

CHALLENGES OF GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE 2019

THE NEW GENERATIONS

Politics is experiencing a generational shift. People born after 1980 face starkly different economic, social, and technological prospects than previous generations. In almost every country, generational cleavages on core challenges of government are increasingly salient.

This conference looks at how those under 40 are changing the world, and at the most important issues for millennials and Gen Z – from technology to climate change to generational equality.

Conference programme

Thursday 31 October

8:00 Registration and coffee

9:00 Welcome remarks by Dean Ngaire Woods, Blavatnik School

9:15 Keynote conversation

Syed Saddiq, Malaysian Minister for Youth and Sports, one of the youngest ministers in Asia

Rafat Ali Al-Akhali (video message), ex Minister of Youth and Sports in Yemen, Blavatnik School Fellow of Practice and School alumnus

Lisa Yasko, Blavatnik School alumna and recently elected member of the Ukrainian parliament as part of the new wave of reformist politicians

10:00 Inside or outside?

In many countries, generational divisions on the challenges of government are widening, while trust in existing establishments is weakening. Should the young and the dissatisfied seek to change things from within, or to drive change through external activism or other means?

In this session, young elected politicians and those from outside government discuss their paths inside and outside 'the establishment'.

Speakers include: **Yemi Babington-Ashaye**, founder of WEF Global Shapers and President of United People Global; **Nick Allardice**, Chief Product Officer, Change.org; and **Jeremy Roberts**, Member of the Ontario Provincial Parliament and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, Canada, and Blavatnik School alumnus.

11:00 Coffee

11:30 From conception to career: Building better futures for young people

OECD-level countries provide rich opportunities for a minority of cognitively gifted young people, but the majority face pitfalls all along the chain from conception to developing a career – from the damage caused by stress in early parenting to the limited availability of vocational training.

The Blavatnik School's Sir Paul Collier, author of *The Future of Capitalism*, talks to three people who are addressing some of the issues: Sara Fernandez, director of volunteer organisation Oxford Hub, who works on strengthening families with young children; Sandra McNally, Director of the Centre for Vocational Education Research; and Josh Babarinde, founder of a smartphone repair service staffed by ex-offenders and at-risk youth.

Speakers: **Josh Babarinde**, founder and CEO of Cracked It; **Sara Fernandez**, Director of Oxford Hub; **Sandra McNally**, Director of the Centre for Vocational Education Research and Professor of Economics at University of Surrey; and **Sir Paul Collier**, Professor of Economics and Public Policy, Blavatnik School.

12:30 Lunch

13:30 Keynote – Pete Buttigieg, Democratic presidential candidate for 2020

A video keynote speech from Pete Buttigieg, Mayor of South Bend, Indiana, who is running in the US Democratic presidential primaries for 2020 on a platform of generational change.

14:00 Regulating big tech

Younger generations are digital natives and companies such as Facebook, Google and Amazon are not just service providers, but platforms for our lives. In return for the benefits they offer, they have accrued near-monopoly status, huge profits and vast amounts of data. How should such platforms be regulated to maximise public benefit and minimise harm?

Speakers: **Nikhil Pahwa**, Indian journalist and digital rights activist who campaigned against Facebook Basics; and **Aida Ndiaye**, Blavatnik School alumna and Facebook's Public Policy Manager for Sub-Saharan Africa. Moderated by **Pepper Culpepper**, Blavatnik Chair in Government and Public Policy, Blavatnik School.

15:15 Coffee

15:45 Parallel sessions

Bringing the benefits of technology to all

While digital technologies appear to be ubiquitous, not everyone is benefiting from their potential to drive economic growth. In fact, three billion people – many of them young – will still be offline in 2023. How can the next generation bridge the divide and bring everyone into a digitally bright future?

Speakers include **Siddharth Shetty** from iSPIRT, a think tank for the Indian software industry; **Lizelle Strydom** from CareerBox, which prepares high-school pupils in South Africa for digital careers; **Beatriz Kira** from the Pathways for Prosperity Commission and who helped write Uber's regulations in Brazil; and **Aida Ndiaye**, Blavatnik School alumna and Facebook's Public Policy Manager for Sub-Saharan Africa. Moderated by **Stefan Dercon**, academic co-director for the Pathways for Prosperity Commission and Professor of Economic Policy, Blavatnik School of Government.

A new economics for a new generation

Many young people feel traditional economic models have let them down and are no longer fit for purpose. Inequality is high, and rising. What does the new generation of economists have to say, and what new models look most promising?

Speakers include **Mark Paul**, Assistant Professor of Economics at New College of Florida and previously active in the Occupy movement; **Maeve Cohen**, ex-Director of Rethinking Economics; and **Enrique Zapata** of CAF, the development bank of Latin America, a Blavatnik School alumnus. Moderated by **Eric Beinhocker**, Professor of Practice (Public Policy), Blavatnik School, and Executive Director of the Institute for New Economic Thinking, Oxford Martin School.

17:00 Closing remarks

17:15 Drinks

Friday 1 November

8:00 Registration and coffee

8:30 'Brexit breakfast' (situation dependent)

1 November may be the UK's first day outside of the EU – and whatever happens, divisions over the matter will remain deep. A chance for informal reflections convened with Blavatnik School and other University of Oxford thinkers.

9:15 Peter Frankopan: A historical perspective

Peter Frankopan is professor of global history at Oxford University and author of the bestselling 'The Silk Roads: A New History of the World.' Here he talks about the role of young leaders throughout history.

9:45 Intergenerational inequality: How real is it, and how important?

Baby boomers have been accused of stealing millennials' economic future. Dr Jennie Bristow, author of 'Stop Mugging Grandma', and Joseph Sternberg, author of 'Theft of a Decade', debate whether claims of generational injustice are fair or helpful.

Speakers: **Joseph Sternberg**, columnist for the Wall Street Journal, and **Jennie Bristow**, senior lecturer in sociology at Canterbury Christ Church University. Moderated by **Peter Kemp**, Associate Dean and Professor of Public Policy, Blavatnik School.

11:00 Coffee

11:30 Parallel sessions

The future of the planet

Younger generations have inherited a planet in great peril. The school strike movement's founder Greta Thunberg and others say governments and politicians have not done enough. At the same time, cities, businesses, and even some countries are setting and achieving targets few thought possible even a year ago. Where do 'outside' and 'inside' strategies work best, and how can they support each other?

With **Nina Möger Bengtsson**, author and member of the Danish Youth Climate Council; and **Temilola Fayokun**, representative from the UK Students Climate Network. Moderated by **Thomas Hale**, Associate Professor in Global Public Policy, Blavatnik School.

Youth and the city workshop

Over half of the world's population live in urban areas, and the countries with the fastest-growing urban populations are also those with the youngest populations. Cities are dominated by the young and mobile. How does municipal government ensure its own legitimacy in the face of an ever-changing populace?

Speakers: **Jefferson Kojee**, Mayor of Monrovia, the capital of Liberia; **Marian Schreier**, Mayor of Tengen, Germany (the youngest mayor in the country) and Blavatnik School alumnus; and **Soledad Nuñez Mendez**, former Minister of Housing in Paraguay and Blavatnik School alumna. Facilitated by **Oliver Harman**, Cities Economist, Blavatnik School.

12:45 Lunch

13:45 Parallel sessions

Intergenerational climate policy workshop

This interactive session comprises multiple small-group discussions that aim to tackle specific aspects of the climate crisis. Several senior policy figures will identify a pressing climate-related problem they face, and will brainstorm solutions, supported by technical experts from Oxford University.

Participants: **Dr Marc Venhaus**, senior analyst at Volkswagen AG, **Janar Akaev**, Member of Parliament in Kyrgyzstan; **Tom Hayes**, Oxford City Council climate lead; **HRH Prince Khalid bin Bandar**, Ambassador, Embassy of Saudi Arabia; **John Harris**, Board Member, Manhattan Community Board Five; and **Andres Diaz Silva**, Head of Innovation and Sustainable Development, Colombian Embassy. Moderated by **Thomas Hale**, Associate Professor in Global Public Policy, Blavatnik School.

Renewing integrity: Faming, not shaming

A world in which people with power are more accountable, where resources are used more wisely, and where integrity is celebrated would help younger generations regain faith in government. In this session Blair Glencorse, director of Accountability Lab, talks to Batool Asadi about her experience in fighting corruption as the first woman to serve as a field Assistant Commissioner in Balochistan, Pakistan.

Speakers: **Blair Glencorse**, director of Accountability Lab, and **Batool Asadi**, Assistant Commissioner in Quetta, Pakistan. Moderated by **Anna Petherick**, Departmental Lecturer in Public Policy, Blavatnik School.

15:10 Coffee

15:30 Parallel sessions

Cultural change and identity

Identity politics is nothing new – activists have always employed common identities in order to promote political change. But where such movements have historically invoked liberal values with claims of universal relevance, millennial movements have more often built upon narrower identities of gender, sexuality and class. How can we build meaningful political movements across newer identity divides?

Speakers: **Jane Shaw**, Principal of Harris Manchester College, Professor of the History of Religion, one of the principal investigators for the iGeneration Project, **Snigdha Poonam**, author of ‘Dreamers: How Young Indians Are Changing Their World’, and **Jiayang Fan**, staff writer at The New Yorker, reporting on China and US politics. Moderated by **Maya Tudor**, Associate Professor, Blavatnik School of Government.

Cities: Kabul - identity, legitimacy and governance

What roles do cities, with their youthful populations, play in developing a sense of identity and legitimacy in fragile contexts? This panel takes Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan and the fifth fastest-growing city in the world, as a case study to examine how urban contexts and actors can support, or undermine, national stability by providing a dense spatial context where new networks of solidarity, resistance, and governance emerge.

Speakers: **Shoaib Rahim**, former acting Mayor of Kabul; **Freshta Karim**, Blavatnik School alumna and pioneer of mobile libraries for children in Kabul; and **Sharif Hassan**, Kabul correspondent for the Washington Post. Moderated by **Shahrukh Wani**, Cities Economist, Cities that Work, Blavatnik School.

16:45 Closing remarks

17:00 Drinks