

Submission #: 11699

Panel Symposium Proposal for All Academy Theme Session

**At the Interface of Management Science and Practice:
Building a Community for Responsible Research in Management**

Panelists

<p>Thomas Dyllick University of St. Gallen thomas.dyllick@unisg.ch</p> <p>Former Dean, currently Director Institute for the Economy and the Environment</p>	<p>William H. Glick Jones Graduate School of Business, Rice University, USA Bill.Glick@rice.edu</p> <p>Former Dean, Immediate Past-Chair of the Board, AACSB International</p>
<p>Costas Markides London Business School cmarkides@london.edu</p> <p>Coordinator, Ghoshal Conference for Managerial Relevance, former Area Chair, Strategy Group</p>	<p>Organizer, Panelist</p> <p>Gerard George Dean, former editor <i>AMJ</i> Lee Kong Chian School of Business Singapore Management University ggeorge@smu.edu.sg +65 6808 5122</p>

Potential Sponsor: All Academy Theme Program (Panel Symposium)

**At the Interface of Management Science and Practice:
Building a Community for Responsible Research in Management**

ABSTRACT

This symposium presents a whitepaper with a vision of a future “Vision 2030” in which business schools and scholars worldwide have successfully transformed their research toward *responsible science* – defined as research that produces credible and reliable knowledge with either direct or indirect usefulness for addressing problems important to both business and society. This vision is based on the belief that business is a means for a better world. The White Paper is co-authored by 24 senior scholars across five business disciplines from 23 universities in five countries. The paper outlines possible actions by different stakeholders to help business schools and scholars that wish to realize this vision. The paper further explains the impetus for the proposal by describing the current business research ecosystem and associated problems, drawing on published work and a Delphi survey of scholars who have written about different aspects of the current research challenges. The symposium invites discussion and debate on the possibility and necessity of creating a “responsible research” ecosystem so that business and management research can become a force of change for a better world at the interface of management science and practice. Positioning of the White Paper by two members Anne Tsui and Thomas Dyllick will be followed by presentations by Gerard George on impact in management research based on the AMJ special issue on Grand Challenges. Costas Markides will discuss how academics can operate successfully at the interface of management science and practice. Bill Glick will conclude with views on accreditation processes and how business schools need to adapt their research by operating on the interface with practice. Open discussion and comments on creating an open source community on responsible management research will be follow-up actions from the symposium.

**At the Interface of Management Science and Practice:
Building a Community for Responsible Research in Management**

Overview:

Across business disciplines there is a growing concern that our research has become too narrow, that published research does not solve or address real issues of business and society, and that young researchers are discouraged from addressing these important business topics. Many papers and editorials have been written on this and related topics (a partial bibliography of 60+ papers and editorials is available on request), and it is a common theme in discussions among deans, accrediting agencies, professional associations, and journal editors. These groups question the relevance of much of the published research in business and also the validity of its findings. Specific criticisms about validity include an over-emphasis on basic theory over relevance of the topic being studied, excessive focus on methodological and analytical rigor vs. quality of data, and an emphasis on publishing in a small set of journals as evidence of scholarly success as opposed to assessing the quality of the research idea and its impact on theory development, policies and practice. Outsiders such as research funding agencies and business leaders have similar concerns. A further issue is that business school research tends to over-emphasize economic outcomes for businesses and under-emphasize outcomes important for other stakeholders and society as a whole.

These types of concerns and a concomitant desire to do better have motivated an interdisciplinary team of leading business school researchers from across disciplines to address the constraints, propose actions, and promote change within the research ecosystem. The vision is to create an ecosystem of “responsible research in business and

management in service of society.” The team includes senior scholars from accounting, finance, management, marketing, and operations, and most of them have been former association presidents, former and current top journal editors, along with a group of deans and representatives from AACSB, EFMD (AACSB’s parallel organization in Europe), and the PRME group of the Global Compact of United Nations.

Over the last two years the team has worked together to address some of the issues noted above and consider ways to move forward. They have produced a white paper, established a website (to be completed in early 2017), laid plans to establish a community of scholars committed to the responsible research principles as defined in the white paper, and begun an initiative to encourage top journals across disciplines to publish special issues related to “Grand Challenges.” For example, this December (2016), the *Academy of Management Journal* published a Grand Challenge Special Issue and many journals have published or will be publishing special issues on the problem of inequality in societies (e.g., *Human Relations*, 2013; *Journal of Management Studies*, in process; *Organization Studies*, in process). *AMJ* has just issued a new special research forum, calling for new theory development in management, singling out the issues of sustainability, inequality, and well-being as challenges in our world that can benefit from greater research attention. With this increasing momentum, we encourage the IB community to join this movement of critical importance to our profession. How can we dedicate our research resources and talents to studying problems that can contribute to developing knowledge that can be useful to upgrade the effectiveness of international business and ultimately create a better society and a better world?

The purpose of this panel is to present foundational ideas from the interdisciplinary white paper with a vision of the future for business research, proposed principles of responsible science, and possible actions leading toward the future vision. The ideas in the white paper will be especially important with particular implications for international business research. Many business schools in the developing regions are following the current research models, compromising the opportunity to develop knowledge unique for their locations. The proposed responsible research framework will value inclusion and plurality in research paradigms to fit the socio-cultural, legal-political, economic-technological conditions of different region and stage of development around the world. Following an overview of the paper's central ideas, the panelists will engage with each other in a debate format which will ensure that each set of ideas are examined with critical eyes. The audience will be invited to join in the debate. The session is intended to be highly interactive in potentially challenging our current models and searching for opportunities to move forward.

At the end of the session, we hope everyone will leave with an optimism that through both collective and personal actions, management research will move toward a vision that is on the cutting edge, produces solid knowledge, is timely and important, and addresses important international business problems. Business school researchers have a unique opportunity to contribute ideas and solutions to create a better future for organizations, employees, customers, and societies. With increasing criticism that much of our published research today, across business disciplines, is not aimed at these higher objectives and seems to lack real relevance or meaning, we believe the time is now for transformation. We believe that business school faculties are positioned so perfectly to

pursue and create credible, relevant, meaningful and valuable research for business and for our societies.

At the Interface

Much of this discussion on change in research operates at the interface of practice and science. Unless scholars can adopt responsible research principles that foster engagement and dialog of relevance to industry, policy and society, the nature of our research becomes less credible. By creating a community for responsible research in an open source model where ideas and discussions are followed through with research questions, we create scenarios where management research is indeed more meaningful and impactful.

Panelists' Perspectives

To further the conversation of the link between practice and science, the panel will discuss how academics can indeed operate at the interface by solving real world problems. The White Paper sets out principles but NOT an agenda, and the discussions could lead to plural ways by which research agendas can evolve. The panel is composed of deans/former deans who have a rich appreciation of stringent research standards but also a passion for practice and engagement.

Gerry George (Singapore Management University) will present the *AMJ* special issue lessons on Grand Challenges and his December 2016 editorial on developing impact. The focus is on deriving problems from society and framing questions at the interface of social problems and management practice.

Thomas Dyllick (St. Gallen) will present the findings of the Delphi Study and the White Paper on Responsible Science. He will also discuss the ways in which climate

change, sustainability issues have shaped research agendas. Responsible research is based on the assumption that business can be a force for good for society.

Bill Glick (Rice University) will argue that business education needs to have impact at its core. Having served as Chair of AACSB, and as Dean at Rice University, Bill provides a global perspective on how the business school landscape is emerging and what scholars would need to consider for the future.

Costas Markides (London Business School) has often been named among management guru lists and has figured at the World Economic Forum and other practice dialogs where management research is showcased among executives. He will share his reflections on research at the interface of practice and pragmatism of scientific pursuits.

Proposed Session Sponsor and Format

Given the overlaps of our ideas with the AOM's theme of 'At the Interface,' we propose that this session be considered for the All Academy Program. Assuming a typical hour and a half session, we propose that each of the panelists speak for no more than 15 minutes, and that we then engage with the audience, in small groups for 10 minutes, on the issues raised above, then spend the final 20 minutes engaging in a panel discussion on the questions raised in the round table sessions.