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# The Great Stagnation

SUMMIT 2023

Thursday 13 – Friday 14 July 2023

Churchill College and the Møller Institute,  
University of Cambridge

In partnership with  
The Bennett Institute for Public Policy



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# FOREWORD

In 2011, economist Tyler Cowen argued in his bestselling book, *The Great Stagnation: How America Ate All the Low-Hanging Fruit of Modern History, Got Sick, and Will (Eventually) Feel Better*, that economic growth and technological innovation had slowed in the United States, and that Americans might need to wait twenty years to see a rise in real incomes and living standards.

Over a decade later, Cowen thinks the US may be turning a corner, in time to fulfil his original prediction. With the advent of new technologies and promising economic growth, it looks like the Great Stagnation may finally be coming to an end in the US.

To what extent could Britain follow the same pattern? Economic growth and real-terms income have been anaemic since the 2008 financial crisis, whilst average productivity levels compared to other developed nations have been low since the 1970s. Today we are the only G7 country whose economy is still below pre-pandemic levels. Meanwhile, the fundamentals for a decent life are getting more expensive. Since 2008, house prices and childcare costs have risen by around 50 per cent. Despite a higher overall tax burden, most of our public services are stretched and struggling to deliver. Recent economic shocks and inflation are compounding rising inequality and demoralisation.

Yet, whilst Britain is failing on these basic measures, certain parts of the economy hold extreme promise. We are home to some of the most impressive young companies in the world, including DeepMind, one of the world's leading AI labs, and Vaccitech, the start-up behind one of the Covid-19 vaccines that is pioneering mRNA technology. Britain is the top European destination for start-up funding, and a global hub for finance, life sciences, creative industries and climate tech. For all its challenges, a tighter labour market has driven more automation across a range of industries. Is national decline inevitable, or with the right policies and decisions, could we bring our Great Stagnation to an end?

The aim of the summit is to bring together people who are motivated to think about progress in Britain and the world today and want to put their ideas into practice. Over the next two days, you will mix with attendees from business, academia, policy, politics, media and tech, and from different parts of the political spectrum. In the sessions, we will be interrogating the underlying causes of Britain's malaise and asking how we can navigate our economic, social, institutional, and political situation to solve it.

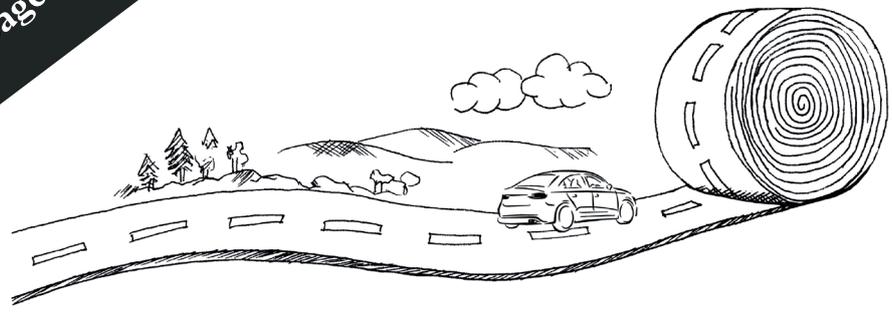
We hope you will enjoy the conversations and find them fruitful.

**Munira Mirza**, Chief Executive, Civic Future

**Nico Macdonald**, co-convenor, The Great Stagnation Summit

**Aria Babu**, co-convenor, The Great Stagnation Summit

Full schedule can be found on the back page



## Session 1: Progress: have we run out of road or can we build new highways?

Thurs 13 July, 18:00-19:30

Over the past three centuries, humankind has experienced remarkable progress – notably in science and technology – resulting in billions being lifted out of poverty. However, today, the long march of scientific evolution seems to have paused, while productivity, wages and standards of living are either static or in decline in many advanced economies. Even before Covid and the war in Ukraine, the UK economy was stagnating. This is despite attempts by successive governments to boost growth and turn the tide.

Have we used up the major benefits of the last few centuries' scientific research and development? Is there a cap on economic growth that we're now bumping up against? Are we experiencing Western ennui? Or should we be optimistic about emerging technologies and the ability of governments and markets to shape the future?

Keynote: **Tyler Cowen**, Professor of Economics, George Mason University

Respondents: **Sam Bowman**, Founder and Editor of *Works in Progress* at Stripe  
**Professor David Edgerton**, Hans Rausing Professor of the History of Science and Technology and Professor of Modern British History, King's College London

Chair: **Professor Diane Coyle CBE**, Bennett Professor of Public Policy and co-Director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge

### NOTES

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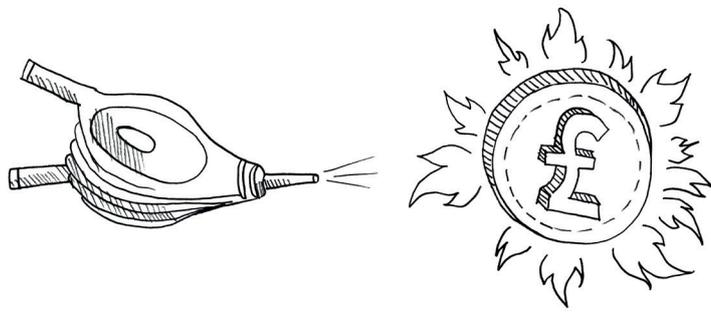
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## Session 2: Rekindling Britain's economic flame: lessons from the past, strategies for the future

Fri 14 July, 09:00-10:30

Britain's economic journey is a tale of repeated transformation. From its sloughing off feudalism with the Reformation, Civil War and Glorious Revolution, to the 18th-century fomenting of the Industrial Revolution, Britain emerged as the world's first capitalist and industrial nation. However, today many fear that Britain is in a period of slow decline.

How should we understand the circumstances and developments which initially brought about Britain's growth? Which advantages does Britain retain, and what can be built on to reinvigorate the economy?

Speakers: **Andy Haldane**, Chief Executive of the Royal Society of Arts

**Anton Howes**, Head of Innovation Research, The Entrepreneurs Network; author

**Professor Deirdre McCloskey**, author; Distinguished Professor Emerita of Economics and of History, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Lord Sainsbury of Turville** (opening), author; former member of the House of Lords; Chancellor of the University of Cambridge; former Minister of Science and Innovation; former chairman, J. Sainsbury plc

Chair: **Professor Tim Besley**, Professor of Development Economics, London School of Economics and Political Science

### NOTES

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## Session 3: Progress on trial: reinvigorating faith in growth amid modern challenges

Fri 14 July, 10:45-12:15

While resistance to progress is not new, present-day challenges to advancement appear increasingly complex and multifaceted – and some argued in bad faith. From balancing environmental conservation with housing needs, and debating the benchmarks of national success to questions about vested interests – and the so-called ‘blob’ – today, progress faces many questions.

Why has progress lost its allure? In an age of short-termism, how can we advocate for long-term investments in ideas, infrastructure and industries for future prosperity? Has a culture of caution and risk aversion stymied progress? What roles do taxation, regulation, and investment play in creating or dismantling barriers to growth? And crucially, what are the obstacles to translating these ideas for reform into action?

Speakers: **Aria Babu**, co-convenor; Policy Fellow, Coadec

**Nicholas Boys Smith**, chair of the Office for Place; founder and director of Create Streets

**Matt Ridley**, author; former House of Lords science and technology select committee member

**Sam Richards**, CEO, Britain Remade

Chair: **Inaya Folarin Iman**, Head of Events and Engagement, Civic Future

### NOTES

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# Unconference and Lightning Talks

On the Friday, from 13:30–15:30, we will host a two-hour ‘unconference’.

An unconference is a participant-driven gathering where the agenda is created by the attendees. Instead of having a structured programme, the unconference will be made up of informal, discussion-led sessions, where anyone can propose to deliver a section of the agenda. Sessions will be between 30–45 minutes long.

This section of the summit will also include the opportunity to deliver a ‘lightning talk’ which is a very short presentation lasting only a few minutes.

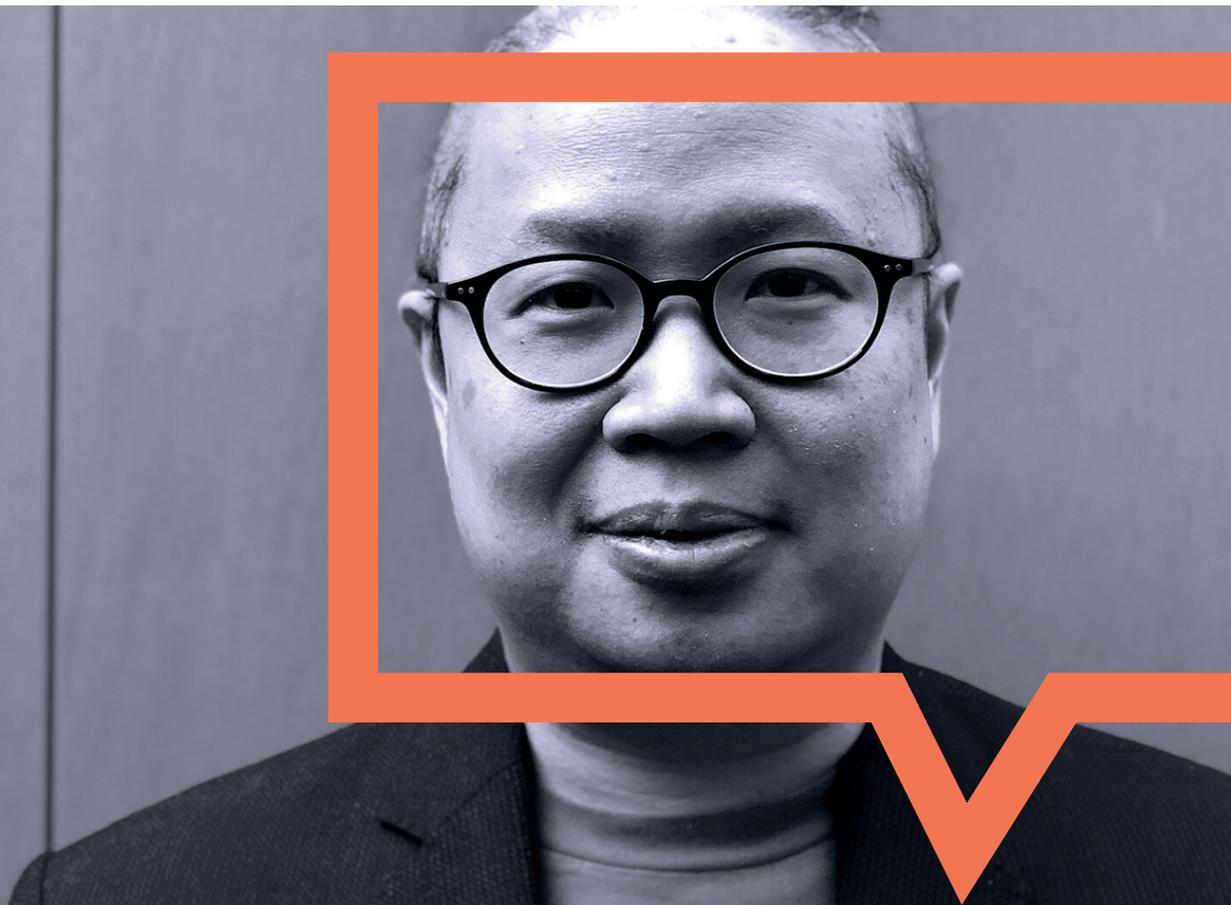
Ask yourself, what do you wish was on the schedule? If we had invited you to speak, what would you have presented on? We’re expecting unconference sessions on themes such as *How do we get energy that’s too cheap to meter?*, *Pronatalism*, *Free market economics vs industrial strategy* – as well as a lot of ideas we have never even heard of.

There are three spaces where the unconference sessions will be held in the Møller Institute: Suite 2, Suite 3 and on the patio, which totals roughly 12 slots, 30–45 minutes long, including Q&A.

We have brought together delegates on the basis of their high level of expertise or knowledge. All delegates are therefore more than welcome to propose and lead a session or deliver a lightning talk at the unconference – and are encouraged to.

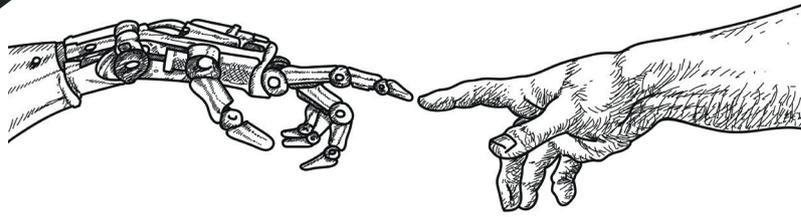
If you want to take part in the unconference, please fill in your name and the proposed session on the sheet at the conference registration desk or contact us in advance at: **[conference@civicfuture.org](mailto:conference@civicfuture.org)**

Facilitators: Ben Yeoh, Angel Investor **[@benyeohben](#)**









## Session 5: Unlocking the potential: harnessing technologies for a prosperous future

Fri 14 July, 17:15-18:15

In the grip of the digital revolution, artificial intelligence, embodied by tools like ChatGPT, has surged into the public discourse, sparking vigorous debates. How should we approach the possibilities and risks of artificial intelligence? How can we best build on these innovations to enhance the UK's research, industrial, economic and employment base? How do we ensure this improves the quality of life for citizens in the UK and beyond?

Speakers: **Matt Clifford**, Chair of ARIA; co-founder, Entrepreneur First  
**Logan Graham**, Technical staff, Anthropic; former Special Adviser to the Prime Minister  
**Saffron Huang**, Co-Director, Collective Intelligence Project  
**Marc Warner**, CEO, Faculty AI

Chair: **John Thornhill**, Innovation Editor, *Financial Times*

### NOTES

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Chair: Rekindling Britain's economic flame: lessons from the past, strategies for the future, *Friday, 09:00-10:30*

# SPEAKERS

## Professor Tim Besley

Tim Besley is School Professor of Economics and Political Science and W. Arthur Lewis Professor of Development Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). From September 2006 to August 2009, he served as an external member of the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee and since 2015 has been a member of the UK's National Infrastructure Commission. He has served as President of the International Economic Association, European Economic Association, Econometric Society and Royal Economic Society. He was a joint recipient of the 2022 FBBVA Frontiers of Knowledge award in Economics, Finance and Management for his work in political economy and was knighted in 2018 for services to economics and public policy.

[www.lse.ac.uk](http://www.lse.ac.uk)



## Sam Bowman

Sam Bowman is founder and editor of *Works in Progress*, an online magazine focused on scientific, technological and economic progress. He is on the Board of Directors of the Mercatus Center, and has previously been Executive Director of the Adam Smith Institute and Director of Competition Policy at the International Center for Law and Economics.

 [@s8mb](https://twitter.com/s8mb)

[www.sambowman.co/about](http://www.sambowman.co/about)

Respondent: Progress: have we run out of road or can we build new highways?, *Thursday, 18:00-19:30*



Speaker: Progress on trial: reinvigorating faith in growth amid modern challenges, *Friday, 10:45-12:15*

## Nicholas Boys Smith

Nicholas Boys Smith is the founding Director of Create Streets, of the associated charity, the Create Streets Foundation, and an influential writer on the design and history of our towns and cities. He was co-chair alongside the late Sir Roger Scruton of the influential Building Better Building Beautiful Commission (described as “seminal” by the then Secretary of State for Housing) and is chair of the Advisory Committee of the Government’s new Office for Place. Between 2016 and 2022 Nicholas was a Commissioner of Historic England. His books include *No Free Parking, Heart in the Right Street, Beyond Location and Of Streets and Squares*.

 [@boys\\_nicholas](https://twitter.com/boys_nicholas)

[www.createstreets.com](http://www.createstreets.com)



## Matt Clifford MBE

Matt Clifford MBE is cofounder and CEO of Entrepreneur First, the leading technology company builder in Europe, South East Asia and Canada. Entrepreneur First invests in top technical individuals to help them build world-class deep technology startups from scratch in six locations across Europe, Asia and Canada. Since 2011, Entrepreneur First has created over 500 startups worth over \$10bn including Magic Pony Technology, Tractable and CloudNC.

Matt is also the Chair of ARIA, the UK’s Advanced Research and Invention Agency. Matt also sits on the board of Code First Girls, which he co-founded in 2013.

Matt started his career at McKinsey & Co. and holds degrees from Cambridge and MIT, where he was a Kennedy Scholar. He was awarded an MBE for services to business in the 2016 Queen’s Birthday Honours.

 [@matthewclifford](https://twitter.com/matthewclifford)

[www.matthewclifford.com](http://www.matthewclifford.com)



Speaker: Unlocking the potential: harnessing technologies for a prosperous future, *Friday, 17:15-18:15*

Speaker: Progress: have we run out of road or can we build new highways?, Thursday, 18:00–19:30

## Professor Tyler Cowen

Tyler Cowen is Holbert L. Harris Professor of Economics at George Mason University and also Director of the Mercatus Center. He received his PhD in economics from Harvard University in 1987. His book *The Great Stagnation: How America Ate the Low-Hanging Fruit of Modern History, Got Sick, and Will (Eventually) Feel Better* was a *New York Times* best-seller. He was recently named in an *Economist* poll as one of the most influential economists of the last decade.

He co-writes a blog at [marginalrevolution.com](http://marginalrevolution.com), hosts a podcast *Conversations with Tyler*, and is co-founder of an online economics education project, [MRU.org](http://MRU.org). His latest book is *Talent*, co-authored with venture capitalist Daniel Gross.

 [@tylercowen](https://twitter.com/tylercowen)

[marginalrevolution.com](http://marginalrevolution.com)



Chair: Progress: have we run out of road or can we build new highways?, Thursday, 18:00–19:30

## Professor Diane Coyle CBE

Professor Diane Coyle is the Bennett Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge. Diane co-directs the Bennett Institute where she heads research under the themes of progress and productivity. Her latest book is *Cogs and Monsters: What Economics Is, and What It Should Be* on how economics needs to change to keep pace with the twenty-first century and the digital economy.

Diane is also a Director of the Productivity Institute, a Fellow of the Office for National Statistics, an expert adviser to the National Infrastructure Commission, and Senior Independent Member of the ESRC Council. She has served in public service roles including as Vice Chair of the BBC Trust, member of the Competition Commission, of the Migration Advisory Committee and of the Natural Capital Committee. Diane was Professor of Economics at the University of Manchester until March 2018 and was awarded a CBE for her contribution to the public understanding of economics in the 2018 New Year Honours.

 [@dianecoyle1859](https://twitter.com/dianecoyle1859)

[www.bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk](http://www.bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk)



## Professor David Edgerton

Respondent: Progress: have we run out of road or can we build new highways?, *Thursday, 18:00–19:30*

Professor David Edgerton graduated from St John's in Chemistry and from Imperial College London in History. From 1984 he taught first the economics, and then the history of science and technology in the University of Manchester. In 1993 he became the founding director of the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine at Imperial College London (1993–2003) where he became Hans Rausing Professor of the History of Science and Technology in 2002. He led the Centre to its new home in King's College in 2013, where he is Hans Rausing Professor of the History of Science and Technology and Professor of Modern British History. He also co-directed the Sir Michael Howard Centre for the History of War.

Professor Edgerton has written several books and is a regular contributor to the press, especially *the Guardian* and *the New Statesman*, mainly on current politics. He is a Fellow of the British Academy.

 [@dehedgerton](https://twitter.com/dehedgerton)

[www.davidedgerton.org](http://www.davidedgerton.org)



## Logan Graham

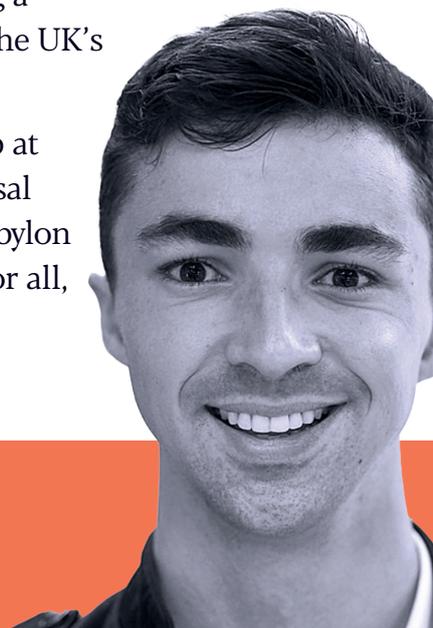
Logan Graham is on the Technical Staff at the San Francisco-based AI safety and research public benefit corporation Anthropic. Until recently he was a Special Adviser to the Prime Minister, working on science and technology; the benefits of AI, particularly preventing extreme risks; and Britain becoming a 'Science Superpower'. He was also involved in setting up "a new ARPA" – the UK's Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA).

Before that he completed a PhD at the Machine Learning Research Group at the University of Oxford, as a Rhodes Scholar. He went on to research causal and interpretable machine learning at X, Google's 'moonshot lab', and Babylon Health. His guiding vision is a high-growth, sustainable, equitable world for all, and he would "really like to automate science and the economy".

 [@logangraham](https://twitter.com/logangraham)

[logangraham.xyz](http://logangraham.xyz)

Speaker: Unlocking the potential: harnessing technologies for a prosperous future, *Friday, 17:15-18:15*



Speaker: Rekindling Britain's economic flame:  
lessons from the past, strategies for the future, *Friday, 09:00-10:30*

## Andy Haldane

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. Among other positions, he is Honorary Professor at the Universities of Nottingham, Manchester and Exeter, Visiting Professor at King's College, London, a Visiting Fellow at Nuffield College, Oxford and a Fellow of the Royal Society and the Academy of Social Sciences. 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 was the Permanent Secretary for Levelling Up at the Cabinet Office from September 2021 to March 2022 and chairs the Government's Levelling Up Advisory Council. He has authored around 200 articles and 4 books.

[www.thersa.org](http://www.thersa.org)



Speaker: Unlocking the potential: harnessing  
technologies for a prosperous future, *Friday, 17:15-18:15*

## Saffron Huang

Saffron Huang is a technologist, researcher, and writer. She is the co-director of the Collective Intelligence Project, a research and policy organisation that seeks to improve and leverage humanity's collective intelligence to better govern and benefit from transformative technologies such as artificial intelligence.

She also co-founded Kernel Magazine, a print publication that examines technology's role in shaping our collective future. She was previously an engineer at DeepMind, where she investigated and engineered large language models, as well as conceptual reasoning, ethics, and safety in machine learning.

She holds a degree in Applied Mathematics and Computer Science, with minors in Government and German, from Harvard University.

 [@saffronhuang](https://twitter.com/saffronhuang)

[saffronhuang.com](http://saffronhuang.com)



Speaker: Rekindling Britain's economic flame:  
lessons from the past, strategies for the future, *Friday, 09:00-10:30*

## Anton Howes

Dr Anton Howes is a historian of invention. He is currently writing a book on the causes of the British Industrial Revolution, and is official historian for the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, as well as head of innovation research for The Entrepreneurs Network. He is a visiting fellow at King's College London, where he was previously lecturer in Economic History. He regularly shares his research on the history of invention at his online newsletter 'Age of Invention'.

 @antonhowes

[www.ageofinvention.xyz](http://www.ageofinvention.xyz)



## Professor Deirdre McCloskey

 @DeirdreMcClosk

[www.deirdremccloskey.com](http://www.deirdremccloskey.com)

Deirdre Nansen McCloskey holds the Isaiah Berlin Chair in Liberal Thought at the Cato Institute, Washington, and is Emerita Professor of Economics, History, English, and Communication at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She has written two dozen books, the latest forthcoming from the University of Chicago Press, *The True and Godly Liberal: Public Theology for an Age of Innovism*. She has published some four hundred scholarly and two hundred or so journalistic pieces in economic theory, economic history, rhetorical theory, philosophy of science, literary criticism, gender studies, theology, ethics, legal and political theory, and statistical theory and practice. From 1968–1980, she taught in economics and history at the University of Chicago, and has taught and visited widely, as at Erasmus University of Rotterdam and the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. A fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, she holds eleven honorary doctorates.



Speaker: Rekindling Britain's economic flame: lessons from  
the past, strategies for the future, *Friday, 09:00-10:30*



Chair: Charting paths to prosperity: how to be good stewards of progress, *Friday, 15:30-17:00*

## Munira Mirza

CEO Munira Mirza was the Director of the No 10 Policy Unit between 2019-2022, and served previously as Deputy Mayor for London. She studied at Oxford University, earned a PhD at the University of Kent, and has worked for 20 years in senior positions in government, academia, business and the cultural sectors. She has appeared in a wide range of media and published widely, including *The Politics of Culture: The Case for Universalism* (2011). She has served on the boards of the Royal Opera House, Institute of Contemporary Arts, Royal College of Music and the West London Children's Zone.

[civicfuture.org](http://civicfuture.org)



Speaker: Charting paths to prosperity: how to be good stewards of progress, *Friday, 15:30-17:00*

## James Phillips

James Phillips is a former special adviser to the Prime Minister for Science and Technology and worked on projects including developing rapid Covid-19 testing and creating the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA). Prior to working in government, he was a systems neuroscientist, having been awarded the Undergraduate Prize by the UK Physiological Society, and receiving the British Neuroscience Association's graduate thesis of the year of award for his PhD. He is also a Honorary Senior Research Fellow at University College London. His Twitter tagline is 'Trying to prepare for artificial general intelligence'.

 [@anemergenti](https://twitter.com/anemergenti)

[jameswphillips.substack.com](http://jameswphillips.substack.com)

Speaker: Charting paths to prosperity: how to be good stewards of progress, *Friday, 15:30-17:00*

## Benjamin Reinhardt

Ben is the CEO of Speculative Technologies, a research organisation that runs coordinated research programs to unlock big-if-true materials and manufacturing technologies that don't have a home in other institutions. He's written widely on research institutions including a piece on How DARPA Works and creating a private ARPA. He started Spectech after working at a number of institutions in the "innovation ecosystem": an augmented reality startup, VC firms, NASA, trying (and failing) to start a robotics company, and a PhD in space robotics creating (very weak) tractor beams.



@ben\_reinhardt

benjaminreinhardt.com



## Matt Ridley

Matt Ridley's books have sold over a million copies, been translated into 31 languages and won several awards. His books include *The Red Queen*, *Genome*, *The Rational Optimist* and *The Evolution of Everything*. His book on *How Innovation Works* was published in 2020, and *Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19*, co-authored with Alina Chan, was published in 2021.

He sat in the House of Lords between 2013 and 2021 and served on the science and technology select committee and the artificial intelligence select committee. He was founding chairman of the International Centre for Life in Newcastle. He created the Mind and Matter column in the *Wall Street Journal* in 2010, and was a columnist for *The Times* from 2013–2018. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and of the Academy of Medical Sciences, and a foreign honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.



@mattwridley

www.mattridley.co.uk



Speaker: Progress on trial: reinvigorating faith in growth amid modern challenges, *Friday, 10:45-12:15*

Speaker: Rekindling Britain's economic flame:  
lessons from the past, strategies for the future, *Friday, 09:00-10:30*

## Lord Sainsbury of Turville

David Sainsbury read History and Psychology at King's College, Cambridge and received an MBA from the Columbia Graduate School of Business in New York. He was Finance Director of J. Sainsbury plc from 1973–1990 and Chairman from 1992–1998. David Sainsbury became Lord Sainsbury of Turville in October, 1997, and was appointed Minister of Science and Innovation from July 1998 until November 2006. He is the founder of the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, and founded and chairs the Institute for Government.

In 2007 he produced a review of the Government's science and innovation policies, "The Race To The Top" and in May 2013 published *Progressive Capitalism: How to Achieve Economic Growth, Liberty and Social Justice*. His second book, *Windows of Opportunity: How Nations Create Wealth* was published in February 2020.

He was elected Chancellor of the University of Cambridge in October 2011.

[www.davidsainsbury.org.uk](http://www.davidsainsbury.org.uk)



Speaker: Progress on trial: reinvigorating faith in growth  
amid modern challenges, *Friday, 10:45-12:15*

## Sam Richards

Sam Richards is the CEO of Britain Remade, a new campaign to promote economic growth. Richards was formerly a special advisor at No.10 Downing Street where he worked on energy and the environment. He is a passionate advocate for clean growth across the UK.

 [@samrichardswebb](https://twitter.com/samrichardswebb)

[britainremade.co.uk](http://britainremade.co.uk)



## John Thornhill

John Thornhill is innovation editor at the *Financial Times* where he writes an award-winning column about technology, hosts the Tech Tonic podcast and runs the FT's Future Forum. He is also the founder of Sifted, an FT-backed site for Europe's startup world. He was previously the FT's deputy editor and news editor. John has written widely about the impact of technology and how it affects our societies, economies and lives.

 @johnthornhillft [ft.com](https://www.ft.com)



## Marc Warner

Dr Marc Warner is the co-founder and CEO of Faculty. He founded Faculty in the belief that we need a safe, human-first path to deploying AI in the real world. We now call this decision intelligence; helping people to use AI to make better decisions. Previously, he was a Marie Curie Fellow in Physics at Harvard University, specialising in quantum sensing. His work has been published in high impact journals, including *Nature*, and covered in many major media outlets, including radio, television and newspapers both sides of the Atlantic. Marc frequently advises the UK government on digital, data and artificial intelligence as a member of the AI Council.

 @MarcWarner10

[faculty.ai](https://faculty.ai)



Speaker: Unlocking the potential: harnessing technologies for a prosperous future, *Friday, 17:15-18:15*

Speaker: Charting paths to prosperity: how to be good stewards of progress, *Friday, 15:30-17:00*

## Stian Westlake

Stian Westlake joined the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in June 2023 as Executive Chair. Before joining ESRC, Stian was Chief Executive of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) and is former Executive Director of Policy and Research at Nesta. Stian's research interests include the economics and politics of innovation, research and technology. He is co-author of *Restarting the Future: How to Fix the Intangible Economy and Capitalism Without Capital: The Rise of the Intangible Economy*. He is a regular commentator on science and innovation policy and has served as adviser to three UK science ministers.

 [@stianwestlake](https://twitter.com/stianwestlake)

[www.ukri.org](http://www.ukri.org)



Speaker: Charting paths to prosperity: how to be good stewards of progress, *Friday, 15:30-17:00*

## Rachel Wolf

Rachel Wolf is a Founding Partner at Public First, leading the agency's policy work. Rachel co-authored the Conservative Party's Election Manifesto in 2019 and was David Cameron's education and innovation adviser when he was Prime Minister. She founded and ran the New Schools Network – the charity which helped develop and implement the Government's free schools programme.

She was also the Senior Vice President for technology company Amplify in New York City, running one of their main product divisions.

Rachel has written for national think tanks and most major broadsheets and she has appeared on all the major broadcast shows. Rachel began her career as an education and political adviser to the Conservative Party and was a policy adviser to Boris Johnson on his first mayoral campaign and in his earlier role as Shadow Higher Education Minister.

 [@racheljanewolf](https://twitter.com/racheljanewolf)

[www.publicfirst.co.uk](http://www.publicfirst.co.uk)



# CONVENORS

## Nico Macdonald

Nico Macdonald teaches Entrepreneurship and Innovation on the University of California Education Abroad Program and is an External Examiner at University of the Arts London. He is co-author and convenor of BIG POTATOES: The London Manifesto for Innovation and was Chief Executive of The Research & Development Society. He co-programmed the Story of London Festival 'Future City' debates for the Mayor of London's Office and chaired the Mayor's London 2012 Global Futures debate series on Technology. Early in his career he was instrumental in the disruption of the publishing and design industries, building on digital technologies to facilitate more progress than they had delivered in a half-millennium. He writes at [www.spy.co.uk](http://www.spy.co.uk)



 @Nico\_Macdonald

Speaker: Progress on trial: reinvigorating faith in growth amid modern challenges, *Friday, 10:45-12:15*

## Aria Babu

Aria Babu is a policy fellow at The Startup Coalition and Policy Exchange, working on science, technology, and AI policy. Prior to these roles, Aria was Head of Policy at The Entrepreneurs Network. There she worked on a range of issues, including procurement, housing, and female entrepreneurship. Outside of work, Aria built a political compass quiz at [thetakemachine.co.uk](http://thetakemachine.co.uk). She's also interested in transhumanist feminism and has written on pronatalism, artificial wombs, and longevity.

 @Aria\_Babu



# MORE ABOUT CIVIC FUTURE

Civic Future supports highly talented young leaders to improve public life.

We have a one-year flagship Fellowship programme which equips participants with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to become great public leaders. We help them to understand the moral, technological, and governance challenges of our time, build excellent organisations, and transform public life for the better.

We are non-party political, not-for-profit, and grounded in the ideas and values that underpin liberal democracy.

[civicfuture.org](http://civicfuture.org)

## THANK YOU

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Absolute AV [absoluteavs.co.uk](http://absoluteavs.co.uk)

All of the team at Churchill College

All of the team at the Møller Institute

Our advisors: Sam Bowman [@s8mb](https://twitter.com/s8mb)

Professor Tyler Cowen [@tylercowen](https://twitter.com/tylercowen)

Professor Diane Coyle [@DianeCoyle1859](https://twitter.com/DianeCoyle1859)

Saffron Huang [@saffronhuang](https://twitter.com/saffronhuang)

James Phillips [@anemergenti](https://twitter.com/anemergenti)

Paul Reeves [@paulreevesagain](https://twitter.com/paulreevesagain)

Stian Westlake [@stianwestlake](https://twitter.com/stianwestlake)

Ben Yeoh [@benyeohben](https://twitter.com/benyeohben)

Online design, development and illustration:  
Genium [geniumcreative.com](http://geniumcreative.com)

Brochure Graphic Design: **Izzi Jones**  
Instagram: [@izzidizzine](https://www.instagram.com/izzidizzine)

Photographer **Stuart Mitchell**  
Instagram: [@Inc\\_monocle](https://www.instagram.com/Inc_monocle)

**Inaya Folarin Iman**, Senior Consultant,  
Events and Engagement, Civic Future

**Julia Sandiford**, Executive Assistant, Civic Future

**Diana Varley**, Head of Operations, Civic Future

Volunteer team: **Alexander Albrecht**,  
**Rushabh Haria**, **Max Mitchell**, **Henry Roberts**,  
**Tyler Robinson**, **Bradley Strotten**

## Inaya Folarin Iman

Inaya Folarin Iman is the Head of Events and Engagement at Civic Future, leading design and deliver of their annual conferences. She is the founder and director of The Equiano Project, a forum to promote freedom of speech and open dialogue on race. She co-convened an agenda-setting conference on identity politics at the University of Cambridge in January 2023. She was the creator and host of The Discussion, a weekly ideas, culture and politics TV show on GB News and she provides regular written and spoken commentary across national programmes and publications.

She is the Cultural Management and Youth Engagement Trustee for the National Portrait Gallery.

 [@InayaFolarin](https://twitter.com/InayaFolarin) [inayafolarin.com](http://inayafolarin.com)

Chair: Progress on trial: reinvigorating faith in growth  
amid modern challenges, *Friday, 10:45-12:15*

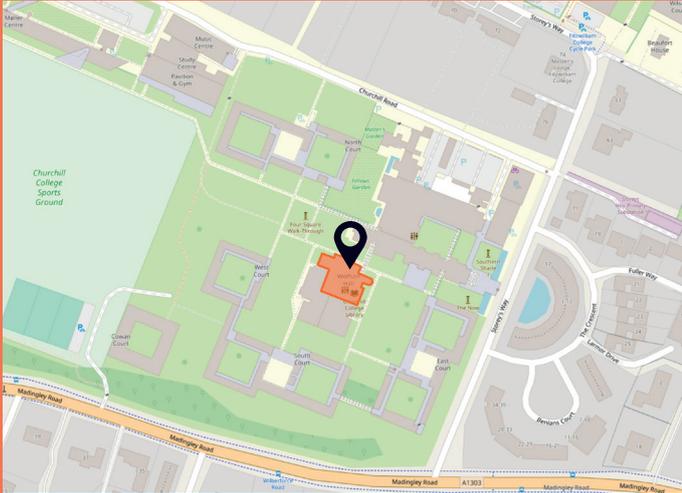


# LOCATIONS



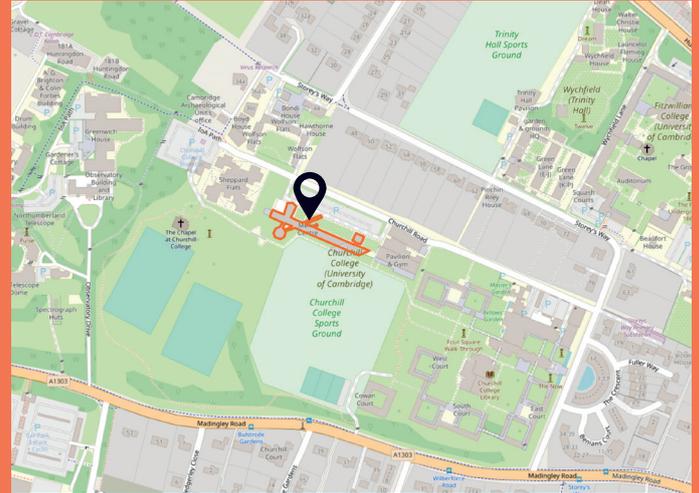
## The Wolfson Hall

Churchill College, University of Cambridge  
Storey's Way, Cambridge, CB3 0DS



## Møller Institute

Storey's Way, Cambridge, CB3 0DE  
(showing Churchill College at right)



# GETTING ONLINE AND SHARING

## WiFi access

For Churchill College use **UniOfCam-Guest** network and connect via an existing account (inc. Facebook, Twitter, Amazon, LinkedIn) / For the Møller Institute use the **Møller** network (no password needed)

## Social media

Please Tweet, or post to other social media, using the hashtag **#ProgressSummit** and where appropriate the Twitter handle **@civic\_future**



# SCHEDULE

## Thursday 13 July: The Wolfson Hall, Churchill College

17:30 REGISTRATION

17:50 Welcome: **Munira Mirza**, Chief Executive, Civic Future

18:00 *Progress: have we run out of road or can we build new highways?*

Keynote: **Professor Tyler Cowen**, George Mason University

Respondents: **Sam Bowman**, *Works in Progress* / **Professor David Edgerton**,

King's College London / **Professor Diane Coyle CBE**, Bennett Institute for Public Policy (chair)

19:30 DRINKS RECEPTION IN THE BUTTERY

20:30 FORMAL DINNER IN THE DINING HALL

## Friday 14 July: Møller Institute

08:30 REGISTRATION AND REFRESHMENTS

08:50 Opening remarks: **Nico Macdonald**, co-convenor

09:00 *Rekindling Britain's economic flame: lessons from the past, strategies for the future*

Speakers: **Andy Haldane**, Royal Society of Arts / **Anton Howes**, The Entrepreneurs Network /

**Professor Deirdre McCloskey**, University of Illinois at Chicago / **Lord Sainsbury of Turville**,

Chancellor of the University of Cambridge / **Professor Tim Besley**, London School of Economics (chair)

10:30 BREAK

10:45 *Progress on trial: reinvigorating faith in growth amid modern challenges*

Speakers: **Aria Babu**, co-convenor; Coadec / **Nicholas Boys Smith**, Office for Place; Create Streets /

**Matt Ridley**, author of *How Innovation Works* and *Viral* / **Sam Richards**, CEO, Britain Remade /

**Inaya Folarin Iman**, Civic Future (chair)

12:15 LUNCH

13:30 *Unconference and Lightning Talks*: Study Centre 8 / Suite 2 / other areas / outside

15:30 *Charting paths to prosperity: how to be good stewards of progress*

Speakers: **Ben Reinhardt**, Speculative Technologies / **James Phillips**, Former Special Adviser

to the Prime Minister; co-creator ARIA / **Stian Westlake**, Executive Chair of the Economic and

Social Research Council / **Rachel Wolf**, Public First / **Munira Mirza**, Civic Future (chair)

17:00 BREAK

17:15 *Unlocking the potential: harnessing technologies for a prosperous future*

Speakers: **Matt Clifford**, Chair of ARIA; co-founder, Entrepreneur First / **Logan Graham**,

Anthropic; former Special Adviser to the Prime Minister / **Saffron Huang**, the Collective

Intelligence Project / **Marc Warner**, Faculty AI / **John Thornhill**, *Financial Times* (chair)

18:15 Closing remarks

19:00 DINNER IN THE STUDY AREA AND ON PATIO