



**BUSINESS AND HUMAN
RIGHTS CATALYST**

Alliance Manchester
Business School



NYU | STERN

Center for Business
and Human Rights



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

GENEVA SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
AND MANAGEMENT

Statement on Incorporating Human Rights in Business Schools

In today's globalized economy, the role of business in protecting human rights is a subject of growing importance. Whether addressing labor practices in global manufacturing or agricultural supply chains, security in mining operations, principles of non-discrimination and equal pay for equal work, or issues of privacy and political disinformation online, businesses face a range of daunting human rights challenges.

Business schools have an important role to play in helping companies respond to these challenges, whether by teaching future business leaders, conducting research on cutting-edge issues, or engaging directly with corporate leaders. Through research and teaching, business schools can work with businesses in different industries to understand these complex challenges and develop effective human rights standards and metrics, as well as the organizational insights to make these standards work. They can highlight human rights as a key aspect of corporate decision-making and provide guidance on how to address operational and reputational risks and develop new business models. They can help identify both the material risk to human rights from corporate activity, as well as the business case for developing a strategic response to human rights.

The field of business and human rights is beginning to take shape as an important element of teaching and research at leading business schools. As part of the effort to accelerate the evolution of this field, on November 30, 2017, representatives of more than 20 business schools met in Geneva, Switzerland, to discuss current efforts to promote human rights in business schools and explore future opportunities. The meeting was co-organized by the NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights, the Alliance Manchester Business School, and the Geneva School of Economics and Management at the University of Geneva, which hosted the gathering. Attending the meeting were representatives of the London School of Economics, Copenhagen Business School, EDHEC Business School in France, ESADE Business School in Spain, Amsterdam Business School at the University of Amsterdam, the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, George Washington University Business School, UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, Ross School of Business at Michigan University, University of Connecticut, University of Oxford Saïd Business School, University of St. Andrews, University of Glasgow, University of Linz, the University of St. Gallen, University of Zurich, HEC Lausanne, the American University in Cairo, and the business school accreditation agency AACSB. Representatives from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed support for the initiative to promote the field of business and human rights at business schools. Representatives of UNICEF, Pennsylvania State University, the University of New South Wales, and the business school accreditation agency EFMD are observers of the initiative. Others from Nottingham University, University of Birmingham, University of Edinburgh, University of Pisa, Santa Clara University, Harvard University, and the Indian Institute of Management at Bangalore have expressed interest in the initiative.

Follow-up meetings will be hosted by the Alliance Manchester Business School in 2018 and the NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights in 2019. Representatives from other business schools interested in participating in this collaborative effort, should contact Dorothee Baumann-Pauly at dbaumann@stern.nyu.edu.