

Preface

The International Conference on Business Excellence is jointly organized by the UNESCO Department for Business Administration within the Faculty of Business Administration in Foreign Languages and the Society for Business Excellence.

The 12th edition of the conference offered various authors the opportunity to contribute and publish their research findings and perspectives related to innovation in a turbulent business environment. Moreover, it targeted a set of improvements and changes in the economic, societal and technological structures and processes complementing the efforts of reaching the sustainability goals.

The conference hosted over 200 researchers, professors, managers, practitioners and Ph.D. candidates, while the minitracks of the conference addressed topics such as:

- Complexity in a turbulent economic environment
- Challenges and strategies in business education
- Energy, climate change and sustainability
- Social entrepreneurship for local change
- Business internationalization and sustainability
- Sustainability in the tertiary sector
- Innovation and the knowledge economy
- Business digitization
- Driving marketing performance through innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial focus
- Business finances in a globalized world
- Data science in a digital society
- Strategic Integrated Reporting for Sustainable Businesses

Yearly, the conference has a dedicated theme meant to depict the strong connection to the present economy, research and practice trends. This year's theme was *Innovation and Sustainability in a Turbulent Economic Environment*. Economic changes, political uncertainties, new business models and technological advances are creating a turbulent business context. The secret tool for companies and any organizations to remain competitive is to successfully innovate and manage turbulences by shifting from a *traditional* towards a *creative-design decision-making* attitude.

The plenary session focused on four relevant key note presentations delivered by special guest speakers coming from different countries in the world: Prof. dr. Claude Chailan, EM Strasbourg University, France; Prof. dr. Juan Manuel Rodriguez-Poo, Universidad de Cantabria, Spain; Prof. dr. Eric Tsui, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong; Prof. Sheb True, Kenesaw University, United States. Their participation, alongside with the distinguished contribution of the authors are a clear reflection of the internationalization strategy of our university.

The conference sessions included more than 120 papers, out of which 43 authors with foreign affiliation from 14 different countries. The minitrack chairs of the 12 sessions are prestigious professors from The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, but also from partner universities from Romania: University of Bucharest, Sapienza University from Italy, Humboldt University from Germany etc.

The collaboration with De Gruyter International Publishing House ensured the conference proceedings indexation in various databases, including Web of Science (Clarivate).

A subordinate objective of the conference was to forge collaboration with prestigious scientific journals. The partnership with the *Management & Marketing. Challenges for the Knowledge Society Journal* (pertaining to Society for Business Excellence), indexed in Web of Science (Clarivate) and Scopus, provided support for further publication.

A brand new partnership has been initiated with the *Sustainability Journal*, indexed in Web of Science (Clarivate), Impact Factor 1.78, leading to the authors' option – pending on supplementary double-blind peer review – of publishing within a dedicated Special Issue, with papers selected from the 12th edition of the International Conference on Business Excellence (ICBE), March 22-23, 2018, Bucharest, Romania.

The conference awards, Business Excellence Awards, The Best Paper Award and Management & Marketing Awards, offered at the final ceremony, undeniably represent the scientific merits and performance recognition of the awardees.

The 12th edition of the International Conference on Business Excellence reflects commitment to excellence, performance and passion for innovation and creativity in the context of augmenting business excellence.

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