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www.abis-global.org
About ABIS

About ABIS

ABIS - The Academy of Business in Society is a global network of over 100 companies, networks, and academic institutions whose expertise, commitment and resources are leveraged to invest in a more sustainable future for business in society.

The ABIS Team supports its partners and members by harnessing the network’s expertise, commitment and resources, and leveraging these through collaborative projects and events that empower change and deliver impact.

Mission

Our mission is to build bridges and strengthen collaboration between the corporate and academic worlds to accelerate systemic change in business education and practice. We create platforms and innovation spaces which enable our members to co-develop new knowledge, as well as education and learning frameworks, that will enhance the business contribution to society.

History

ABIS (formerly known as EABIS) was founded in 2002 in partnership with IBM, Microsoft, Johnson & Johnson, Unilever and Shell and with the support of the leading Business Schools in Europe (INSEAD, IMD, London Business School, ESADE, IESE, Copenhagen Business School, Warwick Business School, Vlerick Business School, Ashridge Business School, Cranfield, SDA Bocconi School of Management).

This creation of ABIS was driven by a shared belief that challenges linked to globalisation and sustainable development required new management skills, mindsets & capabilities. In order to respond to this need, the Partners made strategic commitments to develop Business in Society as a major field of research to underpin better education and learning.

Track Record

- Delivered 90+ knowledge development and learning initiatives
- Secured EUR 11+ million in EU grants to fund 60% of Corporate Responsibility research projects funded to date
- Invested EUR 2.5+ million in funding from ABIS’ corporate founding partners and international foundations (UN Global Compact, Templeton, Roosevelt)
- Co-founded the UN Global Compact Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME)
- Co-developed with EFMD the Corporate Responsibility and ethics-related criteria in EQUIS, the world’s leading business school accreditation standard.

About ABIS

Message from the President

Dear ABIS Members,

I am delighted to introduce the ABIS Highlights Report 2015 which you have before you.

Above all, this allows me to draw your attention to a number of important developments for the network which have occurred in the past months.

In our first Board meeting of 2016, there was consensus among the Directors that this was the year that ABIS would ‘fly’ as an organization, having successfully managed a significant transition phase in 2015. I believe this report underlines that we are well on our way to realising this goal, and that there are many reasons for members to feel equally excited about our progress.

Perhaps most importantly, we have defined a new strategic framework around ABIS’ founding mission, based on two main pillars of Knowledge and Education. This process has already catalysed ambitious new initiatives that will support a far clearer engagement offer to members in 2016 and beyond.

Under the first pillar, last year’s launch of the Knowledge Into Action Forum has inspired the development of a dynamic, year-round platform, of which this year’s Forum is only one part. A new online system will enable members to connect and source expertise, and to co-create new project ideas in line with international funding opportunities.

Meanwhile, our two major EU projects – “EU-Innovate” and “Innovation for Sustainability (I4S)” – have moved into their final year, and are already having impact on high level audiences and platforms. As a case in point, "I4S" will underpin ABIS’ first ever branded workshops at this year’s Academy of Management (AoM) conference. I strongly encourage you to follow their progress as both projects deliver their key insights and findings.

On the Education side, consensus has grown that ABIS needs to do more collectively to accelerate change and transformation in business education and talent development. Our unique model and track record of collaborative platforms means that we can legitimately be more than a talking shop on these issues, and create genuine impact through action.

A robust pipeline of major company-led initiatives is now in place, including the Global Talent Forum for Sustainable Business (Unilever), Responsible Leadership Development in Africa (IBRA-GSK-Unilever), Building Leadership Capabilities (CSLL), and the Role of the Board in Sustainable Enterprise Performance (Mazars). We are also exploring new avenues to develop the Alliance for Advancing Health Assets (Johnson & Johnson).

2016 will also bring the launch of our new Global Education initiative to shine light on, and leverage the experiential knowledge among our business schools and universities who are leading the way in education for sustainability.

I would like to thank you and every member of this extraordinary network, as well as the ABIS Advisory Board and Board of Directors, for your ongoing support.

I would like to close, however, on a more reflective note. More specifically, to acknowledge the profound sadness felt by the whole ABIS community when we learned that Nigel Roome, our longstanding Academic Chair, passed away earlier this year after a long fight against cancer.

Nigel's vision, intellect and scholarship were hugely influential in so many areas: shaping the strategic ambitions of global companies, informing and guiding international policy makers, inspiring young researchers to embark on scientific careers to move society towards a more sustainable future, and shaping the minds of the hundreds of thousands of students who passed through his classrooms. He was one of ABIS' most passionate and committed champions, and he will be truly missed by all of us.

Alfons Sauquet Rovira
President

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Alfons Sauquet Rovira
President
ABIS Knowledge Into Action Platform

ABIS Knowledge Into Action Platform: Empowerment of Business-Academic Collaboration

ABIS is committed to putting engaged business-academic collaboration at the heart of everything we do. It is our aim to become more inclusive and demonstrate the value of ABIS as an innovation and collaboration hub for our members in different parts of the world. In this regard, we have focused in recent months on developing new ways in which members of the ABIS network can take greater ownership in bringing forward their inspiring ideas for new projects and engagement opportunities.

Our new Knowledge Into Action Platform (KIAP) is designed to take us beyond the limits of physical events in Europe, and to empower members from Norway to New Zealand to connect and collaborate as never before.

Against this backdrop, the Knowledge Into Action Forum will evolve into the annual physical meeting between members at which the network reviews and guides the central team on enhancing support mechanisms and processes, as well as discussing big ideas for new collaborative initiatives.

Introducing the New Online Platform

The ABIS website will henceforth host the new and exclusive Members Area. This is the new digital approach that has been developed to reach out to academic and corporate members and connect them with each other. Now, members can dive into the world of knowledge, tools, resources and connections to enable themselves and their organisations to drive impactful change. We strongly believe

- Find and share Engagement Opportunities with more than 500 other ABIS Members

that the Members Area will bring our global network closer together and support you in your shared journey. This online platform will provide you with a relevant and useful content for engagement, as well as the opportunity to connect with every individual who is part of our network.

Our new online support system drives the Knowledge Into Action Platform in three essential ways:

1. It hosts individual profiles of hundreds of managers and scholars in ABIS member institutions, whose expertise is highlighted through a comprehensive tagging system enabling Members to find and connect directly with colleagues in business and academia in areas of common interest;

2. The Members Area also contains functionalities to allow members to post ideas or requests partners to develop new collaborative activities. Thanks to the tagging system, all members with a stated interest in the main theme are automatically notified of new documents being posted or conversation threads opened.

3. A year-round notification service informs members of new funding and resource opportunities linked to their areas of interest.

Overall, the Members Area will be administered by the ABIS Team, but members can of course share new opportunities that they have identified with the network (to scope interest in collaboration) and manage their individual and institutional profiles. This again serves as an open loop system: members can be inspired to work together when new resourcing channels are announced, or develop multi-actor partnerships before looking for new opportunities for additional resources.

Participate in Funding and Collaboration Opportunities matching your Interests

Link to Members Area: http://www.abis-global.org/member-area

For Login Details Contact: karolina.sobczak@abis-global.org

ABIS Knowledge Into Action Forum

In addition to our Members Area, we want to enhance the process of the platform through our annual ABIS Knowledge Into Action Forum.

The forum is the main physical meeting point for the network to come together and discuss new ideas for collaboration at different stages of development. An interactive format allows for members to engage at three main levels:

1. A defined initiative for which project leaders are seeking key expertise and capabilities to address specific gaps and optimise the competitiveness of a grant proposal;

2. An emerging initiative for which the champions wish to test different approaches before designing concrete project plans;

3. Frontier thinking for which pioneers want to have exploratory discussions around new concepts and ideas, and to gauge network interest in developing them.

It should be underlined, however, that the Members Area exists to allow members to connect with each other at each level throughout the year! In this way, the Forum is a valuable milestone: it is a focal point around which members can design their (virtual) planning and project development, but it is also the potential catalyst for new partnerships which can then be developed ex post through the Members Area.
Investment Funds, implemented at regional level, can be used to support the development of research and innovation capacities at local levels. Combined, these schemes will invest an estimated €120 billion to support research and innovation activities in the period 2014-20.

Five other programmes are connected to, or impact on, research and innovation activities: COSME, Erasmus+, the Health programme, the Life programme and the Connecting Europe Facility.

In Education, the Erasmus+ programme aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education, Training, and Youth work. The seven-year programme will have a budget of €14.7 billion. Erasmus+ will support transnational partnerships among Education, Training, and Youth institutions and organisations to foster cooperation and bridge the worlds of Education and work in order to tackle the skills gaps we are facing in Europe.

Erasmus+

Erasmus+ features three central schemes called Key Actions, of which two are particularly relevant for the network: Cooperation for Innovation, and Exchanges of Good Practices. Under the latter, ABIS prioritises the following opportunities:

- Knowledge Alliances are transnational, structured and result-driven projects, notably between higher education and business. Knowledge Alliances are open to any discipline, sector and to cross-sectorial cooperation. The partners share common goals and work together towards mutually beneficial results and outcomes.
- Strategic Partnerships are cooperation networks bringing together institutions/organizations active in the fields of education, training and/or youth, as well as enterprises, research institutes, public authorities, social partners etc. Strategic partnerships have the aim of cooperating in order to implement innovative practice leading to high quality teaching, training, learning and youth work, institutional modernization and societal innovation.

Additionally, the ABIS network has a great opportunity under Erasmus+ to pursue new Joint Masters Degrees (JMD) around dimensions of sustainable business. JMDs enable an international consortium of higher education institutions, plus industry and societal partners where relevant, to develop new programmes which fill key skills niches in the graduate job market and enhance sustainable growth and competitiveness.

Overview of EU Funded ABIS Projects & their Leaders (Past & Present)

ABIS secured over EUR 12.5 million in EU Funding

Overview of Submitted Proposals & their Leaders in 2015

Sustainability-Oriented Enterprise - Marie Curie

Health Innovation, Technology & Management - Marie Curie

Factory of the Future - H2020

Youth Driving Social Change - H2020

Support by the ABIS Team

As the development of projects and proposals can be quite challenging, the ABIS Team in Brussels supports members in a range of ways, such as the scheduling and hosting of consortia meetings online or offline to move ideas forward into reality.

This relates in particular to European Union funding schemes, around which ABIS has a long track record and deep insights regarding key success factors and process management. As groups of members move into the more structured phases of proposal development, the central team can offer its excellence in designing the ‘Impact’ and ‘Implementation’ sections of a bid – worth 2/3 of the final evaluation mark – and advice on the conceptual and intellectual dimensions of proposal design. There are also resources available to help members prepare a consortium budget, and more broadly to leverage ABIS’ institutional relationships to find corporate and network partners which can strengthen the bid’s competitiveness.

Overview of EU Funding

European funds for research and innovation activities are distributed between several interlinked financing schemes. For the current period (2014-20), the main programme, Horizon 2020 is fully dedicated to funding such activities across all policy fields. Sectoral programmes also fund research and innovation activities in the fields of space research (Copernicus, Galileo); nuclear energy (Euratom Research and Training Programme, International Thermo-nuclear Experimental Reactor), and coal and steel production. The European Structural and Investment Funds, implemented at regional level, can be used to support the development of research and innovation capacities at local levels.

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ABIS Contact

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New Knowledge, Approaches and Ideas

As part of the process to transform the embedded knowledge of our network into more collaborative projects (both in number and ambition), ABIS convened its inaugural Knowledge Into Action Forum in April 2015.

The Forum was conceived with two objectives: first, to grasp the increased opportunities to secure grants from the EU, through new schemes where members could propose the central theme instead of having it defined by the Commission; and second, to create a space for members to take more ownership and lead new proposals with their own areas of expertise and passion.

Above all, it aimed to provide an informal setting to give participants the opportunity to discuss international research proposals and fundraising possibilities in an atmosphere that fostered the active exchange of ideas and reinforced business-academia collaboration.

Event Activities

The inaugural Forum took place in Brussels on 28-29 April, hosted by founding partner Vlerick Business School on its new executive campus.

The programme was divided into two distinct parts. During the first afternoon, attendees heard from the EU Commission and Project Coordinators about emerging priorities and themes linked to business in society and sustainability, as well as in-depth information about processes, key success criteria, impact expectations and experiences from on-going projects.

On the second day, the agenda featured a range of small-scale workshops, led by corporate and academic members around their own proposed themes of strategic interest. These were designed to connect and empower small clusters of Partners & Members to develop joint proposals for funding and wider collaboration in the months that follow. Please see next page for a full list of workshop topics.

Event Proceedings

Based on the initial workshops, a number of proposals are now in the process of further development for submission in 2016 or early 2017, with over 20 different members involved. In this simple regard, the Forum can be considered a success – and our ambition is to double the number of workshop-generated proposals in 2016.

As a follow-up to the event, many participants also underlined the value of having such a convening point in the ABIS calendar devoted to new project development. Among the constructive feedback were calls for more corporate-academic dialogue and a clearer alignment between new project ideas and specific funding schemes. These important and valuable insights will be reflected in the programme design for May 2016.

List of Workshops

WS 1: The American University in Cairo Corporate Sustainability from a Comparative Lens - Europe, Middle East, North and South Africa
WS 2: Accenture Circular Economy & Competitiveness
WS 3: BI Norwegian Business School Building a network of members to explore corporate sustainability at Board level
WS 4: Comillas Pontifical University Lifelong learning for young adults: better policies for growth and inclusion in Europe
WS 5: Mazars Long-termism in business - does it really pay?
WS 6: Amsterdam Business School Transforming Data into Responsible Action: How to improve Sustainable Value Chain Performance through Business Analytics
WS 7: ABIS - The Academy of Business in Society The Alliance for Business in Society
WS 8: Kingston Business School SME Business Model Innovation
WS 9: Gordon Institute of Business Science The Network of Business Sustainability: Bridging the gap between academic research and business sustainability challenges
WS 10: Mazars Tone at the Top – making it live throughout an organisation
WS 11: University of Koblenz-Landau Entrepreneurship and Society in Europe
WS 12: Copenhagen Business School Business and Human rights: Unfolding the emerging regime to management professionals with an emphasis on the implications of the UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights
ABIS 14th Annual Colloquium

Conference Theme

On 27-28 October 2015, SDA Bocconi School of Management and ABIS staged the 14th ABIS Annual Colloquium in Milan Italy. The event’s theme focused on Global Sustainability Strategy: New models and approaches to achieve sustainable living.

One of the main objectives of the Colloquium was to be an important contributor to the global dialogues around the theme of the Universal Expo 2015 - Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life.

The core issues of sustainable development have become a subject for global concern in recent years, which has been reflected in the field of strategic management. However, the unit of analysis in the field has predominantly been the multinational enterprise. A decade ago, the fundamental questions addressed how corporate strategy would evolve to include sustainability and responsibility - in itself, a relatively new field of inquiry.

Yet the aftermath of the financial and economic crises has highlighted an urgent need for new strategic management and decision-making models which nurture smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and deliver shared value for business and society. The same issues apply universally to MNCs, SMEs, government agencies, NGOs, and others. The challenge is how to empower and equip as many actors as possible to manage them going forward.

Thus, as in previous years, the 2015 Colloquium leveraged the ABIS model of corporate-academic partnership to focus on ways in which companies, business schools and universities, and other actors can collaborate more effectively to define and develop new frameworks in knowledge, talent and learning that contribute to lasting solutions.

Colloquium Programme

At the event corporate leaders gave their insights regarding the developments for future models for sustainable living in the areas of energy, mobility, food, and cities for 2020 and beyond.

Prior to these, some of the world’s thought leaders in the field of sustainability provided everyone with evidence- and experience-backed perspectives on the prospects, obstacles and potential game-changing approaches to achieve more sustainable economies, societies and living models in the years to come.

Moving forward, various Master Classes enabled participants to engage in a more focused debate with the same speakers to have more in-depth conversations about the different matters.

Day two was largely about the participants taking ownership of the debate, working together in facilitated groups to define evidence-based scenarios for inspiring organizational change around different dimensions of sustainability. In line with ABIS’ mission, it was structured around the two parallel and interlinked themes: Knowledge & Education.

Keynote Speakers

Jacques Attali
President, Positive Plant & Positive Economy Forum
Doug Baillie
Chief HR Officer, Unilever & Advisory Board Chair, ABIS
Frank Geels
Professor of System Innovation and Sustainability at the Sustainable Consumption Institute, The University of Manchester
Andrew King
Professor of Business Administration at Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth
Mario Monti
President of Università Bocconi and Chairman of the High-level Group on Own Resources of the European Union
Letizia Moratti
Co-Founder of the San Patrignano Foundation
Janos Pastor
Assistant Secretary-General for Climate Change at the United Nations
Sergio Piazzi
Secretary General at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean
Rajendra Shende
Chairman of TERRE Policy Centre, Former Director of United Nations Environment Programme-UNEP

With the Patronage of
EXPO
MILANO 2015
Redefining A Global Skills & Talent Agenda

In the past couple of years, a growing number of corporate sustainability champions – with Unilever in the vanguard – have recognised that they need new profiles from their talent pipelines to lead sustainable business transformation in a rapidly changing global context. However, they have significant challenges in finding, recruiting and developing the people that they seek.

The companies also recognise that, just as they cannot resolve sustainability challenges in isolation, they have a vested interest in consolidating and communicating their long-term talent requirements with a more unified voice, so that there is a strategic opportunity for business education providers to engage and respond through innovation in their own curricula and programmes.

Against this backdrop, it goes to the very heart of ABIS’ founding mission – and the shared interests of our partners and members – to facilitate a new model of engagement between these companies and our wider academic network. Our ultimate objective is to inspire a deeper working relationship between the business and academic worlds, so that all companies benefit over time from graduate talent pools aligned with the global sustainability challenges we face.

First ABIS Global Talent Forum

On 3 December 2015, the inaugural ABIS Global Talent Forum for Sustainable Business took place at Unilever’s Four Acres Leadership Development Centre, hosted by Doug Baillie, Chief HR Officer at Unilever and Chair of the ABIS Strategic Advisory Board.

The event brought together senior HRM, talent and leadership development executives from a range of global industry sectors. More specifically, it opened new dialogues and reflection about the requisite talent and leadership profiles to lead sustainable business transformation in a rapidly changing global context.

Doug Baillie opened the Forum by sharing Unilever’s perspectives on the growing volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA) in the global business context, and four major trends which have serious implications for the company’s markets, business model, strategy, and the talent required to deliver a sustainable long-term future.

Overall, broad agreement was reached on the need for greater clarity and consistency of message on the values, mindsets and qualities required of tomorrow’s leaders – recognising that this has not been done effectively to date, either within companies or at the interface with business schools and universities.

The forum proposed concrete steps to end Q2 2016 to continue the discussions, with a specific focus on talent / people competences and mindsets, and invited those present to engage in working groups to inform a second Forum before the summer. Initial reaction in the room indicated strong support for this going forward.

The work of the consortium will focus around the following two tasks for the first half of 2016:

- To create a holistic framework of the critical skills, values, mindsets & qualities that the next generation of corporate sustainability leaders will need to have by 2025;
- To produce a concise discussion paper explaining the rationale behind the framework’s contents, which will also be used as a discussion paper for the 2nd Global Forum.

ABIS Contact

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Innovation for Sustainability (I4S)

Sustainability-Driven Innovation

I4S is funded by the EU ‘Marie Curie Actions’ scheme and coordinated by ABIS. It is a Research and Competence Training Network for Sustainability-Driven Innovation (or simply I4S) which aims to prepare early-stage researchers to generate and disseminate knowledge about how businesses and their managers contribute to, and participate in innovation that promotes economic, social development in ways that are environmentally sustainable.

The members of the I4S consortium recognise ‘sustainability-driven innovation’ as a complex challenge that business scholars and practitioners ought to understand through interdisciplinary and trans disciplinary research rooted in a multi-level theory and research design. The long-held view of business organisations as insular entities which stand apart from society and innovate only to achieve instrumental interests is increasingly contested.

Some scholars pursuing research in the area of the business contribution to sustainable development support an alternative view of firms as systemic entities, able to develop connections with other actors in society, through multiple institutional frameworks, and working across sectors with communities and other agents.

One proposition is that sustainability-oriented corporations are seen to engage in innovation in a proactive, stakeholder-engaging way, and at multiple levels. This might involve technological innovation, innovation in business models or innovations that result in systems change. The realisation of ambitions of this kind invariably involves businesses and others in managerial and organisational innovation.

In the past year, eight early-stage researchers (ESRs) within I4S have embarked on field work in different empirical settings: multinational enterprises in construction and retail, a medium-sized enterprise in electrical engineering, service providers (IT solutions, management consulting and social business innovation), a cross-sectoral enterprise association dedicated to sustainable development and a world-leading environmental NGO with global sustainability perspectives and reach. The project’s focus has therefore been on supporting the ESRs in developing their research and advancing their scientific training.

About I4S in 2015

The project runs from January 1st 2013 until the end of December 2016 with 8 associated multinational corporate partners. Its network includes eight business schools, universities, and associate partners with prior research experience in aspects of sustainability, business and innovation. The training network is designed to expose early-stage researchers to a diversity of conceptual and empirical perspectives from which our understanding of sustainability-driven innovation can be improved. It brings together experienced university and business school faculty with an interest in developing new orientations to research by studying areas that are relevant to sustainability-driven innovation, yet remain relatively under-theorised.

I4S Final Conference on 28 October 2016 in Brussels

In her role Sally will work very closely with ABIS to progress the final year of mentoring, dissemination, engagement, and reporting to the Commission, including Chairing the final conference aimed at a practitioner and policy audience at ABIS in Brussels on 28 October 2016.

Sally Randles as New Scientist in Charge

Sally Randles has been confirmed in the role of the ABIS Scientist in Charge for the last year of the project.

Sally was touched to have been asked to step-up to the role for the remaining year of the project following very sad and untimely death of the irreplaceable Professor Nigel Roome from cancer in January 2016.

In her role Sally will work very closely with ABIS to progress the final year of mentoring, dissemination, engagement, and reporting to the Commission, including Chairing the final conference aimed at a practitioner and policy audience at ABIS in Brussels on 28 October 2016.

I4S at the Academy of Management (AoM) Annual Meeting

Two sessions by (I4S) have been accepted, for the 76th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in August 2016.

The sessions will focus around the following two themes:

- Scholarship for Actionable Results: Reversing the Devolution of Care
- Innovating for Sustainability: The State of the Art and Beyond

The Academy of Management Annual Meeting is the premier conference for more than 10,000 students, academics, scholars, and professionals in the field of management and organisation studies. The 76th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management will be held August 5-9, in Anaheim, California, USA.

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"I am also reminded of what we all really know but sometimes forget. Opportunities are created by people, and people respond to those opportunities. No-one owns that, no-one is indispensable; all we can really do is try, at best, to make things happen. So I am with you through the history of the network and in spirit, urging you on not to cease looking for and creating opportunities. Go for them with my blessing - own a piece and contribute a piece for others. In this way we have a chance to make our group, our society and our planet better places" - Nigel Roome

The Academy of Business in Society
In-Depth: About the Sustainable Entrepreneurship Awards

In 2015, EU-InnovatE confirmed a new strategic partnership with future4you GmbH, the founders and organisers of the prestigious Sustainable Entrepreneurship Award (SEA) scheme. The SEA was established in 2012 and has quickly become one of the world’s most recognised platforms for identifying and rewarding entrepreneurs providing new solutions to global and local sustainability challenges.

Each year a range of awards are presented to enterprises, projects and ideas which address a social or ecological problem by combining innovative solutions with a profitable commercial strategy. A dedicated EU-InnovatE prize – worth €10,000 to the winner – is now one of the highlights of the year-round process, with evaluations being conducted by a high-level jury chaired by Professor Belz, EU-InnovatE’s Scientific Coordinator.

Upcoming Highlights and Milestones

Through to the end of 2016, the EU-InnovatE consortium will develop a wide range of outputs tailored for different scientific, industry, policy and stakeholder audiences, including reports, toolkits, training course designs, and social media videos & content.

In parallel, the following events will underpin the journey to the end of the project:

- Sustainable Innovation Virtual Workshop – May 25, hosted online by Cranfield and GlobalScan
- 3rd PhD Summer Academy – September 14-16, hosted by Politecnico di Milano in Milan
- Industry Round Table – September (date TBC), hosted by ABIS in Brussels
- Policy Round Table – September (date TBC), hosted by ABIS in Brussels
- 2016 Sustainable Entrepreneurship Awards – November (date TBC), hosted by future4you in Vietnam
- EU-InnovatE Final Conference – November 22, hosted by ABIS in Brussels

The submissions process for 2016 is now open, with full information available at www.se-award.org/en. As a way of strengthening the value and excitement of the Gala Awards Ceremony in November, selected start-ups will also have the possibility to pitch their business ventures to a community of potential investors and political & industry leaders. The official date for the 2016 Gala will be announced later this year.

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Background
ABIS and a consortium of members are now in the final year of delivery of the “EU-InnovatE” Project, one of the world’s largest business-oriented research initiatives linked to sustainability. Supported by €4.7 million in EU funding, and coordinated by TUM School of Management in Germany, it investigates the role that end users, innovators and entrepreneurs will play in driving transitions towards more sustainable lifestyles and green economy in Europe.

Scope of the Project
From green electricity tariffs to car sharing schemes, many sustainable products and services have in recent years been brought to market by enthusiastic start-ups. More users and consumers than ever are turning their hands to business in a bid to solve social and environmental problems.

The central thesis being tested in the project is that in the decades to come, end users and user entrepreneurs will play an essential role as innovation drivers in the critical domains of energy, food, living and mobility, empowered by the digital revolution, access to new technologies and social media, crowd funding, new public policy instruments, and more.

The EU-InnovatE consortium, led by Prof. Frank-Martin Belz, has spent 2015 in an empirical phase. This has primarily explored the potential impact of this emerging phenomenon through a ground-breaking blend of scenario, modelling, case studies, policy insight, and in-depth analysis of how sustainable entrepreneurship is evolving both within and outside of established corporate value chains. Through its work, the group seeks not only to establish and legitimize user innovation and entrepreneurship for sustainability as an international research and teaching domain, but also provide evidence-backed insights to industry and policy around its potential to create sustainable growth, jobs and competitiveness in the years ahead.

As an indication of the growing level of interest in the work being undertaken and overall central theme, EU-InnovatE has already been showcased at many of the world’s leading events for management scholarship, including the Academy of Management Annual Meeting (AoM), European Academy of Management (EURAM), European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS), and the Babson Entrepreneurship Conference.

Save the Date: EU-InnovatE Final Conference on 22 November 2016 in Brussels
Managing the Responsible Business Challenge in Africa

Corporate-Academic Partnership Programme

Since 2014, ABIS and three of its corporate partners have been partnering with various business schools in Africa to facilitate greater collaboration between Africa’s Higher Education Institutions and business. Africa’s flourishing economies show the strength of entrepreneurship, innovation and talent. The key question we kept asking was how this growth could take into consideration the responsibility that goes with it, how we could better prepare talent for the leadership roles required to direct this growth and thus contribute to making progress towards market stability and sustainable development. 2016 is the year of implementation as our partners and curriculum align with greater focus towards implementing our goal of developing a leadership course and piloting it through two ABIS’s partner business schools in Africa.

Business-Academic Collaboration as a Catalyst

With the intention of equipping African business schools with cross-cutting competencies in general management and leadership, ABIS brought together eighteen faculty members from seven business schools in Africa and four corporate partners for a two-day workshop on the 4 and 5 December, 2015, at the University of Stellenbosch. The training process was facilitated by Mary Gentile who has developed a unique pedagogy called Giving Voice to Values (GVV). She says that “GVV challenges the assumptions about business ethics at companies and business schools, she argues that often the issue isn’t distinguishing what is right or wrong, but knowing how to act on your values despite opposing pressure.”

At the end of the two day planning and training session, it was decided to develop a program and train faculty in the use of the facilitation methodology to implement the leadership program. A decision was taken to implement the project in stages, commencing with two pilot courses: one facilitated by Strathmore Business School and the other by Stellenbosch Business School. The following schools took part in the train the trainer workshop: Strathmore Business School, Kenya, Lagos Business School, Nigeria, Ghana Business School, Ghana, American University of Cairo, Egypt, University of Stellenbosch, University of Pretoria, Henley Business School and the University of Cape Town’s Graduate School of Business, South Africa.

Considerable progress has been made since then: the framework and curriculum for the program has been written up and submitted for accreditation at the University of Stellenbosch Business School, three of our corporate partners, IBM, Unilever and GSK have committed seed funding to implement the two pilot programs in 2016. The pilots have the dual purpose of testing out the curriculum and facilitation methodology but also to double up as a ‘train the trainer’ opportunity for faculty from the schools in which the intervention takes place.

ABIS will strive to equip faculty with the content, facilitation skills, and the networks through designing and implementing leadership development programs that has a focus on sustainability and ethics. This new platform that has been created with a unique collaboration of so many business schools and the private sector will surely assist us in achieving this goal.

Collaboration between business and academia is crucial for developing cross-cutting competencies in leaders. This, in fact, is a pertinent skill necessary to succeed in the fast-paced challenging business environment, especially in Africa. The ABIS intervention will address this issue by training academics to act as catalysts in developing these competencies around sustainability in all its facets.

ABIS as a global network of businesses and academic collaboration has developed a new platform that aims to support responsible management education and leadership development for Africa’s leaders from local companies, government and NGOs.

“Giving Voice to Values challenges the assumptions about business ethics at companies and business schools, she argues that the issue isn’t distinguishing what is right or wrong, but knowing how to act on your values despite opposing pressure.” — Mary Gentile

Key Objectives

1. Designing core components of executive, management and small business development courses on responsible leadership across the African continent;
2. Developing faculty to support the delivery of responsible management education and leadership education for sustainability;
3. Designing and delivering new innovations in management at business schools as part of executive education offerings and through in company workshops;
4. Pilot one in country training and one in company workshop in 2016.

Achievements since inception of the Idea in 2014

During 2014/2015, the ABIS Africa business academic platform gathered through a series of workshops and worked together towards the common goal of designing a pilot course on leadership for Managing the Responsible Business Challenge in Africa. To define the building blocks of this pilot course, the platform has been focusing on:

1. Sharing current best practice models for leadership and management development in ethics and sustainability;
2. Facilitating strategic debate around the current gaps in leadership and management education towards sustainable and ethical business in Africa;
3. Designing core components, innovative methods and delivery structures of executive, management and small business leadership courses across the African continent;
4. Facilitated a two-day workshop to equip faculty to deliver content using the Giving Voice to Values pedagogy;
5. Content and outcomes developed and presented for accreditation at the University of Stellenbosch for piloting the course at two sites in Africa.

In alignment with the fundamental purpose of transforming responsible leadership in Africa, with a new curriculum design for executive programmes, the first pilot model of the course has been co-created and submitted for accreditation at the University of Stellenbosch.

The success of the course rests on the adoption of a cross-sectorial approach, integrated from its design phase to the delivery model and feeding back into the public discourse.

The specific impact being targeted with this first pilot is to address the macro issue of responsible and ethical management and discuss the role of leadership in dealing with this systemic problem.

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Alliance for Advancing Health Assets

Health Improvement through Societal Change

In 2010, ABIS co-founded with the Johnson & Johnson Corporate Citizenship Trust and Rutgers University the Alliance for Advancing Health Assets (AHA). The Alliance is a highly diverse global network of passionate individuals and organisations who are transforming society’s approach to health improvement through social change.

Over the past five years, the Alliance has brought together leaders from across the global health spectrum for a “voyage of discovery” to identify concepts, models, processes and tools in support of informed decision making that could lead to better health in individuals, communities and systems.

AHA is not merely a forum within which people come together to rethink the way health is perceived, resourced and managed. It has also used the collective reach of its participants to research, implement and “pressure test” new tools which will allow health practitioners, communities and policy-makers to collect evidence and advocate for a shift towards seeing health as an asset.

Current Status

The Alliance’s development phase came to a close at the end of 2015, with the finalization of various resources which are being made publicly available. These included, among others:

- A Health Asset scorecard
- A research study analysing pioneering ventures in India, Kenya and Sweden
- A Position Paper and journal publication based on the research cases
- A prototype Knowledge Inventory of Health Asset ventures and literature
- Conceptual design for an international Health Asset Summer School

One of the other significant outputs from last year’s work is a “Discovery Framework” which highlights potential avenues for action and exploration in 2016. The Framework is constructed around five main pillars (also reflecting the resources created to date):

1. Network Development
2. Research & Education
3. Knowledge Management
4. Products & Services
5. Advocacy & Regulatory

For 2016, the ambitions for the Alliance remain as before:

- To influence HA capacity building and strengthen health systems by increasing HA thinking/acting and linking HA science to practice;
- To enable systemic change and develop tangible evidence showing the value of applying HA development approaches;
- To catalyze global networking which bridges across disciplines, and inspires a wide spectrum of actors to engage in collaborative (even virtual) Health Assets projects;
- To populate a virtual health assets knowledge repository;
- To broadcast Health Assets success stories and their impacts;
- To continue to influence, mobilise and support innovators in this emerging field.

Next Steps

At the start of Q2 2016, there is an open invitation to ABIS members interested in this field to put themselves forward (as individuals or institutions) as new champions to build on the strong foundations which have already been constructed by ABIS, JJCCT and Rutgers.

This comes against a backdrop of three potential scenarios for the remainder of the year:

1. Those involved thus far celebrate what has been achieved, and choose to leverage what has been learned and developed in their own professional context (i.e., values, methods, tools), outside of any formal structure or Alliance.
2. Groups of interested individuals investigate specific HA opportunities that have been identified and proceed with finding the resources to act on them. NOTE: the J&J Trust can facilitate additional networking to support this.
3. One, or a small group of organizations, express their desire to take on a leadership role for the Alliance, acting as a global/regional hub for coordination of health asset development efforts.

ABIS Contact

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Johnson & Johnson
CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP TRUST
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ABIS Publications

The Role of Corporate Sustainability in Asian Development: A Case Study Handbook (Forthcoming June 2016)

Editors:
- Dr. Fabien Martinez
- Prof. Hyuk Rhee
- Prof. Gilbert Lenssen

Corporate Sustainability (CS) has a short history in Asia, but is growing in importance. It can be defined as a business approach that responds to multiple stakeholders on every dimension of how a business operates and creates long-term shared value through integration of business strategies, human values, and ecological culture. It is logical that fast-growing economies, such as those in Asia, are boosted by the commitments of businesses to sustainable development of their regions.

Recently, more companies in Asia have started to recognize the strategic importance of building practices that create sustainable bottom lines related to the economy, environment, and society. Understanding CS as a part of the responsibility of a firm, extending beyond economic and legal obligations, multinational companies have sought to integrate new standards and norms that reflect the concern of various stakeholders, from consumers and employees to local communities. One such representative trend in CS is Fair Trade in South Korea.

Other CS activities commonly practiced in Asia focus on philanthropic responsibilities, usually related to activities that enhance human welfare and goodwill in the respective regions. Most companies that carry out philanthropic projects make donations for such purposes as children or job educations, improvements in community infrastructure, and developments in art and culture. Eventually, CSR activities of multinational companies have been positively affecting the communities by satisfying various stakeholders and developing the social welfare as a whole. At the same time, the companies themselves have seen positive effects in the long term regarding brand image and customer satisfaction as well as financial performance.

It is against this backdrop that Korea University Business School and ABIS have sought to capture this emerging practice in a new case book for managers and business educators. The book titled “The Role of Corporate Sustainability in Asian Development: A Case Study Handbook” builds mainly on the results of two conferences in South Korea in 2012 and 2013 that were co-hosted by KUBS and ABIS.

The conferences led practitioners and professors to discuss theoretical backgrounds of CS and later invited practitioners from leading global companies in the electronics and automotive industries to discuss “The Role of Corporate Sustainability in Asian Development,” focusing more on the practical application of CS principles.

These corporate cases are now published with this book to showcase a range of best practices that have been highlighted as relevant in recent years and are certainly salient to address the role of corporate sustainability in Asian development.

The book will be useful to academicians who teach and research CS issues, practitioners who are searching for appropriate CS strategies to benchmark, students who are studying to be future business leaders in the field, and the general public who are interested in the CS activities of multinational companies.

**List of Cases**

- Intel – CSR 3.0: how to leverage social innovation to create business and social value
- Lenovo – Venture Philanthropy; supporting NGOs
- Samsung Electronics – Green Memory Chips
- ZTE – Eliminating Digital Divide
- BMW – BMW i Story: revolutionizing sustainable mobility
- Hyundai Motor Company – Fostering social enterprises
- Mahindra & Mahindra – Mainstreaming sustainability in business through knowledge building

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**Overview**

The Principles for Responsible Management (PRME) was launched in 2007 as a United Nations Global Compact initiative. It aims to globally inspire and lead change in the field of responsible management and thought leadership.

Inspired by internationally accepted values, which include the UN Global Compact’s Ten Principles, the Six Principles of PRME provide a structure for engagement in order to advance academic institutions in terms of social responsibility by incorporating universal values into curricula and research. By doing so, PRME seeks to establish a process of continuous enhancement among institutions of management education in order to develop a new generation of business leaders that is capable of managing the complex challenges faced by business and society in the 21st century.

**PRME**

Gradual and Systemic Change in Business Education

The PRME initiative aims to create a framework for gradual, systemic change in business schools and management-related institutions. This change is based on three distinctive characteristics of the initiative: continuing improvement, a learning network, and reporting progress to stakeholders.

To report on progress of participating institutions to stakeholders through Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports is a crucial part of the active commitment to PRME.

**Our Involvement**

With ABIS being a co-creator of PRME, as well as member of its Steering Committee, we are part of the group of global and regional associations, which advise the PRME Secretariat on a wide range of strategic and operational issues. Furthermore, the 2014 Steering Committee meetings were chaired by Simon Pickard, ABIS Director General at the time. As of 2015, ABIS Managing Director Joris-Johann Lenssen is representing the ABIS in the PRME Steering Committee.

The committee as a whole is committed to advance long-term goals in responsible management education in business schools worldwide. Finally, ABIS also aims to align our own initiatives with UN policies around sustainable development through the partnership with PRME.

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