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future.

SUMMIT 2024

The New Wild West:
Progress in an Age
of Disorder



3.30pm, Thursday 27 – 10am, Saturday 29 June 2024

Royal Holloway University, Egham, Surrey



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civalfuture.org/the-new-wild-west



FOREWORD

Future historians may look back on this period as the beginning of a new era of disorder. War has returned to Europe, conflict has erupted in the Middle East, and tensions with China have increased, throwing wider global relations into doubt. The artificial intelligence revolution has begun to reshape economies, national security, and the fabric of society.

Demographic shifts and the movement of people are challenging national social contracts and welfare systems. Advanced democracies wrestle with institutional inertia and economic stagnation. The British political system has been repeatedly paralysed by division, short-termism, and vested interests, making it difficult to drive progress. Although we expect our politicians to act in the national interest and tackle low growth, their room for manoeuvre seems constrained by factors outside their control - from global bond markets to international law, or reliance on fragile supply chains. The result is a crisis of faith in politics and political leaders. On the eve of our general election, few are confident that any leader can deal with the myriad problems the country faces.

Yet history tells us that countries can emerge from periods of decline, and Britain has rich resources and reserves of talent to do so. The first step for today's public leaders is to have a national conversation that grapples honestly with pressing challenges and solutions to address them. This is what we aim to do over the next two days. By bringing together leaders, thinkers, and experts across disciplines, we will gain a deeper and shared understanding of how the United Kingdom - and our allies - can adapt and succeed in an unpredictable world. This is a chance to be optimistic and realistic, to debate and decide the future we want to see. The next chapter of our history is not yet written.

Munira Mirza, Chief Executive, Civic Future

See full schedule on back page



Day 1

17.30 - 18.45

State of the Nation: resilience in the era of disorder

In an era marked by rapid technological advancements, resurgent geopolitical tensions, economic stagnation, and growing political polarisation Britain faces a crucial question: how should we navigate this new age of disorder? How can we bolster governance and foster resilience? What changes, if any, should we make to our economic and political model to fortify ourselves amidst global uncertainties? And how do we foster stronger leadership and restore confidence in our institutions and national identity?

Speakers: **Samo Burja**, Bismarck Analysis, **Mike Bird**, The Economist, **Joel Kotkin**, Chapman University

Chair: **Baroness (Gisela) Stuart**, Chair of Wilton Park

NOTES

See full schedule on back page

Day 2

9.30 - 10.45

What is the national interest?



What defines the national interest? It's common to frame Britain's challenges as part of a broader western malaise. While geopolitical rivalry, threats to supply chains, mass migration and climate change affect us in a similar way to Europe and the United States, it doesn't follow that our solutions should mimic theirs. In what ways should Britain align or depart with the larger powers to our east and west? Is it realistic in such an interconnected and competitive world for Britain to chart its own course and what would that look like? What political and economic levers could be harnessed to realise this?

Speakers: **Yascha Mounk**, Johns Hopkins University, **Elisabeth Braw**, Atlantic Council, **Rado Tylocote**, Legatum Institute, **Benedict Macon-Cooney**, Tony Blair Institute

Chair: **Inaya Folarin Iman**, Civic Future

11.15- 12.15

How do we radically improve Britain's state capacity?

It's commonplace to say Britain isn't working, citing the housing shortage, escalating care costs, NHS waiting lists, porous borders, bankrupt councils, stalled infrastructure projects, failed military hardware on an extensive list of evidence. Despite the expanding size and cost of the state, its effectiveness is diminishing whilst public confidence wanes. What are the primary obstacles to Britain's state capacity and how can we practically overcome them? How do we ensure the state maintains a clear mission while remaining adaptable and agile? Are there successful models, either within Britain or abroad, that we can emulate? Is the British state equipped to confront such challenges, or are our best days behind us?

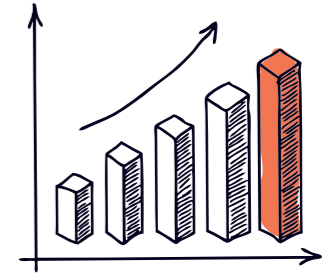
Speakers: **Dominic Cummings**, political strategist in conversation with **Lord Adonis**, Labour life peer

Chair: **Munira Mirza**, Civic Future



13.15- 14.30

Should the state play a more active economic role?



Britain's economy has been stagnant for nearly two decades. Growth is sluggish, productivity lags behind other advanced economies, and our industrial base is substantially depleted. Whilst promises to 'level up' have raised hopes of economic renewal, they have not materialised. Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves is promoting 'securomics', a more interventionist state to pursue national goals and invest in key industries to determine future success. Meanwhile, our most innovative start-ups complain they are frozen out of state contracts such as defence technology, or can't expand their labs. Should the state take a more active role in economic growth, and if so, how? What is the right balance between the free market and state intervention in shaping prosperity?

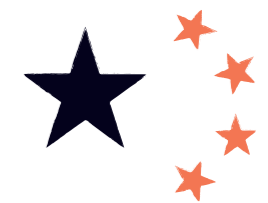
Speakers: **Professor Richard Jones**, University of Manchester, **Hilary Salt**, Social Democratic Party, **Professor Mark Pennington**, King's College London, **Marc Warner**, Faculty AI, **Sam Bowman**, Works in Progress

Chair: **Liam Halligan**, The Telegraph

14.45 Unconference (see page 6)

17.15- 18.15

How should the UK approach China?



For nearly a century US military and economic power and liberal democratic values defined the global order. This is changing. The rise of China, with its vast population, surveillance state, industrial strength, and strategic alliances, is forcing western governments to reassess their approach.

Britain's trade relationship with China may have expanded but scrutiny over China's involvement in critical telecoms and nuclear power infrastructure and its human rights record has intensified. Security chiefs' warnings about Chinese cyber-espionage and political influence in universities remind us that the rebalancing of the world order is unlikely to be benign. Many argue that Britain needs to bolster its industrial capacity to reduce its reliance on Chinese manufacturing. Yet global finance and trade, climate change, and AI safety still require some degree of cooperation. How can we get the right balance? How do we cultivate diplomacy and statecraft to navigate this intricate relationship? If China's ascent is inevitable, how can we ensure it is not a threat to British interests?

Speakers: **Michael Gove**, government minister, **Tanner Greer**, Center for Strategic Translation, **Desmond Shum**, author and Hong Kong businessman

Chair: **Cindy Yu**, The Spectator

Day 3 - 10.00 Conference closes after breakfast



SPEAKERS

Lord Adonis

Speaker: How do we radically improve Britain's state capacity? *Friday, 11:15-12:15*

Lord Adonis is Labour Party politician, life peer and journalist, and was a Government Minister for five years under Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. He is currently a columnist for The New European, starting his career as an Oxford University academic before joining the Financial Times and later The Observer. In the No 10 Policy Unit in Blair's first administration he specialised in constitutional and education policy, before being created a life peer in 2005. He is the author of several books, including *Education Education Education: Reforming England's Schools* (2012) and *Saving Britain: How We Must Change to Prosper in Europe* (2018).



@Andrew_Adonis

Mike Bird

Speaker: State of the nation: resilience in the era of disorder. *Thursday, 17:30-18:45*

Mike Bird joined as Asia business and finance editor in 2021, based in Singapore. He writes about capital markets, economic development and major corporations across the region. He co-presents one of The Economist's weekly podcasts, Money Talks. His upcoming book, "The Land Trap", tells the story of how the world's oldest asset continues to shape the global economy today and puts our prosperity at risk. Mike previously worked for The Wall Street Journal in London and Hong Kong as a reporter and financial columnist. @Birdyword



Sam Bowman

Sam Bowman is a founding editor of Works in Progress and head of publishing at Stripe. In the past he has been director of competition policy at the International Center for Law & Economics, a principal at Fingleton, and executive director of the Adam Smith Institute. He co-authored the influential article *The Housing Theory of Everything*, which argued that housing shortages exacerbate the major challenges in the Western world—such as low economic growth rates, climate change, obesity and fertility. He also writes a newsletter titled *Consumer Surplus* at sambowman.co



@s8mb

Speaker: Should the state play a more active economic role? *Friday, 13:15-14:30*

Elisabeth Braw

Speaker: What is the national interest? *Friday, 9:30-10:45*

Elisabeth Braw is a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, focusing on geopolitics and the globalised economy as well as greyzone and hybrid threats. She is the author of the award-winning *Goodbye Globalization: The Return of a Divided World* (2024), *The Defender's Dilemma: Identifying and Deterring Gray-Zone Aggression* (2022), and *God's Spies* (2019). Braw was a senior fellow at both the American Enterprise Institute in Washington and Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) in London. She's a member of the UK National Preparedness Commission and the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy's advisory council and has worked in the private sector and academia. Braw writes for the Financial Times, Wall Street Journal, Foreign Policy, The Times, and Politico Europe.



@elisabethbraw

Samo Burja

Speaker: State of the nation: resilience in the era of disorder. *Thursday, 17:30-18:45*

Samo Burja is the founder and President of Bismarck Analysis, combining foundational research and unique insights into functional institutions, the impacts of new technologies, and winning strategy in politics, business, or philanthropy. Burja is a Senior Research Fellow in Political Science at the Foresight Institute and a Research Fellow at the Long Now Foundation.

He is a frequent speaker at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Y Combinator's YC 120, and Reboot American Innovation in Washington DC, and divides his time between San Francisco and his native Slovenia.



@samoburja





Speaker: How do we radically improve Britain's state capacity? *Friday, 11:15-12:15*

Dominic Cummings

Dominic Cummings is a British political strategist who served as Chief Adviser to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson (2019-2020) From 2007 to 2014 he was a special adviser to Michael Gove in opposition and in Government. From 2015 to 2016 Cummings led Vote Leave, successfully executing the 2016 referendum campaign for Britain's exit from the European Union. Cummings' Substack (dominiccummings.substack.com) is one of the most widely read and talked about political newsletters in Britain.

@Dominic2306



Speaker: How should the UK approach China? *Friday, 17:15-18:15*

Tanner Greer

Tanner Greer is an essayist, journalist, and independent researcher. He is the director of the Center for Strategic Translation. He writes and podcasts at the Scholar's Stage, a forum to discuss the intersection of history, politics, culture, behavioural science, and strategic thought, with a focus on East and Southeast Asian affairs. He is published by a range of America's premier foreign policy and public affairs outlets: Foreign Affairs and Foreign Policy, The National Review, The LA Review of Books, The American Conservative, and Tablet.

@Scholars_Stage



Speaker: Should the state play a more active economic role? *Friday, 13:15-14:30*

Rt Hon Michael Gove

British politician and government minister; Secretary of State for Education (2010-14); Government Chief Whip and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (2014-15); Lord Chancellor & Secretary of State for Justice (2015-16); Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2017-19); Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (2019-21); Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations (2021-24).

@michaelgove



Speaker: How should the UK approach China? *Friday, 17:15-18:15*

Professor Richard Jones

Richard Jones is Professor of Materials Physics and Innovation Policy at the University of Manchester, where he is the Vice-President for Regional Innovation and Civic Engagement. He is an experimental soft matter physicist, with a PhD from Cambridge and postdoctoral work at Cornell. In 2006 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in recognition of his work in the field of polymers and biopolymers and in 2009 he won the Tabor Medal for contributions to nanoscience. Jones co-authored *The Missing £4 Billion: making R&D work for the whole UK* (2020) and authored *Science and innovation policy for hard times: an overview of the UK's Research and Development landscape* (2022).

@RichardALJones





Speaker: State of the nation: resilience in the era of disorder. *Thursday, 17:30-18:45*

Joel Kotkin

Joel Kotkin is the author of *The Coming of Neo Feudalism: A Warning to the Global Middle Class* (2020), along with 10 other books. He is the Presidential Fellow in Urban Futures at Chapman University in Orange, California and Executive Director of Chapman's Center for Demographics and Policy. He writes for the National Review, American Mind, The Spectator, The Telegraph, and many other influential platforms. Kotkin's research and writing covers demography, class, and opportunity.

 @joelkotkin



Speaker: What is the national interest? *Friday, 9:30-10:45*

Yascha Mounk

Yascha Mounk is a writer and academic known for his work on the crisis of democracy and the defence of philosophically liberal values. Born in Germany to Polish parents, Mounk has degrees from Cambridge and Harvard, and is Professor of the Practice of International Affairs at Johns Hopkins University. He is Contributing Editor at The Atlantic and Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, Founder of Persuasion magazine, host of The Good Fight podcast, and publisher at Die Zeit.

He has written five books, most recently *The Identity Trap: A Story of Ideas and Power in Our Time* (2023).

 @Yascha_Mounk



Speaker: Should the state play a more active economic role? *Friday, 13:15-14:30*

Professor Mark Pennington

Professor Mark Pennington works on interdisciplinary questions in Philosophy, Politics and Economics and their relationship to public policy, including urban and land use planning, social capital, deliberative democracy, sustainable development, and the role of markets as coordination processes.

Pennington's core concern is to make the classical liberal vision of a society of open markets, personal freedom, and limited government, more robust. He is the author of three books on political economy, most recently *Foucault and Liberal Political Economy: Power, Knowledge and Freedom* (2024), and is currently Director of the Centre for the Study of Governance and Society at Kings' College, London.

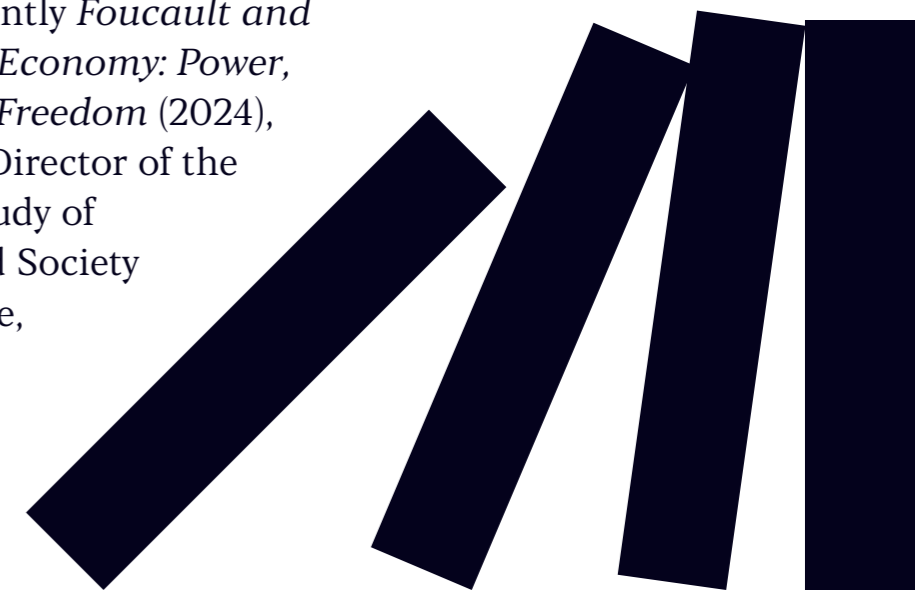


Speaker: What is the national interest? *Friday, 9:30-10:45*

Benedict Macon-Cooney

Benedict Macon-Cooney is Chief Policy Strategist at the Tony Blair Institute, covering economic and fiscal policy, health, climate and energy, science and tech, government innovation and geopolitics. He started his career as Treasury Economist, before working on economic and government transformation in South East Asia and Rwanda, and in the financial services industry. He led the recent New National Purpose report series, co-authored by Tony Blair and Lord Hague, and writes publicly on AI, biotech and clean tech.

 @benedictcooney





Hilary Salt

Hilary Salt is an actuary and partner at First Actuarial LLP, a business she co-founded 20 years ago employing nearly 500 people across the UK. In this role Salt developed the groundbreaking new collective DC pension scheme with the Communication Workers Union and Royal Mail. She is a member of the Council of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, and is the SDP's 2024 prospective parliamentary candidate for Wythenshawe and Sale East.

 @redactuary

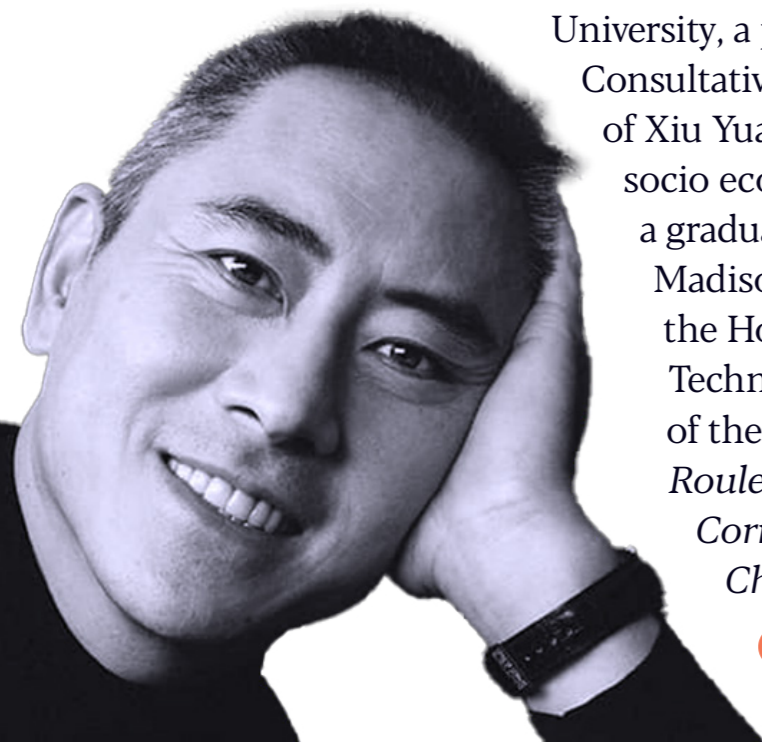
Speaker: Should the state play a more active economic role? *Friday, 13:15-14:30*



Desmond Shum

Desmond Shum is a serial entrepreneur with experience in IT, financial investment and real estate development in the Greater China region. He is an Honorary Trustee of Tsinghua University, a previous member of Beijing Political Consultative Conference and member of the board of Xiu Yuan Foundation, the publisher of a leading socio economic magazine in China. Shum is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Northwestern University (US), and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. He is also a Henry Crown Fellow of the Aspen Institute. Shum's memoir, *Red Roulette: An Insider's Story of Wealth, Power, Corruption, and Vengeance in Today's China*, was published in 2021.

 @DesmondShum



Speaker: How should the UK approach China? *Friday, 17:15-18:15*

Dr Rado Tylocote

Dr Rado Tylocote is Managing Director of the Legatum Institute. He is a former Special Adviser to Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP as Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency, then Business Secretary. Tylocote has degrees from Cambridge University and Imperial College, and authored *Breaking Ranks: The Challenge of EU Defence Integration to the United Kingdom* (2024), *Inadvertently Arming China?: The Chinese military complex and its potential exploitation of scientific research at UK universities* (2021) and *Plan A+: creating a prosperous post-Brexit UK* (2019).

 @RadoTylocote

Speaker: What is the national interest? *Friday, 9:30-10:45*



Dr Marc Warner

Dr Marc Warner is the co-founder and CEO of Faculty, with the goal of a safe, humanfirst path to 'decision intelligence': helping people 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 major media outlets on both sides of the Atlantic. Warner advises the government as a member of the AI Council.

 @MarcWarner10

Speaker: Should the state play a more active economic role? *Friday, 13:15-14:30*




CHAIRS

Chair: Should the state play a more active economic role? *Friday, 13:15-14:30*

Liam Halligan

Liam Halligan is an award-winning economist, journalist, broadcaster and author. He is currently the Economics and Business Editor of GB News and co-hosts The Telegraph's Planet Normal podcast. He is best known for his weekly "Economics Agenda" column in The Sunday Telegraph, which he has written since 2003 – and which has been recognised with a highly-coveted British Press Award. He is the author of *Home Truths: The UK's chronic housing shortage how it happened, why it matters and the way to solve it*.

 @LiamHalligan



Chair: How do we radically improve Britain's state capacity? *Friday, 11:15-12:15*

Munira Mirza

Munira Mirza is the Founder and Chief Executive of Civic Future. She was Director of the No 10 Policy Unit between 2019-2022, and has worked for 20 years in senior positions in government, academia, business and the cultural sectors, including as Deputy Mayor of London for eight years. She has degrees from Oxford and Kent and is Honorary Professor at the Strategy and Security Institute at Exeter University. Mirza writes widely, including two books, *The Politics of Culture: The Case for Universalism* (2011), and *Living Apart Together: British Muslims and the Paradox of Multiculturalism* (2007). 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.



Chair: State of the nation: resilience in the era of disorder. *Thursday, 17:30-18:45*

Baroness Stuart of Edgbaston

Baroness Stuart of Edgbaston is a crossbench life peer and former Labour MP. During her 20 years as an MP she served on a number of House of Commons and Joint parliamentary committees including the Intelligence and Security Committee, Defence Committee, Foreign Affairs Select Committee and the Social Security Select Committee. She was chair of the Vote Leave Campaign Committee and served as chair of Vote Leave's successor organisation, Change Britain.

 @GiselaStuart



Chair: How should the UK approach China? *Friday, 17:15-18:15*


Cindy Yu

Cindy Yu is a British-Chinese journalist who covers China's political and social structures. She is assistant editor at The Spectator and presents the "Chinese Whispers" podcast. She was born and raised in Nanjing, China, until the age of 10. She read politics, philosophy, and economics at the University of Oxford, where she also read for a master of science in contemporary Chinese studies. Her research specialised in Chinese political propaganda and modern youth opinion.

 @CindyXiaodanYu



Inaya Folarin Iman

Inaya Folarin Iman is a journalist and the Head of Events and Engagement at Civic Future, leading the production, design and delivery 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, identity and culture. She has been a columnist and feature writer for numerous national publications including The Telegraph, Daily Mail and spiked. 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 on the big moral and political questions of our time.  @InayaFolarin

Chair: What is the national interest? *Friday, 9:30-10:45*



LOCATIONS

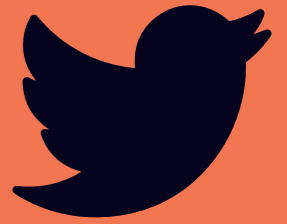
Arriving at Royal Holloway

Maps



SOCIAL MEDIA

Please feel free to tweet or post about the summit on social media, tagging Civic Future on X at [@civic_future](https://twitter.com/civic_future)



SHOPS, CAFÉS AND ATMS

The Union Shop is located in the Davison building, open 8am-6pm. Other shops can be found in nearby Egham and Englefield Green.

Café on the Square is open on weekdays 8am-6pm, and weekends 9am-4pm. The Boilerhouse Café is open weekdays 8am-4pm. The shop and cafés on campus take card-payments only and the campus is cashless.

The Boilerhouse Café is open on week-days from 8am – 4pm.

CONTACTS

If there is an emergency on campus, please call Security on +44 (0)1784 443888 or on +44 (0)1784 443 063. For logistical questions, please contact Henry Cochrane +44 7305 425474 or Julia Sandiford +44 7779 264775.

GETTING ONLINE AND SHARING

WiFi access

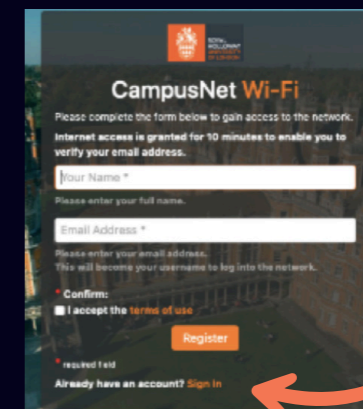
You will receive a pre-configured Username and Wifi code with your room keycard or at registration.

1 Join the CampusNet WiFi and it should bring up a prompt to the Captive Portal (if it does not then open a browser and navigate to a page such as <http://neverssl.com>)

Click on **Visiting the University**

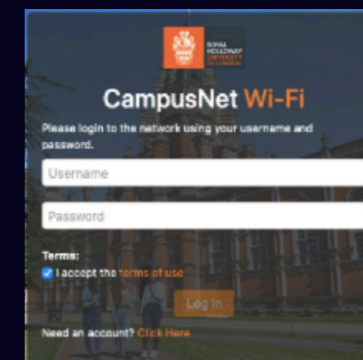


2 Do not enter name or email but click **Already have an account?**



Sign In at the bottom of the page.

3 On the next screen enter the Username and Password supplied and tick the box to accept the terms of use (It should be exactly as below image and not asking for a college account)



If you are having trouble accessing the Wifi, please speak to the Hub Reception.

SCHEDULE

Thursday 27 June: The Shilling Auditorium, Royal Holloway

15:30	REFRESHMENTS AND REGISTRATION IN THE SHILLING BUILDING
17:15	Welcome: Munira Mirza , Civic Future
17:30 - 18:45	<i>State of the nation: resilience in the era of disorder</i> Samo Burja , Bismarck Analysis, Joel Kotkin , Chapman University, Mike Bird , The Economist Baroness (Gisela) Stuart (chair), Chair of Wilton Park
19:00	DRINKS RECEPTION IN THE PICTURE GALLERY
20:00	FORMAL DINNER IN THE FOUNDERS HALL
22:00	MAIN BAR OPEN FOR GUESTS

Friday 28 June: Windsor Building, Royal Holloway

09:25	Welcome: Munira Mirza , Civic Future
09:30	<i>What is the national interest?</i> Yascha Mounk , Johns Hopkins University, Elisabeth Braw , Atlantic Council, Rado Tylocote , Legatum Institute, Benedict Macon-Cooney , Tony Blair Institute, Inaya Folarin Iman (chair), Civic Future
10:45	BREAK
11:15	<i>How do we radically improve Britain's state capacity?</i> Dominic Cummings , political strategist in conversation with Lord Adonis , Labour life peer, Munira Mirza (chair), Civic Future
12:15	LUNCH
13:15	<i>Should the state play a more active economic role?</i> Professor Richard Jones , University of Manchester, Hilary Salt , Social Democratic Party, Professor Mark Pennington , King's College London, Dr Marc Warner , Faculty AI, Sam Bowman , Works in Progress, Liam Halligan (chair), The Telegraph
14:30	<i>Unconference Explainer</i> Compere: Ben Yeoh , playwright and investor
14:45	<i>Unconference</i>
17:00	BREAK
17:15	<i>How should the UK approach China?</i> Rt Hon Michael Gove , government minister, Tanner Greer , Center for Strategic Translation, Desmond Shum , author and Hong Kong businessman, Cindy Yu (chair), The Spectator
18:15	<i>Closing remarks</i>
18:30	REST, REFRESHMENTS AND DIRECTING TO THE QUAD
19:00	BBQ IN THE QUAD

Saturday 29 June, 10:00: Conference closes after breakfast