

OSKAR VON MILLER FORUM

Press release

Society – Corporations – Responsibility Corporate Social Responsibility for Sustainable Development

A lecture by Klaus M. Leisinger, Global Values Alliance / Basel, on June 27, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Oskar von Miller Forum

Most of the wealth of modern societies stems from successful entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, only about half of all people trust corporations and their leaders to live up to their responsibility and “do the right thing.” It will, however, not be possible to tackle the social changes we are facing for the common good without profit-oriented corporations taking on a leading role. The challenges of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, digitalisation and intensifying competition with players from emerging markets such as China cannot be addressed by doing business as usual. Given that complex problems cannot be solved by individual parties, there is a growing need for new forms of cooperation between business and society.

Is the discourse about ethical responsibilities above and beyond legal action merely a “professor’s philosophy” or a new type of discursive ethics enabling corporations and societal stakeholders to find consensual solutions? What scope for action and decision-making do modern managers have under conditions of intense competition and continual change? And what are the resulting demands made on business, political and social leaders?

In his lecture, Klaus Leisinger will present his views on these questions.

About Klaus M. Leisinger

Klaus M. Leisinger is Professor of Sociology at the University of Basel and founder and president of the foundation Global Values Alliance (Stiftung Globale Werte Allianz). Up to 2013, he was president and CEO of the Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development. He has served as a researcher and lecturer on questions of social corporate responsibility at European and U.S. universities for many years.

His work focuses on issues such as a contribution by industry to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, transcultural understanding and corporate responsibility. He advised several UN institutions on these topics, for instance serving as Special Advisor on the Global Compact to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. He is a member of the leadership council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network and of the steering committee of the Ethics in Action initiative associated with the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences.