



The Academy of Business in Society

Call for Papers: Governing SDGs: From Universal Agenda to Local Action

Guest Editors

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Introduction

The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets were launched by the United Nations in 2015 as a global 2030 agenda for sustainable development, which is intended to bring prosperity to the world while protecting the planet. The SDGs build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and set an ambitious plan of action for the next 15 years, which ultimately requires commitment from all stakeholders in all countries across the world. Private businesses are also expected to play an active role in this process by using: “(...) *their creativity and innovation to solving sustainable development challenges*” (UN, 2015).¹

Implementing the SDGs is not an easy endeavour. For instance, different countries, sectors, and organisations have various resources and interests, which all affect their work with the SDGs. Moreover, the broad formulation of SDGs can give rise to a variety of interpretations and behaviours, which are likely to affect the impacts (social, environmental, and economic). Therefore, especially in first years we are likely to witness an element of heterogeneity in the implementation of the SDGs across the globe.

The objective of this Special Issue is to explore the various manifestations and usages of SDGs across organisations, sectors, and national borders. As seen from Table 1, SDGs can be addressed from a number of different perspectives, ranging from the negotiations leading up to the formulation of the global themes to the individual sensemaking and sensegiving processes at the local level. In particular, we welcome contributions cutting across levels (micro, meso, macro) and/or perspectives (governance making, taking and breaking), as academic research is often biased towards one-level/one-perspective analyses of organizational phenomena.

¹ UN (2015), Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations (UN).

Perspective Level	Governance Making (Production of SDGs)	Governance Taking (Adoption of SDGs)	Governance –Breaking (Circumventing SDGs)
Societal level (Macro)	<i>Example:</i> How issues and actors are selected in and selected out in the development of the SDGs.	<i>Example:</i> How SDGs are translated into national action plans, policies, and strategies.	<i>Example:</i> How groups of actors obstruct the development and implementation of the SDGs.
Organisational level (Meso)	<i>Example:</i> How organisations make local adaptations of the SDGs.	<i>Example:</i> How governance frameworks, templates and tools influence the use of SDGs.	<i>Example:</i> How aspirational talk, greenwashing, and ‘bullshit’ are used to oversell commitment to SDGs.
Individual level (Micro)	<i>Example:</i> How individual actors use SDGs as an influence tactic to promote sustainability within the organisation.	<i>Example:</i> How the implementation of SDGs influence individual values, attitudes, and behaviour.	<i>Example:</i> How individuals exploit loopholes in the SDGs.

Source: Based on Rasche et al. (2016).²

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- How are SDGs translated in sectors and geographical contexts?
- How do organisations manage and control the implementation of SDGs?
- What types of competences and knowledge are brought into play for making SDGs operable?
- How do organisations manage paradoxes, dilemmas, and conflicts emerging from the work with SDGs?
- How are SDGs translated into management education and training?
- How are SDGs aligned with predominant organizational cultures and institutional logics?
- What governance mechanisms are necessary to implement SDGs within the organisation?
- How do individual, organisational, and institutional factors influence the operationalization of SDGs?
- How can business partners, public authorities, and non-profit organisations be involved in the work with SDGs?
- How do the public perceive the fit between SDG commitments and current business practices?
- To what extent does SDGs inspire a homogenization of the sustainability field?
- How can technologies and tools influence the work with SDGs?
- What are the impacts from the implementation of SDGs?

² Rasche, A., Morsing, M. & Moon, J. (2017). The Changing Role of Business in Global Society, in: Rasche, A., Morsing, M., & Moon, J. (Eds). *Corporate Social Responsibility: Strategy, Communication, Governance*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-28.

Types of Submission

We welcome high-quality submissions which advance our knowledge on relevant topics related to SDGs. The special issue does not favour any special theoretical perspectives or methodological approaches and is open to conceptual as well as empirical contributions.

Submission process

The special issue is coordinated with the ABIS Annual Colloquium, which will take place in Brussels on November 15 -16th 2017. A collection of papers will be published in a special issue of Corporate Governance: The international journal of business in society. The selection process will consider both the academic quality of the paper as well as the proximity to the general theme of the Colloquium.

For more information about the ABIS Colloquium, see: <https://www.abis-global.org/events/16th-abis-annual-colloquium-2017>

However, your research does not have to be presented at the ABIS Colloquium to be eligible for consideration for the special issue.

Deadlines

- September 7, 2017: **Paper proposal** of about 1000 words, explaining the aim, methodology, possible findings, and relevant references.
- September 21, 2017: Response of **acceptance of the proposals** to the authors.
- November 6, 2017: Authors interested in submitting their paper for the **special issue** of Corporate Governance: The international journal of business in society should send their **full paper**, making this explicit in the cover page. *Please, note that authors not interested in submitting their papers for the Special Issue do not need to send a full paper*
- December 11, 2017: Response to authors about **acceptance of papers** for the **review process** in the special issue of Corporate Governance: The international journal of business in society.

Directions and further information

- Please send your proposals to: contributions@abis-global.org
- We suggest using the [Harvard style guidelines](#) of the for paper style and references.

For any question related to the Call for Papers, please contact us via: contributions@abis-global.org