



*Money or social impact?
Coherence or innovation?
Digital or human work?*

*Most leaders struggle to select the best out of
contradictory options, while some change the
world by choosing not to select.*

Paradox & Plurality

23th MAY 2018 | LEADERSHIP & SOCIETY
FORUM

Exploring the power of paradoxical thinking, plural
approaches, dynamic equilibrium, and consistent
inconsistency to transform business and society

with: LINDA PUTNAM, LUCA GUSTINIANO,
and JONATHAN SCHAD.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Presently, leaders all around the world are confronted with ambiguous solutions to different problems, creating tensions when inevitably there are no right answers.

The time has come to create tools so that paradoxes can be accepted as challenges, and pluralities can be received with creativity and tolerance.

The Leadership & Society Forum on Paradox & Plurality taking place the 23rd of May is a preliminary event which aim to involve researchers, academics, and faculty members from different universities and realities to define the state of Paradox research throughout an Informal research presentation where the public is incentivized to actively participate. The discussion is going to be led by Linda Putnam, Luca Giustiniano and Jonathan Schad, global top researchers that aim to introduce Paradoxical and Plural perspectives in social sciences, and particularly in managerial studies.

As part of the partnership between the Amélia de Mello Foundation and Nova SBE, this year, the first annual Leadership & Society Forum will be held on May 23rd & 24th.

2. CONCEPT

Should organizations invest in projects that are economically viable or privilege those that create value to different stakeholders, even if not profitable? In a world of limited resources, should healthcare systems increase patient care or privilege cost effective solutions? Open and closed, digital and human, are contradictory ways of working: which should organizations privilege?

These questions have no clear answer. Traditional management models may indicate that there is one best option to select and that different contexts will lead to different choices, but they rarely consider that the question is not to be “solved”. To a ground-breaking field of research that explores paradox and plurality, the problem with these questions is their “either/or” nature. Leaders are often pressured to emphasize opposing options and behave consistently towards their choices, creating tensions from unwanted manifestations of the unselected and the forgotten voices. It is time to provide them with tools to address contradictions as recurrent challenges and embrace the tensions with tolerance and creativity. This calls for a different kind of sensitivity and approach to problem-solving, far more based on sense-making, mindfulness, and stakeholder dialogue across different sectors of society.

Paradoxes have always been present in society, but they are increasingly salient to decision-makers and researchers, because they emerge naturally in a world of increased volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, brought by globalization and digitalization.

This year’s Leadership & Society Forum will address this challenge with an inclusive and interdisciplinary approach to research, focused on co-creating knowledge with business ecosystems and the society at large. Paradoxical approaches are brought to interdisciplinary and practical discussions on:

- The state of paradoxical research
- Methodological approaches to paradox and plurality

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE FORUM

The Leadership & Society Forum is an Annual event, sponsored by Fundação Amélia de Mello’s Chair on Leadership and intends to be a space of collaboration between Science, Corporations and Society. This first day of the forum is dedicated to the academics’ interest on the topic, or that want to stay updated on the latest discussions on the areas covered. The Forum is co-sponsored by Nova School of Business and Economics, Câmara Municipal de Cascais, and Revista LÍDER.

- **Engaging business and societal stakeholders in an inclusive knowledge hub** to co-create high quality research and bring new understandings on old themes that were traditionally investigated and discussed with polarized views and disregard for the society at large. The Forum will be explicitly interdisciplinary and intends to build intellectual and social resources that establish a fruitful dialogue among research communities and the society they serve.
- **Uncovering the paradoxical tensions that both drive and hinder societal development**, by exploring the potential of conflict as a source of creativity and by preparing the research communities, the public and private leaders, and the society at large, to a future that is not driven by predictable patterns but instead by the co-evolution of plural realities. By creating bridges that link different stakeholders in open reflections about our paradoxical realities, the Forum will expose the bright and dark sides of innovation, the co-existence of different rhythms and paces of business disruption and public regulation, and the need to reconcile the early adopters with the excluded from innovative technologies.

4. AGENDA

May 23rd: PRE-EVENT AGENDA Leadership & Society Forum 2018

11:00 – 12:30	Informal research presentation to Faculty and PhD Students: “The state of Paradox research” (L.Putnam, L.Giustiniano & J.Schad) @Nova SBE Campus – auditorium 102
12:30 – 14:00	Optional Lunch with researchers (limited first come first serve basis) @Nova SBE Campus – Room 306

Note: The attendance is also open to partners and other Universities.

5. VENUE & DATE

The Leadership & Society Forum will take place on the 23th of May at the Nova SBE Facilities.

Nova School of Business & Economics, Campus de Campolide, 1099-032 Lisboa Portugal

HOW TO GET THERE:

By public transport: the simplest way is to arrive at the metro station of São Sebastião (Blue and Red Line). When disembarking at the station of São Sebastião exit in the side of the street Avenida Ressano Garcia (and not in the commercial center “El Corte Inglés”). Then follow the Avenida Ressano Garcia until arriving to the Central Mosque of Lisbon on your right, by keep following to that direction you will have in front of you the Santander building, which on the left you will notice the gates to enter Nova SBE.

When entered in Nova SBE, please follow the slightly steep street that will lead you to the main building (an 19th-century building). By entering you might ask the kind guardians for direction to the auditorium 102. It is located after the entrance 30 meters on your left.

Busses arriving nearby Nova SBE Campolide Campus: 701, 713, 716, 726, 742, 746, 756, 758, 770

CONTACTS

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