



The Academy of Business in Society

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Introduction



Dr. Ivo Matser EMP
Chief Executive Officer



Prof. Dr. Baback Yazdani
Chair of the Board of
Directors

Dear ABIS Partners and Members,

It is a great pleasure to share with you our main activities of the last year 2021, where we all learned that "business as usual" and "taking for granted" do not apply anymore. The complexity of the world is becoming more visible than ever before. This sounds quite challenging, but it also opens new windows of opportunities.

For this reason, at ABIS we decided to **invest in innovation** on several levels. While we kept our traditions of our flagship events, the **Knowledge Into Action Forum** and the **Annual Colloquium**, we innovated on the formats and speaker diversity, offering interactive fishbowl sessions and giving young leaders the spotlight they deserve.

In terms of support in publishing your research, last year we not only finalized our special issue **"Measuring Impact and Creating Change"**, and initiated a new one on **"Driving impact through responsible investing"**, but we also kept working to publish a series of innovative **"Sustainability Teaching Practices"** that will be available to you later this year.

We also re-framed our EU funding involvement strategy. You can count on us to oversee dissemination and/or communication strategies, advise on the impact of your proposals and be part of advisory boards. In line with this, we offered a **Horizon Europe Funding webinar series** and took part in several consortia and proposals that will hopefully help ABIS to engage our members in exciting projects. We were also pleased to organize a hybrid **Roundtable for Industry and Policy Makers** for the **ReTraCE project**, that proved to be a success and immense help for the early-stage researchers involved.

We proudly delivered two relevant, tailor-made activities for our members: the **Responsible Investing Summer Course** with NN Investment Partners and the **Creating Value Roundtable (2nd ed.)** with Antwerp Management School, which led to the **Corporate Approaches to Sustainable Value Creation Report**.

We deep dived into the **Scenario Exploration System** foresight tool by re-introducing its use at the academic, business and policy levels, followed by monthly **SES Taster sessions**. We engaged with many enthusiasts who are integrating the tool into modules, courses, and projects in member institutions and beyond. We are now also offering trainings for interested facilitators. At the COP26 Climate Summit, the same tool has been used to open discussions on complex problems with multiple stakeholders.

In 2021, we also launched a pilot **Mentoring programme** for early-stage-researchers. The interest among our network to be involved was remarkable and we can assure you to continue with this initiative in 2022.

We would also like to share a few other innovations from which we expect a high impact for our members and society. We launched the **ABIS Sustainability Hub**, a network of individuals to share activities, best practices, failures, and knowledge about sustainability from various dimensions. We are also in the test stage of developing a business school management tool for the implementation of sustainability - the **Sustainability Performance Assessment**. Based on a questionnaire, ABIS will create reports for the decision-makers in schools for their further sustainable developments, strategies, and priorities.

We trust that these innovative approaches and activities will be of value and will support all of us in bettering our impact on society. We look forward to engaging with you online or in person in 2022!

Dr. Ivo Matser EMP
Chief Executive Officer

Prof. Baback Yazdani
Chair of the Board of Directors

About ABIS

Who we are

Our mission is to advance the role of business in society through research and education. Every day, we focus on:

- accelerating the movement towards a sustainable, inclusive and circular economy
- empowering and mobilizing sustainability change agents in academia and business
- developing and supporting the spaces and practices that equip current and future business leaders with the knowledge, skills and mindsets they need

Our story

ABIS was founded in 2001 and launched at INSEAD in 2002 with the support of the leading Business Schools in Europe (INSEAD, IMD, London, ESADE, IESE, Copenhagen, Warwick, Vlerick, Ashridge, Cranfield, Bocconi) in partnership with IBM, Microsoft, Johnson & Johnson, Unilever and Shell. This initiative was driven by a shared belief that challenges linked to globalization and sustainable development required new management skills, mindsets & capabilities. ABIS developed a strong role in responding to this need and it focused on integrating sustainability at the heart of business curricula, corporate policies and business strategies by providing knowledge and capacity building.

Our network

As one of the very few existing business-academic networks, we nurture a unique experience. We believe that research and business have a role to play and we trust that academia and business can work together for a more sustainable world. Our network is big enough to always have new knowledge and ideas flowing, but also small enough to build unusual and strong connections and to create intimate spaces for brave discussions. We care about our network priorities and needs. Our members are willing to openly share their progress, challenges and dilemmas to learn and further improve. This creates an inclusive community and environment where individuals feel safe to share and value each other's insights and experiences. This contributes to develop and scale up their sustainability efforts in research, education and responsible ways of doing business.

We believe that the value is in the network and we achieve it with and for our members through:

3 main engagement areas

Knowledge Productivity



ABIS facilitates your access to academic & business experts, peer-to-peer sharing on specific and multidisciplinary issues and an increased impact and results of your work.

Learning & Development



ABIS allows you to gain the latest knowledge as well as the skills and mindsets to develop your sustainability change agency and leadership, within and outside your organization.

Communication & Dissemination



ABIS helps to increase the visibility of your activities and results and to learn about new initiatives, funding and collaboration opportunities, projects and latest developments from our network and beyond.

Knowledge Into Action Festival



On 27-29 April 2021, we convened our annual Knowledge Into Action Forum in the form of a **Festival** for the first time, **spreading over 3 days**.

The event was a unique opportunity crafted for our members to harness the **emerging developments** in sustainability and **value-centered models**, as well insights on **future needs** and **learning paradigms** to support the **sustainability transformation**.

Each day focused on a different topic, with expert panel discussions and interactive co-creation sessions where participants took an active role, shared their opinions, contributions and takeaways following specific methodologies. In the three days, we embarked on a journey to sense:

- Is there a shift towards responsible, value-centered business and economy? (Day 1)
- How can it look like? (Day 2)
- What kind of competences and learning paradigms does this require? (Day 3)

We were pleased to have welcomed **participants from 20 countries** all over the world at the live event representing over **45 organizations**.

We hosted **14** incredible and diverse **speakers** from *B Lab, Circle Economy, Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism, Concordia University, European Youth Forum, WEF Global Shapers, Junior Entreprises Global, Natura &Co, Oikos International, Presencing Institute, PRME, UN Global Compact and Stellenbosch University*.

We are very proud to have organized a **conference** with **57% female speakers**. We were also honored to have on stage **leaders from young generations** who exchanged their thoughts, vision and ideas with senior leadership figures from academia and other sectors. This was an important moment to understand the shifts that are emerging and movements **led by youth**.

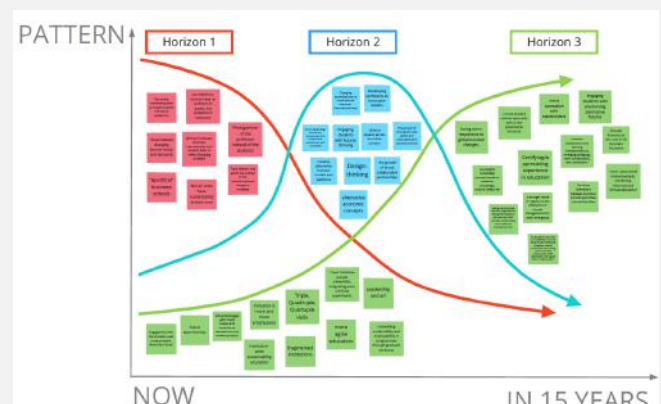
On Day 1, we started by taking stock and sensing into the shifts that are happening in the world. The panel session on **"Emerging business models and economic systems"** explored the developments and calls for alternative economic systems such as inclusive or stakeholder capitalism and circular economy, also taking into account the challenges of the post-Covid recovery and social distress.

The central session of the event on Day 2 **"What is the future calling for?"** put the spotlight on young leaders - whom we at ABIS call movers - who shared a powerful vision, reframing, and drive for the transformation towards more value-centred, pluralistic, inclusive, sustainability-driven economy and education.

The last panel on Day 3 **"What do businesses and business schools need to learn?"** of our KIAF reflected on new mindsets and competences that are needed to deal with this increasingly complex human society, social divides, and environmental challenges. We discussed how businesses and business schools can become innovative and learning organizations to navigate new waters.

In closing, ABIS hosted a **interactive co-creation session** on the **future of business education** featured a **3 Horizons exploration**, which purpose was to help participants initiate transformative action and acquire the perspectives of futures consciousness. The session harnessed the learnings from the event and participants insights which generated a map for possible developments in business education.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the full KIAF report where you can find the summaries of the sessions, recordings and further resources for learning.



20th ABIS Annual Colloquium



"Driving impact through responsible investing"

ABIS organized its **20th Annual Colloquium** on November 23 during which speakers and participants engaged in keynote speeches, panel discussions, research presentations and interactive sessions on the timely topic of **"Driving responsible investing to deliver impact"**.

The conference created a dialogue between practitioners and academics centering on the question: **how to enhance positive business impact on society through responsible investing?** In particular, speakers and participants addressed the related benefits and opportunities for business and business schools.

The conference welcomed responsible investing professionals, business practitioners, as well as scholars and educators in business, management and sustainable finance. The event was an opportunity for them to engage with each other, learn and discuss the **latest insights and developments** in responsible investing. We were pleased to receive 40 participants at the live event representing around 30 organizations and 10 countries.

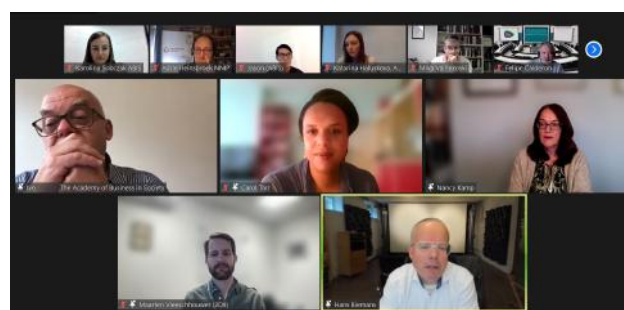
The conference was opened by a **keynote** from **Adrie Heinsbroek**, Chief Sustainability Officer at **NN Investment Partners** who started off with a reflection on **investing as preparing for the future**. Finance in general is called to change from just shifting capital in financial transactions to impact in the real economy e.g. not just reducing carbon of portfolios (simply divesting), but also allocating capital to make the transition to a low-carbon economy happen.

The panel session **"Investors and banks as changemakers - making it work"** featured a number of relevant voices in the finance sector such as representatives from **ING**, **Kavedon Kapital**, **2° Investing Initiative** and **University of Groningen**, who shared their approaches on responsible investing.

The next session **"Company perspectives and opportunities"** featured cases which exemplified ways in which business can integrate, benefit from and create positive impact by adopting responsible investing principles and strategies. Firstly we learned about **"Managing sustainability reporting and circular transformation"** from **Iris van Wanrooij**, Program Manager Corporate Social Responsibility, **Emma Safety Footwear**. Later we discussed with **Roberta Bosurgi**, CEO, **European Venture Philanthropy Association** **"Creating social impact through innovative financing approaches"**.

The last session of the Colloquium featured a interactive fishbowl discussion on **"Responsible Investing and sustainability education - are business schools missing out?"**. After the opening statements by **Jörg Rocholl**, President, **ESMT Berlin** and **Tim Mescon**, Executive Vice President and Chief Officer, EMEA, **AACSB**, the participants reflected on what is the reality of responsible investing education in business schools and how business schools can educate leaders with a more integrated understanding of sustainable decisions-making.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the full Colloquium report where you can find the summaries of the sessions, recordings and further resources for learning.



20th ABIS Annual Colloquium



Driving impact through responsible investing

For the afternoon programme, we proceeded to learn about the **latest research findings** on responsible investing and sustainable finance both from academic and practitioner presentations.

We introduced two parallel tracks :

- **ESG, Corporate Governance and Value Creation**
- **Responsible Investing approaches and performance**

The track chairs **Joan Fontrodona**, Professor and Director of Business Ethics Department, **IESE Business School** and **Luk Van Wassenhove**, Emeritus Professor of Technology and Operations Management, **INSEAD** introduced in each track 5 authors to present their latest papers.

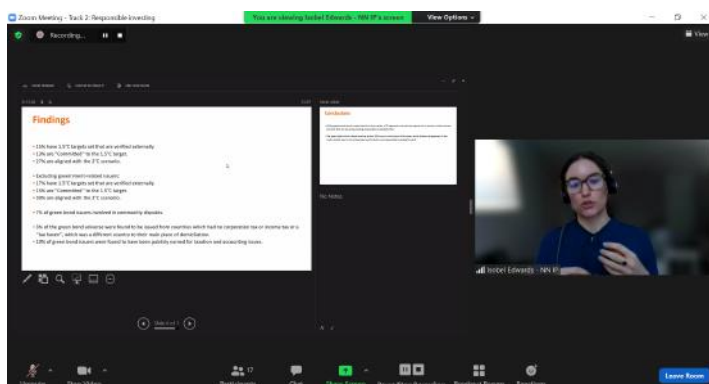
All the authors were invited to submit their full papers in the upcoming **ABIS Special Issue: "Driving impact through responsible investing"** at the **Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal** by Emerald publishing. The papers in the Special Issue will examine:

- how to enhance positive business impact on society through responsible investing?
- Is there alignment among business and investors on investing in sustainable activities?
- What are the challenges and the opportunities of responsible investing?

We were pleased to have received and desk accepted **12 papers** for the double blind peer review process. We wish good luck to all the authors and are excited to embark on this journey together. The Special Issue is scheduled to be **published in spring 2023**.

Guest editors for the upcoming Special Issue:

- **Joan Fontrodona**, Professor and Director of Business Ethics Department, **IESE Business School**
- **Luk Van Wassenhove**, Emeritus Professor of Technology and Operations Management, **INSEAD**
- **Ivo Matser**, Chief Executive Officer, **ABIS - The Academy of Business in Society**



Horizon Europe Funding Webinar Series



"Impact and Dissemination" & "Exploitation"

To support our members in their continuous efforts in obtaining European funding we have continued in 2021 with the **ABIS Horizon Europe Funding Webinar Series**.

This webinar series aimed to exchange knowledge and inform our business-academic network about the EU funding and provide practical insights and tips on how to submit a winning project proposal. In 2020 we started off with 2 sessions: "Introduction to Horizon Europe" and "Fundamentals of a project proposal". In 2021, we brought you more in depth sessions specifically on "Impact and Dissemination" and "Exploitation"

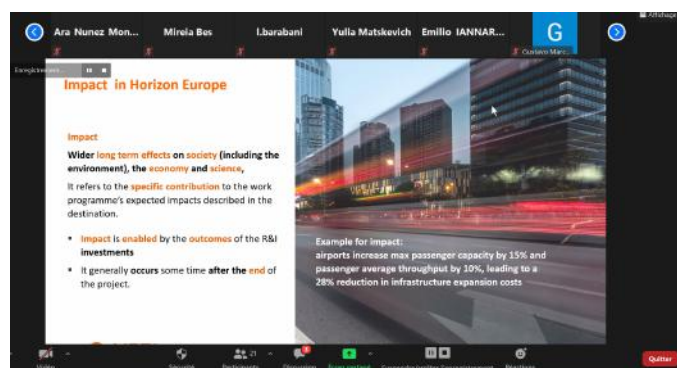
- **Impact and Dissemination** with **Andrea Di Anselmo**, Vice President and Founding Member at **META Group**
- **Exploitation** with **Lorenzo Barabani**, Consultant at **META Group**

In the Impact and Dissemination session, our expert speaker focused on the strategic orientation of Horizon Europe on the **expected impacts of projects** and how to approach this section when writing project proposals. We discussed the insights and useful tools for maximising the impact of the outcomes **beyond the state of the art** through well planned dissemination.

The following Exploitation session, which took place one week after, looked at **maximizing the projects impact** through appropriate measures to **make use of the results** during and after the project's implementation. We discussed tips and tools how to best realise value from these research results.

ABIS remains being active in EU projects, mainly under Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ (see section EU Projects in this report). The team is open for collaborations on diverse range of sustainability topics where we get to use our knowledge and experiences, engage our network, lead work packages in dissemination and communication, advise on proposal impact or being part of advisory boards.

[Click here to access all the recordings.](#)



Scenario Exploration System



A serious foresight and gaming tool

The **Scenario Exploration System (SES)** is a **serious foresight and gaming tool** developed by the **European Commission's Joint Research Centre** to facilitate the practical use of scenarios from **foresight** studies, engage participants in systemic long-term thinking while exploring alternative sustainable futures in the role of different societal stakeholders.

Event: Exploring sustainable futures with serious gaming

From the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we were unable to organize any in person SES workshops. We took this as an opportunity to learn even more about the **origins of this tool, its current use** by different stakeholders by organizing an event on **"Exploring sustainable futures with serious gaming"**. The aim of the event was to bring **awareness of the tool** to our network and broader audience, its versatility and **applications in policy, business and academia**.

The first session **"From foresight to a serious game"** brought together the developers and game designers of the Scenario Exploration System from the Joint Research Centre, Fraunhofer Institute in Karlsruhe and Participatory Futures Global Swarm. The speakers introduced the origins and the initial goal of the SES. They explained the whole design process with its prototyping and iteration. They discussed what were the lessons learned from the whole process and its first applications.

The second session **"Scenario Exploration System – different versions and applications in academia, business, and policy"** introduced 6 different users of the game from policy, academia and business presenting 6 different SES versions. They explained the reasons behind developing these particular versions, objectives, learnings and outcomes of the played sessions. The session also featured participants of the different versions of the tool to bring a player-perspective as well.

[Click to watch the recordings of "From foresight to a serious game" and "SES - different versions and applications"](#).

SES Digital version

To be able to play the game under the difficult circumstances, we developed and tested out a **digital version** of the tool. We have tested it out first with the junior entrepreneurs from the **Junior Enterprises Europe**. We offered a workshop as part of the ABIS flagship event **Knowledge Into Action Festival 2021**.

During these two sessions, we understood that the quality of the workshop remains extremely high even in digital format, the participants gained many insights and learnings from it. The digital version among others has a immense advantage that it can be played with different stakeholders all around the world.

SES Taster Sessions

To be able to spread our offer to our network and beyond, we have introduced **monthly one-hour Taster Sessions**. In this session we give a quick **overview of the tool** and **showcase a practical and interactive example** of how to play this game digitally. The participants gain a better understanding about the key **benefits, learnings** and the **dynamics** of the tool. So far, we have organized 6 Taster Sessions with over **100 participants** and this number is increasing every month.

[To join us for a Taster Session click here and register.](#)

SES tailored workshops and trainings

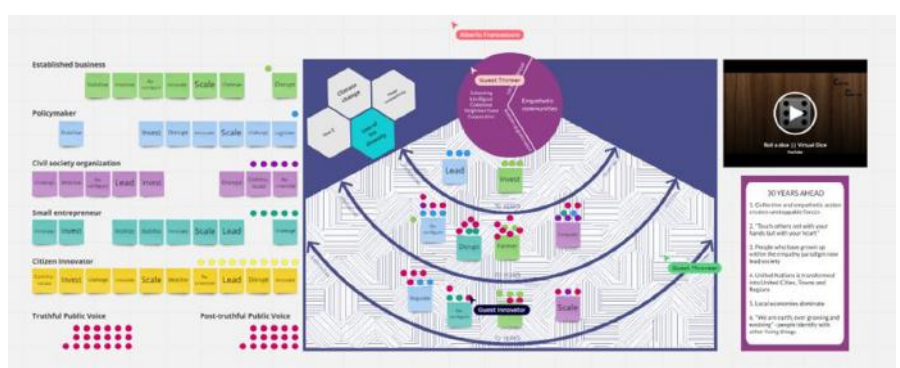
The SES workshop has been increasingly popular. We take great care when organizing a SES workshop as the tool is **highly versatile** and can be **tailored to every client need** and every scenario or topic. The SES can be used in academic context as a teaching tool but also for strategic reasons for internal management teams both in business and academia.

Throughout the year 2021 we delivered **5 tailored workshops** for both members and non-members, academia but also public bodies: *Stellenbosch Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Bremen, University of New Brunswick and SCO Sweden*.

On top of one-off workshops, we also offer **trainings for future facilitators** (game masters) of the tool. We have trained around **30 facilitators** from *Stellenbosch Institute for Sustainable Futures, Liverpool John Moores University and SCO Sweden*.

To offer you an example of how our members and clients use this training, Liverpool John Moores University integrated the SES tool as a core part of their **MSc programme on International Business Management** and its **CSR module for 100 students**.

[Read more about the Scenario Exploration System.](#)



ABIS New and Upcoming Initiatives

ABIS Mentoring Programme



Mentoring Programme pilot for Early Stage Researchers

ABIS has developed and initiated in October 2021 a Mentoring Programme pilot that aims to **strengthen the learning and development for Early Stage Researchers** and **creating supportive connections** that are necessary in order to contribute to address today's environmental and social challenges.

Many Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) today look to find their ways developing their careers while also contributing to **make a positive impact**. At ABIS, we have hosted many young and talented researchers at events and conferences, and having been involved in many MSCA International Training Networks, we perceive how in need ESRs are of both **personal and professional support** to flourish in their careers and **take part in the sustainability transformation**. The need for supportive connections has been exacerbated by the Covid pandemic, while **learning and development of researchers** and faculty has been identified as an underdeveloped area in increasing business schools' impact and change agency.

The ABIS Mentoring programme aims to **empower young academics** active in the sustainability field, helping them **reach their full potential** in professional and personal development. Our goal is to make a significant contribution to equipping leaders with the skills and capabilities to advance the role of business in society and allow people and planet to prosper.

The core of the programme is a set of **6-8 one-hour 1:1 mentoring sessions** in sustainability, helping ESRs progress in their careers and make an impact on society. The programme also includes **regular workshops** and **online calls** organized by ABIS. The whole programme lasts **9 months**.

The interest among our network was very high as we received **19** highly experienced **academic mentors' applications** offering up to **30 mentoring spots** and **13 mentees' applications**. Through a couple of **matchmaking events**, we were able to put together **9 couples** that signed **mentoring agreements**. After a introductory **kick-off event** where we laid down the program structure, timeline, fundamental mentoring rules and the participants' expectations, we organized 3 workshops aiming for further ESRs' professional development and growth. The sessions included:

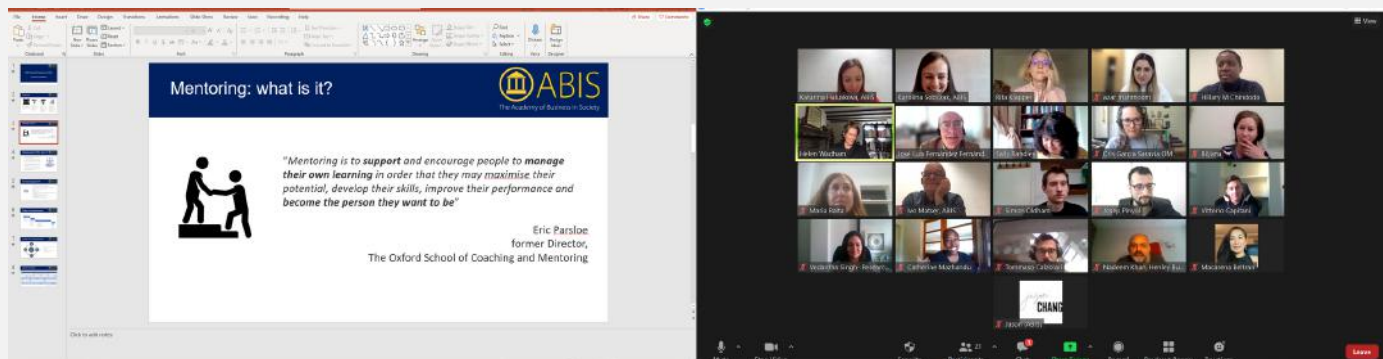
- Scenario Exploration System workshop
- Research academics as change makers – research impact vs academic rigour
- Responsible Research in Business and Management

Throughout the whole process informal sessions with mentors and mentees were organized to gain feedback and insights about this programme.

We are pleased to work with our mentoring couples and finish this pilot off with a celebration event by the end of June 2022.

Seeing this programme as very satisfactory, providing with added value to our institutional members, mentors and mentees, we have decided to continue with this Mentoring Programme in 2022 as well. If you are interested, please stay tuned as we will communicate Calls for mentors and mentees soon. The expected beginning of the **next Mentoring programme is September 2022**.

[Read more about the Mentoring Programme pilot.](#)



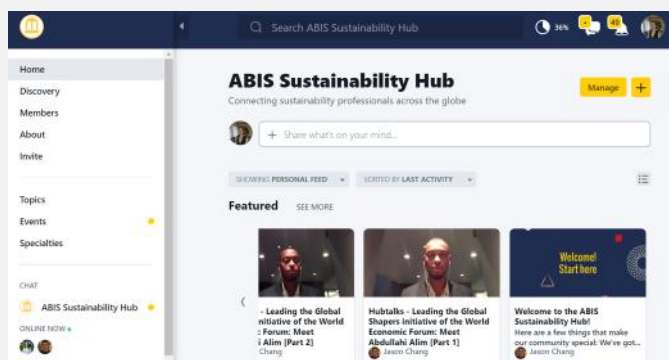
Sustainability Hub and Sustainability Performance Assessment



ABIS Sustainability Hub

By the end of 2021, we have launched a **Sustainability Hub**, a platform for **sustainability practitioners** and **business professionals** to *connect, explore, learn* and *collaborate* on various **sustainability initiatives**. The idea was driven by utilizing ABIS connections of individuals and create higher engagement, while also reaching out to a more diverse and undiscovered set of stakeholders. Currently, we have more than **100 members** of around **30 nationalities** represented on the Hub. We are currently on the scaling up phase, with many more ideas and projects coming up.

[Join our Hub HERE.](#)



Sustainability Performance Assessment (SPA)

ABIS has developed a **Sustainability Performance Assessment (SPA)**, a **management model** designed to **integrate sustainability in higher education institutions**. Its purpose is to report to decision-makers of these institutions and to engage them in **continuous improvement** by gaining awareness on how its enablers are leading to sustainable transformation. The assessment will analyse and inform about the actual status of **sustainability implementation at institutional and academic level** and provide with **recommendations** for effective further developments.

The assessment consists of

- **a survey** containing different sets of 60 questions directed to *key internal and external stakeholders* focusing on sustainability *enablers* and *performances*
- **reporting** from an analysis of the processed answers from the survey

The report can be used as part of the self-assessment report (SAR) for the institution's national or international accreditation purposes. The ABIS SPA report will provide **context and evidence** of the **institution's sustainability initiatives and performance**.

ABIS is currently in the testing phase of this assessment with its *Board of Directors* and their respective member institutions. We will be communicating soon this opportunity to all our members.



Second edition

Building on a very successful first edition of the ABIS & Antwerp Management School Creating Value Roundtable held in Spring 2020, which featured sessions on value creation concepts and methodologies, we were pleased to organize in 2021 a second edition. In this second edition, we continued the dialogue with companies - *Port of Antwerp, Johnson & Johnson, ABN Amro, BASF and the Value Balancing Alliance* -, followed by a further round of reflections from the **value creation concepts originators** *Jed Emerson, Mark Kramer, Stuart Hart, Robert Phillips and Wayne Visser*.

The aim of the roundtable was to convene a group of senior figures from the business and academic communities for an **in-depth debate** and **critical review** on existing value creation approaches and **sustainability integration models**.

Among the issues we discussed:

- Which approaches on value creation lead to sustainable transformation?
- Does the integration of sustainability practices lead to value creation?
- How effective is the integration of sustainability practices for sustainable transformation?
- To which extent do change processes (management) facilitate the decision and implementation of sustainability integration?

To discover all the recordings from the roundtable, please [click here](#).

As the roundtable generated a lot of interest and exchanges of views among our network and the topic was also mentioned as one of the most significant research themes in the 2020 ABIS Members survey, we decided to host an **informal follow up session** for our members by using an interactive **fishbowl format**. The goal of the session was to gather feedback on the content and the format of the roundtable, and also to increase the understanding of the participants' perspectives on the issue of value creation.

This led to the publication of a **report "Corporate approaches to sustainable value creation"**. The report provides an overview of the above mentioned companies value creation models, as well as key insights from the dialogue on emerging approaches to value creation.

In the report you can discover:

- **four value creation models**
- **six key dimensions for sustainable value creation,**
- reflections on the **impact of the Covid-19 pandemic,**
- views on the **incentives** needed to support the development of more sustainable value creation approaches
- **key takeaways for learning how to create value** from a follow up dialogue with 10 ABIS members, especially useful for business schools researchers and educators

[Click to access the report.](#)



NN IP Responsible Investing Summer Course



After a successful NN IP Responsible Investing Summer Course of 2020, we have been invited to collaborate with the **NN Investment Partners** further to prepare the **NN IP Responsible Investing Summer Course: "The future of responsible investing"** that was scheduled to take place from 20 July to 25 August 2021.

The format of the course stayed similar with having 6 **online, interactive, thought-provoking lectures** from **leading academics** all around the globe. True to our mission, we were able to **bridge the academic and corporate world**. Leading academics from our network organizations and beyond including *Oxford University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the University of Zurich* and the *University of Groningen* gave in-depth presentations on their expertise and experience about **the future interplay between sustainability, finance and technology**.

The lectures focused on several topics, including:

- **The transition to new (business) models:** how can we better predict, steer and measure responsible investing outcomes?
- How can we ensure the **capital** we put to work in **financial markets** will have a **positive impact** in the real world?
- Are **AI and technology** effective in **responsible investing**?

Second year in a row, the series attracted a lot of attention. Nearly **2300 participants registered**, with having a **show-up rate of 70%**.

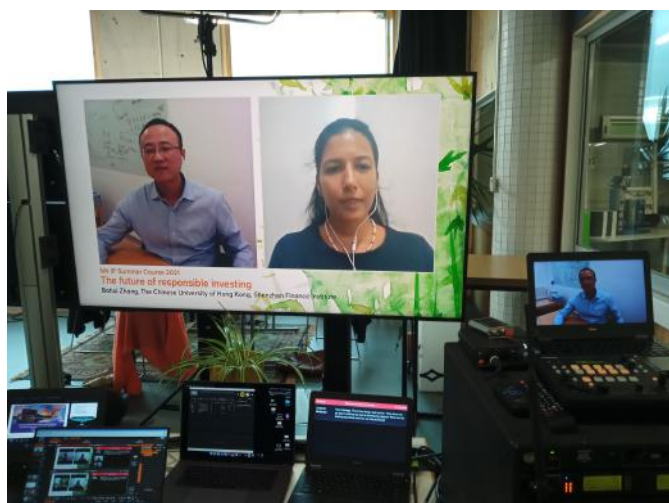
At ABIS, we were very happy to contribute to:

- Assessing potential speakers for Summer Course
- Coordinating all communication, admin and finance between speakers and NN IP
- Knowledge support during briefing process and at Q&As
- Content management for NN IP marketing collaterals and its coordination with speakers

The whole list of speakers:

- **Ben Caldecott**, Director, Oxford Sustainable Finance Programme & Professor in Sustainable Finance **University of Oxford**
- **Nancy Kamp-Roelands**, Professor non-financial information, integrated reporting and assurance, **University of Groningen**
- **Tensie Whelan**, Clinical Professor of Business and Society, Director, Center for Sustainable Business, **NYU Stern School of Business**
- **Andreas Hoepner**, Professor of Operational Risk, Banking and Finance, Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School & the Lochlann **Quinn School of Business of University College Dublin (UCD)**
- **Bohui Zhang**, Presidential Chair Professor of Finance Associate Dean of School of Management and Economics, **The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)**
- **Markus Leipold**, Professor of Financial Engineering, **University of Zurich**

[Read more about this collaboration HERE.](#)



Business in Society: Measuring Impact and Creating Change



ABIS Special Issue



Stemming from the **ABIS 18th Annual Colloquium on “Business in Society: Measuring Impact and Creating Change”** hosted by **ESMT Berlin** in 2019, we were able to publish the ABIS Special Issue: "Measuring Impact and Creating Change" with the collaboration of the Emerald journal: Corporate Governance, the International Journal of Business in Society.

The 9 papers that made it into the Special Issue after careful double blind peer review and two rounds of revisions, are pertinent and topical in the sustainability discourse, focusing on some of the fundamental issues in measuring impact and systemic change and impact on macro and micro level. The papers provide a state-of-the-art overview on the current related developments and challenges that academia and businesses are currently facing.

Our guest editors: **Ivo Matser, ABIS; Yury Blagov, St. Petersburg University; Thomas Osburg, Fresenius University of Applied Sciences** and **Boleslaw Rok, Kozminski University** wrote an open-access editorial to this Special Issue.

[**View the Editorial here.**](#)

[**The Special Issue can be viewed here.**](#) You can get access by logging in via Shibboleth, Open Athens or with Emerald account.

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Best Sustainability Teaching Practices



ABIS Special Issue

From the results of the ABIS Survey 2020, **sharing best practices and making high-quality teaching resources accessible to all, is considered one of the top resources and support needed to face current challenges.**

In the light of the **19th Annual Colloquium “Coming full circle? Sustainability and future-proof global recovery”**, where sustainability change agents from business, academia and NGOs harnessed the change possibilities and committed to urgent action and innovation, business schools scholars and educators presented innovative sustainability teaching practices across three tracks: **Sustainability Programmes, Creative Teaching Practices, Business Cases and Industry Engagement.**

Some of these are included in the upcoming **ABIS Special Issue: "Best Sustainability Teaching Practices"**. This special issue is designed to help the ABIS business-academic network and beyond to gain and access relevant insights to accelerate sustainability uptake, learning capacity and improve the development of sustainable business education. Our hope is that business school take leadership toward sustainability transitions.

The Special Issue will be published with 8 papers and an editorial in May 2022 in the Emerald Journal of International Education in Business.

We would like to thank our guest editors, authors and reviewers for their dedication, hard work and loyalty.

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- **Satu Teerinkangas**, Professor of Management and Organization, Turku School of Economics, **University of Turku**
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- **Ivo Matser**, Chief Executive Officer, **ABIS**

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EU Research and Innovation Projects

ReTraCE



Realizing the Transition Towards a Circular Economy

Since 2018, ABIS is part of a consortium **led by University of Sheffield** in **EU Horizon 2020 project under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)** called **"ReTrace" - Realizing the Transition to the Circular Economy**. The consortium is composed of *University of Sheffield, Università Degli Studi di Napoli Parthenope, Universitaet Kassel, SEERC, ABIS, Hogskolan Dalarna, University of Kent, TATA Steel UK, Olympia Electronics and Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam*. The partners also include *University of Exeter, Leeds University Business School, University of Ulsan and Shanghai Jiao Tong University*.

The main aim of the ReTraCE project is to create **a cohort of professionals capable of driving the transition towards the Circular Economy** and employable not only by research institutions, but also by public sector bodies (e.g. local authorities and national agencies) and manufacturing and service sectors including: metals industry, electric and electronic equipment manufacturing, construction materials and waste management. The consortium delivers world class multidisciplinary training to **15 Early Stage Researchers (ESRs)** offering them an extended and valuable program of international exchanges and secondments through the wide network of partner organisations from public, private and third sectors.

One of these 15 researchers is **Josep Pinyol**, who is hosted by ABIS since May 2019. He is also enrolled in the PhD programme in Sustainable Futures at the *University of Exeter Business School*.

Project Meeting with Industry and Job Forum 2021

After a successful **Project Meeting with Industry and Policy Experts** that we organized in **May 2020**, we were pleased to convene another two-day **Project Meeting with Industry and Job Forum** in **December 2021**. This year the **15 ESRs** were able to present their progress in research, their findings and outcomes of their work to industry and policy professionals in the field of Circular Economy. The event was organized in a hybrid form, where the ReTraCE consortium had the possibility to meet **in person** in Brussels while having all project meeting sessions **online**.

We were able to connect the researchers with **13 experts** from institutions such as *Enel, European Remanufacturing Council, Nemak, NTT Data, Metsa Group, European Commission, Circle Economy, CEPS, Chatham House and European Environment Agency and more* who provided them with their experience, useful feedback and critical insights. The goal of the project meeting was to **support the professional development** of the ESRs while gaining practical information from experts working in the field.

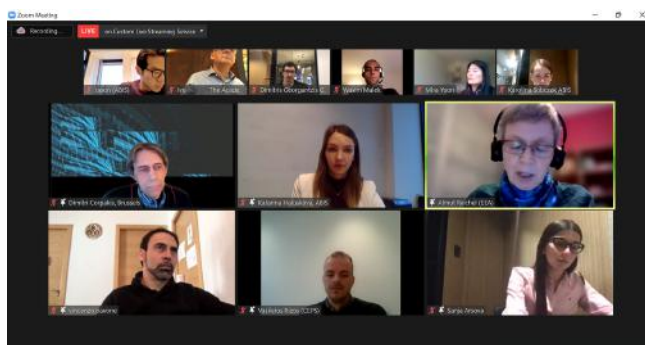
As the project and the ESRs' studies are slowly coming to an end, we have also prepared on the second day several lectures and workshops from *VITAE, European Research Executive Agency and WorldSteel* that offered **practical advice on future job opportunities** and their further professional development whether in academia, industry or policy at the European job market in Circular Economy.

[Watch the recordings of the event HERE.](#)

Exploring the Enablers of Circular Economy Practices: the case of businesses and business schools

Our colleague Josep Pinyol with the support of ABIS team was working on a **report "Exploring the Enablers of Circular Economy Practices: the case of businesses and business schools"** This report investigates what motivates decision-makers to **adopt circular practices** within the context of businesses, business networks and business schools. The report aims to provide new insights to understand **how circular practices are adopted** and how this transition can be further boosted. The research is based on a **set of 20 interviews** to key stakeholders who are involved in the adoption and development of Circular Economy strategies of businesses, or of research groups and teaching programs within business schools.

[To get full access to the report, please CLICK HERE.](#)



Other EU Projects



OPUS: Open and Universal Science

We are pleased to inform you that we have been granted a project **OPUS: Open and Universal Science** under the **Horizon Europe** programme, HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01 call. The project aims to **reform the assessment of research and researchers** towards a system that incentivises and rewards researchers to practice **Open Science**. The consortium led by *PLOCAN, ICORSA and RESOLVO* has **18 academic and non-academic partners**. ABIS role will lie in **developing set of interventions to implement Open Science**, develop **metrics** to monitor and drive Open Science. We will also engage with our members from **industry** and providing with their perspective on the topic. We will also take support the **dissemination and communication** of the project outcomes. We are currently finalising the grant agreement. The project should start by mid-2022.

List of consortium partners:

- Plataforma Oceanica De Canarias, PLOCAN, Spain
- United Nations Education, Scientific Cultural organisation, UNESCO, France
- International Consortium of Research Staff Associations, ICoRSA, Ireland
- Careers Research and Advisory Centre, VITAE, UK
- Universidade Nova de Lisboa, UNL, Portugal
- Technopolis Consulting Group Belgium, TGB, Belgium
- Young European Research Universities Network, YERUN, Belgium
- Joint Information Systems Committee, JISC, UK
- Eurodoc Le Conseil Européen Des Doctorants Et Jeunes Docteurs, Belgium
- UEFISCDI, UEF, Romania
- Research Council Lithuania, RCL, Lithuania
- Academy of Business in Society, ABIS, Belgium
- Marie Curie Alumni Association, MCAA, Belgium
- Sveučilište u Rijeci, UNIRI, Croatia
- TrustInside, TI, France
- Vilnius University, VU, Lithuania
- Resolvo, Italy
- University of Cyprus, UCY, Cyprus

LORETTA: Local, Responsible, Trust-based climate transition

In 2021 we have worked on preparing a **LORETTA** proposal for **Local, Responsible, Trust-based climate transition** for a Horizon Europe call. The aim was to create a **just, trust-based transition** to a **climate-neutral** and **environmentally sustainable economies and societies at local level**. The consortium consisted of many partners from a RRIingD proposal that was submitted in 2020. There were **13 partners** led by *PLOCAN, ICORSA and RESOLVO*. If funded, ABIS role would be to support in **identifying engagement tools and mechanisms** and investigating the **promotion of climate transition methods**. We would also **engage industry and banking sector** and **youth** through workshops. The use of **Scenario Exploration System** was planned to explore possible paths to future and long-term thinking of the consortium partners and other stakeholders. ABIS would take an active part in the dissemination and communication of projects outcomes as well. Even though at this point we have received a negative response, we have created a very interesting proposal to use for the future and the consortium wishes to keep working together on similar proposals in the future. We are looking forward to working together with them in the hopefully near future.

CLIMACT

We were also invited to participate to a **MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship** proposal CLIMACT. A good ABIS acquaintance **Dr. Arijit Paul**, formerly from *University of Graz*, proposed to be a fellow at the *University of Oxford* while ABIS' role would be to **host him for 6 months** after the second-half of the fellowship. The fellow would provide ABIS with **co-designing workshop series** for our network on **climate conscious decision making in businesses**. On the other hand, ABIS team would support the fellow in his research through contacting and bridging him with industry professionals. Unfortunately, the proposal did not get funded. We do hope to have our paths crossed with Dr. Arijit Paul again sometime.

ABIS Participation and Engagement



JE Europe Winter Conference

For the third year in a row we took an active part at the **Junior Enterprises Europe (JE Europe) Winter Conference**, a flagship annual event for around 400 junior entrepreneurs and young leaders. The main theme of the event was **"Find your purpose"** which was addressed by our CEO Ivo Matser at his **keynote speech** at the opening ceremony. The ABIS team hosted a **Scenario Exploration System Workshop (SES) for the first time online thanks to our digitalized SES version** for 25 junior entrepreneurs, where they engaged with foresight scenarios and took on different societal roles that contribute to achieving a more sustainable future. Moreover, we took part in a jury and awarded the **Best Sustainable Junior Enterprise**. Even when the conference was fully online, the engagement of the junior entrepreneurs was excellent and we had a great time.

JE Global - Memorandum of Understanding

After successful and fruitful collaboration with Junior Enterprises Europe (JE Europe), we were very happy to take this partnership a level higher and as a global business-academic network, we partnered up as well with the **Junior Enterprises Global**.

We have signed an official **Memorandum of Understanding** during a **online ceremony**, where we introduced each member of the ABIS team and got to know everyone from the executive board from JE Global. We shared our vision of our cooperation and mentioned several engagement opportunities for the future. With this MoU we set a foundation of our future collaboration and aligned our vision of making **young people protagonists** and of wanting to create an impact on society. Both institutions agreed to strengthen our mutual participation in each other's activities and projects and by developing new joint activities on three levels – international, local and internal.

8th International GSOM Emerging Markets Conference 2021

GSOM Emerging Markets Conference has been organized by **Graduate School of Management of St. Petersburg University** since 2014 and has become a unique platform for discussing and sharing research ideas and experience in a wide range of topics and joined together more than 1600 leading scholars and business practitioners from all around the world. ABIS co-organized and co-chaired a track on **Business in Society: New Reality and the Implementation of Corporate Sustainability Strategies** by Ivo Matser, CEO of ABIS and Yury Blagov, Director of the PwC Center for Corporate Social Responsibility at the GSOM and the ABIS Board of Director in November.

International Symposium 'Foresight and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy'

Our colleague **Karolina Sobczak**, Knowledge Manager at ABIS participated to a panel **"Blended futures: Pushing the boundaries of foresight"** during the **International Symposium 'Foresight and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy'** of the **National Research University Higher School of Economics** at Moscow, Russia. We were able to present the **Scenario Exploration System**, specifically the version stemming from the **EU project EU-InnovatE** that ABIS has been successfully using in our activities, in particular engaging students of our member organizations. She discussed the benefits and the learnings from this serious foresight game and showcasing how this tool can be used digitally as well.

ABIS Team and Board



ABIS Team



Ivo Matser
Chief Executive Officer



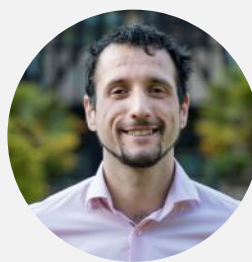
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