

6th International CSR Communication Conference (CSRCOM)
September 13-16, 2022 @Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Germany

**CSR Communication: New Challenges in the
Age of Digitalization and Disinformation**

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

General Theme

“We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic”, the UN’s secretary general Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus remarked in 2020 in response to the then emerging COVID-19 pandemic. The statement suggests that the communicative landscape in which contemporary firms operate has changed significantly over the past decade – and with this also the conditions under which firms and their constituents can engage in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication. On the one hand, the rise of digital media, and especially social media such as Facebook or Twitter, have considerably expanded the range of possibilities for firms to engage in interactions and dialogue with their stakeholders (e.g., Glozer et al., 2019; Maltseva et al., 2019). On the other hand, digital media have also created problems of increasing loads of disinformation (Bennett & Livingston, 2020) and “fake news” (Tsoukas & Knight, 2019) that are shared on their platforms and that make it difficult for actors to differentiate between trustworthy and “real” news sources and dubious and deceptive ones. Some observers even go as far as to say we have entered the age of a “post-truth society” where traditional values of a fact-based information provision are eroding and doubt, even regarding scientific knowledge is spreading (Meyer & Quattrone, 2021).

While the field of CSR communication in research and practice is traditionally concerned with how actors in and around organizations then negotiate meanings about these activities, both in interactions with external stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, the media) and/or with internal stakeholders (e.g., employees) (Schoeneborn, Morsing & Crane, 2020; Schoeneborn & Trittin, 2013), the age

of digitalization and disinformation creates substantially new challenges for CSR communication (Glozer, Caruana & Hibbert, 2019; Verk, Golob & Podnar, 2021). How to legitimize a firm’s business activities with CSR communication that draws strongly on fact-based information (as recommended, e.g., by Morsing et al., 2008), if we live in a society where some actors do not care much about facts or easily dilute these them with “alternative facts” of dubious origin? How to handle stakeholder dialogue via digital media in an increasingly heated and polarized public discourse? And how to prevent that more and more firms tend to go for the option of “greenhushing” (Font et al., 2017) or “strategic silence” (Carlos & Lewis, 2018), that is, to abstain from CSR communication whatsoever out of precaution to become harmed reputation-wise in the public discourse.

At the CSRCOM 2022 Conference at Leuphana University of Lüneburg (Germany), we aim to shed light on the challenges of CSR communication that arise in an age of digitization and disinformation. At the same time, and given the conference’s position as one of the main hubs for CSR/sustainability communication scholarship, CSRCOM 2022 invites for submissions from a much broader spectrum of topics and issues (see non-exhaustive list below):

- Strategic CSR/sustainability communication
- CSR communication and its performativity
- CSR and sustainability reporting
- Stakeholder management and dialogue
- Different aspects of ‘CSR washing’ (incl. greenwashing & -hushing)
- Consumer, marketing and branding aspects of CSR

- CSR in digital contexts (e.g., social media, gamification)
- Relation between internal and external CSR communication
- CSR as corporate micropolitics and internal activism
- Gender, diversity, and CSR communication
- Entrepreneurship and CSR communication
- SME perspectives on CSR communication
- Social movements, cultural change, and CSR communication

About the CSR Communication Conference

Since its inception in 2011, the CSR Communication Conference has established itself as a venue for inspiring discussions on a wide variety of communication-related topics in the field of CSR. The general theme of the 6th CSR Communication Conference at Leuphana University of Lüneburg (Germany) is intended to serve as starting point for conversations at the conference (and will be addressed most prominently in keynote talks, etc.). At the same time, and in line with the previous conferences held in Amsterdam (2011), Aarhus (2013), Ljubljana (2015), Vienna (2017) and Stockholm (2019), we are inviting submissions from a much larger spectrum of topics and issues in the area of CSR/sustainability communication (see details in the submission details below). Researchers and practitioners from all over the world will present, review and discuss their work, which makes the conference not only a driver for scientific development but also a hub for inspiration and network building for established and emerging scholars alike.

CSRCOM 2022: Conference Hosts and Organizing Committee

Hannah Trittin-Ulbrich,
Leuphana University of Lüneburg

Dennis Schoeneborn,
Copenhagen Business School &
Leuphana University of Lüneburg

Matthias Wenzel,
Leuphana University of Lüneburg

Sigrid Bekmeier-Feuerhahn,
Leuphana University of Lüneburg

Urša Golob,
University of Ljubljana

Klement Podnar,
University of Ljubljana

Anne Ellerup Nielsen,
Aarhus University

Wim Elving, Hanze University of
Applied Sciences

Christa Thomsen,
Aarhus University

PhD Seminar

Doctoral students are invited to submit an abstract of their research project/idea for consideration in the pre-conference PhD seminar of the 6th CSR Communication Conference. The seminar will be dedicated to corporate and CSR communication themes, theories, and methodologies; PhD students will present their work and experts from the field will give inputs and research advice not only on the students' work but also discuss further main issues of the conference and thus broadening their horizon.

The seminar takes place at Leuphana University on Sept. 13-14, 2022. More specific information for the seminar will be available on the conference website and via social media.

Submission Details

This Call for Papers encourages scholars to submit either a structured research summary (up to 2,500 words plus references) or a proposal for a special session (see requirements below) for review by **March 15, 2022**, via the [conference website](#).

Structured research summary

A structured research summary (up to 2,500 words without references) should present in a concise way the purpose of the paper, main theoretical framework/assumptions and if applicable research methods and final or preliminary results. Submitted papers must NOT have been previously presented, scheduled for presentation, published, accepted for publication, and if under review, must NOT appear in print before the conference.

Submitters must delete all identifying information before submitting their summary and provide the author details on a separate page.

Special session (panel or roundtable)

The objective of special sessions is to acquaint educators and researchers with new perspectives, theories, and provocative ideas. In submitting special session proposals, the organizer and listed participants request that, if accepted, they all register and appear at the conference. Session proposals should include a short description of the session theme and its relevance (200 - 400 words), list of session participants and short abstracts (200-300 words) of their contributions.

PhD workshop submissions

Emerging scholars may submit an abstract of their research project via the conference webpage. The abstract (of up to 1,000 words plus references) should present in a concise way the

purpose or aim of the project, main theoretical framework/assumptions and, if applicable, research methods and final or preliminary results.

Please note that all submissions for the conference must conform to the format as indicated on the CSRCOM webpage (see a template [here](#)). In case the format of a submitted paper does not correspond with the CSRCOM 2022 format instructions, submitters receive a notification of format insufficiency and may be asked to send a renewed version of their paper that fulfils the conference criteria.

Authors will be notified of acceptance, rejection or suggested modifications as soon as the review processes have been completed (within April, 2022, prospectively). Acceptance of a submission means that the author (or one of the authors) will be expected to present the paper at the conference.

Please submit [here](#) your submission!

Conference Website





For more information please contact info@csr-com.org
or visit our website: www.csr-com.org

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