

NICEC Network Meeting

Skills & Growth: the role of Career Development Work

22nd September 2025

The Studio

7 Cannon Street
Birmingham
B2 5EP



Agenda

Inspire Room, 2nd floor

Tea & coffee is available in the communal area outside the Inspire meeting room throughout the day.

2pm	Welcome and introduction	Gill Frigerio, Chair of NICEC 2020-25
2.15pm	Introduction to the panel event	Tristram Hooley
2.20pm	Panel - Skills & Growth: the role of Career Development Work	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. John Hall, West Midlands Combined Authority2. Stephen Isherwood, Institute of Student Employers3. Claudia Jaksch, Policy Connect4. Sandra Oribine (Cheyne), Skills Development Scotland5. Chris Percy, NICEC Fellow and CareerChat UK Co-founder (recorded presentation)
3pm	Group discussion and provocation	All
4.15pm	Summary of discussions	Tristram Hooley
4.30	Closing remarks	Gill Frigerio
From 4.45pm	Drinks Reception – in the communal area outside the Inspire Room	

Please note: In case of fire, on hearing the alarm bells sound, immediately make your way to the nearest fire exit. Studio fire marshals are recognisable by yellow high-visibility jackets and will assist with directions and evacuation.

On evacuation of the building, the meeting point is across the road, in front of the Hope Street Entrance to Central Station.

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Panel Biographies

Dr Gill Frigerio

University of Warwick & Chair of NICEC from 2020-2025



Dr Gill Frigerio is Reader in Career Studies and Coaching in the School of Education, Learning and Communication Sciences at the University of Warwick. Gill leads a teaching team who run a range of globally relevant postgraduate programmes in career development work and coaching. Her research and teaching interests include vocation and calling; practitioner and action research in career development settings, women's career development and working with marginalised communities. She believes career development work is best understood as interdisciplinary and systemic, requiring the integration of theory, policy and practice in practitioner training. She is the co-author, with Tristram Hooley and Rosie Alexander, of the Career Development Handbook.

Gill has been the Chair of NICEC from 2020-2025, a period of growth and increased reach, with 14 new fellows recruited, a successful international conference on Sustainability and Careers and a higher profile online journal and events programme.

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Prof. Tristram Hooley

University of Derby



Tristram Hooley is a researcher and writer specialising in career and career guidance. He is Professor of Career Education at the University of Derby and a visiting Professor at the Inland Norway University and Canterbury Christ Church University. He is also the author of the Adventures in Career Development blog (<https://adventuresincareerdevelopment.wordpress.com/>) and has published over 100 books, papers, and articles on careers and related subjects.

His work focuses on the intersection of career, education, technology, and politics. He is a Winston Churchill Fellow, a member of the boards of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy and the Career Development Policy Group and the Chief Editor of the NICEC Journal.

John Hall

Interim Head of Service, Careers & Employment Support (Employment and Skills)

John has over 25 years' experience of working within Employment and Skills, accountable for the Mayors Youth Plan, including the Youth Trailblazer, Connect to Work and Careers Hub delivery.

He is also responsible for the development and implementation of West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA) all age careers strategy, the West Midlands approach to addressing Digital Exclusion and the innovation and design and delivery of the WMCA's Employment Support eco-system.

John joined WMCA in 2017 having previously worked at a senior level for the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership, and prior to that for 10 years as Senior Delivery Manager for a Welfare to Work Provider delivering key DWP national contracts and Skills based solutions for employers. He has also worked for Jobcentreplus.



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Stephen Isherwood

Joint CEO Knowledge and Insights, Institute of Student Employers

Stephen was appointed Chief Executive of the ISE in June 2013 following seven years as Head of Graduate Recruitment UK & Ireland at EY. At the ISE he is now responsible for market intelligence and thought leadership, for expertise and analysis, for policy direction and guidance to help members develop their early talent strategies.

Stephen has managed graduate recruitment and development programmes in both the private and public sectors and has extensive experience in the recruitment and development of students, both graduates and school leavers.

In addition to his current role, Stephen undertakes a number of roles related to higher education and employment. He is a Governor of Harlow College, the Enterprise Advisor for Roding Valley High School, is Chair of Trustees at the London Interdisciplinary School Foundation, and sits on employer advisory groups at the University of Cambridge and the University of York. He has presented at a wide range of conferences and events, to various committees in the Houses of Parliament, and often appears in national and local media.



Claudia Jaksch

Policy Connect



Claudia Jaksch is the Chief Executive of cross-party think tank Policy Connect and leads the think tank in its mission to develop cross-party solutions and consensus for problems facing our society.

Policy Connect specialises in supporting parliamentary groups, forums and commissions, delivering impactful policy research and event programmes and bringing together parliamentarians and government in collaboration with academia, business and civil society to help shape public policy. Policy Connect focuses on five policy areas: Education & Skills; Industry, Technology & Innovation; Sustainability; Health; and Accessibility.

Claudia is also a trustee of the charity Carbon Copy and supports the organisation's work on public engagement and local action to tackle the climate crisis.

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Sandra Oribine (Cheyne)

Policy & Professional Practice Lead Skills Development Scotland

Sandra leads the strategic development of CIAG policy, guidance and professional practice learning and resource. She was responsible for instigating and developing new pathways to encourage talent into the career guidance profession in Scotland.

Within her responsibility is Covenant duty to the Armed Forces Community and vulnerable safeguarding.

Sandra holds several strategic relationship roles for SDS. As a key member of the Scottish Government's Steering Group for the CIAG Strategy she is committed to the critical role that accessible, modern, professional practice in career development has. #CareerIsNow



Chris Percy (*recorded presentation*)

NICEC Fellow and CareerChat UK Co-founder



Chris is a data scientist working primarily on career trajectories, applied AI, and economic development. His clients have included the World Bank, OECD, Gatsby Foundation, and government organisations in eight nations. He is the lead UK expert for the EU career guidance network and he appeared as an expert witness in the House of Commons Education Select Committee.

Elsewhere in AI, Chris holds a patent in machine learning, leads a grant to research AI's metaphysical implications, and is just finishing a project on the economic impact of AI. He is also co-founder of an AI careers advice chatbot service.

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