

## Doctoral Program "Ethics and Responsible Leadership in Business"

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### PROF. DR. MARKUS BECKMANN

#### RESEARCH AND DISSERTATION TOPICS

The research activities at the Chair for Corporate Sustainability Management focus on the theory and practice of corporate sustainability management, corporate social responsibility and business ethics. Furthermore, we are also interested in stakeholder relations, sustainability-oriented (business model) innovation and purpose-driven venturing through social entrepreneurship, social business or organizational hybrids. We welcome both conceptual and empirical research. Possible research topics and questions include the following but are not limited to them.

#### Possible Dissertation Topics

##### ***Governance of sustainable value chains and political role of the firm***

Companies are increasingly expected to take responsibility for their entire value chain. To this end, they collaborate with suppliers but also in multi-stakeholder-initiatives (MSIs). In such rule-setting processes, firms step out of their economic role and take on a political role. This also happens in political CSR, e.g., when companies engage in lobbying.

##### ***Business and Human Rights***

Business affects human rights through their own activities as well as through their value chains. At the same time, business is also affected by human rights challenges as the latter impact how stakeholders can create value with the firm.

##### ***Managing trade-offs in sustainability and the search for the business cases***

Companies often face trade-offs when managing profitability and sustainability or ethics. While win-win businesses cases try to overcome trade-offs, win-win solutions are difficult to find and not always possible, often moderated by mental models that guide decision-making.

##### ***Social entrepreneurship and other forms of impact-oriented venturing***

Social entrepreneurs use economic venturing to address societal challenges. In addition to conventional for-profits, hybrid or non-profit organizational forms such as social business emerge with the mission to actively create positive impact.

### ***Organizing sustainability and responsible management within the firm***

Sustainability and responsible management require adequate forms of internal governance, organizational structures and leadership. Here, problem requirements capabilities, and structures need to be aligned appropriately.

### ***The “dark side” of morality and morally motivated management***

Despite noble intentions, pro-social approaches such as social entrepreneurship, CSR or sustainable products can also have negative non-intended effects. Similarly, moral behavior can have a dark side. Moral framings can lead to polarization, thus creating the need for strategies to de-polarize escalating discourse conflicts.

### ***Introductory References***

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For more references, see <https://scholar.google.de/citations?user=HXfRg7YAAAAJ&hl=de&oi=ao>