

# BRILL IN 2021

## CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

Corporate social responsibility is embedded in Brill's mission statement: by offering the best possible service and infrastructure to disseminate academic research, Brill contributes to an environment in which knowledge and academic development can thrive, and which is beneficial to society at large. Our corporate sustainability policy can only be successful if it ties in with our core capabilities and the long-term interests of our stakeholders. Consequently, we focus on initiatives where we feel we can make a difference. At the same time, we strive for high standards and permanent improvement in all general facets of responsible corporate citizenship.

### Brill focuses on two areas:

- A leading or participating role in areas where Brill's core capabilities can be leveraged to further the development of the global scholarly community;
- Permanent improvement in those areas that promote general corporate responsibility.

At Brill, responsibility for ESG lies with the VP Marketing who is part of the Management Team and reports directly to the CEO. On a regular basis, ESG is discussed with the Supervisory Board. In 2021, we have also had discussions with one of our largest shareholders on this subject and we have used their input to improve our reporting and further develop our CSR strategy.

## UN GLOBAL COMPACT

Brill's Corporate Sustainability program is driven by our membership of the UN Global Compact and our commitment to contribute to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These goals play a central role in our publishing program, as they are core themes in the research we publish, but they also shape the way we do business.

We actively seek to expand the research we publish on the SDGs. In addition, we strive to disseminate this research as widely as possible. Of course this is done through our regular distribution channels, but we also focus on this research on our Humanities Matter blog at [www.blog.brill.com](http://www.blog.brill.com) as well as in our Humanities Matter podcast series on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts. Examples of this in 2021 were the campaigns around *In Chains*, which focused on slavery, both historically and in modern times, *Across the Rainbow*, a campaign around gender diversity, *Survival by Degrees* on climate change and *Quality Education*. An overview of these campaigns can be found at [www.brill.com/podcasts](http://www.brill.com/podcasts).

*Illustration representing the UN Sustainable Development Goals that are driving Brill's CSR policy.*





### In Chains

There's more to slavery than a boxed view of chains and transatlantic ships; it's happening right now, in the form of human trafficking. The world has more enslaved people today than ever before. UN's International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that one in 200 people is in some form of slavery, comprised of a majority of women and children. The series *In Chains* discusses and tackles issues related to slavery and human trafficking— from ancient to medieval to modern times.



### Across the Rainbow

Gender is complex, nuanced, a cultural identity, a meeting point of personality and society, a way for people to reconcile their bodies and experiences with those of others. In the themed podcast series *Across the Rainbow*, scholars from the field explore gender equality: its past, present, and future.



### Survival by Degrees

As one of the most serious threats to life on our planet, the climate crisis is no longer something we can address in the future, we must act on it now. In the podcast series *Survival by Degrees*, our authors reflect on climate change and global warming.



### Quality Education

Quality education contributes to a healthier, more stable and prosperous society. The podcast series *Quality Education* features experts in learning and education, who have published with Brill.



Brill also participated in an industry-wide initiative to make content around climate change more accessible with summaries for a broad audience and combining content from different publishers in one portal. This initiative can be accessed at <https://info.growkudos.com/climate-change-knowledge-cooperative>.

We embed the SDGs in our business decisions and monitor our progress. Below we outline key developments in 2021. As we are preparing for ESG reporting our ambitions are not always concrete yet. We will finalize the preparations in 2022.

SDG 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Unfortunately, 2021 continued to be an especially challenging year in terms of health and well-being. We continued to see the effects of COVID-19 and the lockdowns in our communities and Brill offices continued to experience lockdowns. Some of our staff members were affected by illness themselves, or in their immediate environments. Others struggled with the combination of taking care of family and home-schooling children while working from home. Yet others suffered from isolation and missed direct contact with colleagues. In our wider community of authors and editors we saw the same struggles. Brill created an overview of publications related to COVID-19, which were made freely available during the entire year. The COVID-19 collection was the most viewed campaign of 2021. Research on topics such as isolation, loneliness and human connection is vital to societal well-being. Similarly, research in education and home-schooling, and the history and social effects of pandemics, all being areas of study in which the humanities contribute significantly to our coping mechanisms in times of crisis.

The health and well-being of our staff, both physically and mentally, is of the utmost importance to Brill. We have witnessed the significant ways in which COVID-19 impacted our staff and are committed to supporting our employees in the best possible ways. Measures to assist in navigating these challenging times were introduced, including possibility to work from home (mandatory when required by lockdown regulations), flexible hours, and paid short care leave. In the US, a unique scheme of an employee sharing pool of paid time off was introduced.

SDG 4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Education is at the core of our mission: We operate from a strong belief that the Humanities, Social Sciences and International Law are areas of scholarship vital for addressing today's global challenges. This belief motivates us to offer our authors the best possible service and infrastructure to disseminate their research. In order to advance discovery and learning, we are keen to support scholars by providing them with access to the finest research tools and reference works in their fields. The relevance and high quality of the works we publish are key to the sustainability of our business.

Open Access

In order to support a wide dissemination of the research we publish, we invest in Open Access (OA), our fastest growing business model. In 2021, we published 154 books in OA, 34 full OA journals and +650 OA articles. We signed four new Open Access agreements and offered OA waivers and discounts in 38 countries under the EIFL agreement. More information on this can be found at [www.brill.com/EIFL](http://www.brill.com/EIFL) In addition, two Open Access agreements that will take effect in 2022 were concluded.

- 154 OA books
- 34 full OA journals
- +650 OA articles
- 4 Institutional Open Access agreements, two new agreements signed for 2022

Research Integrity

To offer quality education, we also require research integrity. Brill has a Publication Ethics Committee that oversees our policies in this area and addresses any cases of a breach of those policies. Brill's revised publication ethics conform to the standards of ethical behaviour promulgated by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Brill's staff and publishing partners are expected to promote adherence to the core principles of publication ethics as articulated in this document. The policy can be read in full on [brill.com](http://brill.com). Milestones in 2021 around research integrity included the enabling of iThenticate for all Brill journals and an added submission step for peer reviewers that requires disclosure of any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

SDG 5 GENDER EQUALITY

For gender equality, we look both at the division across gender throughout the organization and at the gender pay gap. In recent years, we have noted increased attention towards the gender pay gap in the industry, with several publishers publishing data on average pay across gender. There is a distinction between the gender pay gap and the principle of equal pay, which is important to define. The gender pay gap is based on the difference between the average hourly pay rate between men and women. In contrast, the equal pay issue is one of discrimination: paying men and women different amounts for performing the same job. The UK government has made it mandatory for employers with more than 250 FTE to publish data comparing men and women's average pay across the organization. The data is publicly available: <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/>. Data from our industry showed pay gaps in favour of men, particularly in bonus payments, and women under-represented in the upper quartile. The industry has committed to improvements.

In 2021, Brill staff and management has the following division across gender:

- Supervisory Board: 33% female, 67% male
- Management Board: 33% female, 67% male
- Management Team: 33% female, 67% male
- All staff: 65% female, 35% male

In 2021, Brill's gender pay gap is as follows:

- Management Board: 19% in favour of men
- Management Team: 34% in favour of men
- All staff: 16% in favour of men

It is clear that there is a discrepancy between the number of female staff across the company and the percentage of women in management positions. In addition, we note a gender pay gap in line with the publishing industry at large. In order to improve this, we need to examine and address the root causes and will do so from three aspects: transparency, flexibility, and discrimination.

A first step in the process is transparency. Reporting on these figures annually will assist the company in monitoring improvement and in taking additional measures if improvements do not take place quickly enough. In 2021, a project describing all job functions and weighing them according to a standard model set by the AWWN (General Employers Association of the Netherlands) was finalized in the Leiden office. The weighting process itself was, conducted by the AWWN as an external party. Brill employees were involved and their input on their job function descriptions was incorporated. As a result, a new function grid, including transparent salary scales, was created and made available to all employees.

In addition to transparency, we consider providing flexibility to our employees part of the solution to the gender pay gap. A key aspect in the gender division in management roles (and therefore also salaries) is the larger percentage of women in part-time positions. During COVID, many of our employees - across gender - struggled with combining family care and working from home. We have tried to support the staff by offering flexible working hours, with no negative consequences resulting for the company. On the contrary,

it was observed that employees took responsibility for key deadlines and managed to combine their different roles in an improved way. Brill would like to facilitate flexible hours also in the long term in order to foster an improved work-life balance. Additionally, Brill will continue to provide the option to work from home. Our standard policy for full-time employees is to work three days from the office and two days from home. Employee preferences beyond this standard will be facilitated if possible.

Finally, in order to ensure that a safe working space is provided and that discrimination is avoided at all times, Brill has several policies already embedded in Brill's HR framework. Confidential advisors are assigned within the company, to whom employees can (anonymously if desired) report incidents and seek support as necessary. The safe work environment will be a point of renewed attention in 2022.

## SDG 10 REDUCING INEQUALITY

### Diversity and Inclusion

We value diversity and inclusion among our staff, authors, and editors. To this end, we have joined the initiative from the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) to take action to reduce bias across all stages of the publishing process. This initiative brings together 32 publishing organizations to set a new standard aimed at ensuring a more inclusive and diverse culture within scholarly publishing. As a group, we acknowledge that biases exist in scholarly publishing and commit to examining our own processes to minimize them. Through the RSC initiative, publishers are pooling resources, expertise, and insight to accelerate change in research culture.

Collectively we will:

#### 1. Understand our research community

We will collaborate to enable diversity data to be self-reported by members of our community, and we will work towards a collective and compliant system so that researchers only need to self-report data once. We will share and analyse anonymized diversity data to understand where action is needed.

#### 2. Reflect the diversity of our community

We will use anonymized data to uncover subject-specific diversity baselines, and set minimum targets to achieve appropriate and inclusive representation of our authors, reviewers, and editorial decision-makers.

#### 3. Share success to achieve impact

We will share and develop new and innovative resources to improve representation and inclusivity of diverse groups. We will transparently share policies, measurements, language, and standards, to move inclusion and diversity in publishing forward together.

#### 4. Set minimum standards on which to build

We will scrutinize our own publishing processes and take action to achieve a minimum standard for inclusion in publishing, based initially on the Royal Society of Chemistry's Framework for Action in Scientific Publishing. We will engage all relevant stakeholders to improve outcomes on inclusion and diversity, at all stages of the publishing process.

### Accessibility

Brill is committed to ensuring our websites are easily accessible for everyone. By adopting best practices and striving to adhere to current guidelines and recommendations, we are continuously working towards improving accessibility. Wherever possible, Brill strives to comply with Section 508 Amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, EN 201 549 Accessibility requirements suitable for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe – v2.1.2 (2018-08) and level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1).

### Developing Countries

Brill's sustainability policy also manifests itself in the company's Developing Countries Program. As part of its research capacity building strategy, Brill has an Adopt-a-Library program in place through which it annually donates collections of books to libraries and universities in developing countries. These donations are supported by workshops for academics and librarians that focus on how faculty can increase the impact of their research by publishing nationally and internationally and how to make the best use of limited resources. Such workshops are given throughout the year by Brill publishers as part of research capacity building. Brill's endeavors in this context tie in with existing initiatives, such as Research4Life and INASP's Author Aid, an online mentoring system of international academics and researchers that promotes coaching and the exchange of knowledge between developed and developing countries in a very practical and effective manner. To advance accessibility and distribution, Brill offers discounts on its Open Access fees to academics and scientists in developing countries as part of its Brill Open Program.

### Partnerships that Support Research Communities

Brill actively participates in existing education programs and takes initiatives that are developed in cooperation with professional publishers and international organizations. Examples include Research4Life, INASP, Association of Commonwealth Universities, and Publishers for Development. As part of Research4Life, Brill co-founded and launched a new program in 2018 focusing on International Law called Global Online Access to Legal Information (GOALI). This was done in close cooperation with academic libraries such as Yale and Cornell Law School libraries, the Library of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva as the lead UN entity, and other academic publishers and key stakeholders.

### Sponsorships

In addition to participating in international partnerships, we nurture and promote cultural heritage and the research community in our home town, Leiden. Leiden University deserves a special mention in this regard. The Brill Fellowship available at the Scaliger Institute makes it possible for researchers to study the special collections of Leiden University's library and is just one example of the ways in which the company demonstrates its loyalty to the city and its university. Brill also contributes to Leiden's annual VeerStichting symposium and fosters and maintains positive relations with Dutch heritage institutes. The company has granted corporate sponsorship to the Siebold Museum (Japan Studies) and Rijksmuseum Boerhaave (History of Science), both of which are in Leiden.

Actively contributing to these initiatives supports the future development of the global scholarly community and Brill's network within that community. Therefore, we strongly believe that an active policy in this regard is in the interest of all stakeholders.

## SDG 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Brill's vendor policy contains unequivocal provisions pertaining to social conditions (the exclusion of child labour and corruption, for example) and the substances and materials to be used. Brill's General Business Principles are clear about our values and their impact on the conduct of our business. Brill aims to be a reliable, responsible, and attractive employer.

Brill companies insist on integrity and fairness in all aspects of business and expect the same from our business partners. The direct or indirect offer, payment, soliciting, or acceptance of a bribe in any form is unacceptable. We do not engage in the practice of facilitation payments to accelerate or secure the performance of a routine government action.

Employees must avoid conflicts of interest between their private activities and conducting company business. Employees must also declare potential conflicts of interest. All business transactions on behalf of a Brill company must be reflected accurately and fairly in the accounts of the company in accordance with established procedures and are subject to audit and disclosure.

As a publicly listed company, Brill is committed to compliance with rules against insider trading. In our interactions with employees, business partners, and local communities, we seek to listen and respond honestly and responsibly.

Brill staff is committed to the responsible use of digital communications and social media in line with Group policies. We comply with applicable laws and regulations of the countries in which we operate.

Brill's tax policy is aimed at achieving an efficient tax structure while paying fair amounts due in the jurisdictions where it does business. The transfer pricing arrangements put in place within the Group are aimed at being sustainable within the context of the current OECD initiatives and concerns that have emerged in the global community and the digital economy.

SDG 13 CLIMATE ACTION

For several years, Brill has compensated the CO2 usage of marketing materials. In 2020, we investigated how we can expand CO2 compensation to other areas and extended the policy to include business travel. All flights taken in 2020 and 2021 were compensated retrospectively. Although offset compensation is a positive step, less frequent travel is preferable. In 2020 and 2021, Brill travelled much less frequently due to COVID-19. During this period, we successfully transitioned to working from home, attending conferences virtually, and communicating with our communities via video calls. Personal relations and in-person contact are vital in providing our service level for authors and editors, but video meetings will remain mainstream in our overall communications. We will return to meeting our authors and editors at live events once possible, but will be mindful of the necessity to travel, especially by plane. We have devised a travel policy that promotes the use of trains whenever possible, and focuses on using local staff to attend conferences, thereby avoiding long distance travel when possible.

The effects of COVID-19 accelerated the move from print to digital promotion that was already underway in Brill's marketing strategy. Print materials are kept to a minimum and are printed locally to avoid long distance shipments. Linen bags have been created to replace the use of plastic at conferences.

The number of gratis journal issues printed and shipped has been significantly reduced in favour of digital access, and the use of plastic wrappings on our print books was similarly reduced by changing our cover materials. In addition, our print suppliers have Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. The universal 'Brill' typeface, the use of which saves time and money, was developed as an efficient and therefore paper-friendly font family.

In order to take further action in reducing and compensating CO2, in 2021 Brill partnered with Regreener to chart our CO2 usage, reduce hotspots, and compensate where necessary. In 2022, we will begin to chart scopes 1 and 2 for reporting in our next annual report. Scope 3 will follow in 2023. The reduction of CO2 is viewed as objective within Brill globally and the company intends to involve staff across all locations in this project, as set forth in a strategy presentation in 2021 to all staff by management. In 2022, a working group on this topic to work with our external partners on the initiative will be launched. In addition, we initiated the compensation of the personal CO2 footprint of our employees through Regreener in 2021.

SDG 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

As mentioned above, Brill's research related to the SDGs is especially strong for SDG 16, which can be seen in the offerings of our International Law and Human Rights program. In this light, we are also proud of our cooperation with The Hague Academy of International Law on whose behalf Brill publishes *The Hague Academy Collected Courses* and other publications.

POLICIES

To create a coherent framework for the conduct of business within the Brill Group, Brill has the following policies in place:

- 1. Corporate Governance statement
- 2. Brill Code of Conduct
- 3. Vendor Policy
- 4. Remuneration Policy
- 5. Risk Management Policy
- 6. Whistleblower Policy
- 7. Code of Conduct on Insider Trading
- 8. Guidelines on publication ethics for editors, authors, and reviewers

For documents listed above which are not included in this report, please refer to Brill.com. The Management Board monitors the effects of the above-mentioned policies on a regular basis by discussing them with the HR manager, the appointed trusted persons, and the Works Council.



BRILL