

**Call for Extended Abstracts  
for a Paper Development Workshop  
preceding submissions to a special issue of the  
*International Journal of Management Reviews (IJMR)***

**Tear down this wall!  
Engaging intra-, inter-, and transdisciplinary  
perspectives to move beyond silo thinking for  
sustainability in business**

**Extended abstract submission deadline: 31 August 2024**

**[Submission window full papers: 1 – 31 January 2025]**

### **Special Issue Guest Editors**

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### **Relevance of the Special Issue**

Calls that acknowledge the need for intra- inter-, and transdisciplinary research are abundant. However, research on sustainability in business still displays widespread silo-thinking in various areas of management. The same applies to theoretical approaches, which are often specific to certain areas of research (Gruner & Minunno, 2023) and thus fall short of covering the necessary

spectrum to truly advance knowledge on sustainability in business from a boundary-spanning perspective.

Within the broader realm of management, business, and society, many sub-disciplines addressing sustainability issues fail to thoroughly connect to one another on an *intradisciplinary* level. A vivid evidence of this deficiency is very limited cross-referencing in research on sustainability in business between various sub-disciplines which should generally have a common ground in their sustainability topics (see, e.g., Garcia-Torea et al., 2023, for sustainability reporting as addressed in the fields of organizational studies and accounting, or Schätzlein et al., 2023, for aspects of financing social enterprises as addressed in the fields of entrepreneurship and finance). Consequentially, already intradisciplinary research within the broader management domain has the potential to tear down walls between two or more sub-disciplines.

From a higher-order perspective, similar implications apply to *interdisciplinary* links between business research and other main research disciplines. Insights, theories, and methods from other disciplines, such as psychology, natural sciences, social and cultural sciences, or economics, law and political sciences, could help advance sustainability management research, because sustainability is per se an interdisciplinary topic. For example, to understand what drives or impedes supply chains to become more sustainable, we need to understand not only organizational but also individual behavior in such systems and thus we need insights from psychology (e.g., Tang et al., 2023). Likewise, tools in carbon accounting and management will hardly be able to support combatting climate change without knowledge from natural sciences about underlying causes and effects (Wohlgezogen et al., 2022). Overall, advancing knowledge on sustainability in business requires knowledge on the interplay of various complex systems (market system, natural system, e.g., Schlütter et al., 2023) and, thus, almost inevitably interdisciplinary research approaches. Yet, truly interdisciplinary models of sustainability are either scarce or incomplete (Brink et al., 2020; Schoolman et al., 2012).

Finally, to contribute to sustainable development, research also needs to tear down walls between academic and non-academic stakeholders through *transdisciplinary* research (Beckmann & Schaltegger, 2020). Understanding real world challenges requires “partnering up” (Sharma & Bansal, 2020) with non-academic actors instead of purely considering them a source of data (Brammer et al., 2022). However, truly transdisciplinary research often comes with tensions among the academic and non-academic actors, so that research and practice often remain “two solitudes” (Bansal & Sharma, 2022). Accordingly, while the aspiration for transdisciplinarity in research on sustainability in business is high, the realized level is low (Laasch et al., 2020).

Overall, a lack of synthesis of relevant knowledge on an intra-, inter-, and transdisciplinary-level makes it difficult to determine the true state of scholarly knowledge in sustainability management research. Silo-like knowledge with islands of wisdom in different disciplines and actors might be detrimental to the advancement of future knowledge, for example, in case of an overuse of limited or inconclusive findings or an underuse of research evidence or relevant

theoretical perspectives from related areas (Gruner & Minunno, 2023; Rousseau et al., 2008). We thus urge scholars to tear down these walls. Literature reviews are especially well suited to tear down walls between different disciplines (Gruner & Minunno, 2023; Rousseau et al., 2008), and the *IJMR* has been instrumental in leveraging the potential of excellent literature reviews.

## **Content and Type of Potential Contributions**

The intended scope of the special issue spans across the entire field of research on sustainability in business. We encourage submission of different types of literature reviews such as systematic literature reviews (Siddaway et al., 2019), bibliometric analyses (Zupic & Čater, 2015; Linnenluecke et al., 2020), computational literature reviews (Antons et al., 2023), or meta-analyses (Schmidt, 2008; Combs et al., 2019). The same applies to theoretical lenses and contributions, which can be multifaceted but should be in focus of the papers in the special issue (e.g., Breslin & Gatrell, 2023; Post et al., 2020). Exemplary research questions within the intended scope of this special issue include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- What is the intra-, inter-, and transdisciplinary knowledge structure and intellectual foundations of research on sustainability in business?
- Where and how does silo-thinking and discipline-constrained respective research limit our understanding of relevant knowledge?
- What are the most frequently used theoretical foundations in research on sustainability in business and how can theories from other disciplines or sub-disciplines be used to develop boundary-spanning frameworks?
- In how far are theoretical assumptions on sustainability in business across (sub-) disciplines different from each other and to what extent do such different assumptions fertilize or hinder each other?
- What methodological approaches from other disciplines can be applied to advance research on different aspects of sustainability in business?
- How do the activities across different scopes of practice (private, public, nonprofit) inform our broader understanding of sustainability in business?
- How might multiple types of literature reviews – typically used across disciplines – be combined to provide novel insights about sustainability in business?
- What are the main debates, challenges, and paradoxes in research on sustainability in business and how do the findings help to develop a strategy for impactful future research?
- How can future intra-, inter-, and transdisciplinary studies leverage existing knowledge to study sustainability in business?
- How can varying priorities regarding theoretical contribution as well as managerial or societal implication in different (sub-)disciplines be reconciled to inform current knowledge and future research?

## Timeline for the Special Issue and the preceding Paper Development Workshop

- Submission deadline for Extended Abstracts\*: August 31, 2024
- Pre-submission workshop: September 26, 2024 (virtual)\*
  - **Slot 1:** 8am-11am (London), 9am-12pm (Berlin), 12:30pm-3:30pm (Delhi), 4pm-7pm (Tokyo), 5pm-8pm (Melbourne), 7pm-10pm (Auckland)
  - **Slot 2:** 9am-12am (Los Angeles), 10am-1pm (Mexico-City), 12pm-3pm (New York), 1pm-4pm (Rio de Janeiro), 5pm-8pm (London), 6pm-9pm (Berlin)
- Submission window: January 1 to 31, 2025
- Desk reject decisions: March 2025
- First round of reviews due: May 2025
- Second round of reviews due: November 2025
- Expected publication: Fall 2026

\*Participation in a pre-submission paper development workshop is encouraged but not mandatory for submission to this Special Issue. The workshop will be held online September 26, 2024 (two time slots, see above). In case you would like to be considered for the workshop, please submit your Extended Abstracts by August 31, 2024 to [sustainability@hhu.de](mailto:sustainability@hhu.de) (subject: IJMR Special Issue). **Please indicate in your email in which of the two time slots you could participate.**

## Content of Extended Abstracts for the Paper Development Workshop

- For formatting and referencing, please follow the “Manuscript Format” set out by the *International Journal of Management Reviews* available at: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1468-2370/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1468-2370/homepage/ForAuthors.html)
- Your Extended Abstract should cover the following aspects:
  - Title Page (Title, name, position, affiliation, email address of each author. Please indicate the contact person with an asterisk.)
  - Outline of relevance of your review: How does it fit into the scope of the special issue and why is it important? (max. 1 page)
  - Overview of methodological approach: What type of review do you conduct and how? (max. 1 page)
  - Overview of preliminary results: What are your key findings (as of now)? (max. 2 pages)
  - Overview of envisioned contribution: How do you advance knowledge with your review? (max. 2 pages)
  - References

## Submission Guidelines

- Extended Abstracts should be submitted via email to [sustainability@hhu.de](mailto:sustainability@hhu.de) (subject: IJMR Special Issue)
- [Full manuscripts should be submitted in January 2025 within the submission window via <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ijmr> highlighting that you wish to be considered for the Special Issue ‘Tear down this wall! Engaging intra-, inter-, and transdisciplinary perspectives to move beyond silo thinking for sustainability in business’]

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