

**JOURNAL OF GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
**CALL FOR PAPERS: SPECIAL ISSUE**

**Nurturing Responsibility: Connecting Business Practice, Education and Sustainability**

In the effort to rethink business practices in the context of worldwide recession, rapid globalisation and increasing attention to matters of sustainability and corporate responsibility, a range of issues arise. Some of the most intriguing and urgent questions relate to the practice of academic institutions that provide qualifications and learning opportunities for future managers, leaders and entrepreneurs.

As awareness grows about the global challenges we face, we need to question the effectiveness of existing educational offerings, in preparing students to tackle these issues across varied organisational contexts and business sectors. This requires the development of ways to ensure stronger connectivity at the educational interface between economic priorities and improved global responsibility. Mainstreaming 'sustainability' within the curriculum is becoming critical, so that it becomes a lens through which management is viewed.

This Special Issue will explore these imperatives, share expertise and promote further debate on the issues at stake. Proposals are invited from colleagues worldwide, to contribute to critical discussion and to present current research findings, leading practice and suggestions for future pathways. The sections below contain guidance on the focus, themes and submissions process, plus contact details for the guest editors.

**FOCUS & PURPOSE:**

The Journal of Global Responsibility takes an inclusive view on questions of 'sustainability' and uses this concept to embrace issues of poverty and inequality, environmental degradation, human rights and access to resources. The concept reaches beyond the practice of 'corporate social responsibility', to take into account the complex challenge of reorienting business practices to help improve development processes and life chances worldwide, whilst recognising the inevitability of limits to planetary resources.

Changing business practice to address such limits and inequalities is critically important – and perhaps the most crucial arena for shaping longer term business priorities is within HE curricula. The current literature addressing sustainability issues in business education points to certain important trends:

1. Evidence from recent surveys points to growing student interest in the place of ethical issues within business curricula, with 77% of UG students and 78% of MBA students seeking stronger emphasis on sustainability and corporate responsibility (Christensen et al 2007; Net Impact 2009; 2010).
2. Whilst MBA programmes are regularly redesigned, and attention to ethics and sustainability has visibly increased in recent years (particularly as elective subjects), alumni remain highly critical of the shortcomings of business education in this area. Academic faculty and students alike point to both a lack of core coverage and a lack of integration of such issues within MBA curricula (Aspen Institute 2009; Christensen et al 2007; Stoddard 2009; Tilbury et al 2005).
3. There is distinct and persistent 'disconnect' in the ways that sustainability concepts and paradigms are handled within business curricula, in relation to standard economic and management theories (Carrithers & Petersen 2006; Jabbour 2010; Stoddard 2009; Stubbs & Cocklin 2008).
4. Integrating principles of sustainability education within business education involves fundamental challenges to existing paradigms and requires innovative pedagogies to deal with complexity and contestation (Hunting & Tilbury 2006; Jabbour 2010; Springett 2005; Stubbs & Cocklin 2008).

These trends provide the platform and conceptual focus for this Special Issue, which seeks to stimulate further debate and to encourage scholarly work to address these issues within business education.

## THEMATIC ISSUES:

This Special Issue will encompass a wide range of thematic issues and welcomes proposals for articles from all methodological and disciplinary perspectives, and from a broad range of cultural and cross-cultural settings. Priority themes for the collection include (but are not restricted to):

- the need to encourage ***integrated understanding within business education*** to help students to negotiate and reconcile the tensions between business goals and sustainability imperatives;
- the ways that ***frameworks for future business education are informed by international initiatives*** such as the UN Global Compact and the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative;
- the range of ***skills, attributes and competencies required*** to improve social responsibility within organisations and the most effective ways to nurture these capabilities in students;
- the importance of ***strengthening critical educational approaches*** to business practice within the curriculum, to challenge existing models and mindsets on global responsibility issues;
- the ***effects of market globalisation processes*** upon business education and the implications for questions of sustainability, diversity, ethics and justice;
- the need for ***connectivity between sustainability and entrepreneurship, leadership, innovation and change management*** within mainstream business education;
- the ***presence and influence of employers, rankings and business partners*** upon HE curricula and in setting the agenda for innovative education geared to global responsibility;
- the importance of ***nurturing innovative research cultures and structures***, including postgraduate research talent, to build knowledge of sustainability in business subject areas;
- the ***inter-disciplinary nature of business curricula*** and examples of leading practice that bring together economic, social and environmental factors in relation to sustainability;
- the ***needs and perspectives of students from diverse backgrounds*** as key influencers raising the focus on sustainability at the global level within business curricula;
- the range of ***strategies, approaches and challenges in reorienting existing curricula*** towards more globally responsible business education.

## EDITORIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

This Special Issue has been commissioned by the *Journal of Global Responsibility* with guest editors Professor Daniella Tilbury, Director of Sustainability, and Dr Alex Ryan, Associate Director of Sustainability (Academic), both of whom are based at the University of Gloucestershire, UK.

Professor Tilbury has corporate and academic portfolios at the University of Gloucestershire and is globally recognised for her work in change management, organisational development and education for sustainable development (ESD). She holds a European Commission Marie Curie Fellowship in ESD and leads the University of Gloucestershire's International Research Institute in Sustainability.

Dr Ryan has responsibility for academic development in sustainability at the University of Gloucestershire and is presently working with Business School colleagues to embed ESD principles within its UG and PG programmes. She also works as consultant to the UK Higher Education Academy ESD Project on a series of activities to support organisational change for sustainability in UK HE institutions.

Contributors are invited to submit abstracts for review by the appointed guest editors. Following the initial selection process, invited contributors will be asked to submit full papers for external peer review.

#### **SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS:**

The editors of the Journal of Global Responsibility invite potential contributors to submit abstracts to the guest editors. Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words and should be accompanied by a brief biographical note that includes full name, title/affiliation, email address and contact details.

All abstracts should be structured to include the following sections, in line with Emerald guidelines:

- Purpose
- Design/methodology/approach
- Findings
- Originality/value.

In addition, authors might comment on the research limitations and any practical or social implications.

Abstracts should also indicate their alignment with one of the following categories:

- Research paper
- Conceptual paper
- Case study
- Literature review
- General review.

Please email word document submissions to Alex Ryan by **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2010**: [aryan@glos.ac.uk](mailto:aryan@glos.ac.uk).

An example follows of the abstract style required by the Journal:

**Abstract: Learning to practice social responsibility in small business: challenges and conflicts**

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to address issues of practicing social responsibility (SR) in small business, where SR implementation challenges are unique. The discussion examines the difficulties encountered by small business owners adopting SR practices, and the various strategies they learned in the process.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A total of 23 small business owner-managers located in Western Canada were interviewed in-depth, individually, and in groups. Group interviews were useful for validating and extending the themes and contradictions that arose in individual interviews, particularly in identifying the most common SR challenges and frustrations, and to compare individuals' learning patterns and diverse strategies of response.

**Findings** – The paper findings show that owners learned SR by working through three main areas of challenge within everyday sociomaterial practices: positioning SR commitments and affiliations; balancing diverse stakeholders with SR ideals and costs; and negotiating value conflicts within SR practice, as part of “becoming” a particular enterprise of SR engagement.

**Originality/value** – The paper suggests that SR may be most fruitfully studied by examining the traces of the networks, linkages, and boundaries formulated through everyday interactions, focusing not just on the social networks and information exchange among humans, but more deeply on the sociomaterial networks within which new practices such as SR emerge. Second, the paper underscores the importance of conceptualizing SR “learning” more in terms of practices that emerge through challenge and conflict than in acquisition and application of new knowledge and attitudes.

#### **CONTACT DETAILS:**

Should you wish to contact either of the guest editors to discuss possible contributions or to make further inquiries, please use the following email addresses:

Professor Daniella Tilbury: [dtilbury@glos.ac.uk](mailto:dtilbury@glos.ac.uk)

Dr Alex Ryan: [aryan@glos.ac.uk](mailto:aryan@glos.ac.uk)

#### **PROPOSED TIMELINE:**

Potential contributors are advised that the Special Issue will be prepared within a fixed schedule to meet publication requirements with the Journal. The anticipated timeline is:

Abstract submissions:	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2010
Selection announced:	13 <sup>th</sup> August 2010
Paper submissions:	30 <sup>th</sup> October 2010
Reviews completed:	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2011
Amendments submitted:	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2011
Final publication:	October 2011

#### **REFERENCES:**

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