



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**IMD establishes a new management and innovation research center backed by the LEGO® brand**

Lausanne, Switzerland, and Billund, Denmark, 3 September 2020; The Institute for Management Development (IMD) and the LEGO Brand Group, an entity within KIRKBI A/S, today announced a joint cutting-edge research initiative.

The initiative includes the establishment of a new research center at IMD, The Center for Future Readiness (CFR), backed by a multi-million-dollar grant from the LEGO Brand Group. The new research center builds on the Endowed LEGO® Chair of Management and Innovation – a cooperation between IMD and the LEGO brand that dates back to the 1990s.

Howard Yu, LEGO Professor of Management and Innovation since 2018, will lead the center. He said:

“The mission of the Center for Future Readiness is to filter the noise, to lay bare what impacts organizations so that managers can take actions anchored in reality and conviction. The biggest danger of a crisis is distraction. Clarity matters. I would like to express my gratitude to KIRKBI and the LEGO Brand Group for their support and funding, which comes with no preconditions. Such support allows IMD to build up a research program that explains how and why some companies are able to sustain new growth while others can't.”

Jørgen Vig Knudstorp, Executive Chairman of LEGO Brand Group, commented:

“Established brands – the LEGO brand included – continuously have to go beyond their existing capabilities in order to stay relevant while anchored in their original brand and organizational identity. We need research on management and innovation more than ever. Professor Howard Yu and IMD deliver original thoughts and research that equip both academia and business communities to better understand how to succeed with renewing businesses. I very much look forward to following the future work of the center.”

Professor Yu is the author of *LEAP*, an award-winning business bestseller on how pioneering companies can endure and prosper in a world of constant change and inevitable copycats. The [Center for Future Readiness](#) will conduct research that will also build on the method behind the LEAP Readiness Index, which will allow companies and leaders across different sectors to benchmark on their readiness for the future and learn from others on how to manage changes effectively.

**ENDS -----**

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### **About IMD**

IMD is an independent academic institution with Swiss roots and global reach, founded almost 75 years ago by business leaders for business leaders. Since its creation, IMD has been a pioneering force in developing leaders who transform organizations and contribute to society. Based in Lausanne and Singapore, IMD has been ranked in the Top 3 of the annual FT's Executive Education Global Ranking for the last nine consecutive years and in the top five for 17 consecutive years.

This consistency at the forefront of its industry is grounded in IMD's unique approach to creating "Real Learning. Real Impact". Led by an expert and diverse faculty, IMD strives to be the trusted learning partner of choice for ambitious individuals and organizations worldwide. Challenging what is and inspiring what could be.

Follow IMD on <http://www.imd.org> [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

### **About KIRKBI and LEGO Brand Group**

KIRKBI A/S is the Kirk Kristiansen family's private holding and investment company founded to build a sustainable future for the family ownership of the LEGO® brand through generations. The company's work is focused on fundamental tasks contributing to enabling the Kirk Kristiansen family to succeed with the mission to inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow. LEGO Brand Group, an entity within KIRKBI, works to protect, develop and leverage the LEGO brand across all the LEGO branded entities. KIRKBI's strategic activities include 75% ownership of the LEGO Group and 50% ownership of Merlin Entertainments. The company's investment activities also include investments in renewable energy and significant long-term investments in companies as well as real estate investments in Denmark, Switzerland, Germany and the UK. Read more at [www.KIRKBI.com](http://www.KIRKBI.com)

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