British Academy Future of the Corporation Research Conference
"Social Purpose and Culture of Corporations"

When: 14 May 2018, 9am-5pm
Where: Music Room, British Academy, 10-11 Carlton House Terrace, St. James's, London SW1Y 5AH

This interdisciplinary conference brings together leading academics working on issues related to the future of the social purpose and culture of corporations. We will address:

- Conceptions of culture and purpose and how they relate to one another
- Normative foundations of corporate culture and purpose
- Methods and tools for measuring culture and purpose
- Ways of shaping culture and purpose
- The relation between social purpose and corporate governance

The social purpose of an organisation is what makes the existence of the organisation desirable from the perspective of society. Social purpose concerns the corporation's relationship with different stakeholders, including employees, customers, shareholders, and society. To develop a social purpose, corporations must articulate standards, monitor the benefits and harms the organisation causes to stakeholder groups, and develop systems and processes to improve its impact on stakeholders. The topic of social purposes raises both profound philosophical and political questions, but also practical challenges on the level of the individual organisation.

Corporate culture, as commonly defined, refers to the shared beliefs and practices of members of a corporation that affect how they deliberate and act. An ethical culture or climate works as a backstop to bad behaviour. Culture affects behaviour to a large extent by way of habituation and situational factors. Organisations can shape the behaviour of members by managing their culture through providing an 'ethical infrastructure' for dealing with ethically challenging situations.

This conference brings together recent perspectives on social purpose and the culture of corporations and aims to explore the connections between the two themes. Does corporate purpose need to be articulated and embedded in a corporation's culture to create the desired private and social objectives? Does a good corporate culture help a corporation to achieve its social purpose? Does pursuing a particular purpose require a specific culture? How should the relationship between the two be shaped in the changing socio-economic environment of today's corporations?

Programme

8.30-9.15	Arrival and Breakfast
9.15-9.30	Welcome and introduction
9.30-10.40	Conceptions and normative foundations of culture and purpose
	Onora O'Neill (University of Cambridge): "Purposes, standards, and cultures" **Tom Sorell** (University of Warwick): "Businesses without borders?"
10.40-11.20	Morning break
11.20-12.30	Corporate social purpose, corporate governance, and social and political context
	Avner Offer (University of Oxford): "The corporate social franchise and ethical purpose" **Henning Meyer** (Judge Business School): "Creating shared value beyond the firm"
12.30-13.30	Lunch
13.30-14.40	Methods and tools measuring culture and purpose
	Muel Kaptein (Rotterdam School of Management): "Corporate Ethical Culture: Model and measurement instruments" **Alex Edmans** (London Business School): "Purposeful Business: The Evidence and the Implementation"
14.40-15.20	Afternoon break
15.20-17.00	**Rupert Younger** (Said Business School): "Authenticity, Expectations & Reputation" **John Davidson** (President Options Clearing Corporation): "Report from the Field: Role Conflict and the Transformation of Corporate Culture" **Margaret Heffernan** (CEO and author): "Legitimacy and Licence"
	Reception

Registration: Places are strictly limited. Please let us know asap if you are able to attend by sending an Email to Galina Vinitchouk (galina@principia-advisory.com).

The conference and the Future of the Corporation program of the British Academy

The "Future of the Corporation" program has been initiated by the British Academy, as one of their flagship programs for the coming years. The program addresses a broad range of issues from corporate governance to the impact of new technologies (more information on the program, see here). This event is associated with two work streams, led by Prof. Nien-hê Hsieh (Harvard Business School) and David Rodin (University of Oxford and European University Institute), which focus on the influence of social purpose and organisational culture on corporations' decision-making and behaviour. We are particularly interested in finding out how corporations align their purpose with their organisational culture.