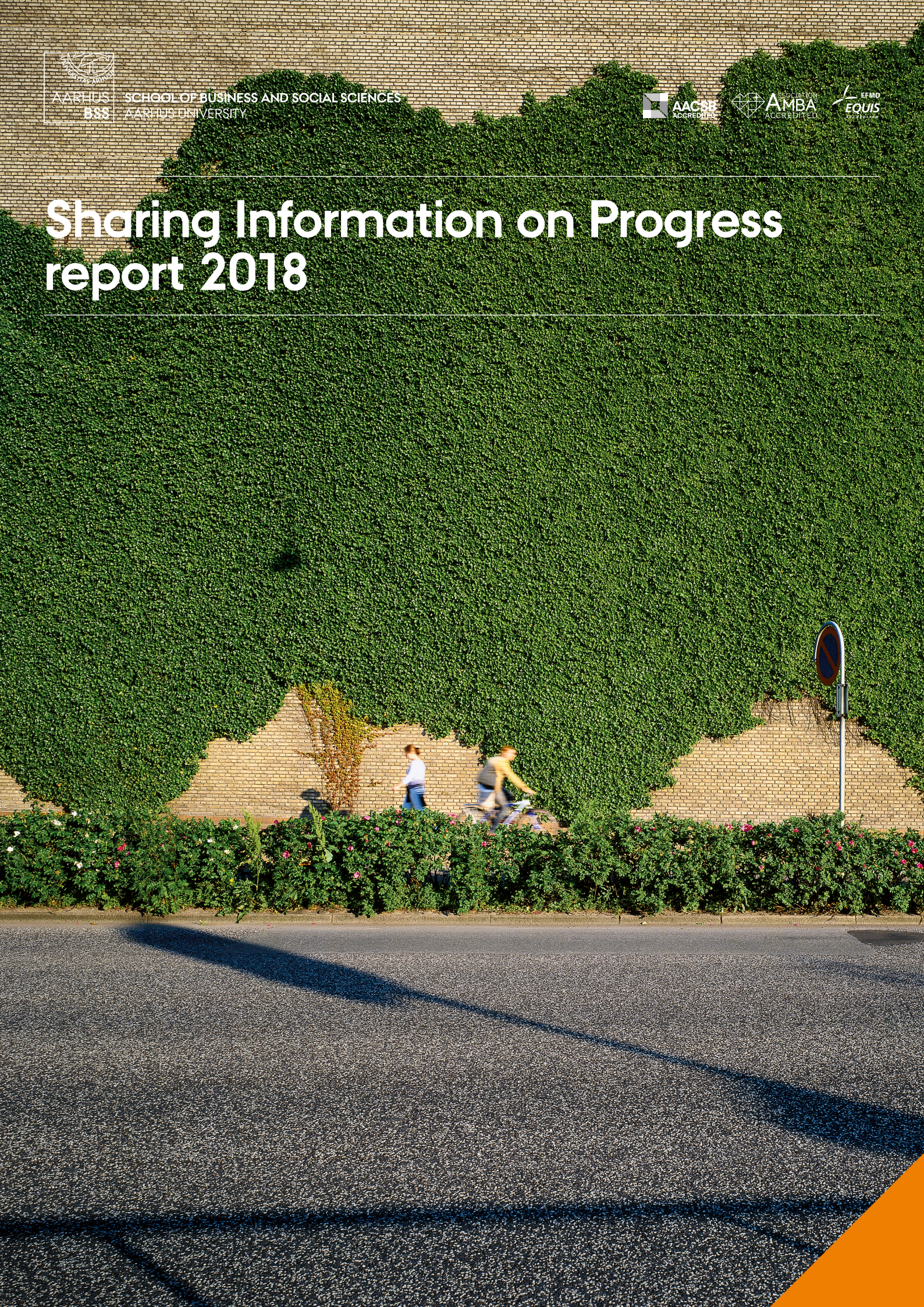




SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
AARHUS UNIVERSITY



# Sharing Information on Progress report 2018



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# A broad **business school** within Aarhus University

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Aarhus BSS is one of the four faculties at Aarhus University.

The school ranks among the largest business schools in Europe and **is accredited by the international accreditation organisations AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS.**

# Aarhus BSS

A broad international business school that takes **unique and innovative approaches** to research and teaching within its core academic disciplines.

This Sharing Information on Progress report describes a selected number of the school's activities and initiatives which support PRME's six principles for responsible management education, and which have been developed since the submission of our last progress report in 2016.

As mentioned in the previous reports, Denmark consistently ranks among the least corrupt countries in the world. Accordingly, being a business school in a society based on deeply ingrained notions of equality and democracy, a specific set of ethical behavioural norms is rooted in the culture of both faculty and students.

Furthermore, Denmark has been recognised as a leader in clean technologies and is home to several providers of world-class wind energy and clean process technologies and products. The acknowledgement of sustainability has reached a level where sustainability is no longer treated as a new or specialist issue, but has rather become recognised as an immanent and inseparable part of the general business environment.

Aarhus BSS has a clear understanding of its role as an ethical and globally responsible contributor with the purpose of creating value for its stakeholders by producing responsible graduates, by developing talent and by sharing research-based knowledge with national and international bodies, institutions and businesses. Within this context, Aarhus BSS also abides by the university policies on responsible behaviour for faculty, staff, students and researchers' activities.

In the following pages, you will learn about existing initiatives and more recent additions to our school's research and education offerings that expose students to critical thinking and innovative approaches to responsibility and sustainable solutions.



Thomas Pallesen  
Dean, Aarhus BSS

**PRME**

This is our **Sharing Information on Progress (SIP)** Report on the Implementation of the **Principles for Responsible Management Education**

# Aarhus BSS in brief

Aarhus BSS is home to six academic departments, all internationally recognised for their quality of educational and research activities, as well as a large number of internationally recognised research centres.

Aarhus BSS offers programmes taught at two campuses, one in Aarhus and one in Herning. Both campuses have common and recreational areas for students and staff, and we put a lot of effort into introducing our students to campus life. The school's increasing international student and staff population contributes to enhancing the dynamic and vibrant atmosphere on campus and in the two cities in general. On several occasions, the campus in Aarhus has been shortlisted as one of the most beautiful university campuses in the world.

The research-based degree programmes offered by the school include highly recognised programmes within disciplines such as economics, finance, accounting, logistics, human resource management, organisation, marketing, management information systems, innovation, entrepreneurship, business communication, law, psychology, public administration and political science.

Gathering all business and social science disciplines under the same strategic framework has created a dynamic and

visionary organisation, which is flexible and changes in line with the society's needs for qualified graduates with the right skillsets.



## KEY FACTS

### Aarhus BSS

- has a student body of more than 12,000 bachelor's and master's students
- employs more than 1,000 faculty and staff members
- is part of a top 100 university
- has strong ties to the private and public sector
- offers a truly international experience with 80+ nationalities on campus
- attracts many international top researchers and lecturers
- offers an exciting student life with inspiring professors and numerous student activities
- provides a wide range of career services to students applying for a student job or searching for an internship





# Principle 1 - Purpose

We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

As one of four faculties of Aarhus University, Aarhus BSS is part of a strong university with a strong international reputation for excellent research, outstanding research-based degree programmes and value-adding cooperation with both private businesses and public government agencies and institutions. The creation of new knowledge driven by curiosity rooted in deep academic competences, and the dissemination of this knowledge to students, partners and society, is the university's *raison d'être*.

In the current strategy of Aarhus University, the contribution to the development and welfare of the whole Danish society is sought to be increased. This goes further than contributing to economic growth; the university's role is also to develop critical, constructive dialogue and to place human existence within a larger context, as well as to contribute to sustainable development. In order to fulfil this role, the university's research, research-based education and consultancy must be conducted with high quality in an international perspective. In addition, this requires the

reorientation of the graduate profile so that it corresponds to a greater extent to the demands of society, now and in the future, as well as an increase in cooperation between the university's many disciplines and in the cooperation with both the private and the public sector. These efforts as a whole must support Aarhus University's vision of becoming an international elite university which takes responsibility for the development of society.

Having this strategy as the guiding principle of our school's operations, Aarhus BSS developed its own strategy in 2017, specifically focused on a mission to be a quality-driven school that contributes to society through delivering leading research in business and social science disciplines and graduates highly valued by national and international job markets, and a vision to contribute to the welfare of society by creating first-class research and education for the benefit of all our stakeholders.

Our overall contributions to society are therefore mainly

## 2018 Innovation Award

One of the recent examples of Principle 1 in practice was the 2018 Innovation Award contest, which was awarded to two students from Aarhus BSS' programme Technology Based Business Development for their project '**Smart recycling**'. The award included a cash prize of DKK 50,000 and was presented by the Minister for Higher Education and Science.

The winning project consisted of a sensor that measures the content of a waste container and issues an alert when the container is full. This allows for a more efficient waste management, as the containers will only be emptied when they are full. This idea appealed to the jury.

The two award winners have now established a company with the help of a start-up programme in the Centre for Business Development at Aarhus BSS. The centre focuses on digital business development and digital technologies and specialises in counselling and developing digital entrepreneurs. In the start-up programme, the two award winners and other like-minded people receive counselling on the development of digital business models, fundraising, joint research publications and conference participation. In this way, the digital concepts of the entrepreneurs are developed strategically and receive the attention and financial backing necessary to secure the company's success - in the short and long term.

Photo: Roar Lava Paaske, AU Foto



### Trans European Moot Court competition

In spring 2017, six students from the Department of Law won the The Nordic Judicial Competition on Human Rights in Stockholm.

The case competition is an annual trial for Nordic law students in the area of the European Convention organised by the Swedish NGO Civil Rights Defenders. Each year, 13 teams from universities in the five Nordic countries participate, and the competition is held in turn in the five Nordic capitals. Judges in the procedure competition are actual judges of the European Court of Human Rights and Supreme Court judges from the Nordic countries.

As the winners of the Nordic procedure competition, the team from Aarhus BSS was invited to represent the Nordic Region in the Trans-European Moot Court Competition, which took place at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg in November 2017.

The students competed against two teams from the Netherlands and Serbia, and won the Trans European competition as well. The actual competition took place as a procedure before the human rights court. The team of students from Aarhus BSS met another country's complainants and vice versa. The jury consisted of three human rights judges.

achieved through our education and research activities, and through the graduates we produce for future job markets in private and public sectors.

Embarking on a successful career upon graduation requires more than just knowledge of one's own core discipline. It requires cultural understanding, interpersonal skills and knowledge of legal, political, financial and societal issues on an international level. At Aarhus BSS, we bring business and social science disciplines together in a broad business school, placing business education in a broader perspective by letting it thrive and prosper alongside strong, core fields of psychology, political science and law. Housing all of these disciplines under our broad umbrella enables us to create the foundation for the welfare of society and provide students and faculty with ample opportunities to meet, work side by side, and initiate relevant interdisciplinary collaboration between e.g. business and politics, business and technology, business and law and business and psychology.

The school's new strategy for the period 2017-2020 has already resulted in a number of successful collaborations across the school's disciplines. These include the establishment of new research centres within public leadership and legal informatics in 2018, both further elaborated under principle 4, new guidelines for interdisciplinary study programmes, and very positive outcomes of two large international accreditations EQUIS and AMBA in 2017. Both accreditation bodies recognised the school's ambitions and efforts in bridging the gap between business and social science disciplines for a more robust and well-rounded education, preparing students for future job market requirements.

# Principle 2 - Values

We will incorporate into our academic activities, curricula, and organisational practices the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Academic freedom is a core value underlying the research and teaching activities at Aarhus BSS, and collaboration and dialogue are facilitated across academic, organisational and geographical boundaries.

By providing an outstanding research and teaching environment, we promote the overall academic objectives of the school where excellence is key, and we give our students a solid return on investment for choosing a degree from Aarhus BSS.

Students' academic learning and development of professional skills is intensified through close collaboration and dialogue between and among our school's faculty, students and stakeholders, and through continuous evaluations and development of the school's course and programme portfolio. By doing this, we can ensure that our students, from bachelor's to PhD level, enter the degree programmes with expectations and motivation to become active and successful students and, ultimately, attractive graduates.

In the current strategy of Aarhus BSS, specific attention is paid to ensuring the best possible conditions for further developing the talents of each individual student and challenging each of them to rise to their full potential during their time of study. Consequently, we provide our students with deeper knowledge and broader understanding of global challenges, and ensure that the academic and professional qualifications acquired during their time at Aarhus BSS meet the demands of national and international job markets.

The values of responsibility and ethical management behaviour are incorporated into the academic activities in various ways, as portrayed in the selected examples in this report.

## Smart Campus Herning prize

Digitalisation and technology is in the very DNA at the Department of Business Development and Technology at our campus in Herning, where we study and research new technologies and how they impact business and society.

The department has recently launched the Smart Campus Herning Prize – an opportunity for all students to influence Campus Herning's transition into a world-class campus that builds on smart technologies to provide an even better learning, education and research environment. The students are invited to think outside the box and come up with new and unexpected solutions by using their imagination, education and business sense. The winner will be announced in February 2019 and will receive a prize of DKK 20,000.

The submissions will be evaluated by a jury of dedicated people. The evaluation criteria are as follows:

### Excellence

- Is the idea novel, inspirational and/or disruptive?
- How does the idea build on the state of the art?

### Impact

- Does the idea have a significant economic and or societal impact?
- Who are the stakeholders and target group(s), and how will it impact them?

### Implementation

- Is the team interdisciplinary?
- Is the idea feasible in terms of technology?
- Are there privacy or safety issues?
- Are the gains exceeding the costs of implementation and maintenance?



### Applied Business Development

In the course Applied Business Development, students learn about real-life business development. They get an extensive toolbox which is needed when being faced with strategic questions from high potential companies in all sizes. Along the problem-solving process, students face all the challenges, barriers and problems that typically arise in both start-ups as well as large multinational corporations.

Cross-disciplinary teams of students are matched with management/board of promising companies in the Jutland area. The companies have different business challenges which are to be solved by the students with guidance. Each case team is appointed an experienced business development coach, who guides the students in the problem-solving process throughout the entire semester.

The applicants are talented master's students with strong results and a high drive. Groups of 3-4 students from different master's programmes are formed through a careful process of student selection and matching. The students can be enrolled after having completed the first year of their master's programme in Economics and Business Administration.

The course takes students through several relevant business development modules and related disciplines such as:

- Structured Problem Solving
- Market Research
- Project Management
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Strategy
- Business Models

### Developing and Emerging Economics

Students of the course Developing and Emerging Economies acquire knowledge and skills that are suitable for functions in an International Economic Consulting context, e.g. as employees in an international consulting firm, in a multinational company, in an international organisation or at the regional or national policy making level.

The course provides students with the basic knowledge and theories of economic growth and development in the third world. It also examines the way that key social institutions and economic policies of developing and emerging economies have affected their economic performance.

Furthermore, the course describes and evaluates the programmes and support from individual countries and international development agencies like the World Bank. The knowledge acquired during the course is important in evaluating investment projects in emerging and developing countries and provides students with skills useful in positions in local economic consulting firms and local or international organisations.

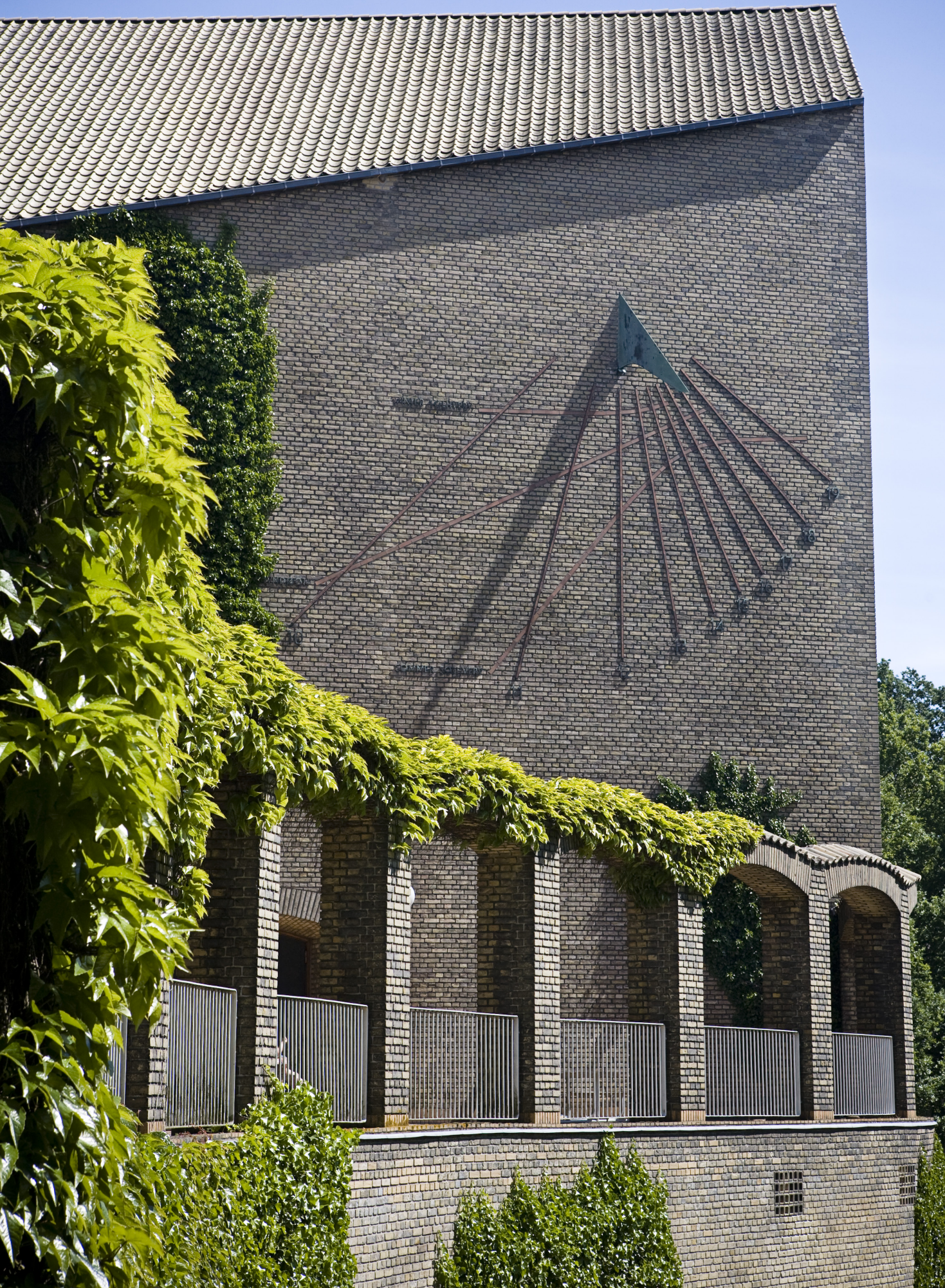
Main topics of the course include:

- Economic growth: Classical growth theory; new growth theory; evidence
- Trade and growth/ FDI and growth – i.e. globalisation and development
- Future population trends and the poverty problem
- Impact of natural resources and the environment on growth
- Rural and urban growth and unemployment
- Impact of good institutions on growth
- Public policy and growth
- Softer issues related to growth such as: Corruption and lobbyism, Culture/trust/social capital, Life satisfaction

### Sustainable Production and Consumption

The course Sustainable Production and Consumption shows the importance of sustainability for the future economy and future businesses. During the course, students acquire a general basic knowledge about the most relevant issues and challenges for converting current production and consumption into a more sustainable system and provides a set of examples of successful or inspiring cases, ideas and solutions in this area. The students learn how to explain important sustainability problems and issues and the trade-offs and conflicts involved, argue for different approaches to tackle these problems, and come up with new ideas based on their background knowledge.

The course introduces students to the definition and history of sustainability and to major sustainability issues on the macro-economic level, analyses the trend to ethical consumerism, highlights approaches for inducing sustainable consumption behaviour and sheds light on ideas for transforming production towards sustainability and opening up business opportunities in that direction. A special focus is given to the three major areas of food, housing and mobility.



# Principle 3 - Method

We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

Aarhus BSS' strategic goal for education in the period 2017-2020 is to improve the quality and relevance of our research-based education to ensure optimal employment opportunities for our graduates on national and international job markets.

Research-based teaching is the foundation of the degree programmes at Aarhus BSS. This means that research is integrated into the teaching with the aim of strengthening students' learning by presenting state-of-the-art research methods and turning new knowledge into hands-on solutions for real-life situations.

As a broad business school, we add value to society by creating knowledge within and across the school's core disciplines – from finance, business economics, accounting, marketing, management, corporate communication and business engineering, to psychology, law, political science

and public administration. Our broad scope enables us to attract researchers, lecturers and students from all over the world, who contribute to forming an international environment where academic and cultural views are exchanged, experiences gathered and friendships formed.

In a Danish business context, the school's broad scope provides the opportunity to better satisfy the demand for new combinations of research-based qualifications among the school's future graduates. For instance, there is no doubt that the field of human resources is becoming an even more important element in business management, which makes knowledge of human psychology a natural part of a person's management skills. The same argument is relevant for understanding future consumer behaviour and demand, and human psychology, thus, pervades the field of marketing.

## European Entrepreneurship Education Award

Entrepreneurship training is on the agenda at many of the school's business programmes. However, entrepreneurship is not just about teaching students how to establish their own company. It is about teaching them to take responsibility for their own life and adopt an active and critical stance towards the world.

Two faculty members' entrepreneurship teaching has recently earned them the European Entrepreneurship Education Award, which is considered the most prestigious, annual European recognition of individuals or organisations who have developed entrepreneurship education research in novel and inspiring directions. The award was presented by the Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship at Lund University and 'recognises an individual or organisation that has contributed to the improvement of entrepreneurship education in academia in Europe'.

The award was granted to the two faculty members from Aarhus BSS for delivering constructive criticism on traditional forms of teaching entrepreneurship and for suggesting novel approaches to identify current and future needs. This genuine interest has among other things manifested itself in the creation of the 3E Conference (ECSB's Entrepreneurship Education Conference). Together, the two faculty members have successfully co-created the 3E Conference into a leading arena for critical and stimulating discussions on entrepreneurship education, and have established a European community of entrepreneurship education scholars. In addition, their joint cooperation in conceptualising and organising the 3E Conference clearly illustrates the collective dimension of entrepreneurial work, which has lately been presented as an area that needs to be further explored.

The school is strongly dedicated to imparting to students exactly the knowledge, skills and experiences that are essential for building professional careers in a global market place. Students get the chance to put their academic knowledge into practice, think in innovative ways away from business as usual and gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex, global world.

All study programmes are therefore developed in close collaboration with our stakeholders from public and private organisations. Combined, this ensures a relevant programme portfolio in compliance with market needs both in Denmark and internationally.

### Campus development

Aarhus BSS is strongly dedicated to further investing in research infrastructure and student facilities at its two campuses in Aarhus and Herning.

The campus in Herning is already known for its strong entrepreneurial environment with Business Factory, which is a knowledge centre and a dynamic incubator environment under the Department of Business Development and Technology. The centre contributes to the promotion of innovation, entrepreneurship and independence in central and western Jutland. In the coming years, major

investment plans are also in place to improve the entire Aarhus campus.

### New University city

University's Board has recently approved plans for the expansion of the campus in Aarhus. In the years 2022-2024, 110,000 square metres of floor area will be added to the campus.

In combination with the existing university park, the new buildings will strengthen the profile of the entire Aarhus campus as an attractive and future-proof research and study environment. In addition to accommodating the university's core activities, the vision is to create a campus that incorporates halls of residence, shops and start-up businesses as well as being integrated with the surrounding urban neighborhoods. A campus which is integrated with the city and full of student life and activities at all hours.

In autumn 2016, Aarhus University launched a comprehensive, inclusive process – Campus 2.0– inviting students, staff, citizens, the municipal system, the business sector and the cultural community to come up with suggestions for the future use of the area.

Photo: Jørgen Weber luftfoto



Photo: Maria Randima AW Komunikasi



### Methodology

The degree programmes at the school distinguish themselves from other programmes both nationally and internationally (the only exception being law) by focusing on both qualitative and quantitative methodology and by integrating theory and practice. These two principles are pervasive aspects of all degree programmes in the school's portfolio and are pivotal to the student's critical analysis and reflection in connection with creating sustainable and applicable solutions to academic as well as real-world challenges. Thus, philosophy of science courses are compulsory on all Bachelor's degree programmes. On these courses, the students acquire a strong foundation for creating knowledge, which can form the basis for their work with problem solving. Furthermore, the students must be capable of assessing the quality of the information to which they will be presented in their professional lives. This presupposes that they are capable of assessing the philosophical basis and the methodological approach of enquiries.

The courses emphasise the role of science in contemporary society, including, among other things, the question concerning the research ethics of the social sciences.

### Educational IT

At Aarhus BSS, there is a very strong foundation for Educational IT since many of the school's lecturers have become familiar with some of the opportunities through various mandatory and elective courses throughout the years.

The main objective of the school's Educational It strategy is therefore to use it as a catalyst to maintain and further develop the quality of the research-based teaching conducted. This includes redesign of teaching or learning activities involving digital technology to address some of the challenges that the students or lecturers experience at the school's degree programmes.

The Educational IT action plan is aimed at supporting, among others:

- more activating and student-intensive teaching methods
- more diverse feedback forms
- increased flexibility in course attendance (which may be relevant in particular for continuing education)
- learning adapted to the student's diversity in relation to prerequisites and learning patterns (enhancing student learning).

## Principle 4 - Research

We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

Strong core disciplines and basic research of high quality are the foundation for creating interdisciplinary research that contributes to the development of solutions to the major challenges facing society.

The overarching general research objectives of Aarhus BSS are therefore to improve research quality and impact by increasing the number of cutting-edge research areas within the school and in interdisciplinary collaboration between the school's business and social science disciplines. With our broad scope of disciplines, Aarhus BSS has created the necessary conditions to enable even more researchers and research groups to work together across their areas of specialisation.

In order to do this, researchers must have the freedom and the working conditions necessary to concentrate on academic and societal challenges, both within their traditional core disciplines and through new interdisciplinary projects.

New ideas and concrete solutions also emerge when resear-

chers collaborate with private and public companies and institutions. This collaboration is therefore sought to be intensified in the current strategy period from 2017-2020,

Many of Aarhus BSS' activities in the course of a year include interaction with public and private organisations in order to put research into practice and practice back into research and education.

In recent years, faculty members from Aarhus BSS have obtained highly competitive research grants for several collaborative research projects on PRME relevant topics. A few examples of these are provided here.

### Crown Prince Frederik Centre for Public Leadership

In May 2018, DKK 60 million from a private foundation enabled the opening of a new interdisciplinary centre for public leadership at the Department of Political Science. The Crown Prince Frederik Centre for Public Leadership is an interdisciplinary research centre involving researchers from all six departments at Aarhus BSS and collaborates with Aarhus University's faculties Health and Arts.

The centre also collaborates with top researchers from leading Danish and international universities such as Harvard University where the Danish Crown Prince studied political science from 1992-1993.

The centre aims to ensure this by hosting an annual conference, continuously communicating its research results and collaborating closely with municipal, regional and government organisations as well as trade unions and organisations for leaders.



Photo: Lise Balsby



### Centre for Business Development

In 2017, a new Centre for Business Development (CBD) was established at the Department of Business Development and Technology. The centre conducts interdisciplinary and international research into the use of modern digital technologies for business development through case studies and evidence-based research. CBD researchers aim to design, implement and evaluate business development across companies. Together with the companies, the centre integrates the new digital technologies into their businesses, processes and ecosystems.

### EU Horizon 2020 programme

During autumn 2018, The Danish Centre for Studies in Research and Research Policy (CFA) at the Department of Political Science received funding for five projects from the EU Horizon 2020 research programme within the broad area of research and innovation policy. Four projects revolve around issues of responsibility and integrity in research. The fifth project is concerned with developing measures of intangible assets at the level of firms. Almost 50 European partner organisations can be counted across the five awarded projects, which have a total budget of € 13.5 million, just above DKK 100 million. CFA plays a large role as coordinator or partner in all projects and receives close to DKK 20 million.

### Big Data Centre for Environment and Health

A professor from the Department of Economics and Business Economics is part of the management team at the new Big Data Centre for Environment and Health established at the Faculty of Science and Technology. The centre has received DKK 60 million from the Novo Nordisk Foundation Challenge Programme. The overall objective of the centre is to achieve a better understanding of the relationship between the environment and health. The Big Data revolution of recent years in registers of medical, environmental and demographic conditions, as well as the possibility to collect data from personal sensors and social media, provide unique potential to understand the complex interactions between environmental pollutants and public health.

### **Semper Ardens grant for research into disruption and globalisation**

In 2018, The Carlsberg Foundation has granted DKK 15 million to a new Semper Ardens research project at Aarhus BSS. There is insufficient knowledge of how individuals, companies and society as a whole are affected by the constant movements and changes of the market economy that have taken place within the past 200 years. The new research centre FIND (Firms and INdustry Dynamics) at Aarhus BSS aims to address this issue. Backed by a six-year grant from the Carlsberg Foundation, the centre will conduct research into how the movements occur, how they interfere with each other and not least what the effect of the movements are.

The new centre will contribute to a much more balanced debate about the challenges and opportunities that Denmark and the rest of the world are facing with the so-called fourth industrial revolution.

### **Environmental Pollution, Health, and Productivity**

In early 2018, a researcher from the Department of Economics and Business Economics received a DKK 2.4 million research grant from Aarhus University Research Foundation for a project entitled "Environmental Pollution, Health, and Productivity". The grant will facilitate the implementation of a research group in empirical environmental economics with a focus on the effects of pollution. The research group will contribute with new insights into the impact of air pollution on contemporaneous adult health or immediate impacts on the productivity at the work place. Furthermore, the group will investigate the missing link between effects on infants and labour market performance by investigating cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes during childhood. Moreover, a goal of the research group will be to analyse the under-researched effects of noise pollution on the population.

### **Leading in green consumer research**

According to a systematic mapping of "green" consumer research from 1975 to 2014 published in Australasian Marketing Journal at the end of 2017, Aarhus University is a leading research institution in this area. The published paper analyses 677 journal articles with a green consumer focus that have appeared in 34 leading marketing, psychology and environmental journals in the given period. The most influential articles, authors, and institutions are identified using citation analysis. Among these is Professor John Thøgersen from the Department of Management, who is considered a globally leading researcher within green consumer research.

The full paper can be viewed in: Kumar, P., & Polonsky, M. J. (2017). An analysis of the green consumer domain within sustainability research: 1975 to 2014. Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ), 25(2), 85-96.







# Principle 5 - Partnership

We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Aarhus BSS collaborates with many different organisations on numerous research and education initiatives across the school's academic scope. This manifests itself through a wide range of public, corporate, institutional, governmental and professional contacts, spanning across industries and organisational levels.

Being a quality-driven broad business school requires that Aarhus BSS takes responsibility not only for offering up-to-date research-based programmes based on core academic disciplines, but also for offering opportunities for the students to develop on a personal level, which will ultimately benefit society. The Danish societal tradition of a high level of welfare, democracy and citizen involvement has an influence on the country's approach to business. Combined with the school's focus on understanding society at large, this approach draws on solutions that are not only focused on generating value in the sense of corporate profit but also on creating value to society more broadly defined.

Moreover, the school's strong core research environments that span across all business and social science disciplines are of great relevance to the business community. The school offers innovative approaches that emerge in the interaction between business development, internationalisation, entrepreneurship and regulation on the one hand and political decisions, psychological approaches to consumer and organisational behaviour, cultural understanding, sustainability, laws, demography, etc., on the other. All have an impact on a company's ability to perform and to develop strategies that will carry it successfully through an increasingly complex globalised economy.

Interaction with businesses and organisations takes place both through various research projects and collaborations but also by inviting speakers and guest lecturers from various industries and governmental institutions. Many students also write their Master's theses in collaboration with companies, investigating issues ranging from CSR, ethics, developing countries, sustainable business models,

etc. By offering more elements that bring the students into direct contact with businesses and public institutions, Aarhus BSS is helping to boost future job opportunities for its students.

## Strategic focusing of education portfolio

In 2016, the University Board approved plans to change the university's educational profile and develop its business collaboration through new focus areas. The change entails increased digitalisation (increased production of computer science, IT and data science graduates), bridge-building between the university and the business community, spin-outs, as well as innovation and research collaboration with businesses. This work was initiated in the autumn of 2016 and will continue in the coming years.

## Career Ready

Another initiative launched by the university is the Career Ready initiative, the purpose of which is to stimulate and

Our goal is to improve the quality of services to public and private organisations and become a preferred provider of skilled graduates to relevant industries.

Aarhus BSS Strategy Strategy 2017-2020

### Business collaboration

In spring 2018, the Danish Industry Foundation invested almost DKK 12 million in two research projects at Aarhus BSS, both of which will be supporting businesses with strategic action in a digital growth market.

A faculty member from the Department of Management is heading one project, "**Smart Home**", which aims to develop and test a strategy and development process for companies wanting to develop new digital business models in the Smart Home industry.

The second project is spearheaded by The Centre for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises. The project titled "**The SME board as a digital catalyst**", is focusing on upskilling board members so that they can make strategic decisions with regard to digital technology.

Both projects are good examples of the faculty's overall efforts to reinforce research and education-related activities with regard to digitalisation. There is a major need for society to know more about how companies can best connect new digital technologies to businesses. We have a strong field of research at our departments, and I perceive major potential for more research partnerships between the university and business and industry.

strengthen the links between the degree programmes and the future professional lives of the university's graduates.

As part of the initiative, Aarhus BSS launched a new add-on course, Career Management Skills (CMS), on the Master's degree programme in Economics and Business Administration from autumn 2017. Through the CMS course, the students acquire a number of tools that they can use to reflect on their experiences in a company and relate them to their own competences and career aspirations from a theoretical as well as personal perspective. This adds an extra dimension to the internships and makes them more targeted and career-oriented.

The aim is to help the students' careers off to a good start while they are still studying, but also to create a better interaction between the students' theoretical knowledge and the internships.

In 2017, 67 students attended the course. From the autumn semester 2018, the course became an integrated and compulsory part of all internships on the Master's degree programme in Economics and Business Administration.

### International recruitment

Towards the end of 2016, Aarhus University entered into an agreement with Business Region Aarhus, a political partnership between twelve municipalities in East Jutland.

Photo: Jesper Rais/AU Kommunikation



In June 2017, the first Aarhus BSS Business Conference was held with the topic **'Management in the new world.'** The programme included presentations from researchers from Aarhus BSS, Duke University as well as corporate leaders and business representatives. The emphasis was on the interdisciplinary nature of the school as well as the interplay between theory and practice.



Photo: Jesper Rais, AU Foto

Under the agreement, Aarhus BSS commits to conducting follow-up research into growth and development in East Jutland, while the member municipalities of Business Region Aarhus contribute to creating job opportunities for accompanying spouses of employees at Aarhus BSS and the rest of Aarhus University. This is expected to strengthen the university's ability to recruit international researchers and lecturers at a high level. The agreement is planned to be extended to include businesses as well, as they too are faced with increasing recruitment challenges.

#### **Further expansion of business collaboration**

Aarhus BSS' commitment to engage with the school's external relations is also manifested in the university's and the school's joint DKK 110 million investment in strengthening the school's business disciplines. Of these funds, DKK 20 million are earmarked for strengthening the school's external relations, especially its relations to the business

community in the period from 2017-2021.

The funds will be used for organising activities and events targeted at the local business community and the school's alumni. For instance, in spring 2017, funds have been used for launching the first Aarhus BSS Business Conference, recruiting an additional employee focused on event management and fundraising and appointing an Associate Dean for Corporate Relations.

#### **Aarhus BSS Business Conference**

In summer 2017, 300 alumni, partners and employees took part in the very first Aarhus BSS Business Conference. The topic was **"Management in the new world"**, and the programme included presentations from researchers across Aarhus BSS as well as corporate leaders. The conference emphasised the interdisciplinary nature of the school as well as the interplay between theory and practice.

Many of the Aarhus BSS's academic disciplines were in play and the 300 participants could choose between eight different sections with presentations from researchers across Aarhus BSS as well as a number of corporate leaders. This gave the participants an insight into not only the latest management research across the school, but also into management from a more practical perspective.

In 2018, the topic of the conference is **"Back to Business - Ignite Your Global Potential"**, dealing with subjects such as how to successfully run a business today, and what companies should do to ensure growth and innovation. The conference offers a mixture of research, practical cases and inspiration that companies can apply to their own reality.

Some of the key takeaways from the main sessions are:

1. Understanding the UN Sustainable Development Goals as an opportunity
2. Understanding the UN Sustainable Development goals as a framework for communication, partnering and market analysis
3. Understanding how best practice cases use to UN Sus-

tainable Development Goals to do well and good

The participants will get practical guidance on how to make sustainability their business, how to engage with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the business benefits of doing so.

#### Aarhus BSS Career & Alumni

Each year, Aarhus BSS Career & Alumni collaborates with more than 40 partner companies and organisations. The main objective of these partnerships is to bridge the gap between students and the employers and to provide our partners with a platform for recruitment and employer branding at Aarhus BSS. The partnerships enable Aarhus BSS to establish close relationships with key employers nationally and internationally.



Photo: Lars Kluge, AU-Foto

## Principle 6 - Dialogue

We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

As part of Aarhus University, Aarhus BSS defends the research freedom of individuals and desires to maintain and develop a culture which promotes collaboration, critical dialogue, curiosity and the independent search for new knowledge and insight.

Aarhus BSS is continuously focusing on further strengthening its relations through its continuing education offers, alumni and career services, public consultancy and research, as it acknowledges the importance of knowledge sharing and close dialogue with the surrounding world. Knowledge sharing and exchange build on the school's strong research strengths and interdisciplinary research undertakings, and thus contribute to finding solutions to the challenges faced by society on local, regional and global levels.

Faculty members at the school are actively involved in dialogue with government agencies, the business community and other stakeholders as the school understands that these relationships are fundamental to the development of its operations for the benefit of the business community and society as a whole.

Continuous dialogue with external stakeholders ensures that the school's degree programmes, research projects and services rendered to society remain relevant, adaptable to change and can develop in tandem with society's needs and expectations.

The connections take myriad forms, but the activities generally include faculty research partnerships, consulting services, conferences on current topics and memberships in professional associations and on boards - both nationally and internationally.

### CTIF Global Capsule workshop

In spring 2017, a workshop on the technologies of the future was hosted by The Department of Business Development and Technology at the school's campus in Herning. The workshop was aimed at companies in the surrounding area and was held on behalf of CTIF Global Capsule (CGC). The five conference sessions covered various interdisciplinary topics in the fields of business, technology, medicine and social science. The programme contained contributions from a series of international participants, and the topics had a broad societal scope.

The programme also included the signing of a "memorandum of understanding" (MoU) between Aarhus University and an Indian delegation in order to establish a future collaboration within a number of agreed fields:

- The education of PhD's, MSc and Bachelor's students
- Existing PhD programmes offered at Aarhus University's graduate schools
- Faculty exchange programme, study trips to and from the Vishwaniketan faculty in India, exchange students etc.
- Efforts to attract external funding of joint activities such as research projects, network activities, scholarships, courses and faculty exchange programme
- A number of Indian researchers will be registered at the Aarhus University graduate schools
- Researchers from Aarhus University will be financed by companies in India



Photo: Lars Kruse, Aalborg University

### Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network (ITN) research grant

In 2017, two researchers from the Department of Management received a DKK 4.3 million grant from the Horizon 2020 EU programme. Participating countries include France, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway, and the network will include affiliated, academic partner organisations such as the Food and Brand Lab at Cornell University, USA, and the Sensory and Consumer Science group at the Universidad de la Republica, Uruguay. The programme is coordinated by Nofima AS in Norway.

The Danish part of the grant will be used to recruit and train two PhD students who will be working in a European multi-disciplinary and inter-sectorial project entitled 'Bringing down barriers to children's healthy eating'. In this project and through the international network, the aim is to train a new generation of innovative and adaptable researchers, with highly specialised skills across complementary fields studying children's food choice.

The programme includes training within natural and social sciences and secondments in academic and non-academic organisations. Non-academic organisations will also contribute to the training programme and in Denmark, Arla Foods' Strategic Innovation Center and Kidvertising (market research agency) will host PhD students for internships through the project period.

### Better data on companies, social policy and voter behaviour

Aarhus BSS will play a leading role in a new national project which aims to improve Danish research infrastructure. In December 2017, the project has been awarded DKK 36 million by the The Ministry of Higher Education and Science and aims to help researchers and other stakeholders understand a wide range societal issues - from the impact of social policy to the relationship between socio-economic factors and voter behaviour. Copenhagen Business School is heading the Danish Research Data for the Sociale Sciences (DRDS) project, but the project take place in collaboration with a wide range of Danish research institutions, including Aarhus BSS. The DRDS project is a truly national collaboration, which comprises all social science and business-oriented organisations in Denmark. This will facilitate useful interdisciplinary research collaborations.

