

**Activity summary of CIAS research fellow in Budapest**

Grant category:  junior  senior  non-resident senior



**Name:** Ove Daniel Jakobsen

**Home institute** (name, position, country):  
Nord University, Professor, Norway

**Academic Year / Semester:**

Spring 2023

**Duration:**

6 mnd

**Project title:**

Developing Locally-based Collaborative Networks for Achieving Sustainability

**Project description\*:**

Many of the problems of our time are due to the way economic and social actors think, feel and act. The attitudes and values promoted by the neoliberal economy have allowed actors to carry out exploitative, destructive, and wasteful activities that ignore and deny the intrinsic value of nature. Problems related to the environment, climate crisis, economic injustice, and social inequality are interconnected and reinforce each other. At the same time our knowledge has become more and more specialized, and no a single discipline can capture the complexity of the problems of the Anthropocene and provide solutions to them (Skirbekk 2019).

In this article we question mainstream business models that focusing on the profit-maximization, growth and return on investment that negatively influences sustainability and resilience of ecosystems, social systems, and economic systems. To develop sustainable local societies, we discuss

alternative business models based on a holistic viewpoint where the different perspectives complete, correct, and balance each other.

Holistic business model can be described as an interconnected set of actors that is coherently organized in a way that achieves some common goals for a local society. In other words, a description of; actors (stakeholders such as; businesses, NGOs, art/culture, nature, authorities); interconnections (collaborative dialogue based networks), and function or purpose (the common good). In our view the sustainable economy should give priority to activities that are in harmony with the overarching goal of maximizing the well-being of human beings, non-human beings, and the whole ecosystem. In this perspective the basic purpose of the economy is to serve the life processes of social and ecological systems. We find a similar understanding in the Norwegian White paper (NOU 2020:15): “The goal of development is the good society, not growth for its own sake”.

We propose that to develop *locally-based collaborative networks for achieving sustainability* we have to *redefine quality of life* (based on the holistic wellbeing model) and *capitalize* on the *uniqueness of the place*. To synthesize values in different local communities the local economic and social actors can participate in a Socratic dialogue where values are extracted from personal stories based on the authentic experience.

The article is structured as follows. Part 1 shows the impossibility of achieving sustainability in today’s globalized economic system. Part 2 analyses the pitfalls of mainstream business models. Part 3 argues for the sustainability-oriented locally-based collaborative networks. Part 4 connects new business and social models with the local quality of life. Part 5 gives case studies from Norway and Hungary. Finally, Part 6 discusses future directions in research and action.

**Achieved result(s)\*:**

To finalize the article I am waiting for some empirical data from a Norwegian municipality (Beiarn). The article will be submitted to the journal: *Business Ethics, the Environment and Responsibility*.

**Connected publications\***

1.

**Title:**

Ecological Business Models enlightened by The Systems View of Life

**Date of submission/acceptance/publication:**

Accepted for publication in Laszlo Zsolnai’s Palgrave book on Sustainable Value Creation.

**Journal category** (if applicable):  Q1  Q2  Q3

**Status:**  accepted/published  in progress  planned

**Professional collaborations, partnerships\***

1.

Name: Professor Laszlo Zsolnai,

Institution: Corvinus University of Budapest/Business Ethics Center

Field of research: Business Ethics, Sustainability, Spirituality and Business

Future plans for joined research: We have cooperated on research and teaching for more than 20 year and the cooperation will continue into the future.

2.

Name: Assistant Professor Andras Ocsai

Institution: Corvinus University of Budapest/Business Ethics Center

Field of research: Business Ethics, Ecological Economics, Sustainability, Spirituality and Business

Future plans for joined research: We are working on projects focusing on business models in an ecological economic context. In addition, teaching on each other's courses at Nord University and Corvinus University

3.

Name: Assistant Professor Gábor Covács

Institution: Corvinus University of Budapest/Business Ethics Center

Field of research: Buddhist economics, Spirituality in Business.

Future plans for joined research: Gabor will contribute in my forthcoming book "Spirituality and Ecological Economics.

I gave lectures on two different courses at Corvinus university in March 2023

1. Business Ethics compulsory for MBAs (Course manager, András Ócsai)
2. Sustainable Value Creation elective for BA/MA/MBA students. (Course manager András Ócsai)

**Future plans, planned return (if any):**

- I plan to return to Hungary later
- I plan to maintain my professional contacts via e-mail
- Any other comment: It is very inspiring to cooperate on research and teaching with my fantastic colleagues at CIAS/Business Ethics Center at Corvinus University.

\*Please give us a properly detailed summary.

Date: 04.07.2023.

Signature: *Ove Jakobsen*