



”

Imagine future with hope and act on the potentials so that a sustainable future can start unfolding from the now”

HANNA LEHTIMÄKI

Professor innovation management, leadership, strategic management, social networks, circular economy

- Leads the **Research Center for Sustainable Circular Economy**, leads **Sustainable innovation research group** at UEF Business School, is a vice director of **RESOURCE Research Community** at the UEF.
- Holds **leadership positions in interdisciplinary and international research projects** that examine **circular economy of critical materials** for electric mobility and **microplastics**.
- Enjoys time with family, outdoor activities, gardening and knitting. **Visible mending**, a sustainability act to lengthen the life of used clothing, is her latest interest.



Hanna Lehtimäki, what are you currently researching?



I study **circular economy as a systemic innovation that supports the sustainability transition in business and society**. My research group examines economic, environmental and social sustainability of business in the local, national, and global value ecosystems. Also, we are looking into sustainable leadership and strategic management from the humanist and appreciative innovation perspectives. **I lead a Finnish Indian research consortium to address sustainable innovation on microplastics in the global North and South**. Two other current research projects focus on catalyzing circular economy implementation in society, and circular economy of critical materials for electric mobility.



What got you interested in sustainable circular economy?



I started my academic career with an interest in what people do in organizations. That has led me to study practice theory, meaning making in social interaction, social networks, relational leadership, appreciative inquiry, and narrative methods. **In studying sustainable innovation in circular economy, I draw from my broad-based background in management and organization theories and interpretive methodologies.**



How does your research benefit from an interdisciplinary approach?



Interdisciplinary research is fun! You get to work with talented and enthusiastic scholars who share a passion for addressing complex issues in society. Collaboration with scholars from different disciplines is a continuous learning process, and that is exciting. The climate crisis and biodiversity loss require immediate action from everyone. Engaging in interdisciplinary research allows for framing the research questions so that they are relevant for seeking solutions to complex issues in business and society.



If you could give your best piece of advice to a younger colleague, what would it be?



My advice is this: **1)** Write your personal mission statement. **2)** Put your heart and soul to making it happen. **3)** Do not hurry, do not worry, trust the process. **4)** Put yourself out there and join the dialogue.



What resource could you not live without?



I am perfectly happy with a ball of wool, needles, coffee and video streaming services. And, of course, I cherish the moments with laughter and joy, when I get together with family, friends or colleagues.