

Minerva Award for University Theses

Introduction:

As part of the *Minerva Award for Excellence Companies 2026*, the initiative aims to promote awareness and reward young university graduates who have written their thesis on topics related to the advancement of women in the workplace, the women and employment, and more broadly on inclusion and women's empowerment. These are key areas on which the Minerva Award, promoted by Unindustria and Federmanager Roma, has been working for several years.

Target participants:

Graduates in legal, economic/statistical, or social fields who have developed a thesis on topics such as Economic and social empowerment of women, Gender dimension and sustainability, Legislation for social and economic emancipation of women, Occupational and economic desegregation, Welfare policies, Full exercise of rights from a gender perspective.

Topics may also relate to the gender dimension within major ongoing transitions and transformations: digital and technological, environmental, demographic, generational, and social.

Topics (non-exhaustive examples):

- Role of education and training in promoting a culture of equality
- Transition from education to work and educational/professional segregation
- Women's leadership and access to top and managerial roles in public and private sectors
- Role of collective bargaining and social dialogue in promoting gender equality
- Equal pay, gender pay gap, and workplace treatment
- Role of public services and welfare in sharing family responsibilities and work-life balance
- Economic/financial independence and decision-making autonomy
- Entrepreneurial opportunities and support for women's entrepreneurship
- Empowerment and freedom of choice
- Equal voice in family and social contexts

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- Combating gender discrimination
- Prevention of and action against gender-based violence and workplace sexual harassment
- Positive actions for labour inclusion
- Gender certification models
- Data, gender, and society: statistics and gender analysis
- Infrastructure for gender equality
- Contribution of the private sector to gender equality and closing gender gaps
- Gender dimension in the context of AI
- Financial education from a gender perspective
- Impact of bias and stereotypes in the labour market and organizations

Requirements:

Applicants must hold a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or equivalent single-cycle degree.

The thesis must have been submitted and defended no more than two years prior to the publication date of the call.

Deadline and application procedure:

The application form (Annex 1), duly completed and accompanied by the thesis in electronic format, must be sent no later than **October 15, 2026** to: premiominerva@un-industria.it

Evaluation criteria:

- Relevance to the call topic: 10 points
- Originality and innovation: 30 points
- Research methodology: 30 points
- Completeness and clarity: 20 points
- Adequacy of bibliographic sources: 10 points

The final decision will be made by an independent panel of experts appointed by Unindustria and Federmanager Roma. The composition of the panel will be disclosed after the application deadline.

Results:

Selected candidates will be notified by email (from premiominerva@un-industria.it) within 10 days of the award ceremony.

Prize:

Each awarded thesis will receive a prize of **€1,500,00**.
Up to a maximum of three theses will be awarded.

Award ceremony:

The awards will be presented during the *Minerva Award for Excellence Companies 2026* event, scheduled for **October 27, 2026**, alongside the recognition of women managers and outstanding companies.