, and economic analysis with thematic contributions that provide concrete insight into the phenomena under examination. Indeed, discussing productivity also means addressing human capital, skills, management, learning models, adaptability, and the capacity for cultural transformation. It is within this broader perspective that the contribution of Corporate Academies assumes considerable strategic importance for competitiveness.

Within the framework of this Working Paper, the contribution devoted to the role of Corporate Academies brings into the productivity debate the perspective of those organisations that are called upon, every day, to translate ongoing transformations into operational reality—from artificial intelligence and emerging technologies to upskilling and reskilling, from

the development of power skills to the creation of entirely new professional roles.

The starting point is the profound transformation affecting the relationship between organisations, competencies, and education systems. Companies are increasingly confronted with a widening mismatch between the professional profiles they require and those available in the labour market. The challenge concerns not merely the number of potential candidates, but above all the quality and specificity of the competencies required. Many of the capabilities that are critical to competitiveness cannot simply be sourced externally because they are developed within production processes, embedded in technologies, supply chains, organisational models, and operational practices. In other words, a substantial portion of the knowledge essential for competitiveness resides within the organisation itself. This scenario fundamentally reshapes the role of Corporate Academies. Whereas in the past they could largely be regarded as internal structures responsible for delivering training programmes, such a representation has now become inadequate. Corporate Academies are no longer simply places where learning content is delivered; they have become strategic custodians of organisational capabilities and institutional infrastructures that support technological, cultural, managerial, and competitive transformation. Their function extends well beyond updating the competencies of existing employees. It encompasses the organisation's ability to develop the competencies that will be required from the organisation itself in the future. At this stage, a new and decisive function emerges. Corporate Academies increasingly act as orchestrators and facilitators of regional learning ecosystems. They collaborate with schools, universities, ITS Academies, vocational education providers, public institutions, suppliers, local communities, and industrial value chains. They translate organisational capability requirements into learning pathways, transform tacit knowledge into transferable content, convert operational practices into educational modules, and translate technological change into widely shared competencies. In doing so, they help bridge a gap that, if left unresolved, risks undermining the country's productive capacity and innovative potential. Such function should not be understood merely as organisational coordination. Rather, it represents a systemic role. Corporate Academies are called upon to connect worlds that often operate according

to different timelines, languages, and objectives: business, formal education, vocational training, applied research, and territorial development policies. Their distinctive strength lies in their ability to begin with the concrete needs of organisations and value chains and, together with the broader education ecosystem, develop learning responses that are more closely aligned with the realities of work. It is precisely here that learning ceases to be an ancillary activity and becomes a genuine driver of productivity.

To fully understand this evolution, it is useful to consider the multiple roles that a Corporate Academy can now assume. It undoubtedly remains a *Corporate Academy* in the traditional sense: an internal centre for capability development, the transfer of distinctive organisational knowledge, and the reinforcement of corporate culture. Today, however, it is considerably more than that. It acts as an ecosystem orchestrator by connecting businesses, schools, universities, ITS Academies, training providers, suppliers, and local communities, creating a shared governance framework around real labour market needs. It functions as a stakeholder university by shifting the focus from developing internal employees alone to co-designing learning solutions with external stakeholders, thereby contributing to the definition of professional profiles, competency standards, and learning pathways that benefit not only individual organisations but also entire industries and territories. It serves as a knowledge agency by capturing, codifying, and making transferable the tacit knowledge embedded in operational practices, production processes, and accumulated professional experience. Finally, it operates as a creator of future professions, moving beyond the search for existing talent to imagine, design, and develop the competencies and occupations that will be required in the years ahead. This transformation also reflects a broader shift in the way organisations view people. The *Assoknowledge Report 2025* clearly identifies a change in paradigm: it is no longer sufficient to assess human capital solely on the basis of existing technical expertise. The willingness to learn, adaptability, curiosity, motivation, collaboration, the ability to interpret complex environments, and the capacity to reinvent oneself throughout an entire professional career have been becoming increasingly important. Corporate Academies are among the principal environments in which this potential can be recognised, nurtured, and transformed into tangible competencies.

The contributions collected in this Working Paper originate from a process of reflection and knowledge sharing promoted by Assoknowledge through its *Academy Circle* initiative. Conceived as a permanent forum for dialogue among Corporate Academy leaders and executives, the Academy Circle enables organisations to meet regularly, discuss shared challenges, exchange experiences, and generate knowledge that benefits the wider learning and human capital development ecosystem. It is important to emphasise that the contributions presented here should not be regarded as isolated case studies or as unrelated corporate experiences brought together in a single volume. Rather, they are the outcome of collective discussions that have revealed common questions, shared trajectories, and convergent perspectives regarding the evolving role of Corporate Academies.

The first Academy Circle meetings focused on two issues of central importance for business competitiveness: Artificial Intelligence & New Technologies and Upskilling and Reskilling. These working sessions provided the basis for the technical contributions of the participating companies, which, in this volume, have been complemented by the broader strategic perspective and institutional vision of each company's Corporate Academy. The structure of the contributions reflects the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon itself: on the one hand, the technical and organisational aspects of transformation; on the other, the identity, reputational, and strategic dimensions that Corporate Academies increasingly assume within organisational life.

The reputational dimension deserves particular attention. A Corporate Academy creates value not only because it organises learning programmes or updates competencies. It also communicates how an organisation interprets the future of work, invests in people, builds trust, engages with stakeholders, and assumes responsibility for employability, innovation, and talent development. In this sense, the Corporate Academy becomes an integral component of the organisation's institutional narrative, its identity, and its strategic positioning. It is not a technical function detached from corporate strategy, but a strategic asset that contributes to organisational credibility, attractiveness, and recognisability. The fourteen organisations participating in this initiative represent a broad range of industries, experiences, and organisational models. Some contribute perspectives on artificial intelligence and emerging technologies; others focus on upskilling

and reskilling processes; all of them contribute to the reflection on the reputational value of Corporate Academies. This diversity makes it possible to examine the phenomenon from multiple perspectives, avoiding the reduction of Corporate Academies to a single function or industrial sector. Today, Corporate Academies span manufacturing, energy, services, technology, education, automotive, and consulting. Their significance lies precisely in their capacity to adapt to diverse contexts while maintaining a common mission: transforming competencies into a structural driver of productivity.

From this perspective, the present section offers a systemic interpretation of Corporate Academies, highlighting their contribution to capability development, innovation, engagement with local ecosystems, and the overall competitiveness of the country. Their role becomes even more significant at a historical moment characterised by rapid technological transformation, continuously evolving professional requirements, and a traditional education system that cannot, on its own, respond at the same pace. Each contribution included in this volume gives tangible substance to this interpretation by demonstrating how capability development, the design of emerging professional roles, and the support provided to individuals throughout organisational change directly influence organisations' capacity to generate value.

The overall purpose of this collection is to contribute to the national debate by demonstrating that a significant share of the country's future productivity will depend upon its ability to build learning ecosystems that are more closely aligned with the real needs of organisations and individuals.

Because of their unique position at the intersection of corporate strategy, human capital development, and education systems, Corporate Academies have become one of the most important mechanisms for creating this connection. Recognising their role means recognising that productivity is generated not merely through the adoption of new technologies, but through the capacity to transform those technologies into skills, behaviours, organisational processes, and culture.

Corporate Academies as Strategic Infrastructures for the Italy's Future Productivity and Competitiveness: A Systemic Perspective

Alessandro Sciolari – Scientific Director, Assoknowledge

The contributions collected in this volume provide a broad, concrete, and coherent representation of the role that Corporate Academies play today in organisational transformation processes. The experiences presented span a wide range of sectors—including energy, manufacturing, automotive, telecommunications, services, education, consulting, technology, and utilities—yet they reveal a common pattern: Corporate Academies are no longer structures devoted merely to the delivery of training programmes. Rather, they have become strategic hubs through which organisations develop capabilities, steer innovation, strengthen productivity, and reinforce the relationship between people, work, and change. This emerges particularly clearly when considering together the contributions from Angelini Industries, Automobili Lamborghini, Enel, Engineering, ManpowerGroup, TIM, Comau, Dallara, Epicode, Pragma, Gruppo Hera, Rome Business School, Six Seconds, and Campus Bio-Medico. While each organisation presents different models, tools, and priorities, they all converge on one fundamental point: productivity does not arise automatically from the introduction of new technologies, nor solely from process efficiency. Rather, it stems from the ability to transform knowledge, innovation, and learning into capabilities that people can effectively apply in their working environments. The first cross-cutting theme concerns moving beyond a reductive understanding of *corporate education*, conceived here as the set of strategies through which organisations develop competencies, organisational culture, and transformation capabilities. Corporate Academies are not portrayed as entities separate from organisational life but as strategic mechanisms closely connected to corporate strategy, operational continuity, and competitiveness. At Lamborghini, for example, the Corporate Academy oversees upskilling, reskilling, technical qualification, AI literacy, and transformational leadership, integrating digital platforms, proprietary learning content, and a dedicated training centre focused on distinctive competencies such as

carbon-fibre manufacturing and upholstery craftsmanship. At Enel, the Skill Evolution Lab and the AI & Transformation Academy demonstrate how capability development can become a strategic lever for managing the energy, digital, and organisational transition. At Hera, the Professional Academies, reskilling and upskilling programmes, and knowledge management tools illustrate a model in which learning, innovation, and business sustainability are closely interconnected.

The second common theme concerns the response to the skills mismatch — that is, the gap between the competencies required by organisations and those actually available in the labour market. This issue runs through almost all the contributions. ManpowerGroup addresses it from its privileged position at the intersection of labour demand and supply, demonstrating how Corporate Academies can design pre-employment pathways, reskilling programmes, and talent pipelines capable of generating tangible employability. Comau approaches the issue in relation to the shortage of qualified professionals in advanced automation and Industry 5.0, ranging from robotics and programming specialists to experts in cybersecurity and artificial intelligence applied to industrial environments. Angelini Industries frames the challenge in terms of strengthening the connection between universities, business schools, and industry, notably through its Gateway programme, which reduces financial barriers and broadens access to advanced educational pathways. A broader systemic consideration emerges from these experiences: Corporate Academies do not merely address existing skills gaps; they actively anticipate future capability requirements. This represents one of the most innovative insights arising from the contributions. Corporate Academies identify transformations in the world of work before they become critical challenges, translate industrial capability needs into structured development pathways, transform technical knowledge into transferable competencies, and support the emergence of new professional profiles. Operating in an environment characterised by exceptionally high technological intensity, Dallara demonstrates how learning is intrinsically linked to the ability to simulate, design, experiment, and make effective use of data and advanced modelling tools. In a sector shaped by 5G, cybersecurity, data, cloud computing, networks, and generative artificial intelligence, TIM highlights the growing obsolescence of technical

knowledge and the need to restore individuals' ownership of their own learning journeys. Comau describes a Corporate Academy open not only to employees but also to customers, professionals, schools, universities, and partners, capable of transforming industrial knowledge into practical, applicable competencies.

The third major theme concerns the knowledge that resides within the organisation itself. Many of the most critical capabilities are not readily available on the labour market because they are developed within organisational processes, technologies, value chains, operational practices, and, above all, through the experience of people. Corporate Academies therefore become environments in which tacit knowledge is identified, codified, and transferred—that is, the body of knowledge that is often not formalised in manuals or procedures but instead resides in the practical experience of those who perform the work. This dimension is particularly evident in the contributions from Lamborghini, Hera, Comau, and Dallara, but it also underpins the reflections of Rome Business School and Campus Bio-Medico, where the relationship between business, research, business schools, universities, and local ecosystems is viewed as the essential condition for transforming dispersed knowledge into organisational and collective value. Artificial intelligence represents the clearest test case of this transformation. The contributions do not portray AI as a technology simply to be added to existing processes, but rather as a force that reshapes learning, decision-making, roles, and responsibilities. Enel highlights the need to translate technological innovation into broadly distributed operational capability, preventing it from remaining confined to isolated pilot projects or specialist expertise. Epicode points to the paradox faced by many organisations: technologies that have been acquired, discussed at board level, and are technically available, yet remain distant from everyday work. Pragma identifies an even deeper transformation, arguing that AI does not merely affect operational processes but increasingly enters cognitive processes—that is, the ways in which people analyse information, evaluate alternatives, and make decisions. Finally, Six Seconds draws attention to the emotional and cultural dimensions of technological adoption, reminding us that enthusiasm, fear, curiosity, resistance, and feelings of inadequacy are not peripheral issues but fundamental conditions that shape transformation. Taken together, these contributions advance a

common proposition: the value of artificial intelligence does not lie in the technology itself, but in organisations' ability to make it understandable, usable, governable, and accountable. Corporate Academies play a decisive role because they foster AI literacy—that is, a broad-based understanding of the principles, opportunities, limitations, and risks associated with artificial intelligence—but, above all, because they help individuals develop critical judgement. The challenge is not simply to know how to use an AI-enabled tool, but to understand when to use it, when to verify its outputs, when to question them, when to exercise independent judgement, and when human oversight must remain paramount. In this respect, Pragma's contribution on *cognitive supervision*—the individual's capacity to maintain attention, critical thinking, and responsibility within AI-supported processes—provides a particularly valuable interpretative framework for understanding the contributions collected in this volume as a whole.

The fourth common theme concerns the renewed centrality of the individual. The contributions clearly demonstrate that upskilling and reskilling cannot be reduced to purely technical categories. Upskilling—the continuous enhancement and strengthening of the competencies required to perform one's current role more effectively—and reskilling—the acquisition of competencies for new roles or new responsibilities—create value only when they are linked to individuals' capacity to learn, adapt, and continually redefine their contribution over time. TIM expresses this particularly effectively through its *Apprendo* model and its use of LinkedIn Learning, demonstrating that productivity does not result from imposing learning pathways but from enabling people to become active agents in their own development. Angelini Industries emphasises the importance of life skills such as critical thinking, sound judgement, relational intelligence, adaptability, and the ability to work across disciplinary boundaries. Six Seconds shifts the focus towards emotional competencies, trust, collaboration, and the ability to navigate change with awareness and resilience. This perspective makes it possible to understand Corporate Academies not merely as vehicles for professional development but as environments in which individuals cultivate their professional identity. Competence is no longer defined solely by what a person is capable of doing today; it also encompasses the ability to continue learning tomorrow, to interpret uncertain environments, to collaborate effectively with both

human and technological actors, to assume responsibility, and to transform change into purposeful action. It is precisely at this point that technical competencies and distinctly human capabilities cease to be separate dimensions. Future competitiveness will depend on people who can effectively leverage data, digital platforms, robotics, intelligent systems, and advanced technologies, while at the same time exercising sound judgement, building meaningful relationships, navigating complexity, and making responsible decisions.

The fifth element concerns learning methodologies. The contributions reveal a remarkable evolution in capability development practices, encompassing digital platforms, micro-learning modules, podcasts, simulators, laboratories, coaching, mentoring, peer learning, professional communities, virtual reality, action learning, and applied projects. Yet, the truly innovative aspect does not lie in the diversity of these tools. Rather, it lies in the fact that learning is becoming increasingly embedded in real work. Lamborghini integrates synchronous and asynchronous learning, e-learning, MOOCs, and dedicated training centres. TIM brings learning into the daily flow of work, including through its *TIM AI Voices* podcast. Epicode emphasises on-demand micro-learning modules and hands-on experimentation. Hera leverages Training Centres, Learning Centres, and virtual reality. Dallara connects learning with simulation, experimentation, and learning through error in controlled environments. The methodology proves effective when it narrows the gap between learning and doing.

The sixth element concerns the measurability of impact. The contributions do not merely assert the value of capability development in general terms; instead, they relate it to concrete indicators, including training hours delivered, number of participants, employment rates, platform adoption, learner satisfaction, operational continuity, productivity, decision quality, innovation capacity, and inclusion. Lamborghini reports approximately 85,000 training hours annually for a workforce of around 3,000 employees. Enel records more than 270,000 person-training hours dedicated to artificial intelligence, learning pathways involving over 5,000 employees, and awareness initiatives reaching more than 50,000 colleagues. ManpowerGroup links its programmes to an employment rate of 65 per cent. Hera reports annual participation exceeding 97 per cent of its workforce. TIM documents more than 717,000 hours of learning delivered

through its *Apprendo* platform. These figures should not be interpreted merely as measures of activity volume, but as indicators of a broader transformation: capability development becomes truly meaningful when it produces observable effects on people, organisational processes, and overall organisational performance.

The seventh element concerns the ecosystem dimension. Corporate Academies increasingly operate as strategic actors capable of connecting businesses with the education system, business schools, universities, Higher Technological Institutes (ITS), public institutions, local communities, industrial value chains, and technology partners. Campus Bio-Medico interprets this evolution as a move beyond organisational self-referentiality towards the creation of genuine knowledge ecosystems. Rome Business School highlights the changing relationship between Corporate Academies and business schools: no longer centred on the delivery of standard programmes, but increasingly based on strategic co-design. Angelini Industries emphasises partnerships with universities and business schools, research collaboration, the integration of diverse bodies of knowledge, and the development of young talent. ManpowerGroup demonstrates how system-level instruments can support employability-oriented learning pathways. In Lamborghini's contribution, DESI illustrates the capacity to generate value not only for the company but also for local communities through dual-learning models. Corporate Academies, therefore, no longer operate solely within organisational boundaries; they have become key nodes within broader collaborative networks.

The eighth element, closely connected to the previous one, is inclusion. The contributions demonstrate that broadening access to competencies is not merely a social objective but a prerequisite for strengthening the country's productive capacity. Angelini Industries links its Gateway programme to the reduction of educational inequalities. ManpowerGroup highlights the participation of individuals without university degrees and those with more fragile educational backgrounds, demonstrating that Corporate Academies can become practical instruments for enhancing employability. TIM emphasises accessibility and the right to lifelong learning within a mature workforce. Hera connects learning, innovation, and the development of people. From this perspective, inclusion is not a peripheral concern; it is an essential component of the system's ability to fully realise

and retain human potential. Finally, the contributions reveal a significant reputational and identity dimension. Corporate Academies reflect the way organisations envision the future of work, invest in people, engage with stakeholders, and fulfil their responsibilities towards local communities, industrial value chains, and younger generations. They are not merely internal mechanisms for capability development but strategic assets that strengthen organisational credibility, attractiveness, and reputation. This is true of the more technology-oriented experiences, such as those of Enel, TIM, Dallara, Comau, and Epicode; of those rooted in manufacturing and distinctive technical expertise, such as Lamborghini; of organisations committed to local development and employability, such as ManpowerGroup and Hera; and of those focused on executive education, individual development, and knowledge ecosystems, such as Angelini Industries, Rome Business School, Six Seconds, and Campus Bio-Medico. Taken together, these contributions complete the picture: despite the diversity of their organisational models, the Corporate Academies represented by Assoknowledge fulfil a common mission. They transform capability needs into structured learning pathways, technologies into competencies, tacit knowledge into shared organisational assets, learning into productivity, and people into informed and proactive agents of change. Their value lies not only in what they teach, but in their ability to create connections: between strategy and work; between business and the education system; between innovation and responsibility; and between individual development and collective competitiveness. From this perspective, Corporate Academies emerge as essential infrastructures for the future productivity of the country. At a time when technologies evolve rapidly, roles are continuously reshaped, competencies become obsolete at an ever-increasing pace, and work demands increasingly hybrid capabilities, Corporate Academies provide a practical and already operational response. The contributions collected in this volume do not describe isolated experiences; together, they articulate a shared vision. The productivity of the future will depend on the ability to cultivate competencies that are dynamic, widely distributed, inclusive, and responsible. Corporate Academies are the places where this capability takes shape.

Contributions from Corporate Academies

1. Angelini Industries

1. a) Talent, Skills, and New Generations: Building Bridges Between Education and Work

Marco Morbidelli - CEO Angelini Academy

Technological, organisational, and societal transformations are redefining the ways in which organisations create value and build competitiveness. Within this context, Artificial Intelligence is introducing a profound shift in the relationship between people, knowledge, and work: it is changing the way we learn, make decisions, collaborate, and develop competencies. The challenge, therefore, is not merely to adopt new technologies, but to understand their potential to strengthen human capabilities, support learning processes, and improve the quality of decision-making. At the same time, we are witnessing an unprecedented acceleration in the evolution of skills. Alongside technical competencies, life skills are becoming increasingly critical: critical thinking, sound judgement, relational intelligence, adaptability, and the ability to work across disciplinary boundaries. These are the capabilities that enable individuals to navigate complexity, embrace change, and create value in increasingly dynamic professional environments. To respond to these transformations, corporate education must focus both on attracting and developing new talent and on supporting the continuous evolution of the competencies of people already working within organisations. Technological transition affects entire workforces, requiring employees to rethink practices, languages, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. Supporting these changes means fostering learning throughout people's professional lives, strengthening both individual adaptability and organisations' capacity to evolve over time. Consequently, corporate learning can no longer be regarded solely as a tool for professional updating and knowledge transfer. Today, Corporate Academies are increasingly emerging as spaces for lifelong learning: environments in which organisations anticipate changes in the world of work, design new learning experiences, experiment with innovative educational methodologies, and transform knowledge into competencies that can be effectively applied within business contexts. At the same time, they are increasingly fulfilling a

connective function by building bridges between what takes place inside organisations and developments in the broader external environment, linking the needs of industry with the worlds of higher education and research. It is from this perspective that Angelini Academy—established five years ago to support the transformation of people, competencies, and leadership—has evolved into an educational innovation hub fully integrated with the strategy and cultural identity of Angelini Industries. It combines strong strategic alignment with significant autonomy in programme design and a distinctive commitment to experimentation, research, and the development of new learning models. Alongside the objective of educating people across different age groups, organisational functions, and levels of responsibility, the Academy pursues the broader ambition of designing and testing educational models capable of generating long-term value for the Group.

The evolution of Angelini Academy is founded upon four strategic pillars. The first is the creation of a carefully selected network of partnerships with leading universities and business schools to foster research, co-design educational programmes, and reflect jointly on the competencies required to address the transformations affecting work and organisations.

The second pillar focuses on collaborative research into learning models. We are developing international fellowships and research initiatives dedicated to the neuroscience of learning, the application of Artificial Intelligence to educational models, and the study of skills mismatches within the life sciences and robotics sectors. Our classrooms are conceived as living laboratories where research and education interact to develop learning methodologies that are both effective and aligned with the evolving nature of work.

The third pillar concerns the integration of diverse fields of knowledge. We believe that today's most valuable competencies increasingly emerge at the intersection of different disciplines: management and technology, the humanities, the creative arts, and organisational knowledge. Innovative collaborations with theatre schools, art institutes, and music academies provide opportunities to cultivate listening skills, judgement, contextual interpretation, critical thinking, and the ability to approach problems from multiple perspectives.

The fourth pillar is the development of young talent. Angelini Academy Gateway—our flagship programme—offers highly talented young people

whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent them from accessing high-quality education the opportunity to participate in an international MBA programme combined with direct professional experience within the company. The objective is to build a bridge between universities, business, and the labour market. Through this significant investment, we contribute to reducing the educational inequalities that still prevent many talented individuals from fully realising their potential, thereby benefiting not only their personal success but also the long-term prosperity of the country.

Continuing to invest in this innovative approach to corporate education means reducing the mismatch between labour demand and supply, accelerating the adoption of technological innovation, strengthening leadership capabilities, and enhancing organisations' ability to operate successfully in increasingly complex and rapidly changing environments. It also means attracting, developing, and, above all, retaining talented individuals, thereby creating the conditions for sustainable long-term growth. In the years ahead, we intend to strengthen this contribution even further by supporting both the continued development of people already within organisations and the entry of new generations into the labour market through dedicated educational pathways and international programmes. From this perspective, promoting generational renewal will become one of Angelini Academy's strategic priorities. Through programmes specifically designed for young people, hackathons, and excellence pathways, we aim each year to prepare dozens of university students for their first professional experience within Angelini Group companies, complementing their academic education with competencies specifically related to organisational contexts. The challenge before us is therefore to build effective partnerships among businesses, public institutions, universities, and business schools, aimed not only at developing the competencies currently demanded by the labour market but also at anticipating those that will become essential in the years ahead. Programmes such as Angelini Academy Gateway can become shared hubs through which opportunities for talented young people are multiplied, educational inequalities are reduced, and the connection between education and employment is strengthened. It is in this context that corporate education can assume a broader societal role: contributing to the development of an educational ecosystem that is inclusive, innovative, and capable of generating lasting value for the country.

1. b) Angelini Academy: An Expression of a Responsible Corporate Culture Looking Towards the Future

Isabella Falautano - Group Chief Sustainability & Communication Officer - Angelini Industries

When discussing Corporate Academies, they are often viewed exclusively as internal training structures designed to ensure the continuous updating of employees' competencies. However, their value extends far beyond serving as learning environments dedicated to employees and collaborators.

Corporate Academies are among the most effective instruments available to companies and organisations for shaping and sustaining their corporate culture, giving concrete expression to their vision of the future while transforming knowledge and experience into shared value.

In the face of the profound transformations that are reshaping the world of work and business—within a context characterised by disruptive technological innovation, epochal demographic shifts, and increasing complexity—the capacity to learn, continuously update competencies, and develop new leadership models has become one of the primary drivers of competitiveness, both for individual organisations and for the country as a whole.

Against this backdrop, investing in competencies goes far beyond a training function. It means creating the conditions that enable individuals, organisations, and communities to face change with greater awareness and stronger innovative capacity, while simultaneously fostering the development of more resilient organisations, more dynamic local communities, and economic systems capable of generating sustainable long-term value. Corporate Academies therefore assume a role that extends well beyond education itself: they become strategic instruments through which organisations express their identity, build reputation, attract talent, and make a tangible contribution to the development of human capital.

For a multi-industry group such as Angelini Industries—founded as a family business and evolved over time into a model of sound and responsible Italian entrepreneurship committed to sustainable, long-term growth—Angelini Academy represents a strategic asset for nurturing the Group's body of competencies, making visible and measurable not only its

commitment to its people but also the broader contribution it seeks to generate for society. It is not simply a place where competencies are transferred; it is a space where vision, critical thinking, the ability to interpret complexity, and a mindset oriented towards change are cultivated.

The Academy is one of the places where the organisation makes its culture visible and fully embodies its commitment to placing people, competencies, and the growth of knowledge at the centre of its long-term development strategy. Every company can claim to believe in the value of its people, but investing in a Corporate Academy means transforming that belief into a concrete and measurable commitment. It means recognising that human capital is not merely a resource to be managed, but an asset to be cultivated, strengthened, and developed over time. When, as in the case of Angelini Academy, an organisation chooses to extend learning and development opportunities beyond its own workforce by engaging prestigious international partners, the Academy also becomes a means of giving back the value generated by the company. It becomes a way of sharing knowledge, promoting capability development, and creating opportunities for growth within the communities and territories in which the organisation operates. From this perspective, the Academy also serves as an instrument of cultural transmission. It does not simply transfer technical competencies; it contributes to disseminating values, behaviours, leadership capabilities, and a strong sense of responsibility.

The profound transformations we are experiencing require not only new competencies but, above all, new interpretative capabilities. Artificial intelligence, digitalisation, and the ongoing evolution of work and markets require organisations to develop flexibility and adaptability, but even more importantly, critical thinking and responsible leadership. It is from this awareness that the new phase of Angelini Academy has emerged, conceived as a bridge between the internal and external environments, as well as between the present and the future. It is an open ecosystem capable of engaging with universities, business schools, public institutions, and companies while experimenting with innovative educational models based on the integration of technology, the humanities, and multidisciplinary approaches. This strategic choice reflects the conviction that the competencies of the future will increasingly emerge from the convergence of different disciplines and from the ability to interpret complex phenomena through complementary perspectives.

A Corporate Academy does not merely strengthen internal competencies; it also communicates externally the kind of organisation a company aspires to be. It positions the organisation as an innovative, responsible, and future-oriented actor. It reinforces the perception of a company that invests in its people and considers the development of human capital to be an indispensable component of its long-term competitiveness.

The objective is to place knowledge once again at the centre of people's growth and development journeys by fostering critical thinking and enabling individuals to make the most effective use of everything that technology makes possible, while never losing sight of the centrality of human experience. Technology can amplify human potential, but it cannot replace the ability to understand complexity, make informed decisions, and build meaningful relationships. From this perspective, the Academy also assumes a central role in an organisation's ability to attract and develop talent, thereby strengthening its reputation—one that today can no longer be built solely on economic performance or the quality of products and services, but increasingly depends on demonstrating genuine commitment to people, responsibility towards the future, and a willingness to contribute to the development of society.

An organisation that invests in continuous learning, leadership development, and talent cultivation sends a clear message to all its stakeholders. It communicates that it believes in the future, that it is willing to invest in new generations, and that it considers the growth of people to be an essential component of its strategic vision. For employees, this means being part of an organisation that actively invests in both their professional and personal development. For managers, it means working within an environment that values capability development and high-quality leadership. For young people, it represents tangible evidence of a commitment to learning opportunities and personal growth. For public institutions and local communities, it demonstrates the presence of an entrepreneurial organisation capable of generating value beyond the boundaries of the business itself. For these reasons, education today represents a form of both industrial and social responsibility. For any organisation, investing in education means exercising a responsibility that extends well beyond short-term horizons. It is in this sense that the Corporate Academy becomes a powerful instrument for building trust.

And today, trust is one of the most valuable assets any organisation can possess.

2. Automobili Lamborghini

2. a) A Skills Ecosystem: The Automobili Lamborghini Experience in Upskilling, Innovation, and Business Development

Alberto Ferrarotto - Head of Learning Ecosystem & Skills Transformation - Automobili Lamborghini

Social, economic, and geopolitical changes, together with the evolution of organisational work models driven by technological and process innovation, have progressively introduced new challenges while assigning new responsibilities to the role of corporate learning. Within this context, the entry of new generations into the labour market—bringing with them different values, expectations, and aspirations—makes it increasingly necessary to foster authentic and inclusive workplaces capable of supporting people's well-being while simultaneously strengthening organisational effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

Recognising the strategic importance of these dynamics, at Automobili Lamborghini we have embarked on a journey to further develop our learning ecosystem in order to ensure business continuity, invest in the key skills of the future, promote widespread AI literacy aimed at enhancing individual contribution, and develop a leadership capable of driving transformation and managing the complexity required by today's socio-economic and technological environment.

Our Corporate Academy is built upon an integrated architecture of initiatives designed for both individuals and teams, with the objective of developing professional competencies while promoting a shared, inclusive, and participatory corporate culture. This ecosystem extends well beyond the delivery of training programmes: it serves as a strategic steward of organisational capabilities, supporting structured pathways for upskilling, reskilling, and specialist professional qualification.

Our learning portfolio is developed through a structured design process carried out in collaboration with qualified external partners and complemented by extensive in-house production of proprietary learning content that leverages the expertise already present within the company. The entire portfolio is reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance.

The managers responsible for the various internal learning domains regularly exchange experiences and best practices, contributing to integrated planning that remains closely aligned with the company's strategic objectives. Access to learning programmes and educational content is provided through the **Lamborghini Learning Place** platform, which promotes both self-directed learning and autonomous access to resources aligned with individual development needs by integrating internal learning catalogues with external digital content. At the same time, it delivers role-specific learning programmes required to achieve professional qualifications.

Learning is delivered through both synchronous and asynchronous modalities, including face-to-face sessions, virtual classrooms, e-learning programmes, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and educational content available through external digital platforms. For highly specialised technical training, we operate a dedicated Training Centre at our Sant'Agata Bolognese production facility, where line operators receive professional qualification in the advanced technologies that distinguish Lamborghini, including carbon-fibre manufacturing and upholstery craftsmanship.

This commitment translates into approximately 85,000 hours of learning delivered each year to our workforce of approximately 3,000 employees.

Among the most significant initiatives introduced during this period is the **Coach & Care** programme for company managers. As part of a broader leadership development strategy, the programme aims to strengthen the relationship between managers and their teams, recognising this relationship as a strategic lever for combining organisational performance with employee well-being. The programme is distinguished by:

- practical workshop sessions conducted in small groups of approximately eight participants, characterised by short, highly focused learning experiences built around real business cases, peer discussion, and coaching feedback that can be immediately applied in the workplace;
- the establishment of Communities of Practice, managed autonomously by participants who have been trained as internal trainers. These communities continue well beyond the initial learning programme, promoting continuous learning, mutual support, and the widespread dissemination of managerial culture through peer learning.

In 2025, Automobili Lamborghini also joined Italy's **New Skills Fund (Fondo Nuove Competenze)**, launching dedicated learning pathways designed to address both organisational and external challenges, with particular emphasis on digital transformation and Artificial Intelligence. The programme currently involves more than 300 participants organised into homogeneous learning clusters, each following a forty-hour curriculum covering digital competencies, innovation, well-being, leadership, inclusion, and sustainability.

In parallel, company-wide digital literacy initiatives have been introduced, together with advanced learning programmes on tools such as Microsoft Copilot 365, supported by an ongoing user community that provides continuous guidance and knowledge sharing. Starting from the principle that technology creates no value without the competencies required to use it effectively, the company has developed an evolutionary learning pathway that progresses from awareness to experimentation and ultimately to operational adoption. The programmes currently underway are explicitly designed to translate learning into practical implementation through proof-of-concept initiatives and digital transformation projects.

Through our Corporate Academy, we aim to contribute directly both to the productivity of the company and to the broader development of the local ecosystem by strengthening the organisation's capacity to innovate, adapt, and continuously improve its processes and operating models. Within this framework, our commitment to younger generations is reflected in the **DESI – Dual Education System Italy** project, which during its first ten years involved 210 secondary school students and delivered more than 9,000 hours of integrated theoretical and practical education. This initiative complements a well-established network of collaborations with universities and educational institutions, including MUNER, Politecnico di Milano, the University of Bologna and their respective Business Schools, LUISS University, and ITS MAKER Academy, fostering a two-way exchange of technical knowledge between the organisation and the education system.

Looking ahead, our ambition is to continue developing an advanced capability management model capable of identifying emerging trends, maintaining close dialogue with the business, and rapidly activating targeted development pathways while enhancing the continuous exchange between internal and external expertise within a skills-based organisational framework.

We firmly believe that the competitive advantage of a Corporate Academy increasingly depends on an organisation's ability to acquire and continuously update competencies in a timely manner, supported by a leadership committed to creating and sustaining environments in which continuous learning becomes an integral part of everyday work. Within this context, corporate learning assumes a strategic role in supporting organisational transformation, accelerating the development of critical competencies, and generating lasting value for the organisation, its people, and the wider ecosystem in which it operates.

2. b) Building the Future through Automobili Lamborghini's Learning Model: Skills, Talent, and Responsibility Towards Local Communities

*Lucia Ghirardini - Head of People Experience, Culture and
Inclusion - Automobili Lamborghini*

At a time when the transformation of the automotive industry demands increasingly advanced capabilities, corporate learning has assumed a strategic role in an organisation's ability to understand change and prepare to respond to it. At Automobili Lamborghini, the Corporate Academy embodies this vision by making visible the way in which the company interprets change, transfers its standards of excellence, and generates value beyond the boundaries of the organisation itself.

Indeed, the way an organisation develops its people reflects the way it envisions its future. For Automobili Lamborghini, the Corporate Academy is not simply a mechanism for updating existing competencies; it is designed to anticipate those that will be required for the future evolution of people, products, processes, and the organisation as a whole. Through the continuous monitoring of emerging trends and ongoing dialogue with the company's different business functions, the Academy contributes to building the key capabilities needed to sustain long-term business development.

This perspective is reflected, for example, in the company's decision to introduce learning programmes on technologies expected to become increasingly relevant to the future evolution of the business. This choice goes well beyond investment in training alone: it demonstrates a commitment to preparing for technological developments and emerging market needs. It is an approach that recognises learning as a means of leading change rather than merely reacting to it—preparing people before change becomes urgent or demands a reactive response.

For a global luxury brand, the product alone is not enough. The Lamborghini promise must also be recognisable in the people who represent the brand, in customer service, in customer relationships, and in the quality of the experience delivered across international markets. Within Automobili Lamborghini's learning ecosystem, the Corporate Academy dedicated to the dealer network has developed a learning portfolio

designed to enable dealership personnel to become authentic ambassadors of the Lamborghini spirit, strengthen a culture of sustainability throughout the dealer network, and align dealerships with the company's strategy and objectives, thereby enhancing the overall quality of customer service.

Learning does not end within the boundaries of the organisation. Automobili Lamborghini contributes to an ecosystem in which schools, universities, research institutions, and the manufacturing sector exchange competencies, perspectives, and talent. It is within this ecosystem that the company's most tangible expression of social and industrial responsibility takes shape.

Automobili Lamborghini has established itself as one of the leading actors within Italy's Motor Valley in promoting skills development, industrial culture, and talent attraction.

Partnerships with educational institutions—including ITS Maker Academy and the DESI project—represent concrete examples of shared responsibility. These collaborations are founded on a two-way exchange of knowledge and competencies: on the one hand, the company shares its technical expertise with younger generations; on the other, it welcomes new perspectives, emerging capabilities, and new talent.

In 2025, Automobili Lamborghini celebrated the tenth anniversary of the previously mentioned **DESI – Dual Education System Italy** project, which has become a well-established expression of the company's commitment to developing future generations. During its first decade, the DESI programme at Lamborghini involved 210 students from local secondary schools, offering them an educational pathway that integrates classroom learning with practical experience through more than 9,000 hours of training delivered directly at the company's dedicated training centre within the Sant'Agata Bolognese production facility. Through this initiative, the company demonstrates its strategic commitment to investing not only in the future of the business but also in the social development of the wider community.

The company is also among the founding members of **MUNER (Motor Valley University of Emilia-Romagna)**, actively contributing to the design of educational programmes, delivering specialised teaching in manufacturing engineering, and promoting meaningful interaction between academia and industry through company visits, career orientation initiatives, and direct engagement with internal teams. The programme also

represents one of the company's primary channels for attracting and recruiting young talent.

The company's commitment to the Motor Valley should therefore not be understood simply as a collaborative initiative, but as an active commitment to strengthening the region's human capital within a framework of mutual development. Alongside product innovation, Automobili Lamborghini has also introduced numerous initiatives focused on social innovation, with the objective of creating an increasingly inclusive working environment.

Among these initiatives, the **Lamborghini Feelosophy** Well-Being Programme—launched in 2021 and built around the three pillars of *body*, *mind*, and *purpose*—represents the cornerstone of a people-centred corporate culture. Through a broad range of dedicated programmes, it promotes holistic well-being, encompassing physical fitness, meditation, preventive healthcare, psychological support, and initiatives related to corporate social responsibility.

The company's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion—already reflected in its dedicated learning catalogue entitled **Universes to Explore** and reinforced through the achievement of both the IDEM certification and the UNI/PdR 125:2022 certification on gender equality—has remained a central organisational priority. Key initiatives include the implementation of a policy aimed at preventing all forms of workplace discrimination, together with an inclusive language campaign designed to raise employees' awareness of the importance of language as both a reflection of society and a powerful instrument for overcoming stereotypes and prejudice.

These initiatives have been complemented by the managerial development programme **Coach & Care**, designed to strengthen the pivotal role of leaders in creating healthy, motivating, and supportive working environments. Supporting managers has been essential in translating corporate values into everyday practice while reinforcing both leadership competencies and managerial responsibility.

Learning is fundamentally a space for relationships, exchange, and a shared sense of belonging. Together, these initiatives demonstrate a learning model that extends far beyond the transmission of knowledge, enabling instead meaningful connections, continuous learning, and shared innovation.

From a Corporate Social Responsibility perspective, this translates into a tangible contribution to employability, professional development, and individuals' ability to evolve in step with changes in the labour market.

Looking ahead, it is increasingly evident that the value of Corporate Academies will not be determined solely by the quality or breadth of the learning content they provide, but by their ability to integrate people, competencies, innovation, and business strategy into a coherent and dynamic system.

Within this vision, the learning ecosystem developed by Automobili Lamborghini confirms its role as one of the company's most important instruments for giving concrete expression to its social commitment—not only by developing today's professionals, but also by helping to shape the future of work and of the wider community. It is an integrated architecture that brings together people, professional communities, individual development, and long-term competitive capability.

3. Comau

3. a) The Corporate Academy as a Driver of Innovation and Growth: The Comau Model

Stefano Pesce – Director, Comau Academy

In today's industrial landscape, the digital and intelligent transformation of industry is not simply the consequence of yet another technological evolution; rather, it is the outcome of a systemic shift that is fundamentally changing the way companies manufacture, operate, and compete on a global scale.

For an international company such as Comau—a leading provider of advanced automation solutions for SMEs and large enterprises across multiple industrial sectors—addressing the challenges posed by digital innovation and the smart factory means, first and foremost, investing in the education, development, and continuous upskilling of people.

It was precisely in response to this need that the **Comau Academy** was established: an educational ecosystem conceived not merely as an internal training centre serving employees, but as a fully-fledged educational Business Unit open to a broad and diverse external audience, including professionals, customers, companies, and strategic partners.

At a time when a significant gap persists between the demand for and supply of the specialised technical competencies essential to the growth of the industrial system, our Academy serves as a bridge between the needs of industry and those of schools and universities, between the requirements of businesses and the aspirations of tomorrow's professionals. Drawing on decades of industrial and managerial expertise, Comau Academy acts as a strategic accelerator capable of transforming knowledge and experience into concrete competencies that can be immediately applied across a wide range of operational environments.

THE SKILLS PARADOX: BRIDGING THE INDUSTRIAL GAP

With the advent of Industry 5.0, the industrial automation sector—in which Comau has operated for more than fifty years—is undergoing rapid transformation driven by the adoption of advanced technologies,

collaborative robotics, Internet of Things (IoT) systems, and intelligent manufacturing solutions.

Despite these developments, there remains a critical shortage of professionals capable of effectively managing this transformation and responding to the new occupational demands generated by emerging technologies and evolving industrial functions. There is an objective difficulty in recruiting specific professional profiles, such as automation engineers possessing advanced expertise not only in software and information technologies but also in electronics and mechanical engineering. Specialists in Artificial Intelligence with substantial industrial experience remain in short supply. Likewise, highly technical professionals—including welders, PLC and robotics programmers, and cybersecurity specialists, whose expertise has become an increasingly urgent requirement for modern industry—continue to be difficult to find in the labour market.

The mission of our Academy is therefore to bridge this professional skills gap by offering targeted learning pathways that combine theoretical foundations with practical application, equipping participants with the competencies essential for succeeding in both today's and tomorrow's industrial environments.

AN INTEGRATED AND STRATEGIC LEARNING ECOSYSTEM

What distinguishes the Comau Academy's educational offering is its distinctive learning model, designed to be flexible, accessible, and fully adaptable to the specific needs of learners, whether they are individual participants, corporate teams, or entire organisations.

In particular, Comau Academy is organised around four complementary and mutually reinforcing learning areas: **STEM**, **TECH**, **BUSINESS**, and **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**. The **STEM** area provides the educational foundation, focusing on mathematics, physics, robotics, and coding. Here we educate both students and teachers, laying the foundations for the professions of the future. The **TECH** area represents the Academy's operational core. It includes programmes covering industrial automation, robotics, robotic welding, and maintenance. Within this area, specialised technicians acquire the practical competencies required to operate directly on advanced industrial production systems.

The **BUSINESS** area addresses the managerial dimension of industrial organisations. Here we deliver programmes in project management, leadership, and manufacturing-oriented problem-solving, preparing professionals capable of leading digital transformation initiatives within their organisations.

Finally, the **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION** area represents our most advanced educational domain, focusing on Artificial Intelligence, sensor technologies, programming languages such as Python, Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs), and industrial exoskeletons. Each year, the Comau Academy delivers approximately one hundred training programmes, ranging from short eight-hour learning sessions to intensive programmes lasting up to 240 hours, with an average duration of approximately forty hours per course. This flexible model enables us to provide learning both in person and through e-learning modalities, ensuring operational continuity for participants ranging from newcomers to experienced professionals already active in the labour market.

IMPACT ON THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM

The results achieved by Comau Academy confirm the effectiveness of its educational approach. Every year, we provide direct training to more than 6,000 individuals. This audience expands to approximately 20,000 people when considering that our programmes are also delivered to educators and facilitators working within vocational training organisations and schools. Through more than 2,500 hours of teaching annually, Comau Academy does far more than simply deliver training programmes: it creates a virtuous cycle of technology transfer. Our educational model transforms competencies into opportunities. The **STEM** pathway opens the door to university education; the **TECH** pathway leads directly to employment in industry; the **BUSINESS** pathway supports managerial careers; and the **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION** pathway prepares participants for advanced technological specialisation. In an industrial environment characterised by continuous transformation, the technical competencies we develop—combined with essential soft skills such as flexibility, adaptability, and the ability to work effectively in teams—represent one of the defining strengths of our educational model, enabling our learners to become fully prepared professionals to succeed in the global labour market.

3. b) The Comau Academy: Corporate Identity, Talent Development, and Social Responsibility for the Future of Work

Giuseppe Costabile - Global Communication & Brand Manager - Comau

Communicating the commitment of a company operating in the industrial sector means more than showcasing new technologies and innovative projects. It means conveying the vision through which the company shapes the future—and the vision of the people who are building it. For this reason, Comau's Corporate Academy is not simply an extension of the business; it is one of the company's most powerful strategic assets for engaging with businesses and the world of work.

In a global market where reputation increasingly depends on being recognized as a forward-looking industry leader, the Comau Academy serves as a powerful platform for communicating our core values, including innovation and sustainability. Showcasing this learning ecosystem therefore means telling the story of a company that, starting from strong local roots, has grown and evolved by embracing global challenges while remaining true to the belief that technological progress is meaningful only when it supports, empowers, and safeguards human potential.

TECHNOLOGY AT THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE

Our communication strategy is built upon a fundamental principle: presenting technological innovation as a means of improving human work and supporting people in their daily activities. When we present our technologies through Comau Academy initiatives, we do not speak about replacing industrial workers; rather, we emphasize enhancing their capabilities. Our narrative is guided by the message "**Our Tech Speaks Human**". This simple yet powerful statement reflects our conviction that advanced technologies, solutions, and processes exist to serve and support people. In this way, Comau promotes a new vision of work in which technology makes jobs safer, more ergonomic, and more rewarding.

Consider, for example, the **MATE wearable exoskeletons**, which enable operators to reduce muscular strain during repetitive tasks performed in uncomfortable positions; our **collaborative robots (cobots)**, which work

side by side with industrial operators, relieving them of physically demanding tasks or facilitating the execution of specific activities; and our **Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs)**, mobile robotic stations capable of independently carrying out complex and physically demanding logistics operations.

There is more. Our Academy also provides tangible evidence that artificial intelligence is neither an abstract nor a threatening concept. Instead, it is a practical tool that becomes a strategic ally for industrial productivity, much like a programming language or an advanced sensor system.

Participants attending educational programmes developed by our Academy not only learn about the opportunities these technologies offer within industrial environments; they also experience their practical application firsthand through **e.DO**, our educational robot, which supports both instructors and learners throughout every course. Using this compact and agile collaborative robotic arm, participants can explore the world of robotics through an unconventional, dynamic, and highly interactive learning experience. Thanks to intuitive programming interfaces, e.DO enables learners to master the fundamentals of coding, experiment with programming industrial robots both on-site and remotely, and acquire the essential competencies required to operate robotic welding systems, thereby developing the foundational knowledge of an emerging profession. As a team-building tool, courses conducted with e.DO also strengthen critical soft skills, enabling participants to refine teamwork techniques, enhance problem-solving capabilities, and develop collaborative strategies applicable not only in technical environments but also in managerial contexts.

This practical approach is particularly important in bridging the perception gap that often discourages young people from pursuing STEM disciplines. Through hands-on laboratories and company visits, we demonstrate that the Industry 4.0 factory is an innovative, digital, and technologically advanced environment capable of offering stimulating and rewarding professional careers.

This is the essence of the strategy through which our company engages with the industrial and professional world: creating tangible opportunities that allow people to discover modern industry and attract talent seeking not merely employment, but an environment where their competencies can

evolve, create meaningful impact, and generate value both for themselves and for society.

AN OPEN AND CONTINUOUSLY EVOLVING ECOSYSTEM

The communicative strength of our Academy lies in its openness. We are not an isolated educational institution, but rather an open hub—a global network engaged in continuous dialogue with universities, technical institutes, public institutions, and international partners.

Our decision to educate external teachers and facilitators alongside students, professionals, and corporate teams positions Comau Academy as a genuine educational reference point for learning systems in Italy and internationally.

When we communicate that the Comau Academy delivers programmes ranging from robotics and industrial welding to corporate culture and cybersecurity, we intend to convey to the market that our company is first and foremost a comprehensive knowledge partner, even before being a provider of industrial solutions.

Through our Academy, we make available to a broad and diverse audience our technical and managerial expertise, the strength of our extensive network within the global industrial and manufacturing ecosystem, and the practical experience accumulated by a leading international company. We do so from a privileged perspective—that of an organisation possessing deep knowledge of the industrial system in which it operates, capable of identifying and anticipating change, and consequently anticipating future demand for new strategic professional competencies.

VALUES IN ACTION: INTERNATIONALISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Within a multinational environment, the communication strategy of the Comau Academy conveys competencies that extend well beyond technical expertise. Preparing professionals capable of operating successfully in multicultural environments forms an integral part of our corporate identity and of our responsibility toward the future of work. With operations across twelve countries worldwide, Comau distinguishes itself through the international outlook of its people and their ability to exchange knowledge, expertise, and operational experience across borders while collaborating as one integrated global organisation.

This distinctive characteristic enables both the company and its people to experience continuous professional growth and enrichment, while communicating the importance of looking beyond the industrial or operational specificity of individual sectors or national contexts to embrace a broader perspective—one that is open to change and capable of interpreting the global megatrends shaping industry and society.

Among the central themes addressed throughout our learning programmes are energy efficiency and sustainability. This cultural approach conveys to all our stakeholders the image of a company that fully recognises both the environmental challenges facing our planet and the manufacturing implications these challenges entail over the medium and long term. Through its educational programmes, the values embedded within its teaching methods, and the technological approach that underpins them, our Academy serves as a catalyst for this vision. It demonstrates that productive efficiency achieved through advanced technologies, when supported by robust learning and a genuine commitment to innovation, represents the most effective engine for sustainable, low-impact development capable of looking confidently toward the future.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE IS BUILT IN THE CLASSROOM

For Comau, communicating the story of its Academy ultimately means expressing and sharing the company's identity. It means enabling our partners and customers to understand that behind every robot installed lies a unique journey of knowledge and competencies that made it possible. It means showing students and young professionals that industrial automation is not only a fascinating field, but also a fundamental driver of the future evolution of work. It also means continuously investing in the development of our people's competencies in order to emphasise the necessity of keeping pace with the evolving demands of an industrial system that changes rapidly—and sometimes unpredictably.

The integration of cutting-edge technologies, and above all the understanding of how to use them effectively, of the opportunities they create and the challenges they may present, is essential for building both today's and tomorrow's workforce. There can be no effective technological solutions without human support and contribution—not only because people use technology, but because they are the ones who conceive it in the first place. Our Academy continually brings us back to this fundamental

principle: that genuine innovation is impossible without human knowledge and expertise, and that humanity's responsibility is to govern technological progress in a manner that is effective, responsible, and sustainable.

The communication of our Academy also seeks to strengthen a sense of trust in the industrial and educational ecosystem that Comau has built over time—an intangible yet essential asset for reinforcing the reputation and competitiveness of any organisation. Entering our company to participate in practical workshops, learning by working directly with our educational and industrial technologies, engaging personally with our managers and technical specialists through work-based learning programmes or postgraduate internships—these experiences represent extraordinary opportunities. They enable those approaching Comau and its operational environment to do so through direct, authentic interaction, learning through experience rather than observation alone. Technology, we firmly believe, cannot be learned exclusively from books. The educational model successfully developed by Comau Academy over many years is founded precisely upon this conviction: that the most effective way to understand the industrial system, its dynamics, and its culture is to experience it from within—applying knowledge, practising techniques, and working directly with technologies and industrial systems. Only through this experience can one truly understand how and why complex technologies are created, how working practices evolve, and how professional roles and responsibilities transform over time. As demonstrated by the more than 6,000 learners whom we educate every year, the future of work is not something that simply happens to us; it is a capability that we build together, day after day, classroom after classroom.

4. Dallara

4. a) The Academy as a Talent Ecosystem: Upskilling, Reskilling, and Innovation for Future Competitiveness

Marco Beltrami - Human Resources Director - Dallara

Dallara operates in an environment characterised by an exceptionally high level of technological intensity, where the capacity to innovate is directly linked to the continuous development of engineering know-how and to the speed with which that expertise is translated into practical applications. The growing integration of Artificial Intelligence, together with key drivers such as e-mobility, sustainability, and digital transformation, is fundamentally reshaping design, simulation, and manufacturing processes.

The transformation currently underway extends far beyond the introduction of new technologies. It reflects a much deeper shift in the way work is performed: the transition towards an increasingly data-driven organisation capable of simulating, anticipating, and optimising performance through advanced digital models.

Within this context, the key question becomes: how can the continuity and ongoing evolution of knowledge capital be ensured in an organisation whose competitive advantage is built precisely upon the depth of its technical expertise and its continuous development?

This transformation is rooted in a clear and distinctive system of values that serves as the foundation for every stage of organisational evolution. At Dallara, loyalty, humility, and curiosity are not merely stated principles; they are operational drivers that shape the way people learn and innovate.

Curiosity fuels the drive to explore new technological solutions and engineering approaches. Humility enables individuals to continuously challenge existing models and accumulated knowledge. Loyalty supports the development of relationships founded on trust, making it possible to openly share mistakes, learning experiences, and achievements.

From this perspective, competency development cannot be separated from corporate culture; rather, it represents its natural evolution.

The Corporate Academy therefore functions as a strategic centre for the development and transfer of the organisation's knowledge capital, playing

an active role in connecting technological innovation, competency development, and the long-term sustainability of the business.

At Dallara, this role is implemented through a clear distinction—while maintaining strong integration—between two complementary development pathways:

- **Upskilling**, focused on the vertical and specialist development of competencies, with the objective of generating direct value for the business;
- **Reskilling**, designed as a broad, cross-functional process intended to prepare the organisation for technological and cultural transformation, thereby creating value at a systemic level.

The Academy therefore extends well beyond the delivery of training programmes. It actively contributes to redesigning the way work is performed by supporting employees in integrating new technologies into their everyday activities and fostering a culture of continuous learning throughout the organisation.

A distinctive feature of this approach is the close integration between competency development and real operational contexts. Upskilling, in particular, is strongly linked to hands-on experience and experimentation. A genuine **culture of learning through error** becomes a powerful educational lever, supported by the use of simulators and controlled environments that enable new solutions to be tested at low cost before their implementation in real-world operations.

At the same time, the development of Artificial Intelligence represents one of the organisation's principal investment priorities. Collaboration with technology partners—including a strategic project developed with IBM—has enabled the exploration of physics-informed AI models, generating significant reductions in simulation times while substantially expanding engineering and design possibilities.

Alongside this specialist development of competencies, reskilling focuses on fostering a widespread organisational culture of Artificial Intelligence. This objective is pursued through governance initiatives, the definition of policies and operational guidelines, awareness-raising activities, and the introduction of digital assistants based on Large Language Models (LLMs), progressively enabling the entire workforce to adopt new technologies in an informed and responsible manner.

This development pathway follows a clearly defined evolutionary logic: from initial exploration to competency development, through to the implementation of concrete projects and the transformation of Artificial Intelligence into a pervasive organisational and cultural capability.

A central feature of Dallara's approach is the creation of a genuine **talent ecosystem**, conceived as an open, scalable model closely connected with the local territory and with the principal actors involved in education, training, and innovation.

The Academy does not operate as an isolated entity; rather, it functions as a central node within a network that includes schools, universities, business schools, Higher Technical Institutes (ITS), technology partners, and public institutions. This ecosystem enables intervention across the entire competency development lifecycle—from career orientation and initial education through to upskilling and reskilling pathways for individuals already employed within the company.

The ecosystem supports a dual perspective. On the one hand, it enables the identification and development of talent from the earliest stages of education, creating continuity between learning institutions and the workplace. On the other hand, it supports structured reskilling processes, making it possible to realign competencies with technological and organisational change.

This model represents a critical element in ensuring the long-term sustainability of human capital and in preserving the company's competitiveness within highly complex technological environments. The Academy's contribution to productivity is closely linked to its ability to integrate learning and work. Upskilling strengthens core competencies and accelerates business outcomes by enhancing the organisation's capacity to generate value through increasingly effective and innovative solutions. The introduction of Artificial Intelligence, for example, significantly reduces simulation times while enabling engineers to explore a much broader range of design alternatives during the earliest stages of development, thereby improving both the quality of decision-making and the speed of product development. Although inherently more complex and transformational in nature, reskilling creates the organisational conditions necessary for successful technology adoption. It fosters a data-driven culture, encourages continuous self-development, and strengthens the organisation's long-term capacity to adapt to change.

By maintaining this balance between specialist capability development and widespread competency diffusion, the Academy contributes directly to the company's competitiveness by ensuring alignment between technological evolution and the development of its people. Dallara's experience demonstrates that upskilling and reskilling are not alternative approaches, but rather complementary components of a single transformation strategy. The former drives innovation and delivers tangible results over the short to medium term, while the latter establishes the cultural and organisational foundations required to sustain change over the long term. Corporate Academies are therefore called upon to evolve from traditional training centres into comprehensive knowledge capital development systems capable of integrating technology, people, and organisational processes.

In a competitive environment increasingly defined by the capacity to learn and innovate, the true value of the Corporate Academy lies in its ability to make learning an integral part of everyday work and, in doing so, to contribute concretely to the creation of sustainable value for the enterprise.

4. b) People, Skills, and Territory: The Dallara Model

*Andrea Vecchi - Marketing and Communications Director -
Dallara*

At Dallara, skills development is not a separate function but a dimension that permeates the entire organization and helps define its identity. The combination of initiatives, projects, and relationships built over time outlines a model consistent with that of a Corporate Academy: not simply a structure, but a system that makes visible the way the company interprets its role.

From a communications perspective, this system becomes the language through which Dallara conveys its vision: its relationship with people, the value it places on knowledge, and its responsibility toward the context in which it operates. The objective is not to highlight individual initiatives, but rather to make recognizable an approach in which learning, innovation, and engagement with the community reinforce one another.

At the heart of this approach lies a clear principle: the growth of the company and the development of the local area are inseparable, because skills never evolve in isolation but always within a context that enables them to flourish. From this perspective, investing in people also takes on the meaning of social and industrial responsibility, embedded within a broader vision of sustainability. Sustainability is understood here as the balance between technological progress, community development, and attention to environmental impact—an approach capable of supporting innovation over the long term.

The **Dallara Academy**, open to younger generations and the wider community, together with the activities of the **Fondazione Caterina Dallara**, gives tangible expression to this commitment to giving back. The former, through educational pathways, immersive experiences, and opportunities for dialogue, helps promote engineering culture and brings students and visitors closer to STEM disciplines, stimulating curiosity and interest in scientific and technical careers. The Foundation complements this educational dimension with social and educational initiatives aimed at young people and more vulnerable groups, helping to create widespread opportunities for growth while strengthening ties with the local community. Within this framework, attention to inclusion becomes an

integral part of the company's understanding of its role—not merely as a guiding principle but as a concrete practice aimed at creating environments in which every individual feels welcomed, valued, and able to realize their full potential.

Alongside these initiatives, collaborations with schools, universities, and the broader education system create an increasingly strong connection between education and employment. Within this context, the **Polo di Fornovo**, developed in collaboration with schools, training providers, and local businesses, seeks to strengthen an educational ecosystem closely integrated with local industrial supply chains. Through its contribution to **Innovation Farm** and the **ITS** system, Dallara provides facilities, laboratories, and training pathways focused on Industry 4.0 competencies, particularly in the fields of composite materials and advanced technologies.

This context also includes **STEM Racing**, an educational initiative developed within Innovation Farm with Dallara's direct contribution. The project provides a practical opportunity to introduce young students to STEM disciplines, nurture their passion for science and engineering, and at the same time create networking and collaboration opportunities between the company and some of the leading organizations in motorsport and advanced technology.

This approach enables students to engage directly with real-world application environments, developing both technical and transversal competencies while gaining greater awareness of their future educational and professional choices. Experiences of this kind also strengthen autonomy, adaptability, and personal responsibility—qualities that are increasingly essential in highly complex working environments.

Complementing these initiatives, Dallara's contribution to **MUNER (Motor Valley University of Emilia-Romagna)** further strengthens its connection with higher education by integrating individuals into academic programs of excellence characterized by close interaction with industry. Continuous dialogue between the company and universities supports the development of highly specialized competencies and prepares professionals capable of interpreting the technological transformations shaping the sector, while also promoting greater inclusion within scientific and engineering education pathways.

This model also extends internationally, particularly through collaborations with academic institutions such as **Purdue University**. Within these

settings, the integration of education and industry develops across different innovation ecosystems, fostering the exchange of knowledge, methodologies, and approaches among students, universities, and industry, while contributing to the dissemination of engineering culture on a global scale.

Initiatives of this nature play a significant role in building trust. A company that consistently invests in people, collaborates with schools and universities, and makes its expertise accessible is perceived as a credible organization with a long-term vision. Reputation stems from the consistency between declared values and concrete actions, which become recognizable over time.

This also strengthens the company's capacity to engage with its stakeholders. For public institutions, Dallara represents a tangible contribution to skills development and national competitiveness; for academia, it serves as a stable and qualified partner; for local communities, it is an active presence that creates opportunities and strengthens connections with younger generations; and for industrial partners, it demonstrates openness and an enduring capacity for innovation.

A direct impact can also be observed in terms of attractiveness. Today, people choose an employer not only because of the position offered but also because of what the organization represents and the environment it provides. Joining a company that values continuous learning, actively engages with the education system, and offers meaningful opportunities for experimentation becomes a distinctive factor capable of attracting and retaining talented individuals.

Within the organization itself, knowledge sharing, continuous dialogue, and openness to external perspectives contribute to the creation of strong professional communities in which curiosity, humility, and loyalty become everyday practices. This approach is accompanied by growing attention to diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities—essential elements for creating open, equitable, and high-performing workplaces.

From this perspective, the centrality of people becomes a strategic asset. Without the skills, capabilities, and passion of its employees, it would not be possible to sustain the relentless pursuit of excellence that defines Dallara. The ability to attract, develop, and nurture talent therefore becomes a decisive factor in ensuring the company's long-term growth and business continuity.

Within this framework emerges the concept of the "**useful company**"—an enterprise capable of generating not only economic value but also social value. It is an organization that contributes to the development of people, the growth of local communities, and the creation of opportunities for future generations, becoming a driver of both innovation and responsibility.

From a positioning perspective, this clearly defines the profile of a company that goes beyond developing advanced technological solutions to invest decisively in people and the development of competencies. Its commitment to learning becomes a tangible expression of responsibility, strengthening the company's role within the ecosystem in which it operates and reinforcing its credibility.

What emerges is a genuine **intangible infrastructure of the brand**, built upon relationships, experiences, and opportunities that make the Dallara identity visible and tangible. Communicating this ecosystem means giving shape to a vision in which innovation, people, and local communities grow together, generating lasting value not only for the company itself but also for the broader system of which it is a part.

For this reason, communicating this model cannot be regarded as a secondary activity. It is an integral component of the company's competitive strategy. Through this narrative, Dallara makes its role clearly recognizable, strengthens stakeholder trust, and contributes in a concrete way to the future of work and to the long-term development of the national economic and industrial system.

5. Enel

5. a) From Artificial Intelligence to Productivity: The Role of the Academy in Enel's Model

Alda Paola Baldi – Head of Workforce Evolution – People and Organization - Enel

The transformation that companies are currently facing concerns the relationship between technology, organisation and work. In the energy sector, artificial intelligence, the digitalisation of operations, the advanced use of data, and the evolution of network systems are reshaping tasks, decision-making processes and the very nature of occupations. The challenge lies in integrating these innovations into business processes and translating them into higher quality, greater speed and enhanced operational adaptability. This is where a significant component of corporate productivity and the competitiveness of the broader economic system is determined. At Enel, the development of skills accompanies this transformation through a structured and measurable approach. The Academy oversees the development of the capabilities required to integrate AI into work processes, support the evolution of professional roles and strengthen organisational readiness. Investment in upskilling and reskilling serves a function that is directly linked to competitiveness: it enables the transformation of technological potential into widespread operational capability, reducing the risk that innovation remains confined to an experimental or specialist domain.

A first key enabler is the **Skill Evolution Lab**, which makes it possible to anticipate changes in the world of work and translate them into operational guidance. By generating insights into the impact of emerging technologies, workforce readiness and skills gaps, the Lab supports the identification of development priorities and the design of targeted upskilling and reskilling initiatives. This strengthens the organisation's ability to allocate skills where they are most needed, prevent mismatches and make evidence-based decisions. The Skill Evolution Lab therefore performs a critical governance function by transforming signals of change into structured decisions, with direct effects on operational continuity and execution capability.

A second key enabler is the **AI & Transformation Academy**, which develops capabilities throughout employees' professional lifecycle and promotes the widespread integration of artificial intelligence into day-to-day work. Its initiatives are structured across multiple levels, including broad-based awareness programmes, dedicated learning pathways for management, the sharing of use cases, and practical tools to support the integration of AI into everyday activities. The objective is to foster continuous learning while ensuring the practical application of AI within business processes. Lifelong learning thus becomes an operational prerequisite for managing a context in which the lifespan of skills is becoming progressively shorter and occupations are increasingly evolving at the level of individual tasks and activities.

The skills required reflect this ongoing transformation. Demand is growing for hard skills related to the energy transition and emerging technologies, including digital capabilities, data-driven competences, the ability to work with advanced systems, and the integration of AI into operational processes. At the same time, the importance of soft skills continues to increase, particularly critical thinking, human-AI collaboration, adaptability, creative thinking, complex problem-solving and customer orientation. The integration of these complementary dimensions enables technology to be embedded effectively into everyday processes while preserving the essential human contribution to decision-making and operational management. The effectiveness of technical competences increasingly depends on their integration with transversal capabilities that ensure human oversight and the informed interpretation of technological outputs. The structured planning of learning and development pathways, designed in accordance with strategic priorities and the evolving demand for professional capabilities, supports the development of emerging skills and the strengthening of existing ones. The scale and reach of these initiatives provide tangible evidence of the strategic importance of this effort. To date, development programmes have generated more than 270,000 training person-hours dedicated to AI, involving managers, professionals and technical personnel through differentiated learning pathways. These initiatives are complemented by structured programmes involving more than 5,000 employees, as well as awareness-raising activities that have reached over 50,000 colleagues, confirming the systemic nature of the organisation's approach. Together, these interventions reduce adoption times, accelerate workforce alignment and establish a common

foundation of language, awareness and practical capability. The development of AI-related capabilities has a direct impact on the quality of decision-making, the speed of technology integration, the ability to adapt in complex environments and execution times. Its effects are therefore both individual and organisational. At the individual level, it strengthens employability, promotes the informed and responsible use of AI-enabled tools, and enhances personal productivity. At the organisational level, it improves process effectiveness, accelerates the adoption of innovation, strengthens the availability of internal capabilities and supports operational continuity. From this perspective, productivity assumes a concrete and measurable meaning, reflected in higher-quality execution, greater timeliness, more efficient processes and an enhanced ability to translate innovation into tangible results. This transformation also requires a strong change management component. Technological innovation creates value only when accompanied by effective leadership, clear communication, strategic vision and active engagement. Leaders are called upon to give meaning to change, support the development of capabilities and facilitate new ways of working. Within this framework, both **AI Greenhouse**—a programme designed for managers to strengthen their ability to interpret a rapidly evolving environment and lead the integration of artificial intelligence into business processes—and the **Leadership School** play a central role. The latter contributes to developing leaders capable of shaping behaviours, supporting capability development and promoting the effective and responsible use of emerging technologies. The widespread adoption of AI requires trust in technology, responsibility in its use and the critical judgement needed to interpret its outputs. In this context, capabilities, organisational culture and leadership converge towards a common objective: strengthening the organisation's ability to embrace change in a sustainable and high-performing manner. This experience also offers valuable insights for other Corporate Academies. The integration of hard and soft skills, the centrality of continuous learning, and the ability to measure scale, target audiences and organisational impact all reinforce the credibility of Corporate Academies as contributors to productivity. Equally important is the close connection between learning and change management, which enables lasting results when content, processes, leadership and organisational culture evolve in a coherent and mutually reinforcing manner. Together, these factors strengthen companies' capacity to navigate technological transition and contribute to the competitiveness of the productive system as a whole.

5. b) The Academy as a Driver of Identity, Responsibility and Contribution to the National System

Alda Paola Baldi – Head of Workforce Evolution – People and Organization - Enel

The way in which a company invests in its people and supports technological transformation constitutes a fundamental component of its identity and of its role within the economic and social system. While, from an organisational perspective, the value of a Corporate Academy is measured by its ability to develop capabilities and support productivity, from an institutional perspective its significance has become considerably broader. Today, the Academy serves as a strategic instrument of responsibility towards the economic and social system, contributing to the development of human capital and to the long-term sustainability of skills. Investing in learning and development therefore means not only enhancing organisational performance, but also strengthening individuals' employability by supporting them in navigating an environment characterised by increasingly rapid change.

At Enel, the Academy reflects a deliberate cultural choice: transformation is a responsibility to be governed by placing people at its centre. This approach is grounded in an integrated vision that brings together capability development, organisational transformation and impact on the broader external ecosystem. Learning thus becomes a practical means of making change achievable through capabilities developed directly within work processes and on-the-job experience. Within this framework, leadership development initiatives, such as the Leadership School, also play an important role by strengthening management's ability to lead change and guide organisational transformation in alignment with the company's values and responsibilities. The value of the Academy is expressed within a broader ecosystem in which collaboration with universities, schools, Higher Technological Institutes (ITS) and industrial partners strengthens the connection between education and employment, aligning capability development with emerging labour market needs. In particular, collaboration with universities takes the form of jointly designed learning pathways, career guidance initiatives, activities carried out in partnership

with Career Services, and experiential programmes that help make professional roles more understandable while reducing the gap between education and employment. This commitment also extends throughout industrial value chains, which are called upon to sustain the quality of work over time and support the investments required by the ongoing transformation. In the energy sector, where the mismatch between the demand for and supply of specialised skills continues to widen, programmes are being developed across value chains and local communities to strengthen technical capabilities and facilitate entry into the labour market, thereby making a direct contribution to employability and the development of human capital.

The Academy also strengthens the company's reputation. A structured investment in capabilities and in the growth of people enhances the organisation's credibility among employees, prospective candidates, institutions and business partners alike. Learning therefore becomes a driver of trust, giving tangible expression to the alignment between what the company declares and what it actually delivers, while reinforcing its position as a responsible, innovative organisation with a long-term perspective.

In the face of a rapidly evolving world of work, the Academy represents one of the principal instruments through which the company assumes concrete responsibility for the future. It contributes to creating the conditions for sustainable and inclusive growth, in which technological innovation and human development progress in an integrated manner. The quality of transformation depends on the ability to accompany technological and organisational change with accessible learning pathways that equip people with the capabilities needed to navigate change, adapt successfully and participate actively in professional life. From this perspective, the Corporate Academy represents one of the key instruments through which the company fulfils its role within the economic and social system, contributing to the development of capabilities, trust and social cohesion. Its value lies in its ability to connect individual development, the quality of work and the sustainability of change, making innovation more accessible, inclusive and responsible. It is through this balance that the company's contribution to the future of work and to the resilience and competitiveness of the national economic system is ultimately defined.

6. Engineering

6. a) Engineering Academy – The Evolution of the Learning Model through Upskilling, Reskilling, and Personalized Learning Experiences

Ferninando Lo Re – Group Learning Director – Engineering

Companies today are immersed in a profound, systemic and irreversible transformation driven by the convergence of digitalisation, artificial intelligence and the redefinition of business models. In a context where technologies evolve rapidly and customer expectations continue to rise, competitiveness no longer depends solely on the quality of projects, but increasingly on the ability to continuously develop new capabilities and translate them into tangible results. This transformation entails a shift from an organisation based on stable roles and established knowledge towards a dynamic ecosystem founded on continuous learning, adaptability, and the integration of people and technology. Within this context, a key principle emerges: investments in learning and development to support the digital transition, upskilling and reskilling initiatives, and the development of new managerial capabilities—such as change leadership and an innovation-oriented culture—generate real productivity only when they are translated into behaviours, organisational models, processes, tools and business practices. Without this operational transformation, even the most significant initiatives risk failing to achieve their intended impact, particularly at a time when artificial intelligence is compelling organisations to embrace genuine innovation. The central challenge, therefore, is not simply to develop capabilities, but to ensure their widespread and effective application in everyday work. It is precisely in this space that the Engineering Academy operates as a strategic steward of capabilities and as an enabling force for organisational transformation. The Academy is committed to supporting every individual throughout their professional journey by integrating capability development with business needs across the organisation, encompassing every professional role. In this sense, it serves as a direct link between corporate strategy, market evolution and organisational behaviours, translating capability requirements into practical development pathways.

To fulfil this role, the Academy has evolved its learning model, moving from a standardised approach to a flexible and integrated learning ecosystem. The model is based on the principles of the Adaptive Learning Approach, which definitively moves beyond the traditional “one-size-fits-all” paradigm in favour of a flexible and integrated system in which every individual can build a personalised learning journey. Within this framework, learning develops along three main dimensions: an **open learning direction**, which enables each individual either to freely choose a learning pathway based on their professional role and expected capabilities or to independently explore learning content; a **tailored learning rhythm**, which allows participants to adjust the pace and intensity of learning according to operational priorities and professional needs; and a **scalable learning depth**, which provides different levels of learning depth through a variety of formats that can be adapted to individual habits and learning styles. This architecture facilitates the integration of learning into everyday work, making it easier to translate newly acquired capabilities into operational behaviours.

Supporting this model is a learning ecosystem organised around a **Format Mix** that combines synchronous and asynchronous learning, guided learning experiences and self-directed study, with a strong emphasis on hyper-personalisation. Learning Paths delivered through the corporate Learning Management System (LMS), for example, combine short live sessions, videos, podcasts, in-depth learning materials and practical exercises, promoting autonomous and continuous learning that frequently accompanies participants through to professional certification. Open Classrooms, in contrast, consist of a schedule of free live sessions focused on technical and methodological capabilities as well as the most relevant certification pathways. Microlearning takes the form of a structured programme of webinars available both live and asynchronously, ensuring continuous updates on the most current topics. Communities, meanwhile, provide highly interactive virtual spaces where participants can share experiences, engage in discussions with subject-matter experts and foster collaborative peer-to-peer learning. Among the Academy's most significant initiatives are its programmes dedicated to artificial intelligence, which represent a strategic priority for organisational transformation. The **GenAI Empowerment Program** and AI literacy pathways establish a shared foundation of knowledge by developing progressively advanced capabilities, ranging from an understanding of AI principles to their

advanced application across different professional roles. In particular, the adoption of tools such as Microsoft Copilot and GitHub Copilot is supported by dedicated learning pathways that transform AI into a genuine “work partner”, integrating it into day-to-day processes and fostering new forms of human-machine collaboration. The impact of these initiatives on productivity and competitiveness is both direct and tangible. The widespread development of AI-related capabilities, for example, reduces the time devoted to repetitive tasks and improves operational efficiency, thereby releasing resources for higher value-added activities. At the same time, continuous learning strengthens the organisation's ability to adapt rapidly to change, adopt new technologies, and innovate both processes and services. Another distinctive feature is represented by peer-to-peer learning initiatives such as **Share Your Knowledge**, which actively involve employees in the creation and dissemination of learning content. This model not only broadens the learning offer but also fundamentally reshapes organisational behaviours by fostering a culture of knowledge sharing, responsibility and continuous learning. Similarly, the use of internal instructors enables the organisation to leverage its distinctive internal expertise and transfer highly contextualised knowledge.

The Academy also operates through structured reskilling and upskilling programmes, which begin with a detailed analysis of capability needs conducted in collaboration with business units and support employees through to the acquisition of the capabilities required for new professional roles. Closely integrated with business priorities, these pathways provide a practical instrument for supporting organisational evolution and responding effectively to changing market demands. More broadly, capability development through the Engineering Academy contributes to improving process quality, increasing responsiveness to market demands and supporting organisational growth. The availability of up-to-date and certified capabilities enables the company to undertake increasingly complex projects, develop more innovative solutions for customers and strengthen its competitive positioning. Furthermore, the evolution of the company's learning model is designed to facilitate the dissemination of a culture centred on continuous learning and innovation, thereby contributing to the creation of lasting value, strengthening employee engagement and enhancing people's ability to evolve alongside the organisation. In summary, the Engineering Academy represents a genuine engine of transformation: a strategic capability hub that enables the

organisation to translate knowledge into action, innovation into practice, and strategy into tangible results, thereby making a decisive contribution to the company's productivity, innovation and competitiveness.

6. b) Engineering Academy: Corporate Culture and Reputation

Michelangelo Suigo – Group Chief Public Affairs, Corporate Communication & Sustainability Officer – Engineering

In a context in which digitalisation, artificial intelligence and new business models are reshaping organisational and work processes, the Engineering Academy is far more than a learning infrastructure: it is a vehicle for communicating the company's identity and a tangible expression of its role as a business serving multiple stakeholders—employees, customers and institutions. Through its learning offering, formats, and its ability to connect capabilities, professional communities and future career opportunities, the Academy gives visible expression to a vision of the company that invests in knowledge as a driver of competitiveness, regards continuous learning as an everyday practice, and considers the growth of its people a prerequisite for generating sustainable value.

THE ACADEMY AS AN EXPRESSION OF CORPORATE CULTURE

For everyone across the organisation, our Academy represents one of the places where corporate strategy and values are translated into concrete experiences. At a time when technological evolution is advancing rapidly, Engineering is called upon to lead transformation by investing in the capabilities of its people, who must remain at the centre of digital change. This commitment cannot exist solely within institutional messaging; it must be supported by the organisation's internal ability to evolve capabilities, languages and behaviours. The Academy gives substance to this coherence by transforming learning into a permanent, accessible and future-oriented ecosystem.

The evolution of the Engineering Academy's learning model reflects a clear cultural vision: professional growth emerges through connections between people, is consolidated through learning, and ultimately creates value for the organisation. It is a model that places individuals at the centre of their own development, making continuous learning an integral part of everyday work rather than an occasional event. In doing so, the Academy makes visible the way in which the company views its people—not as passive recipients of content, but as active protagonists of their own development and as contributors of capabilities, experience and knowledge to be shared across the organisation.

The Engineering Academy's learning offering reinforces this objective through an integrated and modular approach that combines certification programmes, microlearning, professional communities, reskilling initiatives and peer-to-peer learning. This **Adaptive Learning Approach** enables every individual to design a personalised learning journey based on their role, expected capabilities, professional aspirations and work commitments. Learning thus becomes an open, flexible and personalised experience, accompanying employees from onboarding through to advanced certifications and the professional roles of the future.

Initiatives such as **Share Your Knowledge** also give every employee the opportunity to become a "trainer for a day", sharing their expertise and contributing to the professional growth of colleagues. This practice reflects the conviction that knowledge resides not only within systems or formal organisational structures, but also in the people who create value for the company every day. The Academy therefore becomes a cultural enabler that brings Engineering's professional expertise to the surface and transforms it into a shared organisational asset.

CORPORATE ACADEMY, REPUTATION AND TRUST

In a market where customers, prospective employees, institutions and business partners increasingly evaluate companies according to their ability to generate capabilities, foster innovation and create social impact, the Engineering Academy provides tangible evidence of how a complex organisation operating in the country's strategic sectors regards knowledge

as an asset to be continuously updated, certified and made available to both the business and its professional communities.

The Academy's credibility is also built upon the quality and recognisability of its learning pathways. More than 150 learning paths, free Open Classrooms, certification programmes covering leading technology vendors and internationally recognised project and service management standards, together with accredited learning initiatives and partnerships with best-in-class organisations such as Politecnico di Milano, Bocconi University, Codemotion and Talent Garden, reinforce the company's authority in this field. Certifications transform capabilities into qualifications recognised by the market, increasing clients' confidence in the company's ability to deliver complex projects and support digital transformation with highly qualified and up-to-date professionals.

Engineering is now an **AI-first** company, enabling public and private organisations to adopt artificial intelligence that is governable, secure, transparent and proportionate through the modular **IS-IA** architecture, built upon the **LLM EngGPT 2** platform. Within this context, the Academy's AI learning programmes represent far more than technical training; they serve as a catalyst for rethinking processes, productivity, collaboration and the relationship between people and intelligent technologies. The objective is clear: to equip employees with the capabilities required to help stakeholders achieve not only technological competitive advantage, but also cultural and organisational transformation.

CORPORATE ACADEMY AND BRAND POSITIONING

The Academy contributes directly to Engineering's positioning as an innovative, responsible company capable of interpreting and responding to market transformation. In a sector characterised by rapid and continuous technological innovation, a company's brand is shaped not only by the solutions it offers its customers, but also by the way it prepares its people for change. The Academy therefore becomes a strategic component of brand positioning because it demonstrates that Engineering does not simply adopt new technologies; it invests in the capability to understand them, govern them and translate them into tangible value.

The Academy also builds trust externally. For prospective candidates, it demonstrates the existence of an environment in which they can grow and develop valuable, market-relevant capabilities. For institutions and local communities, it provides visible evidence of sustained investment in learning, employability and digital culture. For partners and stakeholders, it confirms the company's ability to develop and maintain critical capabilities while contributing to the growth of stronger professional ecosystems. In this sense, the Academy forms an integral part of the company's corporate reputation: it is not an ancillary initiative, but a platform for building trust.

The Academy is also a fundamental driver of employer branding because it gives visibility and credibility to the company's Employee Value Proposition. For those considering Engineering as a prospective employer, a well-established Corporate Academy communicates a clear message: joining the company means gaining access to an ecosystem of opportunities in which professional growth is supported by learning tools, structured development pathways, professional communities and recognised capabilities. For those already within the organisation, it strengthens the sense of belonging by giving tangible expression to the company's investment in its people and by providing spaces in which employees can learn, contribute and feel part of a professional community.

The Academy therefore becomes an integral part of the narrative that presents Engineering as a company with a long-term vision—one capable of combining innovation with stability, technical excellence with individual growth, and business performance with social responsibility. Its initiatives with universities, education providers, customers and local communities further strengthen this positioning by demonstrating that the company does not confine knowledge within its own boundaries but actively shares it as a contribution to the development of the wider economic and social system.

7. Epicode

7. a) Training for Transformation: The Role of the Corporate Academy in the Adoption of Artificial Intelligence

Giulio Spinozzi - Head of Academy - Epicode

CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE: WHEN PROMISE DOES NOT BECOME PRACTICE

We are living through a paradoxical moment. Artificial intelligence has become one of the most prominent topics in corporate discourse: investments are increasing, licences are being purchased, and Boards are dedicating strategic sessions to AI. Yet, when one enters organisations and speaks with those who carry out the work on a daily basis—line managers, operational teams, and the people responsible for customers, processes and day-to-day decision-making—it becomes clear that, in most cases, AI remains an unfulfilled promise. Organisations showcase compelling demonstrations, pilot projects that never progress beyond the experimental stage, and tools adopted by a few but ignored by the many.

This disconnect is not a technological problem. The tools exist, they are accessible, and, in many cases, they have already been purchased. Rather, it is a matter of capabilities, culture and learning. Organisations have invested in technology but not, with the same level of commitment, in the people expected to use it. Moreover, when AI training is discussed, it is still too often understood as a course to be completed, a certificate to be obtained, or an hour blocked out in the calendar, rather than as a genuine transformation in the way people work.

The challenge facing Corporate Academies today is therefore twofold. On the one hand, they must build artificial intelligence capabilities rapidly, across functions and at scale, extending them beyond technical teams to every area of the organisation. On the other hand, they must do so through methodologies and learning formats capable of producing lasting learning outcomes that translate into new behaviours and tangible operational capabilities.

A third, equally pressing challenge has now emerged from the regulatory environment. The European AI Act has transformed AI education from a strategic choice into a regulatory obligation. Organisations must be able to

demonstrate that their employees possess a minimum level of AI literacy, that clear internal governance mechanisms are in place, and that there is traceability regarding who possesses which capabilities. It is no longer merely a matter of strategic vision; it is now a matter of regulatory compliance.

THE ROLE OF THE CORPORATE ACADEMY: BEYOND TRAINING TO STRATEGIC STEWARDSHIP

Within this context, Corporate Academies can no longer limit themselves to delivering training courses. They must become the strategic mechanism through which organisations develop the capability to adopt emerging technologies in a conscious, sustainable and measurable manner.

Years of practical experience at the intersection of technology education and organisational transformation have demonstrated this clearly. Extensive work with companies across different industries, organisational sizes and levels of digital maturity has revealed one fundamental lesson: AI adoption is not a project—it is a journey. Like any journey, it requires a clear starting point, well-defined milestones, appropriate tools and the ability to adapt to the specific context of each organisation.

The starting point is not the technology itself, but the people: their level of awareness, their resistance, their concerns and their expectations. Conducting an assessment of mindset and organisational readiness before any learning intervention makes it possible to design learning pathways that begin where people actually are, rather than where we would like them to be. This fundamentally changes the language adopted, the sequencing of learning content, the selection of use cases and the pace of progression.

The second essential element is cross-functionality. Artificial intelligence is not relevant only to those who develop models or manage technological infrastructures. It is equally relevant to those who manage customer relationships, prepare reports, write emails or make operational decisions. Marketing, Sales, Finance, Human Resources, Operations and Customer Care all engage daily with processes that AI has the potential to simplify or fundamentally transform. Unless a common language is established, and unless capabilities are distributed throughout the organisation rather than concentrated in the hands of a limited number of technical specialists, AI risks becoming another source of internal fragmentation instead of a shared driver of acceleration.

From a methodological perspective, practical experience consistently demonstrates that AI adoption programmes capable of delivering meaningful results share several common characteristics.

The first is the use of sequential development phases. Every structured programme begins with an assessment of mindset and organisational readiness, followed by a build-and-activation phase during which a common language is established and role-specific capabilities are developed. This is followed by the actual adoption phase, monitored through follow-up activities measuring real-world use, and concludes with an internal cascading mechanism. This final phase is often the most neglected, yet it ultimately determines whether capabilities become embedded or gradually disappear. Internal ambassadors are needed—individuals who, having acquired the necessary understanding themselves, are able to guide and support their colleagues. A relatively small group can activate a much broader organisational learning system, progressively reducing dependence on external consultants while building capabilities that remain within the organisation.

The second characteristic is the alignment between learning format and learning objective. Traditional corporate learning is often designed as an event detached from everyday work: a course, a classroom, an hour reserved in the calendar. However, people now work in environments characterised by short interruptions, small screens and fragmented attention. When learning formats fail to reflect the actual rhythm of work, learning does not truly take place. It may be certified, but it does not become embedded. Data collected through AI adoption programmes involving a sample of more than 1,200 non-technical corporate professionals demonstrate the effectiveness of a different approach. The introduction of mobile-accessible, on-demand microlearning modules with an average duration of five to seven minutes, integrated directly into corporate communication platforms, produced a completion rate of 84%, compared with an average completion rate below 22% for traditional one-hour linear e-learning courses. Furthermore, the average time required for participants to apply the tool in practice after completing the microlearning content decreased from twelve days to fewer than four hours. Designing learning for the way people actually think and work, rather than for an idealised learner, means providing short learning modules that can be applied immediately, mobile-native formats, and use cases that reflect the specific

language and operational reality of each team. It means designing learning that fits naturally into the flow of work rather than competing with it.

The third characteristic is the integration of cognitive, inductive and experiential learning approaches. A theoretical foundation is indispensable, but theory alone does not generate competence. Principles are assimilated more effectively when learners begin with real cases, observe practical examples and derive general rules from direct experience. Operational capability, however, develops only through tackling real-world challenges. Knowing is not enough; people must be able to apply what they know. Successful programmes ensure that every team completes the learning journey with a tangible quick win, whether this takes the form of a newly developed AI agent, an automated workflow or a generative AI summary integrated into an existing business process. These concrete outcomes provide visible evidence within the organisation that AI is more than simply a promise.

IMPACT ON PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

The relationship between the Corporate Academy and productivity is not an abstract concept. It is the visible and measurable outcome of changes in individual behaviour and improvements in process effectiveness.

Measurement of process-level Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) demonstrates that targeted upskilling in generative AI technologies delivers immediate and quantifiable productivity gains. Within the Customer Care and Operations functions monitored after training, the informed integration of automated workflows reduced processing times for standard cases by 35%, releasing approximately six hours per week for each employee. These hours were entirely reallocated to higher-value activities involving customer relationships and human interaction. From the perspective of compliance with the AI Act, the competency traceability model implemented enabled the organisation to map and certify the AI literacy level of 95% of the target employee population in fewer than six weeks, eliminating the time previously required for internal compliance audits.

AI tools cease to be technologies that are purchased and subsequently forgotten, becoming instead stable components of everyday operational workflows. Adoption becomes sustainable over time: rather than an initial surge of enthusiasm followed by gradual abandonment, it results in lasting

changes to work practices. Greater awareness of both the capabilities and the limitations of AI also reduces organisational risk by limiting compliance errors, cybersecurity vulnerabilities arising from the inappropriate use of AI tools, and unsupervised automated decision-making.

More broadly, an organisation that has successfully developed widespread AI capabilities is a more agile organisation, better equipped to respond to market change and more effective in leveraging the cognitive resources of its people. Productivity does not increase simply because another technological tool has been purchased. It increases because people know how to use that tool effectively, every day, in the situations that matter most.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS: THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO BUILD CAPABILITIES FIRST

Today, Corporate Academies occupy an unprecedented position. They are no longer merely providers of training; they constitute the strategic infrastructure through which organisations determine whether—and how—they will translate major technological transformations into genuine operational capability.

Artificial intelligence represents the most significant of these transformations. Yet the decisive factor is not possessing the most advanced tools. In the years ahead, competitive advantage will belong to organisations that first develop the capabilities, behaviours and governance required to use those tools effectively every day, rather than to those that simply acquire the largest number of licences.

Corporate Academies that recognise and embrace this role—not as providers of training courses, but as architects of cultural and organisational transformation—will become one of the most important strategic assets underpinning the competitiveness of Italian enterprises over the coming years. Their contribution to the productivity of the country will not be secondary; it will be decisive.

7. b) Corporate Academies as Enablers of Social Cohesion and Human Capital Sustainability in the Context of the Digital Transition

Marco Rosci - Chief Business Officer - Epicode

THE ACADEMY AS AN EXPRESSION OF CORPORATE CULTURE

Every organisation has an implicit theory about people. It is a vision—often unspoken—of the extent to which people are capable of growth, whether they are worth investing in, and how relevant their development is to the organisation's performance. Corporate Academies make that theory explicit and visible. They transform a belief into a programme, a priority into an organisational structure, and a promise into a tangible experience that people encounter every day.

Our practical experience demonstrates that the divide between those who possess advanced technological capabilities and those who are excluded from them has become one of the principal drivers of social and economic inequality. From this perspective, Corporate Academies fulfil not only a function of internal organisational efficiency, but also serve as genuine instruments of social inclusion and vehicles for implementing the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), shaping development pathways in accordance with the needs of the broader economic system in which organisations operate.

When a company establishes a Corporate Academy—or engages a specialised partner to develop one in a structured manner—it communicates a clear message to all its stakeholders: employees, prospective candidates, customers, institutional partners, the professional community and the market as a whole. It signals that capabilities cannot be taken for granted, that the future must be actively prepared, and that people are not resources to be consumed but capabilities to be developed. This message carries increasing significance in a context where the pace of technological change places unprecedented pressure on every organisation's capacity to adapt.

CORPORATE ACADEMIES, REPUTATION AND TRUST

A company's reputation is built upon the consistency between what it declares and what it actually does. Many organisations claim to place

people at the centre of their strategy, yet relatively few demonstrate this commitment through structural, continuous and measurable investment in capability development. When Corporate Academies are conceived as strategic infrastructures rather than simple catalogues of training courses, they constitute one of the most credible demonstrations of this alignment.

For employees, the existence of a well-established Corporate Academy conveys a message of investment and commitment: the organisation does not merely expect performance, but assumes responsibility for creating the conditions that make such performance possible. This strengthens trust, reduces disengagement and improves retention, particularly among highly qualified and dynamic professional populations who increasingly regard opportunities for development as a decisive factor in their career choices.

For prospective candidates, the presence of a recognisable, high-quality Corporate Academy serves as a powerful positioning signal. It indicates that the organisation is serious, invests in its people and possesses a clear vision for the future of capabilities. In a labour market where technology professionals are increasingly sought after by competing organisations, a strong reputation for learning and development has become a concrete driver of talent attraction rather than a secondary consideration. For institutional partners—including universities, research organisations and public institutions—a structured Corporate Academy positions the organisation as a credible interlocutor in discussions concerning capabilities, employability and technological transition. Rather than acting as a passive recipient of education and training policies, the company assumes the role of an active contributor capable of shaping their development.

CORPORATE ACADEMIES AND BRAND POSITIONING IN THE AGE OF AI

Artificial intelligence has added a new dimension to the reputational role of Corporate Academies. Organisations that communicate credibly how they are supporting their people in the adoption of AI position themselves as responsible, forward-looking and fully aware of the implications of technological transformation. Conversely, those that fail to do so—or address the issue only superficially—risk being perceived as out of step with ongoing developments or, worse still, as organisations that employ AI to replace people rather than enhance their capabilities. This distinction is becoming increasingly significant in external perceptions of organisations.

The media, public institutions, professional communities and public opinion are paying growing attention to the ways in which organisations manage the transition to AI. Those that communicate clearly their upskilling policies, investments in learning and development, and approaches to AI governance gain a significant reputational advantage. Those that remain silent or rely solely on generic statements gradually lose ground. A learning governance model centred on AI adoption must place people at its core. The fundamental objective of Corporate Social Responsibility as applied to technology is to demonstrate that artificial intelligence is not intended to replace human resources, but rather to enhance and extend their capabilities. Artificial intelligence does not replace human capabilities; it amplifies them, directs them and makes them more effective. Communicating this transition is not simply an exercise in market positioning; it is a public declaration of social responsibility towards the national economic and social system and a programmatic commitment to the organisation's stakeholders.

CORPORATE ACADEMIES AND ATTRACTIVENESS: HUMAN CAPITAL AS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Employer branding has undergone profound transformation in recent years. Whereas attractiveness was once determined primarily by economic factors such as salary, benefits and job security, highly qualified professionals now also evaluate the quality of the learning environment, the speed at which they can develop professionally, and the presence of a culture that genuinely values continuous capability development. Corporate Academies have become one of the most effective instruments for communicating this organisational quality. The issue is not simply the existence of a catalogue of courses; it is the creation of a distinctive learning identity that communicates something meaningful about the organisation both to those who already belong to it and to those considering joining it. A Corporate Academy that develops AI capabilities, offers practical and context-specific learning pathways, and measures success in terms of behavioural change rather than merely hours of training completed conveys a level of seriousness and pragmatism that makes a tangible difference in the market for highly qualified talent.

This is particularly true for younger generations entering the labour market, who possess an innate familiarity with digital technologies and hold high expectations regarding opportunities for professional development. For

these individuals, the presence of a structured Corporate Academy is no longer an added benefit but a clear indication of value alignment, while its absence is increasingly perceived as a reason to look elsewhere. For more senior professionals—including managers, directors and functional leaders—the value proposition is complementary. Access to high-quality AI learning pathways is not perceived as an obligation but as an opportunity for professional renewal and repositioning within a rapidly evolving environment. Corporate Academies that successfully address this need by offering programmes tailored to experienced professionals—individuals who require new capabilities without having to begin again from the outset—build exceptionally strong relationships founded on trust and long-term commitment.

COMMUNICATING THE CORPORATE ACADEMY AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF COMPETITIVE STRATEGY

Companies frequently fall into the temptation of treating communication about their Corporate Academy as a secondary issue, confined to sections dedicated to corporate social responsibility or to career pages on the corporate website. This is a strategic mistake. Communication about the Corporate Academy is not ancillary communication; it is an integral component of the organisation's competitive positioning. At a time when capabilities have become the principal differentiating factor between organisations that thrive and those that struggle, communicating clearly how those capabilities are developed—through which vision, which methodologies and with what outcomes—constitutes an act of strategic positioning. It tells the market who the organisation is, what it values and how it is preparing for the future. This is true for customers, who increasingly select their business partners on the basis of the quality of the human capital underpinning the services provided. It is equally true for investors, who interpret investment in learning and development as an indicator of sustainability and organisational adaptability. It is true for public institutions, which increasingly assess companies as active contributors to the national capability development ecosystem. And perhaps most immediately, it is true for the people who already work within the organisation, who want to know whether the company they have chosen is a place where they can continue to grow, or merely a place where they work. The challenge for Corporate Academies—and for those responsible for communicating their value—is therefore to build a narrative

that is at once authentic, tangible and strategically coherent, avoiding a fragmented collection of disconnected initiatives in favour of a unified vision of the relationship between business and capability development. It is a vision that communicates something genuine about who the organisation is and something credible about where it intends to go.

In this sense, Corporate Academies are far more than learning structures: they represent the clearest evidence that an organisation is capable of thinking about the future—and of making a genuine investment in it.

8. Hera Group

8. a) HerAcademy as a Learning Ecosystem

Ugo Canonico - Head of Corporate Organisation, Learning and Recruitment – Hera Group

For the Hera Group, learning represents a strategic investment aimed at enhancing the value of its people, fostering innovation and disseminating corporate values, thereby contributing both to employees' professional development and to the overall growth of the company. Each year, more than 97% of the workforce participates in at least one learning initiative, averaging over 30 hours of training per employee, supported by an annual investment of approximately €15 million, including both internal and external costs associated with the design and delivery of learning activities.

The principal initiatives delivered through **HerAcademy** include:

- **Workshops and scientific output:**
 - Presentation and discussion of strategic issues relevant to the Group's ecosystem.
 - Publication of background papers by members of the scientific community.
 - Scientific publications (e.g. *Economia dei Servizi*, *Il Mulino*).
- **Initiatives with institutions and innovation centres:**
 - Participation in technical working groups and Scientific Committees; access to distinctive learning pathways.
 - Partnerships and joint projects with learning institutions and other Corporate Universities.
- **Initiatives with Business Schools and Universities:**
 - Participation in technical working groups and Scientific Committees; access to distinctive learning pathways.
 - Guest lectures and external teaching activities delivered through the Group's Professional Academies.

- Memoranda of Understanding and collaborative projects involving research, consultancy and doctoral programmes with universities.
- **Initiatives with Upper Secondary Schools and ITS Academies (Higher Technological Institutes):**
 - Dissemination of the company's knowledge base within upper secondary schools and ITS Academies, including the co-design of tailored learning pathways.
 - University orientation and career guidance events.

The increasing complexity of organisational contexts has made it progressively more important to develop structured processes for knowledge management and knowledge transfer across the workforce. Within the Hera Group, the Knowledge Management system is also developed and managed through an articulated network of **Professional Academies**, conceived as permanent structures dedicated to organising and managing learning activities aimed at transferring and innovating professional knowledge. These Academies are organised according to homogeneous knowledge domains, reflecting the characteristics of specific professional families and the related business processes. Established by the managers responsible for the relevant business processes, the Professional Academies bring together the organisation's leading **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)**, who are entrusted with active and shared responsibilities relating to observation, needs identification, proposal development and innovation within their respective areas of expertise. Membership of the Academies is voluntary and based on a process of co-option founded upon recognised professional expertise and the sharing of the organisation's core values.

The Professional Academies pursue three principal objectives:

1. **Efficiency and effectiveness:** improving the transfer and application of knowledge within day-to-day business operations by enhancing both learning methodologies and the resources devoted to teaching and learning.
2. **Stable interaction with external stakeholders:** developing structured relationships and continuous dialogue with the wider professional community, the education system and other leading organisations.

3. **Continuous innovation:** contributing to value creation by fostering innovation and the sustainability of business processes through the continuous updating and development of critical organisational knowledge.

To date, the Hera Group's Professional Academy system comprises:

- **10 Professional Academies**, covering the areas of Engineering; Procurement and Contracts; Water; Energy; Administration, Finance and Control; Compliance & Auditing; Environment; Information and Communication Technologies; Marketing, Sales and Customer Management; and Human Resources and Organisation.
- Approximately **200 participants**, including founders and active members.

Recognising the need to seize the opportunities and address the challenges arising from the digital, energy and environmental transitions, the Group has designed two major programmes.

- The first is **ecoHERA**, whose objective is to disseminate knowledge and capabilities related to the Group's business value chains across the entire workforce in the areas of water, energy, environment and district heating. These subjects are considered fundamental for the company, irrespective of employees' specific professional roles, in order to keep pace with the continuous changes affecting the context in which the Group operates. The programme was launched in 2022 with the first **ecoHERA survey**, which provided an initial Group-wide assessment of knowledge and capabilities relating to these strategic themes. Beginning in 2023, tailored learning content was developed on topics connected with the energy and environmental transitions. In 2026, the second edition of the ecoHERA survey will be administered, followed by a customised change plan based on the results obtained and on the professional family of each participating employee.
- The second initiative is **HER@futura**, a programme designed to support the transformation and evolution of organisational culture, professional roles and capabilities through continuous learning, reskilling and upskilling. Launched in 2017, HER@futura focuses on the development of organisational culture, business processes, capabilities and tools through the identification, analysis and enhancement of the specific needs and characteristics of the Group's

different employee populations, while taking into account the complexity of the current operating environment. From 2018 to the present, more than **9,500 employees** have participated in at least one learning initiative within the programme, including learning nuggets, webinars, participation in projects featuring workshops and applied learning sessions, Action Learning initiatives, enrolment in master's programmes and external learning interventions—including Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)—as well as envisioning events and celebrations of project achievements. HER@futura also encompasses initiatives relating to cybersecurity awareness and training, together with activities dedicated to generative artificial intelligence, particularly the **Copilot adoption programme** supporting the implementation of Microsoft's Microsoft 365 Copilot generative AI solution. In 2026, the third edition of the HER@futura survey will be administered, followed by a customised change plan based on the survey findings and on the professional family of the employees involved.

For several years, the Hera Group has been working continuously to enhance and improve the employee learning experience by strengthening the integration between the human and technological dimensions through a **human-leading approach**, developing new learning formats and promoting the integration of physical and virtual learning environments.

Among the principal initiatives already implemented or currently underway are:

- The inauguration in 2022 of the **Ferrara Training Center**, a refurbished facility designed to support new approaches to knowledge transfer through the reuse of existing internal and external corporate spaces and the adoption of innovative virtual training methodologies aimed at developing technical and operational capabilities.
- The inauguration in 2024 of the new **HerAcademy Learning Center** in Bologna, designed according to principles of flexibility in both space planning and furnishings to accommodate the diverse requirements of different learning experiences, including Exhibition Spaces, Flexible Classrooms, Coaching Areas, Virtual Training Facilities, Social Spaces and Custom Open Spaces.

- The experimental use of **Virtual Reality (VR)** for learning purposes, providing immersive learning experiences through which participants can explore three-dimensional models of various corporate assets, including REMI stations, industrial plants and other operational facilities.

The Group is also designing **change management plans** linked to the development of corporate venture-building initiatives, drawing inspiration from other innovative formats developed over recent years—such as the **Digital Lab** and the **Virtual Factory**—as well as Action Learning initiatives aimed at fostering a shared approach to innovation in support of the development of concrete projects that are strategically important for the company.

8. b) HerAcademy: A Strategic Driver of Competitiveness and Attractiveness

Alessandro Camilleri - Chief Human Resources and Organisation Officer – Hera Group

In a context characterised by profound transformations—including digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and the energy and environmental transitions—the role of companies extends beyond the production of goods and services to encompass the ability to develop capabilities and generate value through human capital.

Within this context, **HerAcademy**, the Group's Stakeholder University, makes visible the way in which the organisation interprets the future of work and its role in the development of people.

THE ACADEMY AS AN EXPRESSION OF CORPORATE CULTURE

HerAcademy embodies a corporate culture that recognises human capital as a decisive factor of competitiveness and knowledge as a strategic asset. The widespread participation in learning initiatives reflects a structural commitment to continuous learning as an integral and routine dimension of working life.

The **Professional Academies** represent a distinctive model through which the Group organises, enhances and continuously renews its critical knowledge base. The involvement of internal experts, combined with strong connections to the external ecosystem, makes the Academy a space in which the company's technical, organisational and managerial culture is both created and transmitted.

CORPORATE ACADEMIES, REPUTATION AND TRUST

Investing in a Corporate Academy also strengthens the organisation's reputation. Companies that systematically develop capabilities enhance their credibility among employees, stakeholders and institutions alike.

Corporate Academies foster environments of continuous learning, improving engagement, retention and organisational adaptability. In this sense, the Academy contributes to building trust: employees perceive the

organisation as an employer that invests in their professional development and their long-term employability.

For the Hera Group, this translates into the ability to position itself as a responsible organisation, capable of supporting technological and cultural transformation.

CORPORATE ACADEMIES AND COMPETITIVE POSITIONING

In a context of increasing competition and rapidly evolving capability requirements, organisations are increasingly differentiated by the quality of their human capital.

Corporate Academies function as strategic ecosystems capable of aligning capabilities with business objectives and transforming learning into a driver of competitiveness. From this perspective, HerAcademy contributes to positioning the Hera Group as an innovative and forward-looking organisation.

Upskilling and reskilling programmes help reduce the gap between available and required capabilities, strengthening both organisational adaptability and value creation. At a time when a substantial proportion of professional capabilities are subject to rapid evolution, investment in human capital becomes an essential prerequisite for competitiveness.

CORPORATE ACADEMIES AND ATTRACTIVENESS

The Academy also represents a key factor in enhancing the organisation's attractiveness. Opportunities for learning and professional development are now among the principal considerations influencing individuals' choice of employer.

A strong employer branding strategy enables organisations to attract talent while improving engagement and retention. Within this framework, HerAcademy reinforces the Hera Group's positioning as an organisation capable of creating value for its people.

Collaborations with universities, business schools, ITS Academies (Higher Technological Institutes) and public institutions, together with career guidance initiatives, also contribute to building long-term relationships with the education system and local communities.

THE IMPACT OF LEARNING ON THE SDGs

The Hera Group's learning initiatives contribute to all of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, with particular emphasis on the following:

- **SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth**
- **SDG 4 – Quality Education**
- **SDG 16 – Stakeholder Engagement**
- **SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sustainable Water Management**
- **SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy**
- **SDG 13 – Climate Action**



9. Pragma Group

9. a) Upskilling and Reskilling in the AI Era: The Role of Corporate Academies

Oriana Cok - Partner & CEO –Pragma Group

THE CONTEXT AND THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is driving a transformation that differs fundamentally from previous waves of technological innovation. For the first time, technology is not only reshaping operational processes but is also entering directly into organisations' cognitive processes, supporting activities related to analysis, evaluation and decision-making. Within this context, **upskilling** refers to expanding the capabilities required to perform an existing role, whereas **reskilling** entails a more profound redefinition of responsibilities and ways of working. The introduction of AI is making increasingly common situations in which the evolution expected of individuals involves not only acquiring new technical knowledge but also redefining their professional contribution within organisational processes. For Corporate Academies, the challenge lies in focusing on how people perform their roles in working environments characterised by growing collaboration between human capabilities and AI systems.

THE EVOLUTION OF CAPABILITIES IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The impact of AI on work does not result in the disappearance of professions; rather, it transforms the activities that constitute them. More structured tasks can now be supported by AI, while activities requiring contextual interpretation, critical judgement and personal accountability are becoming increasingly significant. Today, AI is capable of supporting highly cognitive and specialised activities. Consequently, Corporate Academies are required to rethink the capabilities needed to operate effectively within these emerging work environments.

WORKING WITH AI: A NEW PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The evolution of AI systems presents a challenge that extends beyond the acquisition of new technical capabilities: the ability to exercise informed

oversight over technology-supported processes. Numerous studies on generative AI systems have shown that users tend to attribute a high degree of reliability to responses that are generated rapidly, coherently and plausibly, sometimes developing excessive dependence on the outputs produced by these systems¹. The literature defines this phenomenon as **automation bias**, namely the tendency to overestimate the reliability of AI-generated recommendations while reducing the level of critical verification exercised by users. This issue is also recognised in the European **AI Act** as one of the areas requiring appropriate governance. AI does not replace human judgement; rather, it changes the way judgement is exercised, increasing the importance of supervision and validation activities. This gives rise to what may be described as a capability for **cognitive oversight**: the ability to maintain attention, critical judgement and decision-making responsibility within processes that are increasingly supported by AI. For Corporate Academies, this entails expanding the traditional scope of learning and development. Alongside the development of technical capabilities, it becomes essential to strengthen capabilities such as critical thinking, source evaluation, contextual understanding and accountability in decision-making.

HOW CORPORATE ACADEMIES SUPPORT TRANSFORMATION

The transformation brought about by AI requires learning approaches capable of influencing not only knowledge acquisition but also professional behaviours. The simple transmission of content is often insufficient when the objective is to change behaviour—that is, the way individuals make decisions, exercise judgement or collaborate with intelligent systems. For this reason, many Corporate Academies are progressively shifting towards learning models that integrate formal learning, workplace experimentation and structured reflection on experience. The emphasis moves beyond the acquisition of capabilities alone to the ability to apply them effectively in real working contexts. Experience demonstrates that the most effective

¹ Recent literature on Large Language Models highlights the risk of developing excessive reliance on AI-generated outputs (overreliance), resulting in a reduced level of critical verification by users. See, among others, Carnat, I. (2024), *Human, All Too Human: Accounting for Automation Bias in Generative Large Language Models*, *International Data Privacy Law*, 14(4), pp. 299–314; Visser, R. et al. (2023), *Trust, Distrust, and Appropriate Reliance in (X)AI*; Lee, J.D.

development programmes are those that help individuals identify concrete behaviours to cultivate, experiment with them in their day-to-day activities, and consolidate them over time through opportunities for dialogue and feedback, including coaching and mentoring. For Corporate Academies, this means assuming a role that increasingly resembles that of a strategic steward of professional development, helping to translate technological transformation into sustainable working practices aligned with organisational objectives.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AS A CONTINUOUS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Within this context, digital technologies assume a role that extends well beyond the simple delivery of learning content. Their principal contribution lies in the ability to accompany learning processes while maintaining a continuous connection with real work situations. Digital platforms make it possible to personalise learning pathways and sustain continuous learning over time. For Corporate Academies, digital technologies therefore represent an opportunity to strengthen the systematic integration of learning and work, moving beyond episodic interventions and supporting long-term development pathways.

IMPACT ON PRODUCTIVITY AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES FOR CORPORATE ACADEMIES

Within the scenario outlined above, business competitiveness will depend increasingly less on access to technology itself and increasingly more on people's ability to use it consciously, responsibly and effectively. Corporate Academies play a strategic role in supporting the evolution of professional roles and fostering the integration of human capabilities with emerging technologies. The challenge of upskilling and reskilling lies in developing forms of work in which the human contribution continues to create value through judgement, contextual understanding, accountability and the ability to govern increasingly complex processes. Their ability to translate technological innovation into capabilities, behaviours and organisational practices constitutes an essential factor in sustaining business productivity and, more broadly, strengthening the competitiveness of the national productive system.

9. b) Corporate Academies, Reputation and Trust: The Value of a Method-Based Approach

Silvia Pallaver - Head of Coaching & Mentoring and Communication –Pragma Group

THE QUESTION EVERY CORPORATE ACADEMY SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER

When discussing Corporate Academies, attention often focuses on learning programmes, the technologies employed, or the number of participants involved. There is, however, a less visible yet equally significant dimension: the contribution that a Corporate Academy makes to shaping the organisation's identity and credibility. A Corporate Academy makes explicit the way in which an organisation interprets the relationship between innovation, capability development and the growth of its people. It communicates a particular vision of work, learning and responsibility towards human capital.

AN IDENTITY BUILT ON THE CONSISTENCY BETWEEN VALUES AND PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

An organisation's reputation is built not only through what it communicates but also through the choices it makes in developing the capabilities of its people. For this reason, Corporate Academies represent far more than a learning function: they make visible the organisation's culture and the way it interprets its role with respect to innovation, change and professional development. Every decision concerning learning content, methodologies, timing and delivery tools conveys a precise message. It communicates the value attributed to people, the organisation's vision of professional development, and the long-term perspective that guides its investment in capabilities. In this sense, a Corporate Academy represents one of the organisational settings in which corporate identity is expressed most tangibly. Within the Pragma Group, this vision has translated into a long-term commitment to research and the development of methodologies specifically dedicated to adult learning. The Group's presence within **Area Science Park** in Trieste, together with its neuroscientific research into cognitive and behavioural processes, has contributed to consolidating an approach grounded in the integration of scientific evidence, digital technologies and organisational experience.

An organisation's reputation is built over time through the quality of the relationships it establishes with its stakeholders. Within this process, Corporate Academies play an increasingly important role because they provide tangible evidence of an organisation's commitment to capability development and the growth of its people. For clients, partners, institutions and professional communities, investing in structured learning pathways demonstrates a willingness to address market transformations responsibly and sustainably. Corporate Academies therefore strengthen organisational credibility by making visible the organisation's capacity to prepare both people and processes for future challenges. The Pragma Group's experience in supporting private companies, public administrations and complex organisations has demonstrated how learning can become a source of trust not only for programme participants but also for the broader ecosystem of relationships surrounding the organisation.

EMPLOYER BRANDING AND ATTRACTIVENESS: WHAT A VERIFIABLE METHODOLOGY COMMUNICATES

The reputation of an organisation that invests in learning is built on two distinct dimensions. The first is visible: partnerships, learning content and certifications. The second is what truly matters to highly qualified professionals: methodology, rigour and measurable outcomes. In recent years, we have observed a significant shift in the expectations of the senior professionals whom organisations seek to attract and retain. Individuals with advanced capabilities increasingly evaluate learning not simply as a professional development opportunity, but as an indicator of the way the organisation understands and values professional growth. A programme incorporating pre- and post-intervention assessment, coaching embedded in real business processes, and structured feedback over time communicates that the organisation takes people's development seriously. Increasingly, individuals assess organisations on the basis of the learning opportunities they provide. The quality of professional development pathways has become an important indicator of organisational culture and of the value placed on people's growth. In this respect, a Corporate Academy contributes not only to the continuous development of capabilities but also to the organisation's ability to attract talent, foster engagement and strengthen employees' sense of belonging.

Investing in capabilities also means assuming responsibility for people and for their ability to navigate an ever-changing professional environment. Technological transformation, artificial intelligence and new organisational models are profoundly reshaping work, making the continuous updating of knowledge and professional behaviours essential. Within this context, Corporate Academies contribute not only to organisational competitiveness but also to the development of the country's human capital. Promoting lifelong learning, supporting people's employability and developing capabilities that are transferable across different contexts are objectives that generate benefits for both businesses and society as a whole. Learning therefore acquires a significance that extends beyond organisational boundaries. It becomes a means through which companies actively contribute to developing the capabilities needed to address the economic, social and technological challenges of both the present and the future. In this respect, the role of Corporate Academies is fully aligned with a broader conception of corporate social responsibility towards people, work and the productive system. At a historical moment characterised by profound technological transformation, contributing to the development of capabilities that enable individuals to maintain employability, professional autonomy and adaptability represents a responsibility that extends well beyond the organisation's immediate objectives.

A PERSPECTIVE FOR THE PRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

In a context characterised by increasingly rapid technological and organisational transformation, an organisation's reputation will depend not only on its business performance but also on its ability to invest in the development of its people in a credible, continuous and value-driven manner. Corporate Academies represent one of the most effective instruments for making this commitment visible and for translating capability development into value for organisations, for individuals and for the productive system as a whole.

10. Manpower

10. a) Corporate Academies as Strategic Infrastructures for Competitiveness

Mirko Raimondi - Head of Manpower Academy – Manpower;

Cristiano Pechy De Pechujfalu - Executive Leader Talent

Management Services and Right Management - Manpower

FROM LEARNING FUNCTION TO STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

For many years, Corporate Academies were regarded as an internal business function, measured primarily in terms of training hours delivered. Today, such an interpretation is no longer sufficient. In a labour market characterised by persistent skills shortages and accelerated digital transformation, the Corporate Academy has become the infrastructure that connects companies' actual capability requirements with the skills available across the labour market and local territories.

ManpowerGroup observes this transformation from the point where labour demand and supply intersect, providing direct visibility into emerging professional capability requirements. This perspective makes it possible to view the skills gap not as an abstract concept but as a concrete and measurable distance between what companies require and what the labour market is able to provide—and to address that gap through structured learning pathways. In 2025, **ManpowerGroup Academy** trained approximately **1,600 individuals**, of whom **65%** secured employment through ManpowerGroup or one of its direct client companies. Over the two-year period **2024–2025**, the total number of participants exceeded **3,200**, corresponding to approximately **22,400 hours of training**. The value of a Corporate Academy is not measured by the volume of training delivered but by its capacity to improve employability and productivity. This marks the transition from a learning function to a genuine driver of competitiveness.

UPSKILLING AND RESKILLING

The Academy's operating model is built around three complementary pillars. The first consists of **pre-employment training**, designed around companies' specific workforce requirements and tailored to the concrete

professional profiles sought by employers. The second focuses on **reskilling programmes** for unemployed and economically inactive individuals, enabling existing capabilities to be redirected towards emerging occupations. The third comprises **dedicated Corporate Academies**, designed to create bespoke talent pipelines in situations where the required professional profiles are not readily available on the labour market. The sectors with the greatest training intensity include energy, mechanical engineering, leather goods and footwear manufacturing within the Made in Italy production system, logistics, and information technology. The defining feature of this model is not its scale but the close connection between learning pathways and subsequent employment outcomes. This linkage is made possible through dedicated sectoral instruments—most notably **Forma.Temp** and the interprofessional training funds—which transform learning from an isolated activity into a systemic lever for labour market development. The **CNC Laboratory in Forno di Taro** provides a clear example. Rather than operating as a stand-alone training course, it functions as a permanent learning facility that continuously prepares operators for computer numerical control (CNC) machinery and places them with manufacturing companies located within the local mechanical engineering district, achieving a long-term employment placement rate of 65%. Its principal strength lies in its continuity: a repeatable pipeline connecting learning with qualified employment, deeply embedded within a well-established industrial district.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

The widespread adoption of Artificial Intelligence is reshaping the content of work more rapidly than traditional education and training systems are able to adapt. For many organisations, the principal challenge is no longer the adoption of technology itself but the availability of the capabilities required to integrate it effectively into business processes.

The Academy addresses this challenge on three levels. First, it develops **digital and AI capabilities**, ranging from data science and generative AI programmes to full-stack software development, cloud computing and cybersecurity. Second, it supports companies in the practical adoption of new technologies. Third, it enables the **reskilling of traditional professional profiles** towards roles characterised by higher digital content. Digital capability is not relevant solely for new entrants to the labour market; it is also an essential condition for maintaining the employability of

the existing workforce throughout the digital transition. In this respect, the Corporate Academy acts as an active labour market stabiliser, supporting workforce adaptability rather than merely responding to disruption.

SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL IMPACT

The impact of Corporate Academies extends well beyond the boundaries of individual organisations. From the perspective of social inclusion, the Academy's programmes reach populations that are largely excluded from traditional education-to-employment pathways centred on university qualifications. During the period **2024–2025**, approximately **96%** of programme participants did not hold a university degree, while more than **11%** possessed no qualification beyond lower secondary education. The Academy therefore transforms a secondary-school qualification—or even the absence of higher educational credentials—into marketable professional expertise.

From the perspective of technical education, the **Fornovo di Taro Training Centre** operates within a broader territorial innovation ecosystem through the **Innovation Farm consortium**, which brings together companies such as **Dallara** and **Bercella**, together with **ITS Maker**, the Higher Technological Institute specialising in mechanical engineering. This represents a model of public-private partnership in which companies, technical education providers and innovation infrastructures jointly design learning pathways on the basis of the capability requirements of the local industrial district, thereby aligning educational provision with actual labour market demand and reducing skills mismatches at their source.

CONCLUSIONS

Corporate Academies have evolved beyond the role of learning providers to become structural drivers of competitiveness. They transform companies' capability requirements into immediately deployable professional skills, anticipate emerging occupational profiles, and operate at national scale while generating measurable impacts on employability and productivity.

For this potential to translate into greater competitiveness across the national economic system, several conditions are essential from a public policy perspective. First, Corporate Academies should be recognised as **strategic infrastructures for competitiveness** and integrated into industrial and labour market policies. Second, stronger alignment should be

established between public funding mechanisms and employment outcomes by directing dedicated instruments—such as **Forma.Temp** and the interprofessional training funds—towards programmes evaluated on the basis of their employment placement results. Third, the connection between education and employment should be further strengthened by enhancing the role of **ITS Academies** and Corporate Academies alike. Finally, a shared framework should be adopted for measuring impact in terms of employability, reduction of skills gaps and productivity.

This is the contribution that **ManpowerGroup Academy** seeks to make to the national economic system: the capacity to interpret emerging capability requirements and to develop skills that are immediately applicable in the labour market, thereby supporting the country's competitiveness. Corporate Academies are not the final outcome of a skills policy; they constitute the enabling infrastructure upon which such a policy depends.

10. b) Corporate Academies as Expressions of Identity, Reputation and Corporate Value

*Daniela Caputo – Commercial & Innovation Executive Leader –
ManpowerGroup Italy*

At a time marked by profound technological, demographic and productive transformations, the issue of skills has assumed a significance that extends well beyond the traditional boundaries of vocational education and training. For ManpowerGroup, which operates at the heart of the labour market and observes its dynamics on a daily basis, skills represent the point of convergence between individual potential and economic development. They make employability possible, sustain business competitiveness, and contribute to the resilience of local communities and territories. ManpowerGroup Academies were established precisely in response to this awareness. Through these Academies, the Group does not merely respond to the needs expressed by the labour market; it gives tangible expression to its mission: supporting individuals and organisations in building the skills required to meet the challenges of the future of work.

It is precisely in this ability to translate a mission into a tangible experience that the reputational value of the Academies emerges. While education and training constitute the core of their activity, their significance extends far beyond their operational function. The Academies become one of the primary arenas in which the organisation's identity is made visible, its values take concrete form, and its commitment to people, businesses and local communities can be observed and assessed by stakeholders.

CORPORATE IDENTITY THROUGH SKILLS

Every organisation expresses its identity through a series of concrete choices. Among these, investment in learning and development occupies a distinctive position because it directly influences people's ability to grow, adapt and build their professional careers.

A Corporate Academy makes a fundamental conviction visible: in a knowledge-based economy, value is generated through the effective integration of skills, work and enterprise. For an organisation such as

ManpowerGroup, which is engaged daily in analysing labour market needs and supporting career development, skills development is not merely an investment in human capital but a strategic instrument for enhancing employability, professional mobility and economic growth. The Academies make this conviction tangible by translating it into practical development pathways for individuals and organisations.

The experience of the ManpowerGroup Academies provides a clear illustration of this approach. Through **Manpower Academy**, the Group delivers upskilling and reskilling programmes designed around the needs of industrial sectors and local labour markets. Through **Experis Academy**, it supports the development of the digital and technological capabilities required to enable business transformation. Although these initiatives operate in different domains, they are united by the same underlying principle: fostering the alignment between people's potential and the evolving needs of the labour market.

The ManpowerGroup Academies also represent one of the principal means through which the Group brings to life the values that guide its actions: **People, Knowledge & Innovation**. Investment in people translates into opportunities for professional growth and employability; the enhancement of knowledge takes shape through structured learning and continuous professional development; innovation is reflected in the ability to anticipate the evolution of the skills required by technological and industrial transformation. From this perspective, the Academies perform far more than a training function: they make visible the way in which ManpowerGroup interprets its role within the labour market and its commitment to people, businesses and local communities.

REPUTATION AND TRUST

Reputation is built through visible and enduring evidence. Organisations earn credibility when they demonstrate their willingness to invest in initiatives that create value not only for themselves but also for their stakeholders.

The existence of a Corporate Academy contributes to this process because it signals a planning capability that extends beyond immediate business priorities. Investing in skills development means adopting a medium- to

long-term perspective and recognising that competitiveness depends upon the ability to support people throughout the transformations affecting work.

For the organisation's own employees and collaborators, learning represents an investment in their professional future and a source of confidence. For clients and business partners, it is an indicator of the organisation's capacity to maintain the up-to-date capabilities required to compete in rapidly evolving markets. For institutions, local communities and professional networks, a Corporate Academy is a visible sign of responsibility. It demonstrates a commitment not only to organisational development but also to strengthening the human capital available within the broader economic system.

The reputational value of the Academy derives precisely from this ability to generate shared benefits. While learning initiatives undoubtedly create value for those who participate in them, they simultaneously reinforce the credibility of the organisation that promotes them, strengthening relationships of trust with a wide range of stakeholders.

ACADEMIES AND BRAND POSITIONING

Growing attention to sustainability, people development and innovation has expanded the range of factors that contribute to building a corporate brand. Alongside the quality of products and services, increasing importance is now attached to an organisation's ability to attract talent, develop capabilities and contribute to the professional growth of individuals.

Within this context, Corporate Academies perform an important brand positioning function. Organisations that invest consistently in learning are perceived as entities capable of anticipating change and interpreting market transformations. Commitment to skills development strengthens associations with values such as innovation, responsibility, reliability and long-term vision.

For ManpowerGroup, this dimension carries particular significance. The Academies represent a natural extension of the role the Group plays in the labour market: not merely facilitating the matching of labour supply and

demand, but actively contributing to the development of the skills required for people's professional growth and for business competitiveness.

In this sense, the Academies become one of the principal means through which the brand makes its value proposition tangible. For ManpowerGroup, whose identity has been built around connecting people with professional opportunities, investing in skills development demonstrates in concrete terms the contribution the Group intends to make to the labour market and to organisational growth.

ATTRACTIVENESS AND SENSE OF BELONGING

In an increasingly competitive market for talent, learning opportunities have become one of the primary drivers of organisational attractiveness. More and more professionals assess organisations not only on the basis of compensation or career prospects, but also according to the opportunities they offer for continuous learning and skills development.

Corporate Academies strengthen this attractiveness by conveying an immediately recognisable message: learning is not regarded as an ancillary activity but as an integral component of the professional experience. For young people entering the labour market, as well as for experienced professionals facing increasingly rapid technological transformation, access to structured learning pathways represents a distinctive factor in choosing an employer.

At the same time, learning contributes to strengthening employees' sense of belonging. Corporate Academies foster the development of professional communities built upon the sharing of knowledge, common languages and collective experience, reinforcing the relationship between individuals and the organisation. They also perform a broader aggregating function that extends beyond individual learning programmes, bringing together people who share competencies, ambitions and aspirations for professional growth. The value generated therefore goes beyond the transfer of knowledge to encompass the creation of social and professional capital—assets that are increasingly important for organisational quality, cohesion and long-term performance.

Equally significant is the contribution that Corporate Academies can make to local communities and regional economies. When learning initiatives are designed around the needs of industrial value chains and local production systems, they strengthen the connection between employment, economic development and innovation, generating value that extends beyond the boundaries of the individual enterprise.

CONCLUSIONS

In today's competitive environment, Corporate Academies have acquired a significance that extends well beyond their traditional educational role. They represent one of the principal instruments through which organisations make their culture visible, strengthen their reputation, and consolidate their positioning among employees, candidates, clients, partners and institutions.

For this reason, communicating the role and activities of a Corporate Academy cannot be regarded as secondary to its educational mission. Communicating an Academy means communicating a vision of the enterprise, of work, and of human development. It means making clear how an organisation interprets change and what contribution it intends to make to the development of the skills needed to address it.

For ManpowerGroup, the Academies represent the point at which the Group's mission becomes a tangible experience. They make visible the connection between skills, employability and competitiveness, translating into action the commitment to unlocking people's potential. It is precisely in this ability to combine economic development with professional growth that their deepest value resides: not simply developing skills, but helping to create the conditions under which work can continue to serve as a driver of progress for individuals, businesses and local communities.

11. Rome Business School

11. a) Corporate Academies and Business Schools: A Strategic Partnership for National Productivity

Massimo Scarcello - Associate Dean - Rome Business School

The growing attention that institutions, businesses and the social partners are devoting to the issue of productivity reflects an increasingly established awareness: competitiveness depends not only on the adoption of new technologies or the efficiency of organisational processes, but also on organisations' ability to translate change into capabilities, behaviours and execution capacity.

Within this context, Corporate Academies have assumed an increasingly central role. They are no longer merely organisational units dedicated to training; rather, they have become genuine organisational infrastructures through which companies support the technological, cultural and managerial transformations that define the contemporary business environment. It is within Corporate Academies that innovation is translated into development pathways, corporate strategies become shared organisational capabilities, and change is transformed into a tangible and operational reality.

Rome Business School's participation in the **Academy Circle** initiative promoted by Assoknowledge stems from this same awareness. Business Schools are an integral part of the ecosystem that supports skills development and share with Corporate Academies a common responsibility: strengthening organisations' ability to address the challenges of transformation. While Corporate Academies oversee change from within the organisation, Business Schools reinforce organisations' capacity to govern that change through applied research, management development, curriculum design, and learning programmes capable of translating transformation into practical and actionable competencies.

Over recent years, the relationship between Corporate Academies and Business Schools has undergone a profound transformation. The traditional model, centred on the delivery of standardised training programmes, is increasingly inadequate to address the complexity of the challenges organisations face today.

A new logic of co-design is emerging. Corporate Academies contribute deep knowledge of corporate strategies, business priorities and the competencies required by organisational evolution. Business Schools bring research capabilities, specialised faculty, advanced pedagogical methodologies, curriculum design expertise, and insights drawn from experience across diverse organisational contexts.

The integration of these complementary strengths creates the conditions for designing learning pathways that are fully aligned with corporate objectives and genuinely focused on value creation. Learning is no longer a function separate from the business; rather, it becomes a strategic lever through which organisations strengthen their capacity to adapt to change, innovate and compete.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND NEW COMPETENCIES

Artificial intelligence, the central topic of the first Academy Circle meeting, provides one of the most significant examples of this transformation. The challenge is not simply to introduce new technologies, but to create the conditions that enable people to understand, adopt and integrate them effectively into everyday work processes.

Experience gained through collaboration with companies and senior executives demonstrates that the principal challenge lies not in the technology itself, but in people's ability to use it strategically, responsibly and effectively. Technical expertise is undoubtedly essential, but so too are managerial capabilities, critical thinking, data literacy, and leadership capable of guiding organisational transformation.

It is precisely through the combination of the deep organisational knowledge embedded within Corporate Academies and the analytical and conceptual frameworks developed by Business Schools that technological

innovation can be transformed into a genuine competitive advantage, rather than remaining unrealised potential.

UPSKILLING, RESKILLING AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING

The second Academy Circle meeting focused on the themes of upskilling and reskilling. In an environment characterised by increasingly rapid transformation, the ability to continuously update existing competencies and develop new ones has become an essential condition for sustaining organisational competitiveness.

The challenge extends well beyond preparing people for new job roles. It involves fostering a culture of continuous learning. Organisations are increasingly required to prepare individuals for activities that evolve rapidly and, in many cases, for professions that are only now beginning to emerge.

In this context, it is essential to look beyond the boundaries of the individual organisation: to interpret market developments, identify the competencies emerging across industries, and continuously update learning content based on scenarios that evolve more rapidly than traditional corporate planning cycles.

Within this framework, so-called **power skills** are becoming increasingly important. Leadership, communication, collaboration, emotional intelligence, the ability to manage complexity and adaptability to change are only a few examples. These competencies complement technical expertise and are becoming increasingly decisive in transforming innovation and knowledge into tangible organisational outcomes.

THE PRODUCTIVITY AGENDA

The decision by CNEL to place Corporate Academies at the centre of the broader debate on productivity is particularly significant. It highlights a fundamental principle: learning and development should be assessed not only in terms of the activities delivered, but above all in terms of the value they generate for organisations.

Corporate Academies contribute to productivity when they accelerate the adoption of innovation, improve the quality of decision-making, strengthen

managerial capabilities, and enhance people's ability to operate effectively in increasingly complex environments.

The relationship between learning, innovation and productivity therefore represents one of the most important areas of collaboration between Corporate Academies and Business Schools. Corporate Academies observe directly the impact of competencies on organisational processes and business performance. Business Schools contribute through applied research, management development methodologies and assessment frameworks that make it possible not only to measure the value generated by investments in human capital, but also to design increasingly effective learning interventions.

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE ECOSYSTEM

The future of corporate learning will be shaped through collaborative ecosystems in which companies, Corporate Academies, Business Schools and other knowledge institutions share expertise, experience and strategic vision.

Neither perspective, in isolation, is sufficient to support the transformations required by today's competitive environment. The strength of the ecosystem lies precisely in its ability to integrate these complementary capabilities and translate them into value for organisations.

The productivity of the national economy will increasingly depend on the quality of this collaboration. For this reason, the dialogue fostered through **Academy Circle** represents an important opportunity—not only to exchange good practices, but also to develop a shared vision of the role that competencies, continuous learning and leadership can play in strengthening business competitiveness and supporting the long-term development of the national economic system.

12. Six Seconds

12. a) The Human Dimension of Upskilling and Reskilling in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Lorenzo Fariselli – Director, Six Seconds Europe

During the Assoknowledge Academy Circle dedicated to the themes of upskilling and reskilling, hosted by Six Seconds, a matter of growing strategic importance for today's productive system emerged with particular clarity: organisational transformation does not depend solely on the introduction of new technologies or the expansion of learning opportunities, but rather on the ability to create organisational, cultural, and professional conditions that make learning a structural driver of change.

From this perspective, Corporate Academies are assuming an increasingly prominent role. They represent not merely a mechanism for updating competencies, but a strategic instrument through which organisations support the evolution of work models, facilitate the adoption of innovation, and shape the relationship between human capital development, productivity, and competitiveness.

Although grounded in different perspectives, the two contributions presented during the meeting converged on a fundamental point. On the one hand, Joshua Freedman, CEO of Six Seconds, highlighted emotional intelligence as an enabling factor in organisational transformation processes. On the other, the "Resonance Capital" model presented by Lorenzo Fariselli and Elisabetta Bracci offered a systemic interpretation of artificial intelligence integration, based on balancing human performance, artificial performance, and effective process governance. Both contributions demonstrate that upskilling and reskilling initiatives become truly effective when they extend beyond updating technical and professional competencies to strengthen individuals' capacity to interpret change, navigate uncertainty, and redefine their contribution within evolving workplace contexts.

This dimension is particularly significant today. Artificial intelligence is reshaping activities, roles, and organisational processes at an unprecedented pace. Within this evolving landscape, many technical

competencies are likely to be absorbed, transformed, or rapidly superseded. Consequently, the key question is no longer limited to identifying which new skills should be developed, but rather which distinctly human capabilities will continue to provide enduring strategic value. From this perspective, emotional intelligence should not be regarded as a complementary or ancillary capability, but as an essential organisational competence. It enables individuals to manage pressure, build trust, collaborate across differences, engage in continuous learning, and sustain change with greater awareness and resilience.

Ultimately, every transformation is measured against the human dimension. Competencies can be transferred, and processes can be redesigned; however, if people lack the capabilities needed to navigate uncertainty, process their emotional responses, and maintain clarity, motivation, and sound judgment, transformation efforts are unlikely to achieve their intended outcomes. Alongside its opportunities, the adoption of artificial intelligence also generates a wide spectrum of emotional responses: curiosity and enthusiasm, but also scepticism, feelings of inadequacy, concerns about the loss of expertise, and resistance to change. Overlooking this dimension would mean interpreting transformation as a purely technical phenomenon, whereas in reality it profoundly affects professional identities, organisational roles, and individual expectations.

It is precisely at this juncture that one of the most significant functions of Corporate Academies becomes evident. If the objective is to support organisational evolution, learning cannot be confined to transferring tools and procedures. It must also strengthen the conditions that make learning itself possible: openness to change, self-awareness, collaborative capability, trust, a growth-oriented mindset, and a willingness to experiment. In other words, Corporate Academies are called upon to operate not only on competencies themselves, but also on the organisational context that enables those competencies to translate into meaningful organisational impact. Within this perspective, the ability to rigorously measure the outcomes of learning interventions also assumes particular importance. Our Academy employs internationally validated scientific assessment tools that enable the monitoring of the return on investment (ROI) of development programmes, as supported by a robust body of corporate-focused scientific and professional publications.

The “Resonance Capital” perspective effectively complements this framework. The introduction of artificial intelligence is interpreted not simply as a technological transition, but as the construction of a sustainable balance between artificial capabilities and human potential. Value does not arise from replacing people with machines, but from the quality of their integration. Without clear strategic direction, robust ethical safeguards, an adequate understanding of organisational processes, and sustained investment in people, innovation risks generating only superficial efficiencies while creating new forms of organisational disorientation. Conversely, when embedded within a coherent governance framework, artificial intelligence can free individuals from repetitive tasks, improve the quality of decision-making, and enhance human contribution in functions requiring higher levels of interpretation, relationship management, and responsibility.

Consequently, upskilling and reskilling now assume a broader significance than simply closing technical competency gaps. Their purpose is to enable a new configuration of work between human and artificial capabilities, helping individuals understand how roles are evolving, which competencies are becoming increasingly central, which established routines need to be reconsidered, and which new responsibilities are emerging. From this perspective, learning becomes the means through which individuals can redefine their professional contribution in an adaptive and forward-looking, rather than defensive, manner.

Equally decisive is the dimension of governance. For development initiatives to be effective, they must be embedded within a clear strategic vision encompassing organisational objectives, the transformations to be enabled, ethical and organisational principles, and the processes requiring redesign. Without such a framework, learning initiatives risk remaining fragmented, while technology may be perceived merely as an externally imposed requirement. Within a coherent governance framework, however, the Corporate Academy can fulfil a critical translational role, bridging strategy and operational practice, innovation and organisational culture, as well as process transformation and people development.

The discussions held during the Academy Circle hosted by Six Seconds, an Assoknowledge member organisation, therefore point to a broader conclusion that is highly relevant to the wider public policy debate: future productivity will depend not only on the speed with which artificial

intelligence is adopted, but also on the ability to make it a driver of the sustainable evolution of work. Achieving this objective requires coherent investment not only in technology, but also in the emotional, relational, and cognitive capabilities of people. Within this context, Corporate Academies are confirmed as a strategic lever for supporting organisational transformation, enhancing the quality of work, and strengthening the competitiveness of the productive system.

12. b) The Corporate Academy as a Brand Culture Infrastructure

Ilaria Iseppato - Partnership Director - Six Seconds Europe

Within the broader debate on national productivity, Corporate Academies are increasingly assuming a role that extends well beyond the traditional boundaries of learning and development. They are not merely places where competencies are transferred, but cultural infrastructures through which organisations articulate and make visible their vision of work, leadership, and organisational development. In the case of Six Seconds Italy and its EQ Biz ecosystem, this evolution is particularly evident: investment in social and emotional competencies is not presented as an ancillary activity, but rather as a defining strategic choice that connects people, performance, well-being, and the quality of workplace relationships.

Six Seconds is the world's largest emotional intelligence network and pursues an ambitious vision: to develop the social and emotional competencies of one billion people. In Italy, the organisation operates through scientific research, training, consulting, and professional certification programmes. Within the business environment, this approach takes shape through the EQ Biz ecosystem, the division dedicated to corporate organisations. EQ Biz is not simply a catalogue of training courses; rather, it constitutes a coherent system of methodologies, tools, partners, shared language, and professional practices capable of translating organisational values into observable behaviours, all under a unified and consistent framework.

The identity expressed through this ecosystem is founded upon several clearly defined pillars. The first is the centrality of the individual. Approximately 70% of critical workplace dynamics concern people and relationships; consequently, the human factor is placed at the centre of organisational development processes. The second pillar is measurability. Emotional intelligence is not presented as an abstract or motivational concept, but as a set of competencies that can be developed, observed, and assessed through scientifically validated methodologies and assessment tools. The third pillar is sustainable performance. The stated objective is not short-term achievement, but the long-term development of leaders, teams,

and organisations in which business results and well-being advance together.

This approach has a direct impact on organisational reputation. At a time when many organisations claim to place people at the centre of their strategies yet struggle to translate this promise into credible practice, an ecosystem such as EQ Biz strengthens stakeholder trust by linking organisational values to tangible methods and measurable action. Its areas of intervention—including people management, performance improvement, organisational transformation, communication and marketing, growth and innovation, mentoring, and diversity and inclusion (D&I)—demonstrate that investment in social and emotional competencies is not confined to specialist learning initiatives but is embedded within the organisational processes that shape the day-to-day functioning of the enterprise. From this perspective, reputation does not emerge from self-promotional messaging, but from the consistency between what an organisation declares and what it genuinely enables in practice.

For internal stakeholders, the message is unequivocal: people development is regarded as a strategic driver rather than a peripheral employee benefit. The Corporate Academy therefore becomes a space where employees, managers, and teams can clearly understand the organisation's culture, recognise its strategic priorities, and acquire the capabilities needed to navigate change. For external stakeholders, the signal is equally significant. Clients, partners, professional communities, and local territories encounter an organisation that differentiates its market positioning not only through its products and services, but also through the quality of its relationships, the care devoted to workplace environments, and its ability to generate meaningful social impact.

From this perspective, the EQ Biz ecosystem is particularly noteworthy because it expands the traditional scope of the Corporate Academy. Rather than merely delivering learning content, it establishes a learning infrastructure embedded within the principal dimensions of organisational life, including leadership, talent acquisition, sales, change management, branding and communication, innovation and artificial intelligence, and organisational well-being. This strategic choice strengthens the ecosystem's brand positioning by establishing the organisation as an actor capable of interpreting contemporary complexity and responding through an integrated approach. In other words, learning is not the ultimate objective,

but the means through which the organisation makes its distinctive way of operating in both the marketplace and society clearly recognisable.

Its integration within an international network further reinforces the reputational strength of the model. EQ Biz is grounded in the globally recognised Six Seconds scientific framework, supported by a presence in more than 170 countries and a worldwide network of specialised professionals and strategic partners. From a corporate communications perspective, this represents a decisive advantage. A brand is strengthened not merely because it communicates compelling values, but because it demonstrates its ability to support those values through expertise, scientific research, methodological rigour, and qualified partnerships. Within this framework, the Corporate Academy becomes a point of convergence between technical credibility and symbolic recognition.

There is also an important dimension of organisational attractiveness that directly affects relationships with talent, young professionals, managers, and professional communities. Today, employer branding is no longer built solely upon the promise of career advancement, but increasingly upon the quality of the learning experience that an organisation is able to provide. An organisation that invests in social and emotional competencies, team development, and the capacity to lead change communicates that it is a place where people are not simply employed, but actively supported in their professional growth. For younger generations, who are placing increasing emphasis on the alignment between work, personal development, and well-being, this represents a significant differentiating factor. For managers and business partners, it signals the presence of a mature organisational culture capable of integrating high performance with social responsibility.

In this sense, investment in competencies also assumes the significance of a broader social and industrial commitment. As highlighted by EQ Biz, social and emotional competencies have become firmly established among the capabilities that are essential for success in today's workplace. Developing these competencies therefore contributes not only to the competitiveness of individual organisations, but also to people's employability and to the overall quality and resilience of the productive system. The Corporate Academy thus becomes a tangible instrument of organisational responsibility. It supports individuals in navigating transitions, strengthens professional communities, enhances collaborative capacity, and promotes a

model of transformation that integrates technological innovation with human development. When it makes organisational culture visible, strengthens stakeholder trust, reinforces market positioning, enhances organisational attractiveness, and translates investment in competencies into a credible commitment to the future of work and younger generations, the Corporate Academy becomes an integral component of competitive strategy. It does not merely communicate what the organisation does; it communicates, with credibility and consistency, what the organisation is and the contribution it intends to make to the country.

13. TIM

13. a) The Sovereignty of Learning: TIM Academy in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Andrea Laudadio - Head of TIM Academy and Development

Telecommunications constitute the infrastructure on which a country's digital sovereignty rests: networks, data, computing capacity, and security. It is also the sector where artificial intelligence is having its earliest and most profound impact, as it is fundamentally reshaping the architecture of work—from 5G to the Internet of Things, from cybersecurity to data analytics, and ultimately to generative AI. The industry is experiencing a twofold pressure: on the one hand, over-the-top (OTT) service providers have eroded traditional revenues and imposed new business models; on the other, an increasingly demanding regulatory framework, governing both data protection and network management, requires skills that did not exist only a few years ago. The transformation that TIM is facing is not merely technological. It also concerns the speed at which skills become obsolete within a mature workforce, whose average age is around 53 and whose employees typically have long company tenure. When technical knowledge evolves more rapidly than people can keep pace with it, the challenge ceases to be one of training and becomes a strategic issue.

The central argument of this contribution is straightforward: in the age of AI, productivity does not stem from imposing training but from restoring people's ability to choose. Alongside a country's technological sovereignty, there is another form of sovereignty: the individual's sovereignty over their own learning. The two are inseparable. A country cannot be sovereign over its skills if those skills are not directly governed by the people who possess them.

Within this framework, the TIM Academy is not simply a provider of training courses, but the strategic function that transforms technological change into widespread organizational capability. The distinction is substantial. Teaching someone how to use an artificial intelligence tool is a form of adaptation; helping that person redefine their relationship with expertise—understanding what remains uniquely human in their work, which machine-generated responses to accept and which to reject—is an

entirely different kind of learning. Many organizations stop at the first stage. The second is the true mission of a Corporate Academy.

Artificial intelligence, moreover, does not eliminate expertise; it redistributes its value. As machines take over an increasing number of tasks, what remains uniquely human is discernment—the capacity to exercise judgment in situations that cannot be fully resolved by data. For this reason, competence cannot simply be transferred through imposition; it can only be cultivated when individuals are placed in a position to make choices, make mistakes, and test their understanding. The freedom to learn is the training ground for that discernment.

For too long, corporate learning has followed what might be called the "School" model: learning pathways designed from the top down, mandatory participation, and value measured primarily by the number of training hours delivered rather than by the competencies acquired. It is a paternalistic model, based on the implicit assumption that people are unable to make informed choices. In contrast stands the "Netflix" model: learning content made available for individuals to select according to their own needs and pace. The goal is not to replace one model with the other, but to combine them: autonomy within a structured framework.

The *Apprendo* initiative translated this principle into practice. More than 28,000 employees were offered a catalogue of 176 courses, organized into 23 subject areas and four broad categories—technological, professional, transversal, and ecosystem-related—with the freedom to build their own learning journey within a limited set of constraints aligned with the company's strategic priorities. The results speak for themselves: more than 717,000 hours of training delivered and an average satisfaction rating of 4.12 out of 5. Psychology helps explain why. The *IKEA effect* describes people's tendency to assign greater value to something they have helped create. A learning pathway that is chosen is perceived as more valuable than one that is imposed—and, for that very reason, it is more likely to be completed.

The same principle underlies the adoption of LinkedIn Learning, whose usage increased from 45% to 74% in just one year, signalling a widespread demand for self-directed learning.

The most recent evolution of this journey is the introduction of podcasts. Through **TIM AI Voices**, the Academy has embraced a format that naturally integrates into employees' daily workflow. Podcasts can be listened to while commuting, lower the barriers to engaging with a complex

topic such as artificial intelligence, and transform professional updating from an isolated event into a daily habit. In this way, podcasts become a fully-fledged learning tool—continuous, pervasive, and capable of fostering a shared language around AI even before developing technical expertise. Their purpose is not simply to train people to use a tool, but to cultivate a critical understanding of technology, one that pays attention to sources, limitations, risks, and ethical implications. It is here that the most important competence takes shape: the ability to calibrate trust in machines, knowing when to rely on them and when to question them.

Freedom, however, is not neutral; it has value only if everyone is able to exercise it. For this reason, accessibility—including learning materials compatible with screen readers, sign language interpretation, and dedicated pathways for women, young professionals, and senior employees—is not merely an ethical add-on but the essential condition for making choice genuine. In this perspective, it reflects Don Lorenzo Milani's principle of *I care* applied to the corporate environment: a model of learning that leaves no one behind, especially those who begin from disadvantaged positions.

The connection between learning and productivity is direct. A workforce that is free to choose what it learns updates its skills more rapidly, reduces the risk of obsolescence, and can be redeployed internally with fewer obstacles. This requires, first and foremost, a cultural shift: from bureaucracy to trust, from attendance to results, from paternalism to participation. Measuring the competencies acquired rather than the hours delivered transforms investment in learning from a cost into a source of value. In this context, employability ceases to be either an individual burden or a corporate concession and becomes a shared responsibility among individuals, businesses, and institutions.

The institutional framework points in the same direction. The European Artificial Intelligence Act has made AI literacy a requirement for those who use AI systems in the workplace: a critical understanding of technology is no longer simply good practice but a condition for regulatory compliance. Likewise, the individual right to training, introduced in the 2016 collective agreement for Italy's metalworking sector and inspired by the French model, signals a broader shift: training protected as an individual right rather than granted at the employer's discretion. Restoring people's

sovereignty over their own learning is fully aligned with this trajectory, enabling organizations to anticipate change rather than merely react to it.

Artificial intelligence tends to separate knowledge from those who possess it: it extracts knowledge, codifies it, and makes it available independently of the individual. The mission of a Corporate Academy in the age of AI is precisely the opposite: to place knowledge back into the hands of those who work, enabling them to choose it, question it, and make it their own. It is through this process that Corporate Academies become infrastructures of sovereignty—both for individuals and, through them, for the country as a whole. This is the central thesis: productivity in the years ahead will depend on our ability to transform AI into a competence that people choose rather than one that is imposed. The freedom to learn is not the opposite of discipline; it is its most mature expression.

13. b) Skills Tell the Story of Transformation

Enrica Danese – Director, Corporate Communication & Sustainability - TIM

An organisation's reputation is built over time. It is founded on results, the capacity to innovate, the quality of relationships, and the credibility of strategic decisions. The way in which an organisation invests in its people and supports their professional growth also plays a fundamental role in strengthening this reservoir of trust.

Over the past four years, TIM has undergone a profound industrial transformation. The company has redefined its business model, reshaped its strategic priorities, developed new competencies, and introduced new ways of working. This journey has taught us a simple yet fundamental lesson: transformation does not occur when the organisation changes; it occurs when the people who make that transformation possible change.

During this period, we have had to address a number of challenges that are affecting large organisations across all industries.

The first concerns the speed at which competencies become obsolete. Artificial intelligence, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data technologies are fundamentally reshaping the content of many professions. The pace at which knowledge evolves has accelerated considerably, making continuous learning an essential requirement.

The second concerns the way in which people learn today. The volume of available content is virtually limitless, and individuals increasingly design their own learning and information journeys. Organisations can no longer assume that knowledge will be disseminated exclusively through traditional learning programmes.

The third is that there is no longer a single learning model suitable for everyone. Within the same organisation coexist highly diverse competencies, professional experiences, expectations, and levels of digital literacy. For this reason, learning must become increasingly modular, accessible, and personalised.

Alongside these developments, organisations are also experiencing another significant challenge: maintaining high levels of employee engagement has become increasingly complex. Organisational transformation, evolving

economic conditions, and changing expectations require new approaches capable of fostering participation, commitment, and a genuine sense of belonging.

It was precisely in response to these considerations that, at TIM, we began experimenting with communication formats that had not traditionally been associated with capability development. We introduced podcasts such as *TIM AI Voices* to explain complex topics such as artificial intelligence in an accessible way, produced short educational video features, developed editorial columns, and created new digital formats capable of reaching people through the channels, moments, and languages that best reflect their everyday media consumption habits.

Our objective was not to replace traditional learning, but to complement it with approaches that are more continuous, more agile, and more closely aligned with people's daily behaviours. Today, the dissemination of knowledge depends not only on the quality of the content itself, but also on its ability to be accessible, relevant, and easy to engage with.

This experience has confirmed that investing in competencies is, above all, about building an organisation capable of adapting to change. It means recognising and valuing accumulated experience, encouraging dialogue across generations, accelerating the circulation of knowledge, and creating the conditions that enable every individual to continue growing throughout their professional career.

For a company such as TIM, this also represents a broader responsibility. The competencies that we develop every day do not merely strengthen the organisation's competitiveness; they also contribute to building the human capital that Italy requires to address the major technological and economic transformations of the future.

For this reason, we continue to regard people development not as a supporting function, but as an essential component of organisational transformation. In a context in which technologies and business models are evolving at an ever-increasing pace, the capacity to learn becomes the foremost driver of resilience, innovation, and long-term competitiveness.

14. Università Campus Biomedico

14. a) From Organisational Self-Reference to Knowledge Ecosystems: The Role of Academies in National Competitiveness

Rossella Ferreri – Administrative Manager, UCBM Academy

In recent years, we have witnessed a profound transformation in the relationship among the actors that contribute to the country's economic and social development. Whereas universities, businesses, and public institutions once operated largely within clearly defined boundaries, pursuing distinct objectives and engaging with one another only occasionally, the growing complexity of today's technological and organisational challenges now demands new forms of collaboration.

The capacity to generate innovation no longer depends exclusively on the resources held by individual organisations, but increasingly on the quality of the relationships they are able to establish within a shared ecosystem. The presence of a postgraduate university school within Assoknowledge—the Italian Education Association of Confindustria—provides tangible evidence of this profound transformation: the transition from a self-referential model to an ecosystem-based approach, in which value is created through collaboration among universities, businesses, public institutions, and local communities.

THE NEW ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES AND POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

Within this new knowledge ecosystem, not only have the roles of the various actors and the nature of their interactions evolved, but the very paradigm of learning has also undergone a fundamental transformation. In an economic and social context characterised by demographic change, longer working lives, and the accelerating pace at which competencies and professions evolve, learning has assumed a profoundly different configuration from that of the past.

For many years, education was conceived as a distinct phase of life, concentrated during the years of formal schooling and essentially completed upon entry into the labour market: first one studies, then one

works. Today, this model is no longer adequate. The speed of technological innovation, the emergence of new professions, and the continuous evolution of organisations require lifelong learning capable of supporting individuals throughout the entirety of their professional lives.

Learning therefore becomes a continuous and dynamic process that extends far beyond any single educational programme, constantly renewing itself to respond to the evolving needs of individuals, organisations, and institutions. From this perspective, Academies emerge as strategic partners in the development and continuous updating of competencies throughout the entire professional lifecycle.

University Academies, in particular, can make a distinctive contribution to the lifelong learning ecosystem. While Corporate Academies are primarily designed to address the specific capability needs of individual organisations, University Academies are uniquely positioned to foster dialogue across competencies, disciplines, and professional experiences. Their institutional mission, grounded in the three pillars of education, research, and the university's so-called "third mission" of societal engagement, enables them to develop a broader understanding of ongoing transformations, promoting interdisciplinary exchange and the development of competencies that are transferable across diverse professional contexts.

WHICH SKILLS IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Artificial intelligence has become one of the principal drivers of transformation across organisational, productive, and professional models. Public debate surrounding its adoption often focuses on the benefits associated with greater efficiency, faster decision-making, and increased automation. Alongside these opportunities, however, there are also less visible costs and risks that tend to be underestimated. The introduction of increasingly autonomous AI systems creates new requirements for oversight, monitoring, security, transparency, and regulatory compliance.

Within this context, the central challenge extends beyond the mere adoption of new technologies to encompass the ability to govern their use in a conscious, responsible, and informed manner. Organisational competitiveness will increasingly depend on the capacity to integrate artificial intelligence into decision-making and operational processes while

preserving meaningful human oversight over strategic, ethical, and organisational choices.

From a learning perspective, the most significant challenge posed by AI adoption will likewise involve a shift away from predominantly technical competencies towards cognitive, strategic, and relational capabilities. Critical thinking, problem-solving, data interpretation, continuous learning, adaptability, and the ability to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines are becoming increasingly central.

A further challenge arises from the growing need to integrate multidisciplinary competencies. The most significant transformations of our time cannot be addressed through isolated specialist knowledge alone. They require professionals capable of combining diverse forms of expertise, interpreting complex environments, and connecting technological, managerial, and interpersonal competencies within a systemic perspective.

STRATEGIC ASSETS FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE UPSKILLING

If change is systemic, then upskilling must also be systemic.

The first strategic asset upon which an effective learning response must be built is the widespread dissemination of competencies throughout the organisation. Transformation cannot remain confined to individuals or specialised technical functions; rather, it must engage senior leadership, middle management, and professionals alike within a coherent and shared development journey.

The second strategic asset concerns the integration of human competencies with technological capabilities. The growing adoption of artificial intelligence—and particularly agentic AI systems—is profoundly reshaping the nature of the competencies required within organisations. As AI increasingly assumes responsibility for automation and decision generation, the uniquely human contribution will lie in the ability to understand and interpret information, exercise critical judgment regarding machine-generated recommendations, and govern organisational environments characterised by complexity and uncertainty.

The third strategic asset lies in recognising the team as the fundamental unit of organisational transformation. If change affects the organisation as a whole, it is within teams that transformation becomes tangible through new ways of collaborating, making decisions, sharing knowledge, and

addressing complex challenges. Teams constitute the primary organisational environment in which individual competencies interact, complement one another, and generate collective value.

This dimension is further reinforced by the growing generational diversity that characterises contemporary organisations. Never before have four distinct generations worked side by side within the same organisational environments, each bringing different experiences, languages, expectations, and approaches to learning. Transforming this diversity into a strategic resource requires viewing the team as a living system that must be continuously nurtured and developed. Just as individual competencies require ongoing renewal, teams also need dedicated spaces, appropriate tools, and meaningful opportunities to strengthen mutual trust, encourage knowledge sharing, and develop a shared language and common understanding.

Corporate and University Academies therefore assume a strategic role not only in developing individual competencies but also in strengthening teams as learning communities capable of sustaining the organisation's ability to manage and lead change over time.

14. b) UCBM Academy: Learning that Redesigns Skills, Organisations, and the Future of Work

Alexandra Tomassi – Head of Communication - Università Campus Biomedico

At a historical moment marked by the structural transformation of economic and productive systems, lifelong learning has ceased to be a supporting function and has become a strategic infrastructure. It is within this domain that a decisive part of the capacity of organisations and public institutions to remain competitive and effectively navigate change is now determined.

It is within this broader context of profound transformation that UCBM Academy operates. As the advanced postgraduate education model of Università Campus Bio-Medico di Roma, it has been conceived as an integrated ecosystem in which academic excellence, the business community, and competency development converge and mutually reinforce one another. Rather than a conventional educational institution, UCBM Academy functions as both a physical and digital platform for the creation, dissemination, and sharing of knowledge, designed to generate tangible impact on employability, innovation, and human capital development. Its mission is clear: to support the transformation of competencies through structured, interdisciplinary learning pathways aligned with the evolving trajectories of strategic sectors within a rapidly changing global economy.

A LEARNING PORTFOLIO COVERING THE ENTIRE PROFESSIONAL LIFECYCLE

The architecture of UCBM Academy is founded upon a lifelong learning approach that accompanies individuals throughout their entire professional journey through a modular and highly integrated educational framework.

First- and second-level University Master's programmes constitute the Academy's primary strategic pillar. These programmes are designed for recent graduates and early-career professionals and are characterised by the

close integration of academic teaching, applied laboratories, project-based learning, and internships within companies and public institutions.

Alongside these Master's programmes are advanced professional development courses focused on specialised and highly technical competencies, as well as Continuing Medical Education (ECM) programmes, which represent a fundamental pillar in supporting the ongoing professional development of healthcare practitioners through clinical activities, workshops, and scientific conferences.

Executive education constitutes another core element of the Academy's model. Executive programmes address the major organisational challenges of contemporary enterprises, including leadership, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and change management. These programmes are complemented by internationally oriented Bootcamps designed to accelerate competency development in areas characterised by high technological intensity.

UCBM Academy also develops tailor-made programmes for private companies and public administrations. These initiatives are specifically designed following a detailed analysis of organisational needs, with the objective of supporting transformation processes and human capital development. Lifelong learning constitutes a structural component of the model, reflecting the understanding that learning must be continuous in response to the increasingly rapid obsolescence of competencies across productive systems.

This educational framework is further enhanced by the Simulation Center, which introduces an immersive and experiential dimension to learning that is particularly valuable within the healthcare, technology, and engineering sectors, strengthening the connection between theoretical knowledge and professional practice.

The Academy's educational portfolio is organised around strategically important thematic areas, including Healthcare & Management, Engineering & High-Tech, Nutrition Science, Management, Innovation & Sustainability.

At the same time, the Academy maintains a strong focus on emerging domains through specialised programmes in Artificial Intelligence & Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, the NIS2 Directive, Space Security, and AI Management, thereby consolidating its advanced positioning in areas of critical technological innovation. This portfolio is complemented by Team Coaching and Emotional Intelligence programmes dedicated to strengthening leadership capabilities, interpersonal competencies, and collaborative dynamics within complex organisational environments.

AN ECOSYSTEM BUILT ON GLOBAL INDUSTRIAL PARTNERSHIPS

UCBM Academy is distinguished by its close integration with the international industrial and technological ecosystem. Collaborations with global organisations such as Google.org, AWS, Microsoft, and Cyber 4.0 reinforce the practical dimension of its educational programmes while significantly enhancing their capacity to generate innovation that can be effectively transferred into productive systems.

The result is a learning model that does not merely observe transformation from the outside but actively anticipates it and translates it into practical, applicable competencies.

LEARNING AS A DRIVER OF ORGANISATIONAL IDENTITY AND CULTURE

The education provided by UCBM Academy extends well beyond the development of technical competencies. It directly contributes to the construction of organisational identity and culture.

Through structured dialogue among academic faculty, businesses, and technology partners, its programmes help establish shared languages, cultural models, and organisational values that foster a culture of innovation, responsibility, and professional excellence.

TALENT, EMPLOYABILITY, AND HUMAN CAPITAL

In an increasingly selective and competitive labour market, UCBM Academy plays a strategic role in attracting, developing, and enhancing talent. The quality of its educational programmes, combined with their close integration with industry, enables the creation of professional pathways that are closely aligned with the evolving requirements of contemporary economic systems, thereby strengthening the connection between education and employability.

RESPONSIBILITY AND THE FUTURE OF WORK

Investment in learning through flexible, experiential, and innovation-oriented programmes extends well beyond the educational dimension. It represents an expression of strategic responsibility and a long-term vision for the future of organisations, individuals, and work itself.

