

MAD WORLD LEADERS SUMMIT 2026

Workplace Culture, Employee Health & Wellbeing

Thursday 26th November, Convene, 155 Bishopsgate, London

This framework outlines the core themes, timings, and session formats for the MAD World Leaders Summit. Specific session titles, final timings, and speakers are subject to change as the programme is finalised.

REGISTRATION, BREAKFAST & NETWORKING EXHIBITION · 08:00 to 09:00

08:00 Networking Breakfast and Exhibition

Doors open for registration, a hosted networking breakfast and the exhibition. The exhibition hall is open from the start of the day. Sponsors and exhibitors are available for conversation from 08:00, with a dedicated 1-to-1 meeting schedule running throughout the morning for delegates who have pre-booked time with exhibitors or sponsors.

09:00 *Delegates move to main auditorium*

MORNING PLENARY · One Track · 09:00 to 10:30

09:00 OPENING ADDRESS

Welcome to MAD World 2026

The chair welcomes delegates, sets the tone for the day and names what the room has in common: a shared belief that work can and should be better for the people doing it. A brief provocation to frame the day ahead, not a summary of what is coming but a challenge about what each person here is prepared to do differently by the time they leave.

Dr Amrita Sen Mukherjee, Founder and Wellbeing Expert, Your Wellbeing Doctor

09:10 KEYNOTE

The State of the Nation: Taking Stock of Workplace Mental Health

After more than two decades of workplace mental health moving up the organisational agenda, where do we stand today? This keynote offers an honest stocktake of the current landscape, examining where meaningful progress has been made, where the evidence suggests change has stalled, and the challenges that continue to shape the relationship between work and health. Looking beyond the headlines, it reflects on how attitudes have shifted, where organisations have made genuine advances, where significant gaps remain, and what the wider picture tells us about the future of workplace wellbeing, providing a clear, evidence-based assessment of the state of the nation and setting the context for the conversations that follow throughout the day.

Dame Carol Black, GBE

09:30

IN CONVERSATION WITH

The Neuroscience of Performance: Why Wellbeing is the Strategy, Not the Support Act

A deep, unhurried conversation exploring what the science of human performance actually says, not the simplified version that circulates in leadership training. How stress, recovery and psychological safety interact at a neurological level. Why organisations that treat wellbeing as a separate workstream are building on unstable foundations. What it genuinely takes to create conditions for sustained high performance without burning people out. The interviewer holds the conversation at depth, pushing beyond comfortable narratives to surface the tensions leaders actually face in practice.

Reserved for **Helen Beebe**, Managing Director, AJ Products (TBC)

10:00

FIRESIDE CONVERSATION

The AI Question: What Is It Doing to Us?

Beyond the productivity debate lies a harder conversation: what is constant connectivity, algorithmic pressure and AI-mediated work actually doing to human cognition, identity and mental health? This fireside brings together an expert in digital wellbeing and a senior people leader for an honest exchange. Not a pitch for solutions, but a genuine grappling with the problem. The conversation covers hybrid fatigue, notification culture, the erosion of cognitive recovery time, and what digital wellbeing genuinely requires from employers as distinct from individual discipline.

Petra Velzeboer, Author, Digital Wellbeing
In Conversation with

PRE-LUNCH · TWO CONCURRENT TRACKS · 11:10 to 12:30

TRACK A · STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP

CHAIR: Dr Amrita Sen Mukherjee, Founder and Wellbeing Expert, Your Wellbeing Doctor

TRACK B · PRACTICE & CULTURE

CHAIR: Emily Warren, Founder and Director, Flourisher

11:10

PANEL DISCUSSION

Making the Case: How Do You Get Leadership to Actually Care?

The most consistently cited frustration from wellbeing and HR professionals is the gap between evidence and action at board level. This panel opens with two short data-led case studies from practitioners who have built the business case successfully, then broadens into a frank discussion about what actually works. What data convinced decision-makers? What language landed? What failed completely? Panellists bring a CEO perspective, a wellbeing lead with measurable outcomes to share, and someone prepared to present the data from an initiative that did not deliver.

Speakers:

Susan Gee, Head of Occupational Health & Wellbeing, Yorkshire Water Services

Peter Cheese, Former Chief Executive, CPID

Hayley Farrell, Global Health Safety Wellbeing Director, Arcadis

Claire Joseph, Wellbeing Manager, Pinset Masons, Chair, LawCare

PANEL DISCUSSION

Good Mental Health as a Performance Strategy: Reframing the Whole Conversation

The workplace wellbeing conversation is dominated by crisis, deficit and damage limitation. This panel argues for a different starting point: that good mental health is not the absence of illness but an active state that drives better performance, stronger relationships, more creative thinking and more resilient organisations. What does it look like to build for positive mental health rather than simply treating poor mental health? How do leaders normalise talking about mental wellbeing in the same breath as results and culture? And what happens to the data when organisations make that shift?

Speakers:

Lauren Lunniss, Health & Wellbeing Manager, BNP Paribas

Nimisha Overton, Former EMEA DEI Lead, Canon

Chimen Chauhan, Head of Benefits for EMEA, Disney (TBC)

Sobia Afridi, Equality Diversity Inclusion Specialist, Talent Team, People Services

11:50	IN CONVERSATION WITH I Got It Wrong: What It Actually Takes to Change a Culture Opens with a 10-minute structured case study: specific initiatives, specific data, specific outcomes both positive and negative. The senior executive then stays on stage for an extended conversation that goes deeper into the decisions behind the data. Not a polished retrospective but a genuine account of what systemic change costs, what breaks along the way, and what the numbers do and do not capture. Delegates receive a one-page takeout of the key data and learning points. Speakers: Annisha Taylor, Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Ofcom In conversation with Louise Wilkinson, Founder, Culture Minds	FIRESIDE CONVERSATION Benefits Design and Financial Wellbeing: What Employers Can Actually Do Opens with a 10-minute data-led overview: the statistics on financial stress and mental health, what benefits packages currently look like versus what employees say they need, and what the evidence shows about which interventions work. The fireside then examines what meaningful benefits design looks like in practice: moving beyond generic EAP signposting, connecting financial, physical and mental health support, and what personalised provision actually requires. Delegates leave with a practical framework for auditing their own benefits offer. Speakers: Sabrina Robinson, Wellbeing Lead, Essex County Council
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12:20 *Lunch · 1 hour · Buffet in Exhibition Hall · 1-to-1 Sponsor Meetings Active*

POST-LUNCH · TWO CONCURRENT TRACKS · 13:20 to 14:35

TRACK A · STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP	TRACK B · PRACTICE & CULTURE
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13:25	FIRESIDE CONVERSATION From Risk Assessment to Real Change: Psychosocial Hazards in Practice The regulatory landscape around psychosocial risk is shifting, but most organisations are still treating it as a	PANEL DISCUSSION Men's Mental Health: Why Generic Wellbeing Fails Half the Workforce Men remain significantly harder to reach through conventional wellbeing programmes and the gap is widening. This
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compliance exercise rather than a genuine lever for culture change. This panel brings together practitioners who have moved beyond tick-box risk assessments to systemic approaches. What does a meaningful psychosocial hazard framework look like from end to end? How do you win management buy-in when the evidence feels abstract? What do measurable outcomes actually look like, and what do you do when the results are disappointing? Contributors bring perspectives from organisations at different stages of the journey.

Kerrie Smith, Global Health and Wellbeing Lead, Mace

In conversation with Affinity Health at Work

panel is a direct, unvarnished conversation about why that is, what approaches have broken through, and what the workplace can realistically do. Contributors address the cultural and social dynamics that make men reluctant to engage, what peer-led and community-based approaches look like in practice, and the difficult question of how to create safe spaces before a crisis point rather than after.

Speakers:

Jamie Broadley, Head of Health & Wellbeing, Serco Group plc

Fiona McAslan, Head of Wellbeing and Occupational Health, Royal Mail Group

Dr. Dapo Olafimihan, Lead Clinical Psychologist, Latitude Psychology

14:05

CASE STUDY _ RESERVED FOR THE EPA

Building Modern Occupational Health Services: Lessons from the European Patent Office's Transformation

Abstract

The presentation will share practical lessons from the European Patent Office's transformation of its Occupational Health and Wellbeing services into a modern, digitally enabled and user-centred service model. It will explore how governance, digitalisation and organisational change can be combined to modernise Occupational Health services while strengthening trust, protecting sensitive health data and improving the employee experience.

Drawing on the Office's transformation programme, the session will illustrate how the introduction of a digital self-service portal for employees (MyHealth, built on Cority), AI-supported health information and guidance (Health Advisor), digital HR workflows through ServiceNow, and a strengthened medical data governance framework have transformed service delivery and supported a hybrid service model across multiple Office locations. The presentation will reflect on the practical

FIRESIDE CONVERSATION

Inclusion, DEI and the Geopolitical Moment: Holding the Line When the Ground Is Shifting

Opens with a 10-minute case study presenting real data: what happened to psychological safety scores, engagement, and mental health indicators in an organisation that navigated DEI pressure publicly. The fireside then broadens the conversation to examine what employers face more widely: the direct connections between inclusion commitments, psychological safety and employee mental health, how different communities are experiencing the current climate, and what leadership on inclusion looks like when the external environment feels hostile.

Simon Blake OBE, CEO, Stonewall

lessons learned in combining governance, digital innovation and service design to improve the employee experience while delivering more accessible, efficient and sustainable Occupational Health services.

Silvia Analia Echagüe-Wehling,
Director People Services and Well-being -
D423, European Patent Office (TBC)

14:35 Afternoon Break · 40 Minutes · Exhibition Hall Open · 1-to-1 Sponsor Meetings Active

WORKSHOP ROUND ONE · CHOOSE ONE OF THREE ·

15:15 to 16:10

	WORKSHOP A	WORKSHOP B	ROUNDTABLE C
15:25	WORKSHOP WORKSHOP A1 Burnout: Spotting It, Stopping It, and Building Systems That Do Not Create It This workshop moves away from individual resilience frameworks and into organisational design. Working in small groups, delegates map the conditions in their own organisations that generate burnout risk: workload, role clarity, autonomy, recognition, fairness, community. Using real examples brought by participants, the group develops a practical prevention framework that targets the system rather than the symptom. Output: a draft intervention map each delegate takes away. Facilitated small-group	WORKSHOP WORKSHOP B1 Early Careers and the Next Generation: What They Actually Need Organisations are finding that early-career talent has different expectations, communication norms and mental health challenges than previous cohorts, and that programmes designed for an earlier era are failing them. This workshop examines what sustainable high performance looks like for a generation entering work in an AI-accelerated world, what managers need to do differently, and how to build wellbeing into early careers programme design from the ground up. Includes perspectives on retention, post-programme engagement and the growing value of human skills alongside technical ones.	ROUNDTABLE ROUNDTABLE C1 Beyond the Office: Building Wellbeing for Shift Workers, Night Workers and Field Teams Standard wellbeing programmes are built around office hours and desk-based work. This workshop is for practitioners trying to reach the rest of their workforce: shift workers, night workers, those in manufacturing or production environments, field-based and customer-facing staff, and employees working across time zones. In small groups, delegates map the specific barriers in their own organisations and develop targeted approaches that go beyond repurposing office-based content. Includes practical tools for reaching disconnected or hard-to-reach

	workshop. Chatham House rules.	Discussion and practical design workshop. Workshop leads: Rosie Ellis, Early Careers Lead – EMEA and APAC, Aon & Helen Payne Principal Human Capital Consultant, Aon	employee groups. Facilitated working session. Chatham House rules. Reserved for Wellbeing of Woman
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WORKSHOP ROUND TWO · CHOOSE ONE OF THREE ·

16:10 to 16:55

	WORKSHOP A	WORKSHOP B	ROUNDTABLE C
16:10	WORKSHOP WORKSHOP A2 Benefits Design and the Employee Lifecycle: Making Wellbeing the Default Wellbeing as a standalone programme is structurally weak. This session works through the full employment lifecycle: attraction, onboarding, development conversations, performance processes, transitions and exits, examining where wellbeing and benefits design can be embedded rather than bolted on. Particular focus on how benefits packages can be made genuinely responsive to different employee groups rather than homogenous, and how to identify the highest-leverage gaps between current provision and real employee need.	WORKSHOP WORKSHOP B2 Neurodiversity, Inclusion and the Wellbeing Environment How organisations design physical environments, communication norms and support structures has a disproportionate impact on neurodivergent employees, and often improves things for everyone else too. This workshop examines the direct connections between neurodiversity, psychological safety and mental health outcomes, with practical focus on how wellbeing infrastructure can either welcome or exhaust people who process the world differently. Includes an environment audit tool and communication design frameworks delegates can take back and apply.	ROUNDTABLE ROUNDTABLE C2 Getting Line Managers to Actually Role-Model Wellbeing Line managers are the most important variable in employee wellbeing and the most common point of failure. This workshop examines why training alone rarely changes manager behaviour, what accountability structures are needed, and how to build genuine psychological safety in teams rather than performing it. Using real scenarios brought by participants, the group practises the conversations that matter and identifies the organisational conditions that make them possible. Scenario-based workshop. Chatham House rules.

	Delegates leave with a prioritised action map. Facilitated working session. Templates provided.	Discussion and practical workshop Workshop Lead: Daniel Curtis , Educator, Speaker and Storyteller	
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16:55 *Room Reset · 10 Minutes · Chairs and partition to be moved before closing plenary*

CLOSING PLENARY · 17:10 to 19:00

17:05

KEYNOTE

Even a bunny can make a difference: How to connect your team to the feeling of purpose.

Purpose is powerful—but only when people feel connected to it. Ross creates a deep connection to purpose through warmth, humour, and raw emotion. With stories from his time as an Opera Extra (including a stint on stage as a giant rabbit), playful interaction, and thoughtful reflection, Ross shows leaders how to help their teams feel more motivated, fulfilled, and energised—by reconnecting them to the impact of what they do.

Ross Reekie, Founder, Rise Consulting & The Fun Jobs Project

17:25

CLOSING ADDRESS

From Conversation to Commitment

The chair draws together the threads of the day, not as a summary but as a challenge. What has the room decided? What is the one thing that has to change? The closing address names the gap between knowing and doing, and asks directly what each person in the room will do differently in the next working week. High energy, personally challenging, deliberately direct..

Dr Amrita Sen Mukherjee, Founder and Wellbeing Expert, Your Wellbeing Doctor

17:30

NETWORKING RECEPTION

Drinks Reception, Exhibition Hall and Peer Networking

The formal programme ends. The exhibition hall reopens with provider stands, informal conversations and space to follow up on connections made during the day. A colour-coded badge system allows delegates to identify others by role. QR codes on badges enable instant connection without exchanging cards. A quiet, low-light room is available for those who need to step away from the noise.

Close of Day