
Event Agenda

ISE Student Recruitment Conference 2025

Monday, June 23, 2025

Registration opens

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM | Location: Foyer

Welcome and ISE Opening Address

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Affinity 1

Speakers



Sarah Hathaway

Joint CEO | ISE



Stephen Isherwood

Joint CEO | ISE



Joan Moore

Ise Chair Head Of Early Talent Recruitment | Accenture

Opening Keynote Session: The day after the robots come: the Early Careers edition

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Affinity 1

Bill Boorman has spent a working lifetime in and around recruiting. He has seen hype, noise, reality and change loudly proclaimed over the years. In this session, Boorman looks ahead and asks the question What happens when AI technology arrives. How will this impact the way that we hire. What impact does the AI applicant have on our well honed hiring systems. What will the new entry jobs be now, when agentic agents do the work that currently forms early careers. What do we consider cheating in the AI age. How do we best prepare students for entry in to this new world of work.

What is happening now that gives us an indication of what is coming next. 2025 is the year that Boorman calls proof of concept. The year where real hiring tests are pitching people against agentic agents in AB tests, to determine how hiring , and the work of talent acquisition teams will emerge in 2026. The probable winners and losers.

Expect a few surprises, with more than a hint of controversy.

Speaker



Bill Boorman

Keynote Speaker | Guest of the ISE

Lunch and networking in the exhibition

12:00 PM – 1:15 PM | Location: Belmont Suite/Affinity 2

Keynote Session: The Future of Work in the age of AI

1:15 PM – 2:15 PM | Location: Affinity 1

Every day we hear of advances in AI, with new systems — from ChatGPT to DALL-E — taking on activities that, until recently, we thought only human beings alone could ever do: writing effective code and drafting compelling documents, designing beautiful buildings, and diagnosing medical illnesses. What does all this progress mean for the future of work? It is one of the greatest questions of our time. And in this optimistic and pragmatic talk, Daniel Susskind explores what lies ahead, drawing on his best-selling books, 'The Future of the Professions' and 'A World Without Work.'

Speaker



Daniel Susskind

Research Professor in Economics and Bestselling Author | King's College London

Comfort Break

2:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Beyond Processes: How Early Career Employers Balance Business Needs with Candidate-Centred Hiring

2:30 PM – 3:15 PM | Location: Affinity 1

In today's competitive hiring landscape, early career teams face growing pressure to deliver ROI, high-quality hires, and exceptional candidate experiences—despite rising application volumes and post-pandemic skill disparities. This session features leaders from Deloitte, HSBC, and Sky—who collectively manage over 200,000 applications a year—as they share innovations introduced in 2024/5 to meet these challenges. From pre-skilling to onboarding, they'll walk through their candidate journeys, highlighting where feedback

reports fall short and what truly adds value. The panel will explore how skills, values, technology, and human touchpoints are embedded throughout their processes, and how they navigate trade-offs to protect candidate experience without compromising quality. Expect honest insights into what's working, what's not, and the data behind their decisions. Learn how employer branding plays a pivotal role in creating meaningful candidate connections—and walk away with practical strategies to deliver business impact while strengthening every applicant through the recruitment experience.

Speakers



Nicky Garcea

Co-CEO | Cappfinity



Lauren McCafferty

Director of Early Careers | Deloitte



Glen McGowan

Group Head Emerging Talent | HSBC



Camilla McBride

Head Of Early Careers | Sky

Bridging The ROI Gap In Early Careers Recruitment

2:30 PM – 3:15 PM | Location: Ashted 1

74% of organisations admit they struggle to demonstrate ROI in Early Careers recruitment and development. Failure to bridge this gap could lead to reduced investment, talent shortages, and missed opportunities for underrepresented groups in the workforce. In this accelerated and interactive session, join The Smarty Train's data experts to explore why ROI measurement remains a persistent challenge in Early Careers recruitment, and what steps Early Careers teams can take to ensure its success. Through interactive audience engagement and science-backed tools, this session will grant attendees actionable insights that they can use to better track success, build a compelling business case for investment, and align their recruitment strategies with broader organisational goals.

Speakers



Khairunnisa Mohamedali

Managing Director & Chief Innovation Officer | The Smarty Train



James Gordanifar

Director of Early Careers Advisory | The Smarty Train

Empowering candidates: Could self-screening be the future of volume hiring?

2:30 PM – 3:15 PM | Location: Ashted 2

Take a step into the shoes of Eli and Josephine, a school leaver and a graduate looking to kickstart their careers with an employer of choice. Together with our panel of emerging talent and employer brand leaders, we'll follow Eli & Josephine through their job hunting journeys, taking time at each stage to look at how strategies to engage these candidate personas are changing. We'll look at candidate data (from Connectr Talent Technology's 2024 annual survey, with over 1000 responses from early careers candidates) and hear real stories and experiences from young people to bring to life not just the candidate experience, but the 'rejection experience' as well. Our panel will share their evolving strategies to humanise interactions with candidates whilst maintaining efficiency in a volume hiring space; we'll discuss the role of employer brand and how employers can create an experience that lets candidates screen and exclude themselves, giving power back to candidates, reducing applications volumes and bringing forward only the best fitting candidates, without the detrimental impact on brand perception.

Speakers



Will MJ

Strategic Account Director | Connectr Talent Technology



Grace Rutherford

Graduate Recruitment Manager | British Airways



Gregor Munro

Graduate Retail Manager | Marks & Spencer



Kirsten Penny

Talent Acquisition Manager | Marks & Spencer

Inclusion

2:30 PM – 3:15 PM | Location: Ashted 3

GSK and recruiters SRG share how working together on diversity programmes has led to changes which benefit everyone. They recognise when approaching DEI, it's crucial to balance the unique experiences of individuals with understanding the common human connections that unite us all. In this session, we will explore how to harmonise these approaches, ensuring that we both recognise what connects us all and appreciate the unique contributions of each individual. This integrated strategy will help foster a more inclusive and thriving environment for everyone. Working with the 10,000 Interns Foundation (which exists to transform the workplace, ensuring both equitable access to opportunity and equitable experience paid internships), GSK & SRG initially aimed to broaden the horizons of Black students and graduates and help to unlock access to opportunities for people with a disability. However, this initiative has not only benefited individuals by providing them with valuable experiences, but also added to the workplace culture, with the interns becoming agents for change, and contributing to a more inclusive environment for everyone involved. As a result (directly or indirectly) from GSK hiring diverse talent, we have learnt to view diversity through an intersectional lens which has led to unexpected changes and help foster a more inclusive workplace.

Speakers



Tricia Lucas-Clarke

Early careers Inclusion Recruitment Manager | GSK



Rhona Mechan

Early Careers Delivery Manager | Srg Talent

Refreshments and Networking in Exhibition

3:15 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Affinity 2

Can D&I Survive the ‘Wokelash’?

3:45 PM – 4:30 PM | Location: Affinity 1

D&I efforts are facing unprecedented challenges with some major organisations having announced significant rollbacks in their D&I programmes, citing cost pressures, shareholder priorities, and cultural backlash against so-called “woke” agendas. This session will unpack the implications of this trend for the UK, particularly in the realm of early careers, where D&I initiatives have become integral to attracting diverse, high-potential talent. We’ll explore whether UK businesses should follow this retreat or take a different path to ensure they continue to support underrepresented groups and achieve long-term success.

Speakers



Joe Seddon

Ceo And Founder | Zero Gravity



Harminder Dhillon

Global Head Of Emerging Talent | Hsbc



Mark Lomas

Head Of Culture | Lloyds Of London



Sophie Radford

Head Of Partnership | Zero Gravity



Verity Magee

Group Social Sustainability Manager | Kier

Balancing innovation with ethics: 3 must-do actions to protect diversity in the era of the AI-enabled candidate

3:45 PM – 4:30 PM | Location: Ashted 1

AI is revolutionising recruitment. Two in three students now use AI in the process — and Early Careers teams are under pressure to respond. But while AI offers efficiency gains, it also raises tough questions: can you identify quality candidates at scale without sacrificing inclusion? And with so much noise out there, what does responsible use of AI actually look like? In this session, we’ll share three practical steps to shape your AI strategy – without compromising ethics or candidate experience. Expect fresh data, real-world case studies, and unfiltered student insights, including: Where AI can help (and hinder) diversity What candidates want from an AI-enabled hiring process What a scalable but equitable but equitable sifting model looks like today Join us to hear how teams at Amazon, HMRC and University College London are embracing AI responsibly – and get your Early Careers strategy future-ready.

Speaker



Robert Newry

Co-Founder | Arctic Shores

Coaching students to success

3:45 PM – 4:30 PM | Location: Ashted 2

In this fireside chat with Georgina Sweeney (Deutsche Bank) and Nichola Robinson (AMS) hosted by Nic Sullivan (Meet & Engage) they will discuss their vision to improve student outcomes, student wellbeing and personal development, engagement and belonging via AMS’ Coaching proposition.

Set the context of increasing applications and Deutsche Bank’s number of applications rising to 140:1. Impacting on students wellbeing, resilience and ability to do their best in the recruitment process. Their aim is to support candidates with reasonable adjustment to start on day one and Provide students with group and personalised support as they move through the process due to real time sentiment and feedback.

AMS implemented their Candidate Coaching Proposition, a personalised engagement experience designed to support students between the point of application through to offer and onwards to day one in role.

Their proposition supports a number of key dynamics around students trying to get either work experience, an apprenticeship, internship or full time role. It also supports organisations through educating students to be more productive and add value from day one, focus on soft skills to link into the training they will get when they join.

Candidates register for their coaching journey on a virtual platform called Meet & Engage, a social-style portal where they will find content like wall messages, chatbot, videos, polls, infographics, and an automated helpdesk available 24/7. They receive relevant curated content at timely intervals all the way up until their start date with the aim of increasing engagement and readiness to begin their career, including live coaching webinars with very high uptake.

Deutsche Bank have received nearly 140,000 applications globally to date for their early careers 2025 programme and have made just over 1500 offers so far – so that’s over 100,000 individuals who have access to live career coaching with AMS Talent Coaches whether they are successful with an offer at Deutsche Bank or not.

This truly embodies the vision the Bank seeks to realize, making sure that everyone's got the opportunity to have this kind of learning and development as part of their application journey, but also giving them something back so that even if they are rejected, they feel like they've had a good experience, the brand is positive, and most importantly they've learnt something that they can take to other interviews and other applications, hopefully supporting their sense of wellbeing and confidence and motivation as they move forward.

Speakers



Nichola Robinson

Client Director - Early Careers & Campus | AMS



Nicola Sullivan

Solutions Director | Meet & Engage



Georgina Sweeney

Early Careers Employer Brand Lead | Deutsche Bank

Strategies to support and recruit candidates from diverse backgrounds

3:45 PM – 4:30 PM | Location: Ashted 3

UCAS' latest Project Next Generation insights into 13-17 year-olds offer a fresh perspective on the motivations and barriers young people face when exploring early career pathways. This research highlights the experiences of underrepresented groups, including neurodiverse students, women aspiring to STEM careers, students from ethnic minority backgrounds, and those from lower socio-economic contexts. This interactive panel session will explore both the successes and challenges of recruiting and supporting young people from diverse backgrounds. It features a leading employer recognised for their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, alongside an apprentice and a graduate scheme participant—both from underrepresented groups. Together, the panel will delve into effective strategies for attracting diverse talent, fostering inclusive workplaces, and breaking down barriers to participation. The employer panelist will share their proven strategies for recruiting and retaining diverse talent and offer practical recommendations for other organisations. Meanwhile, the apprentice and graduate scheme participant will provide powerful first-hand accounts of their journeys, highlighting the challenges they faced, the support that made a difference, and their advice for employers striving to build more inclusive and accessible opportunities. This session offers actionable insights and strategies for employers and educators, equipping you with the tools to support young decision-makers, promote diversity in early career pathways, and build inclusive workplaces where all talent can thrive.

Speakers



Pete Milsom

Partnerships Manager - Apprenticeships | Ucas



James Austen

Director | The School Outreach Company



Hannah Rashidi

Product Manager | BT



Sophie Burnett

Student Recruitment Senior Manager | KPMG



Priyank Kishore

Senior Audit Associate | KPMG

Comfort break / Move to next session

4:30 PM – 4:45 PM

Keynote Session: The Political Outlook

4:45 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Affinity 1

Sam looks ahead to the big political challenges and decisions that will shape the landscape for employers, higher education and students over the next year. He will cover topics including: the upcoming spending review, education policy, and the impact of devolution.

Speaker



Sam Freedman

Senior Fellow | Institute of Government

Reflections and Close of Day 1

5:45 PM – 6:00 PM | Location: Affinity 1

Speaker



Stephen Isherwood

Joint CEO | ISE

Welcome Party kindly sponsored by Young Professionals

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM | Location: Belmont Suite/Affinity 2

At the end of day one, this event gives delegates the opportunity to reflect on the day's conference sessions and also get to know peers

in a relaxed setting. Make sure to add this valuable networking experience to your conference schedule.

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Morning Stretch and Mindfulness

7:00 AM – 7:30 AM | Location: Belmont Suite

Speaker



Sarah Hathaway
Joint CEO | ISE

Early Morning Energiser Session: Quick Fire Solutions with the Solution Provider Steering Group

7:45 AM – 8:30 AM | Location: Ashtead Suite

This will be an engaging, high-energy session focused on rapidly addressing multiple attendee challenges. A central box will be placed in the room to collect challenges throughout Day 1, so look out for this! During the session, attendees will rotate through challenges quickly—similar to speed dating—spending around 5–7 minutes on each challenge. Participants will identify common themes or challenges that might be solved with a single solution, in a format which fosters interaction, collaboration, and dynamic problem-solving.

Speakers



Izzy Miller
Account Manager | Pathway Ctm



Nichola Robinson
Client Director - Early Careers & Campus | AMS



Mike Grey
Director | Gradconsult



Mark Griffith
Director | FourthWall



Emily Bryant
Group Head of Marketing | Amberjack



Ben Williams
Founder and Managing Director | Sten10

Registration opens

8:00 AM – 10:30 AM | Location: Foyer

Welcome and scene setting for day 2

8:50 AM – 9:00 AM | Location: Affinity 1

Speaker



Sarah Hathaway
Joint CEO | ISE

Keynote Session: Mindfulness at Work

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM | Location: Affinity 1

Discover how HSBC is pioneering the integration of mindfulness into the workplace in this insightful keynote by Sean Tolram, Head of Mindfulness at HSBC. Drawing on neuroscience and practical techniques, Sean explores how mindfulness can reduce stress, improve focus, and support early-career professionals navigating the challenges of recruitment and workplace integration. With a focus on real-world application, this session dispels common myths, highlights the impact of mindfulness on performance and well-being, and offers simple, science-backed tools to help individuals thrive in high-pressure environments.

Speaker



Sean Tolram
Head of Mindfulness | HSBC

Refreshments and Networking in Exhibition

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM | Location: Belmont Suite/Affinity 2

ISE Panel Discussion: Redefining Student Recruitment and Development in the Age of AI

10:30 AM – 11:15 AM | Location: Affinity 1

With employers receiving record numbers of applications, students facing a high rejection rate, and AI set to disrupt how recruitment and development strategies are delivered, our expert panel will take a deep look at how our industry needs to adapt and evolve to meet the challenges presented by uncertain times.

Speakers



Stephen Isherwood

Joint CEO | ISE



Bill Boorman

Keynote Speaker | Guest of the ISE



Tracy Scurry

Newcastle University



Kate Daubney

Kate Daubney Careers



Lauren McCafferty

Director of Early Careers | Deloitte

Comfort break / Move to next sessions

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM

In a world of AI and increased applications, have we lost the personal touch? A masterclass in how user-generated-content (UGC) is transforming early careers recruitment

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM | Location: Affinity 1

We're at a pivotal moment in the early careers world. While students and employers are benefitting from the positive developments of AI, there's a risk we could lose the most crucial part of recruitment - the personal touch. According to our comprehensive Student Research Survey to over 4,000 students, 63% said that meeting an employer in person made them feel more confident in applying for roles. For many, being present at every campus across the country is not always possible so how can employers remain human throughout their marketing with time and resource challenges? In our session, we'll take a deep dive into how to ensure employers aren't losing personability in their early recruitment strategies. With a specific focus on how to maximise the benefits of content creation, social media and in person campus activations. We often hear about how important authenticity is, and 80% of students told us they want to see more authentic content from employers. But what does 'authentic content' actually mean and how do we put this into practice? We will bring this to life by showcasing the type of content that resonates with the student audience, and how employers can harness this within their attraction and retention strategies. These insights will be underpinned by our recent student survey to 4,000 14-23 year olds who have shared their views on how they want to see real life people and experiences from employers they are applying to. Plus, what types of content and social media platforms they are using the most in their job search. These insights will be brought to life through a student and employer panel where we will discuss what user-generated content (UGC) is, how to create it effortlessly and which social media platforms deliver the best results for employer branding and recruitment marketing. The session will share practical tips and advice on how employers can harness the people that work in their organisations to bring real experiences to life.

Speakers



Emma Miles

Client Partner and Senior B2B Marketing Manager | Higherin



Ali Lindsay

CEO | Higherin



Ella Perryman

Head of Content | Higherin



Victoria Whitehill

Head of Talent Engagement- Early Careers Recruitment, | Deloitte LLP

Unifrog Insights: Balancing power in recruitment to engage and empower the next generation

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM | Location: Ashted 1

The recruitment process has become increasingly transactional, with candidates facing overwhelming rejection rates. This session will focus on reshaping recruitment to be more people-centric, balancing power between employers and candidates while empowering students to make informed decisions about their next steps. Drawing on Unifrog's unique position as a careers platform used by over 4000 secondary schools and colleges globally and 30,000 daily student logins, we'll share data-driven insights into student behaviour, career aspirations, and candidate experience. Attendees will gain early access to findings from our 2025 Career Insights Survey which received over 21,000 responses last year, highlighting key trends and actionable insights to inform your recruitment strategy. We will conclude the session with a panel discussion featuring employers and careers leaders, providing insights on personalising recruitment strategies, engaging younger students, and supporting decision-making at the offer stage. Join us to gain actionable insights and strategies for crafting a recruitment process which engages and empowers the next generation of talent.

Speakers



Caroline Collins

Head Of Employer Partnerships | Unifrog



Vicky Fordham

Careers Lead | Bishop Vesey's Grammar School



Hannah Hitchins

Senior Marketing Manager | ICAEW



Jane Branscombe

Early Careers Talent Consultant | E.ON

Yes, And: Humanising Conversations and Collaboration with Improv

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM | Location: Ashted 2

In fast-moving, high-pressure work environments, it's easy for communication to become transactional — especially when systems are automated and people are stretched. But what if we could reconnect with the human side of how we work?

This session explores how core principles of improv — like "Yes, And", active listening, and responsive communication — can help build stronger, more empathetic connections in interviews, feedback, collaboration, and beyond.

With over a decade of experience training thousands of people a year — from performers to professionals across finance, tech, law, and more — the Free Association brings practical tools that help teams communicate with clarity, authenticity, and presence.

Attendees will leave with practical insights to:

- Use active listening and improvisational techniques to build rapport and navigate the unexpected.
- Communicate with empathy — even under pressure or at scale.
- Foster a collaborative culture where creativity, inclusion, and psychological safety thrive.

Whether you work in recruitment, L&D, or leadership, this session offers simple, improv-inspired tools you can apply immediately — even if the idea of improv scares you.

Speakers



Ryan Dench

Director | The Free Association



Chris Gau

Facilitator | The Free Association

Transitioning from Student to Professional: A Case study from the FCA

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM | Location: Ashted 3

An in-depth case study of how the FCA used the STP with their 2023/24 apprentices and graduates (and plan to use it in 2025), to support their transition from Student Life to Professional life.

Attendees will:

- Explore the STP (Student to Professional) concept and research
- Share insights, data, and lessons learnt from the FCA
- Discover how to apply the STP model

Speakers



Rebecca Fielding

Founder & Md | Gradconsult



Lindsay Rowe

Senior Associate - Programme Management | Financial Conduct Authority

Lunch and networking in the exhibition

12:15 PM – 1:15 PM | Location: Belmont Suite/Affinity 2

Creating a neuro-inclusive early careers hiring process: Empowering neurodiverse talent from application to offer

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM | Location: Affinity 1

For decades, and despite the best of intentions, conventional hiring process have systematically disadvantaged neurodiverse talent. In this session, we'll explore the key drivers of bias, and how progressive organisations are breaking down systemic barriers to create genuinely inclusive end-to-end hiring processes for neurodiverse talent. This session highlights common recruitment pitfalls and introduces innovative, practical solutions demonstrated through Virgin Media O2's successful transformation of their early careers hiring strategy through a truly neuro-inclusive lens. Attendees will gain insights into the transformative power of neuro-inclusivity in hiring, and how it enriches candidate experiences, boosts innovation, and ultimately enhances organisational success.

Speakers



Jamie Betts

Founder | Neurosight



Adela Culver

Senior Future Careers Recruitment Manager | Virgin Media O2



Felicity Carter

Programme Manager | Ambitious about Autism

Is purpose a privilege? Gen Z's attitudes to career decisions

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM | Location: Ashtead 1

Purpose-driven branding is often hailed as essential for attracting young talent, yet Gen Z's attitudes are far more nuanced. Drawing from original research with 1,500 individuals aged 13-25, this session challenges popular myths about Gen Z's motivations, revealing tensions between purpose, practicality, and privilege.

We'll unpack scepticism around "purpose-washing", the balance between ethical values and financial security, and why purpose resonates differently across diverse backgrounds.

Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to better attract and engage tomorrow's workforce.

Speakers



Tristan Moakes

Head Of Comms Strategy | Stafford Long



Maria Donovan

Senior Resourcing Business Partner | Stafford Long

AI at the Coalface: Real-World Insights from Employers and Universities

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM | Location: Ashtead 2

Curious about how AI is actually being used in the real world of early talent recruitment and student careers services? Join this interactive, practical session exploring how professionals from both the private and higher education sectors are using AI tools to work smarter—not just harder. You'll hear from two frontline experts (Legal & General and University of Huddersfield) as they share the wins, pitfalls and surprises of applying AI to common challenges—from screening CVs to answering student queries to designing engaging assessments. Expect lively discussion, real use cases, and plenty of practical tips. You'll also get the chance to vote and share your own experiences via Slido, and receive a roundup of AI-in-practice insights after the session. Whether you're a cautious experimenter or a confident AI adopter, this session will leave you better equipped to navigate the evolving landscape of early careers AI.

Speakers



Ben Williams

Founder and Managing Director | Sten10



Louise Rutherford

Director of HE Consultancy | Gradcore



Dan Brieger

Head Of Talent Assessment | Legal & General



Chris Webb

Career Consultant | The University Of Huddersfield

The Power of 1-1 Mentoring for Underrepresented Groups with AWE Nuclear Security Technologies

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM | Location: Ashtead 3

Pathway CTM will present "The Power of 1-1 Mentoring for Diverse Young People", showcasing how tailored mentoring significantly improves apprenticeship outcomes for underrepresented groups. Drawing on their experience supporting over 40 employer partners, the team highlights how their personalised 1-1 mentoring helped 538 students—62% female, 78% from ethnic minority backgrounds, and 27% receiving free school meals—achieve success rates 10 times higher than the national average. The session explores three key strategies: building strong relationships with schools to boost outreach, leveraging a diverse team of former teachers, apprentices, and specialists, and collaborating closely with employers to deliver consistent, expert guidance. A key case study with STEM employer AWE demonstrates how the approach has boosted confidence and success rates, particularly among young women. Attendees will gain practical insights into supporting diverse candidates, enhancing confidence during the application process, and creating a high-touch, inclusive recruitment journey through effective mentoring.

Speakers



Izzy Miller

Account Manager | Pathway Ctm



Penny Allum

Apprentice Recruitment And Attraction Lead | AWE Nuclear Security Technologies



Ashton Massey

Delivery Manager | Pathway CTM

Comfort break / Move to next sessions

2:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Inside the psyche of tomorrow's workforce: insights from 6,000 students to shape early talent strategies with Browne Jacobson, a Parent Voice, and Barr Beacon School

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Affinity 1

The way we attract young talent is broken. We flood them with options, yet they're overwhelmed. We say we're accessible, yet most don't know where to start. Gen Z isn't tuning out — we're just not speaking their language. This session cuts through the noise. You'll hear from a panel of teachers, apprentices, parents, and employers unpacking real insights from 6,000 Gen Z voices. Their fear isn't failing — it's choosing wrong. Their frustration isn't too little information — it's too much. We'll go beyond the data to explore what actually works: how to be clear, human, and relevant in your early careers strategy. No corporate fluff. No box-ticking. Just a brutally honest conversation about what needs to change if we want to win the trust of the next generation. If you're ready to move beyond business as usual, this is the session to be in.

Speaker



Louisa Hampson

Head of Client Relations and B2B Marketing | Young Professionals

Using data to inform your diversity strategy, identify unequal recruitment outcomes and make better and fairer hiring decisions

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Ashtead 1

This best practice session will provide data-driven strategies for ensuring equitable recruitment outcomes across early careers, featuring exclusive insights into how Rare's employer partners have applied the Rare Fair Hiring Toolkit to drive EDI success. One case study focuses on the use of Rare's adverse impact reporting to identify and eliminate unequal outcomes in an assessment process. Rare will talk through how firms can replicate these successes armed with robust data, clear targets and intelligent tools. Rare will also cover the evolving D&I landscape in response to international policy changes, the impact of this backlash and how organisations can navigate fairer hiring in a climate where global forces can make it harder to overtly drive EDI success.

Speaker



Raphael Mokades

Managing Director | Rare

Gen Z's Career Crisis: How Employers & Educators Can Fix the Readiness Gap

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Ashtead 2

The future of work for Gen Z brings both challenges and opportunities. With only 20% of employees feeling equipped with the skills for their roles and just 32% of students confident in accessing career information, employers must rethink how they support this generation. To explore these issues, an interactive panel session bringing together including Virgin Media O2 and JLR, current college students and subject matter experts from Amberjack and Springpod will investigate findings from the 2025 Careers Research with over 1K Gen Z respondents. We will delve into when and how young people start thinking about careers, what kind of advice they seek, their preferred guidance styles, and who influences their decisions. We also explore how major societal trends—like AI, climate change, and an aging population—shape their outlook. Insights will be deepened through networking discussions and Q&A, leading to a practical checklist that will help employers enhance how they attract, engage, and recruit Gen Z talent.

Speakers



Jenny Fitzgerald-O'Connor

Head of Learning and Development | Amberjack



Jo Bishop

Senior Schools And Colleges Outreach Lead | Springpod



Karen Handley

Head of Future Careers | Virgin Media O2



Morgan Gore

Global Education and Outreach Lead | JLR

Ethical Interviewing in Action: A Case Study Inspiring Best Practices for Inclusivity in the Neurodivergent Community

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Ashtead 3

This case study will showcase how inclusive design can transform digital interview processes to better support neurodivergent candidates. Traditional selection often fails to accommodate cognitive and behavioural diversity, placing some candidates at a disadvantage. This research, led by Dr Alison Callwood, used a co-design approach involving neurodivergent individuals to enhance an asynchronous Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) platform. Key modifications included a practice portal and accessibility tools. In a study of 292 participants, neurodivergent candidates performed significantly better using the modified format, with no performance gap between neurodivergent and neurotypical groups. Over 90% of neurodivergent participants reported reduced anxiety and increased fairness. High inter-rater reliability confirmed consistent scoring. This session will explore the limitations of traditional methods, present evidence from the study, and offer actionable takeaways for implementing inclusive, data-driven interview practices that promote equity.

Speakers



Dr Alison Callwood
CEO | Sammi-Select



Emilie Edwards
Senior Lecturer in Midwifery | Middlesex University

Refreshments and Networking in Exhibition

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM | Location: Belmont Suite/Affinity 2

Keynote Session: Charting New Paths: Overcoming Barriers and Making a World of Positive Difference

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM | Location: Affinity 1

I. Stephanie Boyce's journey began on a council estate in Aylesbury, the daughter of Caribbean immigrants who came to the UK in search of opportunity. Growing up, she saw firsthand the barriers that can stand in the way of ambition, barriers of race, class, and expectation. Believing in her own worth, she learned the value of perseverance and the power of believing that every door is open if you PUSH: you Persevere Until Something Happens.

Speaker



I Stephanie Boyce
Keynote Speaker | c/o JLA

Reflections and close of conference

4:30 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Affinity 1

Speakers



Sarah Hathaway
Joint CEO | ISE



Stephen Isherwood
Joint CEO | ISE



Joan Moore
Ise Chair Head Of Early Talent Recruitment | Accenture

Pre-dinner drinks reception

6:45 PM – 6:45 PM | Location: Affinity Foyer

19:15

Gala Awards Dinner kindly sponsored by Higherin

7:15 PM – 11:59 PM | Location: Affinity Suite

0:00

The conference ends with the fabulous Gala Awards Dinner where we enjoy great food and entertainment as well as celebrate excellence within student recruitment and development. The evening will commence with a drinks reception and will be followed by a sumptuous 3-course dinner during which the industry awards will be presented. Once all the awards have been presented – the dancing will begin. The party continues until 01:00.

Wednesday, June 25, 2025