

2025 Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) Report

Gordon Institute of Business
Science (GIBS)

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About the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME)

The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) is a United Nations-supported initiative founded in 2007 that aims to raise the profile of sustainability in their classrooms through Seven Principles focused on serving society and safeguarding our planet.

PRME engages business and management schools to ensure they provide future leaders with the skills needed to balance economic and sustainability goals, while drawing attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aligning academic institutions with the work of the UN Global Compact. Driven by its mission to transform management education, PRME equips today's business students with the understanding and ability to deliver change tomorrow. As a voluntary initiative with over 800 signatories worldwide, PRME has become the largest organized relationship between the United Nations and management-related higher education institutions.



“*The PRME initiative was launched to nurture responsible leaders of the future. Never has this task been more important. Bold leadership and innovative thinking are needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

Antonio Guterres

Secretary-General (2017 - Present)

United Nations

”

Principles of PRME



Purpose

We advance responsible management education to foster inclusive prosperity in a world of thriving ecosystems.



Values

We place organizational responsibility and accountability to society and the planet at the core of what we do.



Teach

We transform our learning environments by integrating responsible management concepts and practices into our curriculum and pedagogy.



Research

We study people, organizations, institutions, and the state of the world to inspire responsible management and education practice.



Partner

We engage people from business, government, civil society, and academia to advance responsible and accountable management education and practice.



Practice

We adopt responsible and accountable management principles in our own governance and operations.



Share

We share our successes and failures with each other to enable our collective learning and best live our common values and purpose.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In September 2015, all 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted a plan for achieving a better future for all – laying out a path over the next 15 years to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and protect our planet. At the heart of Agenda 2030 are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 related targets that address the most important economic, social, environmental and governance challenges of our time. The SDGs clearly define the world we want – applying to all nations and leaving no one behind. Successful implementation of the SDGs will require all players to champion this agenda; the role of higher education is critical to this.





Getting Started

This section provides foundational information about Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), including key details and basic institutional data.

Graduates & Enrollment

2024 Statistics	Number
Graduates	1221
Faculty & Staff at the University	2724
Faculty & Staff at the Institution	388
Student Enrollment at the University	56409
Student Enrollment at the Institution	6902
Undergraduate Attendance	455
Masters-Level Postgraduate Attendance	1758
Doctoral Student Attendance	82
Certificate, Professional Development, or Continuing Education Attendance	4607

Degrees Offered

Masters Programs

-  Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)

Doctoral Programs

-  Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.)

Additional

-  Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration (PDBA)
-  MPhil in Business Management specialising in International Business
-  MPhil in Business Management specialising in Corporate Strategy
-  MPhil in Business Management specialising in Change Leadership
-  MPhil in Business Management specialising in Evidence-Based Management



Purpose

We advance responsible management education to foster inclusive prosperity in a world of thriving ecosystems.

Letter of Commitment

PRME Principles for Responsible
Management Education

an initiative of 

December 15, 2023

Letter of Commitment

PRME Champions 2024-2025

Dear PRME Secretariat,

As an institution of higher education actively involved with the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative, **the Gordon Institute of Business Science** commits to join the next two-year cycle of PRME Champions programme in 2024-2025.

In doing so, and as per the Call for Applications (attached separately), **the Gordon Institute of Business Science** commits to actively engage in the PRME Champions programme by identifying a core team of at least two-three people (e.g. academic point person and a second academic and/or administrative point person) and allocating adequate capacity and resources for the core team to be able to actively drive the institution's commitment to the two-year cycle of 2024-2025. **The Gordon Institute of Business Science** further commits to send at least one representative to participate in each of the two in-person workshops, two hybrid workshops and four online webinars throughout the two-year cycle of 2024-2025.

The Gordon Institute of Business Science is committed to the refreshed Seven PRME Principles and to taking transformative action towards the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals across curriculum, research and partnerships. We are open to sharing our journey, challenges and learnings within the PRME Champions group, as well as learning from others, with the aim of future-proofing our institution and demonstrating the impact of our sustainability efforts.

Sincerely,



Prof Morris Mthombeni
Dean : GIBS

Definition of Purpose

At GIBS, our purpose is to advance responsible management education that fosters inclusive prosperity across Africa and beyond. As a proudly African institution, we equip leaders with a human-centric, entrepreneurial mindset to drive sustainable, equitable, and innovative business practices that create long-term impact for organisations, societies, and ecosystems.

Institutional Engagement

76% - 100% of faculty at Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) actively contribute to our work with PRME, advancing responsible management education, or addressing sustainable development challenges through their work.



Values

We place organizational responsibility and accountability to society and the planet at the core of what we do.



How We Define Values

A proudly Africa-based institution, GIBS is committed to serving, inspiring and advancing world-class business practices across the continent and beyond. We embrace a human-centric approach to business; striving to make business healthier and more sustainable through decisive leadership, long-term strategic intent, and the development of inclusive, equitable, diverse and climate-sensitive business environments.

Who Champions Responsible Management Education at Our Institution

- ❖ Centralized sustainability office
- ❖ Interdisciplinary efforts across business school
- ❖ Disciplinary efforts within business school
- ❖ Individual Leaders
- ❖ Small group of individuals/specialists. Individual Leaders

Student Awareness

76% - 100% of students at Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) are aware that we are a PRME Signatory Member.

Student Engagement

76% - 100% of students at Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) actively contribute to our work with PRME, advancing RME, or addressing sustainable development challenges through their work.

Values Voices

GIBS and PIR: A case study of how create a cycle of 'engagement with feedback' and continuous improvement

At GIBS, the PIR process is coordinated by the Accreditations, Rankings, and Quality (ARQ) team. **The process is increasingly becoming organised and owned by the MBA students themselves.** The ARQ team was formed less than three years ago and is now a team of six. They took on the responsibility

for PIR for the first time in 2024 and this case is based on their experience and progress in coordinating and established structures and process for the 2024 and the 2025 PIR process and the continuity from year to year.

The philosophy of the ARQ team in all their work is a process of continuous improvement based on ‘engagement with feedback’. For the GIBS team this means a cycle of engagement and improvement that supports the overall GIBS school strategy of creating value to business. GIBS distinguishes its role in society as being the business school that is close to business to fulfill [“our ambition to build better societies, better leaders and better businesses”](#)[1]. As our Dean Morris Mthombeni explains: “our overarching strategy is to relentlessly focus on developing a purpose-driven, world-class business school, championing Africa to the world”.

GIBS first took part in the 2023 PIR survey and Nikitta Hahn, senior manager, explains that the ARQ team has now **intentionally developed and extended the process by becoming a ‘bridge’ between the PIR values and objectives and the GIBS MBA students.** She describes how the ARQ team equip students to understand the importance of PIR survey in multiple ways.

It starts with a presentation to each class of MBA students, of which there are 7 classes and over 400 students[2]. **The presentation is introduced by the Head of Academic Education, Prof Hayley Pearson.** The ARQ team explain the importance of honest feedback that is valuable to GIBS and to future students and how the principles of ‘engagement with feedback’ are followed. Each year, the PIR feedback leads to improvements being made by GIBS with examples of how this has been done based on prior PIR survey outcomes. More than that, the data from the PIR results are carefully analysed to better understand the feedback and prioritise improvements so that GIBS actions are intentional and targeted at making a difference. The presentation shows how this is done with examples of improvements that have already been operationalised. It also demonstrates the value of the qualitative input, which is reviewed carefully for ideas and insights. The ARQ team is lucky to have their own data analyst, Polly Ramaselele, who is central to the process, working with other team members Siamukelo Kubayi, Farhad Singh, and Carlista Joseph.

Following the class presentation, **a representative from each MBA class is identified by the students to coordinate the survey process** and they are entrusted with the responsibility to communicate with their fellow students, drive the authenticity of the responses, and encourage participation. The ASQ team also provide administration support to the student class reps and check in with progress regularly. The class representatives meet together and are introduced to students who acted as class reps in the prior year and can provide guidance based on their own experiences.

In 2025 the level of organisation and ownership by the class reps and the engagement with each MBA class was at a notably higher level. Agnes O'Neill, Head of Accreditation, says that the importance of the PIR survey really 'landed' with students in the class of 2025, and they responded with more energy and enthusiasm. She attributes this to several factors.

First, **the presentation demonstrates the value of the student input to GIBS** and how GIBS responds to the PIR survey. It explains the principle of 'engagement with feedback' from the PIR survey, analysing the data, both quantitative and text, understanding and developing insights, leading to actionable and continuous improvement.

Second, the presentation encourages students to participate and to leave **a legacy of positive change and progress** to future students who will benefit from the improvements that have been made following the PIR survey input from current students.

A third element has been introduced in which the students, in the year prior to their MBA, are introduced to the PIR survey during **a student 'town hall' meeting with the Dean of GIBS**^[3]. While other topics are covered at this meeting, the Dean presents the PIR results from the prior year and **creates the awareness of the PIR survey** and the work on sustainability that GIBS is doing. **It plants the seed for their participation in the PIR survey in which they will be invited to participate the following year.**

Together the multiple aspects of the process **reinforce the value chain that creates the cycle of 'engagement with feedback' that in turn contributes to the GIBS strategy of creating value to business.**

We hope that this brief overview of the GIBS process of connecting PIR with students will be useful to colleagues at other schools. We would be happy to share further details.

^[1] Link: <https://www.gibs.co.za/pages/about-gibs>

^[2] **Please see presentation attached - Abbreviated Version of PIR Survey**

^[3] This programme is known as the Post-Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (PGDip) and is a pre-requisite for admission to the MBA. There are also 7 cohorts in the PGDip with a similar number of students.



Teach

We transform our learning environments by integrating responsible management concepts and practices into our curriculum and pedagogy.



How We Define Teach

Teach at GIBS means integrating responsible management, climate leadership, and sustainability into our curriculum and pedagogy, equipping students and executives with the knowledge, skills, and values to lead ethically, innovate responsibly, and address Africa's complex social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Educator Recognition

At Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), we recognize educators for quality of teaching in the following ways:

- ❖ Annual teaching excellence awards
- ❖ Course evaluation scores
- ❖ Faculty promotion and tenure consideration
- ❖ Publication or research support
- ❖ Professional development opportunities

Fostering Innovation



To a great extent

Teaching and learning at our institution strongly foster innovation.

Experiential Learning



A lot

Our institution supports experiential learning significantly through teaching and learning.

Learning Mindset



To a great extent

Teaching and learning at our institution strongly promote a lifelong learning mindset.

Method of Teaching and Learning



In person

Traditional classroom-based learning with face-to-face instruction.

Barriers to Innovative Curriculum

In 2024, Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) identified the following barriers to innovating, updating, or taking risks in existing curriculum:

- ❖ Accreditation constraints
- ❖ Assessment challenges

Barriers to Innovative Pedagogy

In 2024, Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) identified the following barrier to innovating, updating, or taking risks in existing pedagogy:

- ❖ Accreditation limitations



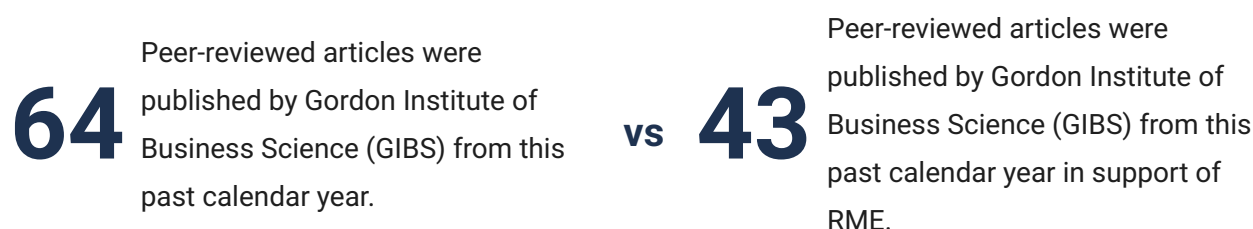
Research

We study people, organizations, institutions, and the state of the world to inspire responsible management and education practice.

How We Define Research

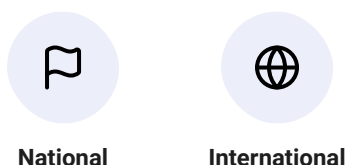
Research at GIBS connects academia, business, and society to address ethical, financial, and developmental challenges. Through initiatives like the Centre for Business Ethics, the Responsible Finance Initiative, and the Centre for African Management and Markets, we generate impactful, practice-oriented knowledge that builds partnerships, informs policy, and advances responsible management across South Africa and the continent.

Research vs Research for RME/Sustainable Development



Research Funding

In 2024, Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) was awarded funding for research that is:



Socializing Research

In 2024, Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) contributed research findings to:

- ❖ International media
- ❖ Local media
- ❖ National media
- ❖ Open-access platforms
- ❖ Social media and digital outreach
- ❖ Public events and lectures
- ❖ Industry and business networks

Research Projects

In 2024, Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) reported 6 research projects that implemented responsible or sustainable activities.

SDG4 student research projects

Period Covering: January, 2024 - December, 2024

Department: Management

SDG4 focused applied business projects



SDG6 student research projects

Period Covering: January, 2024 - December, 2024

Department: Management

SDG6 focused applied business projects



SDG7 student research projects

Period Covering: January, 2024 - December, 2024

Department: Management

SDG 7 focused applied business projects



SDG7 student research projects

Period Covering: January, 2024 - January, 2024

Department: Management

SDG8 focused applied business projects



SDG9 student research projects

Period Covering: January, 2024 - December, 2024

Department: Management

SDG9 focused applied business project



SDG11 student research projects

Period Covering: January, 2024 - December, 2024

Department: Management

SDG11 focused applied business project



Research Barriers

In 2024, Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) identified the following barriers to conducting research related to sustainability and/or responsibility:

- ❖ Funding challenges
- ❖ Ethical concerns
- ❖ Research impact and application
- ❖ Regulatory and legal restrictions
- ❖ Publishing barriers
- ❖ Time constraints



Partner

We engage people from business, government, civil society, and academia to advance responsible and accountable management education and practice.

How We Define Partner

At GIBS, partnership means co-creating knowledge and solutions with business, government, academia, and civil society. Through initiatives such as the Anti-Corruption Coalition, Ethics Barometer, and WE-DARE, we collaborate across sectors to address ethical, developmental, and societal challenges, amplifying responsible management impact locally and across Africa.

Institutional Partnerships

- ❖ AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
- ❖ AMBA (Association of MBAs)
- ❖ CEEMAN (Central and East European Management Development Association)
- ❖ Financial Times
- ❖ Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC)
- ❖ Local institutions and associations
- ❖ Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)
- ❖ Positive Impact Rating (PIR)
- ❖ Business Schools for Climate Leadership (BS4CL) Africa
- ❖ PRME Champions
- ❖ PRME Chapter Africa

Student Organization Partnerships

- ❖ Enactus
- ❖ SDSN Youth/SDG Student Program



Practice

We adopt responsible and accountable management principles in our own governance and operations.

How We Define Practice

Sustainability in practice in the GIBS context refers to the continuous, evidence-based application of sustainability principles across teaching, leadership, and business. It reflects a deliberate commitment to embedding the UN PRME's ethos into action—ensuring that sustainability is not a theory, but a standard, lived behaviour across the GIBS ecosystem. At GIBS, practice in sustainability means embedding responsible leadership into action - through curriculum, research, and operations. In line with UN PRME principles, it is how we live our values daily: modelling ethical, inclusive, and future-focused business behaviours that go beyond rhetoric to create meaningful, measurable impact.

Institutional Policies and Practices

- ❖ Buildings/real estate
- ❖ Campus operations guides
- ❖ Carbon reduction or offset commitments
- ❖ Accreditation body recommendation documents
- ❖ Employee equity, diversity, inclusion
- ❖ Sustainability strategy or strategic plan (school or university level)

Practice Voices

The following statement from stakeholders at Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) demonstrates our commitment to sustainable and responsible practices.

Sponsoring projects that align with our school strategy | BS4CL Africa Mini-White Paper Series on Climate Leadership

Business Schools for Climate Leadership (**BS4CL**) **Africa** is an initiative of PRME Chapter Africa. [BS4CL Africa](#) was founded in 2022 by the Deans of six PRME member schools in Africa, at the invitation of the Deans of the American University in Cairo (AUC), Onsi Sawaris Business School, and the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). The founding Deans worked together with the PRME Secretariat and [BS4CL](#), an alliance of eight European Business schools established at COP 26 in Glasgow in 2021.

Over the past few years, there are a number of principles that have become evident from the work that has been done by BS4CL Africa. One of these is for each school to make a contribution that is not only directed at the collective aims of BS4CL Africa, but is also of strategic relevance to its own context and strategic priorities. **It is in this way that the BS4CL Africa projects become integrated with school governance. At GIBS we choose to volunteer and collaborate on projects that align with our values, our mission and our strategic priorities.**

An example of this approach is the [BS4CL Africa Mini-White Paper Series on Climate Leadership](#), launched at the Casablanca Climate Leadership Forum (CCLF) in Morocco in late 2024. CCLF is hosted by ESCA Ecole de Management and co-branded with BS4CL Africa. The mini White Paper series is co-branded with PRME Chapter Africa and Strathmore University Business School (Strathmore), and sponsored by the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS).

The white paper series is designed to present interesting and relevant business research in or across Africa on the subject of **“Leading the Way to Climate Action in Africa: Business schools and businesses working together taking action to combat climate change.”** It is directed at understanding how can businesses schools and businesses, work together across Africa to take action to combat climate change and deliver inclusive, equitable, and transformational change.

GIBS and Strathmore worked together to create a peer-reviewed evaluation process of all submissions using an agreed rubric to provide structured feedback to all authors. As a result of this process, six papers were accepted after appropriate revisions. These six papers have now been through a detailed editing process that followed the GIBS requirements for the publication of white papers, to prepare them from publication. The first group of three papers is currently with the graphic designers in preparation for publication. The publication of the series is targeted for Q3 2025 ahead of CCLF 2025 in November 2025.

Topics include financing and investment, entrepreneurship, innovation, strategic foresight and corporate climate commitment, green technology investment, and business education and climate action. Authors are from six Africa countries and five business schools.

The benefits of this project are at multiple levels. For the scholars, their work is recognised, published and disseminated across a wide network. For BS4CL Africa and PRME Chapter Africa, the series delivers on our collective strategic objectives. For individual schools, there is recognition of work in the climate leadership space. For GIBS, the opportunities are for our faculty to engage with climate leadership research, that in turn supports GIBS strategy of delivering tangible outputs, as a school, and as a part of the important collective initiative that is BS4CL Africa.

BS4CL Africa
Business Schools for
Climate Leadership
Africa

PRME Principles for Responsible
Management Education
CHAPTER AFRICA

**Mini White Paper Series
on Climate Leadership**

**DEADLINE
EXTENDED TO MONDAY
JANUARY 26th 2025**

Further details of the requirements and submissions deadlines may be found **HERE**

THEME
Leading the Way to Climate Action in Africa: Business schools and
businesses working together taking action to combat climate change.

The American University in Cairo
Gordon Institute of Business Science
University of Pretoria
Lagos Business School
Stellenbosch Business School
Strathmore University
ESCA

in association with

ESCA SHAPING LEADERS

&

CASABLANCA
CLIMATE
LEADERSHIP
24

sponsored by

Gordon Institute of Business Science
University of Pretoria

2024 Public call for Mini White Papers.



Share

We share our successes and failures with each other to enable our collective learning and best live our common values and purpose.

How We Define Share

At GIBS, share means openly communicating knowledge, progress, and challenges with all stakeholders. Whether internal or external, this practice builds trust, encourages accountability, and amplifies learning. Sharing reflects our commitment to transparency, collaboration, and responsible leadership, as set out in the UN PRME principles.

Engagement Opportunities

Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) offers transparent engagement opportunities for members of our institution and community to contribute to our sustainability and responsibility efforts in the following ways:

- ❖ Open faculty and student meetings and town halls
- ❖ Partnerships with local organizations
- ❖ Community events and consultation forums
- ❖ Boards and advisory committees
- ❖ Feedback mechanisms (e.g., surveys, suggestion boxes)

Communication Audiences

Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) communicates its policies and progress on sustainable development and responsibility with:

- ❖ Chamber of commerce and local communities
- ❖ Boards and advisory committees
- ❖ Faculty and staff
- ❖ Prospective and current students



SIGNATORY

Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS)



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Website

<https://www.gibs.co.za>