



COUNCIL on
BUSINESS & SOCIETY
An alliance with a purpose

The Next Frontier of responsible Business Leadership: Insights from Business School Deans

From the CoBS
Global Alumni Event
Dean's Roundtable,
Madrid, September
2025.



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BUSINESS SCHOOL



EAESP



SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
FUDAN UNIVERSITY



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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
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REIO BUSINESS SCHOOL



MONASH
University



Stellenbosch
Business School
STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY



THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK



The **Council on Business & Society** (CoBS), visionary in its conception and mission, was founded in 2011. The CoBS is dedicated to promoting teaching and research in responsible business leadership and business practices to tackle issues at the crossroads of business, society, and planet and collectively shape our future generations of responsible leaders.

With a firm belief that today's challenges cannot be met by one country and one institution alone, the CoBS alliance – through its leading international member schools – offers a unique global and local perspective on major issues through its presence on 6 continents and in 16 countries worldwide.

Together, the CoBS member schools count over 507,000 alumni – managers and leaders in the world's leading companies and organisations, or entrepreneurs creators of value and of employment and social impact.

In this light, since July 2025, the CoBS has launched a series of Global Alumni Meet Ups, where former students of the CoBS member schools can meet their peers and grow their international opportunities and participate in interactive learning events with high-level academics, business leaders, and policy makers.

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THE SCHOOLS OF THE COUNCIL ON BUSINESS & SOCIETY



Our next CoBS Global Alumni Event

January 22nd 2026: Hosted by Warwick Business School, 22 January, 5.30pm-8.30pm at WBS London, Level 17, The Shard 32 London Bridge St, London SE1 9SG

Free event, open to alumni from the CoBS member schools living and working in the London area. Alumni are invited to take part in an interactive event on the theme of *Ethics in Action: Navigating Fraud in the Modern Business Landscape* facilitated by Warwick Pro-Dean, Prof. Jo Horton.

PLEASE REGISTER [HERE](#).



Previous Events

September 2025: The IE Tower, Madrid, hosted by IE Business School, Spain, on the occasion of the CoBS Deans' Seminar 2025. Alumni interacted with a roundtable event on the theme *The Next Frontier of Responsible Business Leadership: Insights from Business School Deans*.

July 2025: Copenhagen, an informal event hosted by the ESSEC Business School Alumni Chapter, Copenhagen, on the occasion of the CoBS professional development workshop on *The Social Impact of Business Schools at the Academy of Management Conference*.

June 2025: Paris, hosted by ESSEC Business School Executive Education, La Défense-Paris Campus. Alumni interacted with Climate Leadership author and Senior Director of Strategy at BCG BrightHouse Emilie Prattico on the theme of *Business Leadership in the Green Transition: From Paris to the world*.



Visit the CoBS Alumni webpage



THE DEANS OF THE COUNCIL'S MEMBER SCHOOLS



**Dean and President Vincenzo Vinzi,
ESSEC Business School,
France, Asia-Pacific, Africa**

"At ESSEC, we believe that training students and participants for responsible leadership is key for answering the challenges of a complex world. Together with the members of the Council on Business & Society, we strive to promote responsibility so as to impact today's economy and society, and shape tomorrow's world."



**Dean Luiz Artur Ledur Brito,
FGV-EAESP, Brazil**

"Being recognized worldwide as a think-tank, FGV-EAESP not only produces academic research in management and public policy, but also applies research via its close relation with the corporate world. Its participation in the Council on Business & Society enriches its global vision through the multiple perspectives generated by the Council's initiatives."



**Dean LEE NEWMAN,
IE Business School, Spain**

"IE Business School's mission and purpose are based on the pillars of academic excellence, innovation and entrepreneurship, technology, social responsibility and internationalisation. At IE we firmly believe in the power of the entrepreneurial mindset to change the world for the better. We will keep encouraging students through the cobs initiatives to explore social innovation and entrepreneurial challenges with special emphasis on unconventional approaches to enduring social problems."



**Dean Dinesh KUMAR
Indian Institute of Management Bangalore,
India**

"For over five decades, IIM Bangalore has stayed committed to nurturing leaders that want to aid the immediate and ongoing challenges affecting business, government and society. In a business environment defined by disruption, our role as India's leading management educator is to guide the insatiable curiosity to learn and serve as a gateway for purposeful change through excellence in teaching, research and business innovation."



**Dean Simon Wilkie,
Monash Business school, Australia**

"Monash Business School is committed to excellent, international, enterprising and inclusive education and research, informed by deep engagement with our stakeholders. We are guided in our research by a regard for human rights and social justice and by a respect for diversity in individuals, communities and ideas. Committed to pushing the boundaries of knowledge, we aim to transform business, addressing global problems and contributing in a meaningful way to the issues that matter."



**DEAN AND PROFESSOR MIKE MAZZEO,
OLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL,
UNITED STATES**

"At Olin, we train students to be values based and data driven. Individually, values based and data driven are important traits of a great leader. Together, they are transformative. Olin advances the application of rigorous decision-making criteria balanced with a steadfast commitment to personal and societal values."



**Dean MARK SMITH,
STELLENBOSCH Business School,
South Africa**

"At Stellenbosch Business School we pride ourselves on our commitment to responsible leadership through teaching, research and social impact. We are committed to making a difference throughout our local, national and international ecosystems and proud to be members of the Council on Business & Society."



**Dean Laurent Muzellec,
Trinity College Dublin Business School,
Ireland**

"Located at the heart of a world-renowned university in the centre of Dublin, a European capital city and hub for global business, Trinity Business School is committed to "Transforming Business for Good" and ethical leadership. We enable our Faculty, students, and graduates to focus on their moral compass throughout their career and create a better planet, economy and society for future generations."



**Dean and Professor
Xiongwen Lu, School of Management, Fudan
University, China**

"The School of Management, Fudan University joined the Council to communicate, exchange and collaborate with our global partners, absorb advanced management ideas and share China's unique experience. As a leading business school in China, we will make continuous efforts to drive the mutual development of global management education and the social economy."



**Dean and Professor Hiroshi Nakamura, Keio
Business School, Japan**

"As the leading business school in Japan, it is our duty to investigate how business should maintain a balance with global societal issues. We desire to explain to the world what Japan has experienced through rapid growth by means of the Council on Business & Society."



**INTERIM Dean Lynette PURDA,
Smith School of Business, CANADA**

"It's not enough to simply graduate good corporate citizens. We must prepare students to be leaders who understand their role in society regardless of the sector they choose to work in: business, government, entrepreneurship or not-for-profit. At Smith, we are developing an impact mindset to help our students change the world."



**Dean Andy Lockett, Professor of Strategy
and Entrepreneurship, Warwick Business
School, United Kingdom**

"As a leading European business school at a world-class University, Warwick Business School is committed to developing ideas and people that shape how we do business. We believe in the power of education to create the leaders the world needs to tackle societies' great challenges, such as global warming, ageing populations and increasing inequality."



The Next Frontier of Responsible Business Leadership: Insights from Business School Deans

Madrid, September 2025

The CoBS Global Alumni Meet Up hosted by IE Business School organised a roundtable event that brought together the Deans of the Council on Business & Society member schools to give insights and answer alumni questions on what the CoBS schools are undertaking in sustainability and CSR initiatives for their students and the shape of responsible leadership to come.

The Next Frontier of Responsible Business Leadership: Insights from Business School Deans facilitated by Prof. Concepción Galdón. With kind thanks to the IEBS organising team, and Prof. Adrian Zicari, and Tom Gamble, Council on Business & Society.

With kind acknowledgements to the Deans' panel. In alphabetical order: Concepción Galdón, Jo Horton, Xiongwen Lu, Mike Mazzeo, Laurent Muzellec, Lynnette Purda, Aarti Ramaswami, and Simon Wilkie.

AI AND CLIMATE CHANGE: TWO ISSUES THAT WILL SHAPE THE WORLD OF WORK AND HOW BUSINESS SCHOOLS PREPARE THEIR STUDENTS

Facilitator: Associate Dean Prof. Concepción Galdón, IE Business School:

I feel that AI is a word we've been shying away from and something we should go forward to. Dean Wilkie, what could you add to this? How do you see AI and its impact on business and society?

Dean Simon Wilkie, Monash Business School: I feel the same. We're living through the fourth industrial revolution and AI is the flavour of the month, but it's been a couple of shoes dropping along this pathway since maybe ten years ago.

This is the most profound transformation of society since the second industrial revolution that goes back from about 1890 to 1920. Back then, both society and social norms changed. We moved, for example, from a world where child labour was acceptable, and where kids were expected to work, to one where it wasn't. We introduced compulsory free schooling – public schooling in most societies. So, we radically changed the social contract. And I believe we're going to have to go through a similar transformation of work due to AI. The questions will be: what's the nature of organisations and their role in society? How does education fit in with work, and with other things, over people's lifetimes?

Firms, whether they like it or not, are going to be in the leadership position around what that change will look like. And in particular, many of our companies and many of our leaders will have the resources and the megaphone to allow that voice to influence public policy in a way that us as individuals do not. So, I think the next generation of leadership is not just 'do I have a plan or do I check the boxes on my CSR report?' The key question will be: are we actively spending our lobbying money for social good, or to drive this transformation in what short-run effects we're having? That's, I think, the frontier of where leadership needs to be developed and instilled into the next generation of leaders, and this is what I think helps us, as business schools, so powerfully.

Associate Dean Prof. Concepción Galdón: Thanks so much for that. And do you see things similarly at Trinity Business School in Ireland? Is there something else that we're missing that we should be thinking about?

Dean Muzellec, Trinity Business School: Well, I'm echoing what has been said before – AI and the responsible use of it, and the deep transformation that it's going to have on society and potentially even humanity. But I think one thing that I would say is, while we're all getting excited about AI, there's also, for a valid reason, the issue of climate, which is not going to go away. However, it's interesting to see the way these priorities have changed in the last few years in terms of the top



priority of business leaders. If I remember rightly, Forbes or McKinsey publish a survey every year and all of a sudden we saw that climate dropped off the list. Every year sees the highest temperatures recorded. And we need to actually realize that this is not a ceiling that is being pushed, this is a new floor. Every year, that floor is raised, and that in turn becomes our new low. For example, the summer that we had last year in Europe is going to be the norm, and so forth and so on, because any emission that is produced is not going to go away. So, climate must remain a central issue and one that business schools and businesses attempt to address. On another dimension, there's currently a great lot of debate about diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the fact that it is being politicized – dismissed in some cases, and retained as almost like a fighting spirit in others. And I think we need to get out of this dead end and bring back the idea of social justice in the making – to go back to what DEI was probably about in the first place. And if we can't control the outcome, at least bring a certain level of equity in our effort for a better outcome. And I think that would be more inclusive.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

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- **AI is driving a major societal transformation – comparable to past industrial revolutions.** The Deans emphasise that AI is not just another technology trend; it will reshape work, education, and the social contract, just as massive shifts did in the early 20th century.
- **Future leaders must shape – not just react to – this transition.** Companies have greater influence on public policy compared to individuals. The next generation of leaders will need to use that influence responsibly, moving beyond box-ticking CSR toward meaningful advocacy for societal good.
- **Education will evolve alongside work across a lifetime.** As AI changes job roles and organisational structures, learning will need to be continuous, flexible, and integrated throughout people's careers.
- **Climate change remains an urgent priority despite shifting attention.** While AI is dominating discussions, climate risks are accelerating. The "new normal" of extreme weather makes it crucial for business schools and organisations to keep climate action central to their teaching, strategy and business practices.
- **DEI debates should return to their core purpose: social justice and equitable effort.** With DEI becoming politicised, there's a need to refocus on fairness, inclusion, and creating better outcomes – even if perfect control of results is not possible.



A Global Mindset Is More Important Than Ever: For business and trade, impactful partnerships, harmonious relations, and stability

Associate Dean Prof. Concepción Galdón: To give you a little bit of a sneak view into the conversation this morning during the CoBS Deans' Seminar – which connects with something that we think is important also for DEI – one idea we discussed is that of interdisciplinarity. And I think that's something that we need to be looking into in terms of business and management education because it helps to render climate change relevant in other realms and continue to do so. How do business schools cross business management with humanities and thus philosophy, ethics, and other areas? We're not about to become engineering schools instead of business schools, but we do need to bring technology on board in the studies we propose. And this idea of responsible leadership as interdisciplinary leadership offers the notion of being a complete leader – a complete human being that is able to understand the complexity of the world.

Complexity just happens to be a feature of the world we are in, something that reminds us that we have to continue learning throughout our lives, and something

that presents an even greater challenge to the idea of responsible leadership impact. And in this sense, it's wonderful to see all our schools here together, an alliance fighting for the things we care for. And I wanted to ask you, Dean Purda, why was this event valuable enough for you to have come here all the way from Canada?

Dean Lynnette Purda, Smith School of Business, Queen's University: Meeting the Deans from all the other member schools and our alumni here this evening is definitely worth the trip from Canada. Absolutely. And for me, what made me want to be here comes down to really three things. First, it's a shared set of values. Second, it's stability. And my background is as a finance professor, so I'm going to throw in diversification as the third. And the reason that I think it's these three elements is we have seen so much change over the past few years, over the past few months, about relationships between all of our countries, and what's in favour, and what's not in favour. And so for us as a school that's looking to create and help and inspire

global leaders to then go on and take their place with a global perspective, we really need an alliance where we have that shared commonality. And we need to know that we have partners in all areas of the globe so that when it becomes difficult for student mobility in one section, we have that diversification for us to know that we can find that purpose and commonality somewhere else.

So for us, it's a tremendous benefit for our students to give them some security that these values we hold very dear in our Canadian school can be replicated through global experiences. And I think what's incredibly powerful about the CoBS alliance is the stability. Because we've seen that our governments and our policymakers are far from stable in terms of how they approach things like DEI, environment, etc. And so for us to rely on that really solid foundation and have that stability is very powerful as a voice for advocacy – and where we have that consistency that we're not seeing in our external environment. So absolutely worth the trip from Canada. Worth all three reasons for it.

Associate Dean Prof. Concepción Galdón: Dean Lu, you flew in from even further away in China. So why? What's the value of this alliance for you? Why is this worth it?

Dean Xiongwen Lu, School of Management

Fudan University: Well, as a founding member of the CoBS, I still believe in globalization – even if there are a lot of arguments and disputes about globalization or anti-globalization currently making the headlines. As a Chinese school dean, I've talked to so many people and institutions around the world and, despite this, the large majority – perhaps even 100% of them – still believe in globalization. So as top schools in different regions and different countries within the CoBS alliance, we still want to work together. We want to build global impact. That means that we want to develop global leaders. Moreover, if we want to develop global leaders, we definitely should be responsible for the global economy. So how we can do that? How we can make it happen? Well, we try to share our perspectives and consensus and work together. And we put them together to build up something unique, different, which a single one school cannot do. So that's why at Fudan we like to work together in an alliance such as the CoBS. And further, in this moment characterised by a very complicated geopolitical situation, we believe we really should bring a much broader perspective for our young students and future leaders.

This perspective not only covers AI and high tech, but also sustainability and the welfare of the whole global community, as well as being able to understand the current political situation. For if we cannot have a good understanding of why we are in such a situation, we cannot really support our future leaders to make good judgment about their own companies, and about their own societies.

Taking the relationship between the U.S. and China, only 10 years ago we worked very well together, and I do believe we can enjoy the mutual benefits we have now.

And then, we began to take each other as new rivals, almost as enemies. The US didn't want to give us technology, and they didn't want to give us any sensitive technology. So how can we survive through such a very fierce competition? All this to say that we have to help our young people to understand what's going on and why we are in such a very complicated situation. And not only about the U.S. and China, but also about the U.S. and Europe, and Asia – because there are a lot of companies involved and impacted by global events, right? So if we can really help our students broaden their perspective about what's going on, then they can feel responsible for their own companies, for their own industries, and for their own countries. Then they can take responsibility for the whole world. That's why we need to share different perspectives and also mutual consensus and, as a result, use our common understanding and knowledge to deliver future leaders.

I really believe the younger generations are smarter than us – and it's by giving the opportunity to see different perspectives on things that they then develop solutions for the future. It's also why we encourage the mobility of our students across the schools in the alliance. And it's one reason why we need such an alumni gathering in Madrid – because we want you to learn from each other, exchange ideas, and also to explore not only your own solution to your business, but also solutions for the whole world. For me, it's the value of the alliance and why we have our name – the CoBS – the Council on Business & Society. It's a global issue, so that's why I'm here.



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Who Dares, Wins: Global competitors can work together linked by trust, respect, shared values and diversity

KEY TAKEAWAYS

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- **Interdisciplinarity is essential for responsible leadership and modern business education.**
Business schools must integrate humanities, ethics, philosophy, and technology into their curricula to help future leaders understand and address complex global challenges such as climate change.
- **Lifelong learning is critical in an increasingly complex world.**
Complexity is a permanent feature of today's environment. Leaders must continuously learn, evolve, and engage with diverse perspectives to remain effective and responsible.
- **Shared values, stability, and diversification strengthen global alliances.**
The CoBS alliance offers a foundation of common values and reliable partnerships across regions, which supports student mobility, global exposure, and resilience in unstable political environments.
- **Global collaboration remains vital despite geopolitical tensions.**
The Deans reaffirm a belief in globalisation. Working together across countries enables schools to develop global leaders who can understand geopolitical dynamics and make informed decisions for business, society, and planet.
- **Broader perspectives create better future leaders.**
Exposing students to international experiences, diverse viewpoints, and cross-school mobility helps them develop more inclusive, informed, and responsible solutions for business, society, and global challenges.

Associate Dean Prof. Concepción Galdón: Thanks so much, Dean Lu. To the audience, I'd like to say "don't take this for granted." Some might think that business schools love each other, that everything's kumbaya, but it is as competitive an industry as any other. With the CoBS alliance, it does take a lot of trust, and it does take a lot of willingness in a matter that we truly care for, for us as players that compete in the education industry. I hope that you also take the alliance as an example for your own work and your own industries. Our sector is as complicated as any other sector, and yet everybody's here, and everybody's working together.

Dean Mazzeo, you're in the U.S., so you also made a long trip. You've been with the Alliance for slightly a shorter time, and we're very happy to see your school join and to have seen you join us here today. Tell us what made you join CoBS?

Dean Mike Mazzeo, WashU Olin Business School: First of all, being from the U.S., I'm so happy that all of you still wanted me here! I think one of the things that is incredibly important at this time of chaotic upheaval and disruption is to remember that our business schools and universities are very, very long-lasting. I represent Washington University. We are 170 years old. Many of the institutions that are represented by the other deans are as old or even older, which means that we have stood and represented what we bring to the world through decades and centuries of change and disruption.



As a consequence, it's incredibly important that we represent stability and continue to move forward. While in the U.S. we are all buffeted by changes in government and how that affects our businesses, as you were saying, the business, the competitive industry that we're in, being in global alliances and being here to exchange ideas, connecting with the rest of the world on a continuing basis, makes us relevant not only today, but for decades to come. We really believe that maintaining our close alliances is important. For example, Dean Lu at Fudan and ourselves at Olin have a longstanding alliance that, despite the challenges between our two nations, is incredibly strong and it will maintain that strength because, you know, governments come and go. But we are here for the duration.

Associate Dean Prof. Concépcion Galdón: And this is a very important comment. IE turned 50 years last year. We've seen 10 different governments come and go. For the older institutions among us, that means you've seen perhaps 20 or 50 or more governments go by. But we're still here.

And I want to finish this set of questions with ESSEC Business School, because ESSEC holds the secretariat of the CoBS. That means that Prof. Adrian Zicari (CoBS Academic Director) and Tom Gamble's (CoBS Executive Director) offices are with ESSEC – if ever you're in Paris, you can go visit them! – and ESSEC is also one of the founding members of the alliance. So, once again, in this context where it seems like the world is splintering, we continue to maintain and grow the alliance, with

hopefully some good news on this dimension coming in 2026. So, it is true that there are forces that are pulling apart, but there are also some forces pulling together, as has been said. And we, both as member schools of the Council on Business & Society and as individual institutions, are longstanding forces that pull together.

Vice Dean Aarti Ramaswami, ESSEC Business School: One of the messages that I understand from the sharing between us is that the relevance of an alliance like this keeps us responsible for the mission that we are here for as an institution. And when you think about responsible leadership, when you think of organisations, one of the metaphors that I often use with our students is "are we having the right conversations with the right people at the right time with the right tone?" And oftentimes that responsible leadership is embodied in having responsible conversations. What do we include in the conversation? What do we not talk about? What are we defending? What do we not defend? Who are the people who are really invited into a space that is not usually something that we are open to?

And in an alliance like this, as a business school or even as any other school who could be interested in the topics that we are interested in, one of the embodiments of this institution is also the fact that we are very open to understanding the tradeoffs. And I think for students and for institutions, it's very difficult to talk about tradeoffs and to be open about having a wide view of who the stakeholders are, whether it's the students, whether it's faculty, whether it's society.

What are the ways in which a specific policy impacts an individual? What are the ways in which society is evolving and how do these impact the learners that we now have in our organisations and in our classes? In addition, how can we evolve our pedagogy and research to be able to be much more inclusive, but also relevant with respect to the challenges, whether it's AI or technology or looking at diversity and so forth?

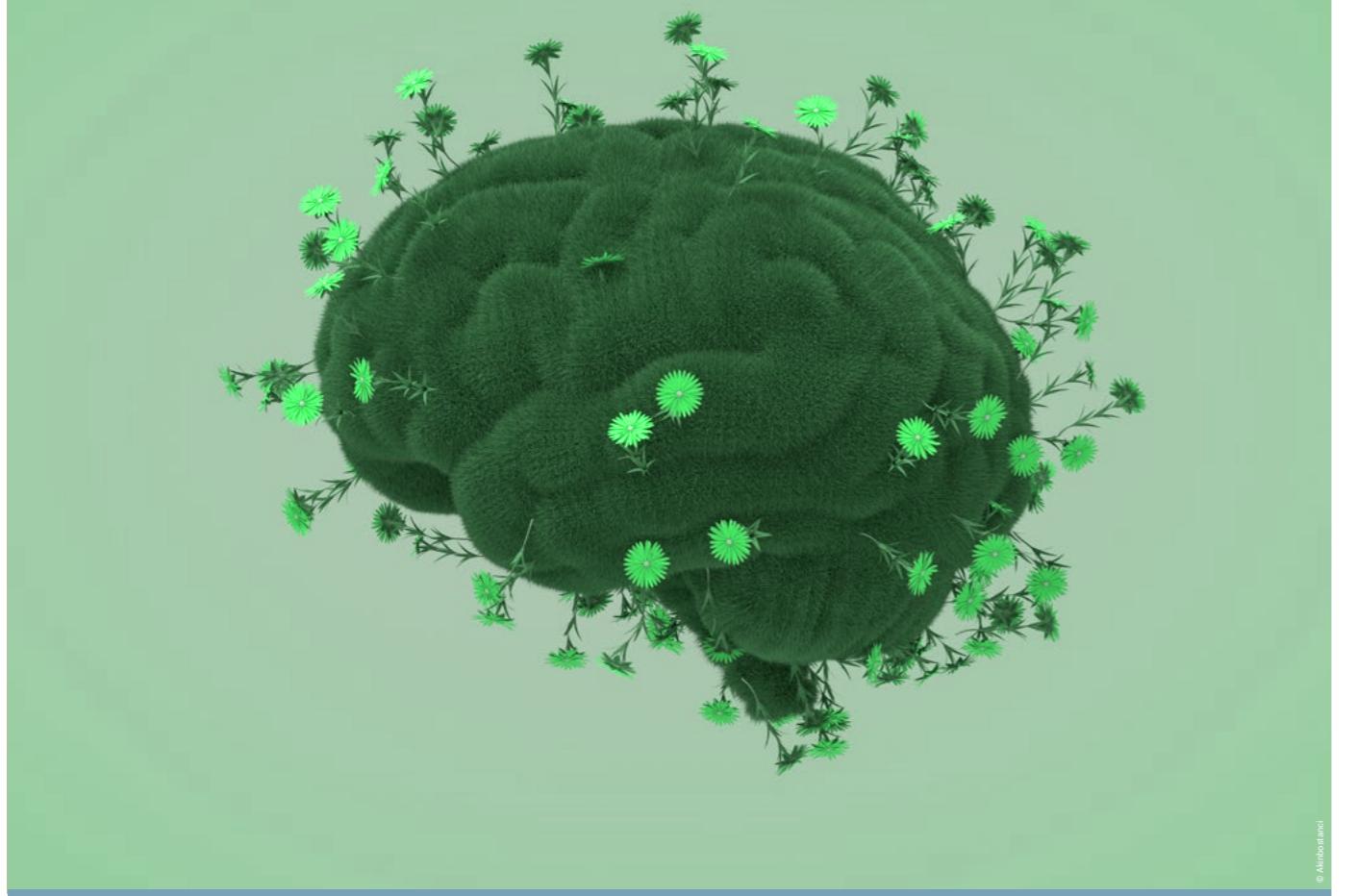
But at the end of the day, it's you – the audience – who are sitting in front of us that's going to be embodying those leadership values that you have inherited from your own institutions. And to be able to embody that, my wish and our sincere wish collectively is to ensure that you're able to have those responsible conversations, those difficult conversations. Because no matter what those frontiers are, it is the ways in which you're going to posture yourself and be in the right mindset with openness that is necessary for you to take multiple perspectives, and really understand the difference between activism and pragmatism that are important. Because that slider moves differently for different people. And I think finding a space to have open conversations that allow for those multiple perspectives allows us to also see how can we responsibly move those sliders and understand impact. So in a nutshell, I think an alliance like this keeps us responsible as institutions at the level of research and also pedagogy, but it also keeps us engaged in what is necessary in terms of the organisations that we are catering to in terms of talent.

So I think it's really important for us to be able to do that. And I think it's also important for us to be able to do that in a way that allows us to be able to have a conversation about what the specific competencies they are looking for, what the perspectives and context are that we would like to expose our students to that allows them to put what they're learning into practice and have a test of the reality of the different ideas that we have been speaking about today.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

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- **Collaboration within the CoBS alliance requires trust despite strong industry competition.**
Business schools compete just like any other sector, so the willingness of institutions to work together shows a deeply shared commitment to values, mission, and societal impact.
- **Universities provide long-term stability amid political and global disruption.**
The Deans highlight that while governments and policies change frequently, universities – some over a century old – offer enduring continuity. Alliances help maintain relevance across decades of upheaval.
- **Global partnerships remain strong even when countries face geopolitical tensions.**
Long-standing collaborations, such as between Olin and Fudan, show that academic partnerships can endure beyond political cycles, reinforcing the importance of steady, cross-border educational alliances.
- **The CoBS alliance keeps institutions accountable to their mission of responsible leadership.**
ESSEC emphasises that being part of the alliance encourages schools to engage in "responsible conversations" about values, trade-offs, stakeholders, and inclusion – key components of cultivating responsible leaders.
- **Future leaders must learn to navigate complexity through open, multi-perspective dialogue.**
Students must be equipped to engage in difficult conversations, understand multiple viewpoints, and balance activism with pragmatism. Exposure to diverse contexts and real-world challenges strengthens their leadership competencies.



Innovating in Education: Responsible leadership and future skills

Associate Dean Prof. Concépcion Galdón: One may say, this is all very well – this is the Deans speaking and they're paid for saying something very inspirational. You might be thinking, but what's real about this? So I just have one last question for all of the Deans. And that is, can you share one real tangible initiative in your school that proves that we have the legitimacy to talk about this?

From the IE Business School perspective, I can mention that we have a Purpose Accelerator that is mandatory content for all of our master's students at the business school. This means that of the 2,000 students who joined us this September, all of them will go through the Purpose Accelerator. It starts with a community engagement project, which is mandatory – and over the years, about 7,000 of our students have participated in this community engagement project – and then moves on to students getting trained on being a purpose- driven business leader. So this is just one thing. There are other courses that some of our alumni here have pursued, but the Purpose Accelerator is to give you just one example of the core content of our programs where we are instilling this sense of being a responsible business leader. How about Olin?

Dean Mike Mazzeo, WashU Olin Business School: At Olin we have launched a business of health initiative, partnering with our School of Public Health and School of Medicine. Our aim is to help people through business live longer, healthier lives.

Associate Dean Prof. Concépcion Galdón: How about ESSEC?

Vice Dean Aarti Ramaswami, ESSEC Business School: In the recent years, we have launched two programs. One of them is the Master in Sustainable Transformation. I think we have some of our alumni over here. We also have a bachelor program called Bachelor Act, which is also very much focused on understanding business and society challenges, but mostly for bachelor level students.

But just to share a fun part, beyond the initiatives that are there at the institutional level for the students, we started something last year called Move ESSEC where we want all our students in the school to be engaged in sports so that they understand what it means to have well-being as a part of the conversation. Because if you want to be a responsible leader, you need to understand what the pulse of health is both in the organisation and in society, and how to obtain better awareness of yourself so that you can go beyond what you learn in terms of theory and concepts, and also start to experience some of those things in your body. That's kind of having a holistic perspective on education and how to be a responsible leader.

Dean Xiongwen Lu, School of Management Fudan University: Two examples from Fudan. The first is that we sponsor our students to go abroad, not only for student exchanges, but also to strengthen our students' stature. Nowadays, because most of our MBA students are part-time, they still don't know where to go, so we cover more than 50% of our students to go abroad, for example to the United States, to learn about what's going on in different countries. Moreover, we see building up an international perspective as a key aspect for the future of global leadership.

Another initiative that we have set up is a very specialised program called Scientech Innovation Young Leaders Program housed within our MBA. This is open to students from every MBA at Fudan and it attracts over 800 candidates, 100 of whom are selected to focus on Scientech Innovation.

Why did we create this specialised program? The answer is that we believe Chinese industries are traditionally manufacturing-oriented, mostly labour-intensive manufacturing, and export-oriented. Today, however, technology plays a major part in driving things and we believe that China should develop its own technology, to gain independence from the effects of barriers, restrictions and technology development bottlenecks.

In this sense, Chinese start-ups now actually focus on B2B, best-in-class technology development, and even some first-in-class development. But how we can understand those things? The answer is developing young talents to identify the evolution of new technology development, the application of such new technology, the impact of it, and its effectiveness when we apply it to current manufacturing.

And when we develop such a solid knowledge, we also try to help them understand how high-tech start-up companies can be successful. If they can know about that before they graduate, and they are ready to join those high-tech start-up companies, it really can bring a lot of professional value, skill and knowledge to support them. This is very, very key for the current Chinese economy, especially when competing with the American economy, I'm sorry to say. So, a focus on developing those young talents for high-tech innovation is the main initiative of our school.

Dean Lynnette Purda, Smith School of Business, Queen's University: I'm immensely proud of our Institute for Sustainable Finance which had its five-year anniversary in the spring of this year. What is really unique about the Institute is its origins. Canada has a very concentrated finance and banking system and it started with our five major banks, each putting up a million dollars, to sponsor the Institute. And so, it was a very unified voice to say, yes, we need to start this. This is important nationally, and all of our major institutions are going to contribute.



The Institute for Sustainable Finance has gone on to have a national footprint with our current research director being out of the province of Alberta, our executive director being out of Quebec. Smith School of Business is of course located in Ontario. And so, despite the competition at the regional and national level, we've been quite agnostic as to where our researchers and thought leaders come from. And, it's really been a wonderful platform to be unified in discussions about sustainable finance at the national level rather than just our own institution. Can you realize how the Institute is spreading the love of finance everywhere in the world?

Dean Laurent Muzellec, Trinity Business School:

At Trinity we have a strategy that is called Transforming Business for Good. And, as you know, strategy is no good without measurement. And so, with regard to climate we have analyzed all of our teaching modules at the school, classifying them to see the proportion per topic that addresses sustainability and the level of depth of it. And, actually we found out that it was 0% in finance.

After tackling this, we have moved to a 20% level in our finance module. Now, that doesn't sound like a lot, but it was 0% before. The good news is that in our entrepreneurship and innovation module, sustainability covered 100% of it. We have done that both at undergrad and postgrad levels. Trinity also created an MSc Responsible Business and Sustainability but we ensure that sustainability cuts across every field of learning at Trinity. And finally, we support an initiative called the Trinity Access Program, Pathway to Business, which is aimed at people from underprivileged socioeconomic backgrounds. Trinity Business School devotes 5% of its extra cash flow to that initiative.

Dean Simon Wilkie, Monash Business School:

One of the things we launched at Monash – given that Australia has its own problematic history – is a Masters of Indigenous Business Leadership, co-developed with the Indigenous peoples of Australia. The student cohort is 100% completely Indigenous and we co-developed the curriculum with community leaders, and Indigenous-based business. There's a real opportunity there with the corporate sector, and not just for those graduates, as companies try to develop their reconciliation action plan of how it's going to go forward in Australia recognizing and respecting Indigenous communities. So, it's a really unique program, and Monash is really proud of that.

Pro-Dean Jo Horton, Warwick Business School: So, at Warwick we have a lot of innovations and I was trying to work out which one I'd talk about. So, I thought I'd talk about the one that's probably the closest to me. We've just developed a Fraud and Risk Centre in the Business School. I've always believed that universities are a social good and also the research that comes out of them – and that we should apply it as best we can. The centre came about from research that was conducted within the accounting group at Warwick Business School which created a global model that can forecast the likelihood of accounting fraud before it happens and about four years before it happens.

As a result, the researchers literally have a list of firms that we believe are at high risk of committing fraud in the future. We tested this in a friendly though competitive comparison with EY Canada – swapping lists of probables – and they admitted defeat, our list even featuring some of their clients. Moreover, we're going to make it accessible to anybody who wishes, not for profit, but to help change what is currently the situation – where CEOs end up with a net benefit for the committee of about £6.9 million per CEO. We need to change that net benefit to a net cost. And so, I'm very proud of my group, the accounting group, to have done this. In this instance too, it's going to be interdisciplinary and in this way get finance, linguistics, the FinTech Centre, Gilmore, etc. building this and developing programmes at the back of it.

Associate Dean Prof. Concepción Galdón: Thank you so much, Deans. Obviously, all of our schools in the alliance have plenty more examples than what we have shared but this will give the flavour that this is real – and a reality in our business schools all over the world within the CoBS alliance.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

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- **CoBS member schools demonstrate credibility through concrete, mission-driven initiatives.** Each Dean shared a tangible program showing that their institution actively implements responsible leadership, sustainability, and societal impact in practice – not just in rhetoric.
- **Schools are embedding purpose, sustainability, and societal awareness into core curricula.** Examples include IE's Purpose Accelerator for all master's students, ESSEC's programmes in sustainable transformation, and Trinity's audit and integration of sustainability across teaching modules.
- **Global leadership development is being strengthened through mobility and international exposure.** Fudan's large-scale sponsorship for students to study abroad underlines the alliance's commitment to broadening young leaders' global perspectives and technological understanding.
- **Institutions are addressing national and societal challenges through specialised programmes.** From Monash's Indigenous Business Leadership programme to Smith School of Business's national Institute for Sustainable Finance and Warwick's Fraud & Risk Centre, schools are creating initiatives tailored to local needs with global relevance.
- **Innovation and collaboration are driving impact across disciplines.** Whether through interdisciplinary fraud prediction research, cross-school health initiatives, high-tech innovation programmes, or access pathways for underrepresented groups CoBS schools show how alliances and internal collaboration fuel meaningful, measurable progress.



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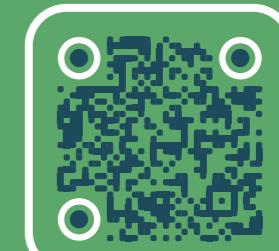
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