

# Integrate sustainability in your company

## *Cooperate and develop solutions to engage other departments*

30 November (9:30-16:30 CET)

Euroflat Hotel, Boulevard Charlemagne 50, 1000, Brussels



## The workshop

Following the approach of the [2016 materiality masterclass](#), this year we invite member companies to a similar format workshop to share, learn and create solutions to improve internal stakeholders engagement on sustainability.

Several challenges have been recognised in breaking silos and aligning work on material topics to fully integrate sustainability in business and **demonstrate a consistent and connected storyline** to stakeholders. The workshop will also focus on **integrated reporting** and how **cross-functional collaboration** is essential to develop integrated thinking and build a unique value creation story.

During the webinar in June ([Let's talk about sustainability outside CSR departments: invite your finance colleagues](#)), we started the discussion and presented the main focus for this series of learning activities with our members: **engage finance and investor relations department to integrate sustainability**.

Join the workshop in Brussels to:

- ✓ Learn more about data connectivity and consistent story telling in the integrated reporting and thinking framework;
- ✓ Gather experiences through experts' presentations and companies' case studies;
- ✓ Directly engage with your colleagues on applicable solutions for your company.

**We recommend participation to:**

- CSR/Sustainability managers
- Investor relations managers
- Finance managers (e.g. accounting, reporting and planning)

**This document is meant to introduce you to the workshop topic and highlight the benefit of joining the discussion for CSR/Sustainability managers, investors relations and finance managers.**

- 1) [Addressing the challenge: integrating sustainability through cross-functional collaboration](#)
- 2) [Workshop agenda](#)

# 1) Addressing the challenge: integrating sustainability through cross-functional collaboration

More and more companies are trying to improve their sustainability performances through reporting, but not all of them are thriving. Why so? Because to make sense of reporting on so-called non-financial information, a company needs to **integrate sustainability into its core strategy**. And this means not only having a well-functioning CSR department, but also a network of relationships into the company, a continuous engagement between different functions, in order to make sustainability part of the everyday projects, activities and communications of the company.

*“I am a **CSR manager**, why is this challenge relevant to me?”*

It is important for CSR/sustainability manager to engage their colleagues on sustainability issues. Acting as leaders on sustainability, they can help the company to take a stand on CSR strategies or reporting standards adoption, by striving for better communication across all functions, facilitating internal collaboration, and support colleagues in engaging externally with relevant stakeholders on sustainability (e.g. investors)<sup>1</sup>.

*“I am an **investor relations manager**, why is this challenge relevant to me?”*

Following investors’ pressure, companies are releasing more and more ESG data to attract them. But in this regard, there is often a communication gap. Some companies report without a clear materiality framework, making it difficult for investors to have decision-useful data at hand. More often, there is a lack of narrative around the company approach to sustainability and sometimes investor relators are not able to tell the right stories. Investor relations managers could help sustainability function in understanding investors needs and what kind of ESG data they want. At the same time, CSR managers would be able to communicate more efficiently the company case for sustainability and provide IR with support in conveying company’s message.<sup>2</sup>

*“I am a **finance manager**, why is this challenge relevant to me?”*

With the spread of different reporting schemes and the need to provide quantitative and reliable data, the accountants of the company could play an important role in supporting CSR managers’ efforts to produce good quality reports. This kind of collaboration would also help to solve a general misunderstanding surrounding the concept of “non-financial information”: this kind of information has actually strong consequences on financial performances, as recognized by several initiatives such as the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure. Therefore, finance managers could help CSR managers quantifying sustainability information, that sometimes are hard to put in numbers, and link them to financial risk and performances, being able to provide more precise exhibits. This would result in an improvement of financial and non-financial reporting and of the alignment of sustainability issues with the broader business narrative.<sup>3</sup>

In this setting, reporting supports companies to enhance cross-functional cooperation and integration of sustainability in companies. Specifically, integrated reporting is founded on the concept of defining business value beyond financial criteria while embedding sustainability. During the workshop we will also discuss the role of integrated reporting and how this supports companies enhancing cooperation within CSR, Investors relations and Finance teams.

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<sup>1</sup> Facts from [Morgan Stanley individual investors survey](#): 72% of active individual investors surveyed show interest in sustainable investing

<sup>2</sup> Facts from [Accenture-UNGC CEO Survey 2016](#): 59% report their company is able to accurately quantify business value of their sustainability initiatives

<sup>3</sup> Lessons from the work and recommendations of the [Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure](#): integration of financial implications from climate risks and opportunities

## 2) Workshop agenda

### Morning session

TIME	AGENDA	SPEAKERS
9:30-10:00	Welcome and registration	
10:00-10:15	Introduction to the workshop: the importance of internal engagement to integrate sustainability across your company and create value	CSR Europe
10:15-11:45	The investor case for sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations from investors: how investors integrate ESG factors in their investment decisions and what kind of disclosure they expect from companies</li> <li>• Integrated reporting: a tool to better integrate sustainability through cross-functions collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sparinvest</li> <li>• Social Issues Team Representative, UNPRI</li> <li>• Andrew Jones, The IIRC</li> </ul>
11:45-12:00	Coffee break	
12:00-13:00	Case studies: how sustainability, finance and investor relations functions can practically collaborate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The business case for cross-functional collaboration</li> <li>• How to build successful collaborations</li> <li>• The outcome: which roles do these functions play when they work together</li> </ul>	Practices from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enel</li> <li>• Solvay</li> </ul>
13:00-14:00	Lunch break	

### Afternoon session

TIME	AGENDA	SPEAKERS
14:00-14:15	Introduction to working groups	CSR Europe
14:15-16:00	Working groups assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Part 1</i>: using case study approach discuss main challenges of engaging sustainability, finance and investors relations departments in your company</li> <li>• <i>Part 2</i>: discuss and list actions, tools and practices that can improve your current situation</li> <li>• <i>Part 3</i>: on a dedicated paper, collect the main inputs of the workshop which you are willing to bring back to your organisation</li> </ul>	Moderated by CSR Europe
16:00-16:30	Outcomes working groups and conclusion of the day	CSR Europe