

**Special Issue for California Management Review**  
**Generative AI and acceleration of ESG Performance**

*Guest Editors:*

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The call for papers for this special issue of the *California Management Review* (CMR) invites contributions that seek to comprehend the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance of firms in the age of generative artificial intelligence. This includes explorations of the challenges and opportunities for ESG performance, as well as the organizational characteristics and processes that establish high ESG performance.

In recent years, the potential for generative AI to accelerate firms' ESG performance by allowing them to evaluate massive volumes of data and develop insights and solutions to complicated problems has been explored (Skaug Saetra et al., 2021) **In this call for papers, the editors welcome research that seeks to understand how the application of generative AI--such as generative design (Alsakka et al., 2023), generative art (Liu et al., 2018) or generative texts (Pavlik, 2023)--in various aspects of business influences ESG performance.**

Some examples of business activities impacted by generative AI include, but are not limited to:

- 1- **Marketing:** Many organizations are leaning toward adopting generative AI to create marketing content such as images, videos, designs, text, and so on (Mayahi & Vidrih, 2022). In the fashion sector, generative AI tools such as Khroma<sup>1</sup> are used to generate images and designs. Studies also have developed new algorithms and deep learning models such as PainNet to design generative fashion models for clothing (Lin et al., 2020). Data Grid, a Japanese technology firm, used the technology to create representative fashion models. Lastly, Spectrum uses generative AI to design its TV advertising<sup>2</sup>. Because the use of generative AI in marketing is still in its infancy, relatively little is known about how AI-generated marketing content affects ESG performance nor is there extensive research on the strategies and frameworks firms can use from a risk management perspective.
- 2- **Knowledge Management & Organizational Learning:** The creation of educational text and content at the organizational level is one of the primary functions of generative AI. Several firms use knowledge management platforms and solutions to better manage their explicit and tacit knowledge and to increase knowledge levels throughout the organization. While AI-powered knowledge management systems, such as Lucy<sup>3</sup>, an AI-powered answer engine, are expected to alter enterprise knowledge management and organizational learning, there is scant understanding of how generative AI-enabled organizational learning (Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023) and knowledge management affects ESG performance; and what business specifications are needed to maximize the effectiveness of such technology?
- 3- **Corporate Intelligence and Communication:** Generative AI promises to change corporate communication and the generation of organizational reports, as well as enhance corporate

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<sup>1</sup> [Khroma - The AI color tool for designers](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Spectrum Reach Introduces AI Ad Platform with Waymark | Charter](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Stronger Business Insights with AI-Powered Knowledge Management | Lucy](#)

intelligence. Omdia<sup>4</sup> generates AI-powered actionable insights for enterprises by analyzing and reporting on external occurrences. In this context, there is a lack of research relating ESG performance and the usage of AI-enabled market intelligence and communication tools.

**This special issue of CMR aims to provide meaningful managerial insights on how executives can develop successful environmental, societal, and governance mechanisms in the age of generative AI.**

Prior research has focused on the application of digital technologies and artificial intelligence as a catch-all word for environmental sustainability (Bermejo & Juiz, 2023; Delgosha et al., 2021; Nishant et al., 2020; Saheb et al., 2022; Skaug Saetra et al., 2021). In this special issue we welcome contributions focusing on any aspect of the ESG performance spectrum, including but not limited to:

- \* identification of the ESG issues that are important to the business,
- \* consideration of ESG implications in strategic, financial, and operational decisions,
- \* engagement and collaboration with stakeholders,
- \* performance measurement and reporting

Earlier research has mainly focused on the environmental benefits of generative AI, such as the application of generative design for ecologically sustainable cities and urban growth (Dilibal et al., 2021; Toker & Pontikis, 2011).

With the introduction of various and new forms of AI-generated content, more studies ought to be conducted to investigate especially the societal and governance performance of businesses. Further research is also needed to investigate the effects of generative AI in the form of texts, photos, and videos on ESG performance.

## **Editor Biographies**

**Mark Esposito** is a Full Professor of Business and Economics at Hult International Business School, teaching across campuses in the area of Economics, Strategy, Foresights and Management of Technology, among some of his most common teaching areas. He is Co-Founder & Chief Learning Officer at Nexus FrontierTech, an AI scale-up venture. He was inducted in 2016 in the radar of Thinkers50 as one of the 30 most prominent rising business thinkers in the world. Mark has held academic appointments for some of the world's leading institutions such as Harvard University, University of Cambridge's Judge Business School, and IE Business School. In his career he has written hundreds of op-eds and professional publications, over 150 articles, several book chapters, over 40 case studies and 13 books, including two bestsellers.

**Terence Tse** is a Full Professor of Finance at Hult International Business School and an affiliate professor at ESCP Business School. Terence is also a co-founder and Executive Director of Nexus FrontierTech, an AI scale-up. He is a co-author of two international best sellers "The AI Republic: Building the Nexus Between Humans and Intelligent Automation" and "Understanding How the Future Unfolds: Using DRIVE to Harness the Power of Today's Megatrends." His next book, "The Great Remobilization", published by MIT Press, is to be released at the start of 2023.

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<sup>4</sup> [Home Page :: Omdia \(informa.com\)](https://www.omnia.com)

**Yusaf Akbar** is a Full Professor of Management at Central European University in Vienna, Austria. His research interests are located at the intersection of business strategy, public policy, and business model innovation. Current research examines evolving sharing economy business models, non-market strategy and dynamic capabilities among others. He has published widely including around 100 articles, numerous book chapters and case studies as well as four books. His research has been published at the Journal of International Management, Journal of World Business, Harvard Business Review and International Business Review among others.

**Alessandro Lanteri** is a Full Professor of Strategy and Innovation at ESCP Business School. His research has been published by leading international journals (Journal of Business Ethics, Philosophical Studies...) and publishers (Cambridge University Press, Palgrave Macmillan...), and has also appeared on leading practitioners outlets (Harvard Business Review and MIT Technology Review outlets, World Economic Forum Agenda and Forbes). His latest book “CLEVER. The Six Strategic Drivers for the Fourth Industrial Revolution” became a no.1 Amazon bestseller. He works with multinationals, governments, International Organizations, startups and family businesses across five continents. He also taught executive education programs for Saïd Business School University of Oxford and London Business School. He holds a Master in Economics from Bocconi University and a PhD in Philosophy and Economics from Erasmus University Rotterdam.

### **Submission Information:**

- Authors requesting advanced feedback on fit and feasibility of a contribution are welcome to submit an extended abstract or full draft to the Guest Editors no later than September 1, 2023 to: [futureslab@hult.edu](mailto:futureslab@hult.edu)
- **To be considered for publication in the special issue, authors must submit a full draft of their papers no later than October 15, 2023 to the following email address: [futureslab@hult.edu](mailto:futureslab@hult.edu)**
- The Guest Editors will then select the papers (approximately 12) that are most likely to result in a first-rate, high-impact submission. Authors of these high-impact submissions will receive feedback to help them revise and strengthen their papers as well as an official invitation to submit through CMR's online submission portal.
- The officially submitted manuscripts will then undergo a rigorous peer review process.

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