



# GFCC Annual Meeting and Global Innovation Summit

Nov. 11-15 Belfast, Northern Ireland

# Accelerating Global Sustainability and Economic Inclusion

# Event Book

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The GFCC is a global multi-stakeholder membership organization founded in 2010 with a footprint spanning more than 35 nations. The GFCC is committed to disseminating best practices to accelerate productivity, growth, and prosperity for countries, regions, and cities. We do that through high-level networking and events, in-depth conversations, analytical tools, advice, and education.

GFCC members include private sector councils on competitiveness and industry organizations, government agencies, global corporations, and leading research universities. All members pay membership dues yearly to secure their placement in the network. Currently, the GFCC hosts 52 members from 23 countries.


Besides its members, the GFCC network also includes experts invited to participate as fellows. Members and fellows have different roles. Fellows contribute by sharing their specialized knowledge and expertise with the community and participating in project development and strategies. Currently, the GFCC hosts 66 fellows from 24 countries.

Learn more about the GFCC at: [www.thegfcc.org](http://www.thegfcc.org).

Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils (GFCC)  
900 17th Street NW, Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
United States

 /thegfcc

 /@thegfcc

 /the-global-federation-of-competitiveness-councils/

 /GlobalFederationofCompetitivenessCouncils

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# Welcome to the 2024 Global Innovation Summit!

Under the theme “Accelerating Global Sustainability and Economic Inclusion,” this year’s GIS will explore the critical intersection of economic performance, social inclusion, and environmental protection. We’ll explore the challenges and opportunities of balancing immediate needs with long-term sustainability goals, fostering inclusive economic models that promote resource efficiency and revitalize communities.

We’re thrilled to host this event in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in partnership with Queen’s University Belfast (QUB) and the Centre for Competitiveness (CforC). Belfast, a city with a long industrial heritage and known for too long as a synonym with conflict, is now a global innovation hub in cybersecurity and AI, allied health, advanced manufacturing, and sustainability. With its highly skilled, dedicated workforce, renowned for its innovation, entrepreneurial spirit, and inclusivity, Belfast is the perfect backdrop for our discussions. QUB and CforC’s commitment to innovation and entrepreneurship, clean technology, and sustainable energy research make them ideal partners for this event.

Don’t miss the GFCC Annual Meeting on November 11th, an exclusive opportunity for members, fellows, and special guests to reflect on past achievements, discuss emerging priorities, and celebrate our expanding and diverse network.

Over the following three days (November 12-14), immerse yourself in the Global Innovation Summit. Engage in keynote presentations, panel discussions, and interactive workshops featuring renowned experts and world leaders. We’ll explore how innovation drives sustainability, the role of inclusivity in the innovation economy, and the power of partnerships in accelerating progress.

A highlight of the Summit is the launch of the 2024 GFCC Call to Action, “Achieving a Sustainable Future for All.” This original framework explores the importance of inclusivity in ensuring the long-term viability of our socio-economic systems. Developed through a collaborative process with our global network of experts, the Call to Action offers key strategies and actionable recommendations for promoting inclusive growth and sustainable competitiveness.

Finally, conclude your Summit experience on November 15th by witnessing firsthand the remarkable advancements in building an innovation ecosystem during site visits. You’ll meet entrepreneurs, explore cutting-edge technologies, and interact with local startups.

This event book is your guide to the GIS 2024 experience, providing detailed information on all sessions and speaker biographies. We hope you find it a valuable resource throughout the Summit.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our hosts, Queen’s University Belfast and the Centre for Competitiveness, and to our esteemed partners and sponsors for making this event possible. We look forward to insightful discussions and collaborative engagement with you at the 2024 Global Innovation Summit!

The GFCC Team

## Media and Dress Code

- Press will be in the room.
- The event will be recorded and photographed.
- Images and audio will be used in post-GIS materials.
- Dress code for the GIS and Gala Dinner is business attire or corresponding national dress.

# Registration and Check-In

To ensure smooth arrival and check-in experience at the Global Innovation Summit and GFCC Annual Meeting in Belfast, please note the following registration procedures.

## Registration is mandatory for all attendees:

- Invitation Only: Both the Global Innovation Summit (GIS) and the GFCC Annual Meeting are invitation-only events.
- Registration Link: If you have confirmed your participation, you should have received an email from [gis24@events.qub.ac.uk](mailto:gis24@events.qub.ac.uk) containing a personalized registration link.
- Registration Process: Please complete your registration by clicking on the link in your invitation email. During registration, you can select the specific days and evening activities you plan to attend.

## Confirmation and Check-In:

- Confirmation Email: Upon completing your online registration, you will receive a confirmation email. This email contains your registration number, your personal QR code and links to manage your registration. Please keep this email for your records.
- Conference App: Download the conference app and log in. Your unique QR code will be available within the app.
- QR Code Check-In: To expedite the check-in process, all attendees will be asked to scan their QR code daily upon arrival at the event venue. **Please ensure you have the conference app downloaded and set up before arriving.**

## Check-in Desks Location

Check-in for the Annual Meeting on November 11 will start at 8:00 AM in Riddel Hall, located at Queen's Business School (185 Stranmillis Rd, Belfast BT9 5EE, United Kingdom).

Check-in for the GIS from November 12–14 will be in the Marquee located in the Quad beginning at 8:00 AM. There will be a designated site entry point, with further arrival and access information to follow. Please find the site venue map on [page 6](#) for more details.

Once checked in, delegates will receive their name badge and lanyard and are asked to wear it throughout the conference.

# Key Contacts

## GFCC Guests

### Elaine Rodriguez

erodriguez@thegfcc.org  
Director of Operations, GFCC

## Registration and Check-In

### Jane Hastings

j.hastings@qub.ac.uk  
Events and Conferencing Officer, Conferencing and Events, Queens Global, QUB

### Jack Mawdsley

j.mawdsley@qub.ac.uk  
Conferencing & Events Manager, Queens Global, QUB

## GIS Agenda

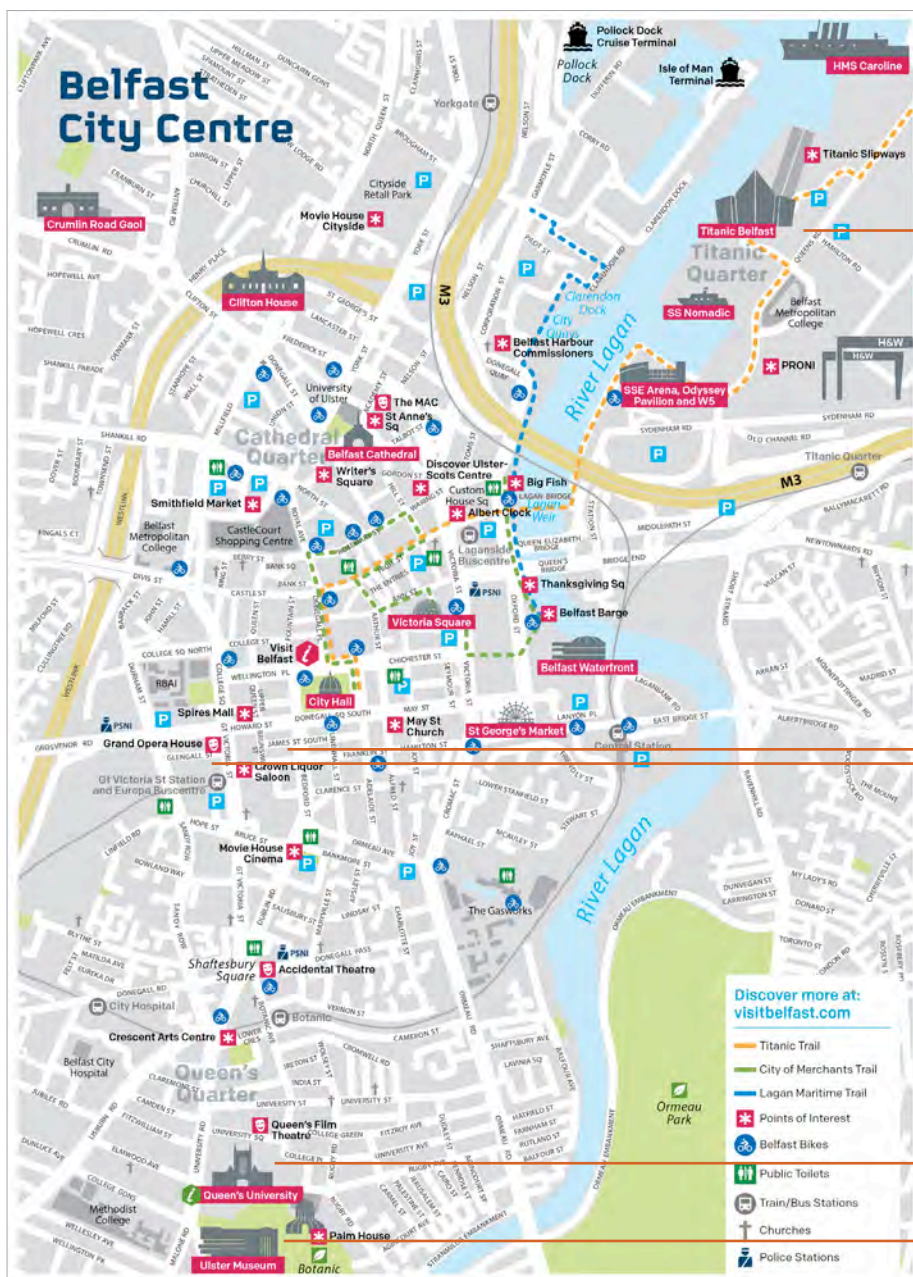
### Caroline Walker

caroline.walker@qub.ac.uk  
Senior Engagement Manager, Strategic Projects, QUB

### Bethan Leonard

b.leonard@qub.ac.uk  
Alumni Engagement Officer, QUB

# Local Area and Venue Maps



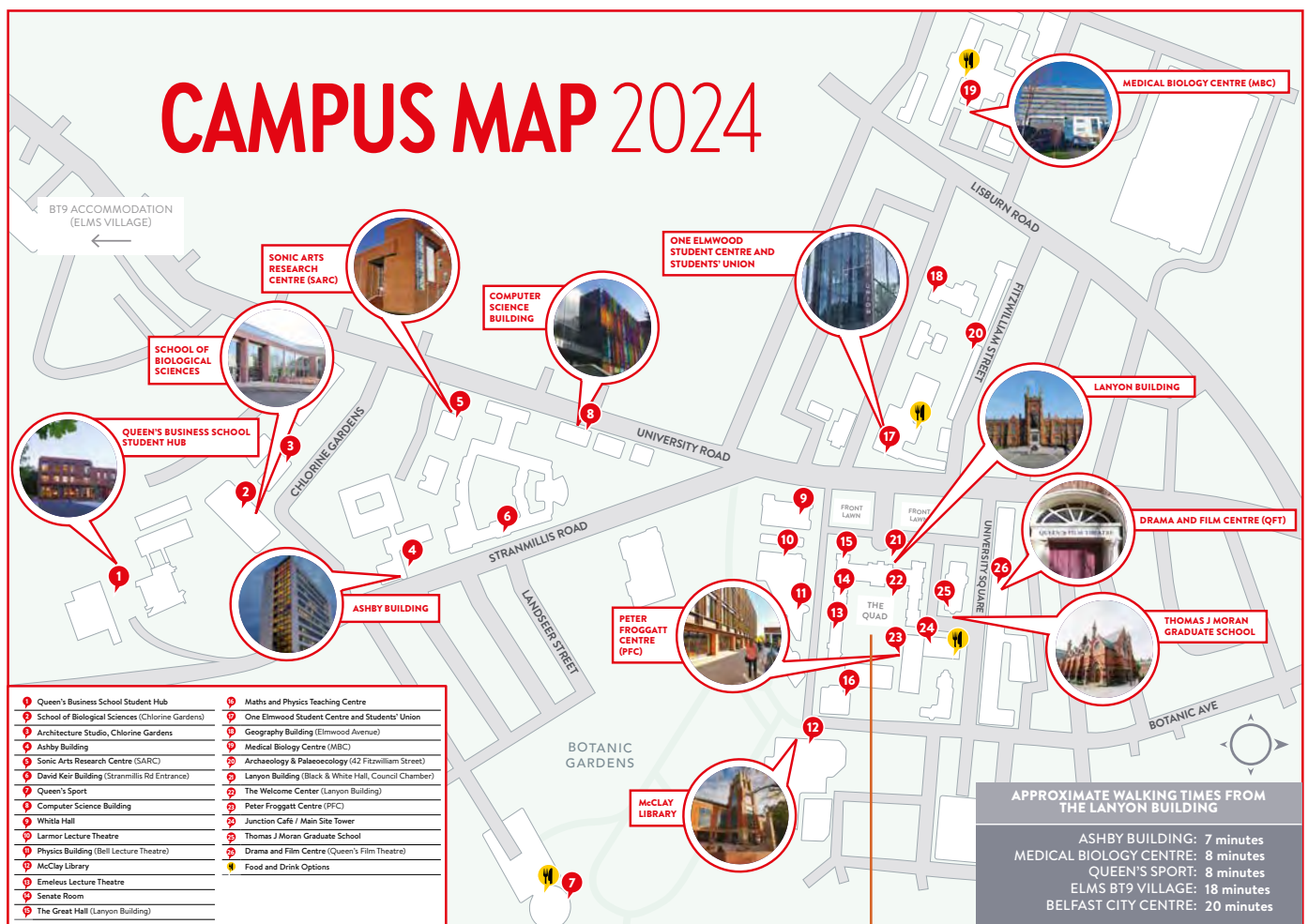
**Titanic Belfast**—Location of the Informal Dinner on November 12

**Grand Central Hotel Belfast**

**The Europa Hotel**

**Queen's University Campus**—Location of GIS and Annual Meeting

**Ulster Museum**—Location of the Opening Cocktail Reception on November 11



- 1. Queen's Business School—Location of the Annual Meeting
- 9. Whitley Hall—Location of the Gala Dinner on November 13
- 15. Great Hall
- 23. Peter Froggatt Centre (PFC)

The Quad—Location of check-in



# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Will transportation be provided from the airport to the Europa Hotel or the Grand Central Hotel Belfast?**

A: No, participants need to arrange their own transportation to and from the airport to the hotels.

**Q: Will transportation be provided to/from the Europa Hotel or Grand Central Hotel and Queen's University of Belfast?**

A: Complimentary shuttle transportation will be provided between the Europa Hotel/Grand Central Hotel and Queen's University Belfast throughout the event. For shuttle schedules and information on arranging your own transportation to and from the university, please refer to the Transportation section of this document.

**Q: Is there easily accessible public transportation?**

A: Yes! There are regular Metro bus services from Belfast city center to the University Area. The 8a and 8b buses run from the city center to the main Queen's University Campus seven days a week, approximately a 15-minute journey. Day tickets are £4 per person. For information on timetables visit [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk)

**Q: Are there rideshare options to get around Belfast?**

A: Yes! Taxis from Belfast City center can be ordered from Value Cabs by ringing +44 028 90 80 90 80. The prices of journeys can vary depending on peak times but are approximately £10 from the city center to the main campus. Rideshare apps like Uber are also available.

**Q: I have arrived at the event, where do I check in?**

A: On November 11, for the GFCC Annual Meeting, check in will take place at the Riddel Hall. From November 12-14, check-in desks will be placed in the Marquee located in the Quad for the Global Innovation Summit attendees.

**Q: If I am attending the Annual Meeting on November 11th and have checked in that morning, do I need to check in again on the morning of November 12th for the Global Innovation Summit?**

A: You only need to register and pick up your badge on your first day. This badge grants you access to both the Annual Meeting and the Global Innovation Summit. However, you'll need to scan the QR code in the event app each morning for daily check-in. Please keep your badge with you throughout the event.

**Q: I am a speaker (moderator/panelist/presenter), where do I go to meet my fellow panelists?**

A: All moderators and panelists are asked to come to the Green Room to meet their fellow panelists and be mic'd for the stage no less than 30min. prior to their session.

**Q: Where can I find the Green Room?**

A: The Green Room is located backstage to the plenary space inside Whitla Hall. There will be signs to direct you, but if you have any trouble finding it, please ask one of the members of the event team.

**Q: I am a panelist in one of the Panel Conversations, is there anything I should know?**

A: Yes! Your session moderator should have sent you an email with details about the session and contact information for your fellow panelists. If you haven't received this email, please contact Elaine Rodriguez ([erodriguez@thegfcc.org](mailto:erodriguez@thegfcc.org)) or Roberto Alvarez ([ralvarez@thegfcc.org](mailto:ralvarez@thegfcc.org)). In addition, the "Agenda" section lists your fellow panelists, and the "Session Dynamics and Roles" section provides further information about the session format. This section will also confirm that the panel conversations are designed to be informal and conversational, so there is no need to prepare any slides or presentations.

On the day of the event, please arrive early and visit the Green Room where you'll meet the other panelists, be mic'd up, and escorted to the stage.

**Q: I am a discussant in one of the Workshops, is there anything I should know?**

A: Yes! Your session moderator should have sent you an email with details about the session and contact information for your fellow discussants. If you haven't received this email, please contact Elaine Rodriguez (erodriguez@thegfcc.org) or Roberto Alvarez (ralvarez@thegfcc.org). In addition, the "Agenda" section lists your fellow discussants, and the "Session Dynamics and Roles" section provides further information about the session format. This section will also confirm that the workshops are designed to be informal and conversational, so there is no need to prepare any slides or presentations.

On the day of the event, the workshops will be preceded by a 15-minute session for a brief overview of the format and goals. Event staff will be available to direct you to the workshop location.

**Q: Once my participation on a session is over, where do I go?**

A: A member of the team will un-mic' you after your session. Please walk back to the Green Room—we will take care of you there.

**Q: Is there an arranged lunch for participants of the GFCC Annual Meeting and Global Innovation Summit?**

A: Yes, there are lunches arranged for participants:

- Annual Meeting (November 11): Lunch will be served in the café area outside the lecture theater. Event team members will be there to direct attendees. Please make sure you have your name badge to assure access to the complimentary lunch.
- Speakers/presenters/moderators/GFCC Fellows/GFCC members (November 12, 13, and 14): Lunch and coffee breaks will be provided in the Quad, just outside the Whitla Hall. Please make sure you have your name badge with you to access these complimentary meals.

**Q: How can I let you know about my dietary restrictions?**

A: You can specify any dietary restrictions during the registration process. In addition:

- For the Quad lunch buffet: Dishes will be clearly labeled. If you have any questions or concerns, catering staff will be available to assist you.
- For sit-down dinners: Our staff will have information about dietary restrictions provided in advance, but please feel free to speak with them directly if you have any questions or specific needs.

**Q: Will transportation be provided for the suggested tourist trips and site visits?**

A: Yes, round-trip transportation will be provided for Friday, November 15th tourist trips and site visits. Please check the event agenda section of this event book for specific pickup times and locations.

# Agenda Overview

**Invitation only**

NOV 11	NOV 12	NOV 13	NOV 14	NOV 15
<b>Annual Meeting</b> Harvard Lecture Theatre, Queen's Business School	<b>Global Innovation Summit</b> Queen's University of Belfast Panels and Keynotes: Whitla Hall Workshops: Peter Froggatt Centre (PFC)			<b>Innovation Site Visits</b>
<b>Lunch</b>				
<b>Annual Meeting</b> Harvard Lecture Theatre, Queen's Business School	<b>Global Innovation Summit</b> Queen's University of Belfast Panels and Keynotes: Whitla Hall Workshops: Peter Froggatt Centre (PFC)			<b>Tourism Options</b>
<b>Opening Cocktail Reception</b> Ulster Museum	<b>Informal Dinner</b> Titanic Belfast	<b>Gala Dinner</b> Great Hall, Queen's University of Belfast	<b>Open Time</b>	<b>Open Time</b>

# Transportation

## Getting to and from the airport

There is no airport transfer service available. Participants are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the airport.

## Getting to and from the event

### Event Shuttle

- A complimentary shuttle service will be provided between the conference hotels (Grand Central Hotel and Europa Hotel) and Queen's University Belfast.

#### Shuttle Schedule

Day	Date	Departure Time (from hotels)
Monday	Nov 11	08:00
Tuesday	Nov 12	07:45
Wednesday	Nov 13	07:45
Thursday	Nov 14	08:15

- Shuttle buses will return to the conference hotels after the last scheduled event each day.
- Transportation will also be provided to the Gala Dinner on November 13th, departing from the hotels at 18:30.
- On November 15th, the shuttle will depart from InvestNI for site visits. Please see the Agenda section (Nov 15, Friday) for details on the site visit schedule and transportation.

### Alternative Transportation Options

If you prefer to arrange your own transportation to and from Queen's University, the following options are available:

- Metro Bus:** Regular Metro bus services (8A, 8B, 8C, or 8D) run from Belfast city center (stop located at [specific landmark/address] on Howard Street) to the main Queen's University campus. The journey takes approximately 15 minutes, and day tickets cost £4 per person. For timetables and real-time information, visit [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk).
- Taxi:** Taxis can be ordered from Value Cabs (+44 028 90 80 90 80). Fares vary depending on peak times but are approximately £10 from the city center to the main campus.
- Rideshare:** Rideshare apps like Uber are also available.
- Walking:** The university is about a 15-minute walk from each hotel.

Date	From	To	Pick Up Time	Passengers	Who
Monday, Nov. 11	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	Riddel Hall, 185 Stranmillis Rd, Belfast BT9 5EE	8:00	30	GFCC Members
	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	Riddel Hall, 185 Stranmillis Rd, Belfast BT9 5EE	8:00	30	GFCC Members
	Riddel Hall, 185 Stranmillis Rd, Belfast BT9 5EE	Ulster Museum	17:45	30-60	GFCC Members
	Ulster Museum, Botanic Gardens, Belfast BT9 5AB	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	20:30	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Ulster Museum, Botanic Gardens, Belfast BT9 5AB	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	20:30	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	7:50	30	GFCC Members and contributors
Tuesday, Nov. 12	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	7:50	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Hotels x 2	18:00	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Wy, Belfast BT3 9EP	19:00	50	GFCC Members and contributors
	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Wy, Belfast BT3 9EP	19:00	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Wy, Belfast BT3 9EP	19:00	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Wy, Belfast BT3 9EP	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	21:00	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Wy, Belfast BT3 9EP	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	21:00	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	7:50	30	GFCC Members and contributors
Wednesday, Nov. 13	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	7:50	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	17:30	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	17:30	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	18:45	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	18:45	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	22:30	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	22:30	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	8:15	30	GFCC Members and contributors
Thursday, Nov. 14	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	8:15	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	16:45	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Queen's University Belfast University Rd, Belfast BT7 1NN	Europa Hotel, Great Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7AP	16:45	30	GFCC Members and contributors
	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Wy, Belfast BT3 9EP	14:15	10	GFCC Members
Friday, Nov. 15	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	McConnells Distillery, 53-55, A Wing, Crumlin Road Gaol, Crumlin Rd, Belfast BT14 6ST	15:20	10	GFCC Members
	Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Wy, Belfast BT3 9EP	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	16:30	10	GFCC Members
	McConnells Distillery, 53-55, A Wing, Crumlin Road Gaol, Crumlin Rd, Belfast BT14 6ST	Grand Central Hotel 9-15 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7FF	17:30	10	GFCC Members

# Sessions Dynamics

## Keynote

The total time allocated to keynote is between 20 to 60 minutes, including time for transitions.

A host introduces the keynote speaker, who delivers a speech or presentation. A Q&A session may follow.

There will be a countdown clock during the session to support time management.

## Panel Conversation

The total time allocated to panel conversations is 45 minutes, including time for transitions. Please refrain from using slides, this type of session will be conversational.

The moderator will open the discussion with a brief overview of intent (2-3 minutes) and jumpstart the conversation, this will include directing questions to the panelists. The moderator may ask broad questions to the group or direct questions to specific panelists. Panelists should also feel free to raise, in the context of the moderated conversation, a relevant topic that the suggested questions may not address.

In the initial round, panelists will have 2-3 minutes for their remarks. Please note that they should reflect on the question proposed by the moderator. A free-flow conversation will follow the initial round.

The moderator will summarize the conversation (2-3 minutes) and close the discussion at the appointed time. If time allows, a quick Q&A will follow. Moderators and panelists will need to keep timing as the next panel will be ready to go live immediately after the session.

There will be a countdown clock during the session to support time management.

## Conversation

The total time allocated to a conversation is 20-45 minutes, including time for transitions.

The moderator will open the session and briefly introduce the speaker(s), and tee him/her/them up with a short statement and/ or question.

The initial introduction should last around 3 minutes. The speaker(s) and moderator will have about 20 minutes for their discussion. If time allows, a quick Q&A will follow.

The moderator will summarize the session (1 minute) and close the discussion at the appointed time. Moderator and speaker(s) will need to keep timing as the next sessions will be queued and ready to start immediately after the set end time.

There will be a countdown clock during the session to support time management.

## Workshop

The total time allocated to workshops is 75 minutes, including time for transitions.

The workshops will be progressive dialogues that will build on the ideas discussed in the day's plenary panel conversations.

The moderator will begin the workshop with a 10-minute introduction to highlight key recommendations, issues and ideas emanating from the panels and introduce the discussants.

The moderator will provide each discussant with 5 minutes to share insights and suggestions for advancing the agenda related to the workshop's theme.

After all discussants have shared their views, the floor will open for additional contributions.

The workshop will conclude with the moderator summarizing the three key recommendations for the thematic area. This should take about 10 minutes. The moderator who will capture and summarize key issues and recommendations raised in the workshop that will be presented back as outcomes to the full conference plenary session at the end of day.

# Session Roles (Moderator, Panelist, Discussant)

## Panel Roles Overview

### Before the Panel:

- Arrive early: Please arrive at the Green Room 30 minutes before your session to finalize preparations and meet your fellow panelists.
- Stage management: A stage manager will escort you to the stage and cue you when it's time to enter. An announcer will introduce panelists in alphabetical order by last name, followed by the moderator.

### During the Panel:

- Moderator's role: The moderator will:
  - Start the discussion with a brief overview (2-3 minutes).
  - Guide the conversation by asking questions to the panelists.
  - Ensure a balanced discussion and keep the session flowing smoothly.
- Panelists' role:
  - Provide concise responses to questions to allow for ample discussion.
  - Engage actively in the conversation and share your insights.
- Q&A: If time allows, the moderator will facilitate a brief Q&A session with the audience. Audience members can raise their hands and use the standing microphones to ask questions.

### After the Panel:

- Closing: The moderator will summarize the key takeaways (2-3 minutes) and close the discussion.
- Exiting the stage: An announcer will thank the panel, and participants will exit the stage as directed by the stage manager.

## Moderators (Conversation and Panel Conversation)

- The moderator will introduce the session and frame the discussion with his or her insights regarding the session topics (2-3 min.), guided by the framework and the discussion questions provided in this event book.
- The moderator will guide the conversation allowing time for response and commentary from other panelists.
- The moderator should not provide descriptive biographies for each panelist. Panelist biographies will be on our event website and in this event book.
- If time allows, the moderator will allow questions from the audience. Moderators will need to use their best judgment.
- The moderator may provide brief closing remarks (2-3 min.), summarizing the overall themes of the discussion and/or providing relevant concluding insights at the end of the panel.
- There will be a clock on stage controlled by the event producer alerting the moderator as to the time remaining for the panel.

## Panelists

- Panelists are requested to provide conversation-catalyzing, thought-provoking, personal responses to the questions posed by the moderator.
- No PowerPoint slides or other graphics will be used during the panels.
- Each Panelist is asked to provide short responses to the questions in order to allow for plenty of conversation.
- If time allows for questions from the audience, panelists should also be prepared to answer questions posed by participants and curated by the moderator.
- Panelists should not provide descriptive self-introductions, as biographies will be on the event website and in this event book.

- Panelists should feel free to mention ongoing projects at their organization relevant to the conversation.
- Panelists should also feel free to raise, in the context of the moderated conversation, a relevant topic that the suggested tee-up questions may not address.

#### **Moderator (Workshop)**

- The moderator will introduce the session and frame the discussion with his or her insights regarding the session topics (10 min), guided by the framework provided in this event book and the panel sessions preceding the workshop.
- The moderator should not provide descriptive biographies for each panelist. Panelist biographies will be on our event website and in this event book.
- The moderator will encourage the other discussants to provide insights and suggestions to advance the workshop theme for about 5 minutes per discussant.
- Moderators should manage time effectively and maintain a focused and productive discussion, guiding the conversation back to the main theme if needed.
- If time allows, the moderator will allow commentary from the audience. Moderators will need to use their best judgment.
- The moderator will close the workshop by sharing three key recommendations/actions. This should take 10 minutes.
- The moderator will summarize key issues and recommendations that will be presented back as outcomes to the full conference plenary session at the end of day.

#### **Discussants (Workshop)**

- Panelists are requested to actively participate in the discussion sharing their expertise and perspective on the theme posed by the moderator.
- Panelists should not provide descriptive self-introductions, as biographies will be on the event website and in this event book.
- PowerPoint slides or other graphics are not required. However, if you wish to use them, please submit your slide decks to [gis24@qub.ac.uk](mailto:gis24@qub.ac.uk) clearly marked with your name and workshop title, no later than Tuesday 5th November. Each discussant has 5 minutes only, so we recommend keeping your decks to a maximum of 4 slides.
- Each discussant is asked to provide short insights and recommendations in order to allow for plenty of conversation.
- Discussants should feel free to mention ongoing projects at their organization relevant to the conversation.
- Discussants should engage with other discussants and the moderator in a constructive and collaborative manner and contribute to the development of key recommendations and actions.



November

11

GIS  
Day 0

BY INVITATION ONLY

# Agenda

\*\* All local times Greenwich Mean Time

## GFCC Annual Meeting

### Harvard LT in Queen's Business School

Reflecting on a dynamic year for the GFCC, members, fellows and select guests will gather to look back at some of our achievements, explore the different priorities within GFCC Member organizations, celebrate the expansion of our network with new members and discuss emerging themes in innovation and competitiveness strategy.

### 08:30 Registration and welcome coffee

Coffee will be served in front of the venue.

Participants will be asked to check-in using their QR codes to obtain their event badges. The same badge will be used throughout the event for access to all activities.

### 09:00 Welcoming Remarks

(15 min)

#### Prof. Sir Ian Greer

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

#### Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

#### Dr. Stephen Kingon CBE

Chairman, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

#### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

### 9:15 Participants Individual Introduction—Round Robin Introductions

(40 min)

We'll kick off our 2024 GFCC Annual Meeting with quick introductions. Participants will share their name, organization, and country they represent.

### 09:55 Annual Meeting Introduction

(5 min)

The GFCC's Executive Director will set the stage for the Annual Meeting, providing an overview of what to expect and introduce the agenda for the day.

#### Dr. Roberto Alvarez

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

### 10:00 GFCC State of Affairs—Presentation by the GFCC Team

(15 min)

2023 and 2024 were remarkable years for the GFCC, including growth and diversification of its network of members and fellows, content expansion and development of new exciting initiatives. In this session, GFCC members and fellows will learn more about key initiatives and achievements in 2023 and 2024. The GFCC President and Executive Director will present about the GFCC numbers, initiatives, and projects.

#### Dr. Roberto Alvarez

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

#### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

## BY INVITATION ONLY

### 10:15 Accelerating Global Sustainability and Economic Inclusiveness

(60 min)

The GFCC community has co-created the 2024 Call to Action "Achieving a Sustainable Future for All". Building on the success of the 2023 GFCC "Innovate the Sustainable Future" Call to Action, this year we aim to drive meaningful contributions to sustainability policies and actions using the lens of inclusive growth. The new call to action extends far beyond addressing humanity's expanding environmental footprint on the planet and proposes actions to enable societies to meet current needs while forging a stable and inclusive economic path for future generations.

### 10:15 Call to Action: Achieving a Sustainable Future for All

During this session, GFCC leadership will introduce the "Achieving a Sustainable Future for All" Call-to-Action and highlight its key principles and strategic vision.

#### Dr. Roberto Alvarez

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

#### Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

#### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

### 10:20 Accelerating Sustainability and Inclusiveness in the GFCC Community

GFCC leaders from different regions around the world will reflect on the Call-to-Action and share their recommendations, considering priorities and circumstances in their respective nations and organizations.

#### MODERATOR

#### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

### KICK-OFF DISCUSSANTS

#### Dr. Ghadah Al-Dabbagh

Head of Omnipreneurship Lab, Al-Dabbagh Group  
Saudi Arabia

#### Dr. Saif Al Hiddabi

Undersecretary of Research and Innovation - Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation  
Oman

#### Chad Evans

EVP and COO, Council on competitiveness  
Treasurer, GFCC  
USA

#### Dr. Nkem Khumbah

Head of STI Policy Systems, Governance and Partnerships, African Academy of Science  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
Kenya

#### Dr. Venetia Koussia

Executive Director, Council on Competitiveness of Greece  
Greece

#### Kainar Kozhumov

Partner, Centre for Research and Consulting  
Kazakhstan

#### Dr. Paul Madden

Director, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

#### Dr. Miguel Marques

Vice-President, Catholic University of Portugal  
Portugal

#### Hiro Nishiguchi

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Japan

#### Focus questions:

- How can that be achieved in your reality?
- What general recommendations do you have for the GFCC community?

### 11:15 Coffee Break

(20 min)

## BY INVITATION ONLY

### 11:35 New Members Spotlight

(55 min)

Leaders from each new GFCC member taking part in the Annual Meeting will be invited to give 3-minute remarks, introduce their organizations and agendas. This session is organized in two blocks, with time for Q&A and comments at the end of each block.

#### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Roberto Alvarez

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

#### Block I

##### Dr. Martin Betts

CEO, HEDx  
Australia

##### Prof. Brian Falzon

Dean of Engineering, Design and Built Environment,  
Western Sydney University  
Australia

##### Takashi Inutsuka (via recorded video)

Executive Director, Tsukuba Global Innovation Promotion  
Agency (TGI)  
Japan

##### Charles Kiefel AM

CEO & Founder, The Principals Funds Management  
Founder & Co-Chair, Australian Advisory Board on  
Competitiveness  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Australia

##### Prof. Damon Salesa

Vice-Chancellor, Auckland University of Technology (AUT)  
New Zealand

##### James Tsiolis

CEO, Netlinkz  
Australia

#### Block II

##### Eldar Abdrazakov

Founder & CEO, Centras Group  
Kazakhstan Growth Forum  
Kazakhstan

##### Sandra Duxbury

Entrepreneur and Consultant in Strategic Policy and  
Advanced Education  
Canada

##### Dr. William Hadelman

University of Pittsburgh  
USA

##### Prof. Padma Raghavan

Vice Provost for Research and Innovation, Vanderbilt  
University  
USA

##### George Scutaru

Chief Executive Officer, New Strategy Center  
Romania

### 12:30 Northern Ireland in Transformation: From Peace to Global Innovation

(40 min)

The Good Friday Agreement launched a new phase in Northern Ireland's history and unleashed a new growth phase. Additionally, Ireland has become a magnet for talent and a major hub for global business and finance. Belfast, once a fundamental manufacturing city where industries such as shipbuilding flourished and had global pre-eminence, has become a global innovation and entrepreneurship hotspot, with new industries such as digital arts, cybersecurity, medical devices, electronics and others gaining relevance. As the Island continues to evolve and strives to position itself, the themes of innovation and global competitiveness are at the center of today's agenda. In this session, GFCC leaders will engage in a conversation to explore the connections between Northern Ireland's competitiveness agenda and global transformation efforts. The session begins with a presentation on the Northern Ireland context, followed by interactive discussions with each participant offering their perspectives in 2-3-minute remarks.

#### PRESENTER

##### Dr. Stephen Kingon CBE

Chairman, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

#### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Ryan Feeney

Vice-President of Strategic Engagement and External  
Affairs, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

#### DISCUSSANTS

##### Prof. Razvan Bologa

Innovation Coordinator, Bucharest University of Economic  
Studies—ASE  
Romania

## BY INVITATION ONLY

### Zaimizi Hamdani

Chief Strategy Officer, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS  
Malaysia

### Dr. Matthew Hulver

VP of Knowledge Enterprise Initiatives, ASU Knowledge  
Enterprise  
USA

#### Discussion questions

- What are the priorities to drive innovation and competitiveness in Northern Ireland?
- How do such priorities relate to the realities of countries represented in the GFCC?
- What can be learned from Northern Ireland's experiences and applied elsewhere?

### 13:10 Networking Lunch

(60 min)

### 14:10 Place-Making Innovation: Reflecting on the GFCC-Aston URLF

(40 min)

The GFCC University and Research Leadership Forum is shifting its focus to universities' vital role in place-making innovation in the digital and innovation economy. Right before this Annual Meeting, GFCC leaders from government, business and academia met in Birmingham for the inaugural Leadership Dialogue on "Universities 4.0 and Their Role in Driving Place-Based Innovation and Socio-Economic Transformation" hosted by Aston University. In this session, participants will share their insights and reflect on how the discussions in Birmingham connect with the work of the GFCC in general and the realities represented in the organization worldwide.

#### MODERATOR

### Prof. Sir Ian Greer

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

#### PRESENTER

### Prof. Aleks Subic

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Aston University  
UK

#### Kick-off discussants

### Dr. Martin Betts

CEO, HEDx  
Australia

### Prof. Jim Metson

Senior Advisor, Newmarket Campus Development,  
University of Auckland  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
New Zealand

### Prof. Padma Raghavan

Vice Provost for Research and Innovation, Vanderbilt  
University  
USA

### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

#### Discussion questions:

- What key lessons can be learned from the Birmingham case?
- How do such lessons apply to other realities in the world in the GFCC network?
- What has surprised you in Birmingham that everybody should know about?

### 14:50 Future Themes in Competitiveness Strategy

In this session, the GFCC community will explore cutting-edge topics in Competitiveness Strategy through a series of brief presentations and discussions. Each presenter will share their experiences, cases, and perspectives on critical emerging issues. A moderated discussion will follow where GFCC members can exchange ideas and develop actionable recommendations for implementing these themes into national and regional strategies.

#### Discussion questions:

- How can this theme be integrated into competitiveness strategies?
- What practical solutions can be used to do that?
- Who should take the lead in driving the conversation?

### 14:50 Future Strategies

(35 min)

In this session, we will explore how industry and government can utilize foresight studies and future visioning to identify trends, anticipate issues and opportunities, and strategize effectively.

## BY INVITATION ONLY

### PRESENTER

#### Rushdi Abdul Rahim

President & Chief Executive Officer, Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT)  
Malaysia

### MODERATOR

#### Dr. Harris Pastides

President Emeritus, University of South Carolina  
Distinguished Fellow, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

### KICK-OFF DISCUSSANTS:

#### Eldar Abdrazakov

CEO, Centras Group  
Chairman, Kazakhstan Competitiveness Council  
Kazakhstan

#### Dr. Michinari Hamaguchi

Director General of SCARDA, AMED  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Japan

#### Mark Minevich

Founding Partner and Chairman, Going Global Ventures (GGV)  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
USA

#### Dr. Rachel Swift

Vice-chair, Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness  
GM Strategy Innovation & Ventures, HCF  
Non-executive Director, Innovation & Enterprise Advisory Board  
Australia

### 15:25 Decarbonization

(35 min)

In this block, we will discuss the main opportunity areas for decarbonization projects, exploring their geographical distribution across the globe. Additionally, we'll examine the key factors and strategies needed to accelerate the development and implementation of these projects.

### PRESENTER

#### Dr. Bob Barbour

Director and Chief Executive, Centre for Competitiveness  
UK

### MODERATOR

#### Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

### KICK-OFF DISCUSSANTS

#### Dr. Ayman AlFudhaili

CEO of the Industrial Innovation Academy  
Oman

#### Athina Chatzipetrou

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Greece

#### Deborah Gordon

Senior Advisor, Longview Fusion Energy Systems, Inc.  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
USA

#### Prof. Ken Sloan

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Harper Adams University  
UK

### 16:00 Coffee Break

(20 min)

### 16:20 Frontier Markets

(35 min)

In this segment, the discussion will focus on effective strategies to tackle the issues and capitalize on the potential within frontier markets spanning diverse regions like Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe.

### PRESENTER

#### Dr. Hippolyte Fofack

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
USA

### MODERATOR

#### Dr. Claudio Furtado

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Brazil

### KICK-OFF DISCUSSANTS

#### Abdulwahab Al-Maimani

CEO, Spectrum Index  
Oman

#### Anuar Buranbayev

Partner, Centre for Research and Consulting  
Kazakhstan

#### Phillip Phiri

Executive Director, National Competitiveness Commission (NCC)  
Zimbabwe

## BY INVITATION ONLY

### Hirotaaka Yamada

Director of the Paris Office, Japan Science and Technology Agency  
Japan

### 16:55 Geostrategy

(35 min)

In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, traditional boundaries between security, infrastructure, economics, and technology are blurring. As new challenges emerge, innovative frameworks are essential to navigate this evolving landscape.

#### PRESENTER

### George Scutaru

Chief Executive Officer, New Strategy Center  
Romania

#### MODERATOR

### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

#### KICK-OFF DISCUSSANTS

### C. Derek Campbell

Executive Chairman, LVC Global Holdings Ltd.  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
USA

### Dr. Jan Mladek

Director, The Czech Institute of Applied Economics, Ltd.  
Minister of Agriculture (2005-2006), Czech Republic  
Minister of Industry and Trade (2014-2017), Czech Republic  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Czech Republic

### Prof. Damon Salesa

Vice-Chancellor, Auckland University of Technology (AUT)  
New Zealand

### 17:30 Closing remarks

(5 min)

### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

### 17:35 End of program

## Opening Cocktail Reception

### Ulster Museum

### 18:00 Welcome remarks

(20 min)

The Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils is pleased to open the 2024 Global Innovation Summit in partnership with the Queen's University of Belfast, the Centre for Competitiveness, and their partners and sponsors for the event. Join us as we commence the outstanding discussions and listen to introductory words from GFCC and Northern Ireland leaders.

### Prof. Sir Ian Greer

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

### Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

### Dr. Stephen Kingon CBE

Chairman, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

November

12

GIS

Day 1



## Queen's University of Belfast

Whitla Hall

Innovation is the Key to Sustainability

This first day will set the stage for the GIS 2024 and explore how technological advancements and creative solutions drive sustainability. Experts will discuss the latest innovations that are transforming industries and paving the way for a greener, more sustainable future.

### HOSTED BY

Wendy Austin

**08:00 Arrival and Check-in**

**09:00 Welcome to the GIS 2024**

(30 min)

**Prof. Sir Ian Greer**

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**Dr. Stephen Kingon CBE**

Chairman, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**09:30 Agenda Introduction and GIS 2024 Logistics**

(5 min)

**Dr. Roberto Alvarez**

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

**09:35 Opening Session: Exploring the Universe**

(60 min)

Brian brings scientific discovery to life for millions. He is also a leading experimental physicist, helping to recreate the conditions 1/000000000th of a second after the Big Bang "to confirm the universe's underlying simplicity." With breathtaking images, Brian shows how science shocks and excites our imagination, as well as bringing humanity together. He also sets out the case for coordinated investment in science as key to job creation and growth.

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Prof. Brian Cox**

CBE FRS—CERN Physicist and Broadcaster  
Professor of Particle Physics, Manchester University

**10:35 Panel Conversation: Accelerating Global Sustainable Development Goals and Economic Inclusiveness**

(45 min)

The climate crisis remains a critical issue, and countries and businesses are struggling to address it without jeopardizing the lives of various segments of society. People in advanced economies are raising their voices to protest initiatives that are perceived as eroding their quality of life, while people in emerging nations demand to be included as partners in global prosperity. This equation is compounded by technological change and the rise of AI, which brings great promise but will also cause major shifts in job markets and societies. Innovation is essential to address this complex scenario at all levels, from policy frameworks to education and training models, from business models to institutions. In this session, GFCC Board Members will review the state of competitiveness in the world and share insights and concrete recommendations on how to break perceived trade-offs between sustainability, technological acceleration, and inclusiveness.

### MODERATOR

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

### PANELISTS

**Lulzim Basha**

Chairman, Democratic Party of Albania  
Albania

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**Charles Kiefel AM**

Chairman, The Principals Funds Management  
Founder and Chair, Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Australia

**Prof. Miguel Marques**

Vice-Rector, Catholic University of Portugal  
Portugal

**Antonios Sagris**

Head of Group Corporate Development and ESG, Piraeus Bank  
Greece

**Prof. Aleks Subic**

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Aston University  
UK

**Discussion questions:**

- How can countries advance sustainability without increasing the cost of life for populations?
- How can regions and nations scale up skilling efforts to keep up with AI and tech growth?
- What examples in policy and business are working and could be scaled up globally?

**11:20 Navigating the AI Revolution: Preparing for a World of Digital Transformation**

(45 min)

Join AI expert Daniel Hulme, CEO of Satalia, for a thought-provoking session exploring the key issues emerging alongside the rise of AI and digitalization. Hulme will share his view of the ethical considerations, societal impact, and transformative potential of AI and other emerging technologies and offer insights for universities and businesses to navigate this evolving landscape and prepare for the future of work.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Dr. Daniel Hulme**

CEO & Founder, Satalia  
UK

**12:05 Launch of GFCC Call to Action**

(10 min)

During this session, GFCC leadership will introduce the "Achieving a Sustainable Future for All" Call-to-Action and comment on some of the key proposals highlighted in this flagship document co-created with the GFCC community.

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**12:15 GFCC Members and Fellows Photo**

(5 min)

A photo of all GFCC members and fellows in attendance will be taken during this time.

**12:20 Lunch**

(60 minutes)

Private lunch for speakers/guests. Time available for attendees to view exhibition space.

**13:30 Transforming the World via Innovation in Energy**

(15 min)

The energy transition demands bold innovation. In this session, Stephen Gallagher, Director of Strategy for Energy Customer Solutions at SSE, will showcase cutting-edge innovations propelling the energy transition. Discover how SSE is leading the charge in developing and implementing solutions for a cleaner, more sustainable energy landscape. Gain valuable insights into the technologies and strategies shaping the future of energy.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Stephen Gallagher**

Director of Strategy and Low Carbon Solutions, SSE Energy Solutions  
UK & Ireland

**13:45 Panel Conversation: Seizing the Decarbonization Opportunity**

(45 min)

Decarbonization poses opportunities for investment and new business development while requiring innovation across the board. However, it also comes with risks and challenges, as the development of any new industry inevitably does. To realize the energy transition opportunity and decarbonize industries, the world needs new technologies to be translated into real-world applications. Achieving acceptable price points and finding early adopters of these technologies is critical. In this panel session, participants will share lessons learned on how to navigate decarbonization processes from policy, business, and community perspectives.

**MODERATOR**

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**PANELISTS****Dr. Steven Ashby**

Director  
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory  
USA

**Prof. John Barry**

Professor of Green Political Economy & Co-Director of  
the Centre for Sustainability, Equality and Climate Action,  
Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

**Debbie Caldwell**

Climate Commissioner, Belfast City Council  
NI

**Dr. Manny Pohl**

Chairman and CIO, EC Pohl & Co  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
South Africa

**Marguerite Sayers**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer, ESB  
Ireland

**TBD**

Glavbolgarstroy Holding AD (GBS)  
Bulgaria

**Discussion questions:**

- What is key in securing off-takers for decarbonization projects?
- What policy frameworks are required to drive demand without increasing the cost of living?
- What can government, industry, and research do to accelerate new techs into the market?

**14:30 Bridging Food Security & One Health is Pivotal to Society**

(25 min)

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER****The Right Honourable Baroness Minette Batters DL**

Former President (2018–2024), National Farmers' Union of  
England and Wales  
UK

**14:55 Panel Conversation: Harnessing Partnership to Advance Food Security and One Health**

(45 min)

The challenge of providing the world's growing population with access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food all the time and in ways our planet can sustain and against the backdrop of climate change and biodiversity loss continues to be a major challenge for society. The Covid-19 pandemic has illuminated the deep connection between animals, humans, and the wider planetary environment and a One Health approach is receiving increased political attention as a solution to some of the greatest health threats we face today including increasing zoonotic disease emergence, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), food safety and security. Our panel of experts will discuss the inextricable links between Global Food Security and One Health and argue that enhanced and accelerated innovation, investment, and partnership are required to support society.

**MODERATOR****Prof. Wayne Powell**

Principal and Chief Executive, SRUC  
UK

**PANELISTS****The Right Honourable The Baroness Minette Batters**

Former President (2018 - 2024), National Farmers' Union of  
England and Wales  
UK

**Dr. Peter Dorhout**

Vice President for Research, Iowa State University  
USA

**Prof. Ursula Lavery MBE**

Technical and R&D Director, Pilgrim's Europe  
UK

**Phillip Phiri**

Executive Director, National Competitiveness Commission  
(NCC)  
Zimbabwe

**George Scutaru**

Chief Executive Officer, New Strategy Center  
Romania

**Prof. Ken Sloan**

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Harper Adams  
University  
UK

#### Discussion questions:

- How can digital technologies boost food production while reducing environmental impact?
- What role do regenerative agriculture practices play and how can they be scaled globally?
- How can Africa's arable land be utilized to enhance food production sustainably?

#### 15:40 Transition to workshops

(15 min)

GIS 2024 organizers will introduce the workshops, explain the dynamics, and direct participants to their respective locations.

#### Dr. Paul Madden

Director, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

#### 15:55 Workshops

(75 min)

Location: Peter Froggatt Centre (PFC)

The GIS 2024 workshops will be progressive dialogues that will build on the ideas discussed in the day's plenary panel conversations. Each workshop will begin with the moderator highlighting key recommendations and ideas from the panels. Following this, kick-off discussants will provide their insights and suggestions for advancing the agenda related to the workshop's theme. After all discussants have shared their views, the floor will open for additional contributions, with the moderator potentially inviting comments from plenary session moderators present. The workshop will conclude with the moderator summarizing the three key recommendations for the thematic area.

#### Workshop 1: Seizing the Decarbonization Opportunity

##### MODERATOR

#### Elvena Graham OBE

Chair  
Tourism Northern Ireland, NI

##### DISCUSSANTS

- Sunday Adejo, Co-Founder, Biodry2Energy, Nigeria
- Debbie Caldwell, Climate Commissioner, Belfast City Council, NI
- Tim Cox, Whole Systems Director, NIE Networks, NI
- Karen Hennessey, CEO, Real Leaf Farm, Ireland
- Prof. David Rooney, Dean of Internationalisation and Reputation, Queen's University of Belfast, School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Research Centre in Sustainable Energy, NI

#### Workshop 2: Transforming the World via Innovation in Energy

##### MODERATOR

#### Mark McGranaghan

Fellow  
Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), Ireland

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- Dr. Steven Ashby, Director, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, USA
- Kelly Becker, President, Schneider Electric, France
- Raymond C Decorvet, Senior Account Executive, Mann Energy, Switzerland
- Thorsten Heller, Chief Innovation Officer, GE Vernova, Sweden
- Andrew Keane, Director, NextSys, University College Dublin, Ireland
- Marguerite Sayers, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, ESB, Ireland

#### Workshop 3: Food Security & One Health: Innovation to accelerate solutions and improve economic growth, climate resilience and the nation's health

##### MODERATOR

#### Prof. Nigel Scollan

Queen's University of Belfast, Institute of Global Food Security  
NI

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- Kerri Crossey, Global RDA Project Manager, Kerry Group, Ireland
- Heather Jenkins, Agri-Food, Supply Chain Development and Commercial Strategy Consultant; Director of Buying Waitrose (2008-2018), UK
- Dr. Jan Mládek, Director, The Czech Institute of Applied Economics, Ltd.; Minister of Agriculture (2005-2006), Czech Republic; Minister of Industry and Trade (2014-2017), Czech Republic; GFCC Distinguished Fellow, Czech Republic
- Anne Richmond, Head of Research and Development, Pilgrim's Europe, UK
- Prof. Akinori Yamanaka, Director, West Tokyo International Innovation Co-Creation Hub, Japan

#### Workshop 4: Advancing Resources Productivity

##### MODERATOR

##### Prof. Jim Metson

Senior Advisor, Newmarket Campus Development  
University of Auckland  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
New Zealand

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- C. Derek Campbell, Executive Chairman, LVC Global Holdings Ltd.; GFCC Distinguished Fellow, USA
- Dr. Walter Copan, Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer, Colorado School of Mines, USA
- Kainar Kozhumov, Partner, Center for Research and Consulting (CRC), Kazakhstan
- Mark Minevich, Founding Partner and Chairman, Going Global Ventures (GGV); GFCC Senior Fellow, USA
- William Simwanza, Officer-In-Charge for Industry, Innovation and Minerals, African Union Commission, Ethiopia

#### Workshop 5: Accelerating Sustainability and Inclusiveness Through R&D

##### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Padma Raghavan

Vice Provost for Research and Innovation and Chief Research Officer  
Vanderbilt University  
USA

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- Marcel Foca, Senior Expert, New Strategy Center, Romania
- Deborah Gordon, Senior Advisor, Longview Fusion Energy Systems, Inc.; GFCC Senior Fellow, USA
- Dr. Wendy McCloone, Director of Research, Queen's University of Belfast
- Dr. Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director-General, Department of Science and Innovation, South Africa
- Dr. Nathan Skillen, Assistant Professor in Sustainability (Brewing & Distilling), School of Engineering and Physical Sciences, Herriot-Watt University, UK
- Prof. Jay Walsh, Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation, University of Illinois, USA

#### 17:10 Panel Conversation: Advancing Global Sustainability

#### Key Recommendations & Feedback from Workshops

(45 min)

This final panel discussion on Day 1 will review the key recommendations that emerged from the workshops. Participants will engage in a lively discussion, share the key recommendations, and debate what is needed to turn those into action across sectors, from the local to the global level.

##### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Roberto Alvarez

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

##### PANELISTS

##### Ellvena Graham OBE

Chair of Tourism  
NI

##### Mark McGranaghan

Fellow, EPRI  
Ireland

##### Prof. Jim Metson

Senior Advisor, Newmarket Campus Development,  
University of Auckland  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
New Zealand

##### Prof. Nigel Scollan

Queen's University of Belfast, Institute of Global Food Security  
NI

##### Prof. Padma Raghavan

Vice Provost for Research and Innovation and Chief Research Officer  
Vanderbilt University  
USA

##### Discussion questions:

- What are the main insights you gained throughout the day?
- What key recommendations emerged from your workshops?
- When we think about global sustainability what is the one key thing we should prioritize?

#### 17:55 Day 1 Wrap up

(5 min)

##### Dr. Roberto Alvarez

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

## BY INVITATION ONLY

**09:00–17:00**

### **Datathon at Queen's Business School in Partnership with Alteryx and Kainos**

**Location: Queen's Business School**

This is an exclusive event for 150 pre-selected students.

Queen's Business School, Queen's School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computing, Alteryx, and Kainos will conduct a dynamic datathon where 150 students will use their skills and creativity to solve a complex sustainability challenge and showcase their talent in a collaborative and inspiring environment.

**18:00 Annual Sustainability Spotlight**

**Location: The Great Hall**

(60 min)

Space is limited. This event requires registration prior to attendance.

Join Desiree Fixler for a deep dive into the world of sustainable and blended finance. Desiree's 25+ years of experience will illuminate the path toward a more responsible and impactful financial system.

#### **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Desiree Fixler**

Advocate For Change in ESG investing and Sustainability  
UK

**19:30–21:00**

**Dinner (for invited guests only)**

**Location: Titanic Belfast**

**19:30 Welcome**

**Prof. Sir Ian Greer**

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**21:00 Dinner Ends**

November

13

GIS

Day 2

## Queen's University of Belfast

### Whitla Hall

#### Inclusiveness is a must for long-term sustainability

Focusing on the necessity of inclusiveness, the second day of the GIS 2024 will address how social equity and inclusiveness are essential to sustain growth and economic development in the long run. Sessions will highlight collaborative approaches that ensure that all communities are included in the innovation economy.

#### HOSTED BY

##### Mark Simpson

Correspondent and presenter, BBC News NI

#### 09:00 GIS 2024: Welcome to Day 2

(10 min)

##### Prof. Sir Ian Greer

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast NI

##### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness USA

#### 09:10 Opening Session: A Programme for Social Cohesion and Connection

(40 min)

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

##### Andy Haldane CBE

Chief Executive, RSA (Royal Society of Arts) and former Chief Economist, Bank of England UK

#### 09:50 Panel Conversation: Bringing Everyone into the Innovation Economy

(45 min)

This session will focus on the importance of skilling and creating opportunities for all demographics to access the innovation economy. Digital platforms are crucial for education and global job market access, but partnerships among industry, universities, governments, and civil society organizations are fundamental to cross divides and close gaps. These collaborations are needed to put in place frameworks to enable skilling and participation in the new economy. Addressing the global talent shortage by providing education and training is essential for inclusion,

social cohesion, and competitiveness. As AI and technology growth transform societies, ensuring everyone can participate in the innovation economy is vital for sustainable growth and social stability.

#### MODERATOR

##### Tina McKenzie MBE

Chief Executive Officer, Staffline Recruitment Ireland

#### PANELISTS

##### Abdulwahab Al-Maimani

CEO, Spectrum Index Oman

##### John Healy OBE

Chair to the Board, InvestNI NI

##### Cat McCusker

President, NI Chamber and NI Regional Lead NI

##### Douglas Muzimba

Director, NCC Zimbabwe

##### Prof. Austen Rainer

Professor, School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Queen's University of Belfast NI

##### Prof. Damon Salesa

Vice-Chancellor, Auckland University of Technology New Zealand

#### Discussion questions:

- How can in practice local communities build partnerships for an inclusive innovation economy?
- Can global partnerships ensure education and training across geographies? How?
- What tools work to skill people for the innovation economy? How can they be scaled up?

#### 10:35 Break

(10 mins)



**10:45 Pioneering a Zero-Emissions Maritime Future**

(20 mins)

Artemis Technologies' CEO will share his vision to decarbonize the maritime industry. Learn about transformative technologies and vessels that operate with zero emissions. Discover the unique solutions from tailored engineering services to the groundbreaking Artemis eFoiler® electric propulsion system.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER****Iain Percy OBE**

Founder and CEO, Artemis Technologies Ltd  
UK

**11:05 Panel Conversation: Expanding Productivity Frontiers in the Digital Age**

(45 min)

This panel will explore how digitalization transforms productivity at the company, regional, and national levels. Discussions will focus on leveraging digital technologies to drive innovation, the economic impacts of digitalization, and strategies to capitalize on its potential while avoiding common pitfalls. Experts will share insights on preparing societies, institutions, and individuals for these changes, highlighting the effects on productivity across various levels—micro (company), meso (regional), and macro (national). The panel will offer best practices for fostering a digitally adept workforce and economy, ensuring that all levels of society are prepared to thrive in a digitally-driven world.

**MODERATOR****Rushdi Abdul Rahim**

President & Chief Executive Officer, Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT)  
Malaysia

**PANELLISTS****Eldar Abdrazakov**

Founder & CEO, Centras Group  
Kazakhstan Growth Forum  
Kazakhstan

**Dr. Ghadah Al-Dabbagh**

Head of Omnipreneurship Lab, Al-Dabbagh Group  
Saudi Arabia

**Dr. Adrian Johnston MBE**

Belfast Innovation Commissioner, Belfast City Council  
NI

**Dr. David Jordan**

Lecturer in Economics, Queen's Business School, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

**James Tsiolis**

CEO, Netlikz  
Australia

**Discussion questions:**

- Beyond the hype, what is needed to effectively boost productivity via digital technologies?
- What are the key strategies for regions to capitalize on digitalization for economic growth?
- How can national policies support workforce readiness for a digital economy?

**11:50 InQUBate: Supporting Queen's Young Entrepreneurs**

(15 min)

This session will provide a brief overview of the voting process for selecting promising young entrepreneurs at Queen's. Attendees will learn about InQUBate, a university-wide network that fosters innovation and supports student and graduate startups. Discover how your vote can make a difference in helping these aspiring entrepreneurs thrive.

**PRESENTER****Brian McCaul/ Meabh Reynolds**

Director, QUBIS, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

**12:05 Lunch**

(55 mins)

**13:00 Conversation: Enabling Place-Making Innovation**

(30 min)

This conversation will delve into the importance of place-making innovation, emphasizing that innovation happens on the ground and requires strong leadership to drive change. Discussions will cover the necessity of cross-sector collaboration and highlight examples from various regions worldwide, showcasing what works and what doesn't. The session will explore how places that invest in innovation can reinvent their economies by transforming challenges into opportunities. Panelists will provide concrete recommendations on identifying key industries, business types, and technologies that align with local assets. The conversation will focus on understanding and leveraging these assets to foster sustainable and inclusive innovation, driving regional and global progress.

#### MODERATOR

##### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

#### IN CONVERSATION

##### Dr. Masayuki Adachi

President & COO, Horiba  
Japan

##### Prof. Sir Ian Greer

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

#### 13:30 Datathon Highlights: Insights from the Leading Teams

(40 mins)

This session spotlights the top Datathon teams. Get inspired as the top teams take the stage to share their journey, challenges, and triumphs from the competition. Learn firsthand about winning strategies from their experience.

#### 14:10 Opinion is the Lowest Form of Evidence - deploying data to drive a sustainable cancer revolution

(20 min)

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

##### Prof. Mark Lawler

Professor of Digital Health, Queen's University of Belfast  
UK

#### 14:30 Conversation: Harnessing the Economic Dividend of Health

(45 min)

Delivering a sustainable agenda that preserves our individual and population health and enhances our collective well-being is becoming ever more challenging, as our population ages and costs of healthcare escalate. However, increasingly we are realising that health innovation provides not only an opportunity to deliver 21st-century care for our citizens but also can help realize economic benefits. Our panel of experts will challenge the current status quo, arguing that health is both an investment as well as a cost and articulate a data-informed vision where a sustainable health and well-being agenda can both contribute to improved patient outcomes and better quality-of-life, while also driving a socio-economic health dividend that contributes to better sustainability, increased productivity and enhanced competitiveness.

#### MODERATOR

##### Prof. Mark Lawler

Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Digital Health, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

#### IN CONVERSATION

##### Dr. Michinari Hamaguchi

Director General of SCARDA, AMED  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Japan

##### Professor Chris McCabe

School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences,  
Queen's University of Belfast

##### Angela McFarlane

Vice President, Strategic Planning UK & North Europe,  
IQVIA, UK

##### Steve Orr OBE

Chief Executive Officer, Catalyst Innovation Centre, NI

#### 15:15 Transition to workshops

(15 min)

GIS 2024 organizers will introduce the workshops, explain the dynamics and direct participants to their respective locations.

##### Dr. Paul Madden

Director, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

#### 15:30 Workshops

(75 min)

#### Location: Peter Froggatt Centre (PFC)

#### Workshop 1: Preparing the Workforce for the Digital Age

#### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Venetia Koussia

Executive Director  
CompeteGR, Greece

#### DISCUSSANTS:

- Chris Allen, GFCC Senior Fellow; Former Greek desk, European Commission, Greece
- Dr. Ghadah Al-Dabbagh, Head of Omnipreneurship Lab, Al-Dabbagh Group, Saudi Arabia
- Dr. Martin Betts, CEO, HEDx, Australia

- Prof. Razvan Bologa, Innovation Coordinator, Bucharest University of Economic Studies—ASE, Romania
- Sandra Duxbury, Entrepreneur and Consultant in Strategic Policy and Advanced Education, Canada
- Erion Isufi, CEO & Founder, Landmark Technologies, Albania

#### Workshop 2: Reshaping the Business Landscape with AI

##### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Paul Madden

Director  
Centre for Competitiveness, NI

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- Eldar Abdrazakov, Founder & CEO, Centras Group; Kazakhstan Growth Forum, Kazakhstan
- Dr. Ayman Al-Fudhaili, CEO of the Industrial Innovation Academy, National Competitiveness of Oman, Oman
- Hiro Nishiguchi, Managing Director, GEN Japan, Japan
- Prof. Peter Smith, Smith Optical, UK
- NI Chamber member TBC

#### Workshop 3: Transforming Regional Economies via Innovation

##### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Paul Roben

Associate Vice Chancellor, Innovation and Commercialization  
University of California San Diego  
USA

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- Anuar Buranbayev, Partner, Center for Research and Consulting, Kazakhstan
- Ashleen Feeney, Partner, KPMG, NI
- Dr. George Gillespie OBE, Executive Corporate Officer, HORIBA, Ireland
- Zaimizi Hamdani, Chief Strategy Officer, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia
- Dr. Miguel Marques, Vice-President, Catholic University of Portugal, Portugal
- Suzanne Wylie, CEO, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, NI

#### Workshop 4: Health for all—Bridging the Gap

##### MODERATOR

##### Dr. Rachel Swift

Vice-chair, Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness, GM Strategy Innovation & Ventures, HCF  
Non-executive Director, Innovation & Enterprise Advisory Board  
Australia

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- Dr. Claudio Furtado, GFCC Distinguished Fellow, Brazil
- Prof. Deirdre Heenan, Professor of Social Policy, Ulster University, NI
- Prof. Mark Lawler, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Digital Health, Queen's University of Belfast, NI
- TBD, Microsoft, Ireland
- Dr. Haruko Takeyama, Professor, Waseda University, Japan

#### Workshop 5: Making Sustainable Manufacturing a Reality

##### MODERATOR

##### Prof. Sam Turner

Chief Executive Officer  
Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC)  
Belfast, UK

##### DISCUSSANTS:

- Dr. Saif Al Hiddabi, Undersecretary of Research and Innovation—Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Oman
- Prof. Brian Falzon, Dean of Engineering, Western Sydney University, Australia
- Andrew Lynch, Chief Innovation Officer, Irish Manufacturing Research, Ireland
- Prof. Mark Price, EPSRC Fellow in Engineering Design—School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, Queen's University of Belfast, NI
- James Rutherford, Chairman, Centamin plc, UK; Director, Manara Minerals, Saudi Arabia; Director, Ecora Resources plc, UK

## 16:45 Panel Conversation: Advancing Economic Inclusiveness

### Key Recommendations & Feedback from Workshops (45 min)

This final panel discussion on Day 2 will review the key recommendations that emerge from the workshops. Participants will engage in a lively discussion, share the key recommendations, and debate what is needed to turn those into action across sectors, from the local to the global level.

#### MODERATOR

##### Chad Evans

Executive Vice President, Council on Competitiveness  
Treasurer, GFCC  
USA

#### PANELLISTS

##### Dr. Venetia Koussia

Executive Director, CompeteGR  
Greece

##### Dr. Paul Madden

Director, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

##### Dr. Paul Roben

Associate Vice Chancellor, Innovation and  
Commercialization, University of California San Diego  
USA

##### Dr. Rachel Swift

Vice-chair, Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness,  
GM Strategy Innovation & Ventures, HCF; Non-executive  
Director, Innovation & Enterprise Advisory Board  
Australia

##### Prof. Sam Turner

Chief Executive Officer, Advanced Manufacturing Innovation  
Centre (AMIC), Belfast  
UK

#### Discussion questions:

- What are the main insights you gained throughout the day?
- What key recommendations emerged from your workshops?
- When we think about including people into the economy, what is the one key thing we should prioritize?

## 17:30 Day 2 Wrap up

(5 min)

##### Dr. Roberto Alvarez

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil

**BY INVITATION ONLY****Gala Dinner and Global Competitiveness Awards**

Great Hall at Queen's University of Belfast

**18:30 Shuttle departs from the conference hotels (Europa and Grand Central)**

**19:00 Drinks at The Naughton Art Gallery at Queen's**  
(30 min)

**19:30 Welcome**

**Prof. Sir Ian Greer**

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**Dr. Stephen Kingon CBE**

Chairman, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**20:45 GFCC Global Competitiveness Awards**

The Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils is pleased to present the Global Competitiveness Award in honour of leaders who are contributing to advance innovation and competitiveness agendas.

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**21:15 InQUBate prize presentation**

**22:30 Dinner ends**

November

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GIS

Day 3

## Queen's University of Belfast

Whitla Hall

### The Power of Partnership

The final day of the GIS 2024 will emphasize the importance of collaboration to advance society and the economy. Discussions will center on successful partnerships between industries, governments, and communities that enhance innovation and drive collective progress toward a sustainable future.

#### HOSTED BY

##### Bill Neely

Former Chief Global Correspondent at NBC News

### 09:30 GIS 2024: Welcome to Day 3

(10 min)

##### Prof. Sir Ian Greer

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

##### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

### 09:40 Perspectives for the Future

(20 min)

#### SPEAKERS

##### Hilary Benn MP

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

##### Joseph Kennedy III

US Special Envoy for Northern Ireland

### 10:00 Leading Northern Ireland Forward

(20 min)

##### Emma Little-Pengelly, MLA

Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland  
NI

##### Michelle O'Neill, MLA

First Minister of Northern Ireland  
NI

### 10:20 Navigating the Future: Embracing AI to Transform Our Workforce and Skills

(40 mins)

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

##### Cecilia Harvey

Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Tech Women Today  
UK

Sponsors' Remarks (10 mins)

##### Derek Hynes

Managing Director, NIE Networks  
NI

### 11:10 Break

(10 mins)

### 11:20 Panel Conversation: Breaking Barriers: The Impact of Women in Shaping an Innovative Economy

(45 min)

What happens when diverse perspectives meet intrinsic motivation and bold ideas? Women leaders are at the forefront of this fusion; reshaping industries and pioneering change. With their unique insights and entrepreneurial spirit, they drive profound change by not only breaking barriers but crafting new paths for sustainable growth, collaboration, and innovation.

#### MODERATOR

##### Prof. Karen McCloskey

Director, Queen's Gender Initiative, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

#### PANELLISTS

##### Dr. Raja Al Gurg

Group MD & Chairperson, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group  
UAE

##### Athina Chatzipetrou

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Greece

##### Clare McGee

CEO, Awaken Hub/Awaken Angels  
NI

### **Sinead Rocks**

Managing Director, Nations & Regions at Channel 4  
UK

### **Amb. Barbara Stephenson**

Vice Provost for Global Affairs and Chief Global Officer,  
University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill  
USA

### **12:05 Panel Conversation: Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) - Innovating for Social Change**

(45 min)

Civil Society, encompassing the community and voluntary sector, social enterprises, and other non-governmental, not-for-profit organizations, plays a vital role in driving innovation. Organisations within this sector approach innovation differently, focused on social value and enhanced by close ties to communities, their willingness to collaborate across sectors and experiment with new ideas, ensures they are at the forefront of social innovation. Despite challenges relating to funding and sustainability, the sector has the unique ability to leverage partnerships and find creative solutions to some of society's most complex challenges.

#### **MODERATOR**

### **Prof. Kathryn Higgins**

Director, Queen's Communities and Place  
NI

#### **PANELISTS**

### **David Linton**

Founder and CEO, Madlug C.I.C  
NI

### **Jonathan McAlpin**

Vice Chair & CEO, East Belfast Enterprise, NI

### **Celine McStravick**

CEO, NICVA  
NI

### **13:45 Greater Manchester's Transformation: An Inclusive and Sustainable Model for Building a City Region**

(40 min)

#### **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

### **The Right Honourable Mayor Andy Burnham**

Mayor of Greater Manchester  
UK

Speaking on how Manchester has successfully harnessed all of its anchor institutions and managed to drive forward a significant change agenda that has transformed the City region over the last 30-40 years and how he plans to continue its success, with particular regard to the inclusive, sustainable agenda.

### **14:20 Conversation: Making Innovation Partnerships Work in Practice**

(45 min)

This panel will explore the critical role of cross-sector, cross-industry, and cross-regional collaboration in driving innovation, focusing on partnerships between different types and sizes of organizations, including industry, government, and academia. It will highlight real-world examples from around the globe where such collaborations have successfully accelerated innovation, examining the key factors that enabled these successes. Discussions will delve into the frameworks necessary for fostering these partnerships, including legal structures, incentives, and funding mechanisms. The panel will also cover unconventional and emerging forms of collaboration, such as corporations partnering with startups through open innovation and other models. The session aims to provide practical insights and recommendations for building effective innovation partnerships.

#### **MODERATOR**

### **Joan Gabel**

Chancellor, University of Pittsburgh  
USA

#### **PANELISTS**

### **Dr. Michinari Hamaguchi**

Director General of SCARDA, AMED  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Japan

### **Margaret Hearty**

Chief Executive, InterTradeIreland  
NI & Ireland

### **Dr. Matthew Hulver**

VP of Knowledge Enterprise Initiatives, ASU Knowledge Enterprise  
USA

### **Dr. Nkem Khumbah**

Head of STI Policy Systems, Governance and Partnerships, African Academy of Science  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
Kenya

### **Ahmad Razif Mohamad**

Head of International Partnership, MIGHT  
Malaysia



**15:05 Conversation: South-North Global Partnerships**

(20 min)

This fireside chat will bring together leaders from the Northern and Southern Hemispheres to discuss collaborative approaches for addressing global challenges and sharing prosperity. The session will explore how different regions can leverage their unique strengths and resources to create impactful partnerships, fostering innovation, economic growth, and social cohesion across the globe. Participants will share insights and actionable recommendations for building a more inclusive and resilient world through South-North cooperation.

**MODERATOR****Bill Neely**

Title

**IN CONVERSATION:****David Donoghue**

Former Irish ambassador and former Irish Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ireland

**William Simwanza**

Officer-In-Charge for Industry, Innovation and Minerals, African Union Commission  
Ethiopia

**15:25 GFCC Impact: Catalysing Partnerships at a Global Scale**

(5 min)

Accelerating the Innovation and Competitiveness agenda in Africa

**William Simwanza**

Officer-In-Charge for Industry, Innovation and Minerals, African Union Commission  
Ethiopia

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**15:30 Panel Conversation: Navigating the Competitiveness Landscape in a Fast-Changing World**

(45 min)

This panel will explore the interconnected global shifts in demographics, technology, climate, and political systems that are reshaping competitiveness strategies. We will examine the links between these forces and their impact on security, environmental policy, trade, and more. From the rise of technology and Africa's growing population to evolving perceptions of work and life, the session will shed light on emerging trends and offer insights into how leaders can craft effective strategies to navigate these complex, turbulent times and the evolving geopolitical context.

**MODERATOR****The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**PANELISTS****Jeremie Brecheisen**

Managing Partner, Gallup EMEA  
UK

**Dr. Hippolyte Fofack**

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
USA

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**Hiro Nishiguchi**

Managing Director, GEN Japan  
Japan

**James Applegate**

US Consul General in Northern Ireland  
USA

**Discussion questions:**

- How can leaders align competitiveness with global shifts?
- What are the key links among security, environment, tech, demographic change and trade?
- How can regions leverage trends to navigate challenges?

**16:15 Launch of GIS 2025**

(15 min)

**SPEAKERS**

**Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton**

Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast

**Joan Gabel**

Chancellor, University of Pittsburgh  
USA

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**16:30 Event Closing**

(15 min)

**Prof. Sir Ian Greer**

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA

**Dr. Stephen Kingon CBE**

Chairman, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI

**The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith**

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA

**09:00-14:00**

**Fringe Event: Women in Business**

**Location: Mandela Hall**

Pre-registration required

Join a dynamic fringe event celebrating women in business. Hear from inspiring leaders, share experiences, and forge valuable connections. Engage in thought-provoking discussions, gain practical insights, and be part of a supportive community driving change.

**09:00 - 15:30**

**Young Enterprise NI**

**Location: Quad**

Open to all event attendees

Experience the energy and innovation of Young Enterprise NI. Meet the young entrepreneurs shaping the future, witness their creative business ideas, and be inspired by their passion and drive. This is an opportunity to support the next generation of business leaders and see firsthand the impact of enterprise education.

November

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GIS

Day 4

## Belfast, Northern Ireland

### 9:15 Shuttle departs from Invest NI

Address: Bedford Square, 1 Bedford St, Belfast BT2 7ES, United Kingdom

### 10:00 Arrival at Wightbus, Ballymena

Welcome tea and coffee

### 10:30 Factory Tour (Split into 3 groups-led by senior engineers)

### 11:15 Depart for Catagen

### 12:00 Visit to Catagen

### 13:00 Lunch at Grand Central Hotel

### 14:00 Shuttle Departs to Tourism Options

#### **Titanic Museum (2 hours)**

Titanic Belfast is an iconic six-floor building featuring 10 interpretive and interactive galleries that explore the sights, sounds, smells, and stories of the Titanic.

#### **Game of Thrones Tour (2-3 hours)**

Game of Thrones Studio Tour takes you on a journey from the conceptual stages of Game of Thrones and into the heart of Westeros where you'll be in awe of giants and dragons, and the real Iron Throne.

#### **McConnell's Distillery Tour (1 hour)**

Signature tour: You'll learn about the restoration of this historic Belfast brand while exploring our home here at McConnell's Distillery. Observe the process of making triple-distilled, single malt Irish whiskey and of course, sample some of our award-winning whiskies along the way.

# Speaker Bios

## Eldar Abdrazakov

Founder & CEO, Centras Group  
Kazakhstan Growth Forum  
Kazakhstan



Eldar Abdrazakov is Founder & CEO of the Centras Group. Centras is a Kazakhstan's leading investment & insurance firm. Centras commands Top3 position in retail insurance distribution and expands its digital services in Mobility, Property, Health & Wealth.

Prior to founding Centras at 2004, Eldar was Head of Wholesale & Investment Banking at Kazkommertsbank, then Kazakhstan's largest bank, and CEO at Kazkommerts Securities. Abdrazakov joined the bank as an international banking officer in 1995.

Eldar serves on the Boards of Directors at the Kazakhstan Stock Exchange, Air Astana. He chairs the Kazakhstan Competitiveness Council and a member of Advisory Board of Harvard University's Davis Center on Russia & Eurasia. Ex-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Forte Bank JCS and YPO Kazakhstan.

Eldar Abdrazakov graduated from Yassawi University, Kazakhstan and completed Harvard Business School's General Management Program (GMP8). Also in February 2023 Eldar Abdrazakov received the status Chartered Director of the UK's Institute of Directors. In 2024 launched world famous quick service restaurant chain Popeyes in Kazakhstan.

## Dr. Masayuki Adachi

President & COO, Horiba  
Japan



Chairman of Japan Analytical Instruments Manufacturers' Association Chairman of RIKEN Future Innovation Alliance Fellow member of Society of Automotive Engineers (U.S.A.) Masayuki Adachi, Ph.D. is a president & COO of HORIBA, Ltd., which is leading manufacturer of analytical instruments in Kyoto, Japan. He has been involved in the R&D of automotive test systems for nearly

twenty years. His expertise led to the development of emission gas analyzers using novel technologies. In parallel to his responsibility in technology, he has also engaged with the global management of HORIBA business as a president and CEO of HORIBA in the United States from 2007 for four years and a chairman of the supervisory board of HORIBA France from 2014. During his career at HORIBA, he was a visiting researcher at University of California, Irvine from 1988 to 1990 and earned doctorate at Doshisha University, Kyoto in 1999.

## Sunday Adejo

Co-Founder  
Biodry2Energy  
Nigeria



Prince Sunday Martins Adejo is originally from Nigeria, coming from one of the seven ruling houses in Ile-Ife (Southwest Nigeria). He is the Co-Founder of Biodry2Energy, based in Switzerland, a company that works globally across the industrial and service sectors, driving innovations in energy, recycling, and beyond. Sunday is an Engineer and a former footballer.

## Dr. Raja Al Gurg

Group MD & Chairperson, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group  
Dubai



Dr Raja Easa Al Gurg is Chairperson and Managing Director of the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group (ESAG). She is known for her stellar leadership of the Group under the tutelage of her late father, the Founder, Easa Saleh Al Gurg.

Dr Al Gurg believes in the power of mentorship and is famed for her support and encouragement of Arab women entrepreneurs. She is Founder of the Dubai Businesswomen Council and Member of the Board of Directors of Dubai Chambers. She is also a Member of the Family Business Advisory Committee which oversees the Dubai Centre for Family Businesses.

Dr Al Gurg is the Deputy Chairperson of the National Bank of Fujairah, a member of the Board of Directors for Dubai Academic Health Corporation, and Vice Chairperson of University of Dubai. She is on the Board of Trustees for the Mohammad Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences. She is also the Deputy Chairperson of the Board of Governors at Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University and on the Board of Trustees for Ajman University.

She holds an Honorary Doctorate from Queen's for economics and was conferred as a Doctor of Literature by Amity University, India. In 2022, she was appointed as Honorary Pro-Chancellor at Heriot Watt University.

She is also the Chairperson of the Board of Al Jalila Foundation. In 2023, she was awarded the Legion of Honor, Chevalier (Knight) by President of France Emmanuel Macron.

Dr Al Gurg is also a published author. Her biography was the first of its kind by an Emirati businesswoman. The second book, *The Power of Authenticity: Three Principles of Leadership*, is a candid account of the obstacles and triumphs that this well-respected UAE business leader faced on her path to becoming one of the most influential businesswomen in the Arab world.

#### **Dr. Ghadah Al-Dabbagh**

Head of Omnipreneurship Lab, Al-Dabbagh Group  
Saudi Arabia



Dr Ghadah Al-Dabbagh is the Chief Officer of the Omnipreneurship Lab (OmniLab) at the Al-Dabbagh Group and an emeritus Professor in the King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. She holds a PhD in Communications Systems Engineering, University College London (UCL) London UK, 2011, and MSc in Data Communication Networks and Distributed Systems, University

College London (UCL) London UK, 2000 and a BSc in Computer Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL, USA, 1990. She is a technology professional and scholar with significant experience in data communication systems, adept at understanding and solving complex problems and proficient in designing intelligent systems and solutions. She has extensive experience in leading multi-disciplinary projects on topics such as Internet of Everything (IoE), providing connectivity of the Internet of Things (IoT) devices and sensors for Smart Cities, Self-Driving Cars, Location Awareness, Ad-Hoc Networks, Wireless Sensor Network, Cooperative Communications. She also possesses strong technical skills in Optimization, Deep Learning (AI, Machine learning) and Data Science.

#### **Dr. Ayman Al-Fudhaili**

CEO of the Industrial Innovation Academy, National Competitiveness of Oman  
Oman



Dr. Ayman Alfudhaili is a distinguished leader in the fields of innovation management, strategic planning, and business development, with a robust track record in transforming start-ups and leading organizational change. With extensive experience in Oman investment sectors, including manufacturing, finance, fisheries, agriculture, mining, and ICT, Dr. Alfudhaili has been instrumental

in shaping national and organizational strategies to achieve strategic objectives. Currently serving as the CEO of the Industrial Innovation Academy, Dr. Alfudhaili has previously held significant roles such as VP of the Program Management Office for Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-Up Unit and VP of Business Development at the Implementation Support & Follow-Up Unit (ISFU). His leadership in these roles has been pivotal in translating Oman Vision 2040 into actionable mid-term strategies and national programs, endorsed by His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq.

Dr. Alfudhaili's notable achievements include the establishment of the Plastic Downstream Center in Sohar Industrial Estate, restructuring the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development (ITHRA), and developing the National Fiscal Program (TAWAZUN). He has also designed and led various in-country value programs, such as the Rabat and Tawreed Programs, aimed at enhancing local added value through strategic supply chain management. An accomplished academic, Dr. Alfudhaili holds a PhD in Innovation Management from Newcastle University, UK, an MBA from Coventry University, UK, and a Bachelor of Science from Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. His expertise is further recognized through his board memberships, including the Oman Investment and Development Holding Company and the Industrial Innovation Center.

Fluent in both Arabic and English, Dr. Alfudhaili is a sought-after speaker and thought leader in innovation and strategic management, contributing significantly to the discourse on economic diversification and sustainable development in Oman and beyond.

**Abdulwahab A. Al Maimani**

CEO, Spectrum Index  
UK



Abdulwahab Al Maimani is a distinguished Omani investor and consultant, renowned for his strategic leadership in finance and wealth management. As the founder of In Abdulwahab, he offers systematic, science-backed investment advisory services, focusing on financial planning and portfolio management for individuals. Under his guidance, Abdulwahab's Office has grown

into a multinational investment portfolio, diversifying across sectors such as watchmaking, banking, real estate, and technology. His commitment to responsible investment is evident through partnerships with leading entities, emphasizing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles. Beyond his entrepreneurial ventures, Al Maimani serves as a government consultant, contributing to Oman's Vision 2040 by advising on sustainable economic growth and development strategies. His work reflects a dedication to empowering youth, fostering innovation, and achieving national progress with global investment excellence.

**Dr. Saif Al Hiddabi**

Undersecretary of Research and Innovation - Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation  
Oman



Dr. Saif Al-Hiddabi is currently the Undersecretary for Research and Innovation at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation in the Sultanate of Oman. He began his career in 1992 as a faculty member in the Mechanical and Industrial Engineering Department at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), where he rose to the position of Associate Professor in 2007. In addition to

his teaching and research responsibilities, Dr. Al-Hiddabi served as the Assistant Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Research at the College of Engineering from 2002 to 2006.

Dr. Al-Hiddabi joined the Research Council (TRC) of Oman in 2008 and served as the Assistant Secretary General for Research and Scientific Programs until 2020. He also held the position of Assistant Secretary General for Strategic Planning and Business Development at TRC for eight months before being appointed Undersecretary by royal decree in August 2020. Dr. Al-Hiddabi's research interests lie in the area of nonlinear systems analysis and control, with a focus on designing and implementing advanced nonlinear control for complex systems.

Dr. Al-Haddabi has received invitations to collaborate with reputed academic and research institutions around the world, including serving as a Visiting Researcher at the RWTH Flight Dynamics Institute at Aachen University of Germany in 2003, a Visiting Scholar in the Aeronautics and Astronautics Department at Stanford University, California, USA in 2005, and a Visiting Professor in the Aero-Astro Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston, USA in 2007-2008. He has published many research papers in highly respected scientific journals and conferences and has contributed to the advancement of science and technology through technical reports.

Dr. Al-Haddabi holds a BSc degree in Mechanical Engineering from SQU since 1992, MSc degrees in Aerospace Engineering since 1995 and Electrical and Computer Engineering, and a PhD degree in Aerospace Engineering since 2000, all obtained from The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA. He is also a graduate of the National Defense College of Oman and holds a Master's degree in Strategic Studies for National Security and Defense since 2019.

**Chris Allen**

GFCC Senior Fellow  
Former Greek desk, European Commission  
Greece



Chris Allen was Resident Economic Adviser in Athens for the European Commission from 2015-24. He played an important role in achieving the successful completion of the Greek crisis adjustment program and the coordinated implementation of the reforms and fiscal strategy that resulted in Greece's subsequent strong recovery. He was previously responsible for EU industrial

and business policy making, contributed to the EU's negotiating strategy on global climate change, and played an important role in the development of the EU Horizon 2020 partnerships on advanced industrial technologies. Prior to joining the Commission, he was head of economic forecasting at the European Central Bank and a university lecturer in the UK and the Netherlands. He has a PhD in Economics from London Business School and numerous publications in economic policy making.

**Dr. Roberto Alvarez**

Executive Director, GFCC  
Brazil



Roberto Alvarez is a systems thinker and doer with over 25 years of experience at the intersection of technology, business and policy. A native of Brazil, he is a community builder who has worked with and implemented joint initiatives alongside organizations and partners in the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe and Oceania throughout his career.

As Executive Director at the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils (GFCC), Roberto oversees the organization's policy portfolio and operations, engages with global leaders across the GFCC network in 35+ countries to conceptualize and develop new initiatives, builds global partnerships, creates content on innovation and competitiveness strategy and leads the GFCC team.

Roberto is also a Senior Policy Fellow at Queen Mary University of London Global Policy Institute and an active early-stage tech investor. He is a Venture Partner at NYC-based Seldor Capital, one of the first space-tech VCs worldwide, helping transform state-of-the-art technologies into high-impact businesses. He is an Industry 4.0 advisor to Bossa Nova Investments, the most active micro-VC company in LatAm, and the founder of Aventures, an early-stage investment company in Brazil that invests in cleantech and AI. Roberto is also part of the team behind FrissOn Capital, an early-stage VC company focused on deep tech ventures in LatAm. He has been involved in over 25 early-stage deals in various countries.

Roberto's career includes senior management positions at the Brazilian Agency for Industrial Development (ABDI), business consulting (manufacturing and logistics), tech entrepreneurship, higher education and civil society organizations. He has authored and organized books and publications on innovation, industrial development and manufacturing strategy and operations. Roberto holds a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from COPPE-UFRJ and was trained in Quality and Productivity at the Japan Productivity Center, as well as Exponential Technologies at the NASA Ames-based Singularity University. He is a certified coach in exponential organizations.

**James Applegate**

US Consul General in Northern Ireland  
USA



James Applegate took up his duties as U.S. Consul General in Belfast in August 2023. Prior to moving to Northern Ireland, James served as the Director for Europe and Asia Programs in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

He previously served as Political and Economic Counselor at Embassy Rangoon during the 2021 coup and its aftermath, and as the head of the DPRK Unit on the Korea Desk during a period of active negotiations. His other tours include Guangzhou, Canberra, Kabul, the State Department's Operations Center, the Foreign Service Institute's School of Leadership and Management Studies, and the U.S. Mission to the International Organizations in Vienna (UNVIE).

James holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from Michigan State University and a master's degree in international economics and finance from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Prior to joining the Foreign Service, James served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Armenia and worked as an Emergency Medical Technician. He is half of a tandem couple, and his spouse, Sarah Boyke, is currently a Career Development Officer. James has two children and is a native of west Michigan.

**Dr. Steven Ashby**

Director  
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory  
USA



Dr. Steven Ashby is Director of the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, where he sets PNNL's strategic direction and oversees its \$1.5 billion R&D budget. Under his leadership, PNNL's nearly 6,500 talented staff members draw on signature capabilities in chemistry, Earth sciences, biology, and data science to advance scientific discovery, enable energy sustainability, and enhance national security.

Dr. Ashby previously served as PNNL's Deputy Director for Science and Technology. Prior to joining PNNL, he spent nearly 21 years at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, where he founded the Center for Applied Scientific Computing and maintained several leadership positions, ultimately serving as Deputy Principal Associate Director for Science and Technology.



A widely recognized leader in computational science, Dr. Ashby is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics; member of the Washington State Academy of Sciences; national laboratory leadership partner for the U.S. Council on Competitiveness; and serves on advisory committees for local and state organizations, including the Washington Roundtable.

He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

### Dr. Wendy Austin

Former journalist and broadcaster, BBC NI



Wendy Austin has one of Northern Ireland's best known voices. A journalist and broadcaster for 45 years, she presented radio and television programmes for the BBC both in NI and nationwide, from Good Morning Ulster to Inside Business and Woman's Hour on BBC R4. Her career started in local newspapers and the Belfast Telegraph, then Downtown Radio and BBC Radio Ulster,

Radio 4 and BBC television.

Currently she presents podcasts for Ulster University Business School and the NI Social Care Council and continues to enjoy hosting conferences and events.

### Dr. Bob Barbour

Director and Chief Executive, Centre for Competitiveness Northern Ireland



Bob Barbour, Director and Chief Executive of the Centre for Competitiveness, a private sector, not for profit, membership organisation actively supporting the development of an internationally competitive economy through innovation, productivity improvement, sustainability and quality excellence on the island of Ireland. He is also Chief Executive and Secretariat of the Centre's

energy business groups, Smart Grid Ireland™ and Biogas Ireland™ facilitating strategic leadership and knowledge exchange and informing government policy and regulation.

Bob Joined the Centre in 1994 on returning home from 25 years living and working internationally. Prior to joining the Centre Bob's engineering and management experience covered executive positions working and living in Europe, Middle East, Australia and the USA with extensive work-related travel in the far east.

His work experience ranged from Operational Management in Power Station utilities as well as commissioning of electrical power generation plants in Australia and the Middle East. Following this he made a career change as a corporate executive into the ICT sector living in Europe and the USA with worldwide responsibilities for corporate procurement & negotiations for external manufacturing of digital / data storage systems within Digital Equipment Corporation's external products and technologies business.

In his current role supporting regional Competitiveness the Centre's strategic relationships includes Foundation membership of the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils headquartered in Washington DC, Foundation membership of the Global Smart Energy Federation currently with headquarters in Delhi, India. The Centre is also the National Partner of the European Foundation for Quality Management, Brussels and a member of the Northern Ireland Business Alliance. The Centre is an approved strategic business improvement partner for the Aerospace, Defence, Security & Space industry in the UK and Ireland.

Bob is a Management & Business graduate with national qualifications in Mechanical Engineering. He received a Doctor of Science in Economics (Honoris Causa) from Queens University, Belfast. Bob is married with two grown up children.

### Prof. John Barry

Professor of Green Political Economy & Co-Director of the Centre for Sustainability, Equality and Climate Action, Queen's University, Belfast UK



John Barry is a father, a political activist, trades unionist, recovering politician and Professor of Green Political Economy in the Centre for Sustainability, Equality and Climate Action at Queens University Belfast. He is also co-chair of the Belfast Climate Commission, and member of the Sustainable Future Committee of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

What keeps him awake at night is the life opportunities and future wellbeing of his and other children in this age of the planetary emergency and intersecting social and economic injustices within and between countries. What also keeps him awake at night is the following question: why it is easier for most people to believe in the end of the world than the end of capitalism and economic growth? What keeps him awake during his day job is why higher education is continuing in a 'business as usual' manner while the planet burns, inequality increases, and militarisation and conflict within and between societies grows?

### **Lulzim Basha**

Chairman, Democratic Party of Albania  
Albania



Lulzim Basha graduated in Law at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. He has worked for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and as a Legal Adviser at the United Nations Mission in Kosovo. Transitioning to Albanian politics in 2005, Basha was elected member of Parliament. During the period 2005–2011 he subsequently served as Minister of Public

Works and Telecommunications, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Interior.

His achievements include the construction of Albania's largest infrastructure project, the Durres-Kukes highway, implementation of the integrated TIMS system for border control, production of biometric passports, visa-free travel to Schengen countries and Albania's NATO membership. In 2011, Basha was elected Mayor of Tirana, where he continued his ambitious urban development projects and approved the first Urban Plan for Tirana in decades. As Mayor, Basha masterminded the expansion of the main Boulevard and the rehabilitation of the Tirana River.

Transitioning to party leadership in 2013, he became the first chairman of the Democratic Party elected directly by its members. His leadership has been characterized by his efforts to modernize and democratize internal party processes. Additionally, the establishment of the Foundation for Freedom and Democracy underscores his commitment to nurturing analytical discourse and policy innovation within the party.

Basha has also been recognized for his dedication to democratic principles, human rights, and the rule of law. Throughout his career, he has consistently advocated for transparency, accountability, and good governance, both within Albania and on the international stage. Basha has been an active voice in advocating for Albania's integration into the European Union and fostering closer ties with neighboring countries. His diplomatic insight and dedication to regional cooperation have contributed to Albania's positioning as a key player in the Western Balkans region.

### **The Right Hon. The Baroness Minette Batters**

Former President (2018 - 2024), National Farmers' Union of England and Wales  
UK



Minette Batters was the first woman to be elected President of the National Farmers' Union in 113yrs. She's represented the interests of over 46,000 farming businesses across England and Wales through unprecedented times, navigating the challenges of Brexit, Covid 19 and the war in Ukraine. During this time, she worked with four Prime Ministers - three of them in one year - and six Defra Secretaries of State.

In 2020 she led the NFU on one of the most successful campaigns ever seen, bringing together a coalition of chefs, including Jamie Oliver, farmers, environmentalists, consumer groups and animal welfare experts - resulting in over one million people signing the NFU food standards petition.

Minette co-founded 'Ladies in Beef' and the Great British Beef Week and is currently writing a monthly piece for Country Life magazine. She is currently an ambassador for Farm Africa and a passionate advocate and fundraiser for the Junior Diabetic Research Foundation.

Minette is mother to twins and is a tenant farmer, on the Longford Estate near Salisbury, Wiltshire.

### **Kelly Becker**

President, Schneider Electric  
France



Kelly has spent many years leading Schneider Electric's business across the globe and is currently responsible for all operations within the UK and Ireland, Belgium and Netherlands. Kelly has also held the role of Schneider Electric Country President, Ireland and Vice-President of the Power Solutions Division in the US.

During her experience, Kelly has led many Schneider functions across the globe with a strong focus on strategy and business execution. During her time in the US, Kelly led strategy and business development for Schneider's \$4B Partner Business with a focus on strategic growth and breakthrough initiatives, market and geographic expansions and internal start-ups.

She has held previous roles with Danaher Corporation and TAC/Schneider Electric selling complex energy management infrastructure projects to K-12 Schools and Universities in Texas, Illinois and New Mexico.

Kelly holds a Bachelor of Science degree in advertising and public relation from Texas Christian University and a master's degree in Business Administration from the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia.

She currently serves on the Corporate Advisory Board for the Darden School of Business, is the Deputy Chair of the French Chamber of Great Britain and an Executive Director of British American Business.

### Hilary Benn MP

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland  
Northern Ireland



Hilary Benn was appointed Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on 5 July 2024. He was elected as the MP for Leeds Central in 1999 and is now the MP for Leeds South.

During the last Labour Government he served as a Minister in the Home Office, as Secretary of State for International Development and as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Since 2010, in Opposition he served as Shadow Leader of the House of Commons, the Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Shadow Foreign Secretary.

From 2016–2021 he was the Chair of the Exiting the European Union Select Committee, and latterly the Select Committee on the Future Relationship with the European Union, before his appointment as Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary in September 2023.

The Secretary of State has overall responsibility for the ministerial work of the Northern Ireland Office.

### Dr. Martin Betts

CEO, HEDx  
Australia



Emeritus Professor Martin Betts has more than 40 years of experience in academic and executive roles in universities in Europe, Asia, Australia, and around the world. As the founder of HEDx, he has created trusted relationships with leading global universities and EdTech companies in the US, UK and Australia. Martin previously served as the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Engagement at

Queensland's Griffith University, and he spent a decade at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), as Dean of Faculty for Science, Engineering, IT, Design and the Built Environment.

Martin is host of the HEDx podcast and co-authored "The New Leadership Agenda," "The New Learning Economy," and "Changing Higher Education for Good," outlining principles and strategies informing the future of higher education. His dedication to education is deeply rooted in what he sees as the transformational benefits of education in ways that his sister and others have been denied and he learnt from his dearly departed father that one can make change happen by engaging with people and putting action before talk.

### Prof. Razvan Bologa

Innovation Coordinator, Bucharest University of Economic Studies—ASE  
Romania



Professor at the Computer Science Department of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies. His research interests include: artificial intelligence, adaptive learning, Industry 4.0, upskilling/reskilling, enterprise systems and cybersecurity.

Professor Bologa is a distinguished expert in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and

educational technologies, having led research projects that explore the integration of AI into educational technologies. His research focuses on areas such as AI-driven education, knowledge management for enterprise competitiveness, and intelligent systems designed to optimize business operations. Through his work, Professor Bologa has contributed significantly to advancing the role of AI in enhancing educational efficiency and innovation.

In addition to his research contributions, Professor Bologa serves as the Director of the Master's program in Enterprise Information Systems. In this capacity, he oversees the development of the program, ensuring that it provides students with cutting-edge knowledge in both AI and enterprise systems. Under his leadership, the program has gained a strong reputation for preparing graduates to lead in the rapidly evolving digital economy.

Prof. Bologa is actively involved with innovative start-ups with a focus on artificial intelligence in education and cybersecurity. He has started the largest educational robotics initiative for children in Southeastern Europe.

As president of CyberKnowledgeClub(CKC), an active NGO, prof. Bologa has been running initiatives in the area of STEM education with AI since 2018. The projects of CKC have been dedicated to helping children from disadvantaged communities in order to get access to educational robotics and AI. Responsible use of artificial intelligence and sustainability represent a key focus of Prof. Bologa's research.

### Jeremie Brecheisen

Managing Partner, Gallup EMEA  
UK



Over the past two years, Jeremie has led the Gallup CHRO Roundtable, which hosts 1,000+ large-company CHROs. He has conducted over 800 one-on-one interviews with these executives, hosted over 500 roundtables and facilitated over 200 briefings with large-company HR leadership teams. Jeremie has also published articles on quarterly CHRO survey data, many of which have appeared on Gallup.com and in the Harvard Business Review. His findings are quoted in many publications, including The Wall Street Journal.

Jeremie is a regular contributor and subject matter expert for many topics on Gallup.com, including Gallup's Real Future of Work series, disruptive forces, agility, the future of HR and industry-specific challenges.

Jeremie has managed many of Gallup's largest global clients, and his work has taken him all over the world, including North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. He has personally trained or coached thousands of managers and has designed workplace solutions for hundreds of thousands more.

Jeremie is an experienced public speaker, having presented at many public conferences, such as HRD Summits, MoneyLive Events, HCI Conferences, Argyle Conferences, Merit Summits and CoreNet Conventions, among others. He has served as a keynote speaker at international conventions with in-person audiences of over 30,000 and live-streaming audiences of more than 10,000. He regularly conducts Gallup public webinars for international audiences.

Jeremie received an MBA in the China International Program from the University of Hawaii. He received his bachelor's degree in modern Asian history from Brigham Young University. Jeremie speaks conversational Mandarin Chinese.

### Anuar Buranbayev

Partner, Center for Research and Consulting  
Kazakhstan



Anuar is a Partner at Center for Research and Consulting, a Kazakhstan-based think-tank that specializes in public policy research, spatial development policies, strategy development for business and government.

He had experience in upstream oil production, oil service, mining sectors and banking.

Anuar was also a Chairman of the Management Board of a state-owned think-tank Kazakhstan Industry Development Institute (now QazIndustry) and lead the research unit in industrial policy. His core competences include spatial research, corporate strategy formulation, building financial management systems and industrial policy.

Anuar holds an MBA from Maastricht School of Management where he specialized in General and Strategic Management. He is currently lecturing at local business school in the field of Strategic Management, Business Policy, General Management.

### The Right Honourable Mayor Andy Burnham

Mayor of Greater Manchester  
UK



The Mayor joins Greater Manchester's Combined Authority as its chair and eleventh member. He is also the lead for Policy & Reform and Transport.

Prior to being Mayor, Andy was MP for Leigh from 2001. In Government, Andy has held Ministerial positions at the Home Office, Department of Health and the Treasury. In 2008 he became Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, before returning to Health as Secretary of State in 2009.

In opposition, Andy has served as Shadow Education Secretary, Shadow Health Secretary and Shadow Home Secretary.

Andy lives in Leigh, Greater Manchester, with his wife and three children. He is a keen supporter of Everton FC.

**Debbie Caldwell**

Climate Commissioner, Belfast City Council  
NI



Debbie leads Belfast City Council's climate work and co-chairs the 'Belfast Resilience & Sustainability Board' and the Belfast Climate Commission. She leads a programme of work that includes developing and delivering a localised roadmap to decarbonise the city, supporting a retrofit hub and developing an Low Emission Vehicle Strategy as well as projects that are re-naturing the city. Prior

to joining the Council, Debbie led the design and delivery of climate investments in Asia and Africa. Debbie is also a Board member of the Centre for Competitiveness.

**C. Derek Campbell**

Executive Chairman, LVC Global Holdings Ltd.  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
USA



C. Derek Campbell is a Leader, Strategist, Entrepreneur, Investor, and Mentor. He is the Executive Chairman of LVC Global Holdings Ltd, an international asset acquisition and advisory platform that optimizes and monetizes opportunity flow in Energy, Infrastructure, Natural

Resources, Security & Defense, and Tech.

Mr. Campbell is a Distinguished Fellow with the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils, a former Principal Member of U.S. EXIM Bank's Sub-Saharan Africa Advisory Committee, and a former Advisory Board Member of the African Energy Chamber. Additionally, Mr. Campbell is a retired Colonel in the United States Marine Corps Reserves, serving with distinction in Iraq, Afghanistan, and South Sudan. Based on his decades of business experience, he holds Executive Board positions with both private and publicly traded corporations and serves as a mentor for Founders/CEOs via his participation with groups like Tiger 21, Loyal VC, Baltic Tech Ventures, and the Founder's Institute. Mr. Campbell holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Maryland and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

**Athina Chatzipetrou**

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Greece



For more than three years, I have served as a Non-Executive Director for the ELLAKTOR Group, contributing to the turnaround achieved in 2023. Chair of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee and Member of the Audit Committee, contributing to the governance framework in compliance with the Athens Stock Exchange ("ATHEX").

For more than six years, I served as CEO and Executive Chairwoman at the Hellenic Development Bank SA ("HDB"). I have led a holistic strategy focusing on sustainable business development while simultaneously changing its operating model. I took over in February 2020 with 280 million euros under management, and in September 2023, HDB had 10.5 billion euros under management. With a leverage ratio of 3.1 and a GVA of 2.9, HDB supported more than 43 thousand businesses and contributed 7.7 billion to the Greek GDP. At the Archaeological Fund, I disrupted the traditional process of accessing main archaeological sites in Greece through e-tickets.

For more than 16 years, I embarked on CFO and FD roles in numerous sectors and industries with particular emphasis on finance, administration, and project management. I have led Finance and Administration Functions for well-known multinational companies with a track record of successfully structuring and leading shareholder engagements to desired results. I have a good understanding and adaptation to complex business environments and situations and am trained at defining, communicating, motivating, and driving change at executive levels and across the broader community of stakeholders. For that, I view problems from the 'big picture POV,' and I recognize critical areas to drive into more detail by quickly structuring approaches to solve complex problems, synthesizing information rapidly with good business judgment, and quickly deriving deep insights.

### Dr. Walter Copan

Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer,  
Colorado School of Mines  
USA



A physical chemist by training, Copan began his career in R&D, business leadership and biotech ventures at The Lubrizol Corporation. Over the years, he has held a variety of roles in the private and public sectors, including the U.S. Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) in Golden, where he served from 2003 to 2005 as principal licensing executive for technology transfer, focused on increasing NREL's effectiveness in developing and commercializing clean energy technologies. Copan then served as executive vice president and chief technology officer at Clean Diesel Technologies, Inc., helping to lead the company's transformation from research focus to a successful commercial enterprise. He returned to the public sector in 2010, when he was named managing director for technology commercialization and partnerships at the DOE's Brookhaven National Laboratory.

In October 2017, Copan was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology and Director of NIST. At NIST, he spearheaded streamlining and modernization of U.S. policies and practices for innovation and technology transfer arising from federally funded research. Since January 2021, Copan has served as Senior Advisor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, co-founding the Renewing American Innovation project to advance U.S. innovation, standards and intellectual property policy.

Copan holds a PhD in physical chemistry and a B.S./B.A. dual degree in chemistry and music, all from Case Western Reserve University. He was recognized by the university as Distinguished Alumnus of the Year in 2008. He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors and was named the 2020 Laboratory Director of the Year by the Federal Laboratory Consortium. AUTM, a leading association in technology transfer, recognized Copan with its 2021 Bayh-Dole Award for his contributions to innovation and technology transfer.

Copan holds a PhD in physical chemistry and a B.S./B.A. dual degree in chemistry and music, all from Case Western Reserve University. He was recognized by the university as Distinguished Alumnus of the Year in 2008. He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors and was named the 2020 Laboratory Director of the Year by the Federal Laboratory Consortium. AUTM, a leading association in technology transfer, recognized Copan with its 2021 Bayh-Dole Award for his contributions to innovation and technology transfer.

### Professor Brian Cox

CBE FRS—CERN Physicist and Broadcaster  
Professor of Particle Physics, Manchester University



Arguably the UK's best known experimental physicist, Professor Brian Cox's books and TV programmes have been read and watched around the world and credited with making science engaging and accessible to millions. With his down-to-earth, likeable enthusiasm, Brian is frequently labelled a 'rock star scientist', in part due to his time as a professional musician. He the Professor of

Particle Physics at Manchester University, The Royal Society Professor for Public Engagement in Science, and a key part of the ATLAS experiment at the CERN Large Hadron Collider.

Brian's blockbuster TV shows include Wonders of the Universe, The Planets, Wonders of Life, and Forces of Nature, each looking at the fundamental science behind everything from stars and planets to atoms and microbiology. He has also presented Stargazing, Space Hoppers, The Big Bang, and numerous editions of Horizon. His books accompanying the Wonders of... series have become bestsellers, as did his co-authored titles Why Does  $E=mc^2$ ? and The Quantum Universe.

From speaking at TED in the US to World Economic Forums in Davos and China, Brian's presentations engage, inform, and entertain. They feature awe-inspiring images from the depths of the universe as well as his trademark infectious enthusiasm for his subject. Alongside the story of life, the universe and everything, Brian argues that science can unite the world in an attempt to discover our shared origins and answer long-held mysteries. He also explains the work of CERN and their attempts to use cutting-edge technology and engineering to recreate events fractions of a nanosecond after the Big Bang "in the hope of revealing the underlying simplicity of the universe." He considers black holes, and why he believes they are the most interesting objects we know to exist in the universe, and how Mars appears to have had all the conditions we think are necessary to support the origin of life three and a half billion years ago.

Brian is one of the few speakers to tour internationally with a solo lecture show, Universal: Adventures In Space and Time. An International Fellow of the Explorers Club, Brian was awarded the prestigious Lord Kelvin Award for his work in promoting science to all. When not filming around the world, he writes for a range of popular and scientific journals and co-hosts Radio 4's Infinite Monkey Cage, the comedy and science show. He and his friend and co-host Robin Ince examine the big and not-so-big science questions alongside comedians, scientists, and celebrities both on air and on tour.

### David Donoghue

Former Irish ambassador and former Irish Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ireland



David Donoghue is a former senior Irish diplomat.

As Ireland's Ambassador to the United Nations (2013-17), he led with his Kenyan colleague the global negotiations which in August 2015 delivered agreement on the Sustainable Development Goals and the wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agreement of all 193 countries in the world to this unprecedented blueprint for the development of humanity and preservation of the planet was considered one of the greatest achievements in the history of the UN.

David Donoghue also led a UN negotiation process which in 2016 produced the New York Declaration on Migrants and Refugees, the first ever global agreement of this kind.

Earlier in his career, he was involved for many years in the Northern Ireland peace process. He was a senior member of the Irish Government's negotiating team for the Good Friday Agreement (1998). He is the author of *One Good Day* (2022), a personal account of those negotiations.

He had postings at different times as Ireland's Ambassador to Russia, Austria and Germany. He was also from 2001-4 the head of Irish Aid, the country's development cooperation programme, and from 2009-13 the Political Director at the Department of Foreign Affairs, a role which gave his overall responsibility for Ireland's foreign policy.

David Donoghue works today in a variety of think-tanks, civil society and academic settings on sustainable development, migration/refugee issues and conflict resolution. He is a Distinguished Fellow at ODI, a London-based think-tank, and a Fellow of the Robert Bosch Academy in Germany. He holds three honorary doctorates from Irish universities and is also an Honorary Professor of the Practice in the School of Management at Queen's University Belfast. He chairs the executive committee for the Irish branch of Sustainable Development Solutions Network (which is led by QUB and UCC). He is a Board member of Enlight, a network of European universities, and is also a visiting lecturer at a number of universities in Europe and the US. Among other roles, he is the Chairman of Screen Producers Ireland.

### Dr. Peter Dorhout

Vice President for Research, Iowa State University USA



Dr. Peter K. Dorhout serves as Professor of Chemistry and Vice President for Research at Iowa State University and an Ames National Laboratory Affiliate. Prior to coming to Iowa State, he served five years as Vice President for Research following four years as dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Kansas State University.

He has served as the Interim Academic Vice President at Colorado State University-Pueblo (2011), preceded by 20 years at Colorado State University-Fort Collins as Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, Assistant Vice President for Research, and Professor of Chemistry. He served as a collaborator at Los Alamos National Laboratory 1987-2011. He is a past chair of the Chemistry Section for the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He has led professional organizations and foundations as a member of the Boards of Directors for the American Chemical Society (President, 2018), the Research Corporation for Science Advancement (Board, 2003-present, Board Chair 2024-26), the Iowa State University Research Park, the Iowa Innovation Council, the Science Center of Iowa, and the Mid-Iowa Council Scouting BSA Executive Board. He has been a member of the Council on Competitiveness, Advisory Committee and Working Group co-Chair (2019-2020) and the Technology Leadership & Strategy Initiatives group (2021-present)

He is a recognized expert in solid state and nuclear materials science and environmental chemistry. He has had active research programs in solid-state f-element and radiochemistry, and nanomaterials science. He has published over 120 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and reviews while presenting over 130 international and national invited lectures on his chemistry and related topics, including laboratory safety. Dr. Dorhout earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a doctorate in inorganic chemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and served as a postdoctoral scientist at Ames National Lab at Iowa State. His list of professional awards includes Fellow of the American Chemical Society, Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Research Corporation Cottrell Scholar, Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar, A. P. Sloan Foundation Fellow, National Science Foundation CAREER Fellow, and the ACS-ExxonMobil Faculty Award in Solid State Chemistry.

### Sandra Duxbury



Sandra Duxbury currently works with her family group of companies following her retirement from a successful career in the Alberta public service.

During her public service career, she led strategic policy for various provincial Ministries in Canada, including Alberta Advanced Education, Research and Innovation, Economic Development, Executive Council, Health and Environment. Having started her career in environment and resource policy, she explored in depth challenges and opportunities related to advancing sustainable development. Throughout, she was responsible for strengthening policy excellence and bringing about transformational systemic change.

Often this work required the development of new organizational capability, such as introduction of new information systems and strategic foresight. It also involved collaborating across the public and private sectors, research agencies and post-secondary institutions to advance priorities and develop solid data foundations for evidence-informed policy and measuring outcomes. A highlight example is the catalyzation of Canadian participation in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor study.

Sandra began her career as an entrepreneur and consultant, focused in the areas of environmental policy, environmental management systems and public engagement.

She has a Masters of Public Administration from Queen's University (Kingston) focused on developing leadership for public sector innovation and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Alberta.

She is proud to have been part of hosting the GFCC Global Innovation Summit in Banff, Canada as well to have attended GIS twice in London, which included participation in the inaugural University and Research Leader's Forum.

### Chad Evans

Executive Vice President, Council on Competitiveness  
Treasurer, GFCC  
USA



As Council EVP overseeing all programs and initiatives, Chad develops and manages the Council's policy agenda and workstream, including: development of the Council's flagship "National Commission on Innovation & Competitiveness Frontiers;" creating both the "Building University-Industry-Lab Dialogue for Advanced Computing" effort and the "Exploring Innovation Frontiers Initiative" with the National Science Foundation; forming the "Ameri-

can Energy & Manufacturing Competitiveness Partnership" with the U.S. Department of Energy; and, helping to shape and launch the "National Engineering Forum."

In addition, Chad has built and shepherded over the past decade the Council's "Technology Leadership and Strategy Initiative," engaging Fortune 500 chief technology officers, university vice presidents of research, and national laboratory deputy directors to make the policy and business cases for America's innovation-enabling investments in talent, technology and infrastructure.

He has also helmed C-suite innovation summits, dialogues and immersions across Latin America, Europe, Asia and Oceania. Has focused, in particular in Brazil and Australia - having created 4 U.S.-Brazil Innovation Summits and 20+ innovation learning laboratories across both nations; and having launched the first-ever U.S.-Australia CTO Dialogue series.

Chad holds an M.S. from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, with an Honors concentration in International Business Diplomacy from Georgetown's Landegger Program. He has a B.A. in Political Science and International Affairs from Emory University.

He is Secretary to the Board of the Council on Competitiveness; Treasurer to the Board of the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils; a member of the Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station Advisory Board; an ARCS Foundation National Science and Engineering Advisory Council member; a U.S. German Marshall Fund Fellow; and a past member of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Industry Advisory Council and the World Economic Forum Advisory Board on Russian Competitiveness.

### Prof. Brian Falzon

Dean of Engineering, Western Sydney University  
Australia



Distinguished Professor Brian G. Falzon is the Dean of Engineering, Design and Built Environment at Western Sydney University and Chair of Advanced Composite Materials and Aerospace Structures. Between 2021 and 2023, he was Distinguished Professor and Chair of Advanced Composite Materials and Aerospace Structures at RMIT University, Director of RMIT University's Space Industry Hub, Director of the Victorian Node of the Smart Satellite Cooperative Research Centre (SmartSat CRC), and Education and Training Program Manager for the Australian Composites Manufacturing Cooperative Research Centre (ACM CRC). He was Head of the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Queen's University Belfast, from 2015 to 2021, and was appointed to the prestigious UK Royal Academy of Engineering - Bombardier Chair in Aerospace Composites in 2013.



Between 2008 and 2012 Prof Falzon held the Foundation Chair in Aerospace Engineering at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, where he was also Director of Research, Head of Aerospace Engineering, and Deputy Head of the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. Between 1996 and 2008, Prof Falzon was at Imperial College London where he joined as a postdoctoral research fellow before becoming an academic staff member. Prof Falzon graduated with a PhD in Aeronautical Engineering from the University of Sydney in 1996 and was the recipient of the Golden Jubilee graduate prize. He also gained a Bachelor of Engineering in Aeronautical Engineering with first-class honours and a Bachelor of Science with a double major in Physics and Pure Mathematics from the same University.

Prof Falzon is internationally renowned for his industry-driven work on the computational analysis, design, manufacture and testing of advanced composite structures. An accomplished world-leading researcher (in the top 1 percent in the field of Material Science – Elsevier ranking 2024), his work has had global impact. His early work had a significant influence on the innovative designs subsequently implemented by Boeing Aerostructures Australia on the Boeing 787 and FA-18E/F programs. Prof Falzon was also key in helping define new modelling methodologies for the UK government-backed research program, ‘Next Generation Composite Wing’. His work on composite failure mechanisms, impact damage modelling and fracture toughness characterisation have helped the NASA Advanced Composites Project, which focused on developing reliable methods to predict structural failure. He has fostered extensive industry collaborations and in addition to the industry/government partnerships mentioned above, he has also delivered projects for Airbus, QinetiQ, UK MoD/dstl, McLaren Racing, Rockwell Collins, Thales Australia, DSTG, and Artemis Technologies.

He has received three awards from the Royal Aeronautical Society and, in 2009, was honoured with an Australian Leadership Award from the Australian Davos Connection (ADC) for his contributions to national issues and demonstrated leadership in his field. He is a Chartered Engineer and a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society. Prof. Falzon co-founded Veryan Medical Limited, a spin-off from Imperial College London established in 2003, which developed a novel vascular biomimetic stent. Veryan was acquired by Otsuka Medical Devices UK Ltd in December 2018.

### Dr. Ryan Feeney

Vice-President of Strategic Engagement and External Affairs, Queen’s University of Belfast  
NI



Dr Ryan Feeney is Vice-President for Strategic Engagement and External Affairs at Queen’s University Belfast.

Prior to this appointment he was Director of Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility at Queen’s University Belfast, and before that Director of Strategic Communication and Engagement at the Police Service of

Northern Ireland, where he was responsible for the Strategic Communications, Civic and Political Engagement and Digital and Creative functions of the Service and was a member of the Service Executive Team. He was previously Head of Public Engagement here at Queen’s University and was a Visiting Professor in Governance and Public Policy at Ulster University. Dr Feeney served as an independent member of the Northern Ireland Policing Board from 2011–2018 where he was the lead member for Human Rights and Professional Standards and the Vice-Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. He has previously served in various advisory roles in both the public and private sectors.

Ryan has organised and curated six major international conferences, including the 20th and 25th Anniversary events at Queen’s marking the anniversaries of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, a major conference in partnership with the University of Chicago on Human Rights and Refugees, a conference with Yale University on the Northern Ireland Peace Process and a conference with the Columbia University on the role of women in conflict resolution. He is currently leading the organisation of the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils Global Innovation Summit being hosted by Queen’s in Belfast in 2024, focusing on Global Sustainability and Economic Inclusion.

Dr Feeney is graduate of Queen’s, having studied Education, Business and History (B. Ed Hons) at undergraduate level at St. Mary’s University College and holds an MA in History and Politics from Ulster University and an LLM in Law, Governance and Public Policy from Queen’s. He has a Doctorate in Governance specialising in political science and public policy from the National University of Ireland with a specific focus on the Strand Two structures of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. He has also published several articles on governance, reconciliation, and the Good Friday Agreement in various journals. He was the Executive Producer for a major documentary, RTE’s “The Agreement” a two-part series on the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement negotiations which was also broadcast on BBC One. He is also currently working as Executive Producer on a major international documentary chronicling the life of Senator George J. Mitchell.

### Desiree Fixler

Advocate For Change in ESG investing and Sustainability  
UK



Desiree Fixler is known for her candid advocacy to reform policy and practice around ESG and impact investing.

With over twenty-five years of experience in sustainable finance and investment banking Desiree serves a trusted advisor to financial institutions, NGOs and regulators including the UK's Financial Conduct Authority and the Monetary Authority of Singapore, and guest lectures at Cambridge University.

Prior to her role as Group Sustainability Officer at Deutsche Bank's asset manager, DWS, Desiree held senior roles at JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank and Zais Group.

Desiree is a member of the CFA's ESG Technical Committee, a member of the LSE's Entrepreneurship Advisory Group, a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Responsible Investing and holds a BSc Economics (Hons) from the London School of Economics.

### Marcel Foca

Senior Expert, New Strategy Center  
Romania



Marcel Foca has over 25 years of experience in geospatial technologies and has designed large-scale IT systems for public institutions and private organizations in Romania and over the world. Is a community builder, guiding institutions, organizations and social groups to identify their common goals and common future. Author or co-author of several articles and studies in the field

of geospatial and IT&C, Marcel Foca is actively involved in „Lumea Geospatiala”, Club Romania, „Dispeceratul Civic” and New Strategy Center.

### Dr. Hippolyte Fofack

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
USA



Dr. Hippolyte Fofack, a Research Associate at Harvard University and Parker Fellow at Columbia University, is a leading development and financial economist with over 20 years of experience in leadership and management, development economics, banking and international finance, and academia. Dr. Fofack's deep expertise and pioneering efforts have been essential for shaping the

future of development and finance and the global debate on financing development and efforts to reform the global financial system. Until recently, Dr Fofack was the chief

economist and director of research and international cooperation at the African Export-Import Bank. Previously, he served in several capacities with the World Bank Group, including as head of the Macroeconomics and Growth Program.

Dr. Fofack holds a master's degree in economics from the University of Lille, France, and an advanced degree in international economics and finance from the University of Bordeaux in France. After completing his dissertation, "Distribution of Parallel Market Premium Under Stable Alternative Modeling," he was awarded a Ph.D. from American University in Washington, D.C. Dr. Fofack is a distinguished fellow of the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils, a fellow of the African Academy of Sciences and a member of several other leading professional and scientific organizations, including the American Economic Association, the African Finance and Economic Association. Fofack has been a Guest Editor of several prominent journals, including the World Bank Economic Review, Economic History of Developing Regions, and Journal of African Trade.

Dr. Fofack has published extensively and served as Editor-in-Chief of Contemporary Issues in African Trade and Trade Finance and was a member of several editorial Boards, including the Journal of African Development, the Journal of African Trade, and the Gulf Economics Journal. Fofack has taught and given lectures at several universities and research institutions. In addition to his regular columns on global affairs published by Project Syndicate, he has also been a regular contributor to many newspapers and magazines, including African Banker, African Business, Bloomberg, Financial Times, The Banker, Guardian, Le Monde, Japan Times, Korea Times, and Newsweek.

### Dr. Claudio Furtado

GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Brazil



Cláudio Vilar Furtado is a Board Member of the Delta Global Investment House (US) and a Distinguished Fellow of the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils (GFCC) serving as a strategic advisor to GFCC initiatives.

President of INPI – the National Institute of Industrial Property, a governmental organization linked to the Ministry of Economics from February 2019 to January 2023.

Tenured Professor at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation – São Paulo (FGV-EAESP) from February 1974 to July 2022. Taught courses in Investment Strategy, Corporate Finance, Corporate Governance and External Auditing (MMC, 2018), and taught Private Equity and Venture Capital for 23 years.

A member of the Board of Directors of Norsa Inc. and Solar BR Inc., subsidiaries of the Coca-Cola Corporation in a joint venture with Grupo T. Jereissati - NE from 2008 to 2015, he was responsible for Finance, Governance and Auditing. Member of the Board of Directors of ATENTO Holding Investments and Telecommunications Services, a subsidiary of Grupo Telefónica, headquartered in Madrid, from 2008 to 2012. He was Executive Vice President at ABC-Bull Inc. and Director of Development at Elebra Inc. from 1983 to 1989.

Partner/Director of CVF Finance and Investments Ltd., a consulting firm specializing in Financial Strategy, Corporate Finance, and Applied Economics (active from 1993 to 2018). Acted as an expert witness in Brazilian arbitration cases and one international arbitration case (ICC).

Founded the FGV- Center for Research in Private Equity and Venture Capital (GVcepe), serving as its Executive Director from 2003 to July 2016.

Coordinator of FGV-Projects for the Telecommunications Industry from 1995 to 2004. Founded and led the Center for Distance Education at FGV-EAESP (now known as FGV-Online) from 1997 to 2000.

He is the author of many professional articles and has been a speaker at international conferences. He co-wrote the First and Second Brazilian Censuses of Private Equity and Venture Capital (2006 & 2011).

He is also a member of the Brazilian Association of Private Equity and Venture Capital (ABVCAP) and was a founding member of the Brazilian Institute of Corporate Governance (IBGC). GFCC Distinguished Fellow. Founded in 2010, the GFCC brings together competitiveness and innovation organizations, government agencies, corporations, and universities from over 30 countries to work together on competitiveness strategies and disseminate best practices to drive innovation, productivity, and prosperity (beginning March, 2023).

He received a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro in 1971, a Master's Degree in Business Administration from FGV-EAESP in 1978, a Master's Degree in Business Economics from the University of Chicago's Booth Business School in 1980 and completed the coursework for a doctoral degree in Financial Economics at this institution in 1983. He completed his PhD in Administration at FGV in 1997. His specialties are Administration, Applied Business Economics, Finance, Corporate Strategy, Investments, Private Equity and Venture Capital.

## Joan Gabel

Chancellor, University of Pittsburgh  
USA



As the 19th chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, Joan Gabel oversees a community of nearly 34,000 students and more than 15,000 faculty and staff members across five distinct campuses, all working to advance Pitt's legacy of academic excellence, community service and research innovation.

During her tenure, the University has achieved record new student applications, graduation rates, postgraduation placement and research expenditures. Gabel also led the creation of the University's first metrics-driven strategic plan, the Plan for Pitt 2028, which prioritizes the University's values and impact. To ensure a Pitt education remains accessible and affordable, she launched the innovative Pitt Finish Line Grant to provide just-in-time financial support for students nearing graduation.

Since her arrival, Gabel became a founding member of College Presidents for Civic Preparedness, which has grown to represent 100 colleges and universities. She serves as chair of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities' Council of Presidents and the Fulbright Scholar Advisory Board (CIES); as academic vice-chair of the Council on Competitiveness; and on the boards of the American Council on Education and the Association of American Universities.

Gabel previously served as the president of the University of Minnesota (U of M) System and Twin Cities campus. Under her leadership, U of M developed its first comprehensive systemwide strategic plan, which resulted in record-setting graduation rates and annual research expenditures, as well as unmatched startups, patents and private giving, including the completion of a \$4 billion capital campaign that exceeded its goal by 10%. Transformational partnerships, such as the NXT GEN MED program between the university, Mayo Clinic and Google, led to reimagined research and student opportunities.

Prior to joining U of M, she served as executive vice president for academic affairs and provost at the University of South Carolina and as dean of the Robert J. Trulaske, Sr. College of Business at the University of Missouri. Gabel began her teaching career at Georgia State University, then joined Florida State University where she was the DeSantis Professor of Legal Studies; chair of the Department of Risk Management and Insurance, Real Estate and Legal Studies; and director of international relations within the College of Business. She is the recipient of numerous research, service and teaching awards, including recognition as a Fulbright scholar, elected membership in the

American Academy of Arts and Sciences and inclusion on the Pittsburgh Business Times' Power 100 list of influential leaders. Gabel holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Haverford College and a Juris Doctor from the University of Georgia School of Law.

### Stephen Gallagher

Director of Strategy and Low Carbon Solutions, SSE Energy Solutions  
UK & Ireland



Stephen is an energy market executive with over 25 years' experience across the energy, manufacturing and retail sectors. As Director of Strategy and Low Carbon Solutions for SSE Energy Customer Solutions he has responsibility for shaping the future of the business, ensuring that SSE is helping its customers across the UK and Ireland on their path to Net Zero, through low carbon solutions provision as well as driving strategic innovation with a focus on sustainability.

Since joining SSE in 2006 Stephen has held roles including Director of Business Energy and Director of Finance & Pricing for SSE Airtricity and Transformation Programme Director in the GB Retail business.

He is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountant of Ireland, having trained in KPMG, and has a degree in Business & Legal Studies (University College Dublin) and a Masters in Strategy & Leadership (University College Cork).

### Dr. George Gillespie

Executive Corporate Officer, HORIBA  
Ireland



Building on a PhD from Queen's University, Belfast based on research into low emission engines, Dr Gillespie has over 35 years international experience in the automotive sector and more recently in the emerging Hydrogen sector. Currently as Executive Corporate Officer for HORIBA Ltd in Japan he is responsible for the global Automotive, Energy & Environmental businesses. Dr

Gillespie has previously held senior roles with Ricardo plc, Schenck AG and MIRA Ltd, and has worked extensively in the UK, Germany, USA, Japan and China.

In addition to his work at HORIBA, Dr Gillespie is a Board Member of CPI Ltd (a member of the UK Advanced Manufacturing Catapult) and Board Member of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), having been SMMT President between 2019 and 2021. He holds an honorary Doctorate from Coventry University, is a Chartered Engineer

and a Fellow of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. He received an OBE from Her Majesty The Queen in 2015 for Services to the Automotive Industry.

### Deborah Gordon

Senior Advisor, Longview Fusion Energy Systems, Inc.  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
USA



Deborah C. Gordon is an independent consultant providing consulting services to several small technology companies. Gordon is an Advisor Rhombus Power, Inc. She serves on the Board of Directors of Peninsula Volunteers, Inc., Peninsula Volunteers Properties, the Arms Control Association, Probability Management, Inc., the Institute for Security and Technology, Council on Strategic Risks, m-Lab.us, and the Fort Ross Conservancy. She is an Affiliate at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University from which she retired in August 2019 after 22 years as the Executive Director of the Preventive Defense Project. She is the former Mayor of Woodside, CA and served 17 years on the Town Council. She has also served as Director, City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County and as Chair for many San Mateo County and California State Advisory bodies. Gordon has over 30 years of experience in algorithm design, signal processing, network design, and network security and holds U.S. and Canadian patents for her work in medical instrumentation. Gordon holds a BS in computer science from the University of Southern California.

### Prof. Sir Ian Greer

President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast  
NI



Sir Ian has been President and Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast since August 2018. He has extensive experience of university innovation driving regional economic growth. This includes cross-sector developments both in Northern Ireland and England, and specifically the Belfast Region City Deal Innovation Pillar, driving innovation in key sectors for the local economy, such as

health innovation, data science & analytics, and advanced manufacturing. He is passionate about the importance of social responsibility and inclusion to the University's mission, particularly widening participation, diversity & inclusion and civic engagement.

He is a strong advocate for collaboration across and between sectors. His leadership has developed or expanded partnerships across the island of Ireland, the UK, the

Middle East and the USA. He is a past President of Universities Ireland, promoting collaboration across the island, a member of the British Council's Education Advisory Group, Founder of both the Health Innovation Research Alliance, Northern Ireland (HIRANI) and the Northern Health Science Alliance, and non-executive Director of Dubai Academic Health Corporation. He is a Deputy Lieutenant of the County Borough of Belfast.

By way of background, he is a medical graduate of the University of Glasgow, with his research and clinical career in obstetrics & gynaecology, where he was recognised as an international authority on pregnancy complications, particularly thrombotic problems. He has published over 400 Publications including 14 Books and 28 Clinical Guidelines. He has held senior leadership positions in several UK Universities, and was Vice-President of the University of Manchester, immediately before moving to Queen's. He was made a Knight Bachelor in the King's Birthday Honours 2023 for services to education and the economy.

#### **Dr. William Hadelman**

University of Pittsburgh  
USA



As vice chancellor and chief strategy officer, William Haldeman partners with University of Pittsburgh leadership and stakeholders to develop and propel strategies that elevate growth and impact, including through the Plan for Pitt 2028, the University's strategic plan.

Prior to his time at Pitt, he served as a strategic adviser to the president at the University of South Carolina, a visiting fellow for international policy and innovation at Carnegie Mellon University and chief strategy officer at the University of Minnesota (U of M), where he led the development and record-breaking implementation of the U of M's first comprehensive systemwide strategic plan.

Haldeman has extensive high-level government experience, serving the White House Domestic Policy Council, the seventh floor of the U.S. Department of State, and as a member of a governor's senior staff. He earned a Ph.D. in history at American University and term membership on the Council on Foreign Relations. A presidential historian and scholar, Haldeman is the author of the upcoming book "Meeting the Moment: Inspiring Presidential Leadership That Transformed America" (SUNY Press, 2024).

Among his extensive board experience, Haldeman is a board member of the Heinz History Center and United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania and was a member of the executive board for the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games, helping to bring the games to the Twin Cities and the University of Minnesota.

#### **Andy Haldane**

Chief Executive, RSA (Royal Society of Arts) and former Chief Economist, Bank of England  
UK



Andrew Haldane is the Chief Executive of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). He was formerly Chief Economist at the Bank of England and a member of the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee. He was the Permanent Secretary for Levelling Up at the Cabinet Office from September 2021 to March 2022. Andrew is Founder and President of the charity Pro Bono Economics, Vice-Chair of the charity National Numeracy and Chair of the National Numeracy Leadership Council. Andrew chairs the Government's Levelling Up Advisory Council and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre's Industrial Board. He is contributing editor at the Financial Times and Chief Economic Advisor at PwC. Among other positions, he is Honorary Professor at the Universities of Nottingham, Manchester and Exeter, Visiting Professor at King's College, London and a Fellow of the Royal Society and the Academy of Social Sciences.

#### **Dr. Michinari Hamaguchi**

Director General of SCARDA, AMED  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Japan



Michinari Hamaguchi earned his PhD in medicine from Nagoya University, and appointed Research Associate at the Nagoya University School of Medicine in 1980. He pursued research at Rockefeller University in the U.S. from 1985-1988. From 2009-2015, he served as the President of Nagoya University. After serving as the President of JST from 2015-2022, he has been serving as the Counselor to the President of JST, the Director General of SCARDA to promote vaccine R&D since Apr. 2022 and a Chairperson of the Council for Science and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in Japan (2015-2023).

### Zaimizi Hamdani

Chief Strategy Officer, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS Malaysia



Zaimizi Hamdani graduated with Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Hartford, USA, in 1996, and later earned Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Strathclyde, UK, in 2013. He joined PETRONAS in 1996, starting as Planning Engineer (Maintenance) at PETRONAS Gas Berhad. In 1997, he joined engine-technology development projects, including attachment at Sauber PETRONAS Engineering AG in Switzerland. He moved to PETRONAS Research Sdn Bhd in 2005, where he was responsible for the development and commercialisation of engine in China. In 2012, he was appointed as General Manager for Group Technology Commercialisation Management, Technology & Engineering (T&E) Division, and CEO of PETRONAS Technology Ventures responsible for the management, protection, and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP). Later in 2019, he was assigned to Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, first as Director of Strategic Alliance Office, Corporate Strategic Planning, then Director of Technology Transfer Office, Research Innovation & Commercialisation. He currently serves as Chief Strategy Officer at UTP since 2021.

### Cecilia Harvey

Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Tech Women Today UK



Cecilia Harvey is a visionary leader who has left an indelible mark on the world of technology. As a senior executive, entrepreneur, and author with over two decades of experience in the industry, she is a game changer who is committed to fostering diversity and changing the face of technology to catalyse innovation and inclusive thought.

Cecilia's illustrious career began on Wall Street, where she quickly made a name for herself as a tech trailblazer. She has held senior positions at some of the world's largest financial institutions, including Morgan Stanley, Barclays, HSBC, and IBM. She also served as the COO of Citigroup Markets and Securities Services Technology.

Cecilia is on a mission to be a force for positive change in the tech sector. She is also the founder of Tech Women Today, a global digital platform that showcases women in technology and serves as a resource for female entrepreneurs who want to leverage technology to grow and scale their businesses.

Cecilia's passion for promoting diversity in tech is rooted in her deep understanding of the industry's challenges. In 2023, only 18 percent of the UK tech workforce was female, and just 5 percent were from a black or minority ethnic background. With her fiery determination, Cecilia is opening doors, smashing ceilings, and helping underrepresented and marginalized communities thrive. Through her work, Cecilia has challenged the norm and recognized the power of her own path. Her profile is unmatched in the sector, and she is a shining example of what can be achieved when you combine talent, tenacity, and a commitment to making a positive difference in the world.

### John Healy

Chair to the Board, InvestNI NI



John Healy OBE is a highly experienced senior executive with 30 years of experience in the technology sector, mostly gained in the financial service industry. John studied at Queen's, graduating with a BEng in Manufacturing Engineering in 1991 and an MSc in Computer Science in 1992. He was Vice President and Managing Director at Allstate NI until December 2022.

His influence elevated Allstate's reputation as the top technology employer in Northern Ireland, where he helped establish strong ties with universities, as well as ensuring good working relationships with government. In 2020, John won Director of the Year award for Inclusivity (Institute of Directors) and is regarded as one of the best-known business figures in Northern Ireland. He is past-President of the NI Chamber and was previously Chair of Software NI.

He was awarded an OBE in the 2020 New Year's Honours list in recognition of his services to economic development in Northern Ireland. He is currently Chair of Invest NI, Northern Ireland's economic development agency, whose role is to grow the economy by helping new and existing businesses to compete internationally, and by attracting new investment to NI. In December 2023 he received a Doctor of Science in Economics for services to Business and Commerce from Queen's.

**Karen Hennessey**

CEO, Real Leaf Farm  
Ireland



Karen is the CEO of agri-tech company Real Leaf Farm, which is leading the development of sustainable hydroponic farming in Ireland and the UK. She has a strong commitment to sustainability and ESG and is dedicated to driving growth and value for businesses. She previously led the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland for nearly 10 years.

Karen also has experience in scaling food businesses, having spent nine years in Glanbia plc where she was responsible for acquiring Glanbia's first nutritional businesses.

Karen is Vice Chair of Tourism Ireland and a board member of the Port of Waterford (POW) and is Chair of the POW Green Committee and Audit Risk Committee. Previous directorships include Chair of Showcase Ireland Events Limited, Vice-President of the Bureau of European Design Associations and Board Member of Kilkenny Carlow Education Training Board. A qualified Chartered Accountant and Chartered Director, Karen holds an MBA from UCD Smurfit School and recently completed the Business Sustainability Management programme at the University of Cambridge.

**Prof. Kathryn Higgins**

Director, Queen's Communities and Place  
NI



Professor Kathryn Higgins (PhD) is founder and Director of Queen's Communities and Place, a cross institutional initiative based on partnership between communities, policymakers and academics. Guided by our Social Charter we commit the resources of the University to work in partnership to find lasting solutions that tackle disadvantage and improve outcomes for children, young

people and communities.

Kathryn is an experienced research leader having previously directed two multi-disciplinary research centres at Queen's - the Institute of Childcare Research (2007-2019) and the Centre for Evidence and Social Innovation (2019-2021) Her Directorship of Queen's Communities and Place consolidates her extensive experience in leading research consortiums around community health and wellbeing and of vulnerable populations, particularly children and young people.

She has attracted funding from prestigious sources such as the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Northern Ireland Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Northern Ireland Executive and individual Ministerial Departments of the Executive.

**Charles "Chad" O. Holliday Jr.**

Chairman, GFCC  
USA



Charles O. (Chad) Holliday, Jr. is the Former Chairman of Royal Dutch Shell plc. He previously served as Chairman of the board of Bank of America and as Chairman and CEO of DuPont, the company he retired from after 36 years of service.

Chad is Lead Independent Non-Executive director at Venterra Group plc and lead investor at Resource Resolutions, plc. He is a licensed Professional Engineer and a member of the U.S. National Academy of Engineering and the UK Royal Society of Engineering.

He is also a founding member of the International Business Council and a Senior Fellow of The Mission Possible Partnership (MPP), an alliance of climate leaders focused on supercharging efforts to decarbonize some of the world's highest emitting industries in the next 10 years. MPP is a joint venture between multiple NGOs including the World Economic Forum to expand and accelerate the work of seven nascent industry working groups in aluminum, aviation, cement and concrete, chemicals, shipping, steel, and trucking.

He previously served as Chairman of the following organizations: U.S. Council on Competitiveness, United Nations Sustainable Energy for All, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Catalyst, U.S. Business Council, and the U.S. National Academy of Engineering.

Holliday graduated from the University of Tennessee with a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering. He received honorary doctorates from Polytechnic University, Brooklyn, New York; Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland; and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee.

**Dr. Daniel Hulme**

CEO & Founder, Satalia  
UK



Daniel Hulme is a globally recognised expert in AI and investor in Emerging Technologies. He's the CEO of Satalia, an award-winning company that provides AI innovations for global brands. Satalia joined the world's largest media company in 2021, WPP, where Daniel is also the Chief AI Officer. Daniel has been recognised as one of the top 10 Chief AI Officers globally.

Having received a Masters and Doctorate in AI at UCL, Daniel is also UCL's Computer Science Entrepreneur in Residence and a lecturer at LSE's Marshall Institute, focused on using AI to solve business and social problems.

Daniel is a serial TEDx and Google speaker, and regularly keynotes on AI, ethics, innovation and decentralization. He contributes to numerous books and articles on the future of work, and is a faculty member of SingularityU.

Daniel has advisory and executive positions across companies and governments. He holds an international Kauffman Global Entrepreneur Scholarship and actively promotes purposeful entrepreneurship and technology innovation across the globe.

### Dr. Matthew Hulver

VP of Knowledge Enterprise Initiatives, ASU Knowledge Enterprise  
USA



Matt Hulver is the Vice President of Knowledge Enterprise Initiatives and Professor in the College of Health Solutions at Arizona State University (ASU). With a focus on enhancing ASU's engagement and funding profile nationally and internationally, Hulver fosters connections with federal agencies, policy leaders and institutions, and East Coast academic and industry partners. He

oversees ASU's Research Engagement Office and works synergistically with the ASU Office of Government and Community Engagement to align research priorities with government interests. He is based in ASU's Washington D.C. office.

Previously, Hulver served as Vice President of Research at ASU Knowledge Enterprise, identifying and deploying strategies to grow and diversify ASU's research portfolio as well as overseeing research operations and development, core facilities, and research security and compliance. He joined ASU in 2021 from Virginia Tech, where he was the executive director of the Fralin Life Sciences Institute and a professor in the Department of Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise.

### Erion Isufi

CEO & Founder, Landmark Technologies  
Albania



Erion Isufi was born in Tirana, the capital of Albania, on March 21, 1978. He grew up and received his education in Tirana, later pursuing higher studies at the University of Utrecht, where he earned a Master's Degree in Arts in 2004, focusing on History and International Relations.

After completing his studies in the Netherlands, Erion returned to Albania to contribute to its economic growth. With an entrepreneurial spirit, he launched various ventures in retail, communications, and technology.

Through his communications agency, Landmark Communications, Erion has led a team of creative professionals, developing comprehensive marketing campaigns for corporate clients. His work includes significant rebranding eTorts for ONE Telecom (after the acquisition from T-Mobile), which later merged with Albtelecom, and providing full-service support to Coca-Cola Bottling Company, the first foreign direct investment in Albania after the fall of communism in 1993. He has had the opportunity to direct projects for many international companies operating in Albania.

In the past decade, Erion has continued his entrepreneurial journey by establishing several technology companies, notably Moveo Albania Technology and Landmark Technologies. Recognizing Albania's strategic location as a gateway to Eastern Europe and the strong technical and language skills of its workforce, he created a company to serve foreign clients in software development, testing, and communications. Committed to attracting valuable job opportunities for Albanian youth, Erion facilitated the entry of the Italian giant Sisal into Albania, which now employs over 750 people and conducts much of its internal software development in the country. For his constant eTorts to growth in the IT field, Landmark Technologies was recognized by Deloitte Central Eastern Europe in 2022 as one of the fastest growing technology companies in all of Eastern Europe<sup>1</sup>. It was and still is the first ever Albanian company to be awarded such a prestigious price.

He has joined GCC with the goal of enhancing Albania's competitiveness on the global stage and attracting high-value jobs to help retain young talent and combat brain drain.

### Dr. Adrian Johnston

Belfast Innovation Commissioner, Belfast City Council  
NI



Adrian Johnston will take up the role of Belfast Innovation Commissioner in January 2025. He is a seasoned leader with over 25 years of experience in technology and innovation. Before joining Innovation City Belfast, he served as the Director of Strategic Business Development at Catalyst, where he was instrumental in cultivating and strengthening strategic partnerships

across industry, academia, and government, with a focus on driving innovation and economic growth in Northern Ireland. He led Catalyst's Open Innovation team, concentrating on the creation of dynamic clusters in Health & Life Sciences, NetZero, and RegTech.

Adrian holds a PhD, specializing in AI adoption in high-value semiconductor manufacturing. He also served as the Head of Digital Catapult NI, where he played a key role in accelerating the adoption of AI and emerging digital technologies across various sectors.



Adrian was the Chair of the International Fund for Ireland, and currently serves as the Chair of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, where he and his team address critical societal challenges such as homelessness, poverty, health inequalities, and digital exclusion.

#### Dr. David Jordan

Lecturer in Economics, Queen's Business School, Queen's University Belfast  
NI



Dr David Jordan is a Lecturer in Economics at Queen's Business School, and a Research Associate at The Productivity Institute. He is currently examining the reasons behind low levels of productivity in Northern Ireland as part of the work of the Northern Ireland Productivity Forum, and he is the Independent Expert Advisor on Productivity to the Northern Ireland Department for the Economy.

His wider research focuses on regional and public economics, alongside economic and financial history. He is particularly interested in the economics of devolution, including how institutions and policy have shaped the long-run performance of Northern Ireland's economy.

#### Andrew Keane

Director, NextSys, University College Dublin  
Ireland



Andrew Keane is Director of NexSys and the Energy Institute at University College Dublin. Andrew is a Full Professor in the School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering at UCD where he leads a group focused on power system planning and operation, especially distribution networks.

Current research topics focus upon the interaction between power electronic systems and the power system, often arising from renewable and distributed energy resources. Other interests include multi energy systems and their co-simulation and co-optimisation.

Andrew is Director of NexSys an all-island research programme involving 40 academics from across nine universities. NexSys targets the development of credible pathways to a Net Zero Carbon Energy System. Previously, Andrew has served as Head of the School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering at UCD and held positions in industry with ESB Networks. In 2015 he co-founded NovoGrid a grid automation company developing software solutions for renewable generators and utilities.

#### Joseph Kennedy III

US Special Envoy for Northern Ireland



Over four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, Mr. Kennedy built an impressive

legislative record around economic policy, health care, and civil rights. Representing a district that spanned from the suburbs of Boston to the proud post-industrial communities along Massachusetts' South Coast, Mr. Kennedy sat on the House Energy &

Commerce committee and spearheaded bipartisan efforts to extend mental health coverage, support the domestic manufacturing industry, protect consumer voices online, make hearing aids more affordable, and defend access to legal assistance for struggling families.

Today, Mr. Kennedy also serves as Managing Director at Citizens Energy, a non-profit energy company founded to help low-income families meet their basic energy needs.

Through innovative programming, Citizens has donated hundreds of millions of dollars to benefit millions of families across the United States. He is the founder of Groundwork Project, an advocacy organization dedicated to supporting local community organizing efforts in under-resourced and historically disenfranchised communities. He also serves on the boards of the Woodwell Climate Research Center, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Massachusetts Association for Mental Health, and the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate. He is a graduate of Stanford University and Harvard Law School and spent two years in the United States Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic. He is married to Lauren Birchfield Kennedy and they have two young children, Eleanor and James, and a rescue dog, Banjo.

#### Dr. Nkem Khumbah

Head of STI Policy Systems, Governance and Partnerships,  
African Academy of Science  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
Kenya



Dr. Nkem Khumbah joined the African Academy of Science as Head of STI Policy Systems, Governance and Partnerships (STI-PGA), effective September 2023. He is also a Senior Fellow with the Washington-based Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils (theGFCC.org), faculty affiliate with the Science, Technology and Public Policy Program (STPP) at the University of Michigan,

and Chairman of the Africa Development Futures Group. He previously was Lecturer of Mathematics and member of the STEM-Africa Initiative at the University of Michigan; Assistant Professor of Mathematics at North Georgia College and

State University; and held research Fellowships at Institute for Pure and Applied Mathematics at UCLA and the Mathematical Science Research Institute at UC Berkeley.

He has worked extensively with the breath of African Science, Technology and Higher Education bodies, including serving in 2015 as Founding Executive Curator of the Next Einstein Forum (NEF): Africa's Global Forum for Science, Policy and Society.

His articles have appeared in journals like the New York Times and the African Policy Review; he is frequent speaker at conferences and symposia in North America, Africa, Asia, and South America.

### Charles Kiefel AM

Chairman, The Principals Funds Management  
Founder and Chair, Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Australia



Charles Kiefel AM is the Founder and Executive Chair of Principals Funds Management. He founded the Firm to provide global economic analysis and advice to U.S., European, Asian, and Australian money management companies, including: investment and manager selection, enterprise and human capital risk management, and board governance. In 2023, Principals Funds Management pivoted

to strategic global partnerships.

Of note, Charles identified and advised in securing seven—each in excess of \$1B—mandates for new clients and overall sourced more than \$18B mandates from corporate superannuation (pension) funds, insurance companies, and government employee retirement and super funds.

Since 2024, he is an Advisory Board Member for EC Pohl & Company Private Wealth.

Since 2021, Charles is a Board Member for Clean Energy Regulator, Australian Federal Government.

Charles was Board Chairman for Military Superannuation & Benefits Board for 10 years. During this time, he established this pension fund's office, staffing, systems, processes, policies, and engagements with the Defence Ministers and Chief of the Defence Force for all military members and veterans, growing Fund from <AUS\$400M to AUS\$2.6B. Additionally, he significantly increased the number of valuable member services.

Charles was a Non-Executive Board Director for: (1) ASX-listed Universal Biosensors, Inc., giving guidance to Siemens and Johnson & Johnson's Lifescan Division partnership; (2) Lochard Company, where with other Directors, he devised M&A and organic growth expansion strategy leading

to Lochard dominating air traffic control technologies; (3) CHAMP Private Equity Fund II, where he represented LP investors for Castle Harlan Australian Mezzanine Partners; (4) Pacific Equity Partners, where he acted for pension fund investors on Australian & International Advisory Board.

Other past Board Chair roles include Charles as Non-Executive Chair, Wilson HTM Charitable Trust, where he selected contributions, including towards the Great Barrier Reef restoration, and as Inaugural Board Chair, Hyperion Asset Management, which was the first Member of the consortium that became Pinnacle Investment Management Group, an ASX-listed global investments firm.

Since 2018, Charles has served as Co-Chair, Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness. Initially, he was appointed by the Australian Federal Government to strategise and champion new ideas to drive productivity, prosperity, and economic growth for Australia and U.S.

Since 2013, Charles has been involved with GFCC. In 2016, he became a Distinguished Fellow. He then was the Australian Federal Government representative on GFCC's Board of Trustees. Most recently, Charles became a GFCC Board of Trustees Member, a Corporate Member, and joined the ranks of Sustaining Members for Australia—the other five GFCC Sustaining Members are for Brazil, Greece, Portugal, U.A.E., and U.S.

His community engagement involvement is extensive, including as a Founding Member, National Committee for The Menzies Foundation, which is a non-partisan memorial honoring Sir Robert G. Menzies, Australia's longest serving Prime Minister. In July 2024, Charles was appointed a Member of the Alliance for Responsible Citizenship (ARC) Ambassador's Circle.

Since 2024, he is the Special Strategic Counsel to the Chair and EIG, which is based in Washington, D.C., U.S., and is one of the world's largest institutional investors in global energy and infrastructure. Charles is also an Advisory Board Director for The Editor's Circle of Econvue, LLC, based in Chicago, IL, U.S., which is a global consortium of economic and geopolitical experts from a wide range of specialties discussing trending issues.

In 2019, Charles was honored to be awarded by the Commonwealth of Australia as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition "for significant service to Australia - United States relations, and to philanthropy." Previously, he was honored to be awarded by the Commonwealth of Australia the Order of Australia (OAM) "for service to the Superannuation and Funds Management Industries and as a supporter of charitable and educational institutions."

**Dr. Stephen Kingon**

Chairman, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI



Stephen is a chartered accountant who was Managing Partner of PriceWaterhouseCoopers until his retirement in 2007. During his career with PWC he specialised in providing the following services to clients: 1) Strategic Planning; 2) Organisational Design and Restructuring; 3) Financial Management; 4) Corporate Finance; 5) Financial Restructuring; 6) Insolvency Advice; 7) Corporate

Appraisal.

Since retiring from PWC he has held several chairmanships and non-executive director positions including as outlined below:

Non-Executive Chairman

- Balcas Limited
- Invest Northern Ireland
- Centre for Competitiveness
- Lagan Group (Holdings) Limited
- Lagan Homes (Holdings) Limited
- Lagan Investments Limited
- Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Limited

Non-Executive Director

- Allied Irish Bank Group plc (Chair of Audit and Risk Committee)
- Allied Irish Bank UK plc (Chair of Audit and Risk Committee)
- Anderson Spratt Holdings Limited
- Baird Group Limited
- Belfast Harbour (Chair of Audit and Risk Committee)
- BT International Advisory Board
- Dale Farm Limited (Chair of Audit and Risk Committee and Remuneration Committee)
- Mivan Limited
- Mivan (UK) Limited
- United Dairy Farmers Limited

**Dr. Venetia Koussia**

Executive Director, CompeteGR  
Greece



During her longstanding career, Dr Venetia Koussia has acquired senior management positions in companies of various industry sectors, leading them through highly volatile market conditions and emerging socio-economic challenges by designing and implementing socially responsible growth strategies.

As the President and Managing Director of ManpowerGroup Greece for more than 14 years, the world's leader in innovative workforce solutions, she has solidified the company's reputation in Greece by turning it into a valuable partner for both public and private companies and organizations.

Since November 2018 she is the Executive Director of the Council on Competitiveness in Greece—CompeteGR.

Moreover, through innovative collaborations with the EU, she has contributed in developing new successful tools for employment and entrepreneurship.

Having an active role in employment issues on a national, European and an international level and through her dynamic engagement in esteemed institutions, such as the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce she plays a leading role in the development and implementation of initiatives, that aim to improve the competitiveness of the Greek economy:

- The improvement of the efficiency of the Greek labor market.
- The strengthening of an innovative entrepreneurial ecosystem such as conceptualizing and curating the Future Ready Business.
- The enhancement of Boards' effectiveness for sustainable and inclusive growth.

Believing in the power of the good example she devotes some dozens of hours annually from her personal time in assisting people to unleash their potential and overcome stereotypes.

Advocate of Lifelong Learning in February 2017 she got the Financial Times Diploma for Non-Executive Directors being among the first few certified NEDs in Greece.

She holds a Ph.D. in Corporate Strategic Planning in the Financial Services and an M. Phil. in Agricultural Marketing and Market Research, both from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, United Kingdom. Her first degree (B.Sc.) is in Business Administration from the American College of Greece.

She is certified in "Skills anticipating" by the International Labour Organization (ILO)

Among her current publications we can select the "Glossary on the labour market. The words behind the dialogue" and the "Strategic Specialization Orientation Study for EEK EPAS/DYPA schools" for the Greek Public Employment Service (DYPA).

She has been recently appointed as a member of the research community at the Harvard Business Review Advisory Council.

She has been featured as a speaker on television, contributes regularly to print media and digital publications, and has participated in numerous conferences both in Greece and internationally, where she elaborates on topics such as the labor market, business, competitiveness, and related issues.

She is a proud mother of two children.

### **Kainar Kozhumov**

Partner, Center for Research and Consulting (CRC) Kazakhstan



Born in 1975, Kainar Kozhumov graduated with an economist diploma from the Kazakh State Academy of Management in 1996. In 2015, he earned an MBA degree from the Stockholm School of Economics.

Kainar Kozhumov has worked in various sectors, including public administration, the oil and gas industry, and a state holding company responsible for managing state assets. He has gained extensive experience in areas such as investment projects, strategic development, and corporate governance.

Additionally, he has a background in investment in the telecommunications sector, indicating his involvement in the financial aspects of this industry. Moreover, Kainar has also worked in the field of oil and gas sector analytics, showcasing his expertise in analyzing and understanding the dynamics of the energy sector.

His diverse experience across different sectors and roles reflects his versatility and proficiency in handling complex projects and making strategic decisions.

Since 2013, Kainar Kozhumov has been actively engaged in research and consulting. Currently, he holds the position of Managing Partner at the Center for Research and Consulting, a small consulting firm specializing in various areas, including economic policy, regional development, and human capital development.

The firm has successfully completed several projects, which include analyzing regional competitiveness, developing development strategies for various regions in Kazakhstan, conducting research on human capital development and the labor market, formulating entrepreneurship policy, competition policy and privatization strategies, as well as proposals for economic policy reforms.

Kainar's work in research and consulting showcases his dedication to addressing crucial economic challenges and assisting in the development and growth of different regions and sectors in Kazakhstan. His expertise in economic policy and strategic planning has contributed to the success of numerous projects undertaken by the Center for Research and Consulting.

### **Prof. Mark Lawler**

Professor of Digital Health, Queen's University Belfast UK



Mark is Professor of Digital Health, Chair in Translational Cancer Genomics at Queen's University Belfast and Scientific Director of DATA-CAN, the UK's Health Data Research Hub for Cancer. He chairs the International Cancer Benchmarking Partnership and the Lancet Oncology European Groundshot Commission. He co-Leads the All Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) a coalition of 10 universities across the island, co-leading two AICRI HEA-funded North South Research Programmes in precision medicine and digital health. He co-led an influential report on the precision oncology and digital health landscape on the island of Ireland and its enormous potential. In 2021, Mark received the Irish Association for Cancer Research's award, for his pioneering work on cancer research and care on the island.

Mark is strongly committed to patient-centred research and addressing cancer inequalities. He was architect of the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights, receiving the 2018 European Health Award, a prestigious award for partnerships that yield real health impact in Europe. His pioneering work on Covid-19 and cancer received the Royal College of Physicians Excellence in Patient Care Award and the prestigious European Communique Award. His team won the prestigious HDR-UK Impact of the Year Award for providing the crucial intelligence informing a change in policy for treating colorectal cancer. In November 2023, Mark received a Special Merit Award from the European Cancer Organisation, Europe's largest multi-professional cancer organisation, in recognition of his ground-breaking work in Covid and Cancer and his work on cancer inequalities.

Mark was one of the leadership involved in developing and launching a radical new data-informed UK plan for cancer research and cancer care in the House of Commons, Westminster. In January 2024 he provided the crucial evidence on the need to re-establish a National Cancer Plan to the Health and Social Care Select Committee in the House of Commons.

### David Linton

Founder and CEO, Madlug C.I.C  
NI



Dave is an innovator, social entrepreneur, motivational speaker and the founder and managing director of multi-award-winning Madlug C.I.C which achieved B-Corp certification in 2022.

Prior to beginning his journey with Madlug, Dave was a youth worker for over 20 years and for the past eight years he has also

become heavily involved in mentoring and raising awareness of social enterprises and social businesses.

Following a hugely successful crowdfunding campaign with Madlug over the summer of 2017, Dave was given the opportunity to have brunch with Sir Richard Branson in what was a great opportunity to share the story of Madlug with a global business leader.

In 2019 Dave went on to win the prestige titles of GBEA Entrepreneur of the year for Northern Ireland and Entrepreneur for Good for the UK. Dave is extremely passionate about using Madlug to influence a new young generation of social entrepreneurs.

### Emma Little-Pengelly, MLA

Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland  
NI



Emma Little-Pengelly is a Northern Irish barrister and Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) politician serving as the deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland since February 2024. She has been a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Lagan Valley since May 2022, when she was co-opted (appointed) to replace then-DUP party leader Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, who declined to take up his seat following the 2022 election.

She previously served as the Member of Parliament (MP) for the Belfast South constituency in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom from 2017 until 2019.

### Andrew Lynch

Chief Innovation Officer, Irish Manufacturing Research  
Ireland



Andrew Lynch is the Chief Innovation Officer at IMR. He is a member of the EFFRA Made in Europe Partnership Board, and the international Vice President of the EUREKA SMART Manufacturing Board of Directors. Andrew is a member of the ManuFuture High Level Group and chairs the ManuFuture ETP Working Group (State Aid Strategies- Research & Innovation). He is also on the

Academic Advisory Board of the UK's Smart Manufacturing Digital Hub.

In Ireland, Andrew is on the Board of Directors of the Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTEC), as well as on the Ingenuity and ATiM Cluster Executive Steering Committees. He is the founding chair of the Irish National Steering Committee on Collaborative Robotics, and a founding member of the National Advisory Board for the Digital Manufacturing Futures Centre (AIM) and the Board of the FutureCAST Technology Centre on Construction.

Andrew is a contributing expert on several key international policy directives for manufacturing, including the ManuFuture policy document (Vision 2030), the EFFRA Made in Europe program, ManuFuture ETP Strategic Working Group Initiatives, the ECSEL LIASE 14 Whitepaper on the Future of Manufacturing and the ECS SRA (Electronic Components & Systems, Strategic Research Agenda).

He holds an honours Degree in Biochemistry, a first class Masters in Environmental Analytical Chemistry, a PhD in Engineering, and is happily married with two adored daughters.

### Dr. Paul Madden

Director, Centre for Competitiveness  
NI



Paul is experienced in promoting and managing advanced technology projects in various industrial sectors on a regional, national and international basis. He has strong inter-personal skills forged over many years of working in customer-driven industries in international business environments. He has proven ability to collaborate with colleagues from differing backgrounds, cultures and disciplines to achieve commercial success. He is an experienced Non-Executive Director in the public and private sectors.

Paul was General Manager of Rolls-Royce Aerospace in Northern Ireland from 1998–2015; he implemented a major investment plan to establish a technology centre of excellence with 50+ employees developing safety-critical software for the company’s suite of civil and military aircraft engines. He designed and implemented a corporate strategy for software engineering process improvement based upon the University of Pittsburgh’s CMMI framework. He collaborated with regional and national government bodies to implement industry growth initiatives via his role as Chairman of the Northern Ireland Aerospace Consortium (cluster-representative body) for 7 years.

Prior to his time with Rolls-Royce, Paul worked in the IT industry; he directed a programme for software quality awareness and training in Central and Eastern Europe and supported the European Commission in defining the content of technology research and development programmes.

Recently, Paul developed a successful R+D project proposal for a technology optimisation upgrade for a leading Irish sawmill and he facilitated an Industry 4.0 Collaborative Growth Network of manufacturing SMEs in Northern Ireland. At the Centre for Competitiveness currently Paul is leading the Centre’s initiatives in renewable energy with a focus on the utilisation of agricultural manures for the production of biomethane.

**Prof. Miguel Marques**

Vice-Rector, Catholic University of Portugal  
Portugal



Professor of Management at Católica-Lisbon School of Business & Economics and Vice-Rector (Vice-President) of Universidade Católica Portuguesa. President of AEM – Association of Portuguese Issuers (publicly listed companies).

Miguel has a vast business experience, having taken numerous top-level business appointments in different sectors. His experience as a Board Member ranges from executive positions including CEO, to non-executive director roles, such as Chairman and Senior Independent Director. In such Board level positions Miguel has worked in the following sectors:

- Renewable energies and oil & gas (Galp Energy)
- Capital markets (NYSE and Euronext)
- Banking (CGD)
- Infra-structure concessions (Brisa)
- Retail and distribution (Jeronimo Martins)
- Public Administration (AICEP)

Miguel has taught in several MBAs and Executive programs, and he was one of the first Europeans to teach at CEIBS Business School in China (Beijing, Shanghai).

**Jonathan McAlpin**

Vice Chair & CEO, East Belfast Enterprise  
NI



Jonathan McAlpin is Chief Executive of East Belfast Enterprise, having joined the company from his previous role as Director of Operations for the Ulster Community Investment Trust.

Jonathan has dedicated his career to working with social enterprises and SMEs. Before joining UCIT, he was a consultant with Venture International providing management consultancy services to community organisations and social enterprises, which followed his previous work with the West Belfast Development Trust, where he provided advice and financial support to assist start-up and expanding SMEs.

Jonathan is currently Chairman of Enterprise Northern Ireland, Vice Chair of CO3 and serves on a number of Boards in a voluntary capacity.

In his spare time, he is a passionate football fan and follows the fortunes of Northern Ireland and his local team, Crusaders FC!

**Brian McCaul**

Director, QUBIS, Queen’s University Belfast  
NI



Having worked both within technology transfer environments and as an entrepreneur with his own start-up companies, Brian’s experience includes co-owning an aerospace manufacturing business based in the UK and Poland; co-founding an innovation software company in the UK and Netherlands; establishing the Innovation Commons – a community and shared platform of university TTOs bringing entrepreneurs to work on early-stage projects; and working on numerous national knowledge transfer initiatives as Chair of the Association for University Research and Industry Links (AURIL).

**Dr. Wendy McCloone**

Director of Research, Queen's University  
NI



Dr Wendy McCloone is Interim Director of Research at Queen's University Belfast with responsibility for the strategic direction and leadership of professional support services to improve the long-term quality of the University's research and research environment.

Prior to this Wendy held the role of Head of Research Development, a cross university role which provided leadership and support for the development and growth of the research portfolio. Previously Wendy worked for Science Foundation Ireland, developing, and successfully leading innovative strategies for funding discovery and translational research. She lectured in Chemical Engineering at Queen's for eight years and was a process engineer for Eli Lilly S.A.

**Prof. Karen McCloskey**

Director, Queen's Gender Initiative, Queen's University  
Belfast  
NI



Professor Karen McCloskey is Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (EDI) at Queen's University Belfast. She is Director of the Queen's Gender Initiative and led the recent Institutional Athena Swan Gold Award programme (Advance HE Charter for gender equality in academia). She has been an Athena Swan Charter Panel Chair (UK) since 2021.

Professor McCloskey is committed to fostering inclusion and belonging. Her portfolio includes establishing and delivering institutional programmes through collaboration and co-creation with colleagues. She is a speaker, consultant, advisor and mentor. As Professor of Physiology in the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences at Queen's, Professor McCloskey is an educator and research group leader. Her research group focusses on urological cancers with the aim of combatting disease and minimising treatment side-effects on urinary health.

**Cat McCusker**

President, NI Chamber and NI Regional Lead  
NI



Cat McCusker is the Regional Market Leader in Northern Ireland and the Education Consulting Leader. The professional services firm employs over 3,700 people in Northern Ireland, which is PwC UK's fastest-growing region. Its destination workplace in Belfast's Merchant Square is PwC's largest regional office outside of London. Cat is particularly passionate about the skills agenda, mental health, ESG and customer led transformation. Across her role as the Education Consulting leader, Cat works at a global and local level to help universities to reimagine their student and staff experience, bringing people, experience and technology innovation together to help solve some of the firm's clients' biggest challenges. Beyond education, she has also worked with major organisations across local government, central government and the police, generating significant cost savings and tangible benefits.

**Clare McGee**

CEO, Awaken Hub/Awaken Angels  
NI



Clare is a dynamic CEO with over two decades of experience in innovation, mentoring, project management and funding and in particular across the tech and creative sectors.

As co-founder and CEO of AwakenHub/AwakenAngels, she leads efforts to empower women entrepreneurs and investors to transform the startup landscape across Ireland.

Clare's strategic leadership extends to Innovate-NI, where she drives sustainability and entrepreneurship in local businesses.

Known for her strategic operational acumen and commitment to fostering entrepreneurial talent, Clare is a trusted advisor to startups and investors alike.

She was recognised as 'Northern Ireland Business Personality of the Year 2016,' and continues to be a driving influence in shaping Ireland's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### Mark McGranaghan

Fellow, Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI)  
Ireland



Mark McGranaghan is a Fellow at EPRI, located at the EPRI Europe office in Dublin. He received his BS and MS degrees in Electrical Engineering from the University of Toledo (Ohio) in 1977 and 1978, respectively. He has authored more than 70 technical papers and articles on topics ranging from power quality to insulation coordination.

Mark has been a leader in the areas of power quality, development of the smart grid, and distributed resource integration for over 20 years. He is an IEEE Fellow and in 2014 received the Charles Proteus Steinmetz Award for his expertise and dedication to power engineering standards development.

### Tina McKenzie MBE

Chief Executive Officer, Staffline Recruitment  
Ireland



After graduating from Ulster University, Tina went on to pursue a successful international recruitment career, giving her over 30 years' experience in the Recruitment and Employment Services sector and a wealth of entrepreneurial experience. After returning to Northern Ireland in 2013, she established Staffline Recruitment as a start-up throughout Ireland; taking the company from a

standing start to a dominant market leader with a turnover of £150 million within 5 years.

This unprecedented success led to a stream of awards including the UTV Fast Business Growth Award in 2015, IOD's Director of the Year Award in 2017, UTV Business Eye's Business Personality of the Year Award in 2018, the Belfast Telegraph Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020 and the Women in Business Outstanding Businesswoman of the Year Award in 2022. In 2023, Tina was awarded an MBE for services to the local economy and was also named as the 20th most influential person in UK politics in by Politico.

In 2024, Tina was appointed to the Department of Business and Trade Small Business Council. She has previously served as the European Ambassador for Women's Entrepreneurship Day and is the serving Honorary Consul to Finland in Northern Ireland. Tina currently Chairs the Policy and Advocacy Board of the Federation of Small Businesses, the largest business organisation in the UK. She is also a member of the Ireland Funds Global Board.

### Celine McStravick

CEO, NICVA  
NI



Celine McStravick is the CEO of NICVA (Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action). NICVA is the largest membership and representative umbrella body for the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland.

With over a 1400 members, NICVA lobbies and campaigns to advance the interests of the people and communities that its members support. NICVA also offers a wide range of practical services and support to the voluntary and community sector.

Celine was appointed as CEO of NICVA in 2023 and has over 25 years' experience in the Voluntary and Community sector. Celine is a dynamic and visionary leader with a deep commitment to social change and community empowerment. Celine's career spans across multiple sectors, including her previous position as the Strategic Director for External Affairs at NCB, a UK-wide leading children's charity.

Her advocacy for outcomes-based accountability in Northern Ireland led her to develop and chair the inaugural Global Outcomes Summit in Belfast, a testament to her commitment to international collaboration. She is a member of the boards of CO3, SportNI, and NICIE. Celine's passion, strategic acumen, and collaborative spirit continue to drive positive social impact and transform the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland.

### Prof. Jim Metson

Senior Advisor, Newmarket Campus Development,  
University of Auckland  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
New Zealand



Professor Metson is Strategic Advisor to the Newmarket Campus at the University of Auckland, charged with developing the area as an Innovation Precinct. He was previously Deputy Vice Chancellor (Vice President) Research at the University. After completing his PhD in New Zealand he moved to the University of Western Ontario, Canada, before returning to New Zealand to the School of Chemical Sciences at the University of Auckland. He has worked extensively with international industry, particularly in aluminium reduction technology, gas dry-scrubbing, and alumina refining and is a recognised international authority on industrial aluminas. He is the author of over 200 papers and is an inventor on a number of patents. At the University of Auckland, he was co-founder of the Research Centre for Surface and Materials Science and



of the Light Metals Research Centre and a founding member of the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology.

Professor Metson has served in a range of national and international roles, including as the Chief Science Advisor to New Zealand's Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, a Councillor for the Australian Institute of Nuclear Science and Engineering and a reviewer for the United Nations Development Programme. Previously he was the chair of the Ministry for Research Science and Technology Research Infrastructure Advisory Group and NZ Government representative on the Australian National Science Advisory Committee that oversaw the development of the Australian Synchrotron. He later chaired the International Advisory Committee for the facility. He is a Director of The New Zealand Synchrotron Group and the Research and Education Advanced Network (REANNZ) and serves on Advisory Boards for several of New Zealand's Centres of Research Excellence.

#### **Mark Minevich**

Founding Partner and Chairman, Going Global Ventures (GGV)  
GFCC Senior Fellow  
USA



Mark Minevich is a globally recognized Chief AI Officer, AI strategist, and investor, committed to redefining our relationship with artificial intelligence for societal good. As founding partner and chairman of Going Global Ventures (GGV), a New York-based investment, technology, and strategic advisory firm, Mark advises public sectors, global enterprises, and prominent brands

across the US, EU, Gulf Countries, South America, and Japan. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the International Data Centers Authority in Washington, DC, and is Co-Chair of AI150, a leadership community under Constellation Research.

Mark chairs the executive committee of the AI for Good Foundation and is an executive committee member of WorkingNation, contributing to the future of work. As an advisor to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), he focuses on digital government initiatives and co-founded the AI for the Planet Alliance to leverage AI for global environmental sustainability.

Mark is a senior advisor to Mayfield Venture Capital and holds Senior Fellow positions with the Council on Competitiveness in Washington, DC, and the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils. His private investments include board roles with Infosec Global, 1FS Wealth, and Corent Technology, Inc. He was also an early investor and advisor to DarwinAI, acquired by Apple in late 2023.

A prolific writer and Forbes contributor since 2020, Mark has published over 80 articles on AI's role in driving sustainable advancements. His book, *Our Planet Powered by AI* (Wiley), highlights AI's transformative potential. His insights are featured in top publications like *Fast Company*, *Forbes*, *VentureBeat*, and the *World Economic Forum*, and cited in *Newsweek, Inc.*, *The Telegraph (UK)*, and *CNBC*.

Mark's past roles include Vice Chair of Ventures and External Affairs and CTO at the Comrade Group, and CTO and strategy executive at IBM. He has been a member of the *World Economic Forum* since 2020 and has engaged G20/B20 digitalization task forces across multiple presidencies.

Mark has received numerous accolades, including the Albert Einstein Award for Outstanding Achievement and the Outstanding Artificial Intelligence Expert Award of Distinction. He has been recognized as one of the top AI influencers and featured in the *Top 50 AI Influencers*, *Top 50 Brand Ambassadors of 2023*, and the *Top 100 Power List* for innovation and technology. His contributions earned him a place in the *Hall of Fame* and recognition as a *National Thought Leader* by the *World Business Angels Investment Forum*.

Mark holds a Master of Business degree from Stevens Institute of Technology.

#### **Dr. Jan Mládek**

Director, The Czech Institute of Applied Economics, Ltd.  
Minister of Agriculture (2005-2006), Czech Republic  
Minister of Industry and Trade (2014-2017), Czech Republic  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
Czech Republic



Jan Mládek is the director of the Czech Institute Applied Economics, Ltd. He graduated from the University of Economics in Prague (1979-1983). He finished PhD. in 1990 - Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In years 1993-1998 worked with the Central European University in Prague / Budapest to study the transformation and privatization of the post-communist countries. He has published many scientific papers at home and abroad. Twice he was the Deputy Minister: 1991-1992 for the first time at the Federal Ministry of Economy of Czechoslovakia and the second time at the Czech Ministry of Finance (1999-2001). Twice he was minister of Czech government: minister of agriculture (2005-2006) and minister of industry and trade (2014-2017). He was also twice member of parliament 2002-2005 and 2013-2017. Currently he is also teaching at Czech Technical University Prague and University College Prague. Mr. Mládek speaks English, Russian, Polish and basic German. He is married with 5 children.

### Ahmad Razif Mohamad

Head of International Partnership, MIGHT  
Malaysia



He currently serves as the Head of International Partnerships at the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT), a leading partnership organization in Malaysia and a powerhouse of future thinking and knowledge advancement.

His goal is to enhance MIGHT's global presence by building a highly connected, internationally networked organization with centers of excellence worldwide. He is particularly focused on developing impactful international co-creation programmes that benefit the nation.

He holds a Master's degree in Technology and Innovation Management from Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Indiana University Bloomington.

### Dr. Mmboneni Muofhe

Deputy Director-General, Department of Science and Innovation  
South Africa



Dr. Mmboneni Muofhe is the Deputy Director-General (DDG) for Socio-Economic Innovation Partnerships at the Department of Science and Innovation in South Africa. Dr Muofhe previously held the position of Deputy Director-General for International Resources and Cooperation and Deputy Director-General for Technology Innovation in the same Department.

Dr. Muofhe holds a PhD in Management of Technology and Innovation, Master of Business Administration and Master of Science

He has years of experience in the South African Science, Technology and Innovation System and the global innovation systems in general, which includes doing scientific research, managing research, international cooperation, development and implementation of innovation funding schemes and implementation of various innovation initiatives and instruments.

Dr Muofhe led the implementation of various science, technology and innovation strategies such as the National Space Science Strategy, Bioeconomy, and Hydrogen South Africa (Energy). He currently leads the implementation of the Circular and Digital Economy (the new sources of growth) aspects of the White Paper for Science, Technology and Innovation; the Modernisation of critical sectors of the

South African Economy such as Mining, Agriculture and Manufacturing and the mainstreaming of Science, Technology and Innovation in government through innovation sensitive planning and budget coordination.

He is also a member of the Steering Committee of the World Health Organisation's mRNA Technology Transfer Hub which is entrusted with building vaccine manufacturing capabilities in low- and middle-income countries. Dr Muofhe is also the South African Group on Earth Observations (GEO) Principal, a member of its Executive Committee and one of its four Co-chairs.

### Conor Murphy, MLA

NI Minister for the Economy  
NI



Conor Murphy is MLA for Newry and Armagh, and is the minister for the Economy.

A key member of the Sinn Féin negotiating team, he had particular responsibility for institutional issues and has represented the party at the Hillsborough, Leeds Castle and St Andrew's negotiations as well as playing a key role in the Fresh Start agreement negotiated at Stormont House.

In 1998, after serving as a Newry and Mourne councillor for eight years, he was elected to the Assembly where he chaired the Assembly Committee, was the Party Chief Whip and also held the position of Group Leader of the Sinn Féin MLAs.

He was re-elected to the Assembly in 2003 and has been the Sinn Féin spokesperson on Education, Equality and International Affairs at various times. He is currently Sinn Féin's spokesperson on all-Ireland economic matters.

In 2005 Conor Murphy became the first Irish Republican to be elected as MP for Newry and Armagh. He then went on to retain the seat in 2010.

Following his re-election to the Assembly in 2007 he was appointed the Minister for Regional Development, a position that he held until 2011.

In 2012, as part of Sinn Féin's commitment to ending double-jobbing, he left the Assembly to concentrate on his role as an MP.

He returned to the Assembly in 2015 when Mickey Brady was elected MP for the constituency. Since re-entering the Assembly, he has been a member of both the Enterprise, Trade and Investment Committee and the Public Accounts Committee.

He was appointed Minister for the Economy in February 2024.

**Douglas Muzimba**

Director, NCC  
Zimbabwe



Douglas Muzimba is a holder of Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Economics and a Master of Science Degree in Economics, both from the University of Zimbabwe, among other various professional certificates in customs, taxation, trade & development, policy analysis and research. He has over 18 years of working experience in public policy, and was instrumental in bilateral,

regional and multilateral trade negotiations and development of market access (tariff) offers for Zimbabwe that culminated in Free Trade Areas for Zimbabwe, including the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); Southern Africa Development Community (SADC); the European Union (EU) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), among others. Currently, he is the Manager for International Competitiveness, at the National Competitiveness Commission (NCC), Zimbabwe. He is responsible for international outreach and engagements, competitiveness benchmarking and surveys and has worked with institutions such as the World Economic Forum and International Trade Centre, among others, as well as analysing the country's international competitiveness performance.

**Martin Naughton**

Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Glen Dimplex Group  
Ireland



MARTIN NAUGHTON is Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Glen Dimplex Group. He studied Engineering in Southampton, England. After 12 years working as an Industrial Engineer and Plant Manager he founded the private, family owned, Glen Electric in Newry Northern Ireland (now Glen Dimplex) in 1973.

Today, with a 50-year heritage in manufacturing, the Irish headquartered Glen Dimplex Group has a worldwide turnover in excess of €1.5 billion and employs 8,000 people. With an international footprint in heating and ventilation, flame, precision cooling and consumer appliances and substantial business activities in the US, the Glen Dimplex portfolio of products and solutions span the living and working environment, all created with a simple and shared mindset of empowering everyday life to work towards a more sustainable future for everyone.

Martin has received honorary degrees from:

- Notre Dame University USA
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Dublin
- Queen's University Belfast
- Ulster University Coleraine
- Griffith College Dublin

He is a Trustee Emeritus of the University of Notre Dame.

He is a Knight of the British Empire (K.B.E.)

He has been awarded the rank of Officer (Officier) of the Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur.

In 2018 he was awarded Oslo Business for Peace Award.

Martin Naughton served 7 years as a member of the Irish Council of State and is the past Chairman of Intertradelreland & Cross Border Body. He is on the Advisory Board of Citi Private Bank for Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

His Naughton Family Foundation supports mainly Education and the Arts.

**Bill Neely**

Former Chief Global Correspondent, NBC News  
NI



Bill Neely has been a broadcast journalist for more than 40 years, beginning at the BBC in Northern Ireland in 1981.

He has won numerous awards, from the Royal Television Society, three consecutive BAFTA awards, an Emmy and the prestigious American Peabody award for coverage of ISIS in Iraq.

Bill helped launch Sky News in 1989 before moving to ITN where he worked for 25 years, later becoming the Chief Global Correspondent of the leading US TV network NBC News.

Neely has covered major international events from the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union to multiple wars, earthquakes, national elections and summits.

He is a graduate of Queen's University Belfast, is married with two daughters and lives in Richmond, outside London.

### Hiro Nishiguchi

Managing Director, GEN Japan  
Japan



Hiro Nishiguchi is a distinguished serial entrepreneur dedicated to advancing global society through the proliferation of innovation management systems and the development of thriving startup ecosystems worldwide.

His core mission is to foster a sustainable future by promoting and implementing a systematic approach to innovation and entrepreneurial activities.

Currently, Nishiguchi holds several key positions, including Managing Director of GEN Japan at the Global Entrepreneurship Network, President of SG Japan at Startup Genome, President of the Japan Bosai (Disaster Risk Reduction) Platform, Chief Innovation Officer of the Advent Group, and Professor at Sophia University.

Throughout his illustrious career, Nishiguchi has held significant leadership roles in globally respected organizations, including the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group, Mercer (as a Worldwide Partner), and the Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (INCJ), where he served as Executive Managing Director.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Sophia University and a Master of Business Administration from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

Certified as an Innovation Management Professional by the Research Institutes of Sweden, Nishiguchi is also an active member of the US Technical Advisory Group for ISO TC279 on Innovation Management. With his diverse expertise and unwavering commitment to innovation, he continues to inspire transformative change and propel organizations toward global success.

### Dr. Frank O'Donnell

Public Sector Lead, Microsoft  
Ireland



As a member of the Microsoft Ireland Leadership Team, Dr Frank O'Donnell is in charge of the Public Sector business, where he works with Government, Health and Education customers across the island. He has more than 20 years of public sector experience - first as a Senior Director at Scottish Enterprise, where he led eBusiness, broadband and the software industry growth in

Scotland, and then as a consultant to public sector clients as a Partner at PA Consulting and Head of Health and Public Sector Consulting at KPMG.

Frank's work has mostly focused on using technology to transform government and public services in the Irish, UK, and Middle East markets. He has a PhD in Engineering Design from the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

### Michelle O'Neill, MLA

First Minister of Northern Ireland  
NI



Michelle O'Neill is an Irish politician who has been the First Minister of Northern Ireland since February 2024 and Vice President of Sinn Féin since 2018. She has also been the MLA for Mid Ulster in the Northern Ireland Assembly since 2007. O'Neill was previously deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland from 2020 to 2022. O'Neill served on the Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council from 2005 to 2011.

In 2007, she was elected to represent Mid Ulster in the Northern Ireland Assembly. She served as the first female Mayor of Dungannon and South Tyrone from 2010 to 2011. She has been serving as Vice President of Sinn Féin since 2018. In 2011, she was appointed to the Northern Ireland Executive by deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness as Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development. In 2016, she was promoted to Minister of Health. In January 2020, she became deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland after the New Decade, New Approach agreement restored the power-sharing executive.

### Steve Orr

Chief Executive Officer, Catalyst Innovation Centre  
NI



Steve Orr is Chief Executive Officer of Catalyst and serves on the Board of Directors. Catalyst is Northern Ireland's science and technology hub providing a home to over 150 innovative companies and helping over 1000 entrepreneurs per annum to create and scale companies.

Before being named CEO in November 2018, Steve was Director and Co-founder of Connect, Catalyst's not-for-profit network of experienced entrepreneurs, business professionals and top research talent dedicated to the creation and scaling of innovation companies in Northern Ireland.

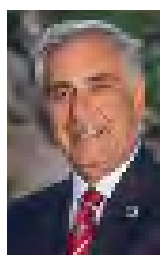
Prior to Connect, Steve co-founded Kineticom, Inc a San Diego, California based technical talent firm in 2000. In 2006 Kineticom was ranked #33 on the Inc 500, the list of the fastest growing privately held companies in the US. Previous to Kineticom, Steve worked in Buckinghamshire, UK

and San Diego and San Francisco, California for S.Com Ltd and S.Com Inc. Steve earned a BSc in Business Information Technology from University of Northumbria.

Steve is a Fellow of the Irish Academy of Engineering and was awarded an OBE in 2022 for services to innovation.

### Dr. Harris Pastides

President Emeritus, University of South Carolina  
Distinguished Fellow, Council on Competitiveness  
USA



Harris Pastides is Distinguished President Emeritus and Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of South Carolina, a system comprised of eight universities on twelve campuses.

He served as its 28th president (2008-2019) and Interim President (2021-2022). Since his and his wife Patricia's arrival at the University in 1998, he has also held the positions of vice president for research and health sciences and dean of the Arnold School of Public Health.

Pastides is an advocate for student engagement beyond the classroom through leadership, service learning, international experience, internships and undergraduate research. He has spearheaded nontraditional programs to increase university access and affordability and has worked with universities in Cyprus, Greece, Oman and Qatar help open avenues for higher education attainment and program development globally.

He is a member of the board of the Institute of International Education (Fulbright) and is chair of its Scholar Advisory Board (CIES). Pastides is on the boards of the University Research Association and the US Council on Competitiveness, where he is a Distinguished Fellow. Previous board service includes the American Medical Association (as the only non-physician member), the Uber National Safety Board, the Southeastern Athletics Conference (SEC), the National Collegiate Athletics Association Division I and the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities.

Before joining the University of South Carolina faculty, Pastides was a professor of epidemiology and chairman of the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He received his Master of Public Health and his Ph.D. in epidemiology from Yale University.

### Iain Percy

Founder and CEO, Artemis Technologies Ltd  
UK



Iain is a four time Olympian, three time Olympic medallist and double Olympic champion. He is also a veteran of four America's Cup challenges beginning in 2005 as a helmsman for the +39 Challenge, before joining Great Britain's America's Cup challenge, Team Origin.

After retiring from Olympic competition in 2012, he joined Artemis Racing as a tactician, and was appointed Team Manager in October 2013. Iain then went on to lead the team's successful 35th America's Cup campaign in Bermuda, reaching the Louis Vuitton Challenger Series final in 2017.

Passionate about protecting the oceans, the economics graduate founded Artemis Technologies in 2017, with a mission to see how America's Cup technology could play a part in the decarbonization of the maritime industry.

He has overseen the company's transition from a sailing services provider, to an applied technologies company focusing on clean innovations for marine transportation.

### Phillip Phiri

Executive Director, National Competitiveness Commission (NCC)  
Zimbabwe



Phillip Phiri is a prominent leader, strategist, and advocate for sustainable economic development, currently serving as the Executive Director of the National Competitiveness Commission. With over a decade of experience in policy formulation, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement, Phillip's passion is to foster inclusive growth and has driven innovative approaches to

enhance export promotion, development, and national competitiveness.

He has years of experience in food manufacturing and distribution having worked for leading Zimbabwean brands and was a core team member in the successful corporate rescue of two leading brands in the FMCG sector in Zimbabwe, Phillip's experience extends to managing operations in multinational brands such as KFC and SPAR in the region (South Africa and Botswana).

He also has provided consultancy for several Micro and SME organizations in Zimbabwe in strategy, business development, and marketing.

Phillip is currently a Doctor of Strategic Management candidate at Chinhoyi University of Technology he also holds an MBA, an Honours degree in Marketing Management an Executive Diploma in Business Leadership, and a Higher Diploma in Food and Beverages Management among other business diplomas and accreditations. He has served in various senior management and board membership roles within governmental and private sector organizations including multinational corporations.

He currently sits on the Zimbabwe Council of Churches resource mobilization Committee, is a council member of the Zimbabwe Institute of Strategic Thinkers (ZIST) and is Chairman of the Church of Central African Presbyterian CCAP Harare Synod Entrepreneurial Hub.

### Dr. Manny Pohl

Chairman and CIO, EC Pohl & Co  
GFCC Distinguished Fellow  
South Africa



As a result of contributions to the Australian Finance Industry, Emmanuel was recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list on the 10th of June 2019 and appointed as a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia. This followed being accepted in 2015 as a Freeman of the City of London and receiving an invitation to join the Company of Loriners: London in 2017.

A Deed of Commission was conferred on him in 1980 to serve as an officer in the South African Navy. Emmanuel holds engineering and MBA degrees from the University of Witwatersand and Potchefstroom University conferred a Doctoral Degree in Business Administration (Economics) on him in 1985 for his thesis on 'The Social and Economic Consequences of Infrastructure Development'.

He was a member of the South African delegation to the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Bangkok in 1991 and has served on the board of a number of major corporations and not for profit organisations in Australia and internationally including, Trustee of the Great Barrier Reef Research Foundation, Member of Presidents Council of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Trustee of the Mater Hospital Prostate Cancer Research Foundation, Councillor of Bond University and in 2019 was invited to serve as a distinguished fellow on the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils. His current executive positions are Executive Chairman and Chief Investment Officer of EC Pohl & Co a highly acclaimed funds management business, Director of Flagship Investments Limited and Managing Director of Athelney Trust Plc in London.

### Prof. Wayne Powell

Principal and Chief Executive, SRUC  
UK



Professor Wayne Powell is Principal and Chief Executive of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), the UK's leading agri-food-environment, tertiary education Institution.

His previous roles include Chief Science Officer at CGIAR, a global agri-food partnership, Professor & Founding Director of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS), Aberystwyth University, and CEO & Director NIAB, Cambridge. He is a Senior Fullbright Scholar and worked for the DuPont Company in Wilmington, Delaware, USA.

Professor Wayne Powell has more than 30 years experience working in the field of contemporary plant genetics and has extensive experience leading organisational and cultural change programmes.

Wayne is a member of Scotland's Science Advisory Council, Chair of Interface, Board member of NatureScot and member of the FCD0 Research Advisory Group (RAG). Until recently he was a member of both DEFRA and DFID's Science Advisory Council and Convenor of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee of Universities Scotland. He maintains an active research group and is an elected Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales and the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

### Prof. Mark Price

EPSRC Fellow in Engineering Design School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, Queen's University Belfast, UK



Mark Price is Professor of Aeronautics and EPSRC Fellow in Engineering Design. He was formerly Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Engineering and Physical Sciences, and Member of the University Executive Board at Queen's University Belfast. A Chartered Engineer he worked in the Aerospace and Software industries before turning to academia. He has held numerous external

leadership positions including Chair of the EPSRC Manufacturing the Future Strategic Advisory Team, a Trustee of the James Kane Foundation and the Campaign for Science and Engineering, as well being a member of the Aircraft Subgroup of the Zero Emissions Flight working group of the Jet Zero Council. His current roles are focused entirely on introducing disruptive technologies in engineering design to help deliver net zero in manufacturing working closely with AMIC and the High Value Manufacturing Catapult. His EPSRC Fellowship is delivering tools through AMIC and the National Composites Centre to support decision making in

aerospace manufacturing and understanding how environmental and policy constraints can be used to positively direct manufacturing enterprises toward net zero and sustainability.

### **Prof. Padma Raghavan**

Vice Provost for Research and Innovation and Chief Research Officer  
Vanderbilt University  
USA



Padma Raghavan is the Vice Provost for Research and Innovation and Chief Research Officer, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor, and Distinguished Professor of Computer Science at Vanderbilt University. As Vice Provost for Research and Innovation, Raghavan oversees the advancement of the university's research and innovation portfolio, including development of strategic partnerships. These partnerships include the Ancora Innovation, with Deerfield Management, to accelerate the development and delivery of life-changing therapeutics from bench to patient, and Army Pathfinder, a program to rapidly advance mission-critical science and technology.

In her faculty role, Raghavan specializes in high-performance computing (aka supercomputing). Raghavan has received several recognitions, including the National Science Foundation's CAREER award, elevation to Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). In 2022, Raghavan was appointed to a two-year term on the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

Prior to joining Vanderbilt in 2016, Raghavan served as the Associate Vice President for Research and Strategic Initiatives, the founding Director of the university-wide Institute for Computational and Data Sciences, and as Distinguished Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at the Pennsylvania State University.

### **Rushdi Abdul Rahim**

President & Chief Executive Officer, Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT)  
Malaysia



Rushdi Abdul Rahim is the President & Chief Executive Officer of the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology or better known by the acronym MIGHT, a technology think tank under the purview of Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation. He is also the Advisor of myForesight®—Malaysian Foresight Institute. Through MIGHT's foresight, trends analysis

and horizon scanning activities, Rushdi spent most of his time working with organisations—private and public—to understand and explore the future impacts of trends as well as disruptions.

For years, Rushdi has spearheaded transformative foresight initiatives, playing a pivotal role in shaping national policy. His visionary leadership has propelled initiatives across industry, youth empowerment, and social progress. Notably, he led a groundbreaking collaboration with UNDP and JPA, envisioning the future of public service. Rushdi's contributions also extend to producing insightful white papers on the profound impacts of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on work dynamics. Serving as Co-Chair for the NSRC's Technology Prioritization

Rushdi was also featured as one of the 25 futurist in Leading Thought's – How to Use a Futurist and served as an International Advisory Board Member and an expert panel to Asia Productivity Organization (APO), Universal Foresight (UF) initiative as well as the Philippines Futures Thinking Society.

### **Dr. Paul Roben**

Associate Vice Chancellor, Innovation and Commercialization, University of California San Diego  
USA



Paul Roben, Ph.D., was named Associate Vice Chancellor for Innovation and Commercialization at UC San Diego in June 2015.

Working with the Vice Chancellor for Research, Dr. Roben is transforming the functions provided by the Technology Transfer Office, Industry Research Alliances, and Industry Contracting into an integrated

organization to include patenting, strategic corporate research partnering and industry contracts. He oversees the Office of Innovation and Commercialization, which will establish a campus-wide innovation platform to build a systemic and sustainable innovation culture, create a vibrant regional ecosystem, and accelerate the commercialization of UC San Diego inventions.

Previously he was Senior Director of Office Technology Development at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, working with multiple academic institutes to develop strategic processes to drive innovation alliances, and help translate their research programs into products for patients and society. He guided the formation of multiple new start-up companies and was responsible for the negotiation of a broad spectrum of technology licenses to industry.

As a key member of Ireland's Innovation Taskforce (2009 to present), he co-authored a national economic-development plan for Ireland, among other achievements.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biotechnology, as well as his Ph.D., at Dublin City University in Ireland, and studied as a Postdoctoral Fellow with Dr. Greg Silverman at UC San Diego.

### Sinead Rocks

Managing Director, Nations & Regions at Channel 4  
UK



Sinead Rocks is from Belfast and graduated from Queen's in 1995 with a BA in English. In 2019, she was appointed Managing Director, Nations and Regions at Channel 4, and has overseen the rollout of the biggest change in the broadcaster's history, 4 All the UK. Under her leadership, the broadcaster has opened three regional centres which are at the heart of Channel 4's plan to attract and develop talent from across the UK.

Before joining Channel 4, Sinead was the BBC's Director of Education, responsible for a range of content across TV, radio, and online and she also played a key role in the BBC's move to Salford – migrating the BBC's Learning department to the Northwest site. She started her career as a journalist at BBC Northern Ireland and is a former editor of Newsround as well as an Executive Producer for BBC Current Affairs.

### Prof. David Rooney

Dean of Internationalisation and Reputation, Queen's University Belfast, School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Research Centre in Sustainable Energy NI



Professor David Rooney is the Dean of Internationalisation and Reputation within the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences at Queen's University Belfast.

He is a Professor of Chemical Engineering at Queen's and director of the Centre for Advanced Sustainable Energy. His research focuses on energy generation, materials and

system integration with a particular focus on Zero Carbon technologies. He has a H-Index of 57, over 10,000 citations and a grant portfolio of over £10m.

He works with a wide range of industries and government bodies, to advance decarbonisation through specific projects, as well as supporting collaboration and cooperation through industrial clusters. He is a committee member for the all-Island Institute for Chemical Engineers and a consultant assessor for an international energy company. He has developed a range of educational courses in Hydrogen Energy Systems and Net Zero Engineering and has a significant background in international partnerships where

he previously led the University's Transnational Education programme as Vice-dean for the China Queen's College in Shenyang, China.

### James Rutherford

Chairman, Centamin plc, UK; Director, Manara Minerals, Saudi Arabia; Director, Ecora Resources plc  
UK



James has over 25 years' experience in investment management and investment banking and currently serves as a non-executive director on the boards of several publicly listed and private companies.

Since 2020, he has served as Non-Executive Chairman of Centamin plc and non-executive Director of Ecora Resources plc, where he also serves as Chair of the Sustainability Committee and is a Director of Manara Minerals.

In addition, he is a director of the Tantallon Capital India Fund, a dedicated Indian equity investment fund, and serves on the Board of Governors of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution.

Rutherford obtained a BSc (Econ) in Economics & Computer Science from Queens University Belfast in 1980 and an MA (Econ) in Development Economics from the University of Sussex in 1981. He is also an alumnus of the London Business School.

### Antonios Sagris

Head of Group Corporate Development and ESG, Piraeus Bank  
Greece



Antonios Sagris serves as the Senior Director and leads Group Corporate Development & ESG at Piraeus Financial Holdings, the parent company of Greece's largest bank, Piraeus Bank. With over 25 years of experience in the financial industry, Mr. Sagris has spent the past decade in senior management roles. He holds graduate and undergraduate degrees in Business Administration, Statistics, and Mathematics from Athens University of Economics and Business, Université de Montreal, and McGill University.



**Prof. Damon Salesa**

Vice-Chancellor, Auckland University of Technology  
New Zealand



Toeolesulusulu Damon Salesa is the next Vice-Chancellor of Auckland University of Technology. He is a prizewinning scholar specialising in history, society and politics in New Zealand and the other Pacific Islands. A graduate of Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, he taught at the University of Michigan and University of Auckland before joining AUT. His works include

Tangata o le Moana and most recently Island Time: New Zealand's Pacific Futures.

**Marguerite Sayers**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer, ESB  
Ireland



Marguerite Sayers Marguerite is Deputy Chief Executive of Energy Utility ESB, based in Dublin. Prior to her appointment, she worked in various technical and managerial positions in ESB, including Generation Manager, Head of Asset Management for ESB Networks, Executive Director Customer Solutions and Managing Director of ESB Networks DAC. With a degree in Electrical

Engineering from UCC, Marguerite is a Chartered Engineer, a Fellow and Past President of Engineers Ireland, a Fellow of the Academy of Engineers, a Board member of Energy UK and a Governor of The Irish Times Trust.

**Prof. Nigel Scollan**

Queen's University, Institute of Global Food Security  
NI



Nigel Scollan is Director of The Institute for Global Food Security (IGFS) and Professor of Agriculture & Sustainability at Queens University, Belfast. The Institute addresses key challenges around food security and one health. IGFS was determined as number 1 in Research Excellence Framework 2021 in unit of assessment 6 on agriculture, food and veterinary science. The Research

Excellence Framework (REF) is a UK-wide assessment of the quality of research in universities undertaken by expert review panels.

Nigel conducted his PhD at The University of Edinburgh, followed by a postdoctoral appointment at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada before joining Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research, Aberystwyth in 1993 and subsequently Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS) Aberystwyth University in 2008.

He held a number of posts at IBERS including Waitrose Professor of Sustainable Agriculture and Professor of Public Engagement with Science at Aberystwyth University.

Nigel is a Past President of the British Society of Animal Science and a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Society in the UK and a past Director of the Oxford Farming Conference (2017-2020).

**George Scutaru**

Chief Executive Officer, New Strategy Center  
Romania



George Scutaru is one of the founders and the CEO of the New Strategy Center ([www.newstrategycenter.ro](http://www.newstrategycenter.ro)), the leading Romanian think tank in security and foreign affairs field, founded in July 2015.

He started his professional career in journalism, in Bucharest, then as a press correspondent to Moscow, before he became the general director of a press monitoring and consultancy agency in Romania.

Between 2004 and 2014 he was a member of the Parliament of Romania, the Chamber of Deputies. In that period, he successively held the positions of Secretary (2004-2008) and Vice-Chairman (2008-2014) of the Committee on Defense and National Security. Between 2014 and 2015 he was national security advisor to the President of Romania.

On behalf of the President, Scutaru coordinated the entire negotiation process for the national agreement, assumed in 2015 by all Romanian political parties from the Parliament, for a 2 percent of the GDP financing of the defense sector, which triggered an extensive modernization process of the Romanian Armed Forces and enhanced the interoperability with NATO and the US.

George graduated from the Faculty of History (University of Bucharest) and holds a master's degree in International Relations. He also graduated from the National Defense College and the National Intelligence College in Bucharest, and also attended training courses and programs at the NATO College in Rome, the G.C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies and the US Department of State.

Area of expertise: Russia, security challenges in the Black Sea region. He is w of several studies dedicated to Russia's strategy in the Black Sea region, Russian hybrid warfare and aspects related to energy security in the wider Black Sea region.

### Mark Simpson

Correspondent and presenter, BBC News NI



Mark Simpson is an award-winning correspondent and presenter at BBC News. Mark has more than 30 years' experience in journalism, reporting on some of the biggest breaking news stories in Belfast, Dublin and beyond.

Mark is a Queen's University Belfast alumnus, having graduated in 1989 with a degree in Modern History and Politics. He began his journalistic career at a series of Belfast-based newspapers, including the News Letter, The Irish News, and the Belfast Telegraph.

He joined the BBC in 1998 as a political correspondent, just before the Good Friday Agreement.

In 2005, he moved to Leeds, to take up the position of North of England Correspondent, reporting for national and international BBC News.

In 2008, he returned to Belfast as BBC Ireland Correspondent, and later became a news correspondent at BBC NI.

Mark specialises in politics, sport, community and current affairs, and has built a reputation as one of Belfast's best-known and respected news correspondents.

### William Simwanza

Officer-In-Charge for Industry, Innovation and Minerals, African Union Commission  
Ethiopia



William Simwanza is currently the Officer-In-Charge for the Industry Innovation and Minerals at the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. His portfolio includes Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Development which are the bulk of the Private sector in Africa as well as quality infrastructure. His job also looks at how the private sector especially those involved in value

addition can position themselves to access the integrated African Market ushered in by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfcFTA).

He has previously worked for different international organizations such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and GIZ where he among others worked on MSME development as well women's economic empowerment. He also worked in the Civil Service in Malawi as an Economist in strategic planning, Real Sector Policy Analysis and Macroeconomic policy formulation and implementation.

### Prof. Ken Sloan

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Harper Adams University  
UK



Professor Ken Sloan joined Harper Adams as Vice-Chancellor on 1 November 2021. Ken has extensive national and international experience in strategy, leadership, governance, professional, business development and commercial activities.

Previously, Ken was at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, serving as the inaugural Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise and Governance). As a member of the University Executive, he was responsible for providing University-wide leadership and strategic support for the creation and acceleration of major partnerships, government relations, precinct development, new revenue creation, commercialisation, innovation, entrepreneurship, strategic intelligence, group governance and institutional risk.

Ken has previously held roles as Registrar and Chief Operating Officer at the University of Warwick; as a Business Development Director, Universities and Higher Education, with SERCO; and as Special Advisor to the Stephen A. Schwarzman Education Foundation, based at Tsinghua University in Beijing, China. He continues to serve as a panel chair for the Schwarzman Scholars annual selection process.

Ken has chaired and served on the boards of a number of institutional subsidiary companies, boards and international fundraising and development trusts. He chaired the boards of Monash Investment Holdings and Monash College, the Audit and Risk Committee of the IITB-Monash Academy and the Monash Technology Transformation Institute (Shenzhen) Executive Committee. He served on the boards of BioCurate Pty Ltd, Warwick University Enterprises (Australia), and as Chair of the Victorian Heart Institute Strategic Advisory Board. He served as sector representative on the Federal Austrade Agriculture 4.0 Steering Committee and previously as Chair of the Coventry Partnership, ethics adviser to Coventry City Council, Chair of Governors of Woodway Park School and Community College, governor of the WMG Academy for Young Engineers and a board director of the Midlands Arts Centre. He was chair/ member of the University of Warwick's fundraising trusts in Singapore, South Africa and Hong Kong.

Ken graduated with an MA (Hons) from the University of Glasgow, an MBA from the Warwick Business School, and is a member of CPA Australia. He is a Fellow of the Association of Higher Education Professionals and a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (FRSA). He is also a member of the Institution of Agricultural Engineers and the Institute of Directors.

Professor Sloan was invited to give the ANZ Journal of Surgery Lecture in 2021 and this lecture was published in the Journal later that year.

Professor Sloan currently serves on the Executive of Guild HE and on the Board of the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) where he is also Chair of Finance and Audit Committee. He sits on the Telford Town Fund Board for Levelling Up, and is Chair of the Steering Group for Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

### Prof. Peter Smith

Smith Optical  
UK



Prof Peter G.R. Smith is a world-leading academic at the Optoelectronics Research Centre and where he holds a chair in Electronics and Computer Science at the University of Southampton, UK. He graduated from St John's College, Oxford University with a BA in Physics in 1990 and D.Phil in Nonlinear Optics in 1993. After a year spent as a management consultant he joined the University

of Southampton. He became a Professor in 2005, and leads a research group working in Quantum Technologies, Nonlinear Optics, Lasers and has worked in a wide range of areas from laser spectroscopy to polymer integrated-optics. He has published over 450 journal and conference papers in the fields of periodically poled materials and UV written devices at major conferences, including invited talks at national and international meetings. He has 15 licensed patents and has raised over £25m in research funding.

In addition to his academic research Peter has been the founder of two spin-out companies from Southampton, with the most recent, Covesion Ltd, being heavily involved in the UK Quantum Technology Programme. He has been involved in Academic Leadership, serving in roles including Associate Dean, CEO of University of Southampton Malaysia, and as Associate Vice-President and Pro-Vice Chancellor International Projects. He has been a Member of both the University Senate and Council. In his International Role he has led Southampton's engagement with a number of University Networks, including World-Wide Universities Network, RENKEI (where he was UK Co-Chair) and is a fellow of GFCC, IET, IOP and Optica.

Peter is leading a new spin-out company from Southampton, Smith Optical, commercialising a radically new approach to augmented reality displays. The new technology solves the challenges with existing AR tech – offering daylight brightness, total transparency and a solution to the nausea issues that have hampered adoption of AR/XR/VR display technology.

### Amb. Barbara Stephenson

Vice Provost for Global Affairs and Chief Global Officer,  
University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill  
USA



Barbara Stephenson is vice provost for global affairs and chief global officer at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the nation's oldest public university established in 1789. She is a distinguished diplomat, former U.S. ambassador, international leader and prior dean of the Leadership and Management School at the Foreign Service Institute.

Stephenson was appointed UNC-Chapel Hill's inaugural vice provost for global affairs in 2019 and leads the University's global strategy in support of its core mission of teaching, research and service to the state of North Carolina and the country. Under her leadership, UNC-Chapel Hill has realized the Global Guarantee, the University's promise that a global education is available to every student; strengthened relations with strategic global partners; elevated UNC-Chapel Hill's global reputation; and brought the world to Carolina with increased global programming and cultural exchange.

As president of the American Foreign Service Association from 2015-2019, Stephenson was a principal advocate for diplomacy, working closely with Congress, the media and globally engaged strategic partners. A regular public speaker, she has appeared on CNN, BBC, Sky News, PBS, at numerous World Affairs Councils across the U.S., and as a signature speaker at the Chautauqua Institute.

In 2008, Stephenson was appointed U.S. Ambassador to Panama and later became the first woman to serve as deputy ambassador and acting ambassador at the U.S. Embassy in London, America's largest embassy in Europe. As advisor to Secretary of State Rice and deputy coordinator for Iraq (2006-2008), Stephenson was recognized with the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award. She served as American Consul General in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and in Curaçao, with other assignments in South Africa, the Netherlands, and El Salvador.

Stephenson is a member of the American Academy of Diplomacy and the American College of National Security Leaders. She also serves as vice chair of the board of the World Affairs Councils of America, on the advisory council of Global Ties U.S., and on the executive committee of the APLU's Commission on International Initiatives.

Stephenson holds a PhD in English literature from the University of Florida. She and her husband Matthew Furbush have two adult children.

### Prof. Aleks Subic

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Aston University  
UK



Professor Aleks Subic joined Aston University in August 2022 as Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive. Prior to this he was Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the College of Science, Engineering and Health, and Vice President for Digital Innovation at RMIT in Australia. He also held the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) at Swinburne University of Technology.

Professor Subic is a recognised global leader in technology and innovation in higher education, leading on Industry 4.0 strategy and digital transformations across the university sector and with industry and governments both in Australia and internationally. He has received a number of prestigious awards for his work, including the Australian Business Innovation Award and the Victorian Manufacturing Hall of Fame Award.

He is a passionate and lifelong advocate for multiculturalism, equity, diversity and inclusion, leading through clear actions and strategic initiatives at enterprise level. These include creating and appointing the first Dean of STEM Diversity & Inclusion in Australia, establishing Women in STEM Fellowships and mentoring scheme, Indigenous Research Fellowships, scholarships and internships programs, and creating an innovation precinct with start-up accelerators and industry incubators focused on founders from diverse backgrounds and access.

The Vice-Chancellor works with the executive and senior leadership teams, staff and students at Aston University to create and deliver an outstanding experience for over 20,000 students, and for thousands of SME's and corporate employers through mutual business and research interests.

### Dr. Rachel Swift

Vice-chair, Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness  
GM Strategy Innovation & Ventures, HCF  
Non-executive Director, Innovation & Enterprise Advisory Board  
Australia



Dr. Rachel Swift is an accomplished health strategist and executive with over 18 years of international experience across the healthcare industry. Her extensive background combines hands-on implementation and strategic advisory roles, including a decade at The Boston Consulting Group, where she focused on business strategy, healthcare innovation, and enhancing

patient outcomes.

Rachel currently serves on several boards, including the Innovation & Enterprise Advisory Board at the University of Melbourne's School of Medicine, Dentistry, and Health Sciences, where she contributes to the future of medical research and commercialisation health innovation. She also chairs the Finance Committee at GPEX, is on the boards of Akkadian and the Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness, where she serves as Vice-Chair.

Rachel's expertise spans key sectors such as health system management, public health, infectious diseases, digital health, and medical research. Her executive career has included leadership roles across private health insurance, private equity, and management consulting. She has a proven track record of driving transformative health initiatives and leading strategic change in complex environments.

Earlier in her career, Rachel directed a global health initiative in East Africa with the Clinton Health Access Initiative and served as an expert advisor to the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response in West Africa, where she helped shape the strategy and operations for epidemic control.

In addition to her executive and board roles, Rachel has held academic appointments at the Universities of Oxford and Adelaide. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Public Health and the Australasian College of Health Service Management, a Certified Health Executive, and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD).

### Dr. Haruko Takeyama

Professor, Waseda University  
Japan



Haruko Takeyama earned her Doctorate in Engineering from the Department of Biotechnology at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology in 1992. From 1991 to 1994, she served as a research fellow at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. She progressed through academic ranks at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and

Technology, serving as an Assistant Professor from 1994 to 1999, an Associate Professor from 1999 to 2005, and Professor from 2005 to 2007 in the Department of Biotechnology. In 2007, she was appointed to the position of Professor at Waseda University in the Faculty of Advanced Science and Engineering, Department of Life Science and Medical Bioscience (<http://www.takeyama-lab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/>). She has been the Director of the Integrated Institute for Regulatory Science at the Research Organization for Nano & Life Innovation at Waseda University since 2009. In July 2016, she was named Director of the AIST (National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology) and Waseda University Computational Bio Big-Data Open Innovation Laboratory, while also holding a joint appointment as a Joint

Appointed Fellow of AIST. Since 2020, she has served as a project manager for the Moonshot R&D Program in the fields of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. Since 2023, she has taken on the role of program officer for the Biotechnology Research field in the ASPIRE (Adopting Sustainable Partnerships for Innovative Research Ecosystem) program at the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).

Her research encompasses Environmental Science, Microbiology, Biotechnology, and Genome Technology, with current interests including the utilization of environmental bio/gene resources, metagenomic analysis, single-cell analysis, and the development of supporting technologies.

### James Tsiolis

CEO, Netlinkz  
Australia



James is an experienced investment management professional focused on delivering consistent returns for institutional investors, with an emphasis on identifying investment opportunities early in investment cycles. James has transformed investment processes for funds management companies and investment banks in a career that spans over 30 years. He is

Founder and Chairman of Strategic Capital Management Limited (SCM) which has advised institutional investors (in excess of \$36 billion). He is currently Executive Chairman and CEO at Netlinkz Limited: the creator of the Virtual Invisible Network, a globally patented, award-winning encrypted cybersecurity network that allows organisations to connect sites, devices, and staff over the internet through a network solution that is invisible when devices are connected.

Prior to this, James was head of research and investment director for Ipac Securities. This role saw him establish key relationships and co-investment with Macquarie Bank and Deutsche Bank. He has also been senior investment analyst with ASSIRT Investment and Technology Pty Limited. Here he was able to reengineer the investment manager rating process to change the emphasis of the rating review from qualitative to quantitative in turn shifting from customer experience to investment performance.

Earlier in his career James had roles with James Capel Australia Limited as Quantitative Analyst and Analyst with Perpetual Trustees. In both these roles he published various financial papers and conducted numerous client presentations.

James worked with Charles Kiefel on the Board of Military Super, during which time, Charles was Chairman.

### Prof. Jay Walsh

Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation,  
University of Illinois  
USA



Jay Walsh became the University of Illinois' Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation in May 2020. He is a professor of Bioengineering at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. Dr. Walsh oversees the Illinois Innovation Network, a collaboration among the state's 12 public universities that drives inclusive and integrated research, innovation, and economic

development across Illinois; he also serves on the executive committee of the Great Lakes Higher Education Consortium, a collaboration among 6 universities in the US and Canada that promotes academic excellence, innovation, research, and education to inclusively enhance the public good for all people and areas of the Great Lakes.

Dr. Walsh currently serves on the Board of Directors at MxD, the Board of Governors at Argonne National Laboratory, the Board of Directors for Current, and he chairs the Board of the Chicago Council on Science and Technology. Previously, Dr. Walsh was chair of the University Industry Demonstration Partnership (UIDP) Board and he served on the Board of Directors at Fermi National Laboratory, the Illinois Governor's Innovation Council, the Board of Visitors for Vanderbilt's Engineering School, the Naval Research Advisory Committee, and the U.S. Secretary of Navy Advisory Panel.

He was the Northwestern University Vice President for Research from 2007 to 2019. During his tenure, the University's external sponsored awards grew 91% from \$417M in 2007 to \$798M in 2019, one of the largest increases of any major research university in the US during that time period. Dr. Walsh joined Northwestern, in 1988. He was a Professor of Biomedical Engineering. In 1997, he was recognized as the Engineering School's Teacher of the Year, and in 2005, he was selected as the Advisor of the Year.

He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and his Ph.D. in medical engineering from a joint Harvard Medical School-MIT program.

### The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith

President, GFCC  
President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness  
USA



The Honorable Deborah L. Wince-Smith is the President & CEO of the Council on Competitiveness, a non-partisan leadership coalition of CEO's, University Presidents, Labor Union Leaders, and National Laboratory Directors, all committed to developing policy solutions and national initiatives to drive future productivity growth, prosperity for all Americans, and the global success

of American business. She has more than 20 years of experience as a senior U.S. government official, as the first Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy in the U.S. Department of Commerce in the Administration of President George H.W. Bush, and as the Assistant Director for International Affairs in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Reagan Administration. She served as a Senate-confirmed member of the Oversight Board of the Internal Revenue Service in the Administrations of President George W. Bush and President Barack H. Obama.

As a globally recognized leader and practitioner in competitiveness strategy, innovation policy, technology commercialization, and public-private partnerships, Ms. Wince-Smith has served and is a current member on numerous national and global advisory boards and committees, as a University Trustee, and as a director on public and private corporate boards.

She has served on the University of California's President Council for the National Laboratories, the Board of Governors of Argonne National Laboratory, the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation, the Smithsonian National Board, as a Trustee of Lehigh University, member of the Advisory Committee of the US Export-Import Bank, UNICEF, the Secretary of State's International Economic Policy Committee, as Chair of the Secretary of Commerce's Strengthening America's Communities Initiative (SACI), Chair of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Competitiveness, member of Malaysia's Global Science and Innovation Advisory Council (GSIAC), and as a Corporate Director of NASDAQ-OMX.

Currently, Ms. Wince-Smith serves as a Commissioner on the Council on Competitiveness National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers and the National Commission on the Theft of American Intellectual Property. She serves as a Council Member of the Japan Science and Technology in Society (STS) forum, and as a member of the Global Advisory Committees of the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and the Delphi Economic Forum (DEF). She is Vice-Chair of the Trustees of the American College of Greece (ACG), a member of the Board of Trustees

of the College Year in Athens, a member of the Strategic Research Advisory Board of the University of Oklahoma, and on the advisory committee of Queen's Management School, Queen's University Belfast. She serves as a director of private technology companies in medical lasers, cybersecurity, and bio-therapeutics, and on the Board of Trustees of the Hevolution Foundation U.S.

Born in Akron, Ohio, Ms. Wince-Smith graduated Valedictorian from Old Trail School. Ms. Wince-Smith graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Vassar College and earned a master's degree in Classical Archaeology from King's College, Cambridge University. She has received Honorary Doctorates from Michigan State University, the University of Toledo, the Queens University Belfast, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, University of South Carolina, and the European University of Tirana.

### Suzanne Wylie

CEO, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
NI



Suzanne Wylie is Chief Executive of NI Chamber, a leading membership organisation representing over 1,000 businesses in all sectors across the region.

She joined in 2023, having previously held significant leadership roles in public services for over 15 years including as Chief Executive to the Jersey Government and prior to that, as Chief Executive of Belfast City Council. During that time she was instrumental in securing the £1bn Belfast Region City Deal.

A strong advocate for business innovation, she is passionate about helping Northern Ireland's economy and the businesses within it to maximize their growth potential. As Chief Executive, she is deeply embedded in businesses issues, working closely with policy makers to establish the optimum conditions for economic growth and helping member companies to capitalise on unique opportunities and overcome various hurdles.

She is leading NI Chamber through a strategy of membership growth, as well as deepening its level of influence on policy makers.

Suzanne is a member of the Board of Choice Housing, a Council member of Dublin Chamber and sits on the HSC Transformation Advisory Board. She was awarded an OBE, received an honorary doctorate from Queen's University where she also completed her MBA, and is a Fellow of the Institute of Directors.

**Hirotaaka Yamada**

Director of the Paris Office, Japan Science and Technology Agency  
Japan



Yamada was appointed as director of the JST Paris office on October 1, 2022. Since then, he has been serving as the contact point in Europe for JST and for the Japanese science and technology community. The office provides support for the overseas extension of JST programs, collects and disseminates the latest information on science and technology in Europe, and engages in other such activities that advance Japanese science and technology as well as strengthen its presence.

He started his career in a system integrator company in Japan, in 1994. After he joined JST in 2007, he engaged in the management of industrial-academic collaboration programs, business strategy planning, and JST's overall budget control. He also supported the Science and Technology in Society forum (STS forum), which holds an annual international conference in Kyoto, Japan, as a chief program officer from 2014 to 2015.

In December 2015, he was seconded to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as a director for international cooperation at the International Science and Technology Affairs Division. Until March 2018, he was involved in promoting international science and technology cooperation through such activities as attending bilateral joint-committee meetings and coordinating Memorandums of Cooperation (MOC) between MEXT and several partner countries.

He moved back to JST in April, 2018 and then engaged in STI for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) promotion. His work included setting JST's STI for SDGs policy, holding internal training on SDGs, organizing multi-stakeholder networks for SDGs, and advising co-workers in R&D funding programs or other activities from an SDGs perspective.

He holds an MSc in Science and Technology Policy from the University of Sussex.

**Prof. Akinori Yamanaka**

Director, West Tokyo International Innovation Co-Creation Hub  
Japan



Akinori Yamanaka studied B.Eng. (2005) and M.Eng. (2006) in mechanical engineering and did PhD (2008) under the supervision of Prof. Yoshihiro Tomita in the field of computational solid mechanics, with particular emphasis on the phase-field modelling of phase transformation in steels, from Kobe University (Japan). During the PhD, he was awarded a very competitive grant from the

Japan Society for Promotion of Science. After his PhD, he was appointed as an assistant professor in the Department of Mechano-Aerospace Engineering at the Tokyo Institute of Technology. In 2012, he joined the Department of Mechanical Systems Engineering at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology as an associate professor. In 2015, he was a visiting scholar at Northwestern University (host: Prof. P. W. Voorhees). From 2017 to 2019, he was a visiting researcher at the National Institute of Materials Science (Tsukuba, Japan). In April 2021, he was promoted to a full professor and engaged in research and education in the Department of Mechanical Systems Engineering at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology.

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### Australia

Australian Advisory Board on Competitiveness

### Brazil

Brazilian National Confederation of Industries (CNI)

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Pacific Economic Development Canada—PacifiCan

### Greece

Council on Competitiveness of Greece—CompeteGR

Delphi Economic Forum

### Japan

Japan Science and Technology Agency

Tsukuba Global Innovation Promotion Agency (TGI)

### Kazakhstan

The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Kazakhstan—Atameken

Kazakhstan Growth Forum

### Malaysia

Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT)

### Oman

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### Romania

New Strategy Center

### South Africa

Africa Development Futures Group

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### Zimbabwe

National Competitiveness Commission

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## About the GFCC

The GFCC is a global multi-stakeholder membership organization founded in 2010 with a footprint spanning more than 35 nations. The GFCC is committed to disseminating best practices to accelerate productivity, growth, and prosperity for countries, regions, and cities. We do that through high-level networking and events, in-depth conversations, analytical tools, advice, and education.

GFCC members include private sector councils on competitiveness and industry organizations, government agencies, global corporations, and leading research universities. All members pay membership dues yearly to secure their placement in the network. Currently, the GFCC hosts 52 members from 23 countries.

Besides its members, the GFCC network also includes experts invited to participate as fellows. Members and fellows have different roles. Fellows contribute by sharing their specialized knowledge and expertise with the community and participating in project development and strategies. Currently, the GFCC hosts 66 fellows from 24 countries.

Learn more about the GFCC at: [www.thegfcc.org](http://www.thegfcc.org)

### Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils (GFCC)

900 17th Street NW, Suite 700  
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