

EXECUTIVE PUBLIC LEADERS PROGRAMME



Image credit: Hufon + Crow

Hosted by the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford, the Executive Public Leaders Programme is a unique immersive executive education experience for the heads of public organisations.

EXECUTIVE PUBLIC LEADERS PROGRAMME

As the chief executive of any government department, agency, ministry, or multilateral organisation, it can often feel as if you are managing every conceivable organisational challenge at once, from the internal culture of your organisation to the mastery of new technology and the forging of international partnerships across the public and private sectors.

The Executive Public Leaders Programme strengthens your skills and provides you the conceptual frameworks and practical tools you need to lead a public sector organisation successfully in a rapidly changing and deeply challenging world.

Offering insight from the world’s leading scholars and practitioners, peer learning from your counterparts around the globe, and one-to-one guidance from a team of professional coaches, this programme is for you if you are heading a public-sector organisation or you are moving into such a position in the next two years. The experience is intense and demanding, engaging you through a mixture of classroom discussion, simulations, practical exercises and group work.

“The Blavatnik School has rapidly established itself as a leading education and research partner for senior public policymakers. If you want to be challenged and supported by smart people who share your commitment to public service, it’s hard to beat.”

Lord O’Donnell, head of the UK civil service 2005–11



Blavatnik School of Government

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University of Oxford

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EXECUTIVE PUBLIC LEADERS PROGRAMME

Programme details

- **Session dates:** 5–18 July 2020
- **Applications open:** Now
- **Faculty co-directors:** Associate Dean Calum Miller and Professor Christopher Stone
- **Fee: £18,000 per person**
Includes accommodation (4–18 July), meals, tuition, programme materials, executive coaching and extracurricular activities
- **Language:** English

“A fantastic wake-up call – took many of us with senior, but partial experience, and widened the spotlight, putting our shared experiences into a powerful context. A lot of practical ideas, and things to mull over. And fantastic socially.”

Vijay Rangarajan, UK Ambassador to Brazil, 2019 participant

Outcomes

You will leave Oxford better equipped with skills and insights that help you in your role, that you can bring home to your organisation, and that will strengthen your contribution to the public sector more widely. In particular, you will have strengthened your ability to respond to six challenges facing all leaders of major public institutions:

- Making tough decisions while managing the biases that distort decisions made under pressure.
- Strengthening internal culture and building strong teams able to deliver superior organisational performance.
- Building a culture of integrity in your organisation and sector.
- Communicating effectively within your own organisation, across government, and with diverse public audiences and partners.
- Creating effective partnerships with businesses and social sector organisations, and negotiating internationally across sectors to deliver better services, produce better outcomes, and advance the public interest.
- Adapting to changing digital technology and harnessing its benefits while managing the challenges of cyber threats.

The programme will help you to develop a personal and organisational action plan, supported by programme faculty, executive coaches and your peers.



EXECUTIVE PUBLIC LEADERS PROGRAMME

Programme faculty

You will be guided by a combination of our core faculty, leading practitioners, and renowned experts from other disciplines drawn from the wider University. Those whose involvement is already confirmed are listed below, with additional experts due to be confirmed shortly.



Professor Ngaire Woods CBE is founding dean of the Blavatnik School, and teaches several parts of the programme. Ngaire’s research focuses on the challenges of globalisation, global development, the role of international institutions and global economic governance.

She advises governments worldwide as well as multilateral organisations including the IMF, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the African Development Bank, the UNDP, and the Commonwealth Heads of Government. She has presented many documentaries for radio and television and authored numerous books.



Mara Airoidi

Mara Airoidi is Director of the Government Outcomes Lab within the Blavatnik School, leading research and practitioner engagement on how to improve the outcomes of government commissioning from the private and not-for-profit sector. An economist and decision analyst by

background, she has particular expertise in healthcare and has worked extensively with the UK and Italian national health systems. She has consulted for the UK and Canadian governments, NATO, and the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria.



Sir Paul Collier

Sir Paul Collier is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School. Paul is a world expert on development who has conducted internationally renowned research over several decades and has also served as Director of the Research Development Department of the World Bank (1998–2003). He advises governments and transnational bodies around the world and is a bestselling author of books including

The Bottom Billion and *Exodus*.



Sadie Creese

Sadie Creese is Professor of Cybersecurity in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Oxford. She teaches threat detection, risk assessment and operational aspects of security. Her current research portfolio includes threat modelling

(including anomaly detection for insider-threats), visual analytics for cybersecurity, risk propagation logics and communication, resilience strategies, and understanding cyber-harm for both single organisations and for nations. She previously worked as a cybersecurity expert in business and as a research scientist specialising in security for the UK’s Ministry of Defence.



Pepper Culpepper

Pepper Culpepper is Professor of Government and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School. His research focuses on the intersection between capitalism and democracy. His project *Banklash*, funded by a €2.5 grant from the European Research Council, looks at the

interactions between mass media, public opinion and policy. He previously taught at the European University Institute and at the Harvard Kennedy School. His book *Quiet Politics and Business Power: Corporate Control in Europe and Japan* was awarded the 2012 Stein Rokkan Prize for Comparative Social Science Research.



Stefan Dercon

Stefan Dercon is Professor of Economic Policy at the Blavatnik School and is an economist with a focus on African development. He was Chief Economist of the UK’s Department of International Development, the government department in charge of the UK’s aid policy

and spending, between 2011 and 2017. His current research examines the psychological challenges of poverty, the political economy of development, the challenges and opportunities of new technologies, and how to organise and finance responses to natural disasters and protracted humanitarian crises.



Thomas Elston

Thomas Elston is Associate Professor in Public Administration at the Blavatnik School. His research focuses on the organisation and management of the public sector; particularly the performance of public agencies, the administration of complex organisations, and

the political-administrative interface. He regularly consults for public agencies and NGOs in Europe, the US and elsewhere.



Nikolas Kirby

Nikolas Kirby is Research Fellow in Philosophy and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government. He currently holds a three-year Early Career Research Fellowship awarded by the Leverhulme Trust. He is also Director of the Building Integrity Programme within

the School. He is a co-founder of the Good Lad Initiative, a social enterprise that engages boys and men in discussions about masculinity, sexism and lad culture. He is also a trustee of Aurora UK, an overseas scholarship programme for indigenous Australians to attend Oxford and other universities in the UK; and an academic advisor to the Weidenfeld Hoffman Trust.



Tom Simpson

Tom Simpson is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School. He works on questions of trust: what is trust and what does it mean to be trustworthy? When is trust justified? When is it needed? He also examines issues at the

intersection of technology and security, and provides ethics and judgment consultancy, in particular to military clients. In addition to his research career, he was an officer with the Royal Marines Commandos for five years, serving in Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan.



Clare Leaver

Clare Leaver is Associate Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School and Fellow of University College. Prior to this, she was a University Lecturer in Economics in the Department of Economics at Oxford. Much of Clare's research focuses on careers and incentives

within the public sector. In previous research, she has studied Public Utility Commissioners in the United States, and the senior judiciary in England and Wales. In her current work she is focusing on incentives for educators in low-middle-income countries.



Chris Stone

Chris Stone is Professor of Practice of Public Integrity at the Blavatnik School. Chris has blended theory and practice throughout a career dedicated to justice sector reform, good governance, and innovation in the public interest, working with governments and civil

society organisations in dozens of countries worldwide. Throughout his career, Chris has been an advisor to public defenders, police leaders, and public prosecutors, assisting at the creation of the Crown Prosecution Service of England and Wales, the National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa, and the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.



Calum Miller

Calum Miller is Chief Operating Officer and Associate Dean of Administration at the Blavatnik School. Prior to joining the School, Calum was a senior UK civil servant who worked in the Treasury, the Cabinet Office, the Foreign Office and the

Department for International Development, and served as Principal Private Secretary to the head of the UK civil service (2009–10) and to the Deputy Prime Minister (2010–12).



Diego Piacentini

Diego Piacentini was the Government Commissioner for the Digital Agenda, Italy, up until 2018. Prior to that he was Senior Vice President of International Consumer Business at Amazon. Diego will be teaching as a practitioner on the digital module of the

programme. Having spent his career in the technology industry, he took a leave of absence from Amazon in 2016 to lead the Italian government's Digital Transformation Team, which provides central leadership and direction for a variety of digital projects involving the country's public administration.



Karthik Ramanna

Karthik Ramanna is Professor of Business and Public Policy and Director of the Master of Public Policy Programme at the Blavatnik School. His scholarship explores the role of business leaders in shaping the basic rules that govern capital-market societies. He was previously at the

Harvard Business School, where he taught the required MBA course 'Leadership and Corporate Accountability'. He has consulted with the Brookings Institution, the Center for Audit Quality, and several leading auditing and financial firms.

EXECUTIVE PUBLIC LEADERS PROGRAMME

The programme aims to strengthen the skills that senior public servants need to build cultures of excellence, effectiveness, and integrity throughout the institutions they lead and across the public sector more widely. Throughout the programme, participants work on skills and frameworks that are essential today across all branches and departments of government in any country or international institution:

- Communicating effectively
- Harnessing information technology
- Reducing cognitive bias in decision-making
- Managing people and performance
- Building partnerships and conducting negotiations
- Maintaining personal integrity.

The programme includes opportunities to pull lessons together, connecting the skills and frameworks in unique combinations for each participant, including work with individual coaches and time for group reflection.



University of Oxford

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“Any senior public sector leader who wants to make a bigger difference in the public interest will find that this course provides rich, multi-layered learning and enduring relationships”.

Rebecca Kitteridge, Director-General of Security, New Zealand, 2019 participant

Context and communication

The programme recognises the speed and depth of change confronting today’s leaders, and will open with an overview of the key drivers of change: technological, social, political and environmental.

Then you will examine how leaders of public organisations communicate to best effect: internally, across government, and beyond. Central to this capacity are the abilities to listen, to weave a narrative that is anchored in the values of the organisation, and to communicate with the clarity necessary to catch attention amid a jumble of competing messages around government.

These sessions should leave you with a fresh understanding of the role of storytelling as a fundamental part of leadership.

Data and technology

All leaders face multiple challenges managing today’s rapid changes in information technology. We will explore the complex political, regulatory, and technological challenges leaders face, using a case study on the development of 5G technology.

Another session will focus on cybersecurity, including the cybersecurity capacity maturity model being developed by the Global Cyber Security Capacity Centre, a research centre based within the Oxford Martin School.

Because specific priorities differ, you will be able to choose to dive deeper on topics such as building digital platforms for citizen services, the use of big data in policy formation, and regulating digital technology.

Decision-making

You will examine bias in decision-making, using a behavioural science lens. While senior decision-makers – just like academics – pride themselves on using the best advice and evidence available, there is plenty of evidence that decision-making can be distorted by psychological biases, as well as through social processes such as group deliberation.

During the session, you will explore framing bias, confirmation bias, overconfidence bias, and sunk-cost bias, as well as examples of group-think.

You will consider the consequences for decision-making, and test some simple techniques to overcome these biases in individual and group decisions.

Partnerships and negotiation

Tackling complex social problems requires multiple institutions to work together, often across the public, commercial and social sectors, and there are opportunities in many countries to incorporate new forms of financing from ‘impact investors’ and to craft new relationships among the parties, reshaping public/private ‘ecosystems’. These sessions will expose you to the latest research on pay-for-success contracts with social sector organisations, the use of social impact bonds and development bonds, and the choices public officials face in adopting new forms of public sector finance.

A full day on negotiation in the public interest will refresh and extend your familiarity with core concepts and expand your knowledge of more advanced negotiation tactics. Through interactive simulations, you’ll learn and practise specific analytical tools for conducting multistakeholder deliberations across international boundaries and with powerful commercial interests.

People and performance

You will examine techniques that have proven effective in building mutual respect as a dominant organisational culture. You will discuss recent incidents in the British Parliament and criticisms of longstanding practices there, considering how leaders might rebuild a culture of mutual respect after even just one damaging scandal.

Others sessions will examine techniques for effective team construction, the latest research on performance incentives, and the importance of accountability, value-alignment, and clarity of mission. You will examine the tension between efficiency and legitimacy in managing public sector service delivery, and you will explore the implication of leadership shared between political actors and career officials for setting priorities and for sustaining organisational values.

Integrity

Running across the entire programme, you will be working on issues of integrity. We will examine some classic texts as well as many contemporary ethical challenges faced by leaders like you. With your programme colleagues, you will build a moral language for understanding such scenarios and have greater confidence in handling such pressures.

These sessions will also explore how public leaders can build and promote integrity within their own organisations and what it means for an organisation to be trustworthy. A further set of sessions will examine how difficult it can be to recognise integrity, the factors that cloud our ethical decisions, and the long-term damage to one’s leadership that can flow from a single misjudgment.

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How to apply

The Executive Public Leaders Programme is aimed at senior public leaders who head a ministry, agency or international organisation (permanent secretaries, chief executives or equivalent), or are likely to move into such a position soon.

To apply, please complete the form at www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/eplp. You will be asked to upload a résumé/CV.

Admission to the programme is selective and is based on professional achievements, organisational responsibilities and personal motivation.

For further information on the programme, please contact the Executive Public Leaders Programme team: eplp@bsg.ox.ac.uk; +44 (0)1865 614343

“This is the kind of programme which every senior public leader needs to invest in.”

Marlene Malahoo Forte,
Attorney General of Jamaica,
2019 participant



Image credit: John Cairns

The Blavatnik School experience

The Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford, founded in 2010 with a uniquely global approach to government and policy, blends intellectual rigour with real-world practicality.

We undertake teaching, research and wider engagement with a mission to improve government worldwide. Since our foundation, we have learned from and advised multiple heads of government, several civil service chiefs, and many C-suite executives from organisations like the UN and the World Bank.

The top-ranked university in the world,¹ Oxford combines 900 years of history with the innovative mindset required for cutting-edge research. During the programme you will have opportunities to interact with researchers from multiple frontiers of knowledge.

Over its history, Oxford has produced nearly 60 heads of state and government and countless leaders of major public organisations. The Executive Public Leaders Programme reimagines this leadership education for the 21st century.

¹Times Higher Education World University Rankings.
Oxford has now ranked first for four years in a row.

“A remarkable experience in my career. The teaching method, content and colleagues make it a learning process that gives us a powerful practical tool to implement as heads of our institutions”.

Jaime Tohá, National Director of JUNAEB, Government of Chile, 2019 participant

This information is current at October 2019. Programme content and delivery may vary from the information provided, which should be taken to be indicative rather than tightly prescriptive.

The Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford, reserves the right to vary the programme in line with operational requirements.



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Our award-winning building offers a purpose-built teaching base for the programme – though learning will take place in a variety of locations chosen to stimulate reflection and imagination

Blavatnik School of Government



To learn more about the Blavatnik School of Government, visit www.bsg.ox.ac.uk.

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