

# Connecting Futures event – Speaker biogs

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION SPEAKER BIOGS

### Sir Tony Hawkhead CBE



**Sir Tony Hawkhead CBE** is Interim Chair of the Board at Youth Futures Foundation. He is currently Lay Vice-Chair of the new NHS Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and a former Non-executive Director at the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). He has held several high-profile charity positions including CEO at Groundwork UK and Action for Children. He is also Chair of trustees at Cruse Bereavement Care.

 [@sirtone](#)  
 [Sir Tony Hawkhead](#)

### Yemi Adeola



**Yemi Adeola** graduated from University of Warwick with a degree in History & Politics and is undertaking an LLM CLP at University of Law. Yemi will take up the role as a Trainee Solicitor at Clifford Chance in 2023. During his studies, he founded a social enterprise called Project Access (PA) Midlands which tackles higher educational inequality. He helped launch the charity's tech-enabled mentorship platform in the US Ivy League as Chief of Staff and has previously worked at The Greater London Authority's Environment Unit.

Yemi is a Fellowship Councillor and Trustee at the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). Yemi also serves as a Trustee for the Young Ealing Foundation which brings together the public, private and grassroots voluntary sectors to effect positive change for young people. Alongside this, he is an Advisory Board Member on the Grants Committee of Youth Futures Foundation, supporting young people furthest away from the labour market into sustained meaningful employment.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER BIOG

### Alison McGovern MP



**Alison McGovern** is the Labour MP for Wirral South, and has been an MP continuously since 6 May 2010. She currently undertakes the role of Shadow Minister (Work and Pensions).

## SESSION 1 SPEAKER BIOGS

### Dame Julia Cleverdon DCVO, CBE



**Dame Julia Cleverdon DCVO, CBE** is a passionate and practical campaigner who has gained an international reputation for 'connecting the unconnected', inspiring individuals and organisations to work together for the common good in the most challenged communities.

During her tenure as Chief Executive of Business in the Community from 1991 to 2007, Julia worked closely with the President HRH The Prince of Wales in building a movement of 850 member companies. Julia later served as Special Adviser to The Prince's Charities and focused efforts on disadvantaged communities.

Julia co-founded Step Up To Serve (#iwill), a campaign which was set up to make meaningful social action a part of life for young people across the UK. As Chair of Teach First from 2007 to 2014, and now Vice Patron, Julia has pioneered efforts to address educational disadvantage. She serves on the Careers and Enterprise Company and Youth Futures Foundation boards, is Deputy Chair of the Fair Education Alliance, and has just stepped down as Chair of the National Literacy Trust. Julia also chairs Transform Society, which aims to inspire a generation towards public service. She is Patron of Right to Succeed and chairs Place Matters.

 [@Julia\\_Cleverdon](https://twitter.com/Julia_Cleverdon)  
 [julia cleverdon](https://www.linkedin.com/in/julia_cleverdon)

## Saeed Atcha MBE DL



**Saeed Atcha MBE DL** is an inspiring CEO, Leader and Changemaker having worked to make the world a better place for all young people, for a decade.

Having grown up in care, Saeed is acutely aware of how young people from disadvantaged backgrounds can be overlooked when it comes to learning valuable life skills and having a voice in their future. That's why, at the age of 15, he set up Youth Leads UK which has supported more than 12,500 disadvantaged young Greater Mancunians to access volunteering opportunities and skills development programmes.

As well as being a Former Government Social Mobility Commissioner with special responsibility for young people and vulnerable groups, Saeed is a trustee of youth employment charity Generation: You Employed, UK, a Non-Executive Director at social housing group Bolton at Home, an Associate Non-Executive Director at Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, an Advisory Council Member to the Care Tech Foundation and Vice-Chair of Governors at his former secondary school, Ladybridge High School in Bolton.

Saeed was the youngest person on Her Majesty the Queen's New Year's Honours List in 2019 awarded an MBE for services to young people and community in Greater Manchester.

Later that year, Saeed went on to becoming the youngest person ever to be appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, a role he'll use to connect more young people to the Crown, raise aspirations and support voluntary groups.

 [@saeedatcha](https://twitter.com/saeedatcha)  
 [Saeed Atcha MBE DL](https://www.linkedin.com/in/saeedatcha)

## Marcellus Baz BEM



**Marcellus Baz BEM** has been the founder and chairperson of Nottingham School of Boxing and Switch Up CIC since September 2014. Baz comes from one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK and as a young person was a member of one of the most violent gangs in Nottingham. While trying to get out of the life of crime by training to become a boxer, he was a victim of a machete attack which ended his career.

Baz was then supported by his coach and peers in the boxing gym which helped turn him towards voluntary work, coaching and youth work qualifications and even working in the Nottingham City Youth Offending Service. He focused on working with young people who were at risk of getting involved in or already part of gangs and crime and supporting them to change their life.

Marcellus Baz BEM is widely recognised for his humanitarian work in the UK and Europe (Norway and Denmark) and has received various local, regional and national awards including, BBC Sports Personality Unsung Hero Award 2016. He was also given a British Empire Medal (BEM) by the Queen in December 2016.

 [@MarcellusBaz](#)  
 [Marcellus Baz BEM](#)

### Adam Hawksbee



**Adam Hawksbee** is the Deputy Director and Head of Levelling Up at Onward. He was previously Head of Policy at the West Midlands Combined Authority, working with Mayor Andy Street to shape and deliver programmes on housing, transport, skills, and economic development. Adam is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, where he was a Kennedy Fellow, and has worked with US Mayors as a Research Fellow at the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative and during a period at the New York City Mayor's Office of Operations. He lives in the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham.

 [@ahawksbee](#)  
 [Adam Hawksbee](#)

### Dina Potter



**Dina Potter** is currently Vice President of Social Impact at National Grid with over 20 years' experience in the energy industry. Over her career, Dina has held a number of key roles in Operations, Business Transformation, Corporate Affairs and has been an Executive Advisor.

Dina is passionate about making a difference to society towards a fair energy transition and has been instrumental in helping to improve the lives of thousands of people. Backing up her efforts, in 2021 the Cabinet Office quoted the work she led on behalf of National Grid as "industry leading".

Dina sits on the Youth Futures Foundation Employer Advisory Board and is a member of the Employment & Skills, Wellbeing Business in the Community Climate Action Leadership Group.

 [Dina Potter](#)

## Peter Cheese



**Peter Cheese** is the CEO of the CIPD, the professional body for HR and People Development. Since January 2019, he has been co-chair of The Flexible Working Task Force, a partnership across government departments, business groups, trade unions and charities, to increase the uptake of flexible working. He is also Chair of Engage for Success and the What Works Centre for Wellbeing.

Peter writes and speaks widely on the development of HR, the future of work, and the key issues of leadership, culture and organisation, people and skills. In 2021, his book 'The New World of Work' was published, exploring the many factors shaping work, workplaces, workforces and our working lives, and the principles around which we can build a future that is good for people, for business and for societies.

Prior to joining the CIPD in 2012 Peter was Chair of the Institute of Leadership and Management, an Executive Fellow at London Business School, and held a number of Board level roles. He had a long career in consulting at Accenture working with organisations around the world, and in his last seven years there was Global Managing Director for the firm's human capital and organisation consulting practice.

He is a Fellow of the CIPD, a Fellow of AHRI (the Australian HR Institute), the Royal Society of Arts, and the Academy of Social Sciences. He's also a Companion of the Institute of Leadership and Management, the Chartered Management Institute, and the British Academy of Management. He holds honorary doctorates from Bath University, Kingston University and Birmingham City University.

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 [Peter Cheese](#)



## BREAKOUT 1 SPEAKERS

### Dan Jones



**Dan Jones** leads Connected Futures, Youth Futures' place-based programme aiming at whole system change. Prior to joining Youth Futures, he established the Centre for Ageing Better's first programmes, including place-based approaches to employment in Greater Manchester and community transport in Leeds. He has a long track record in innovation and systems change in the UK and internationally.

[in](#) [Dan Jones](#)

### Sarah Smith



As Programmes Director with Right to Succeed, **Sarah Smith** is leading the implementation of an ambitious 10 year education strategy across Blackpool. Starting out as a volunteer in a youth club, Sarah has spent 15 years levelling the playing field for young people growing up in disadvantaged communities, including supporting 1,000 young people into apprenticeships and co-designing the Kickstarter scheme. She is a school governor and on the advisory board for charity 'upReach'.

[in](#) [Sarah Smith](#)

### Gill Bainbridge



**Gill Bainbridge** is immensely proud to have been the Chief Executive of Merseyside Youth Association since 2004, working daily with a team of dynamic, committed, and passionate staff, who always put young people at the centre of everything they do. She is the custodian of this charity, which has supported young people in Merseyside for 132 years.

A graduate of the University of Liverpool, Gill has a BA (Hons) in Psychology and Sociology and an MA in Women's Studies. She has worked in the voluntary sector in Liverpool for 30 years with experience in youth and play work, disability issues, volunteering, young women's work, advice, support and counselling.

She is committed to co-producing projects with and for some of the most vulnerable young people on Merseyside. Resilience underpins so much of this work with young people; the ability to move forward from difficult life

events, developing positive coping strategies and how to problem solve, and learning from experiences, whether they be positive or negative, and retaining a sense of hope.

She is passionate about this work because it matters, not only to the lives of each and every young person, but to the future of Liverpool City Region as a whole.

Gill aims to support her staff to do what they do best, enabling young people to create positive and lasting change in their lives and to build a brighter future together.

### Anna Round



**Anna Round** is Head of Research and Impact at Youth Futures Foundation. Her research experience includes extensive work on education and skills, regional labour markets and economies, and young people's issues. Before joining YFF she worked at IPPR North, after over a decade as a researcher in higher education and in government.

[in.](#) [Anna Round](#)

### Plamena Marinova



**Plamena Marinova** first joined the Youth Futures Foundation's Future Voices Group through her volunteering and youth voice work, particularly in her role as Chair of the local Youth Advisory Board and the local Youth Town Council. This work motivated her to apply to the FVG and represent young people of sixth form age, like herself, in the topic of youth unemployment. Her priority is to impact the way that employers, educators, the government and youth services provide support and opportunities for young people to pursue academic or vocational routes into the world of work and facilitate a work environment in which young people can thrive. Being a part of the Invest subgroup, Plamena has been able to co-design and facilitate capacity-building workshops for over 40 grant recipient youth organisations and participate in several roundtables including a KickStart scheme consultation and a consultation on preventing NEETs. Having just completed her A-level exams, Plamena is now hoping to continue her youth voice work as well as begin studying Law at university.

## BREAKOUT 2 SPEAKER BIOGS

### Chris Goulden



**Chris Goulden** leads Youth Futures Foundation's Impact and Evidence team. Previously he was Deputy Director of Evidence and Impact at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, where he has worked as Head and Deputy Director of Policy and Research, since joining the organisation as Poverty Programme Manager in 2003. He previously served as a policy analyst with the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and Senior Research Officer at the Home Office. He is a current member of the Social Security Advisory Committee.

 [@Chris\\_Goulden](#)  
 [Chris Goulden](#)

### Hannah Slaughter



**Hannah Slaughter** is a senior economist at the Resolution Foundation, focusing on labour markets. Her research has had a particular focus on low pay, job quality, and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on different groups of workers. Previously she spent three years in the civil service working on a variety of social and economic policy issues including employment, post-16 skills, and health.

 [@hcslaughter\\_](#)  
 [Hannah Slaughter](#)

### Yvonne MacNamara



Yvonne is a founding member and current Chief Executive of the Travellers Movement, a leading civil society organisation in the UK. She is also the current chair and founder of Open Doors Education and Training, a community interest company established in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 to provide online educational support and careers guidance to children, young people from marginalised communities.

Yvonne has been living and working in London since 1989. She has worked within the voluntary and community sector on a wide range of issues concerning ethnic minority communities. Most of this time has been spent working within in the field of Race Equality and Social Justice. She is a well-seasoned campaigner with numerous success stories and award winning projects under her belt.



Yvonne sits on various advisory boards across the public policy sector within the UK advocating for the voices of marginalised people to be included and acted upon.

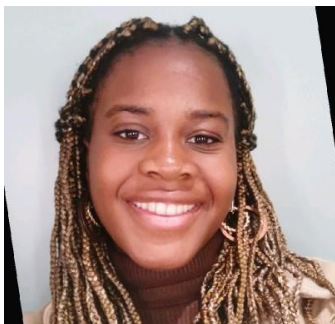
 [Yvonne MacNamara](#)

### **Louise Chandler, Future Voices Group Member**



**Louise Chandler** is passionate about using her lived experience of mental health, disability and unemployment to create positive systemic changes for marginalised young people. She is currently going into the second year of an education degree, which she hopes to use in a career making a difference to the lives of autistic young people. Louise have been involved with Barnardos, organising youth voice events and co-producing National Mental Health Reports. She has experience of speaking at national and regional events and presenting ideas to government ministers through roundtable forums. Within the Youth Futures Foundation, most recently she has been involved with the NEET Team at the Department of Education, ensuring that young people's voices are heard in this particular policy area. She has also written a blog post detailing her experiences in the workplace as an autistic person.

### **Cindy Boa, Future Voices Group Member**



**Cindy Boa** is an Invest Sub Group member within the Future Voices Group at Youth Futures Foundation. She is a 2nd year student at UCL and is passionate about improving access to meaningful careers for young talented people. She currently sits on the committee of the UCL Technology Society, working to connect all students with opportunities in technology. She is also looking to break into the tech sector her, and is passionate about diversifying it.

## BREAKOUT 3 SPEAKER BIOGS

### Peter Cheese



**Peter Cheese** is the CEO of the CIPD, the professional body for HR and People Development. Since January 2019, he has been co-chair of The Flexible Working Task Force, a partnership across government departments, business groups, trade unions and charities, to increase the uptake of flexible working. He is also Chair of Engage for Success and the What Works Centre for Wellbeing.

Peter writes and speaks widely on the development of HR, the future of work, and the key issues of leadership, culture and organisation, people and skills. In 2021, his book 'The New World of Work' was published, exploring the many factors shaping work, workplaces, workforces and our working lives, and the principles around which we can build a future that is good for people, for business and for societies.

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He is a Fellow of the CIPD, a Fellow of AHRI (the Australian HR Institute), the Royal Society of Arts, and the Academy of Social Sciences. He's also a Companion of the Institute of Leadership and Management, the Chartered Management Institute, and the British Academy of Management. He holds honorary doctorates from Bath University, Kingston University and Birmingham City University.

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 [Peter Cheese](#)

### Susan Mackay



**Susan Mackay** is Director and Head of Employment and Skills Evaluation at Ipsos UK. Susan has 19 years' research and evaluation experience, focussed largely on building the evidence base to inform investment in skills, careers and employment policies and programmes. Susan has worked extensively for central and devolved Government departments and agencies across the UK, as well as local and regional stakeholders and delivery partners. She is highly skilled at evaluating interventions aimed at

improving the education and employment outcomes of young people and less advantaged groups in society, particularly those involving multiple delivery partners / sites, or which have a place-based dimension. She is particularly interested in what works in improving young people's journeys through education and into employment and the role of economic and labour market information in informing and supporting career decision making and successful transitions. Susan has a BSc (Hons) Psychology and an MSc Public Policy.

 [@suzmac\\_50](#)  
 [Susan Mackay](#)

### Madeleine Thornton



**Madeleine Thornton** is an Economist and Senior Consultant at Ipsos UK. Madeleine is an experienced economist and senior consultant with particular expertise in local, regional and national economic development policies and programmes. Madeleine is an ONS Accredited Researcher and an experienced mixed-methods researcher, adept at triangulating evidence, effectively communicating findings to a range of audiences and contextualising research in the wider policy landscape. Madeleine has worked with Susan to co-deliver a wide range of regional and sectoral labour market studies, using official national statistics as well as other sources of data to assess current and future employment opportunities and the capacity for the existing skills supply system to meet emerging needs. Madeleine has an MA in Economics.

 [Madeleine Thornton](#)

### Nyasha Duri, Future Voices Group Member



**Nyasha Duri** is part of the Youth Futures Foundation Youth Reference Group and a Future Voices Ambassador. Bringing her love for championing young people, solving problems like youth employment's root causes, and maximising impact through careful monitoring and evaluation to name a few things, she also strives to represent others' views. This is alongside being informed by lived experience on issues such as ethnic disparities. The above led her to found her own organisation Chiye,

helping suicidal NEET generations on benefits to find fulfilling work.

She currently freelances in UX Research, Design, and Product at edtech CIC InnovateHer focusing on equity, diversity, and inclusion. In addition to this, she's a trainer for Talawa Theatre, Getting on Board, and FruitionX across multiple areas. Most recently, she completed a producer residency via LIFT Festival and was named a Franco-British Council Local Leader. Her other commitments include serving as a Non-Executive Director for Do it Now and trustee for Big Change.

Previously, she worked in transparency at civic technology social enterprise mySociety and was handpicked for a community engagement contract at Google within YouTube. Through Theirworld, she assisted with curriculums reaching over 12 million children globally to build pathways to jobs of the future.

### **Annie Boccock, Future Voices Group Member**



**Annie Boccock** is an active member of the Youth Futures Foundation Future Voices Group, working specifically with their research and evaluation team. They are increasingly interested in figuring out 'what works' and how to tackle youth employment issues through policy.

They currently study BA International Development with Quantitative Research Methods at the University of Leeds where they think critically about many different issues within development, international relations and politics. Locally in Leeds, they currently work also as the Young Person Engagement Worker for ABA Leeds.

Annie has had a range of different experiences including being a TEDxYouth@BrayfordPool 2019 Speaker, a European Youth Event 2021 Delegate, a Samsung UK Not a School 2020 participant, an NCS Team Lead for two years and a content creator for many different organisations and groups.