

# VINAYAK (VIN) SHARMA, PhD

FRSA · AFHEA

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## Profile Summary

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My research examines how organisations develop the capabilities needed to navigate circular economy transitions, with particular focus on the social dimensions that established frameworks consistently underestimate. Drawing on 50+ semi-structured interviews with C-suite executives across multinational enterprises, my PhD proposed 'reacting' as a fourth dynamic capability extending Teece's sensing-seizing-reconfiguring framework – two manuscripts are currently under review at *Business & Society* and *Journal of Management Studies*. As Postdoctoral Research Associate on the DECHI programme at the University of Exeter, I am now extending this lens into healthcare, examining how digital technologies enable whole-system circular innovation within NHS contexts. This empirical work has generated active partnerships with Defra, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, and NHS England, bridging academic inquiry and policy-relevant impact.

**Areas of Research Interest** Circular Economy Transitions · Business Model Innovation · Dynamic Capabilities · Social Value Integration · Sustainability Strategy · Organisational Change · Digital Product Passports · Circular Healthcare Innovation

**Areas of Teaching Interest** Strategic Management · Organisational Behaviour · Entrepreneurship & New Venture Creation · Circular Economy & Sustainability · Innovation Management · Human Resource Management · Corporate Strategy

## Academic Appointments

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**Postdoctoral Research Associate** | University of Exeter Business School

*Digitally Enabled Circular Healthcare Innovation (DECHI) Programme* - EPSRC-funded, Universities of Exeter, Sheffield & Cambridge | January 2026 – July 2027

- Workstream lead on whole-system adoption, behaviour change, circular innovation, and digital technology enablement within NHS healthcare contexts.
- Developing evidence-based frameworks for digital and circular healthcare innovation through empirical research with NHS Trusts, MedTech SMEs, and policy stakeholders.

**Lecturer in Management** | University of Exeter Business School | October 2025 – April 2027

Maternity cover. Department of Management. (Prior: Teaching Associate / Adjunct Faculty, September 2022 – September 2025)

- Teaching across Organisational Behaviour, Human Resource Management, Entrepreneurship, Circular Economy, and Strategic Management at undergraduate, postgraduate, and MBA levels.

**Guest Faculty** | UCL School of Management, University College London | October 2025 – Present

- Strategy and Entrepreneurship Group: Business and Corporate Strategy (BSc International Management).
- Executive Education: Co-facilitating Executive Negotiations with Dr Jim Berry, UCL MBA Director.
- Global Engagement: Summer Schools on Innovation Ecosystems for Grand Challenges with Prof. Magda Hercheui and Entrepreneurship and Innovation with Prof. Simon Hulme.

## Education

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**PhD, Circular Economy** | University of Exeter, UK (Awarded March 2026) [Fully Funded, UKRI NICER Programme]

*Thesis: "Circular Business Model Design: Harmonising Social Value with Economic and Environmental Considerations"*

- Affiliated with the UN-backed International Centre of Excellence for Circular Economy Research within the UKRI National Interdisciplinary Circular Economy Research (NICER) Programme (£30M).

- Multi-case qualitative study (Gioia methodology) with 50+ semi-structured interviews with C-suite executives and senior leaders across three multinational enterprises (automotive aftermarket and equipment rental sectors), with combined revenues exceeding £50B.
- Proposed 'reacting' as a fourth dynamic capability extending Teece's sensing-seizing-reconfiguring framework, with two manuscripts currently under review at leading journals.
- Supervisors: Professor Allen Alexander, Professor Fiona Charnley, Professor Erno Tornikoski.

**Visiting Researcher** | Centre for Sustainable Business (CSB), King's College London (June 2025 – December 2025)

**Visiting Researcher** | Venice International University Summer School, Venice, Italy (2024)

**MSc, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management** | University of Exeter, UK (2021–22) [Fully Funded]

- Recipient of the Global Excellence Scholarship. School Commendation List (90th percentile).

**BSc, Business Administration** | Symbiosis International University, India (2016–19)

- Dual specialisation in Finance and Marketing. Chancellor's Gold Medal for Outstanding Academic Achievement. International Student Representative on Student Council.

## Research Output

### Journal Articles Under Review

Sharma, V., Alexander, A., Charnley, F. & Tornikoski, E. (Under Review). Reacting to the Social: Dynamic Capability Development and the Integration of Social Considerations in Circular Economy Business Model Transitions. *Business & Society*.

Sharma, V., Alexander, A., Tornikoski, E. & Charnley, F. (Under Review). When Empirical Anomalies Demand Theoretical Innovation: Abductive Systematic Combining and the Proposed Extension of Dynamic Capabilities Theory. *Journal of Management Studies*.

### Invited Full Paper Submission

Sharma, V., Alexander, A. & Charnley, F. (Invited). From Within: Internal Complexities, Trade-Offs, and Tensions of Firms in Sustainability Transitions. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*. [Full paper due September 2026]

### Research Impact

Doctoral research cited in an industry sustainability report by a NYSE and FTSE-listed multinational: LKQ Corporation. (2025). 2025 sustainability report: Doing our part for a more sustainable world (p. 18).

### Research Reports & Case Studies

Sharma, V. & Bermudez, D. (2026). Advanced Clothing Solutions: Digital Technology Enabling Circular Fashion at Scale. *DICE Network+, EPSRC*.

Sharma, V. (2025). Moss Bros: Circular Business Model Innovation in Fashion Rental. *Exeter Centre for Circular Economy / Ellen MacArthur Foundation Executive Masterclass Series*.

Sharma, V. (2025). Vitsoe: Product Longevity and Circular Design. *Exeter Centre for Circular Economy / Ellen MacArthur Foundation Executive Masterclass Series*.

Sharma, V. (2025). Traceless: Rethinking Plastic Packaging through Circular Innovation. *Exeter Centre for Circular Economy / Ellen MacArthur Foundation Executive Masterclass Series*.

Sharma, V. (2025). LEGO: Circularity in Consumer Goods at Scale. *Exeter Centre for Circular Economy / Ellen MacArthur Foundation Executive Masterclass Series*.

Sharma, V. & Mancholev, C. (2023). Collaborative Autoethnography in Higher Education Pedagogy: A Literature Review. *University of Exeter*.

Sharma, V. & Sealy, R. (2023). Business School Professional Body Inclusivity: Research Report. *University of Exeter Business School*.

### Industry Reports

Sharma, V., Bansal, A., Shah, H., Shah, S., Bhasin, S. & Malya, S. (2022). Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) and the Indian Higher Education System. *Institute of Risk Management India*.

Sharma, V. & Shah, D. (2017). An Insight for an Aspirant in the Indian Forging Industry. *Association of Indian Forging Industries Quarterly*, 12(2), 23–31.

### **Conference Papers (Peer-Reviewed)**

#### *Forthcoming*

Sharma, V., Alexander, A. & Charnley, F. (September 2026). Reacting to the Social: Dynamic Capability Development and the Integration of Social Considerations in Circular Economy Business Model Transitions. *British Academy of Management Annual Conference, Sussex*.

Sharma, V., Alexander, A. & Charnley, F. (September 2026). Navigating Circular Economy Transitions in the Automotive Sector: A Comparative Study of Social Value Integration Across Organisational Maturity Stages. *Industry Studies Association International Conference, Oxford*.

#### *Presented*

Sharma, V., Alexander, A. & Charnley, F. (June 2026). Beyond Planning: Reactive Capabilities in Circular Economy Social Integration. *ISPIM Innovation Conference*.

Sharma, V., Tornikoski, E. & Alexander, A. (2025). Theoretical Extensions in Dynamic Capabilities Framework. *New Business Model (NBM) Conference, Reykjavík*.

Sharma, V., Alexander, A., Tornikoski, E. & Charnley, F. (2024). Organizational Navigation of Circular Economy Transitions. *International Association of Business and Society (IABS) Annual Conference, Maastricht*.

Sharma, V., Charnley, F. & Alexander, A. (2024). Social Value Integration in Circular Business Models. *Venice International University (VIU) Summer School, Venice; International Conference on Resource Sustainability (iCRS), Bangkok*.

Sharma, V., Tiwari, M. & Green, M. (2024). Business Model Innovation Tools: A Systematic Review. *British Academy of Management (BAM) Annual Conference, Nottingham; Business & Society Research Seminar, IÉSEG, Paris*.

## **Grants & Funding**

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### **Successful Funding & Research Allowances**

#### **ESRC funded Postdoctoral Fellowship | £110,150 | 2026–27**

Southeast Doctoral Training Arc (SEDarC) postdoctoral fellowship hosted at University of Surrey for early career researcher development.

#### **UKRI Small Grant - DICE Network+ | £5,000 | 2026–27**

UKRI grant funding for roadshow of my published case study on digital technologies enabling circular economy adoption, enabling journal paper development

#### **University of Exeter Business School Education Incubator Grant | £10,000 | 2024–25**

Student Co-creator. Theme: Future-Positive Skills. Project: “Decolonising Sustainability Education: Co-Creating Inclusive, Intercultural and Future-Positive Curricula.” Led student-led focus groups on lived learning experiences, co-designed inclusive teaching materials, developed practitioner toolkit, and contributed to conference dissemination.

#### **Research Allowance, University of Exeter Business School | £5,721.40 | 2023–25**

Conference attendance funding: NBM Conference, Reykjavík (£1,779); IABS, Maastricht (£1,609); iCRS, Bangkok (£1,247); BAM, Nottingham (£1,086).

#### **IABS Conference Travel Grant Sponsorship | \$560**

#### **ECR Access Fund, DICE Network+ / EPSRC | £250**

#### **Applied / Under Review**

**DICE Network+ Demonstrator Grant (3 applications), EPSRC / University of Exeter | £50,000 each | Principal Investigator**

- **The Loopy Trustmark Project (LTP):** Demonstrating a Circular-by-Design Certification Layer for Digital Product Passports in Fashion. In collaboration with House of Circularity and BabySzn, with support from Swanstant and the British Fashion Council.
- **The Digital High Street (TDH):** A Rural Retail Corridor Test Bed for UK and International Digital Product Passport Standard Interoperability in Independent Retail. In collaboration with Symolem, with support from the UN Transparency Protocol, Landfills2Landmarks Ghana NGO, and a House of Commons representative.

- **Proving the Case for Circular Resale:** A Multi-Brand Automated Pricing Demonstrator to Lower Barriers to Brand Adoption of Recommerce at Scale. In collaboration with Advanced Clothing Solutions (ACS).

### *Unsuccessful*

**Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowship 2026 | Principal Investigator**

**SAMS/BAM Research and Capacity Building Grant Scheme 2026 | £75,000 | Principal Investigator | Project: “Policy Paradoxes in Circular Economy Transitions: Understanding Unintended Regulatory Barriers to Social Value Integration.”**

**Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (POST) / Nuffield Foundation Fellowship Scheme 2026 | Principal Investigator**

**Researcher-led Initiative Award, University of Exeter 2026 | £2,500 | Principal Investigator**

**Early Career Researcher Network (ECRN) Enhancement Award, University of Exeter 2026 | £3,000 | Principal Investigator**

## Teaching Experience

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### *University College London (2025–Present)*

- Business and Corporate Strategy (BSc International Management), Guest Faculty, Strategy and Entrepreneurship Group.
- Executive Negotiations (Executive Education), Co-facilitator with Dr Jim Berry, UCL MBA Director.

### *University of Exeter (2022–Present)*

#### **MBA Level**

- Corporate Challenge Week, Delivered in partnership with BT Group; co-lead.
- Tackling Global Challenges, Co-lead.
- Circular Economy Design Thinking, Facilitator.

#### **Postgraduate Level**

- HR Strategy, Context and Performance (MSc HRM, fully online module), Content development and co-lead.
- Strategic Innovation Management (MSc), Co-lead.
- Strategic Innovation Management for MSc Cohort (BEPM009), Workshop facilitation, case study development, lectures on business model design and strategic management theories, and assessment marking (2024–25).
- Contemporary Tourism Industry (BEPM012), New master’s module content preparation (2023–24).
- Entrepreneurship: New Venture Creation (BEMM394), Assessment marking and tutorial support (2023–24).

#### **Undergraduate Level**

- Project Management (BSc, Business School), Co-lead.
- Circular Economy, Business and Enterprise (BEM3059), Seminar delivery and assessment marking (2024–25).
- Acting Entrepreneurially (BEM2054), Tutorial delivery and assessment marking (2022–23).
- Venture Creation (BEM2046), Assessment marking and student support (2022–23).

#### **International Programmes**

- International Exchange Programme Summer School, Teaching delivery for undergraduate students (Zhejiang University of Technology, China) (2023 – Present)

## Executive Education

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**Circular Economy Marketing and Sales Masterclass | Exeter Centre for Circular Economy / Ellen MacArthur Foundation**

- Tutor; authored 5 original teaching case studies (Moss Bros, Vitsoe, Traceless, LEGO, Advanced Clothing Solutions); 100+ senior executive and managerial participants to date from organisations across multiple global sectors.

**Circular Economy Masterclass | Exeter Centre for Circular Economy / Ellen MacArthur Foundation**

- Tutor for the established CE fundamentals programme for senior practitioners.

**SLB Executive Education Programme | Exeter Centre for Circular Economy | Commencing June 2026**

- Circular economy-focused bespoke executive education programme for SLB (multinational, energy sector).

## Consulting, Advisory & Knowledge Exchange

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### **Government Digital Sustainability Alliance** | Defra | Social Impact working group (2026-27)

- A Defra-led initiative on digital and ICT sustainability across UK government and industry.

### **John Lewis Partnership (JLP)** | Independent Contract Research (2024–25)

- Co-led independent review of JLP's circular design implementation approach, providing external validation as JLP pursues its public commitment for 70% of own-brand products to meet circular design criteria by 2030.

### **Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)** | In collaboration with ICF Consulting (2024–25)

- Commissioned scoping project to inform the design and delivery of Defra's new Pathfinders Evaluation initiative, which supports and evaluates local place-based circular economy initiatives across England.
- Produced landscape mapping of local CE initiative types and their monitoring and evaluation needs; developed a stakeholder engagement strategy and accompanying tools. Initiative types examined included repair networks, libraries of things, industrial symbiosis networks, circular high streets, community fridges, product-as-service models, and material exchange platforms.

### **ECCE Strategic Report 2025–30** | Exeter Centre for Circular Economy

- Authored the Centre's five-year strategic roadmap (internal and external versions), encompassing: centre history and mission, research impact and publications, executive education portfolio, industry and policy partnerships, competitive positioning, and Vision 2030.

### **ReLondon** | Social Value Advisory (2025–26) | Community Fridge Project

### **DICE Network+ / EPSRC** | Early Career Researcher Advisory Board (2024–Present)

### **NHS England** | Behaviour Change Working Group for Circular Healthcare Adoption (2024–Present)

### **Exeter Policy Network** | Member (2024–Present)

## Professional Service

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### **Research Network Leadership**

#### **ISPIM Circular Innovation Special Interest Group** | Co-Lead (2025–Present)

Co-leading the Circular Innovation SIG within the International Society for Professional Innovation Management, contributing to conference programming and network development across the global CE research community.

#### **Exeter Centre for Circular Economy Taskforce** | Member (2025–Present)

### **Peer Review Activity**

- Ad hoc reviewer: Business & Society
- Ad hoc reviewer: British Academy of Management Annual Conference
- Ad hoc reviewer: European Academy of Management Annual Conference

### **Community Engagement**

#### **Global Shapers Community, World Economic Forum** | Head of Socials, London Hub I | October 2023 – Present

- Organising local, national, and regional events fostering social impact leadership among young professionals in London.

## Awards & Recognition

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- PhD Upgrade Commendation, University of Exeter, Advanced to PhD within 9 months with no corrections required (2022–23).
- School Commendation List, MSc Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management, University of Exeter, 90th percentile (2021–22).
- Chancellor's Gold Medal for Outstanding Academic Achievement, Symbiosis International University (2019).

## Professional Memberships & Credentials

- Fellow, Royal Society of Arts (FRSA)
- Associate Fellow, Higher Education Academy (AFHEA)
- Climate Reality Leader, The Climate Reality Project
- Member, British Academy of Management (BAM)

## Industry & Entrepreneurial Background

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### Product Manager, Accessories | John Deere, UK/EU | July 2022 – August 2025

- Managed the accessories portfolio across UK and EU markets, delivering consistent YoY revenue growth through data-driven product strategy, market expansion, and cross-functional collaboration across supply chain, regulatory compliance, and commercial teams.

### Officer, Group Director's Office | MAW Enterprises | September 2020 – September 2021

- Strategic support across 10 divisional businesses (JCB, Yamaha, Skoda, MAN); independently drafted business plans working directly with Executive Directors.

### Analyst, Private Equity | TresVista (Asante Capital), London | May 2019 – September 2020

- Due diligence on 10+ PE funds (AUM \$5B+); prepared pitch materials securing £500M+ in investor commitments; built financial models across 50+ portfolio companies.

### Market Research Analyst | RADMA Research | June 2017 – April 2019

- Qualitative B2B research across multiple sectors; business development and analyst training.

### Founder, SpudMe | September 2021 – May 2022

- NFC-based professional networking startup. Concept to market in 6 months; £50,000 in grants and prizes; managed team of 15 across 9 countries.

### Co-Founder, ExploreiT | August 2017 – March 2020

- Youth-focused sustainability initiative; scaled from 5 to 5,000+ volunteers over 3 years; partnered with Climate Reality Project, United Nations South Asian Youth Network, and various government agencies and NGOs.

## References

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### Professor Allen Alexander

Professor in Innovation & Circular Economy; Deputy Head of Management – Sustainable Futures  
University of Exeter Business School | [a.t.alexander@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:a.t.alexander@exeter.ac.uk)

### Professor Fiona Charnley

Co-Director, Exeter Centre for the Circular Economy; Co-Director, UKRI National Interdisciplinary Circular Economy Hub  
University of Exeter | [f.chnrley@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:f.chnrley@exeter.ac.uk)

### Dr Piyush Gulati

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