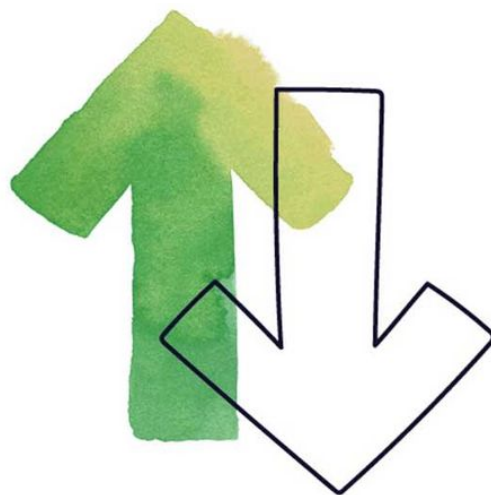


Responsible Investing Summer Course



Activity Report

October 2020

NN IP Responsible Investing Summer Course

- A global learning series on the impact of Covid-19 by NN IP in collaboration with ABIS
- Took place between 29 July and 22 September 2020
- Leading academics around the world delivering lectures online to NN IP's global audience
- Lectures focused on sustainability, consumer behaviour, governance and sustainable finance

1500

registrations

9

lecturers

from Australia, Singapore, UK,
Italy, Finland and more

200

participants

on average per lecture

Key Information

The summer course explored whether the COVID-19 crisis is increasing the speed at which we are moving to a more sustainable world or not. The lectures focused on three key stakeholders – **governments**, **corporations** and **individuals**. Key underlying questions were:

- Will governments use their influence and fuel this change globally?
- Are companies moving from shareholder to stakeholder value?
- What positive changes in end consumer behavior we will retain?



Aside from the summer course, the UpsideDown series also held three other digital events with Netflix co-founder Marc Randolph, Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel Laureate and former World Bank Chief Economist, and Peter Diamandis, co-founder of the Singularity University.

The CFA Institute for investment management professionals appointed one Continuing Education (CE) Credit per lecture.

Recordings

A compilation of the recordings can be found [HERE](#).



Summary of Lectures

Responsible investing: the new normal

Alex Edmans, Professor of Finance, London Business School

29.07.2020

Alex's lecture asked the question if responsible investing actually pays off, or do investors have to sacrifice financial returns to achieve social goals? He also addressed the question of how do you actually assess whether a company is responsible, and implement responsible investing in practice. Alex conducted his lecture in parallel with his new book, *Grow the Pie: How Great Companies Deliver Both Purpose and Profit*.

The 2020 consumer

Emma Macdonald, Professor of Marketing, University of Warwick

05.08.2020

The Covid-19 crisis affected daily lives for individuals all over the world and heightened awareness of climate change and social inequality in a very tangible way, helping make people more aware of the sustainable implications of their behaviour. Emma focused on how consumer patterns change in times of a recession, how lifestyles would change in the 1.5m society and to what extent more responsible behavior by individuals and companies will follow.

Change Agency for a sustainable future

Satu Teerikangas, Professor of Management, University of Turku

12.08.2020

Satu focused on human agency - the conscious and active choices, behaviors and actions we undertake as individuals, in so doing shaping the present moment and the emerging future. She set up a framework to appreciate the landscape of change and in dealing with it. Satu showcased that it is amidst crisis that opportunities for leadership development can be tapped into.

Designing new business models with impact

Jan Jonker , Chair Sustainable Entrepreneurship, Radboud University

19.08.2020

Jan discussed his recently developed Business Model Template, a step-by-step process that aimed to help organisations create new and impactful sustainable business propositions. He illustrated that we are in the middle of a transition to a different, more sustainable society. For companies and organisations, actively contributing to this transition is no longer option, where organisations must structure themselves sustainably and contribute to resolving their customers' sustainability challenges in a measurable and impactful way. That implied changes in thinking, in strategy and ultimately in business and revenue modeling.

How China is stimulating the transition to a more sustainable society post Covid-19

Cary Krosinsky, Lecturer and Faculty Advisory Committee Member, Energy Studies, Yale School of Management

26.08.2020

Cary discussed how financial cooperation between China and the West has the potential to help solve challenges such as inequality and climate change. He argued that successful transformations are only possible when countries collaborate and are economically vibrant, and with his new book on this subject, Modern China, he talks about the recommendations on how to take this forward, including ways to create better relationships including safe spaces for negotiating challenges.

CSR & Responsible Investing: an accelerated convergence after the crisis?

Nicolas Mottis, Professor in Management of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Department, École Polytechnique

03.09.2020

Nicolas illustrated how the integration of extra-financial parameters has made a lot of progress in recent years, with CEOs and top executives showing a growing interest in these dimensions. At the same time, many of them would still argue that most investors they interact with only care about risks and shareholder value. As many Responsible Investment funds have proven their resistance during the crisis and contributed to demonstrate the value created by good ESG performances, he tackles the question if there will be more convergence between RI on financial markets and CSR on the companies' side and if the expected alignment between CEOs and investors is really in progress.

Moving towards transformative resilience

Enrico Giovannini, Full professor of Economic statistics and Sustainable development at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata"

09.09.2020

An EU-focused lecture, Enrico spoke how the EU is currently facing unprecedented challenges, with policymakers and academics increasingly looking at 'resilience' as a holistic conceptual, analytical and policy framework to synthesize insights from across disciplines. Resilience for Enrico, was seen as needed for the EU to 'bounce forward' to swiftly recover and emerge stronger from current and future crises. This would accelerate its transitions, minimizing damage and relieve suffering from crises through adaptation and transformation. He formulated how a strategic approach based on the concept of resilience can be implemented in practice, both by governments and companies.

Strong institutions for responsible investing: business integrity in ASEAN (Spotlight on SDG16)

Lawrence Loh, Director, Centre for Governance, Institutions and Organisations (CGIO) at the National University of Singapore

17.09.2020

Lawrence's session contextualized the ongoing debate on whether unethical practices, particularly corruption or fraud, can be mitigated by strong financial performances. Drawing on real company examples straddling from Europe to Asia, the session examined the ethical dilemma facing investors when picking companies. The ASEAN context was used to unbox the "black box" of business integrity by looking at current challenges in leading corporations. The underlying foundation was Sustainable Development Goal 16, which pointed to the importance of having strong institutional mechanisms to bridge corporate practices with responsible investing.

Green recovery and circular economy

Fenna Blomsma, Junior Professor, Chair in Circular Economy and Systems Innovation, Hamburg University

22.09.2020

Fenna's lecture showed how a (more) circular economy can be brought about through technology, business model and value chain innovation. The circular economy is put forward as a way to "Build Back Better" and to support the "Green Recovery." And rightly so, as replacing the 'take-make-waste' paradigm with one that keeps resources in use for longer can lower greenhouse gas emissions, whilst ensuring the resilience of economies. Questions like: "Where can sources of value creation and capture be found in a circular economy?", "What business models suit a circular economy?" and "How can I align interests within the value chain?" were explored using case examples.

Questions from the audience

On governments

Are there sections of the green industry the EU has most actively invested in? How has this changed since COVID-19?

On corporations

Do you think responsible investment should entail companies using their comparative advantage to solve social problems within emerging markets/ developing countries, in order to extract long-term value and to aid economic development alongside one another

On individuals

Is this change in consumer behavior transitory? Do you think this empathy of consumers and demand for thoughtful businesses will remain after the pandemic is over?

Wordcloud from collected questions



Quotes from the speakers

"Resilience is needed for the EU to bounce forward, swiftly recover and emerge stronger from current and future" - Enrico Giovannini, Professor of Economic Statistics and Sustainable Development, Tor Vergata University of Rome

"Sustainability will only be reached by putting many different solutions into place" - Fenna Blomsma, Junior Professor, Hamburg University

"We just need to make things easy for people to make the right choice" – Emma Macdonald, Professor of Marketing, University of Warwick

"Successful transformations are only possible when countries collaborate and are economically vibrant"
- Cary Krosinsky, Lecturer and Faculty Advisory Committee Member, Energy Studies, Yale College and Yale School of Management

"By applying a radically different approach, companies can create profits for investors and value for society" – Alex Edmans, Professor of Finance and Academic Director, Centre for Corporate Governance, London Business School