

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### 18th ABIS Annual Colloquium 2019

#### “Business in Society: Measuring Impact and Creating Change”

29 – 30 October 2019 | Berlin

In light of the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the ABIS Colloquium 2019 will represent a significant opportunity to reflect on the striking changes the world has experienced over the last 3 decades. The event will also mark 18 years from the foundation of ABIS - The Academy of Business in Society. Founded by major companies and leading business schools, the initiative was driven by a shared belief that advancing the role of business in society required more relevant research and knowledge and new management and leadership skills, mindsets & capabilities. Nowadays, forward-thinking knowledge, tools and relevant skills – whether they support training, planning, analysis, strategy or reporting - is increasingly available to decision makers and change agents.

With a growing number of companies taking steps to be more responsible in how they treat employees, communities and the planet, business is emerging as a true player in fostering societal progress. Business can have a transformational impact and contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by, for instance, decreasing poverty, mitigating climate change or providing access to health. Many innovative companies are embracing the SDGs as business opportunities - having a positive impact is deeply embedded within their purpose and business models<sup>1</sup>. This is particularly true for emerging startups which are finding new creative ways to solve social problems while simultaneously growing their business.

Nevertheless, many companies are still adopting “business as usual” approaches which often take value away from people and planet, polluting the environment, overusing precious resources, contributing to the loss of biodiversity or selling harmful products. It is a challenge to transform to new sustainable business models – decoupling, circularity and regenerative models<sup>2</sup>, it is a paradigm shift. In addition, according to the Responsible Business Trends Report 2019<sup>3</sup>, only 13 percent of companies currently integrate SDGs into the company across different departments with clear goals set.

One of the challenges that companies face is the lack of a common standard for measuring business impact and externalities on society and nature<sup>4</sup>. The amount and quality of information provided by

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<sup>1</sup> Clinton Lindsay and Whisnant Ryan (2019) Business Model Innovations for Sustainability. In: Lenssen G., Smith N. (eds) *Managing Sustainable Business*. Springer, Dordrecht

<sup>2</sup> Winston, Andrew (2019) Business in the Age of Mass Extinction. *Harvard Business Review*, May 2019. Available online: <https://hbr.org/2019/05/business-in-the-age-of-mass-extinction>

<sup>3</sup> Ethical Corporation (2019) Responsible Business Trends Report 2019. Available online: <http://www.ethicalcorp.com/integrating-sdgs-business-strategy-exclusive-insights>

<sup>4</sup> Eccles, Robert G. and Klimenko, Svetlana (2019) The Investor Revolution. *Harvard Business Review*, May–June 2019 Issue. Available online: <https://hbr.org/2019/05/the-investor-revolution>

companies varies. It remains very complicated to measure and understand a company's biodiversity footprint<sup>5</sup> and the same applies for social impact indicators. This is also problematic for investors, which find it extremely difficult to direct funding to companies which represent good investments in the long-term – for both shareholders and society.

As the world of business is being disrupted by new emerging players from startups, challenged by policy-maker regulations and consumer demands, and with the pace of digital innovation accelerating, during the 18<sup>th</sup> ABIS Annual Colloquium at ESMT Berlin we aim to examine the following:

- How can the impact of business on society and nature be assessed?
- How can investors invest with and accelerate positive impact?
- How to source ideas from and collaborate with startups and social entrepreneurs for more positive impacts and sustainable business models?
- What role can digital solutions play in maximizing positive impacts of business on society?

### Submissions

**Extended paper abstracts of 700-1000 words must be submitted by August 15, 2019** by sending them to [contributions@abis-global.org](mailto:contributions@abis-global.org). Authors of accepted contributions have the opportunity to also submit a short paper proposal until October 15, 2019.

### Types of Submission

We welcome high-quality submissions which advance our knowledge on the abovementioned topics. We do not favour any special theoretical perspectives or methodological approaches. The types of acceptable submissions include, but are not limited to:

- Theoretical and empirical papers
- Literature and practice reviews
- Qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods research
- Experimental research
- Single, multiple, large-sample case studies

### Selection process

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/18th-abis-annual-colloquium-2019>

### Deadlines

- August 31, 2019: Submission of **paper abstracts**
- September 15, 2019: Response of **acceptance of the abstract** to the authors
- October 15, 2019: Submission of paper proposal
- January 31, 2020: Submission of full paper
- February 28, 2020: Response to authors about **acceptance of papers for peer review**

### Further information

- Please send your proposals to: [contributions@abis-global.org](mailto:contributions@abis-global.org)
- We suggest using [Harvard style guidelines](#) for paper style and references
- For any questions, please contact us via: [contributions@abis-global.org](mailto:contributions@abis-global.org)

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<sup>5</sup> Lammerant, Johann (2018) Assessment of Biodiversity Accounting Approaches for Businesses and Financial Institutions. Available online: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/assets/pdf/B@B\\_Assessment\\_biodiversity\\_accounting\\_approaches\\_Update\\_Report%201\\_19Nov2018.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/assets/pdf/B@B_Assessment_biodiversity_accounting_approaches_Update_Report%201_19Nov2018.pdf)

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