Introduction

Renewal of Commitment to PRME

CEMS is pleased to unreservedly renew its commitment to PRME. As a global alliance of academic and corporate institutions dedicated to educating and preparing future generations of international business leaders, we fully subscribe to the six Principles of Responsible Management Education. Since joining one year ago, CEMS has been actively involved in applying these principles and looks forward to continued involvement in the years ahead.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Bieger
CEMS Chairman
President of the University of St Gallen
As institutions of higher education involved in the development of current and future managers we declare our willingness to progress in the implementation, within our institution, of the following Principles, starting with those that are more relevant to our capacities and mission. We will report on progress to all our stakeholders and exchange effective practices related to these principles with other academic institutions.

**Principle 1: Purpose**
We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

**Principle 2: Values**
We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

**Principle 3: Method**
We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

**Principle 4: Research**
We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

**Principle 5: Partnership**
We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

**Principle 6: Dialogue**
We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability. We understand that our own organizational practices should serve as example of the values and attitudes we convey to our students.
Principle 1: Purpose

**Purpose:** We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

“CEMS is a global alliance of academic and corporate institutions dedicated to educating and preparing future generations of international business leaders. The CEMS academic and corporate members work collectively to develop knowledge and provide education that is essential in the multilingual, multicultural and interconnected business world.

The joint CEMS Master’s in International Management is the main vehicle for achieving this goal. Common to all activities is the aim of promoting global citizenship, with particular emphasis placed upon the following values:

- The pursuit of excellence with high standards of performance and ethical conduct;
- Understanding and drawing upon cultural diversity with respect and empathy;
- Professional responsibility and accountability in relation to society as a whole.”

This Mission Statement, which was adopted in 2008, is clearly in adequation with the purpose of the PRME. The raison d’être of CEMS Global Alliance is indeed to educate future generations of international business leaders. The fact that the CEMS cohort is composed of 59 nationalities, and that all students spend at least one academic term abroad, shows how global the students’ careers are meant to be, and thus how impactful their decisions might be. Our fundamental conviction is that international leadership is neither acceptable nor sustainable without responsibility and accountability in relation to society as a whole.

Since our signature of PRME in July 2010, all governing bodies of CEMS have worked on the further implementation of our mission statement and of the 6 PRME principles

The CEMS Strategic Board reflected collectively on the role of business schools in society and as a result wrote a book on Business Schools and their contribution to society published this fall by Sage Publications. Fundamental questions related to the education of responsible leaders are central to all Strategic Board meetings.

The Executive Board decided to open the CEMS partnership to social partners and voted on the admission of four social partners since the signature of the PRME agreement in July 2010. The first two social partners sit on the CEMS Executive Board with the same voting right as academic or corporate partners. Debates on how to best work with social partners were held.

The Academic Committee also reflects on the way to integrate sustainability in the CEMS MIM curriculum in a more systematic way. The Academic Committee also took the opportunity to meet with social partners’ representatives to discuss concrete forms of collaboration.

Principle 2: Values

**Values:** We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Faculty plays obviously a key role for achieving this principle, and they have already contributed to major achievements. Three CEMS faculty teams (Business and the Environment, Business Ethics, Gender and Diversity Management) could be relied on to incorporate into the academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility. The CEMS Strategic Board encouraged the creation of another faculty team on social entrepreneurship which will also help us achieve our goal.
This new team was set up during summer 2011, and will enable the development of a broader academic offer to CEMS students with sustainability-related content.

A substantial number of block seminars focusing on social business/climate change or other sustainability issues have been created (see Appendix 1). Ten CEMS member schools offered in 2010-2011 a block seminar on a CSR related subject. 39 of the elective courses that CEMS MIM students have to take beyond the two compulsory courses also focus on related topics (see Appendix 2). A total of 20 universities are offering such courses to its students.

Even if the number of such courses varies greatly from one university to the other, the goal is to ensure that all CEMS students are offered the opportunity to take at least one course on corporate responsibility and sustainability during their CEMS MIM year.

**Principle 3: Method**

**Method: We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.**

The very concept of the CEMS programme, expressed through the CEMS Global Value Statement, offers students a very positive environment in which they can learn and experience responsible leadership. This Value Statement, introduced by CEMS students at the 2010 CEMS Annual Events in Rotterdam, says:

“As a lifelong member of the CEMS community, I hereby commit to uphold and be guided by the following principles:

- The pursuit of excellence with the highest standards of integrity, humility, and ethical conduct.
- Professional responsibility and accountability in relation to society and the environment
- Drawing upon the value of cultural diversity with respect and empathy
- My decisions and actions, both now and in the future, will reflect this Commitment to Global Citizenship that I make here today.”

Building on this oath, the CEMS programme intends to offer experiential learning to students, broaden their perspectives and develop their responsible attitude and entrepreneurial spirit, through the curriculum, the CEMS events and the partnerships with civil society organizations.

**Experiential Learning within the Curriculum**

As mentioned before, the CEMS MIM comprises a carefully-designed curriculum that achieves one of the main goals of the alliance as a whole: to combine academic theory with business practice. The curriculum thus includes 39 electives (see Appendix 2) and 10 block seminars (see Appendix 1) related to sustainability issues in the different schools of the alliance.

Internships that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership are also a key component of the CEMS curriculum. More than 60 students graduating this year worked or volunteered in NGOs or in organizations tackling sustainability issues (Appendix 4).

CEMS member universities provide CEMS students with the opportunity to develop social projects in the framework of a course or a business project (see Appendix 3). For example, this academic year (2011-12), Cologne is offering a CSR course as CEMS elective which allows students to look into the founding of their own social business as a career alternative. On top, the completion of social projects is credited as CEMS electives.
**CEMS Events**
As mentioned before, the first milestone CEMS students have the opportunity to formally commit to is the Value Statement on the day of their graduation. At the 2010 CEMS MIM Graduation Ceremony, 98% of graduands who received their diploma on stage went on to sign it.
CEMS provides CEMS students with significant contacts with civil society organizations, and intends to increase these opportunities in the future. Muhammad Yunus, guest of honor of the CEMS Annual Events 2010 had two sessions with CEMS students, and was made Honorary Member of CEMS.
In 2010, a 3-day regional event gathering 70 students from different schools of the alliance in Louvain, the Louropa Forum, chose as its main topic for its seminars “CSR, a realistic necessity” and invited representatives from UNESCO to come share their experience.

**Students Initiatives**
CEMS makes every effort to reward students for their initiatives in the field of CSR. This year, the spring edition of the CEMS Magazine focused on all sustainability initiatives. Many students and alumni were interviewed on their sustainability-related activities.
CEMS students are given the opportunity to initiate social projects. Some of them are actively involved in oikos (see Appendix 5) which objective is to promote the integration of sustainability issues into research and teaching at their schools.
At their own initiative, students led a fundraising campaign for a UNICEF “School in Africa” project. They raised 50 000€ which were donated to UNICEF in December 2010 during the CEMS Annual Meeting.
Students also take initiatives on social projects through the CEMS Clubs present in each university of the alliance. For example, the CEMS Club from the London School of Economics organized a conference on microfinance in March 2011.
CEMS is also working on other tangible and visible ways to reward students for their social initiatives. For example, a social business competition is to be organized with SenStation (Social Entrepreneurship Network Station and Positive News), enabling competitors to win a CEMS social business award.

**Principle 4: Research**

*Research: We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.*

Research is at the forefront of all academic activities at all CEMS member universities. Collectively, at the CEMS level, CEMS faculty teams engage in collaborative research leading to PhD seminars, publications, and teaching modules such as block seminars.

Examples below are some of the highlights of the achievements of the year. A CEMS PhD workshop entitled "Sustainability and Responsibility in Business" was organized in May 2011 at the Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary. The workshop introduced cutting-edge results and approaches in corporate sustainability and business ethics. Insights from behavioral sciences, positive psychology and ecological economics were applied to arrive at more a robust model of ethical and sustainable business. Working examples of progressive businesses were presented including organic agriculture, eco-gastronomy, ethical fashion and sustainable banking. The workshop was supported by the TÁMOP research program of the Corvinus University of Budapest.
Another example of CEMS’ achievement in terms of research in the field of sustainability lies in the publishing of two books by two CEMS professors, Antonio Tencati and Laszlo Zsolnai. The first one, *The Collaborative Enterprise: Creating Values for a Sustainable World*, written in 2011, deals with the environmental and social cost of the abundance of goods and services produced in our competitive society. This book promotes a collaborative attitude of doing business based on a positive view of the self and others. Theoretical contributions, reflections, cases, examples, and initiatives collected in the book show that a collaborative enterprise is not only possible but also a feasible and desirable alternative to the current, self-defeating, managerial models.

These two authors had previously written another book, *The Future International Manager: A Vision of the Roles and Duties of Management*, which consists in a discussion upon the training of international managers. Published in 2009 in the context of the financial crisis, the book is a collaborative effort of 18 professors of different CEMS universities to create a new professional profile for management. They believe that the task of reinventing the management profession seems to be more relevant than even before, and that business management should be renewed if business leaders are to uplift the financially collapsing, environmentally degrading and socially disintegrating world of our age.

**Principle 5: Partnership**

*Partnership: We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.*

CEMS Corporate Partners are given the opportunity to take part in the CEMS Board discussions and decisions concerning sustainability issues. The collaboration between the academic members and the companies involved in the alliance is a crucial value of CEMS, and we believe that this dialogue between these actors and the social partners will enable the development of effective learning and experiences.

CEMS also invited Corporate Partners to address students about CSR related issues and welcome their initiatives in the field. For example, Société Générale organized a business game, Citizen Act, which proved to be a good way to encourage students to reflect on CSR issues with corporate partners. More skill seminars are to be developed in the same line to build awareness about the notion of responsible leadership among students.

As mentioned earlier, 5 business projects related to sustainability issues were offered during the year 2010-2011 (see Appendix 3). The Business Project is a consultancy-like project. International student teams solve a real business problem as a one-semester part-time activity tutored by the company and a professor in parallel. These projects reinforce the CEMS partnership between universities and companies in jointly shaping the student learning process in international management. In the case of those 5 business projects, students were given the opportunity to have a more pragmatic approach on the missions carried by civil society organizations.
Principle 6: Dialogue

Dialogue: We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability. We understand that our own organizational practices should serve as example of the values and attitudes we convey to our students.

Besides our historical partnership with corporate partners, CEMS aims at establishing a long standing and mutually beneficial partnership with civil society organizations working in different economic or social sectors.

We are achieving major steps in that direction: two NGOs, Care International and Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International, joined CEMS in 2010-2011 as social partners of our alliance. By the end of 2011, two other organizations will have joined the CEMS alliance: UNAOC and Transparency International. The first two social partners seat on the CEMS Executive Board and have a voting right. We aim at identifying the most effective ways to work together with our social partners, and to help them impact CEMS the most while minimizing time and cost on their side.

This impact is being made possible by the diversity of these social partners. The wide range of their activities – fairtrade, humanitarian actions, anticorruption, and dialogue between cultures – enable them to enrich significantly the dialogue with the academic members, the corporate partners and the students. Our aspiration is to develop an environment in which their impact and their influence can be maximized. Some achievements have already been reached in that direction, as mentioned in the article of the New York Times published on October 9, 2011 (see Appendix 6).

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Block Seminars 2010-2011

A Block Seminar is a week-long course organized by each of the CEMS Schools. They are academically and culturally intensive and the experience is the ideal starting point into the programme as this may be the first opportunity for incoming CEMS students to meet and exchange with their new classmates.

Aalto University School of Economics
- Corporate Responsibility in Managerial Practices
  - Yury Blagov, GSOM, Russia
  - Minna Halme, AALTO, Finland

Copenhagen Business School
- Corporate Social Responsibility: Strategic and Ethical Perspectives
  - Steen Vallentin, CBS, Denmark
  - Jukka Mäkkinen, AALTO, Finland
  - Anne Mette Christiansen, CBS, Denmark

St Petersburg State University
- Corporate Responsibility in Managerial Practices
  - Yury Blagov, GSOM, Russia
  - Minna Halme, AALTO, Finland

London School of Economics
- Social Entrepreneurship
  - Professor Sarah Ashwin, LSE, United Kingdom

Norwegian School of Economics
- Innovations, Climate Changes and Corporate Social Responsibility
  - Professor Gunnar S. Eskeland, NHH, Norway
  - Professor Knut Krzywinski, UiB, Norway

NOVA School of Business and Economics
- Sustainability, Openness and Growth

Stockholm School of Economics
- Corporate Responsibility and Sustainable Management
  - Dr. Lin Lerpold, SSE, Sweden

University of St.Gallen
- Sustainability and Corporate Strategy: Meeting the Energy and Climate Challenges
  - Dr. Jost Hamschmidt, HSG, Switzerland
  - Dr. Rolf Wüstenhagen, HSG, Switzerland
  - Elmar Friedrich, HSG, Switzerland

Vienna University of Economics & Business
- Business Ethics

Warsaw School of Economics
- Corporate Sustainability and CSR
Appendix 2: CSR-related electives

A total of 39 elective courses related to sustainability issues were offered to the CEMS students during the year 2010-2011 in 20 universities of the CEMS alliance. More than 70 teachers and professors were involved in the creation of these courses.

**Copenhagen Business School**
- Business Plan Writing for Social Enterprises
  - Kai Hockerts, CBS, Denmark
  - Fredrik Björk, CBS, Denmark
  - Christoph Hierneth, CBS, Denmark
  - Sigvold Harryson, CBS, Denmark
- Corporate Social Responsibility in Global Supply Chains
  - Esben Rahbek Gjerdrum Pedersen, CBS, Denmark
  - Peter Neergaard, CBS, Denmark
  - Liselotte Carlsen, CBS, Denmark
  - Gunther Prockl, CBS, Denmark
- Corporate Social Responsibility: Challenge and Opportunity for Business Leaders
  - Jette Steen Knudsen, CBS, Denmark
- Social Entrepreneurship: Creating Social Change Using the Power of Entrepreneurship
  - Kai Hockerts, CBS, Denmark
- Social Responsible Consumer Marketing
  - Christine Sestoft, CBS, Denmark
  - Torsten Ringberg, CBS, Denmark
  - Niels Kornum, CBS, Denmark

**Corvinus University of Budapest**
- Corporate Sustainability and CSR

**ESADE Business School**
- Business and the Environment
  - Rafael Sardá Borroy, ESADE, Spain
- Corporate Social Responsibility
  - Nicola Manuela Pless, ESADE, Spain

**Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo-FGV**
- Corporate Social Responsibility
  - Mario Aquino, EAESP, Brazil

**Graduate School of Management, St Petersburg State University**
- Corporate Social Responsibility
  - Yury Blagov, GSOM, Russia

**HEC Paris**
- Globalization and CSR
  - Elie Matta, HEC, France
- Social Business/Enterprise and Poverty Certificate
• WTO and Sustainable Development
  • Ligia Maura Costa, EAESP, Brazil

Louvain School of Management
• Management environnemental
  • D. Tyteca, LSM, Belgium
• Social responsibility in economic life
  • Gossieres, LSM, Belgium
  • V. Swaen, LSM, Belgium
• Responsabilité sociale de l’Entreprise
  • J. Noterdaeme, LSM, Belgium

National University of Singapore
• Managerial Decision Making & Ethical Values
  • Robert FLEMING, NUS, Singapore

Norwegian School of Economics
• The Energy, Resource and Environmental Industrial Sector
  • Stein I. Steinshamn, NSE, Norway
• Environmental Economics
  • Gunnar S Eskeland, NSE, Norway

NOVA School of Business and Economics
• Poverty - Concepts and Challenges
  • Adeline Delavande, NOVA, Portugal
• Sustainable International Business
  • Daniel Traça, NOVA, Portugal
• Corporate Social Responsibility
  • Joana Story, NOVA, Portugal
• Social Entrepreneurship
  • Daniel Traça, NOVA, Portugal

Richard Ivey School of Business
• Sustainability
  • T. Bansal, IVEY, Canada

Rotterdam School of Management
• Companies in ecology
  • Dr. G.M. Whiteman, RSM, Netherlands
• Making a difference? Effective management of philanthropic “NGO” organizations
  • Dr. L.C.P.M. Meijs, RSM, Netherlands

Stockholm School of Economics
• Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility

The University of Sydney Business School
• Social Entrepreneurship
  • Richard Seymour, USYD, Australia

Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi
• Green Marketing
  • Prof. Reina, UB, Italy
• Corporate Social Responsibility
University of Cologne
- Climate Change Strategy Role Play - Model UNFCCC
  - Dr. M. Bettzüge, UoC, Germany
  - B. Tischler, UoC, Germany

University of Economics, Prague
- Strategic Leadership and Management of the CSR
  - Marek Stritesky, VSE, Czech Republic
  - Zuzana Dvorakova, VSE, Czech Republic

University of St. Gallen
- Climate Change Strategy Role Play
  - Dr. Rolf Wüstehagen, HSG, Switzerland
  - Dr. David Bresch, Swiss RE
  - Gieri Hinnen, SWISS Airline
- WTO Seminar
  - Oesch Matthias, Bern University

Vienna University of Economics & Business
- Current Issues in Nonprofit Management
  - Mag. Hanna Schneider, WU, Austria
- Ethical Issues in Global Business
  - Elisabeth Götze, WU, Austria

Warsaw School of Economics
- Climate Change Policy and Model UNFCCC
  - Dr Maciej Cygler, SGH, Poland

Appendix 3: Business Projects

A Business Project is a consultancy-like project. International student teams solve a real business problem as a one-semester part-time activity tutored by the company and a professor in parallel. These projects reinforce the CEMS partnership between universities and companies in jointly shaping the student learning process in international management.

Koç University
- Corporate Social Responsibility: Creating a culture of change, awareness and responsibility
  - Ozge Pala, KOC, Turkey
  - Selin Tezeren, PricewaterhouseCoopers

National University of Singapore
- Greentree Packaging Environmental Sustainability Project
  - CHENG Peng Sim, NUS, Singapore
  - Lorne Chew, Greentree Packaging Pte Ltd

Richard Ivey School of Business
- Business Continuity Plan with CARE Canada
  - Darren Meister, Ivey, Canada
  - Nick Ayre, Care Canada
Appendix 4: Students’ Internships

More than 60 students (over 890) have worked or volunteered in organizations focusing on sustainability issues. Here are a few examples of these organizations.

| NGO | Amnesty International (Mauritius) |
| Re:To Juvenil Internacional Costa Rica |
| YMCA (Canada) |
| Prime Trust (India) |
| WACT - We Are Changing Together (Portugal) |

| International Organization | United Nations Development Programme (Croatia) |
| European Commission - Youth in Action programme (Turkey) |
| World Vision Development Foundation (Philippines) |
| Global Poverty Project Cambridge (GPP) (United Kingdom) |
| Banco Alimentar Contra a Fome (Portugal) |
| UCD Volunteers Overseas (Nicaragua) |

| Humanitarian Association | Red Cross |
| Mission Quechua (Peru) |
| Association Good Morning Vietnam |
| Paper4All (Burkina Faso) |
| Children’s Model School (Nepal) |
| South American Language Center in Quito (Ecuador) |
| Alternative Camp (Turkey) |
| Fundación Pedagógica Cristal (Nicaragua) |
| Proyecto Horizonte (Bolivia) |
| Green Chimneys Childrens Services (U.S.A.) |
| Albert Einstein Hospital (Brazil) |

<p>| Specialized Consultancy | Anagreen (Lebanon) |
| Carbon Recycling International (Iceland) |
| HMC Services (Republic of Senegal) |
| Greenea (Czech Republic) |
| Green light for business (Italy) |
| E.ON Climate and Renewables (Germany) |
| Volunteer project AfriTour (Togo) |
| SECEUR, Social Enterprise Consulting University Rotterdam (Netherlands) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Microfinance</th>
<th>Credisol (Honduras)</th>
<th>Grameen Bank (Bangladesh)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government initiative</td>
<td>Finnish Defence Forces, Guard Company in the UN Peace-keeping Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE)</td>
<td>Government initiative Culture and Education Development Foundation (Russia) Magen David Adom (Israel) Fondo para el desarrollo local de Honduras (Honduras)</td>
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**Appendix 5: Oikos Foundation**

Oikos, the international students association for sustainable economics and management, is a leading student-driven network. Founded at the University of St Gallen in 1987, oikos now counts more than 35 student chapters, among them a growing number at CEMS campuses.

Oikos’ mission is to strengthen action competence for sustainable development among tomorrow’s decision makers. With a learning-by-doing approach, oikos students implement sustainability-driven innovation and promote the integration of sustainability issues into research and teaching at their schools. For the CEMS students, this translates into a series of events which offer networking and learning opportunities for emerging issues which are rarely covered in economics and management curricula. The nature of the CEMS alliance makes it the ideal context in which networking and learning opportunities can be developed. For example, this year’s Oikos Spring Meeting was organized by Oikos students from CEMS Member School VSE Prague, and focused on Sustainable Architecture. Among other content, it offered visits to leading green architecture sites, workshops on how to make your campus computers climate-neutral, and sustainability career workshop from Oikos alumni.

**Appendix 6: School Partnerships to Change the World**

Article of the New York Times published on October 9, 2011

Like most business school students, Gui Deng Say didn’t set out to change the world. After graduating from the National University of Singapore with a degree in environmental engineering, the 27-year-old decided to stay on and take a master’s degree in international management.

Because Singapore is a member of CEMS, a global alliance of business schools, Mr. Say was able to divide his second year of study between two other CEMS campuses, the École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Paris, or H.E.C., and the London School of Economics. At H.E.C., Mr. Say studied for a Real Estate certificate, and seemed destined for a fast-track career in international property development. But thanks to a chance encounter at the CEMS graduation ceremony he is now working for the Grameen Bank, the microfinance community development bank which, along with its founder, Muhammad Yunus, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.

“I realized that I will have my whole life to pursue my career,” Mr. Say said in an interview. “I thought I should try something really different. And what I’ve learned from my work here is a very different approach to what we were taught in business school. It’s a far more simple and down-to-earth way of doing things. And it’s very effective.”
According to Thomas Bieger, chairman of CEMS and president of the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland, business schools and the nonprofit sector have much to teach each other.

“In the aftermath of the world financial crisis, business schools came in for a lot of criticism,” he said. “Some people argued we were co-responsible for the crisis, because we had been teaching the wrong methods, and not paying enough attention to questions of ethics and sustainability.”

“Actually our faculty has always been interested in corporate social responsibility,” Dr. Bieger said. “And we have always encouraged our students to pay attention to what happens to the employees of a company, and to what happens to the local communities. But we felt that we had to improve our efforts — and to give those efforts more visibility.”

So at the end of last year, CEMS, which had already forged partnerships with more than 70 corporations from the pharmaceutical giant Astra-Zeneca and Google to Shell and Statoil and Zurich insurance, inaugurated its first “social partnerships.”

Like the corporate partners, social partners will be involved in shaping the curriculum, advising on admissions and in some cases actually teaching or developing courses.

“We don’t want passive partners,” said Kevin Titman, a spokesman for the CEMS head office based at H.E.C. It was CEMS students who first came up with, and pushed for, the idea of social partnerships, he said.

Although the group hopes to eventually include a dozen social partners, so far they have formalized relationships with three: CARE, the international aid organization; Fairtrade International, which campaigns for the rights of producers and farmers; and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which aims to improve cross-cultural understanding. A fourth partnership, with Transparency International, the anti-corruption organization, is expected to be announced in the next few weeks.

The new social partners will all be given seats on the CEMS governing body, and, like their corporate counterparts, have privileged access to recruiting CEMS students for internships and as graduates. But while the corporate partners pay €23,000, or $31,000, a year for membership, the social partners will not be charged.

Founded in 1988 as the Community of European Management Schools, CEMS began with just four members: H.E.C. Paris, the Bocconi University in Milan, ESADE in Barcelona, and the University of Cologne. But in recent years the group has expanded far beyond the boundaries of Europe, now comprising 26 member schools including Tsinghua University in China, Keio in Japan, the Graduate School of Management at St. Petersburg University, the Koç University Graduate School of Business in Turkey and the Fundação Getulio Vargas-EAESP in Brazil.

Consistently ranked in the top three programs of its kind, the CEMS Masters in International Management typically attracts students with little or no business experience.

“Our students tend to come to us straight after their undergraduate degrees,” Mr. Titman said.

Students pay no tuition for their second year, he said, and are required to spend at least one term of that year as a student in another CEMS school (though some, like Mr. Say, choose to spend both terms of their second year abroad.) Graduates are awarded two degrees, one from their home university and one from CEMS.
“By the time they finish, all CEMS graduates need to be trilingual, so they usually spend at least one term at a school where they can also work on a language,” he said.

Thomas Bieger said it is precisely the desire to work across national and cultural boundaries that sets CEMS students apart. “Although many of our schools are the best in their respective countries, and are considered quite selective, when we recruit students we tend to focus less on measures like GMAT scores and more on looking for students with the highest cultural sensitivity,” Mr. Bieger said.

Pernille Son Paulsen, a native of Haderslav in Denmark who graduated from CEMS last year, did her undergraduate degree in business, language and culture at the Copenhagen Business School. “I spent my third year in Peru, where I wrote my bachelor’s thesis about the impact of the Fairtrade movement on the country’s coffee growers.”

“One thing I noticed was that although Peru had a lot of export industries, not just coffee but also mining and minerals, all the value-added portion happened outside of Peru,” she said. Although Ms. Paulsen’s languages are Danish, English and Spanish, she spent her final term at the Rotterdam School of Management, where her master’s studies focused on “questions about global governance.”

Ms. Paulsen currently works as an analyst at Fairtrade headquarters in Bonn. She says that forging formal partnerships with social enterprises “will change the mix of people who choose to apply to CEMS,” making the schools more attractive to students like her, who seek to go beyond the traditional focus on the corporate bottom line.

“If you study in a more traditional management program, you look at things like supply chain, marketing, finance,” she said. “At CEMS we do all that, but this also gives us the ability to add questions about sustainability and corporate social responsibility.”

Apart from access to an idealistic cohort of young people, what do the social partners hope to gain from their involvement?

Robert Glasser is secretary general of CARE, based in Geneva. “Our relationship grew out of conversations between some of our directors in Paris and the CEMS council,” he said in an interview. “For us it offered the chance to try and interest some of the brightest students in the world to consider alternatives to a traditional business career.”

“We get phone calls all the time from mid-level executives, very successful people who want to change their careers. It’s like a gap in their souls isn’t being filled. This gives us a chance to reach these people when they are still young.”

Dr. Glasser also said his organization “can draw on CEMS students to do consulting on our projects or business plans. They’re still students, and the work may not always be of the highest quality. But it’s probably better than a lot of the consultants we pay for.”

He said that while CARE hasn’t yet had a chance to have staff members teach courses: “For me that will also be quite important. I get invited to go to a lot of schools and give a talk. But this is a structural change in the way students see the world, and that can have a lot more impact.”

Ms. Paulsen and Mr. Say would agree. After less than a year at Grameen Bank, Mr. Say, who still hopes to succeed as an entrepreneur, said that “in the long term I’d like to enter the social enterprise sector. “I don’t want to exclude any future,” said Ms. Paulsen.
But her experiences at CEMS and at Fairtrade have led her to believe she may not have to choose between doing good and doing well. “Even conventional businesses are beginning to think more about sustainability,” she said.