The truth won’t set us free—until we develop the skills, the habit, the talent and the moral courage to use it.

Margaret Heffernan
Forward Institute

The Forward Institute was set up by a small group of major organisations to help the next generation of leaders meet the complex challenges facing business and society.

In 2014, supported by The Boston Consulting Group, we came together as a cross-sector coalition to commit to a commercially rigorous exploration of responsible leadership and to find new ways to embed these principles in our future leaders.

Each year we work with 25 significant organisations to select a diverse cohort of 40 accomplished leaders from the public, private and social sectors to join our distinctive 18-month Fellowship programme.

Our focus is on institutional, not just individual, impact.
Systemic challenges are placing significant pressure on leaders. Yet the way we develop our leaders has failed to evolve sufficiently. Never has so much been invested in leadership development, yet the gulf between the public and institutions continues to grow. New capabilities are needed to succeed.

PROFOUND CHANGE, DECLINING TRUST

The world is changing rapidly. Technological disruption, growing transparency, political instability, climate change, mass migration and changing employee expectations are challenging traditional assumptions and ways of working.

Public trust in capitalism and its institutions has been shaken. In the face of profound social and environmental challenges, organisations need to demonstrate a social licence to operate alongside traditional (often short-term) metrics of success. They increasingly face tough questions about how they choose to operate.

INSULAR CULTURES

Recent reputational crises have exposed insular cultures that stifle innovation and enable corrosive norms to develop. Traditional career paths and the incentives to get ahead encourage people to become ever more inward looking and siloed.

The result can be a senior cadre who are technically brilliant but isolated from wider society and ill-equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of the years ahead.

THE CHALLENGE
Our purpose is to create change within major institutions to help them act more responsibly. We do this by building and supporting a movement for responsible leadership within and across organisations.

We believe that to thrive in today’s complex and evolving world, organisations must be outward looking, responsive and responsible. Our Fellowship programme supports the next generation of senior leaders to broaden their perspectives, explore their values and hone their leadership. We challenge and support them to make a real difference in their organisation.

We are a non-profit organisation and form part of the broader movement towards a fairer and more responsible society.

We are not a third party training provider, but a coalition of major organisations facing shared challenges. The Forward Institute is an exercise in collaboration and experimentation between all involved.
Each year we select a Cohort of 60 exceptional Fellows nominated by the CEOs of our partner organisations. Fellows are high-performing individuals viewed as potential future CEOs, CIOs, CFOs, COOs and CMOs. Many have recently taken on a significant new leadership role.

We aim to identify a small group of leaders from each partner – helping them to integrate principles of responsible business into the fabric of their organisation.

OUR FELLOWS INCLUDE

- Natalie Black
  Deputy Director - Policy Unit
  Prime Minister’s Office
- Karalee Close
  Partner & Managing Director
  The Boston Consulting Group
- Michael Cockroft
  CFO - Europe
  InterContinental Hotels Group
- Richard Copperthwaite
  CIO - Central Europe
  Tesco
- Michael Docherty
  Director of Digital & Supporter Experience
  Cancer Research UK
- Natalie Black
  Deputy Director - Policy Unit
  Prime Minister’s Office
- Kevin Fletcher
  Chief Economist & Director
  HMRC
- Ranjani Kearseley
  Head of HR
  Fidelity International
- Lubaina Manji
  Head of R&D & Group Innovation
  Barclays
- Catherine Reper
  Chief Superintendent - Islington Metropolitan Police
- Andy Morris
  Head of Digital & Marketing
  British Gas
- Andrew Shapland
  Salutations Director
  Carillon
- Ian Stevenson
  Managing Director - Naval Ships
  BAE Systems
- Nick Thompson
  CEO
  Africa Governance Initiative
- Hanlie van Staden
  Client Service Director
  Old Mutual Wealth
- Emmajane Varley
  Head of Insight, Culture & CEO Commms
  HSBC
- Tina Yu
  Country Director - Malawi
  Save the Children
- Martin Zhang
  Sector VP - Infrastructure Safety
  Halma
- Gi Fernando MBE
  Founder
  Freeformers
- Rob Hodderwick
  Commanding Officer
  3 SCOTS
  British Army
- Lauren Anderson
  Head of EU Withdrawal
  Bank of England
- Jon Bingham
  Partner
  KPMG
- Rosalind Ford
  Transmission & Distribution Director
  Carillion

The Forward Institute has been extraordinary. Never before in my professional life have I been exposed to such intellectual diversity. Therefore, it is unsurprising that my takeaways from the 18 months are numerous and varied.

My time on the Fellowship was a period of profound personal and professional change...a true catalyst to reassess what I am doing in my professional life and how I interact with others...it became apparent to me what a dearth of leadership there currently is, yet how much people crave strong leaders.

Having reawakened my passion and found a number of co-conspirators, my personal commitment is to continually seek opportunities to make a difference to the social diversity agenda within traditional city firms.

As a responsible leader I can no longer assume that someone else is dealing with these overwhelming challenges – as leaders of influential companies we need to stand up and take action.
OUR APPROACH

It’s easy to agree we need more responsible leadership; harder to define and enact it. What responsible leadership looks like varies between organisations and over time. We believe moral choices are shaped by the interaction between our character, the company we keep, and the context in which we operate.

The programme examines:

• PERSONAL LEADERSHIP
• NETWORKS & COLLABORATION, SYSTEMS & COMPLEXITY
• MAJOR CHALLENGES FACING ORGANISATIONS & SOCIETY

Instead of a set curriculum, each programme is shaped and co-created with the cohort of Fellows, allowing content to respond to the challenges they are facing. Underpinning each programme is an exploration of underlying principles; that responsible leaders will be accountable, purposeful, open, fair, diverse, human, and think and act for the long-term.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

HEIGHTENED RESPONSIBILITY

Deep conviction and understanding of the principles of responsible business and the ability to articulate a business case for them.

BOLDER LEADERSHIP

Strengthened values, moral compass and sense of purpose. Mindset of experimentation and collaboration. Heightened courage and ability to lead innovation and change.

BROADER PERSPECTIVES

A member of a diverse, collaborative and dynamic network; broader worldview - thinking beyond organisational boundaries and alert to emerging opportunities and challenges.
THE PROGRAMME

INVESTIGATION
Self-reflection and preliminary investigation into responsibility within Fellows’ own organisations.

LAUNCH
A full day of inspiration and provocation to welcome new Fellows.
Hosted By: Bank of England, Tate Modern, London’s City Hall.

RESIDENTIALS
Three residential retreats allow time to slow down, build relationships and engage with issues at a deeper level. Sessions include provocations from senior leaders, field visits to groundbreaking projects, structured exercises, community dinners and reflection time.
Hosted by: Wellcome Genome Campus, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, City of Manchester.

INQUIRY
2 Months

FOCUSED PROGRAMME
12 Months

CHANGE CHALLENGE
Throughout the programme Fellows identify and work on an important issue within their organisation that requires responsible leadership.

LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE
Paired Fellows spend two days observing each other in their respective organisations studying how responsibility and leadership is enacted.

DISCUSSION GROUPS
Fellows navigate the programme in facilitated small groups. Meeting at residential and between them.

DISCOVERY SESSIONS
Regular roundtables exploring critical issues. Hosted by our Advisory Board, CEOs and thought leaders. Discussions are probing and off-the-record.

EXPERIMENT
6 Months

DISCUSSION GROUPS
Fellows focus on their Change Challenge with support and provocation from their Discussion Group in half-day sessions.

THE FELLOWSHIP
An active programme of events allow Fellows to keep connected, inspired and collaborate across cohorts.

CONCLUSION
The cohort share learning and celebrate. Fellows afterwards present back to their Executive Committee and colleagues at work.
Hosted by: Mansion House.

THE PROGRAMME

18 MONTHS
3 RESIDENTIALS
1 LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE
20 FIELD VISITS & SEMINARS
1 CHANGE CHALLENGE

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RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

ACCOUNTABLE

‘Wilful blindness’ is both a legal concept and the name of a book by our lead faculty, Margaret Heffernan. Through exercises and discussion, Fellows help each other consider their own areas of wilful blindness, and widen the scope of what they will take responsibility for.

PURPOSEFUL

Fellows debate the dynamics of profit and purpose. Sessions including Mary Gentile’s work on Giving Voice to Values help Fellows articulate their values, raise questions about ethics and tensions, and close the gap between aspirations and actions.

LONG-TERM

By bringing together insights from different sectors and examining long-term societal trends and new technologies, Fellows explore the challenge of short-termism and the opportunities for systemic change.

OPEN

Innovation theory and practical experimentation feature strongly. Fellows investigate the promise and risks of transparency and how to create a culture of candour – open to new ideas and challenge.

DIVERSE

Increasing diversity of thought is a core theme. Connections across the Fellowship are mapped and developed during the programme and beyond. Fellows are exposed to different perspectives and socialise with people they wouldn’t usually encounter. They are encouraged to build more diverse teams and networks.

FAIR

Listening skills are honed, un-regarded voices heard, and the wider consequences of individual and organisational actions considered. Fellows are proactive in involving teams and wider stakeholders during their time on the programme.

HUMAN

We consider hubris, humility, failure, friendship and fulfilment. Addressing the physical, mental and emotional aspects of work, the programme helps Fellows build their individual resilience and wellbeing and drive a more human, healthy and progressive workplace.
WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT?

ORGANISATIONAL FOCUS
Fellows are encouraged to disseminate new working practices and ideas; and to identify and tackle a Change Challenge within their organisation.

SENIOR SPONSORSHIP
Each organisation must have a senior sponsor to champion the work internally. Typically the CEO or CDO. In addition, Fellows benefit from the direct guidance of our Advisory Board and other senior leaders.

DIVERSE COMMUNITY
We bring together corporates, government, regulators, investors, professional and financial services, and NGOs. This mix exposes Fellows to different perspectives and allows them to build broader networks.

VALUES-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP
We were set up to help tackle the gap between stated values and lived actions in organisations. The entire programme is an exploration into the principles and practices of responsible leadership.

PRACTICAL & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
Practical in approach. Experiential in design. Field visits, immersive sessions, and rapid and iterative experimentation help embed the Fellows’ learning.
CREATING IMPACT

An integral part of the programme is for the Fellows to apply their learning within their organisations, undertaking experiments to explore different ways of doing things day-to-day.

Fellows also work on a ‘Change Challenge’ - an important issue they identify that requires responsible leadership. This is agreed between Fellows and their sponsor, ensuring the topic is strategically important for the organisation.

Change Challenges are primarily self-directed work. Time is given at all events for Fellows to develop new approaches and focus on leveraging the insight, experience and cross-sector network of our partner organisations.

Fellows are expected to spread their ideas inside their organisation - starting conversations and sharing techniques from the programme. Designed by our Faculty, we are building toolkits on core topics and key techniques so that ideas can be widely shared.

TECHNOLOGY & MENTAL HEALTH

Multiple organisations collaborating to assess the impact of technology on mental health and to develop interventions based on findings.

TACKLING FOOD WASTE

Two large multi-nationals partnering with multiple social entrepreneurs to experiment with combining scale and agility in addressing the moral and commercial issue of food waste.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Creating environments in which people feel able and energised to innovate, speak up and take risks in order to uncover areas of wilful blindness.

PAST CHANGE CHALLENGES

Helen Millichap, Metropolitan Police

I have launched a major clinical leadership programme (2020) based on the Forward Institute that brings together clinicians and managers from across the NHS to develop a whole-system approach to healthcare delivery.

Peter Bibawy
Medical Director
Hampshire & Farnham CCG

I’ve been using materials and tools from the programme in my own team meetings and across the organisation to support individual development and drive a different set of behaviours.

Vicki Baker
Head of HR
Old Mutual Wealth

We’re aiming to prove (or disprove) a link between the rise of tech and mental ill health at work. Our survey of 15,000 people across 4 major organisations provides vital data to raise awareness and support subsequent stages of the project. This cross-sector investigation is only possible because the Fellowship brings organisations together to tackle common problems.

James Neale
Managing Director
Macro
Barclays

I have set up a year long leadership course for my own Battalion based on the programme. I will be pleased if it is even partly as effective as the Forward Institute has been!

Rob Hedderwick
Commanding Officer
3 SCOTS
British Army

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Helen Millichap, Metropolitan Police
BEYOND THE PROGRAMME

We are building a movement for responsible leadership within and across organisations, so continuing to work closely with the Fellows after the programme is vital to our success.

**FELLOWSHIP**

All Fellows from every cohort are brought together for an annual Forward Institute event - building a movement for responsible leadership. Meanwhile, Fellows are encouraged to continue to meet in their original Discussion Groups to support and challenge each other throughout their careers.

**INSPIRATION**

We recognise the need for regular stimulus: our series of Discovery Sessions on aspects of responsible leadership is open to all Fellows regardless of cohort. Our monthly email provides news articles and questions for Fellows to debate and share with their teams.

**COLLABORATION**

Many Change Challenges continue and grow beyond the programme, with Fellows from each cohort joining each other’s challenges, and recruiting colleagues to assist.

**MENTORING & COACHING**

Fellows mentor future Fellows, and can draw on the community of Forward Institute mentors and coaches.

**RESOURCES**

Through our Creative Commons licensing agreement, Fellows can use Forward Institute exercises and materials with their teams to develop and share good practice.
Leaders at all levels face an array of complex questions in a world that seems to be ever more complicated. It helps hugely to have friends to debate, support and challenge on the journey.

Sir Anthony Salz
Chair, Forward Institute

Sir William Castell
Chair, Foundation for Futures, London

Sir Ian Cheshire
Chair, Debenhams

Katherine Quarrell-Cox
Former CEO, Alliance Trust

Professor Lynda Gratton
London Business School

Andrew Hutlings
Partner, Freshfields

Charlotte Hogg
Former Deputy Governor, Bank of England

Sam Lidlow
Former CEO, Centrica

Sir Richard Lambert
Chair, British Museum

Jonathan Moulds
Philanthropist

Robert Phillips
Co-Founder, Serico Chambers

Stuart Roden
Chair, Lansdowne Partners

Sir John Rose
Former CEO, Rolls-Royce

Daniela Barone Soares
Non-Exec Director, Halma

Jasmine Whitbread
CEO, London First

Sue Bonney
Senior Partner, KPMG

General Sir Nick Carter
Head of the British Army

Alison Cattrell
CEO, Banking Standards Board

Professor Jeremy Farrar
Director, Welcome Trust

Paul Feeney
CEO, Old Mutual Wealth

Sir Jeremy Heywood
Cabinet Secretary, Civil Service

Tony Moggett
CEO, Tesco UK

Katherine McLeland
Head of Investor Relations, Barclays

Rod Pars
CEO, Standard Life

David Rhodes
Senior Partner, BCG

Dominic Rosal
Global CEO, Fidelity International

Janti Soeripto
CEO, Save the Children

Nigel Taylor
CEO, Carbon Services

George Turner
EVP and General Counsel, IHG

Charles Woodburn
CEO, BAE Systems

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Lead Faculty, Forward Institute; Emeritus Professor, Exeter University

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Assistant Professor of Organisational Behavior, London Business School

Heather Bowers
Former Director of Innovation & Futures, KPMG

Dame Louise Casey
Director General, Casey Review Team, UK Government

Professor Sir Cary Cooper
Head of Organisational Psychology, University of Manchester

Steven D’Souza
CEO & Founder, Deeper Learning

Mary Gentile
Director, Giving Voice to Values

Ed Gillespie
Co-Founder, Faterra Sustainability Communications

Professor David Greyson
Director, Daughtly School for Corporate Reputation, Cranfield

Professor Veronica Hope-Hailey
Dean of School of Management, Bath University

Geoff McDonald
Mental Health Campaigner
Former Global VP HR, Unilever

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