Bennett Institute for Public Policy

Annual Conference

Friday 22 April 2022  I  Churchill College Cambridge/Online

Explore the policy issues facing governments and populations today
Welcome to the Bennett Institute for Public Policy Annual Conference 2022 – in Cambridge and online.

This is an important forum for us to share our work and to engage with other perspectives and expert insights. When we launched the Bennett Institute in 2018 to address in a meaningful and practical way pressing policy challenges in increasingly turbulent times, we had no idea how much more turbulence lay ahead.

We are grateful to all those joining us today to take part in the day’s discussions.

These centre around the Institute’s four key interdisciplinary research themes – Place, Progress, Productivity, and Decision-Making in Government. Each session aims to draw on the outstanding, cross-cutting collaborations and academic excellence based in Cambridge and elsewhere. The aim is to contribute both to furthering knowledge and to practical policy insights.

We are especially pleased to welcome the UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance, to speak about the combined work of academics and policymakers throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and how it will continue into the future.

Thanks to your participation and support for the Institute, we have been able to grow a powerful network of supporters and partners.

And we hope that our work helps guide policymakers as they address some of the most challenging policy questions, and ultimately leads to tangible improvements in peoples’ lives.

Diane Coyle, Bennett Professor of Public Policy
Michael Kenny, Professor of Public Policy
Dennis C Grube, Professor of Public Policy

Directors of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, Cambridge
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A focus on spatial inequalities and the importance of ‘place’ is increasingly integral to public policy worldwide. In part, this is because of a growing recognition that all policy has distinctive local effects and consequences, and needs local knowledge if it is to be implemented effectively. Most recently this concern has been shaped by a rise of disenchantment with politics and government in places that feel ‘forgotten’.

Michael Kenny
Professor of Public Policy and Inaugural Director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge

Michael Kenny is Professor of Public Policy, and the Inaugural Director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge where he leads the Institute’s place and public policy programme. He previously held roles at Queen’s University, Belfast, University of Sheffield, and Queen Mary University of London. He has also served on the Leverhulme Trust’s Advisory Committee, and was co-director of the British Academy’s “Governing England” programme. He is a visiting Fellow at the UCL Constitution Unit, and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, and holds advisory positions with the Constitution Society, the ‘Behaviour Change by Design’ project, and ‘The Science of Global Risk’ project. His research includes leading projects on left-behind communities, social infrastructure and devolution, and he is writing a book about the UK's constitutional future.

@michaelkenny_ @bennettinst

Francesca Gains
Professor of Public Policy and Co-Director of Policy@Manchester, University of Manchester

Francesca Gains is Professor of Public Policy at the University of Manchester, Academic Co-Director of Policy@Manchester at the University's policy engagement institute, and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Her research examines political management arrangements and the way in which policy demands are translated (or not) into policy outcomes. Previously her research has examined governance reforms in both central and local government and she worked on the Local Government Act 2000 that first introduced leader-cabinet and mayoral arrangements in English local government. Francesca also has a long-standing research agenda around equalities policies and currently is a member of the Greater Manchester Women and Girls’ Equality Panel. Most recently she was invited to join the steering group of the Local Government Association’s Levelling Up Local Inquiry.

@francescagains @UoMPolicy
What is the importance of ‘place’ for people’s life opportunities?

The Bennett Institute explores what a place-based approach to public policy would achieve, and which social outcomes it might help us to address. Recent work concentrates upon the challenges of levelling up in the UK, the importance of social infrastructure, and the determinants of regional productivity.

Joshua Bailey
Senior Policy Advisor, Levelling Up Taskforce

Josh Bailey works in the Levelling Up Taskforce, led by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up and formerly by Andy Haldane, Permanent Secretary for Levelling Up, that produced the Levelling Up White Paper earlier this year. Before that, he held a range of roles in the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury, working across domestic and international economic policy.

Fiona Reynolds
Chair of the Governing Council of the Royal Agricultural University

Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE is Chair of the Governing Council of the Royal Agricultural University, and Chair of the Management Board for the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge. She was the Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge (2012-2021) following a long career in the voluntary and public sectors, latterly as Director-General of the National Trust from 2001-2012. Before joining the National Trust, she was Director of the Women’s Unit in the Cabinet Office (1998-2000), Director of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (now Campaign to Protect Rural England) from 1987-98 and Secretary to the Council for National Parks (now Campaign to Protect National Parks) from 1980-87. Dame Fiona is also an Honorary Fellow of the British Academy.

@fionacreynolds

bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk/place
DECISION-MAKING IN GOVERNMENT

Good politics and good policy must operate together to arrive at good outcomes. Data and evidence do not speak for themselves, nor does evidence-based policy get made in a political vacuum. Political decision-making structures are forced to wrestle with extraordinary complexity in real time, at high speed, with imperfect information and low tolerance for risk.

CHAIR:

Dennis C Grube
Professor of Politics and Public Policy and Co-Director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge

Dennis C Grube is Co-Director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy and Professor of Politics and Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, where he is also a Fellow of Girton College. Dennis’ research interests focus on the nexus between political and administrative leadership, and in particular the ways in which senior civil servants contribute to public debates whilst striving to remain non-partisan. He has authored and co-authored five books to date, with a sixth book due for release in the summer. These cover topics such as speaking truth to power, institutional memory, and the merits of different forms of collective government.

@bennettinst

SPEAKERS:

Sir John Aston
Harding Professor of Statistics in Public Life, University of Cambridge, and former Chief Scientific Adviser to the Home Office

Sir John Aston is Harding Professor of Statistics in Public Life, University of Cambridge. He is based in the Statistical Laboratory, Department of Pure Maths and Mathematical Statistics, where he works in areas including medical imaging and official statistics. John is also the Co-Director of the Cambridge Mathematics of Information in Healthcare Hub (CMIH) and on the Management Board of the Cantab Capital Institute for the Mathematics of Information (CCIMI). He is on the Bennett Institute for Public Policy Management Board, a non-Executive Board Member of the UK Statistics Authority, and from 2017–2020 was Chief Scientific Adviser to the Home Office. He was a founding director of the Alan Turing Institute.

@HardingProf @FacultyMaths
Sarah Dillon
Professor of Literature and the Public Humanities, University of Cambridge

Sarah Dillon is Professor of Literature and the Public Humanities in the Faculty of English at the University of Cambridge. She is a scholar of contemporary literature, film and philosophy, with a research focus on the epistemic function and value of stories, on interdisciplinarity, and on the engaged humanities. She is the co-author of Storylistening: Narrative Evidence and Public Reasoning (2021), author of Deconstruction, Feminism, Film (2018), The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory (2007) and many academic articles and book chapters. She is the General Editor of the book series Gylphi Contemporary Writers: Critical Essays and serves on editorial boards.

@ProfSarahDillon @englishunicam

Dame Theresa Marteau
Behavioural Scientist and Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit, University of Cambridge

Professor Dame Theresa Marteau DBE FMedSci AcSS is Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit at the University of Cambridge and co-chair of The Lancet Chatham House Commission on improving health post Covid-19. She also sits on the Bennett Institute for Public Policy Management Board. Her research focuses on the development and evaluation of interventions to change behaviour (principally diet, physical activity, tobacco and alcohol consumption) to improve population health and reduce health inequalities, with a particular focus on targeting non-conscious processes. She also researches the acceptability to publics and policymakers of government intervention to change behaviour.

@MarteauTM @BHRUCambridge

How are political decisions best made and communicated in a crisis?

The Bennett Institute’s political decision-making research programme examines how decisions are made in government. From the black box of the cabinet room itself, through to the role played by senior civil servants, special advisers, and outside experts, it examines current practice across a range of parliamentary democracies.

bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk/decision-making
Public Policy is intended to lead to better outcomes but what does ‘better’ mean? How can policies also deliver other dimensions of wellbeing, from public health to fair access to goods and services? What measures of progress, beyond GDP, are needed to reflect today's economy and society, understanding the distribution of opportunities and the imperative of sustainability? And what legal and governance measures can help advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?

**CHAIR:**

**Matthew Agarwala**  
**Project Lead for the Wealth Economy, Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge**

Dr Matthew Agarwala is the Project Lead for the Wealth Economy project at the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge. His research looks at developing wealth-based approaches to measuring and delivering sustainability, wellbeing, and productivity. Matthew’s research is motivated by the belief that 21st century progress cannot be described by 20th century statistics. He regularly consults for governments and scientific organisations on topics of natural capital, ecosystem services, green finance, wellbeing, and sustainability. He is also a regular media contributor.

@MatthewAgarwala @bennettinst

**SPEAKERS:**

**Bina Agarwal**  
**Professor of Development Economics and Environment, Global Development Institute, University of Manchester**

Bina Agarwal is Professor of Development Economics and Environment at the Global Development Institute, University of Manchester. She has served as President of the International Society for Ecological Economics, President of the International Association for Feminist Economics, and Vice President of the International Economic Association. Her research covers property, land rights and livelihoods; environmental governance, agriculture and institutional change; and poverty and intersecting inequalities. In 2005, she spearheaded a successful civil society campaign for amending India’s Hindu Inheritance law to make it gender equal. Her recent books include *Gender and Green Governance*, and *Gender Challenges: A three volume compendium of her selected papers*. In 2008 she received a Padma Shri from the President of India; in 2010 the Leontief Prize; and in 2017 the International Balzan Prize.

@officialUoM
What does ‘progress’ mean in today’s context and how it can be measured?

The Bennett Institute’s research programme on ‘progress’ includes the Wealth Economy project which focusses on achieving sustainability, and The Many Dimensions of Wellbeing Project which explores how to develop measures of wellbeing among differing individuals, communities and groups, and the need to represent this diversity while being useful for policy.

Anna Alexandrova
Professor in Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of King’s College, Cambridge

Anna Alexandrova is Professor in Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge, with a special focus on social sciences. Prior to her current role, she was an Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri, USA. Since 2018, Anna has been the Principal Investigator on the project ‘Expertise Under Pressure’ at the Centre for Humanities and Social Change, Cambridge. Her research is on the philosophy of social sciences, especially economic modelling, explanation, and the science of wellbeing. She has written a book on the latter topic, *A Philosophy for the Science of Wellbeing*, which won the 2022 Gittler Book Prize of the American Philosophical Association.

@ExpertiseUnder

Claire Melamed
CEO of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

Dr Claire Melamed is the CEO of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. This growing network brings together governments, private sector, and civil society to harness and leverage data and data technology towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. She was previously Managing Director of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), and in 2014, she worked in the office of the UN Secretary General, writing the report of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution, ‘A World That Counts’. She serves on multiple Boards and advisory groups for institutions including the UK Office of National Statistics Data Science Campus, the ODI Human Mobility Initiative and Mo Ibrahim Foundation Governance Index.

@clairemelamed

bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk/progress
Productivity – the way ideas and labour are transformed into products and services that benefit society – is driven by innovation and by social and economic organisation. Without productivity growth, living standards cannot improve sustainably. Yet there has been a long-term slowdown in productivity growth around the world and also greater inequality in the distribution of its benefits in terms of income and access to opportunity.

CHAIR:

Diane Coyle
Bennett Professor of Public Policy and Co-Director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge

Diane Coyle is the Bennett Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge. She co-directs the Bennett Institute where she heads research under the themes of progress and productivity. Diane is also a Director of the Productivity Institute, a Fellow of the Office for National Statistics, an expert adviser to the National Infrastructure Commission, and Senior Independent Member of the ESRC Council. Prior to this she served in public service roles including as Vice Chair of the BBC Trust. She has authored over 200 articles and 10 books, and in 2018, was awarded a CBE for her contribution to the public understanding of economics. Her research interests cover economic statistics and the digital economy, competition policy and digital markets, natural capital, and infrastructure.

@DianeCoyle1859 @BennettInst

SPEAKERS:

Meredith Crowley
Professor of International Economics at the University of Cambridge

Meredith Crowley is Professor of International Economics at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of St. John’s College. She is a Top Lead and Research Affiliate at the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence (ESCoE), Senior Fellow at UK in a Changing Europe, Coordinator at Cambridge-INET (Institute for New Economic Thinking), and Research Fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR). She holds advisory roles at the UK Department for International Trade, the CEPII, the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, and Bruegel. Her research on international trade, trade policy, firms in international trade, law and economics of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/World Trade Organisation has appeared in numerous peer-reviewed journals and prominent media outlets.

@MeredithCrowle1
Julia King  
Baroness Brown of Cambridge

Baroness Brown is a Crossbench Member of the House of Lords, and an engineer with extensive experience in industry and academia. She chairs the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology. Julia was Vice Chair of the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) (2008-2021), is Chair of the Adaptation Committee of the CCC, and advises the UK Government as a member of the Hydrogen Advisory Council and climate adviser to the Jet Zero Council. She also chairs the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Climate Commission. Julia is chair of The Carbon Trust, and a non-executive director (NED) of Ørsted, Ceres Power and Frontier IP. She led the King Review on decarbonising transport (2007) for the UK Government and was a NED of the Green Investment Bank.

@baroness_brown @theCCCuk

Bart Van Ark  
Managing Director of The Productivity Institute and Professor of Productivity Studies, Alliance Manchester Business School, University of Manchester

Professor Bart van Ark is Professor of Productivity Studies at the Alliance Manchester Business School (AMBS) at the University of Manchester. He is also Managing Director and Principal Investigator of The Productivity Institute, a UK-wide entity which aims to lay the foundations for an era of sustained and inclusive productivity growth by bringing together academic research, policy studies and business engagement. He is an internationally acclaimed expert in the field of international comparative productivity measurement and analysis, innovation and technology and digital transformation. He is also a Senior Adviser at The Conference Board, an Honorary Professor at the University of Groningen (the Netherlands) and a Research Fellow at the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR).

@bart_ark @TPIProductivity

bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk/productivity

Why does productivity matter and how can it be improved?

To address these issues, the Bennett Institute’s Productivity research programme looks at the value of data and data policy, policy for the digital economy, and the digitisation of government, society and the economy. The Institute leads the Cambridge hub of the UK’s national Productivity Institute, with a focus on knowledge capital and sector-level productivity dynamics.
The Covid-19 pandemic placed science advice at centre stage - it’s been vital to some of the most important decisions governments have had to make and because of that it has come under great scrutiny as a process including whether its inclusive and timely. Scientific advisers have also been scrutinised. How can the scientific advisory system learn from its experience of this unprecedented crisis and continue to improve and work effectively into the future?

**KEYNOTE**

Stephen J Toope  
Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge

Professor Stephen J Toope became the 346th Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge in 2017. He joined Cambridge after a distinguished career as a scholar and academic leader. He was Director of the University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs (2015-2017), and before that President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of British Columbia (2006-2014). Professor Toope served as President of the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation (2002-2006), and as Dean of Law at McGill University (1994-1999). His areas of specialisations are in international law, human rights, international legal theory, and international development. He has, for example, served as a Law Clerk to the Rt Hon Brian Dickson, Chief Justice of Canada, and as a Chair of the UN’s Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances.

@Cambridge_Uni

Patrick Vallance  
Government Chief Scientific Adviser and Head of Government Science and Engineering Profession and National Technology Adviser

Sir Patrick Vallance FRS FMedSci FRCP is Government Chief Scientific Adviser (GCSA), Head of the Government Science and Engineering (GSE) Profession and National Technology Adviser (NTA). His personal research was in the area of diseases of blood vessels and endothelial biology.

Patrick was President, R&D at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) from 2012 until 2017. Prior to this, he was Senior Vice President, Medicines Discovery and Development. He joined the company in May 2006 as Head of Drug Discovery. He was a member of the GSK Board and the Corporate Executive Team. During his period as head of R&D over 14 new medicines were approved for use worldwide, for diseases ranging from cancer to asthma and HIV.

Prior to joining GSK, he was a clinical academic, Professor of Medicine and led the Division of Medicine at UCL. He has over 20 years’ »
experience of basic and clinical research, and was a consultant physician in the NHS. His research spanned from work on medicinal chemistry and structural biology, through to cellular work, studies in humans and use of large electronic health record databases.

He was elected to the Academy of Medical Sciences in 1999 and to the Royal Society in 2017. He was on the Board of the UK Office for Strategic Coordination of Health Research (OSCHR) from 2009 to 2016. He is an Honorary Fellow at UCL and holds honorary degrees from Imperial College London, Glasgow University, University of York, and St George’s, University of London. He was a non-executive director and board member for UK Biobank and a non-executive board member for Genome Research Limited but stepped down in taking up the GCSA role.

Peter Bennett
Founding benefactor of the Peter Bennett Foundation

Peter Bennett is the founding benefactor of the Peter Bennett Foundation (2013), and the Bennett Institute for Public Policy (2018). Graduating in 1978, he read Economics at Churchill College, University of Cambridge. Following a successful career in banking and hedge fund management, Peter now devotes his time to pursuing philanthropic endeavours to promote equality and reduce poverty through direct donations and institutional support. The foundation recently established the Bennett Institute for Applied Data Science at The University of Oxford. Following the success of these initiatives, Peter continues to explore new partnerships in different academic fields.
Keep in touch with future news and events by following us on Twitter and LinkedIn, subscribing to our newsletter, and visiting the NEW website.

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