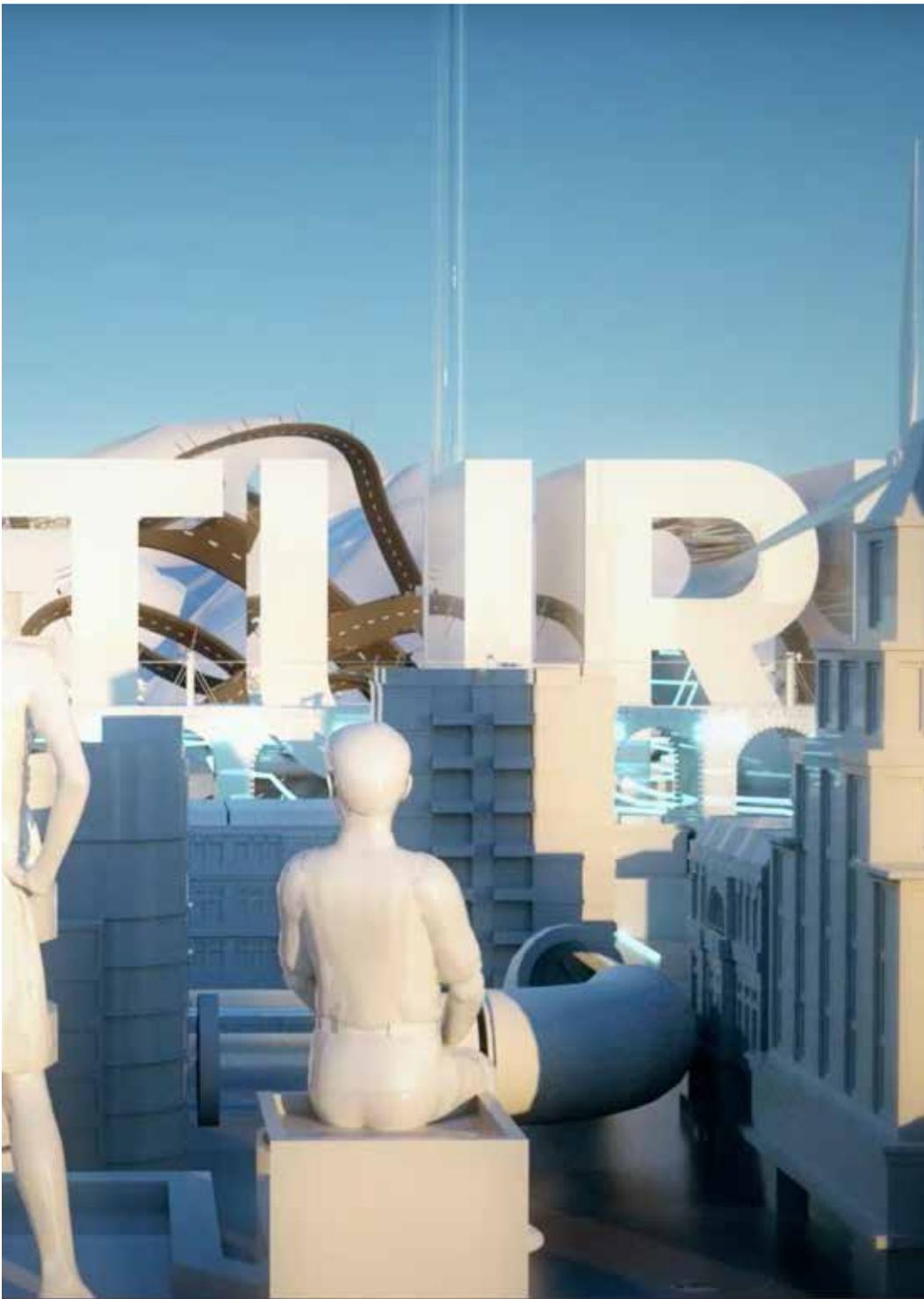


our future scotland

video biographies

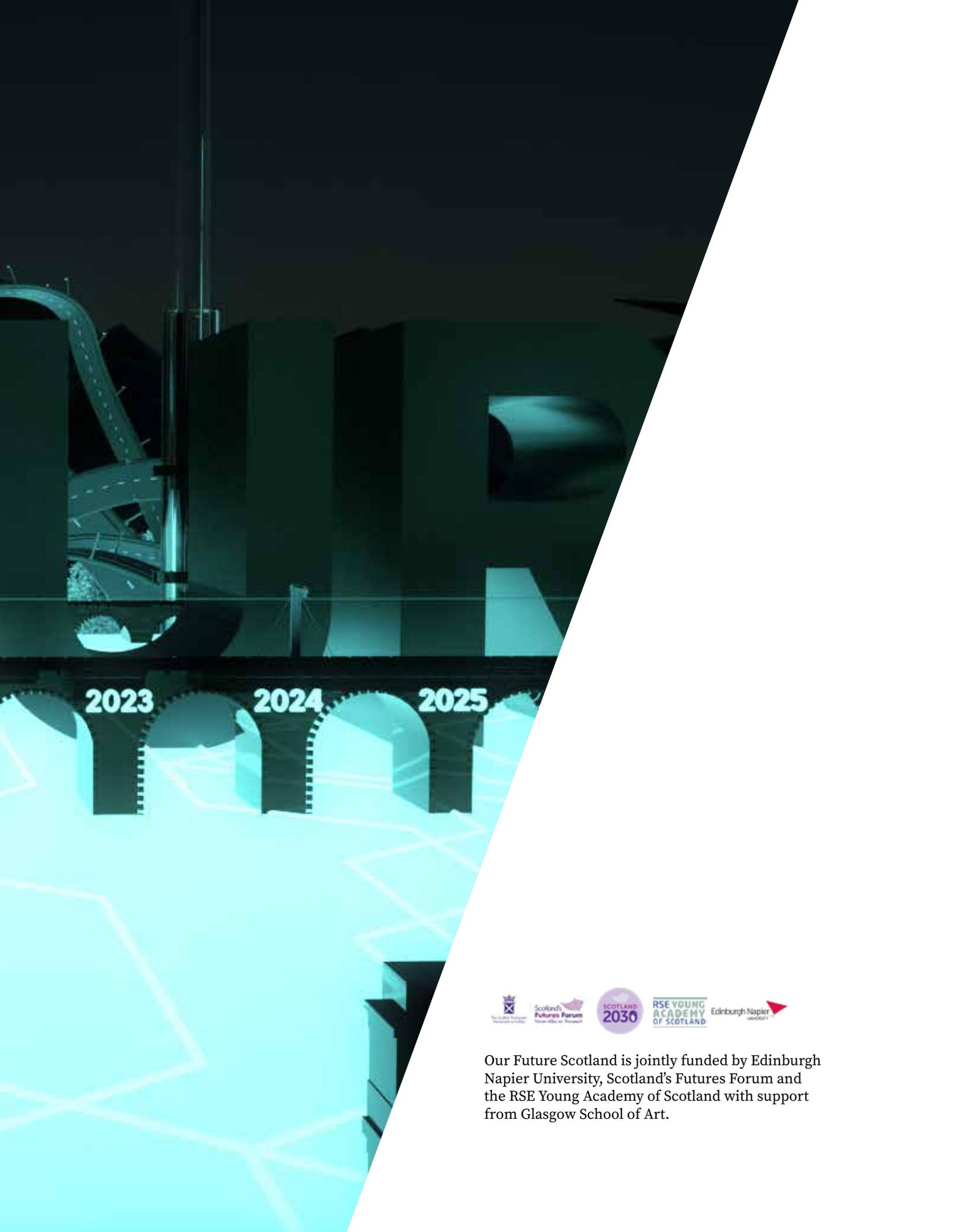


hello & welcome

Our Future Scotland seeks to engage people everywhere to find out their aspirations for Scotland's social, economic and cultural future. The public project launched in May 2018 and is part of a major initiative at the Scottish Parliament: the [Scotland 2030 Programme](#). This is exploring what Scotland could be like by 2030 and beyond. It is taking a number of different perspectives and considering the societal and cultural impact of existing and predicted trends across key areas such as education and learning, health and wellbeing, the environment, technology and the economy. The programme, led by the Parliament's think-tank Scotland's Futures Forum, is designed to simulate debate about the long-term challenges and opportunities Scotland faces.

Our Future Scotland is one element of the overall Scotland 2030 Programme. It is about engaging the public and encouraging national discussion and debate on four key societal themes: education, wellbeing, environment, and technology. To get the discussion going, videos have been drawn together featuring well-known Scottish and international figures from these sectors. They discuss their aspirations for the future of Scottish society, and are available to [view online](#). This booklet contains the biographies from those who have taken part in the project so far, but this is only the start. We want to hear your opinions and perspectives on the challenges and opportunities facing Scotland by 2030 and beyond.

Join the conversation!
#ourfuturescotland



2023

2024

2025



Our Future Scotland is jointly funded by Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland's Futures Forum and the RSE Young Academy of Scotland with support from Glasgow School of Art.

biographies



Prof. Sethu Vijayakumar

The University of Edinburgh

Professor Sethu Vijayakumar is the Director of the Edinburgh Centre for Robotics at the University of Edinburgh. His research interest spans a broad interdisciplinary curriculum involving basic research in the fields of robotics, statistical machine learning, motor control, planning and optimization in autonomous systems and computational neuroscience. His latest project involves a collaboration with NASA Johnson Space Centre on the Valkyrie humanoid robot being prepared for unmanned robotic pre-deployment missions to Mars. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the winner of the 2015 Tam Dalyell Prize for Excellence in Engaging the Public with Science.

Gillian Docherty

Chief Executive, The Data Lab

Gillian Docherty has over 22 years' experience working in the IT sector. She is responsible for delivering the strategic vision set out by The Data Lab board, which is to create over 250 new jobs and to generate more than £100 million to Scotland's economy. Prior to this Gillian held a range of Senior Leadership roles at IBM UK including Leader for Software Business in Scotland, Systems and Technology Sales Leader and Territory Leader for General Business Scotland. Gillian is on the Board of Tech Partnership Scotland and is also a Board member of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. Gillian has a degree in Computing Science from Glasgow University and is married with a daughter.



Dr. Gregor Hofer

Chief Executive,
Speech Graphics

Dr Gregor Hofer holds a PhD in Informatics from the University of Edinburgh. Prior to co-founding Speech Graphics, he was a research fellow at the School of Informatics and a senior researcher at the Telecommunications Research Centre Vienna where he successfully commercialised a text to speech prototype that now powers several government webpages. Gregor co-authored grants worth £1.5 million to fund the commercialisation of technology. In addition to his full-time role at Speech Graphics he is a Supervisory Board member at System Industrie Electronic Holding AG.



Chris van der Kuyl

Chairman, 4J Studios

Chris van der Kuyl is the Chief Executive of 4J Studios whose expertise combines the start-up, development and market listed business arena in the technology, media and entertainment sectors. Chris grew his first business, VIS Entertainment Plc out of a bedroom in Dundee to become a global player in the creation of leading-edge entertainment property for computer, television and video games platforms worldwide. He is widely recognised as one of the UK's the leading young entrepreneurs and is a member of the Global Leaders of Tomorrow Programme at the World Economic Forum. As one of the youngest Fellows of the Royal Society of Edinburgh Chris sits as a member of the Scottish Scientific Advisory committee who advise the Scottish government on all areas of science and technology.



Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP

First Minister of Scotland

Nicola Sturgeon is a Scottish politician who is the current First Minister of Scotland and leader of the Scottish National Party, in office since November 2014. She is the first woman to hold either position and is the MSP for Glasgow Southside constituency. Before she became an MSP, Nicola worked as a solicitor at Drumchapel Law Centre, helping people with legal problems. Nicola was elected as an MSP representing the city of Glasgow in 1999 and was re-elected as a Glasgow MSP in 2003. In 2007, Nicola won the Glasgow Govan constituency from Labour.

Chris Brookmyre

Author

Christopher Brookmyre is a Scottish novelist whose novels mix comedy, politics, social comment and action with a strong narrative. He is the author of 18 published novels to date, the latest being *Dead Girl Walking*. His debut novel was *Quite Ugly One Morning*. In 2006 Christopher won the seventh Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction with *All Fun and Games until Somebody Loses an Eye*. He has also been shortlisted three times for the Theakstons Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year Award: in 2007 for *All Fun And Games Until Somebody Loses An Eye*, in 2008 for *A Tale Etched in Blood and Hard Black Pencil* and in 2012 for *Where The Bodies Are Buried*.



Jackie Kay

Scots Makar

Jackie Kay is a Scottish poet and novelist and the third modern Makar, the Scottish poet laureate. She was made MBE for services to literature in 2006 and is currently Chancellor of Salford University. Her poetry collections include *Darling: New and Selected Poems* (2007), and *Fiere* (2011), which reflects on her Nigerian and Scottish heritage. Her memoir *Red Dust Road* (2010), which she has called a 'love letter' to her white adoptive parents, won the Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust Book of the Year Award in 2011. Her latest collection, featuring poems from her residency at the Ardtornish Estate, is *The Empathetic Store* (Mariscat, 2015).



David Baillie

Writer and Artist

David Baillie is a Scottish writer and artist best known for creating the Vertigo comic series *Red Thorn*, and for writing stories for *2000 AD* and *Judge Dredd Magazine* - for which he also once wrote a monthly column describing his life as a comics creator. He's also written and drawn for *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Penguins of Madagascar*, *MEGA!*, *Horrible Histories*, *Comics International* and *Zombies and Robots*. His stories have been translated into almost a dozen languages. His screenwriting has been nominated for a BAFTA/Rocliffe Award and shortlisted for the hotly-contested *Red Planet Prize* and the *BBC Scotland Writes Drama Competition* and he recently worked with the prestigious *Ragdoll Productions* on a couple of television projects.



Willie Rennie MSP

Leader,
Scottish Liberal Democrats

Willie Rennie is the Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats and Member of the Scottish Parliament for North East Fife. He was Chief Executive of the Scottish Liberal Democrats and the Party's Chief of Staff at the Scottish Parliament between 1997 and 2001. He was MSP for the Mid Scotland and Fife region from 2011 to 2016 and before that Member of Parliament for Dunfermline and West Fife between 2006 and 2010. Willie went to college in Paisley and before his election worked for a small Scottish communications firm, helping advise the Royal Society of Chemistry and Asthma UK. When in Parliament he was a member of the House of Commons Defence Select Committee, Shadow Defence Minister and Chairman of the Lib Dems' Campaigns and Communications Committee.

Peter Cairns

Director,
Scotland The Big Picture

Peter is a conservation photographer with 20 years of professional experience under his belt. He has co-founded major communication initiatives such as Tooth & Claw, Highland Tiger, Wild Wonders of Europe and 2020VISION. Peter is a co-founder of The Wild Media Foundation, the Company behind SCOTLAND: The Big Picture. A long-time advocate for rewilding, Peter is a serving Board Member of Scottish charity Trees for Life and is a Senior Fellow of the International League of Conservation Photographers.



Ruth Davidson

Leader, Scottish Conservative Party

Ruth Elizabeth Davidson is a Scottish politician and heads the Scottish Conservatives. She sits as Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) for Edinburgh Central. After graduating from Edinburgh University, she worked as a BBC journalist. She served in the Territorial Army, as a signaller. After leaving the BBC in 2009 to study at Glasgow University, Davidson joined the Conservative Party, and was the party's candidate in the Glasgow North East constituency at a 2009 by-election and at the 2010 general election. In the 2011 Scottish Parliament election, Davidson stood for election in the Glasgow Kelvin constituency and on the Glasgow regional list. Following party leader Annabel Goldie's resignation in May 2011, Davidson stood in the subsequent leadership election which she won becoming party leader in November 2011.



Richard Leonard

Leader,
Scottish Labour

Richard Leonard is a British Labour Party politician who is leader of the Scottish Labour Party, and Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Central Scotland region. He studied politics and economics at the University of Stirling. Richard worked as Assistant Secretary of the Scottish Trade Union Congress where he was responsible for economic affairs in a post he held for five years. Before that he worked with the highly-respected socialist Member of the European Parliament, Alex Falconer, as a researcher and campaigner. He was first elected to the Labour Party Scottish Executive Committee in 1997 and is a former chair of the Scottish Labour Party.

Claire Mack

Chief Executive,
Scottish Renewables



Claire Mack is the Chief Executive at Scottish Renewables. Prior to this she was the Director of Policy and Place at Scottish Council for Development and Industry. Claire also spent 12 years at Ofcom, the communications regulator in the UK, latterly as Regulatory Affairs Manager in telecoms, radio spectrum and postal services.

Simon Forrest

Chief Executive, Nova Innovation

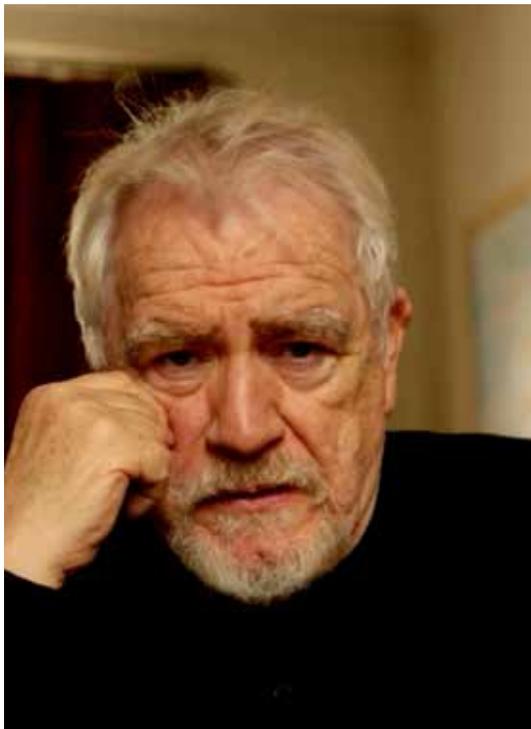
Simon Forrest is the founder and Managing Director of Nova Innovation Ltd. Simon is an engineer with over 20 years' industrial experience gained with industry-leading companies including Wood Mackenzie, Scottish Power and IBM. Simon has a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Edinburgh, an M.Eng from the University of Strathclyde, is a Chartered Engineer and an IET member. Nova Innovation is a world-leading tidal energy technology company. In 2014 the company delivered the world's first community owned tidal energy project and in 2015 will deploy the world's first in-sea tidal turbine array in the Bluemull Sound in Shetland.



Deirdre Michie

Chief Executive, Oil and Gas UK

Deirdre Michie has extensive experience as a senior business leader in the oil and gas industry in the UK and globally. She joined Shell's downstream operations with an LLB Hons in Scots law, undertaking a variety of business roles before moving to Shell's UK upstream operations as Senior Commercial Negotiator. Deirdre was appointed CEO of Oil & Gas UK in May 2015 and is a member of MER, the UK Government and industry forum. She is Chair of Common Data Access Limited, a director of OPITO Strategic Ltd, a Board Member of Opportunity North East and of the SCDI (Scottish Council for Development & Industry). Deirdre is also a member of the UK government's Women's Business Council which is focused on increasing women's contribution to economic growth.



Brian Cox

Actor

Brian Cox, CBE is a Scottish actor who works with the Royal Shakespeare Company, where he gained recognition for his portrayal of King Lear. Cox is also known for appearing in Super Troopers, The Bourne Identity, The Bourne Supremacy, X2, Braveheart, Rushmore, Rise of the Planet of the Apes, Troy, and Doctor Who. He was the first actor to portray Hannibal Lecter on film in 1986's Manhunter. An Emmy Award-winner, Cox has also been nominated for Golden Globe, BAFTA, and Screen Actors Guild Awards. In 2006, Empire readers voted him the recipient of the Empire Icon Award.



Debora Kayembe

Human Rights Lawyer

Ms Debora Kayembe was called to the RDC Bar in September 2000. As principal of Debora Kayembe MITI, Lawyer- Linguist, she focuses on matters involving legal, Political, language issues as well as Human Rights and International Law. Ms Kayembe settled in the UK in 2005 and soon joined the Institutes of Translation and Interpreting. She has been a qualified member of the Institute since 2010 and qualified for five languages: French, English, Swahili, Lingala and Kikongo. Ms Debora Kayembe joined the Assistant Counsel list of the International Criminal Court / Victim support section; she is included at the Sollicitor roll at the Barreau de Matadi / RDC; she is a qualified paralegal in civil Court practice in Scotland and a board of director member of the Scottish Refugee Council.

Maggie Chapman

Co-Convenor, Scottish Green Party

Maggie Chapman is Co-convenor of the Scottish Greens and a trade unionist. She was a member of the Smith Commission and COSLA's Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy. Maggie served as an Edinburgh Councillor for 8 years and is the first politician in Scotland to call for the introduction of a Living Wage. Maggie has fought for better housing regulations, including Living Rents and the regulation of private landlords. Originally from Zimbabwe, she has lived in Edinburgh and Dundee. She has worked in higher education as a lecturer, in the third sector for a women's charity, and is Rector of the University of Aberdeen.



Dr. Alessandra de Silva Dantas

MRC CMM,
The University of Aberdeen

Dr Alessandra de Silva Dantas is a Research Fellow the MRC funded Centre for Medical Mycology (CMM). Its vision is to facilitate innovative interdisciplinary research and training that will substantially advance our understanding of fungal pathogenesis and host immunity. The CMM is generating knowledge that has the potential to improve the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of fungal diseases, an area of infectious disease that has enormous impact on human health.



Prof. Lis Neubeck

Edinburgh Napier University

Lis Neubeck is Professor and Head of Cardiovascular Health in the School of Health and Social Care at Edinburgh Napier University. Her research focuses on innovative solutions to secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease, identification and management of atrial fibrillation, and use of new technologies to improve access to health care. Lis has secured over £1.5m in competitive research funding and has won notable prizes and awards for her research, including the prestigious Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand Nursing Prize (2013). She is also a Fellow of the European Society of Cardiology.



Philip Long

Director, V&A Dundee

Philip Long is the director of V&A Museum of Design Dundee. Born in Edinburgh, Philip has a wealth of experience in arts and culture, having spent his 20-year career working in museums across the country. He is passionate about culture in Scotland, previously holding high-profile roles in both Edinburgh and Glasgow, including National Galleries of Scotland.

Mary T. MacInnes

Retired Head Teacher

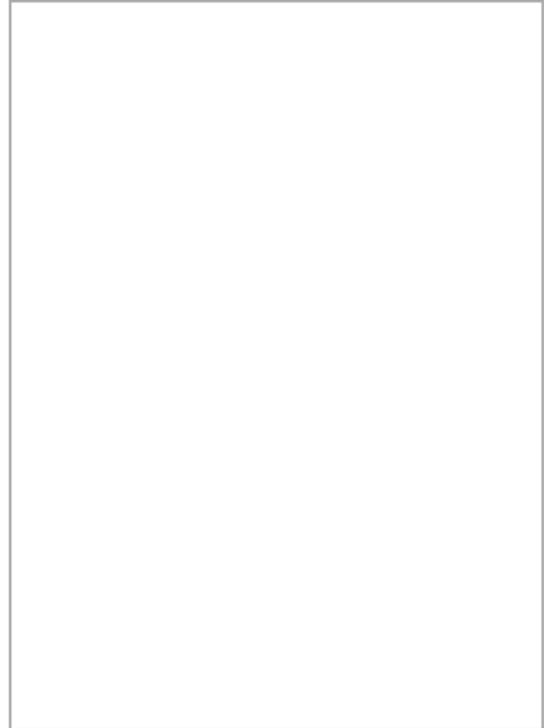
Ceòlas' chair Mary T. MacInnes has numerous roles within the local community relating to education, Gaelic language and adult learning. Mary has very recently retired from being headteacher of Sgoil an Lochdair and has wide experience in development communities. She has held roles as a local authority representative on the Scottish Government working groups. Mary has also sat on the board of a number of national organisations such as the Scottish Arts Council and MG Alba. Mary is the Chairperson of Ceolas Uibhist Ltd, an internationally acclaimed Gaelic arts organisation based in South Uist which is currently endeavouring to progress an ambitious project in partnership with LCC, UHI to establish a world class centre for music and Gaelic in South Uist. She is a board member of Bòrd na Gàidhlig.



You're Next

Your opinions and perspectives on the challenges and opportunities facing Scotland 2030 and beyond are also important. Share your views via any of our social media channels using the hashtag #ourfuturescotland

www.ourfuturescotland.com



Rt Hon Ken Macintosh MSP

Presiding Officer,
Scottish Parliament

The Rt Hon Ken Macintosh MSP Ken was first elected to the Scottish Parliament in 1999. At the 2016 Scottish Parliamentary election, Ken was returned as a member for the West of Scotland region before being elected as the Scottish Parliament's fifth Presiding Officer by his peers. Upon his election as Presiding Officer, Ken said that he would continue the programme of Parliamentary reform, seeking to work together across the party divide for the common good.

