



RightsCon online 2020

Panel discussion on human rights risks in business models

Jul. 31, 2020 | 3:30pm - 4:30pm EEST

The business model of any company, including the value proposition, revenue model and value chain construct, sets the tone for how that company operates.

This session will focus on the ways in which business models in the technology industry might be driving human rights risks, and what companies should do in practice to address this. The discussion will be informed by a foundational paper which will be made available shortly before RightsCon and which will help inform and frame the discussion.

The session will:

- Discuss the complexity of implementing human rights due diligence in relation to business models, as compared to more traditional and operational company activities.
- Identify how to build robust multi-stakeholder understanding and dialogue about the dilemmas that may arise in seeking to address risks related to business models – for example, where efforts might lead to unintended negative human rights impact.
- Explore what role users of technology, investors, regulators and civil society should play in advocating for, and even supporting, companies to address business model related human rights risks.

The session will feed into the [B-Tech project](#). One immediate outcome will be to inform the B-Tech's onward roadmap for the project's work on business models in technology.

Host: B-Tech Project, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Facilitators:

Lene Wendland, Chief, Business and Human Rights, Development and Social and Economic Issues Branch, UN Human Rights

Mark Hodge, Senior Advisor, B-Tech, UN Human Rights

Panellists:

Vivek Krishnamurthy Samuelson-Glushko Professor of Law, University of Ottawa / Director, Samuelson-Glushko Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC)

Ashleigh Owens, Senior Advisor, Shift

Mikael Ekman, Acting Tech Ambassador, Silicon Valley, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

Nien-he Hsieh, Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School

Note: The discussion was informed by a newly released [B-Tech's foundational paper on business models](#).

A recording of the panel is available on the B-Tech portal.