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# **A Vision of Responsible Research in Business and Management: A Necessary Conversation**

**Community for Responsible Research in  
Business and Management**

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# The Position Paper

- ✓ Vision 2030
- ✓ Background
- ✓ Principles of responsible research
- ✓ Actors and potential actions
- ✓ Current research ecosystem
- ✓ Consequences of “do nothing”
- ✓ Call to action

# Vision 2030



“In 2030, business and management schools worldwide are widely admired for their contributions to societal well-being.... Research is timely and cutting edge, .... Both schools and scholars are committed to the ***principles of responsible research***.... helped to develop effective systems leading to high economic performance, great innovations, positive employee and customer wellbeing, a clean environment, and strong communities, ... Standards of excellence are attuned to local conditions and the needs of surrounding communities; ... **support humanity’s highest aspirations**..., Business leaders and government officials ... seeking advice on policies and offering support for research on issues that need understanding. ”

# Background: Persistent and Systemic Institutional Problems



Entrenched and inter-twined **norms, practices and incentive** structures at all levels of the business school.

--- School reputation based on faculty **publications in a narrow set of journals** defined as prestigious based on self-referential criteria.

--- Faculty **rewards based on same publications and self-sustaining**, but benefits to the public are not so clear.

Pressure to conform – **rankings and assessments** - hard to change by any one individual, one group, or one school.

# Two Core Issues in the Current Research Ecosystem

**We want research results that produce credible knowledge.**

Instead, we have..

- Rigorous but unreliable and non-reproducible results.
- Confirmation bias and other questionable research practices.

**We want knowledge which is useful for practice.**

Instead, we have...

- Topics of research distant from practices or challenges in business and society.
- Publication numbers and citation counts as primary measures of success.

**“Without the assurance of credible research findings, the question of relevance is irrelevant” (position paper, p. 9)**

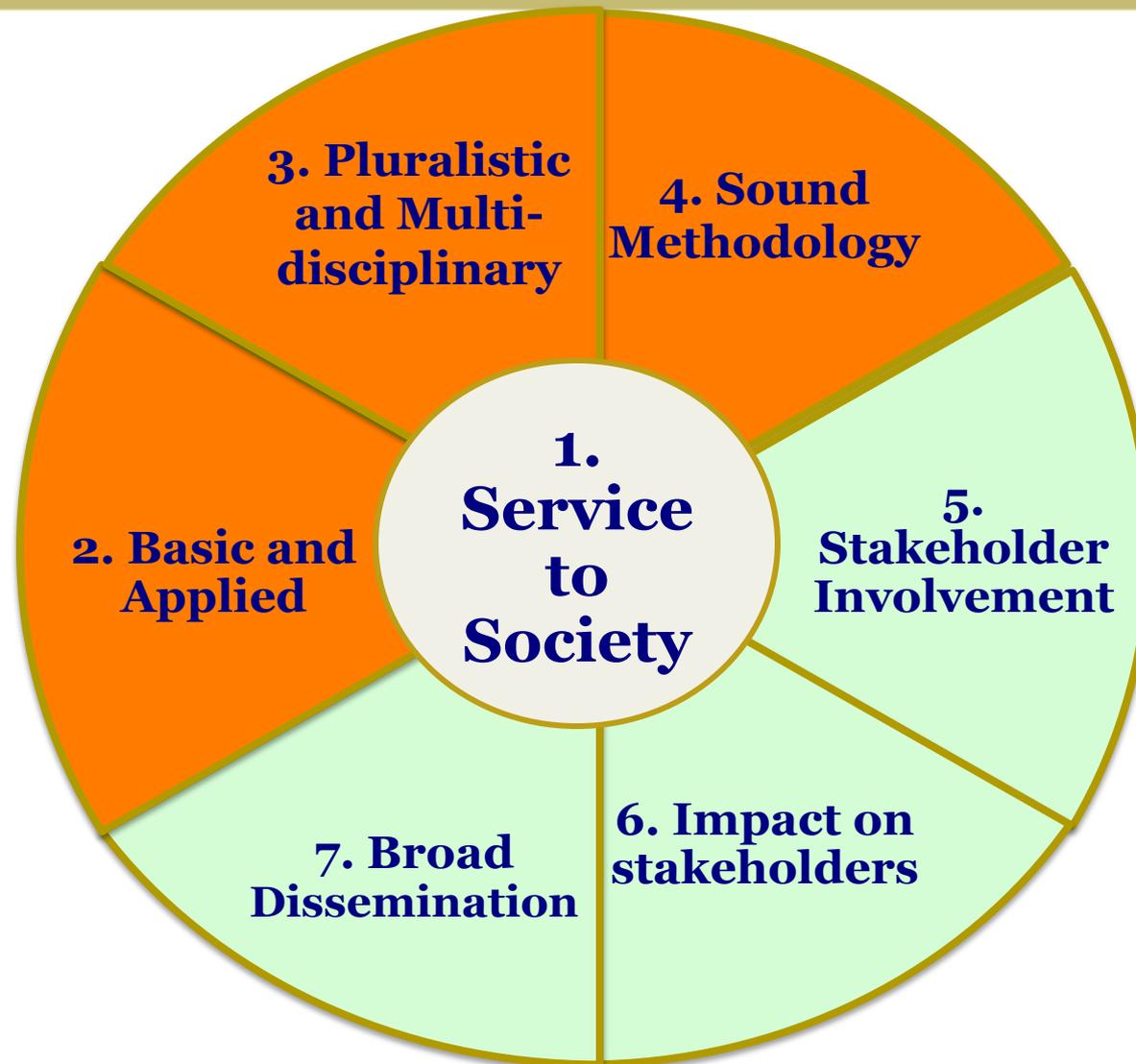
# Responsible Research: Definition

- ...scientific work that produces **credible and reliable knowledge** with either direct or indirect **usefulness** for addressing problems important to both business and society.
- Based on the belief that “**business can be a means for a better world if it is informed by responsible research.**”

Responsible research is high on BOTH rigor (credibility) and relevance (usefulness).



# 7 Principles of Responsible Research



# Actors and Possible Actions in the Research Ecosystem



1. Journal editors and publishers
2. Scholarly association leaders
3. Scholars and doctoral students
4. University leaders, deans, heads, senior scholars
5. Accreditation agencies and business school associations
6. Funding agencies and government
7. Business, alumni, NGO, students, society

# The “Do Nothing” option

## Falling behind on the educational mission

- Fail to prepare students for the changing business landscape.

## Failing to help businesses to meet the challenges of technology, globalization and emerging markets

- New industries, new organizational forms, new work arrangements, inequality, un- and under-employment, sustainability

## Legitimacy and survival of business schools at risk

- Global competition (14,000 business schools), declining enrollment, increasing cost, MOOCs, alternative lower cost providers (corporate universities, consulting firms), unclear returns to research investment, talent exit

# RRBM: Call to Action

- RRBM vision is for  
*... a future in which business schools and scholars worldwide have successfully transformed their research toward responsible science, producing useful and credible knowledge that addresses problems important to business and society.*

Join & Support RRBM :

**Endorse the Position Paper  
and Share your Best Practices**



# Cost of Research?

- Estimated cost of an A-journal article: \$400,000
  - Initial estimate from Terweisch & Ulrich (2014)
  - Multiplied by count of articles in 4 and 4\* journals
  - Global annual expenditure on business research **????**

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  - Average salaries for 30,039 research faculty
  - Assuming 40% faculty time spent on research
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  - Extrapolating from 511 reporting schools to the 780 accredited schools, global annual expenditure: **\$3.8 B**
- What is the return to research investment in terms of credible and useful knowledge?

# A Moral Dilemma for School Leadership



- Why does society invest in scholarly research?
- Why do business schools engage in scholarly research?
- Who benefits from current scholarly research?
  - Faculty
  - Journals
  - Schools
  - Students
  - Business
  - Society
- Is the Academy – ourselves – being served?

# Urgent Need to Change

## Take action

- Endorse the position paper
- Create change through your research and through any of the 7 sets of actors in the research eco-system (Schools, journals, professional associations, etc.)

## Speak up

- Endorse the position paper
- Advocate for RRBM

# Initiatives to Improve Research Credibility



*2016 SMJ* calls for repeatable results with emphasis on data **accessibility** and **transparency**.

*2017 JIBS* defines 10 principles (e.g., use of statistics) to increase the **reliability** and **accumulation** of knowledge.

*2017 MOR and JBP* policies of replication, data accessibility and **two stage review process (pre-approvals)** to prevent p-hacking and HARKing.

2015 Center for Open Science offers 8 **Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP)** guidelines.

# Journal Special Issues on Real World Problems



1. *A Management J* – “Well-being, inequality, sustainability”
2. *AMD* - “Sustainable development for a better world” (SDGs)
3. *Journal of International Business* - “Changing the world: How IB research makes a difference”.
4. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* “Accounting’s contribution to UN SDGs”
5. *Irish JoM* - “Responsible research in management”
6. *JPIM* - “Social innovation in an interconnected world”
7. *Mfg & Service Operations Mgt* - “Responsible operations and supply chain management”
8. *J of Marketing* - “Better marketing for a better world”
9. *Journal of Sustainable Finance* – expressed interest
10. *JMS* - “Social and economic inequality”
11. *Human Relations* “Economic inequality and management”

# Initiatives to Improve Research Usefulness



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U.S. NSF funding criteria – proposals must **specify social impact** beyond scientific outcomes

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UK Research Excellence Framework **20% weight on research with social impact**

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UK Stern Report – recommend broader definition of impact and increase weight to **35%**

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AACSB – 2013 Standards on **innovation, impact and engagement**

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EFMD – 2014 **Business school impact system** & 2013 Standards on **globally responsible citizenship**

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# cRRBM Publications

## **The Moral Dilemma of Business Research**

May/June 2018



## **Responsible Research**

January 2018

## **Why Care About Impact?**

January 2017



# Books and Awards

- Palgrave Studies on Sustainable Business
  - Call for Contributions to edited book:  
*Responsible Research for Better Business*
- International Association for Chinese Management Research (IACMR) and RRBM
  - [2017 Responsible Research in Management Award](#)
  - Ten articles and two books

# Pioneering Schools

- University of Michigan, Ross School of Business
  - Associate Dean for Business+Impact
  - Engage business leaders and policy makers on research such as job creation and social impact finance
  - Develop joint research with 18 schools on campus on poverty alleviation and social entrepreneurship
- Peking University, Guanghua School of Management
  - Thought Leadership Platform
  - 5 million RMB funding of 25 research projects on seven strategic areas: industry upgrading and innovation, new and development finance, economic reform, national development
  - 7 postdoc positions and staff support

# Pioneering Schools, cont.



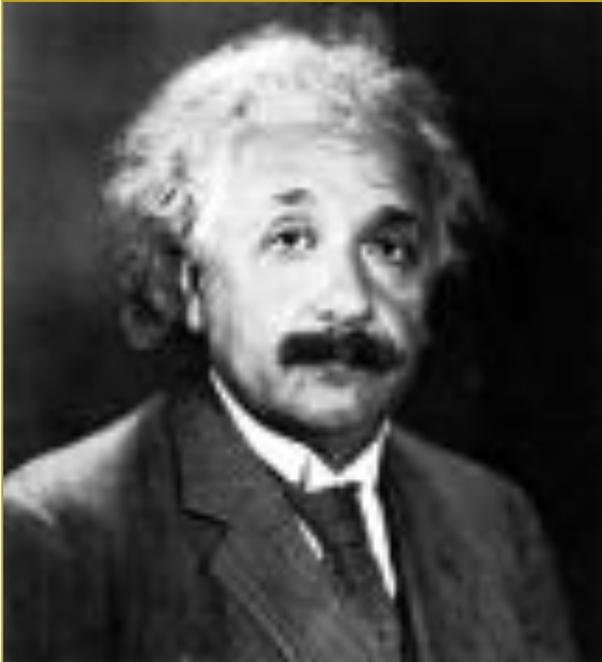
- Rotterdam School of Management
  - “To be a force for positive change in the world”
  - UN SDGs as a framework to guide teaching and research
  - Business models that combine doing well and doing good.
- Singapore Management University
  - Dean’s Impact Grant to foster impact-driven mindset
  - Customize research for the Southeast Asian context
  - Financial inclusion of poor families, Tri-sector Collaboration – private sector, civil society, government
- University of Notre Dame, Mendoza College of Business
  - Dean’s Mission Research Award
  - Published papers that contribute to the common good
  - One award in each of five disciplines

# The Real Challenge Begins



- Dissemination of the position paper
  - All business disciplines – scholars and students
  - All business schools – deans and associate deans
  - Top journal leadership – editors and associate editors
  - Accreditation agencies – school memberships
  - PRME, Aspen, GRLI, etc – school and business leaders
- Aspirational goals
  - 1000 individual endorsers by end of first quarter and 5000 by end of 2018
  - 100 institutional partners by end 2018
  - 25 pioneering schools

# We Need Your Help!!!



“Concern for making life better for ordinary humans must be the chief objective of science. Never forget this when you are pondering over your diagrams and equations!”



- **THANK YOU**
  
- Questions & Discussion
  - Questions about RRBM
  
  - What is happening in your schools/associations
    - Good news
    - Opportunities for improvement

## Time for ACTION

- **Join & Endorse RRBM**
- **Share Best Practices**
- **Make things Happen!!**
- **<https://www.rrbm.network>**

# Backup slides below



# Outline

- I. Introduction to **RRBM** Responsible Research  
in Business & Management
- II. Position paper: Vision, Principles,  
Actors, and Actions
- III. Initiatives in Support of RRBM
- IV. Taking Actions – how you can make a  
different

# Collective Profile of 28 Founding Members



- 16 senior scholars and 8 deans
  - Accounting, Finance, Management, Marketing, Operations
- 23 universities in 10 countries
- 4 supporting institutions
  - AACSB, EFMD, Aspen-BSP, PRME
- Collectively, they are...
  - Intellectual leaders in their fields
  - Editors of leading journals
  - Leaders of professional societies
  - Disciplinarily and regionally diversified

# A Brief History of RRBM

- Fall 2014 to Summer 2017
  - Formed team, wrote position paper, made presentations, sought consultation of position paper
  - 85 co-signers (30 deans and provosts, 72 universities, 21 countries) – including Caryn Beck-Dudley and Kathy Getz
- Fall 2017
  - Finalized position paper
  - Prepared the RRBM website and roll out plan
- Winter 2018
  - Began invitation to “Join and support RRBM”
  - Over 180 individual endorsers (Total ~300)
  - 30 institutional partners (20 schools)

## A Vision of Responsible Research in Business and Management

Striving for useful and credible knowledge

Imagine a world where business or management research is used widely in practice by business and other non-business organizations to improve the lives of people in our societies. Read our Vision paper and join our effort to advance responsible research in business and management.



# Actors and Possible Actions Toward Vision 2030



## **1. *Journal Editors and Publishers***

- a. Publish research important to business and society...
- b. Emphasize research context, phenomena...
- c. Publish replications, negative findings, and non-significant findings ....

## **2. *Scholarly Association Leaders***

- a. Professional commitment...to a higher aim of service to society...
- b. Identify ...opportunities for research with impact...
- c. Promote applied and impactful research in their mission statements...
- d. Encourage inter-disciplinary research...

## **3. *Scholars and Doctoral Students***

- a. Commit to pursue scholarship that contributes to ...
- c. Follow the principles of responsible science in their roles as authors, reviewers, editors, educators, and evaluation committee members...
- d. Doctoral student training ...

# Actors and Possible Actions Toward Vision 2030



## ***4. Univ Leaders, Deans, Dept Heads, Senior Scholars***

- a. Develop a vision on responsible research...
- b. Redesign promotion and tenure criteria....
- d. Revamp the PhD program....

## ***5. Business School Associations and Accreditation Agencies***

- a. Include societal impact of research in assessment standards...
- d. Share best practices...

## ***6. Funding Agencies and Government***

- a. Broaden the criteria to include social impact for funding decisions ...
- b. Expand the criteria for assessing research accomplishment...
- c. Funding agencies provide grants on studying grand challenges....

## ***7. Business, alumni, NGO, students, society***

# Toward a New Research Ecosystem with Coordinated Actors and Actions

Current  Future

