

## Principles of Partner Engagement

The Hamburg Sustainability Conference's aim is to accelerate and scale implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through a conference and event program co-created with high-ranking sustainable private sector initiatives and influential partners from developing countries and emerging economies.

Businesses around the globe have big impacts on our climate and on the lands, waters and communities that all of us rely upon for survival. Owners and management of companies increasingly understand that sustainable business models protect business assets, mitigate risk and create opportunities.

Therefore, ambitious partners from the private sector are invited to participate in co-creating the HSC's programs towards breakthrough initiatives and to support the HSC financially.

### **Quality criteria for program sessions**

- Each session at the HSC must present, accompany or initiate a breakthrough or actionable best practice. This can be done on stage or in a confidential setting.
- Each session must involve leading stakeholders from different sectors (e.g. politics, business, civil society, academia) and bring them together on stage and around the table as speakers, panelists and moderators. The private sector must be involved as a co-creating and co-solving partner in every session.
- The HSC is global, all. The topics of the sessions must be addressed from a global perspective. The HSC's ambition is that at least 40% of the speakers and panelists, including the moderators of each session, as well as the co-creation partners of each session must come from developing countries and emerging economies.

- Furthermore, the HSC aims at that at least 70% of all active participants are leaders with decision-making power and / or distinguished experts in their field (heads of state, ministers, presidents / vice-presidents, CEOs / C-level executives, scientific directors / leading scientists and respective equivalents from civil society organizations).

### **An HSC breakthrough-initiative ...**

is ambitious ...

- in promoting transformative economic-technical or economic-social solution/s,
- with significant acceleration and / or scaling potential for the SDGs and global transformation,
- with a clear relevance both to emerging economies and developing countries,
- being effective beyond national borders,
- with a focus on forging, introducing, accelerating or scaling,
  - either innovative and disruptive solutions that are scalable and applicable in different regional and country settings,
  - or taking established initiatives and sustainability feasible business cases to a new level (e.g., by expanding the alliance or / and scaling existing efforts),
- in that it may propose targeted and balanced regulations that allow for leveraging further proven sustainable private sector engagements, and
- it involves reliable, relevant partners with proven capacity to cut “gordian knots” to deliver the suggested breakthrough

and it engages various relevant stakeholders ...

- from different areas (i.e. politics, private sector, multilateral / civil society organizations), and
- from different countries,
- including at least one partner from the emerging economies / developing countries or from international organizations / associations, and

- who have made a serious effort to accomplish full-stakeholder alignment in due time prior to the conference,
- or possibly develop even more dynamic and transformational towards the HSC 2025 conference.

### **Our philosophy and criteria towards support**

The overall strategy of partnering is about diversity and balance.

We select partners who are relentless about co-creation and co-solving new and sustainable breakthrough initiatives and eager to support the HSC to stimulate the necessary and broadly acceptable transformation of our economies and societies. The HSC's governance ensures the highest standards of professionalism and independence from private donors.

We strive for a variety of exemplifying partners.

Corporate partners are ...

- small & large,
  - from emerging economies / developing countries and from further developed economies
- and
- for-profit and non-profit companies - and social entrepreneurs.

Our due diligence regarding partners is directed towards the highest levels of compliance to honor sustainable businesses - and to avoid green- and whitewashing.

The financial support we request and gratefully accept from partners on behalf of the HSC's mission is balanced in its structure to ensure the HSC's independence and neutrality.

The audience we invite through financial support from the HSC's initiators and from the HSC partners is high-level and will be very diverse.

## Partner Engagement in particular

All partner engagements must meet these Principles of Partner Engagement and pass the HSC's Supervisory Board's approval. UNDP's (*United Nations Development Program*) due diligence criteria apply.

- ◆ *Breakthrough First*: The proposed engagement must advance an HSC program and have a defined, tangible benefit or a strategy that significantly increases public awareness of measurable breakthroughs, or funding for near-term breakthroughs, or anticipates influencing changes in business practices, which will result in increased benefits to acceleration or / and scaling of SDGs with measurable results within three years.
- ◆ *No Endorsement*: The HSC's relationship with a partner is in no way an implied or real endorsement of a partner, a business or an industry. All public communications regarding partner engagements are subject to prior agreement by the HSC and the partner. No third-party entity may use the HSC's name and/or trademarks without explicit, written permission.
- ◆ *No Undue Benefit*: A partner engagement must not result in private benefit to a partner - whether a financial benefit or publicity - that exceeds the benefits received by the HSC and its mission. The level of promotion should be appropriate to the type of engagement.
- ◆ *Aligns with Mission and Values*: The engagement must be consistent with the HSC's mission and values and should respect the sensitivities of the HSC's initiators, its other partners and other stakeholders with which the HSC works. Examples of potential compromise include a conflict of interest or an implication that the relationship may influence the HSC's strategy and priorities.
- ◆ *One HSC*: The engagement's benefit to the HSC must outweigh risk or potential damage to all parts and dimensions of the HSC.

- ◆ *Transparent and Independent Role of the HSC:* The HSC must always be publicly transparent about its role in and the use of analyses, data and / or any publication that may be produced as a result of a partner engagement, including complying with the UNDP Principles, when applicable. At the HSC's discretion, peer organizations, governments, the academic community, and other interested parties may be consulted about the HSC's work. The engagement must always respect the following terms:
  - The HSC and the partner agree that the analysis or work product is not proprietary to the partner or association, will be freely offered to interested governmental agencies, other partners and various relevant stakeholders, and may be published in relevant literature or other print media; and
  - The HSC will seek input on its analysis as appropriate from regulatory agencies and other key stakeholders; and
  - The HSC retains the option to publicly comment on the merits of any partner's activities, development proposals or other matters that affect the HSC's priorities; and
  - The HSC will disclose the identities of companies, associations and other partners with whom it engages and the nature and purpose of its engagements; and
  - The HSC will share general knowledge and expertise gained in partner engagements to promote better SDG-transformative business practices and public policies at sectoral, national, and international levels.
  
- ◆ *Commitment by Partners to the HSC and Accelerated and Scaled SDG-Implementation in General:* The partner must demonstrate a commitment to accelerating SDG-implementation and to sustainability objectives of significant, lasting, and measurable scope. The partner must have developed policies or practices to address its significant sustainability impacts or intend to develop these through or during its engagement with the HSC. The partner must report transparently on its progress in implementing these policies and practices. The HSC will engage only when satisfied with the partner's level of commitment and performance, as determined by due diligence.

- ◆ Partner Reputation, Policies, and Practices Not a Material Risk to the HSC: The partner's reputation, policies, and practices must not present a material risk to the HSC's reputation or ability to achieve any of its objectives that is greater than the achievable benefits of the engagement. Risks include environmental risks, human rights violations or similar abuses by the partner, prosecution of the partner for illegalities, regulatory compliance failures or a highly publicized controversy related to the partner.
- ◆ The HSC's Right to Not Engage or / and Terminate: The HSC will continuously evaluate the HSC's impact of its work with partners and may discontinue concrete partner engagements if the impacts achieved are not satisfactory. The HSC must retain its unilateral right to terminate a partner engagement for reasons relating to actual or potential reputational harm or legal compliance, breach of an agreement, and misuse of the HSC's intellectual property including the HSC's name.
- ◆ Acceptance of Funds: In conjunction with any partner engagement, the HSC may accept and freely allocate funds from a partner to support the development of a particular project or work product when it does not compromise, or appear to compromise, the HSC's independence and neutrality and does not conflict with an existing engagement with the partner.