

Call for Book Chapters

Handbook of Sustainable Business Model Innovation

Co-editors Maria Holgado (University of Sussex, UK) and Keivan Aghasi (University of Sheffield, UK) invite scholars from around the world to contribute chapters to a Handbook of Sustainable Business Model Innovation, which will be published in the Edward Elgar [Business and Management Handbooks](#) series.

Several converging factors underscore the timeliness of this handbook. The escalating climate crisis, increasing resource depletion rates, and widening social disparities demand urgent and systemic responses from the business community. Besides, there is a growing concern that incremental improvements to existing business models are insufficient to address or tackle these challenges. A more fundamental transformation of how businesses create, deliver, and capture value is required, making sustainable business model innovation (SBMI) a critical area of inquiry.

We invite chapter proposals for a comprehensive handbook on SBMI. This handbook aims to provide an ideal resource for academics, researchers, and graduate students seeking to understand, analyse, and contribute to the evolving field of SBMI. Empirical and conceptual chapters are welcome. We encourage conceptual chapters to have illustrative real-life examples or refer to cases to showcase points and arguments.

The handbook will explore the theoretical foundations, conceptual approaches and frameworks, empirical findings, and future directions of SBMI. It will offer a rigorous and critical examination of how businesses can transform their business models to address pressing environmental, social, and economic challenges.

Potential Themes and Topics

We welcome chapter proposals that address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

Theoretical Underpinnings of SBMI: The literature leverages a diverse set of theories to explore the evolving concept of SBMI. Chapters should highlight the relationship between the theories and the evolution of the SBMI, tracing its development and key milestones within the broader theoretical contexts. Some examples of these theories are: *stakeholder theory*, which emphasizes the role of various stakeholders in shaping sustainable business models; *transaction cost economics*, which can help explain the governance structures of sustainable value chains; *network theory*, which is useful for analysing collaborative business models; *systems thinking*, which provides a holistic perspective on the interconnectedness of social, environmental, and economic systems; *institutional theory*, which examines the influence of social norms and regulations on business behaviour; *paradox theory*, which helps in understanding the inherent tensions in sustainable business models; the *natural resource-based view*, which highlights the strategic importance of environmental resources; and *practice theory*, which focuses on the everyday activities and routines that shape sustainable practices.

Conceptual Approaches and Typologies of SBMI: The literature has witnessed the development of frameworks encompassing various conceptual approaches and typologies in SBMI research. These frameworks provide lenses through which to analyse, design, and classify SBMI, facilitating both theoretical development and practical application. Chapters in this area could explore frameworks related to conceptual approaches such as *circularity*, which emphasizes closed-loop systems and resource efficiency; *regenerative business*, which aims to restore and enhance natural ecosystems; *resilience*, which focuses on the ability of business models to withstand and adapt to shocks; *responsible innovation*, which integrates ethical and sustainability considerations into the innovation process; *inclusive growth*, which aims at a fair distribution across society and providing opportunities for everyone; and *business ecosystems*, which examines the collaborative networks that underpin sustainable value creation.

SBMI in Practice: Literature has reported an array of challenges, barriers, and enablers of SBMI. We welcome chapter proposals looking at the range of SBMI adoption and implementation achievements, issues, concerns, and potentials. Some key topics warrant specific attention, including: the role of experimentation, such as lean start-up methodologies, in facilitating the development of sustainable business models; the mechanisms through which these models can be effectively scaled up to achieve broader impact; the importance of collaborations and boundary-spanning activities in fostering innovation and knowledge sharing; how corporate governance innovations can drive the integration of sustainability into business strategy and business models; the potential of digital technologies and cleantech to enable new sustainable business models; the adoption of servitization and collaborative consumption models; the principles of responsible innovation, social, and environmental innovation, and frugal innovation; how to effectively assess impact of sustainable business models; the role and contributions of specific stakeholder type/s in developing sustainable business models; and the role of financing for SBMI, such as microfinance and crowdfunding, and leadership in driving sustainability.

SBMI in Context: SBMI manifests differently across various contexts, necessitating meticulous attention and understanding of the factors at play. We welcome chapter proposals that explore how SBMI is shaped by the unique characteristics of different actors and regions, including start-ups, SMEs, and MNEs. Furthermore, examining the specific challenges and opportunities for SBMI in the Global South is yet another avenue of submission to bring issues such as resource constraints, institutional voids, and unique developmental priorities into the fore.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of SBMI, this handbook embraces a wide range of methodological approaches. We encourage submission of empirical chapters that employ established research designs, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. We also welcome contributions that showcase emerging and novel methodological innovations in SBMI research, such as comparative analysis, design science research, action research, discourse analysis, and other relevant cutting-edge techniques.

Submission Process

Interested authors are invited to submit a chapter proposal of no more than **1,000 words**. Please submit your chapter proposals to co-editor Keivan Aghasi K.Aghasi@sheffield.ac.uk, indicating “Edward Elgar Handbook” in the subject of the email.

The proposal should include:

- Proposed title.
- Author(s) name(s), affiliation(s), and contact information.
- A clear outline of the chapter's objectives, scope, methodology and key arguments.
- A summary of the chapter's main contributions to the field.
- A clear statement of how the proposal fits at least one of the above-described themes.
- A list of key references.

The complete chapters should be in the range of **5,000-8,000 words**, including references.

Chapter style:

- Include an abstract of up to 150 words
- Include up to 6 keywords
- Include a list of references, using APA (the 6th edition) referencing style
- Follow the Edward Elgar Publishing guidelines for book chapters: [As you write your book or chapter, advice for authors from Edward Elgar Publishing](#).

Please check Edward Elgar guidelines for chapters in multi-authored books: [Additional information for Contributors from Edward Elgar Publishing](#)

We look forward to receiving your innovative and insightful contributions to this important field.

Timeline and Important Deadlines:

- Submission of chapters' proposals for review: 1st October 2025
- Decision and feedback on chapters' proposals: 7th November 2025
- Submission of complete chapters (1st review): 30th March 2026
- Decision and feedback on complete chapters: 15th May 2026
- Submission of complete chapters (final version): 30th June 2026
- Publication of handbook: Spring 2027

Note: Contributors may also be requested to serve as reviewers for this process. Final acceptance of approved papers will be contingent on incorporating reviewers' feedback to the satisfaction of the Guest Editors.

Elgar *Handbooks* are commissioned to offer a comprehensive overview of the state-of-the-art in any given field. Often widely cited, individual chapters present expert scholarly analysis and offer a vital reference point for advanced research. To drive discoverability and citations, all Edward Elgar *Handbooks* have been accepted into the Book Citation Index as well as SCOPUS, while individual chapters are indexed by Google Scholar.

About the co-editors

Dr Maria Holgado is an Associate Professor in Operations Management at the University of Sussex, UK. Her research concerns innovations in operations, supply chains, value networks and business models that aim at developing new models and solutions for more sustainable, resilient, and better performing organisations, products and services. She is particularly interested in collaborative research to develop concepts and tools that facilitate the implementation of sustainability practices and enhance organisations' competitiveness, resiliency and resource productivity. Maria has participated in large collaborative research projects, funded by the European Commission through FP7, Horizon2020 and Horizon Europe programmes, and national funded projects in the UK and Spain related to developing concepts and tools that will encourage industry to adopt energy and resource efficiency improvement strategies, understanding the challenges and mechanisms to foster the implementation of industrial symbiosis and developing new business models, solutions and performance standards for more sustainable and higher performing production and service networks.

Dr Keivan Aghasi is a Lecturer (Assistant Professor) in Entrepreneurship at the University of Sheffield, UK. Prior to his current appointment, he was a Research Associate at the Entrepreneurship Centre, University of Cambridge Judge Business School where he currently holds an honorary Associate position. His areas of research revolve around unravelling and alleviating the challenges of responsible growth and transformation of start-ups into viable businesses. In particular, he is investigating the impact of structured support programmes (e.g., accelerators and incubators) and scalable (regional) interventions in the start-up eco-system to bolster sustainable entrepreneurship. Keivan has participated and been consulted in several European Commission and nationally funded projects in the UK and Italy related to understanding the challenges of resource acquisition for start-ups and growth for SMEs as the driver of innovation in various sectors, including high-tech, knowledge-intensive, and cultural-creative industries.