

THE IS AND OUGHT OF BUSINESS ETHICS

Empirical Evidence and Normative Arguments brought into Dialogue

3rd Wittenberg Business Ethics Conference & 1st Doctoral Satellite Workshop

The conference will take place **from October 4, 2023 until October 5, 2023**. It will be held in person in Lutherstadt Wittenberg, Germany (40 minutes hour train ride from Berlin). In addition, a satellite workshop for doctoral students will be held **on October 6, 2023**. Here students will have the opportunity to receive feedback on paper drafts and research ideas from established professors. All interested are invited to participate at both the conference and the workshop, and applications to the conference are also open to PhD students.

The conference is organized on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Wittenberg Center for Global Ethics and is the third of the kind: We started in 2017, continued in 2019 and are now back in 2023.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Keynote 1: Prof. Dr. Cristina Bicchieri, University of Pennsylvania

Keynote 2: Prof. Dr. Sandro Ambühl, University of Zurich

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS

Prof. Dr. Markus Beckmann, Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

Prof. Dr. Dirk Matten, Schulich School of Business, York University

Prof. Dr. Andreas Suchanek, HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management

Prof. Dr. Ingo Pies, Martin-Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg

YOUNG FACULTY MEETING

Dr. Moritz Appels, Erasmus Universität Rotterdam

Dr. Julia Grimm, Stockholm University

Dr. Rebecca Ruehle, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

FACULTY FOR THE DOCTORAL WORKSHOP

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ORGANISATIONAL COMMITTEE

Prof. Dr. Philipp Schreck, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

PD Dr. Lisa Schmalzried, Wittenberg Center for Global Ethics

Cassandra Grützner, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg and doctoral program „Ethics and Responsible Leadership in Business“

Oleg Fedoseev, HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management and doctoral program „Ethics and Responsible Leadership in Business“

THEMATIC FOCUS OF THE CONFERENCE

Research on morals and business abounds. The last decades have yielded fascinating insights on how individuals and organisations do behave and have brought forward sound arguments on how they should behave. By now, we know a lot about relevant topics and theories as diverse as cooperation (Chaudhuri 2011), trust (Berg et al. 1995), fairness (Güth/ Kocher 2014), ethical decision making (Bazerman/ Gino 2012; De Cremer/ Tenbrunsel 2012; Treviño et al. 2006), normative business ethics (Arnold et al. 2020; Brenkert/ Beauchamp 2010), normative theories of the firm (Donaldson/ Walsh 2015; Elms et al. 2010; Pies et al. 2021) and ethic-oriented leadership theories (e.g. Brown / Treviño / Harrison 2005; Maak / Pless 2005).

But there is still a great gap between those working primarily empirically, and those working primarily normatively. On the one side, scholars mainly in areas such as management, behavioural ethics, and behavioural economics, focus on analysing the IS of moral judgments and behaviour, without addressing the normative implications of their positive work. On the other side, normative business ethics scholars focus on the OUGHTS of judgement and behaviour, without systematically discussing empirical restrictions on the individual and contextual levels.

Without a doubt, to find solutions for the challenges of business ethics and understand its questions, both empirical and normative approaches are necessary. Many scholars have argued that the two fields need each other and should engage in true dialogue. In a nutshell, positive research can't provide normative guidance on its own; while normative theory is incapable of implementing the ethically desirable without knowledge on empirical restrictions (Donaldson 1994, 2012; Dunfee/ Donaldson 2002; Güth/ Kliemt 2010; Schreck et al. 2013; Treviño/ Weaver 1994; Weaver/ Trevino 1994).

In our view, positive and normative scholars of business ethics do not talk as much as they could and should. Therefore, the interdisciplinary conference "The Is and Ought of Business Ethics: Empirical Evidence and Normative Arguments brought into Dialogue" aims to be a dialogue platform between empirically and normatively working business ethicists from different disciplines. We invite papers from the empirical or normative side of the debate, from any related discipline (economics, management, psychology, philosophy, etc.), and methodological background (behavioural experiments, survey data, positive and normative theory, etc.). All papers should critically reflect on the limits of

their methodological approaches, bring empirical and normative findings into exchange and/or sketch future collaborative research between empirical and normative business ethicists. We thus welcome any research suitable to advance the dialogue between empirical and normative business ethics.

Topics should be broadly oriented, but are not restricted to, the following three overarching themes:

1. From Is to Ought

Often, the driving force of doing experimental, qualitative or quantitative work in business ethics is to test the effects of morally relevant policies or to identify hurdles and limits that may make behaving in the morally desirable way difficult if not impossible. In some cases, though, empirical work may have an even bigger impact upon the conceptual work it is often built upon: It may expand or criticise a normative framework it is based upon. Or more generally: **What normative or conceptual implications can be derived from your empirical findings?**

Under this theme, we are interested in which ways empirical work can influence normative or ethical considerations. Concrete examples, studies or experiments are very welcome to showcase and reflect upon the impact of empirical insights on to the normative sphere.

2. From Ought to Is

Philosophers are often faced with the criticism that their work has little impact upon the real world. However, the impact of the discipline is as important as in few other areas of philosophy: Business ethics, at its core, is practically oriented. So the question is: **What practical implications can be derived from your conceptual or normative findings?**

Under this theme, we invite talks in which conceptual or normative work is not only practically oriented, but actively reflects upon the practical implications of itself. This may include both implications upon practitioners in the field, such as ethically guided policy, or upon empirically working researchers. For example, sketches on which kinds of data may be of particular normative importance or how specific ethical findings ought to influence future empirical research are very welcome.

3. Bridging the Gap Methodologically

Both the use of empirical insights in conceptual arguments and the collection of data due to theoretical works are staples across both the conceptual and empirical sciences alike. **But what is the best way for one side to inform the other?**

We are interested in examples or best practices in which the methodology usually found in one field is being applied in another, or in which conceptual and empirical work are being brought closely together. When is it especially useful to apply qualitative or quantitative studies in conceptual fields? When should empiricists work with more

theoretical arguments? How can one ensure that a method is still appropriate when applied in a different field? How can results and methods be communicated so that they are useful to researchers from all backgrounds? Critical engagement with how or if methodologies ought to be mixed in the first place are also very welcome.

Talks under this theme may therefore include investigation of (empirical) business ethics from a philosophy of science point of view, analyses under which circumstances empirical and normative work cooperate well together, best practice examples in which interdisciplinary work has come to fruition as well as other, adjacent topics.

We are purposefully leaving the suggested content of the talks very open. As long as the talk touches upon themes relevant to business ethics, may be of interest to empirically and normatively working business ethicists and encourages conversation between both sides, we are warmly welcoming it.

FOCUS OF THE DOCTORAL SATELLITE WORKSHOP

During the workshop, doctoral students will have the opportunity to receive feedback on a (completed or near completed) paper draft or pitch an early-stage research idea. The goal is less to present a fully finished idea, but to receive feedback from established professors about either a started, but not finished project (paper development session) or for an early stage research idea (research idea pitch). For the paper development sessions, small groups will be formed and the prior-submitted paper drafts discussed by both the participating doctoral students and the leading professor. For the research idea pitches, short presentations about a not-started or early stage research idea are to be presented, so that feedback and comments can be suggested.

Doctoral students are also warmly invited to apply for the section talks of the main conference.

SUBMISSIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP

Submissions are possible for three different formats. Category 2 and 3 are only open to doctoral students.

1. Section talks (25 min talk followed by 15 min Q&A)

Submission of abstracts (600 words):	February 10, 2023
Notification:	February 20, 2023
Submission of full paper (2750-3000 words):	September 15, 2023

2. Paper Development Workshop

Submission of abstracts (500 words):	April 1, 2023
Notification:	late April, 2023
Submission of full papers (around 7500 words):	August 1, 2023

3. Research Idea Pitch Workshop (10 min pitch followed by 10 min Q&A)

Submission of abstracts (300 words):	April 1, 2023
Notification:	late April, 2023
Submission of extended abstract (1000 words):	August 1, 2023

All submissions via [THIS LINK](#)

CONFERENCE FEES

The conference fee covers meals (without breakfasts), the conference dinner and the social program.

Regular:	200 €
Doctoral students / students:*	100 €

* Doctoral students whose papers have been accepted for the doctoral workshop will get free accommodation and a travel cost travel allowance of maximally 150 Euro, provided a positive founding decision.

ACCOMMODATION

A limited number of rooms are available at Leucorea, the old Wittenberg University (single room 40 €; double room 28 € per person). During the submission process, we will ask whether you are interested in staying at Leucorea.

CONTACT

If you have any questions regarding the conference or the doctoral workshop, please, feel free to contact us: conference23@wcge.org.

CITED LITERATURE

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