

Competencies for Sustainable Entrepreneurship



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Definitions

Competence is described as the generic, integrated, and internalized capability to deliver durable effective performance in a certain professional domain, job, role, organizational context, and task situation. Competency or the plural competencies are the constituents of competence, which refers to coherent clusters of knowledge, skills, and attitudes which can be utilized in real performance contexts.

The overarching aim of *Sustainable Entrepreneurship* is ultimately to balance the competing demands for environmental protection and economic development, emphasizing economic, ecological, and social goals in equal degrees.

Sustainable entrepreneurs are described as those individuals who holistically integrate the goals of economic, social, and environmental entrepreneurship into an organization that is sustainable in its goal and sustainable in its form of wealth generation.

Setting the Stage

Sustainable development is perhaps the most prominent challenge for businesses of our time. Climate change and the destruction of biodiversity demonstrate the negative and potentially deadly consequences these processes have for living species (United Nations 2004). Entrepreneurial action is increasingly seen as a promising way to preserve ecosystems, counteract climate change, reduce environmental degradation, improve agricultural practices, and maintain biodiversity (Dean and McMullen 2007; Patzelt and Shepherd 2011). In addition, acting entrepreneurial is of increasing importance because of the rapidly growing complex world we live in, caused by developments such as globalization and technological change (Lackéus 2015). Everyday life is characterized by dynamics and discontinuities, or as Gibb (2002) states: “Individuals as consumers, workers and as members of families [...] face greater levels of uncertainty and complexity in their lives” (p. 136). In a world in which global climate disruption, ever-increasing population, and massive extinctions of biodiversity and critical species are at the forefront, there is a need for individuals who are able to deal with these challenges in their work contexts. These challenges are intertwined with the sustainable development goal: “decent work and economic growth.” Here, economic growth refers to creating conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment.

Developing specific competencies can help these (future) workers in dealing with complexity and uncertainty in their work context, but also with tackling some of the grand challenges of our time. One of those fields in which uncertainty and complexity are truly at the forefront is the domain of sustainable entrepreneurship. Therefore, competencies for sustainable entrepreneurship can support future change agents in their jobs and offer pathways for balancing the triple bottom line through their entrepreneurial behavior.

Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Global climate change and the accelerating depletion of natural resources are just two of several phenomena indicating that the world is not well aligned with the concept of sustainable development (Brundtland 1987). The severity of global sustainability challenges has led to an increasing awareness that incremental solutions will not be enough to maintain critical levels of natural and social capital (Russo 2003) and hence there is an increased interest in sustainable entrepreneurship as a phenomenon and a research topic (Cohen and Winn 2007; Dean and McMullen 2007). The relationship between entrepreneurship and sustainable development has been addressed by various streams of thought and literature such as ecopreneurship, social entrepreneurship, institutional entrepreneurship, and sustainable entrepreneurship, of which some are covered in this *Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Decent Work and Economic Growth* as well. Early conceptions of this link between entrepreneurship and sustainable development stem from theories based on an economics or market failure perspective. Traditional theories from environmental and welfare economics largely concluded that market failures within the economic system not only prevent entrepreneurial action from resolving environmental problems but actually motivate environmentally degrading entrepreneurial behaviors (Cropper and Oates 1992). More specifically, this stream of literature states that, because of the unique characteristics of many environmental resources, certain

obstructions to their efficient allocation in the market system exist, and, as a result, entrepreneurial action will not protect and preserve valuable environmental resources (Dorfman 1983). From a practical perspective, this argument has led to policy and research that focuses on regulatory intervention as the primary solution to environmentally relevant market failures and has created a general lack of knowledge about the means by which entrepreneurs can help solve environmental challenges (Dorfman 1983). This has however not held back recent developments in the field that focus less on the market system, but more on the individual processes and characteristics of these sustainable entrepreneurs.

As a result, entrepreneurship is increasingly identified as a catalyst for solutions to sustainability problems (York and Venkataraman 2010; Dean and McMullen 2007). Whereas conventional entrepreneurship is more associated with counteracting sustainable development, as almost everything is subordinate to the bottom line, sustainable entrepreneurial action is seen as a promising way to preserve ecosystems, counteract climate change, reduce environmental degradation, improve agricultural practices, and maintain biodiversity (Cohen and Winn 2007; Dean and McMullen 2007; Patzelt and Shepherd 2011). The central idea behind the development of sustainable ventures is that the activities performed by entrepreneurs in the pursuit of gains must not undermine the ecological and social environments in which they operate and, when necessary, they must restore or nurture such environments toward recovering the balance between the environment, society, and economic activity which is referred to as the triple bottom line (Patzelt and Shepherd 2011; Schaltegger and Wagner 2011). This and other definitions of sustainable entrepreneurship resonate with mainstream sustainability ideas. Ultimately, its overarching aim is to balance the competing demands for environmental protection and economic development, emphasizing economic, ecological, and social goals in equal degrees (Patzelt and Shepherd 2011).

Sustainable Entrepreneurs

In the work of Young and Tilley (2006), sustainable entrepreneurship is embodied by someone “who holistically integrates the goals of economic, social and environmental entrepreneurship into an organization that is sustainable in its goal and sustainable in its form of wealth generation” (p. 88). Sustainable entrepreneurs balance the triple bottom line, by balancing economic health, social equity, and environmental resilience through their entrepreneurial behavior (Kuckertz and Wagner 2010). Sustainable entrepreneurs are often referred to as *change agents* for sustainability. According to Svanström et al. (2008), a successful change agent for sustainability must have knowledge of environmental, of economic, and of social issues related to sustainability. Furthermore, the change agent must have a value system to support their actions. This value system is a necessary condition that separates conventional entrepreneurs from sustainable entrepreneurs. Addressing sustainability problems and recognizing sustainable business opportunities requires to go beyond descriptive questions of how complex social-ecological systems have evolved, how they are currently functioning, and how they might further develop (Swart et al. 2004; Rockström et al. 2009; Wiek et al. 2011). It deals with how social-ecological systems ought to be developed in order to achieve a balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects in business practices. Therefore, the concept of sustainability can be characterized by its value-oriented and also normative character. Individuals who are involved in sustainable development do not only feel responsible; they also take responsibility and act upon their values and norms. In addition, the sustainable entrepreneur must have the ability to perform sustainability tasks. Therefore, the difference between conventional entrepreneurs and sustainable entrepreneurs is not just about the difference in the nature of the opportunity to be exploited but also has to do with the value-oriented character of the decisions made which entails making the trade-off between economic, social, and environmental values without, a priori, choosing one over another – even if this entails tensions and conflicts (Hahn et al. 2014).

Therefore, it is not just the sustainable entrepreneurial object (i.e., product, service, method of production, etc.) that serves a different goal than that of conventional entrepreneurs. Also, the entrepreneurial process as such seems to imply that sustainable entrepreneurs require different skills, knowledge, and values which enable them to achieve sustainability goals through their entrepreneurial actions.

Research on different types of skills and knowledge to deal with sustainability issues or challenges meanders across various contexts vary from organization-level studies to individual-level studies. For instance, in the domains of environmental issue management and corporate social responsibility, the level of analysis is commonly the company. Here, knowledge and skills to deal with sustainable development are usually described by organizational-level competencies or dynamic capabilities (Heugens 2006; Nijhof 2005). Even though the level of analysis in these studies is the company, it is acknowledged that these organizational-level competencies or dynamic capabilities are a product of individual-level competencies that are enacted by individual employees (Heugens 2006). As a result, studies on individual-level competencies are rising in most fields that deal with sustainable development in a business context. Especially in the field of entrepreneurship, where the individual has a much bigger impact on the performance of the venture (because of the small size of start-up companies), a focus on individual-level skills, knowledge, and attitudes is dominant. But also in the field of individual competencies, different approaches exist. The next section addresses the concept of individual competence and introduces a competence framework for sustainable entrepreneurship.

Competencies for Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Already more than two decades ago, Barbara Bird (1995, p. 51) stated that “Entrepreneurial Competence may be an oxymoron to a disgruntled investor, but it provides policy makers, program directors, educators, and organizational

researchers with an important predictor of venture outcomes.” Also in the EU, there is continuous attention for entrepreneurial competencies. The EU defined “sense of initiative and entrepreneurship” as one of the key competencies for lifelong learning (European Parliament and the Council of the European Union 2006). Since then, entrepreneurial competence has received much attention in policy documents (e.g., Morselli and Ajello 2016). Recently, Bacigalupo et al. (2016) proposed the “EntreComp,” a European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework, including 3 competence areas and 15 underlying competencies translated to 442 learning outcomes related to entrepreneurship. Next to receiving attention from a (European) political point of view, the competence concept also remains to receive attention from scholars all over the world, in which sustainable development becomes a more important element.

Approaches to Individual Competence

In general, three approaches to competence are described in the literature. In the behavioral-functionalistic or work-oriented approach, individual competencies are derived from detailed job descriptions that are central for accomplishing specific work tasks and then translating those activities into personal attributes (Sandberg 2000). A job analysis refers to an investigation of an occupation, in which the analysis is centered around a number of jobs. The jobs are further broken down into a series of activities, which in turn are broken down into duties, tasks, and sub-tasks. One basic criticism of the behavioral-functionalistic approach is that a list of work activities does not sufficiently capture the underlying knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to accomplish those activities efficiently (Eraut 1994).

As a reaction to these critiques, the generic- or worker-oriented approach to the concept of competence emerged (Eraut 1994; Sandberg 2000). The generic approach views competence as a set of attributes possessed by workers, typically represented as knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal traits required for effective work performance. Researchers in this approach focus on

observing successful and effective job performers to determine how these individuals differ from less successful performers. One of the strengths of this approach to competence is that much effort has been put into testing it on a large scale with a wide variety of practitioners, using a wide range of psychometric techniques to measure the reliability and validity of the constructs. However, the competence profiles resulting from this approach are often too general, thereby losing the context specificity of the competencies, and are therefore difficult to use in professional practice (Eraut 1994; Osagie et al. 2015). Both the work-oriented and worker-oriented approaches fall short in addressing the situated nature of professional practice (e.g., Brown et al. 1989); this is problematic since people and their world(s) are inextricably related: workers and their work blend together in the execution of activities, with workers experiencing them and making sense of them (Sandberg 2000).

Over the last two decades, there has been a continuous search for more comprehensive conceptualizations of competence in order to contrast them clearly with the disintegrative and reductionist models of competence described above. Comprehensive in this sense refers to the integrated and internalized capability conditional for accomplishing task performance, problem-solving, and functioning within a specific position and context. From this comprehensive perspective, competence is defined as “the generic, integrated and internalized capability to deliver durable effective performance in a certain professional domain, job, role, organizational context, and task situation” (Mulder 2014, p. 111). Competency or the plural competencies are the constituents of competence, which refers to coherent clusters of knowledge, skills, and attitudes which can be utilized in real performance contexts. An important characteristic of competence is that it is a latent construct, meaning that not all competence is continuously present in performance. For instance, the mere fact that a person is able to act entrepreneurial with regard to sustainable development does not mean this person is actually acting entrepreneurial all the time. Therefore, competence and its constituent competencies

are latent constructs, meaning that assessing them always involves inference. Furthermore, competencies in the comprehensive approach are always context dependent, referring to them being constituted in relation to contextual factors (e.g., peers, networks, industry).

Competencies for Change Agents in Specific Work Contexts

According to Svanström et al. (2008), a successful change agent for sustainable development must have knowledge of environmental, of economic, and of social issues related to sustainability (i.e., knowledge element of competence). Furthermore, the change agent must have a value system to support their actions (i.e., attitude element of competence). In addition, the change agent must have the ability to perform sustainability tasks (i.e., skills element of competence). Considerable, though mostly conceptual, efforts in translating these abilities for change agents into competencies have been made over the last decade (Svanström et al. 2008; De Haan 2006; Wiek et al. 2011; Rieckmann 2012). Education for sustainable development aims at enabling people to “not only acquire and generate knowledge, but also to reflect on further effects and the complexity of behavior and decisions in a future-oriented and global perspective of responsibility” (Rieckmann 2012, p. 128). It is likely that these skills, attitudes, and knowledge stem from individual competencies for sustainable development. Over the past few years, individual competencies for sustainable development have received much attention in the education for sustainability literature (De Haan 2006; Barth et al. 2007; Wiek et al. 2011; Rieckmann 2012). Competencies such as foresighted or anticipatory thinking, systems thinking, interdisciplinary work, and participation are considered as key competencies that warrant (additional) attention in higher education.

Critical questions can be raised regarding the conceptual nature of these studies as they lead to rather abstract academic descriptions of competencies (Delamare Le Deist and Winterton 2005), which are more in line with the worker-oriented view on competence, focusing on generic descriptions and little attention for specific contexts. As

a result, competence descriptions from the education for sustainability literature are usually decontextualized because competence lists are meant to be study program overarching, crossing various educational contexts and curricula. The reality, however, is that sustainability challenges and tasks often become meaningful in one’s specific work environment. Therefore, the work context is also an important factor to take into account in the field of sustainable development.

As a reaction to these critical remarks, several scholars have identified and studied competencies for sustainable development which are enacted in a specific work context and embrace a comprehensive approach to competence (Hesselbarth and Schaltegger 2014; Osagie et al. 2015; Wesselink et al. 2015; Lans et al. 2014; Ploum et al. 2017). In today’s society, different types of work contexts for change agents in the field of sustainable development can be distinguished. For instance, CSR managers, sustainable intrapreneurs, and sustainable entrepreneurs all play a key role in bringing about change to companies and society as a whole. Competencies identified in relation to specific change agent’s context are usually combinations of the key competencies for sustainable development mentioned above and key competencies identified in management and entrepreneurship literature (Hesselbarth and Schaltegger 2014; Lans et al. 2014).

Most of these studies applied the comprehensive or multimethod-oriented approach to competence in applying these competencies in the business context. For example, the work of Hesselbarth and Schaltegger (2014) focuses on contextualizing competencies for SD in a work context. Based on experiences of MBA alumni, they propose five key competencies for change agents for sustainability. Osagie et al. (2015) combined results from a systematic literature review with results from 28 interviews with CSR managers to compile a set of 8 CSR-related competencies. In the field of CSR, Wesselink et al. (2015) performed an empirical study to analyze individual competencies for managers engaged in corporate sustainable management practices and identified five competencies which highly correspond with core tasks performed by CSR

managers. In addition, Lans et al. (2014) identified a framework of seven competencies for sustainable entrepreneurship based on focus groups with teachers involved in entrepreneurship education and by performing an exploratory factor analysis on the survey in which the seven competencies were queried. Finally, Ploum et al. (2017, 2018) further tested and developed the framework as proposed by Lans et al. (2014) in subsequent studies with entrepreneurship students and professionals, resulting in a framework of six competencies for sustainable entrepreneurship. Table 1 provides an overview of the five studies and competencies mentioned in these studies.

Competencies for Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Despite the use of some of the same initial competencies, the inclusion of key competencies differs among the different studies. Three competencies are included in all five studies, namely, strategic (management) competence, systems thinking competence, and interpersonal competence. Where Hesselbarth and Schaltegger (2014), Lans et al. (2014), Osagie et al. (2015), and Ploum et al. (2017) underpin the importance of normative competence, the empirical study performed by Wesselink et al. (2015) did not point in this direction. They argue that this could be a result of either normative competence already being internalized in the behavior of CSR managers or the structural lack of normative behavior in this specific work/business context (Wesselink et al. 2015).

Another competency which has been subject to debate is anticipatory/foresighted thinking competence (both words are used for more or less the same construct). Rieckmann (2012) identifies this as one of the most important competencies, and it is also empirically found in the work of Hesselbarth and Schaltegger (2014), Osagie et al. (2015), Lans et al. (2014), and Ploum et al. (2017). However, Wesselink et al. (2015) did not include this competency as a key competency. The reason for not including this competency seems to be directly related to the specific CSR context in which they have researched the enactment of the competencies (Wesselink et al. 2015).

They argue that in the more mature phases of the CSR implementation process, foresighted thinking is less important than in the starting phases. Their sample consisted of companies in the more mature phases, which could explain the absence of foresighted thinking competence.

Also, embracing diversity and interdisciplinarity competence is not supported by all five studies. Lans et al. (2014), Wesselink et al. (2015), and Ploum et al. (2017) acknowledge the importance of this competence, but it is not included in the studies by Hesselbarth and Schaltegger (2014) and Osagie et al. (2015). The fourth and last competence up for debate is action competence. In the literature, this competence is widely considered as one of the most important competencies for sustainable development (De Haan 2006; Ellis and Weekes 2008; Blok et al. 2016), but in practice, this does not always show. Even though Lans et al. (2014) tend to keep action competence included, the results of their exploratory analysis show significant overlap with strategic management competence. This overlap was confirmed in the study by Ploum et al. (2017) who merged action competence with strategic management competence into strategic action competence. Also, Hesselbarth and Schaltegger (2014) and Osagie et al. (2015) encounter difficulties with the concept of action competence. The latter encourage a more practical interpretation of the concept and see it merely as “actively engaging oneself in the process of CSR implementation” (Osagie et al. 2015, p. 17).

Whereas the other studies mainly focus on students or on CSR professionals, the latest study by Ploum et al. (forthcoming) is one of the only studies that includes experienced sustainable entrepreneurs. The competence framework developed in the educational context was tested in the business context of sustainable entrepreneurs. As this entry revolves around the specific context of sustainable entrepreneurship, a detailed description of the competencies used by Lans et al. (2014) and Ploum et al. (2017, 2018) in subsequent studies is presented below:

1. *Embracing diversity and interdisciplinarity competence*: the ability to structure relations,

Competencies for Sustainable Entrepreneurship, Table 1 Overview of competencies for sustainable development contextualized in the work context, identified by key researchers

Authors	Domain	Key competencies included in research
Hesselbarth and Schaltegger 2014	Entrepreneurship Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic competence 2. Systems thinking competence 3. Anticipatory competence 4. Normative competence 5. Interpersonal competence
Lans et al. 2014	Entrepreneurship Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systems thinking competence 2. Embracing diversity and interdisciplinarity competence 3. Foresighted thinking competence 4. Normative competence 5. Action competence 6. Interpersonal competence 7. Strategic management competence
Osagie et al. 2015	Corporate social responsibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipating CSR challenges 2. Understanding CSR-relevant systems and subsystems 3. Understanding CSR-relevant standards 4. CSR management competencies 5. Realizing CSR-supportive interpersonal processes 6. Employing CSR-supportive personal characteristics and attitudes 7. Personal value-driven competencies 8. Reflecting on personal CSR views and experiences
Wesselink et al. 2015	Corporate social responsibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systems thinking competence 2. Embracing diversity and interdisciplinarity competence 3. Interpersonal competence 4. Action competence 5. Strategic management competence
Ploum et al. 2017, 2018	Entrepreneurship education and sustainable entrepreneurship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systems thinking competence 2. Embracing diversity and interdisciplinarity competence 3. Foresighted thinking competence 4. Interpersonal competence 5. Normative competence 6. Strategic action competence

- spot issues, and recognize the legitimacy of other viewpoints (i.e., stakeholders) in business decision-making processes, be it about environmental, social, and/or economic issues
2. *Foresighted thinking competence*: the ability to collectively analyze, evaluate, and craft “pictures” of the future in which the impact of local and/or short-term decisions on environmental, social, and economic issues is viewed on a global/cosmopolitan scale and in the long term
 3. *Systems thinking competence*: the ability to identify and analyze all relevant (sub)systems across different domains (people, profit, planet) and disciplines, including their boundaries
 4. *Interpersonal competence*: the ability to motivate, enable, and facilitate collaborative and participatory sustainability activities and research
 5. *Normative competence*: the ability to map, apply, and reconcile sustainability values,

principles, and targets with internal and external stakeholders, without embracing any given norm, but based on the good character of the one who is involved in sustainability issues

6. *Strategic action competence*: the ability to collectively design projects; implement interventions, transitions, and strategies; and translate these strategies to responsible actions for the improvement of the sustainability of social-ecological systems

This synthesis of the most recent studies on competencies for sustainable entrepreneurship calls for a more *in-depth* and *empirical* analysis of the competencies at stake when dealing with sustainability challenges.

Future Directions

Research Agenda

Sustainable entrepreneurs try to manage the triple bottom line, by balancing economic health, social equity, and environmental resilience through their entrepreneurial behavior (Kuckertz and Wagner 2010). Sustainable entrepreneurship is thus associated with the promise of more traditional concepts of entrepreneurship such as gaining economic values but also brings additional potential both for society and the environment. Even though it is often stated that the triple bottom line is managed by individuals, open-ended problems like sustainability issues require difficult and complex decision-making processes that are not easy to manage. In line with this, Gibbs (2009) refers to the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship as a “black box,” meaning that economic, social, and environmental values and goals are combined in entrepreneurial processes regarding sustainability issues, but does not get at how (and even if) this is achieved. Focusing on competencies that can enable individuals to achieve this balance between people, profit, and planet helps in understanding this process.

As a result, several research issues can be pointed out. First, studies on what competencies could be considered as key competencies to achieve a balance between people, profit, and

planet are numerous. Interesting to see is that although many scholars warn for the production of endless laundry lists of competencies, the reality is that scholars continue to do so and that real consensus on which competencies constitute sustainable entrepreneurial competence is lacking. In addition, due to the conceptual nature of most of these studies, the lists of competencies are usually rather abstract academic descriptions of competencies (Delamare Le Deist and Winterton 2005). There is a need for research that empirically addresses the validity of such lists of competencies. In addition, moving from the “what” question to the “how” question remains problematic (Lans et al. 2018). There is a need for future research that empirically addresses the actual enactment of these competencies by professionals in the field and relating the competencies with performance measures like opportunity recognition for sustainable development and with decision-making processes.

Impact Agenda

Not just entrepreneurial individuals have an important role to play in transforming our society into a more sustainable one in which there is decent work for all and economic growth and environmental resilience for the future generations to come. In this ever-changing, complex world, education institutions have an important role in preparing future workers for dealing with open-ended sustainability challenges in a work context. Nevertheless, higher education institutions and business schools mainly prescribe a profit-driven and materialistic worldview to students. This can compromise their ethical values and weaken their perceptions of social responsibility (Ghoshal 2005). Critics such as Giacalone and Thompson (2006) argue that students are often encouraged to treat everything as subordinate to profit. Slater and Dixon-Fowler (2010) call this the “profit-first” mentality, which has no regard for moral considerations or social responsibilities. Education institutes have a big role in the transition from this profit-first mentality as a logic toward a new logic in which sustainability is not seen as a loss, but seen as a positive outcome. As such, entrepreneurship education should

incorporate sustainable development as a basic requirement and focus on the development of the competencies for sustainable entrepreneurship. This can be done by implementing new pedagogies that focus on value creation that moves beyond profit maximization. In this process, it is important to keep track of the competencies for sustainable entrepreneurship and to foster them within the teaching cases.

Lackéus (2015) proposed several entrepreneurship-oriented tools to capture value creation processes within education. Even though these tools are specified within the entrepreneurship domain, they could also be useful for teaching sustainable entrepreneurship. For instance, the concept of effectuation represents a quite practical and hands-on approach to teaching “through” entrepreneurship. It has been developed by Sarasvathy and colleagues (see, e.g., Sarasvathy 2001; Sarasvathy and Venkataraman 2011). Effectuation is described as an iterative process of decision-making and active commitment seeking that results in creation of new value, where each iteration is started with questions such as “Who am I?”, “What do I know?”, and “Whom do I know?”. Sarasvathy and Venkataraman (2011) propose that entrepreneurship could be regarded as a generic method for creating potentially valuable change by unleashing human potential and has contrasted this to the scientific method designed to harness Mother Nature. Viewing entrepreneurship as a generic method holds much promise for the field of entrepreneurial education but requires emphasis on taking responsibility, value creation, and using creativity tools (Neck and Green 2011).

In addition, incubators play an important role in the (sustainable) entrepreneurial landscape. Their role is to provide a support environment for start-up companies, thereby promoting local job creation, economic development, and technology transfer (Peters et al. 2004). A lot of sustainable entrepreneurs are involved in such business incubation programs, lean start-up boot camps, acceleration programs, and so on. They could use these learning platforms to develop their sustainable entrepreneurial competencies and become more aware of the enactment of the right

competencies during the stages of the entrepreneurial process. At the same time, these learning platforms should include a focus on the development of these competencies throughout their services and include sustainable development as an integrated aspect of doing business.

Concluding Remarks

Despite the growing interest in sustainable development in all layers of society, it remains difficult to fully reach the potential sustainable entrepreneurs can have in the transformation toward a more sustainable society. Nevertheless, focusing on developing specific competencies for sustainable entrepreneurship might mitigate and overcome challenges that are inherent to this transition toward a more sustainable society in which there is inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment, and decent work for all.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)
- ▶ [Employee Competence](#)
- ▶ [Entrepreneurship](#)
- ▶ [Market Failure](#)
- ▶ [Social Entrepreneurship](#)
- ▶ [Sustainable Business Models](#)
- ▶ [Sustainable Business Strategies](#)
- ▶ [Sustainable Entrepreneurship](#)

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