



EABIS

European Academy
of Business in Society

European Academy of Business in Society Launches 1m Euro Research, Education and Training Partnership Programme on Corporate Responsibility with Business Support

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The European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS) – an alliance of leading companies and business schools working together on corporate responsibility - today launched a 1 million euro, 3 year partnership programme on research, education and training. Topics covered by the 7 initial projects include a broad range of issues such as stakeholder management, measuring the business case, social entrepreneurship, the role of government, the bottom of the pyramid, management skills, MBA curriculum development and executive training.

The launch comes at a time when corporate responsibility is rapidly moving up the management education agenda in business schools and companies are increasingly stressing the need to develop new knowledge and skills for current and future leaders on this topic. The programme aims to meet these challenges and to accelerate the integration of corporate responsibility into the heart of business theory and practice. The launch marks an important milestone for EABIS as it continues to highlight and support the development of corporate responsibility in Europe.

EABIS' founding corporate partners, **IBM, Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft, Shell** and **Unilever** will each contribute 70k EUR per year for the next 3 years in support of the initiative. Speaking on the day of the launch, Patrick de Smedt, Chairman of **Microsoft** Europe, Middle East and Africa said:

"Whilst corporate responsibility remains high on the agenda for most leaders, there is an urgent need for more and better knowledge and skills on the changing role of business in society. To ensure that current and future managers are equipped to meet this challenge, partnerships between companies and business schools are critical. Microsoft and the other founding corporate partners of EABIS are proud to support the launch of the first wave of research, education and training projects on a broad range of vital and relevant issues for business. It marks an important step forward, not only for EABIS and its members, but in supporting the development of corporate responsibility in Europe."

To ensure strong business relevance and high academic quality, company representatives and faculty members assessed 15 initial proposals. The 10 successful institutions represent some of Europe's leading business schools and span 7 countries:

- **Ashridge** (GB)
- **Copenhagen Business School** (DK)
- **Cranfield School of Management** (GB)
- **ESADE Business School** (ES)
- **IESE Business School** (ES)
- **London Business School** (GB)
- **Norwegian School of Management** (NO)
- **SDA Bocconi** (IT)
- **Vlerick Leuven Gent School of Management** (BE)
- **University of Applied Sciences in Business Administration Zurich** (CH)

Speaking about her institution's leadership of the flagship MBA curriculum development project, Prof. Laura Tyson, Dean of **London Business School** said:

"This launch represents a unique opportunity for business schools and companies to collaboratively integrate corporate responsibility into business theory and practice. The leadership role of London Business School in the EABIS curriculum development project confirms our belief in the need to embed corporate responsibility issues into the core of management education. The project will play a crucial role in equipping tomorrow's leaders to respond to the needs of a complex global market place."

The programme comes at a time when corporate responsibility, leadership development and management education are increasingly in the limelight both in companies and in academia. Increasing interest in the links between these topics have seen EABIS expand rapidly from 15 to more than 50 leading companies, business schools and international organisations in the last 18 months.

Asked about the importance of the programme, Peter Lacy, Executive Director of EABIS said:

"The launch of the programme comes at a crucial time when discussions on the relationship between corporate responsibility and management education are currently centre stage amongst business leaders, academics, policy-makers, civil society and the business media. It recognises the need for tangible, results-driven partnerships. It aims to equip current and future leaders with the knowledge and skills to manage the complexity of modern business in a way that creates value for both shareholders and society at large. EABIS continues to be a learning journey for all concerned and we look forward to producing high quality results in this next exciting phase."

The programme follows EABIS' launch last September of 2 projects - "CSR Platform" and "RESPONSE" - worth 2 million euros, as part of the **European Commission's Sixth Framework Research Programme**. It is also a response to calls from the **European Commission "Multistakeholder Forum on CSR"** (July 2004) and the **"European Business Roadmap" on CSR** (March 2005) for business schools to play an active role in developing current and future leaders on corporate responsibility as a contribution to the **European Union's Lisbon agenda**.

Results from 1 year projects and initial findings from 3yr projects are expected spring 2006. Executive summaries of the projects are attached in PDF format.

Additional information is available on EABIS' website: www.eabis.org

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Notes to Editors:

About The European Academy of Business in Society

EABIS is a unique alliance of more than 50 companies, business schools, business networks and other stakeholders, with the support of the European Union Commission, committed to integrating corporate responsibility into the mainstream of business theory and practice in Europe. For more information on members and activities visit: www.eabis.org