



Employer Advisory Group Membership



Alex Hall-Chen

Institute of Directors

Principal Policy Advisor

Alex Hall-Chen is Principal Policy Advisor for Sustainability, Employment, and Skills at the Institute of Directors. Prior to her current role, she was a Policy Advisor (Skills) at the Confederation of British Industry.

Her background is in education policy and research, having first worked in education policy conference development and then for Education Development Trust in research and business development, including an secondment to work on monitoring and evaluation of a government education reform programme in Brunei Darussalam.

She holds an MSc in Comparative and International Education from the University of Oxford, with dissertation research conducted on English Medium Instruction policies in the UAE.



Amy Smith

Framestore

Global Director, Recruitment & Outreach

Amy has been working in talent related roles within the visual effects industry across both the UK and Canada for many years. In each role she has had responsibility for working with schools, colleges and universities to provide careers guidance and support educators with content. She is a non-executive Director of Access:VFX, an industry organisation working to improve the diversity of the visual effects industry. She is also part of the steering group of the Next Gen Skills Academy who, with industry, launched a Level 3 Diploma in Games, Animation and VFX Skills and she took responsibility for working with NextGen to develop, launch and promote VFX apprenticeships. Recently Amy has been completed work as Chair of the T-Level panel for Media, Broadcast and Production. The panel was responsible for providing an employer perspective on the post-16 education landscape in the UK.



Ben Mannion

Hewett Recruitment

Owner / Director

Hello, I'm Ben Mannion, co-Owner and Director of Hewett Recruitment. I have approaching 20 years' experience of working within the recruitment industry, originally learning the trade with a large national agency before joining Hewett in 2009. My background is in IT & Technical recruitment and I originally joined Hewett to set up the IT and Engineering divisions which have since gone on to become key specialisms that we offer. I became a Director in 2013 and my role involves the development and support our Consultants as well as driving business development in a hands on way. I am also the point of contact for some of our sole supplier relationships – which has meant learning all about the fast paced world of Temp recruitment too! The reputation I have developed in the local area means I am well placed to support all of our clients' needs, including offering labour market intelligence, access to additional support services and a network of Exec level contacts. I particularly enjoy working with clients to educate them about how the labour market has evolved and helping develop solutions to their workforce planning challenges. Worcestershire born and bred – apart from 3 years away at the University of Cambridge where I completed a degree in Economics – I am proud to work in a business with a track record of excellence and that works hard to support the local community. Alongside my role at Hewett I am Chair of the Future Skills Board and a member of the Employment & Skills Board for Worcestershire LEP, Chair of the Cornerstone Employers Group and sit on the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Board. I am also a Worcestershire Ambassador have previously been a Board Director and President of H&W Chamber of Commerce, Vice Chair of Worcestershire Advance and a member of the H&W Fundraising Committee for the Prince's Trust. Outside of work I am a big sports fan – in particular rugby and football – and enjoy spending time walking and exploring National Trust properties with my wife and 2 daughters.



Emily Nott

Innovate UK

Head of EDI Programmes

Emily leads on Innovate UK's work to promote diversity and inclusion in business innovation. This involves initiating targeted interventions to address under representation and identifying opportunities to make all of Innovate UK's support for business more visible and accessible. She has introduced high profile campaigns and programmes for Women in Innovation and Young Innovators and is currently working on No Limits, a new mission to unlock the power of untapped talent for innovation in the UK. Prior to Innovate UK, Emily worked in a variety of roles in organisations across the UK research and innovation landscape (including Research Councils and Government Departments) and has many years of experience supporting business-university collaboration and knowledge transfer. Emily has a PhD in Chemistry. Innovate UK helps businesses develop new products, services, and processes they need to grow through innovation.



Emma Jones

Enterprise Nation

Founder

Since launching in 2005, the Enterprise Nation team has helped thousands of people start and grow their businesses. Led by founder Emma Jones CBE, Enterprise Nation operates in UK, Ireland, EU as a small business support platform and provider. Joining Enterprise Nation connects you with resources, community and connections you need to reach your business goals.



Gemma Gathercole

ACCA

Strategic Engagement Lead (England)

Gemma Gathercole is Strategic Engagement Lead (England) for ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants). Her role is responsible for strengthening and shaping relationships with governments, devolved administrations and partners to enhance ACCA's reputation and profile with these stakeholders. In England, this is particularly focused on Mayoral Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Prior to joining ACCA, her career has been in the education and skills sector. Her previous role was leading on skills for the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, supporting the skills and people aspects of the Local Industrial Strategy, regional skills strategy and local growth priorities and building relationships across regional partners. In that role, she established the Coventry and Warwickshire Careers Hubs. Prior to that she worked for a Further Education sector consultancy and for awarding organisation OCR latterly as Head of Policy.



Hollie Crompton

PwC

Social Mobility Lead

Hollie Crompton is the Social Mobility Lead at PwC. Based in Manchester, she joined PwC on the Audit School Leaver Programme and has worked for PwC for 18 years. She qualified as a chartered accountant (ICAEW) in 2008. Since 2017, as part of PwC's dedicated social mobility team, Hollie has led on key projects including the expansion of PwC's Work Experience Programme, the Social Mobility Community Engagement Programme and a data project focused on gathering socio-economic background data on all of PwC's 22,000 people to help inform and measure the social mobility strategy.



Hollie Whittles

Purple Frog Systems

National Policy Skills Champion - FSB & Director - Purple Frog Systems Ltd

Hollie is a passionate advocate for digital skills and apprenticeships. She is an award-winning TEDx speaker, author and director of two digital companies - Purple Frog Systems and FraggleWorks. She is also the National Policy Skills Champion for the Federation of Businesses (FSB). Having originally read business studies at university, Hollie completed a Level 5 apprenticeship some 25 years later in her own organisation, using it as an opportunity to upskill her existing knowledge. As well as employing apprentices, she now has first-hand experience! Hollie has been an Enterprise Adviser for over 5 years, she chairs the Marches Careers Hub Steering Group and sits on various Employer Advisory Boards. Joining the Careers & Enterprise Company Employer Advisory Group is as an opportunity to bring the small business voice to the table. She is keen to help break down barriers and ensure that the work ready skills required by all sizes of business are developed in careers programmes to bridge the gap between education and employers.



Ian Browne

Lloyds Banking Group

Early Careers Lead

I lead early careers, school engagement and levy sharing services for LBG connecting with over 25,000 young people each academic year



Irene Graham

Scale up Institute

CEO

Irene is the founding CEO and a board director of the ScaleUp Institute, a private sector, not-for-profit company focused on making the UK the best place in the world to scale up a business. She is a former senior banker at Standard Chartered where she held both European and global managing director roles. She set up, ran and scaled several of the bank's key client and product businesses across its corporate and institutional bank and led several global M&A activities. Working internationally across Europe, the Americas, Middle East and Asia, living in Singapore for a period of time. During the height of the financial crisis was seconded to work across the banking industry where she led the Business Finance Taskforce and Better Business Finance which was responsible for, amongst other initiatives, the founding of the Business Growth Fund, SME Finance Monitor, and leading on developments in Open Banking, and the Small Business Act. She is a Visiting Professor of Entrepreneurship at Strathclyde University and holds a variety of non executive director and advisory roles across the creative, business and finance communities. This has included participating in the Fintech Strategy review; the Life Sciences Scaleup Taskforce; Creative Industry Councils and sitting on Canada's National Research Industrial Advisory Council.



Jane Gratton

British Chambers of Commerce

Deputy Director - Public Policy

Jane joined the BCC in 2017 to lead on business environment and skills policy for the UK network of 53 Accredited Chambers of Commerce and the 50,000 businesses they represent. She is passionate about shaping an education and skills system that supports young people to develop skills for great careers and that helps employers to train and develop their workforce. She leads on labour market policy, bringing employers and policy makers together on employment issues, including flexible and equitable workplaces. Jane joined the BCC from the Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce where, as Deputy Chief Executive, she led on regeneration, planning and infrastructure policy. During her career, Jane has led the delivery of a wide range of business support programmes helping thousands of firms of all sizes and sectors.



Kate Burnett

Data & Marketing Association - DMA

General Manager, DMA Talent, Data and Marketing Association

Passionate about enabling young people to gain the skills they need to get on in the workplace. Reporting to the CEO, I lead DMA Talent in its mission to attract a new and diverse generation of fresh thinkers to the marketing and data industry. We connect people to industry, provide opportunities to learn new skills and discover the right career. We work with DMA members to plug talent and skills gaps, with government in their technical education strategy and Digital Skills Bootcamps, and also with universities and college to improve career advice, employability and skills in marketing. Prior to this I worked in marketing agencies in Account Management and Database development.



Kate McGoey

Barclays Lifeskills

Head of Barclays LifeSkills

Kate currently leads the award winning LifeSkills programme, Barclays' flagship employability programme and the largest of its kind in the UK. Prior to joining Barclays Kate worked across a range of sectors including construction, sustainability, and renewable energy to develop collaborative programmes of work focused on skills development and social change. Kate is an empathic people leader, conference speaker and a passionate advocate for social and environmental change.



Liane Richardson

Thakeham

HR Director

Liane is the HR Director at Thakeham, covering the entire people remit across the business, from recruitment and wellbeing to performance management. She has worked for the organisation for the past five years during which time it has more than doubled its headcount through organic growth. Thakeham is a leading south of England strategic land promoter and housebuilder delivering sustainable homes and strong communities. With an industry-leading focus on biodiversity and the environment, and a commitment to people and communities, it is at the forefront of placemaking in the UK. Liane started her HR career in a number of engineering organisations, and prior to Thakeham, worked for 13 years for Ricardo Plc where she gained her MSc in Personnel & Development. Liane is also an Enterprise Advisor for a school in Reigate, Surrey, the chair for the Careers Hub in West Sussex and represents the construction industry on the LSIP Board.



Lizzie Crowley

CIPD

Senior Policy Advisor - Skills

Lizzie is CIPD's Senior Skills Policy Advisor and leads CIPD's research and policy development on the UK skills system. Lizzie is a policy and research professional with over 18 years' experience in the employment and skills arena, having worked with both the public and private sector to develop high-quality research to inform organisational practice, public policy and shape the public debate.



Marie Caliskan

Tesco

Head of Development Programmes

Marie is passionate about achieving strategic business goals by creating a great colleague lifecycle that unlocks the opportunities for everyone to grow and develop resulting in a workforce that is engaged, empowered and advocates of our organisation. An inclusive manager that leads by example, when it comes to equality and fairness while always encouraging colleagues to be the best version of their authentic self. Marie is passionate about Tesco's commitment in developing young people and her current role is to lead the pipeline for the future of work through our Development Programmes including Graduate programmes, Apprenticeships, Internships and pre-employment work placements and continues to build our long running relationship with Partners such as Princes Trust and Movement to work



Michelle Perkins

Capgemini

Director Talent Attraction

Michelle is responsible for showcasing careers at Capgemini (and our industry) to a wide variety of candidates. Her particular passion is to support schools and colleges bring employer content into their curriculum and give students the four or more employer interactions that can be life changing. Each year Capgemini works with close to 30,000 students.



Paul Skitt

Flannery Plant Hire

Skills Director

20 years' experience in skills sector. Chair several skills/employment/careers groups, including 2 Cornerstone Groups.



Rita Patel Miller

MACE

Head of Social Value - Mace Consult

I have worked in the Construction Industry and Public Sector for over 30 years , working on a range of Education, Employment and Training programmes and initiatives to make a difference to the lives of young people and the wider communities. I am very proud to be the Chair of the Central London CEC Cornerstone Employer Group.



Roisin Sharkey

KPMG

Head of Corporate Responsibility

Roisin has a career spanning Business and the Civil service where she began her career in the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. She worked on policy development in relation to CSR, environmental reporting and Greenwash and was responsible for introducing carbon reporting into legislation. She took a year secondment to the then Prince of Wales Private Office where she worked as a researcher on his Environment Portfolio. Roisin joined KPMG 12 years ago as an Environmental manager and now heads up the Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability team. Roisin was recognised as Corporate Social Responsibility leader in 2024 at the Better Society Awards.



Samantha Lee

Womble Bond Dickinson

Head of Recruitment and Early Talent

Samantha is responsible for the delivery of the overall recruitment strategy and contributing to the wider HR strategy in the UK. She takes on leadership for the recruitment team (which includes early talent and school outreach programmes) providing support, guidance and mentoring to a team of talent acquisition and development professionals. She also has responsibility for developing and delivering best practice throughout the entire recruitment process ensuring that the firm recruits and retains the very best talent within the business. Samantha works closely with senior stakeholders to understand their business plans and resourcing requirements. Samantha is passionate about employability and dedicates much of her time to early talent and school outreach strategies, designing and developing apprenticeship programmes, supporting graduate and school employability initiatives. Samantha has been an Enterprise Advisor for a school in South Gloucestershire since 2019 and Chair of the West of England Careers Hub since 2020.



Stephen Isherwood

Institute of Employers

Joint CEO, Market Intelligence & Thought Leadership

Joint CEO of Institute of Employers, responsible for market intelligence and thought leadership, for expertise and analysis, for policy direction and guidance to help members develop their early talent strategies. 25 years' experience in student recruitment and development; previous role was head of student recruitment at EY.



Tom Thayer

BP

UK Skills Partnership Manager

Tom joined bp in early 2021 and focuses on the external skills agenda and partnerships around bp's renewables projects including support for ScotWind, Teesside and the Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub. Passionate about education, skills development and the role that business can play in socio/economic community transformation, Tom has a wealth of experience and a proven track record of developing highly-impactful, large-scale programmes that deliver positive community impact. He is a qualified teacher and has an MA in Education & Professional Development.



Toby Shaw

IEMA

Executive Director - Commercial Marketing and Strategy

I joined IEMA in the summer of 2020 bringing with me over 20 years of commercial marketing experience. Having worked across sports, leisure, technology and FMCG, on businesses as diverse as Sony, Branston Pickle and Royal Caribbean, I am passionate about marketing and how it can drive value for membership organisations, and how it can help solve our bigger socio-economic issues.