

Character, culture, and leadership in UK business

University of Oxford

Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd June 2023

Values and purpose have become an important emphasis in business as companies have sought to build back from the COVID pandemic in the context of major social, economic, and environmental challenges. Many firms are seeking to be authentically purpose-driven, and there is a strong business case. What kind of leadership is needed to embed values and purpose in business? What is the role of personal character and how does it relate to structures, systems, and organisational culture? Over the last two years the Oxford Character Project has been undertaking a major research project investigating the role of character, culture, and leadership in UK business. More than 50 businesses have been involved as research partners, and there are opportunities for others to join us as we move forward. The conference will draw together industry leaders from across sectors, academics, and graduate students who are the leaders of tomorrow to make new connections and exchange perspectives and research findings. The event is part of an ongoing initiative to bring research and practice together to explore and advance character-based and purpose-driven leadership in UK business.

Thursday 22nd June

09:30-10:00 Registration and coffee

10:00-10:30 Introduction

[Edward Brooks](#) (Oxford Character Project, University of Oxford)

[Adam Grodecki](#) (Forward Institute)

10:30-11:30 Plenary 1: Character and organisational culture

Presentation: [Marta Rocchi](#) (Dublin City University)

Panel: [Doyin Atewologun](#) (Delta Alpha Psi), [Sarah Gillard](#) (Blueprint for Better Business), Marta Rocchi (Dublin City University), [David Rouch](#) (Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer)

11:30-12:00 Coffee

12:00-13:00 Breakout 1

A. Character and purpose

[Charles Wookey](#)

B. Character and global leadership: research findings from a study of character and leadership in low- and middle-income countries

[Luna Wang](#) (Oxford Character Project, University of Oxford)

C. Arts of Leading

[Pegram Harrison](#) (Saïd Business School, University of Oxford)

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:15 Plenary 2: What does good leadership look like?

Presentation: [Rebecca Park](#) (Oxford Character Project, University of Oxford)

Panel: [Kate Adams](#) (Forward Institute), [Susie Babar](#) (Simmons and Simmons), [Kim McMurdo](#) (Standard Chartered Bank), Rebecca Park (Oxford Character Project)

15:15-15:45 Coffee

15:45-17:00 **Breakout 2**

A. TBD

B. Leader character and the importance of balance

[Corey Crossan](#) (Oxford Character Project, University of Oxford)

C. Next generation leadership

[Anjali Sarker](#) (Oxford Character Project, University of Oxford)

19:00-21:00 Guest speaker: [Alison Cottrell](#) (Financial Services Culture Board)

Friday 23rd June

09:00-09:30 Coffee

09:30-10:45 **Plenary 3: Values and virtues**

Presentation: [Amalia Amaya](#) (University of Edinburgh)

Panel: Amalia Amaya (University of Edinburgh), [Uzma Hamid-Dizier](#) (Slaughter and May), [Rebecca Robins](#) (Interbrand)

10:45-11:15 Coffee

11:15-12:15 **Breakout 3**

A. Kindness in leadership

[Paolo Cervini](#) and [Elisa Farri](#) (Capgemini)

B. Values for a Life Economy

[Kim Polman](#), [Anthony Bennett](#) (Reboot the Future)

C. Inner Mastery, Outer Impact

[Hitendra Wadhwa](#) (Mentora Institute)

12:15-13:15 Lunch

13:15-14:30 **Plenary 4: 7 strategies to develop character-based leadership**

Presentation: [Michael Lamb](#) (Wake Forest University)

Panel: [Glyn Owen](#) (Royal Navy), [Zoe McDougall](#) (Oxford Nanopore), Michael Lamb (Wake Forest University)

14:30-15:00 Coffee

15:00-16:00 **The Future of Business Leadership**

Presentation: Edward Brooks (Oxford Character Project)

Panel: [Susannah Anfield](#) (PWC), Hitendra Wadhwa (Mentora Institute), Adam Grodecki (Forward Institute)