



NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY WEEK 2025 SCOTTISH PROGRAMME:

UNLOCKING SCOTLAND'S PRODUCTIVITY POTENTIAL: WAYS OF WORKING, INVESTING, AND INNOVATING

A long-exposure photograph of a city street at night, showing light trails from cars and buildings. The image is framed by a large, dark blue triangle pointing downwards.

#NationalProductivityWeek

A Message from Sir Anton Muscatelli for Scotland Productivity Week 2025



I am delighted that the University of Glasgow is once again facilitating Scotland's contribution to this year's National Productivity Week.

We all want to see a Scottish economy that is resilient, thriving, and innovative. Bringing together governments, businesses, researchers, and communities is central to ensuring our efforts to boost productivity are successful in building a fairer and more equitable society.

The 2025 Week builds on the key themes of the November 2023 Productivity Week, which focused on improving productivity to generate a strong economy, prosperity for all, and quality public services. These remain important and the 2025 Productivity Week will address how to unlock the potential of the Scottish economy to support these goals.

During the week, experts from business, policy, and academia will explore innovation in the ways we work, considering the rise of purpose in business, different modes of working including hybrid work, wellbeing at work and the importance of investment.

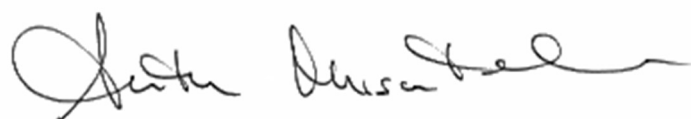
As we begin 2025, we continue to face major economic challenges, particularly our capacity to maximise the existing potential we already have, as well as our ability to harness emerging potential. And we have immense potential in Glasgow and across Scotland. Partnership and collaboration will be key for productivity growth, and so will innovation and investment.

Here at the University of Glasgow, we are taking action to address these concerns, most notably through our collaboration with industry, governments and communities through the Glasgow Riverside Innovation District (GRID).

GRID is an ambitious place-based innovation programme delivered in partnership between the University of Glasgow, Glasgow City Council and Scottish Enterprise to accelerate an inclusive approach to innovation. Within its boundary, the University and its partners are taking a whole-systems approach to economic development, driving innovation through research expertise and convening power to support entrepreneurship and attract high-value industry to co-locate and develop opportunities for jobs locally in Govan.

The investment landscape is changing and evolving in relation to broader socio-economic and environmental challenges, new investors and strategies and innovative approaches such as crowdfunding. In terms of unlocking potential, innovation is key, including technological as well as business process and organisational change.

Knowledge creation drives innovation, innovation drives productivity, and productivity drives economic growth. It is inspiring to see these discussions taking place during the week, and I am proud that the University of Glasgow is playing a part in making this happen.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Anton Muscatelli', written in a cursive style.

Unlocking Scotland's productivity potential

The 2025 Scottish Productivity Week will focus on unlocking the potential of the Scottish economy to promote inclusive growth and shared prosperity. Building on the key themes explored during the November 2023 Productivity Week—which emphasized improving productivity to strengthen the economy, enhance prosperity, and support quality public services—the 2025 programme seeks to address practical strategies for achieving these goals.

The central aim of the 2025 Scottish Productivity Week is to explore actionable approaches to:

- Ways of Working
- Ways of Investing
- Ways of Innovating

These themes are critical to driving productivity. Innovations in work practices are essential, particularly considering emerging trends such as purpose-driven business, hybrid working, and the need to focus on employee wellbeing. Simultaneously, the investment landscape is evolving to address socio-economic and environmental challenges, including Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, new funding opportunities, and innovative tools and processes such as crowdfunding. Finally, innovation—ranging from technological advances to organizational and business process changes—will play a pivotal role in unlocking Scotland's economic potential.

The TPI Scottish Forum, in collaboration with Prosper, Peer Works, and a range of partners from business, academia, and the public and third sectors, will host events across Scotland's diverse regions and industries. The programme is designed to address the unique opportunities and challenges of Scotland's economy, from SMEs to multinationals, and across urban and rural geographies.

The Scottish Productivity Week 2025 aims to foster knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and learning among businesses. By bringing together experts, policymakers, and practitioners, the programme will identify the infrastructure, skills, investment, and support required to unlock Scotland's productivity potential.

28th January 2025 | Scotland Productivity Week, Day 1

Location: The Social Hub, Glasgow

1. **Registration and Networking (Tea and Coffee)**

09:30 – 10:00

2. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

10:00 – 10:10 | *Professor Bridgette Wessels and Mr Tom Arthur MSP, Minister for Employment and Investment*

Welcome to the Scottish Productivity Week: the importance of unlocking productivity to improve prosperity for all in Scotland.

3. **Unlocking AI: Practical Strategies for Business Productivity**

10:15 – 12:15 | *Delivered by Connect Three, Jordan Kay (Head of Innovation and Growth)*

This hands-on workshop will explore the practical applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance business productivity. Led by Connect Three, the session will provide actionable insights and strategies for businesses of all sizes to leverage AI effectively. Participants will discover tools and techniques to streamline processes, improve decision-making, and unlock growth opportunities. Whether you are at the beginning of your AI journey or seeking to scale its use, this workshop offers practical guidance to take the next step.

4. **Lunch and Networking**

12:30 – 13:00

5. **Redefining Productivity: Smarter Ways of Working**

13:00 – 16:00 | *Speakers: Jude McCorry (CEO, Cyber Fraud Centre); Prof. Bridgette Wessels (University of Glasgow); Nikki Slowey (Flexibility Works); Dr Sophie Brett (Prosper); Stuart Mackinnon, Carnegie Trust UK.*

Significant changes in work practices, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and technological advancements, have reshaped the nature of work. Flexible working models, employee wellbeing, and the meaning of work play critical roles in motivating employees, retaining talent, and enhancing productivity.

This workshop will take a multi-dimensional approach, examining how different work practices interact to unlock productivity. Topics include wellbeing at work, flexible working models, Fair Work principles, the purpose of work, and skills development.

Agenda items:

12:30 - 13:45	Arrival, Networking and Lunch
13:45 - 14:00	Introduction to the Session. Prof. Bridgette Wessels
14:00 - 14:50	Roundtable. Chair: <i>Dr Elli Meleti, University of Glasgow</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living and working in Scotland: wellbeing at work (<i>Stuart MacKinnon, Carnegie Trust UK</i>)• The meaning of work and purpose in business in enhancing productivity (<i>Prof. Bridgette Wessels, University of Glasgow</i>)• Changing ways of working: unlocking potential in remote, in-office, shared working, hybrid models. (<i>Jude McCorry, Cyber Fraud Centre</i>)• Healthy Working People (<i>Dr Sophie Brett, Prosper</i>)• The Productivity Power of Flexible Working (<i>Nikki Slowey, Flexibility Works</i>)
14:50 - 15:10	Q&A
15:10 - 15:50	Group Discussion
15:50 - 16:00	Summary and Key Takeaways

29th January 2025 | Scotland Productivity Week, Day 2

Location: The Social Hub, Glasgow

Registration (Tea and Coffee)

09:30 – 10:00

1. Public Sector Productivity: Overcoming Barriers and Realising Opportunities

09:30 – 11:30 | Roundtable | Speakers: Scott Barnett (Head of Information and Cyber Security, NHS); Susan Love (Strategic Engagement Lead, ACCA Scotland); Richard Robinson (Senior Manager, Audit Scotland); Stuart Bain (Chief Officer for the Employers Team, COSLA); Prof. Bridgette Wessels (University of Glasgow).

The Programme for Government references a 10-year public service reform with some specific suggestions, but what does productivity mean in the public sector? This session will bring together key stakeholders to discuss challenges and opportunities in enhancing public sector productivity. The roundtable will focus on identifying actionable strategies and informing research proposals aimed at driving meaningful improvements across Scotland's public sector.

Agenda items:

10:00 - 11:00 Panel Discussion. Chair: Clare Reid, Prosper

Each panel member will address the following questions:

- How do you define productivity in the public sector? Can you share examples of initiatives that have improved productivity?
- Looking ahead, what are the key opportunities for enhancing productivity in the public sector?

Panel responses by:

- Susan Love, Strategic Engagement Lead, ACCA
- Richard Robinson, Senior Manager, Audit Scotland
- Stuart Bain, Chief Officer for the Employers Team, COSLA
- Scott Barnett, Chief Information Security Officer, NHS National Services Scotland
- Bridgette Wessels, Professor of Social Inequalities, University of Glasgow, Co-Lead Productivity Institute Scotland Forum

11:00 - 11:30 Q&A

11:30 Close

2. Networking Lunch

11:30 – 12:00

3. **Scaling Up Success: A Hands-On Workshop for Unlocking Business Potential**

12:00 – 14:00 | Delivered by Connect Three, Jordan Kay (Head of Innovation and Growth)

This interactive workshop, led by Connect Three, is designed to help businesses identify and unlock their full potential for growth. Through practical exercises, expert guidance, and real-world case studies, you'll explore strategies to scale operations, improve productivity, and overcome common barriers to success. Whether you're a small business ready to grow or an established organisation looking to accelerate progress, this session will equip you with practical tools and insights to support your next step.

4. **Driving Growth in Scotland: Finance, FinTech, and Funding**

14:30 – 16:30 | Speakers: Prof. John Finch (University of Glasgow); Elaine Morrison (Director of Productivity (Scottish Enterprise); Kevin Boyd (Director, Quest Corporate); Prof. Jonathan Beaverstock, (Future Finance); Daniel Williams (University of Glasgow).

Investment plays a critical role in unlocking economic potential. This session will explore evolving trends in finance, including ESG-aligned investment, gender-inclusive funding opportunities, and the role of FinTech in driving innovation.

Agenda Items:

14:30 - 15:20

Roundtable: Chair Prof. Bridgette Wessels

- The landscape of investment: opportunities and challenges (*Elaine Morrison, Scottish Enterprise*).
- Innovations in investment: crowdfunding by women in business (*Daniel Williams, University of Glasgow*).
- Future Finance: tools and training in Fintech (*Prof. Jonathan Beaverstock, Future Finance*).
- Making the most of Business Funding Opportunities (*Kevin Boyd, Quest Corporate*).
- Just Transitions, ESG and FinTech for Productivity (*Prof. John Finch, University of Glasgow*).
- The importance of Inclusive early-stage angel investing (*Gillian Fleming, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Mint Ventures*).

15:20 - 15:40

Q&A

15:40 - 16:20

Group Discussion

16:20 - 16:30

Summing Up: Best Practices for Attracting and Applying Investment

5. **Reception**

16:30 – 18:00

Post-event reception featuring light refreshments and networking opportunities to celebrate and connect with fellow attendees

30th January 2025 | Scotland Productivity Week, Day 3

Location: CodeBase, Edinburgh

1. **Productivity Tips for Tech Founders**

09:00 – 11:00 | *Delivered in Collaboration with Barclays Eagle Labs.*

Workshop participants: Melanie Morris (Founder, Deeply Brilliant You), Roan Lavery (CEO & Founder, Free Agent)

This interactive session targeted at tech founders/companies will bring experts and founders first-hand experience on tasks prioritisation, time management, delegation and how to get the most from your people. Through workshops, case study presentation and peer to peer learning we will help tech businesses to power up their productivity.

Agenda Items:

09:00 - 09:30	Registrations and Networking Breakfast
09:30 - 10:30	Workshop, Case study presentation and Q&A <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop on time management and internal communication (<i>Melanie Morris, Founder at Deeply Brilliant You</i>).• How to build autonomous and empowered teams (<i>Roan Lavery, CEO, Free Agent</i>).
10:30 - 11:00	Group Discussion
11:00	Close

31st January 2025 | Scotland Productivity Week, Day 4

Location (1): The Aberdeen Altens Hotel, Aberdeen

Location (2): Easterbrook Hall, The Crichton Trust Estate, Dumfries and Galloway

1. ***The Power of Purpose in Business | Location: The Aberdeen Altens Hotel, Aberdeen***

09:00 – 11:00 | *Speakers: Sheryl Newman (CEO & Founder, Appetite for Business); Prof. Bridgette Wessels (University of Glasgow)*

Research shows that purposeful businesses forecast achieve 10% higher growth than traditional businesses with successful businesses being built on social prosperity and environmental sustainability. But what is business purpose? How can businesses make purpose work for their business?

We will hear from Sheryl Newman, CEO & Founder, Appetite for Business about the way that purpose shaped her business including leading to the B-Corp certification. We will also hear from Prof Bridgette Wessels, University of Glasgow, Co-Lead Productivity Institute Scotland Forum on the early findings of the project research Purpose in business: empowering employees and enhancing productivity.

Agenda Items:

09:00 - 09:30	Registrations and Networking Breakfast
09:30 - 10:30	Presentations and Q&A
10:30 - 11:00	Group Discussion
11:00	Close

2. ***Boosting Regional Prosperity: Productivity in the Rural Economy | Location: Easterbrook Hall, The Crichton Trust Estate, Dumfries and Galloway***

13:00 – 15:30 | *Hosted by the Crichton Trust Estate | Speakers: Gwilym Gibbons (CEO, Crichton Trust); Dr Sam Ross (Business Development Manager; The Melting Pot); Sarah Kenhard (Enterprise and Business Manager, South of Scotland Enterprise)*

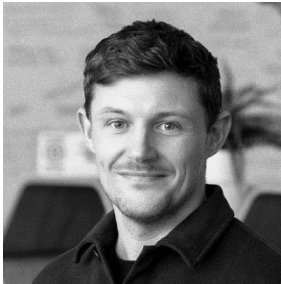
This event is based at The Crichton Trust Estate that hosts 160 rural businesses. It is home to a growing number of Dumfries's most progressive and exciting businesses. Fostering and supporting rural business is key to unlocking the potential of the Scottish economy. It supports a growing and diverse community of businesses who find the combination of large heritage building spaces, natural light, acres of greenspace, trees and great connectivity creates a good place for their business to flourish.

This workshop and tour of facilities will address what rural businesses need to grow. We will explore how the Trust is seeking to build on the 100-year legacy of The Crichton and place its natural capital at the heart of The Crichton's sustainable future. These include types of facilities such as short-term meeting places, co-working opportunities, small quiet offices, suite of offices or buildings, adoption of smart energy system solution to aid transition to NetZero. As well as onsite management team, meeting and conference facilities, EV charging points, onsite café, and restaurant.

Agenda Items:

13:00 - 13:30	Opening Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Rural Business: <i>Gwilym Gibbons CEO Crichton Trust</i> Problem Solving and Places with Purpose: <i>Dr Sam Ross, Business Development Manager, The Melting Pot</i> The context of the South of Scotland for business: opportunities and challenges: <i>Sarah Kenhard, Enterprise and Business Manager, South of Scotland Enterprise.</i>
13:30 - 14:15	Tour of the Crichton Business Site and meeting local businesses
14:15 - 15:15	Group discussion: unlocking the potential of the rural economy
15:15 - 15:30	Key Takeaways for supporting the rural economy

SPEAKERS (Listed in Agenda Order)



Jordan Kay
(Connect Three)

Jordan is a passionate entrepreneur with over 20 years of experience in building, operating, and supporting businesses. Starting at 16, he has founded, failed, operated, and successfully exited service and product-led businesses in Scotland—all by age 36. His hands-on experience sets him apart from traditional consultants. With a creative and strategic mindset, Jordan helps SMEs innovate and grow, guiding many to become industry leaders. He is deeply committed to improving workplace and individual performance, constantly exploring tools to optimize productivity. This drive extends to his personal life, where he applies the same focus to goal setting, journaling, and running ultra marathons.



Jude McCorry
(Cyber Fraud Centre)

Jude McCorry is the CEO of the Cyber and Fraud Centre with over 20 years of experience in the technology sector. She began her career at Dell in Ireland and joined the Centre in April 2020 from The Data Lab, where she was Director of Business Development, connecting industry and academia to maximize Scotland's data value. Jude co-founded the UNICEF Data Hub for Children and serves on the board of the Edinburgh Data-Driven Innovation Hub at Edinburgh University. She is passionate about using data for good and inspiring the next generation—especially women—to pursue careers in cyber and technology.



Nikki Slowey
(Flexibility Works)

I am a dynamic professional specializing in project management, strategic communications and marketing, and campaign management, with a passion for driving workplace culture change. After beginning my career in property and finance, I quickly realized that achieving a positive social impact was essential for my professional fulfilment. Transitioning to the voluntary and non-profit sectors allowed me to leverage and expand my skills while aligning my work with a greater purpose. As a natural collaborator, I have successfully led and contributed to numerous partnerships, consistently delivering results through resourcefulness and strategic thinking. My ability to thrive in resource-constrained environments has honed my capacity to innovate and solve complex challenges. A strategic thinker and effective communicator, I am passionate about finding creative solutions, fostering collaboration, and driving meaningful change in every project I undertake.



Dr Sophie Brett
(Prosper)

Working with the Policy Team, Sophie will support members in advancing shared priorities for a sustainable and prosperous Scotland. With experience in the third sector, she looks forward to collaborating with members across Scottish society on key issues.

Sophie earned her PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Glasgow's Dumfries Campus, researching opportunities for agricultural education in Scottish secondary schools through Curriculum for Excellence. She also holds an MSc in Environmental Policy and Governance and is passionate about building a more circular, sustainable Scotland.

Outside work, Sophie enjoys exploring Scotland's scenery—usually on foot or by bike, always with coffee and bacon rolls!



Stuart MacKinnon
(Carnegie Trust)

Stuart is Carnegie UK's head of communications and advocacy. Stuart manages our programme of public relations, public affairs and reactive policy activity.

Before Carnegie UK, Stuart was head of communications at the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) in Scotland. Stuart has given evidence to parliamentary committees, written for titles like The Scotsman, and appeared on television and radio.



Dr Elli Meleti
(University of Glasgow)

My name is Elli Meleti, and after more than 20 years in industry as a manager, consultant, and business owner, I earned a PhD in Management in 2020 from the University of Glasgow (Adam Smith Business School). My research focused on Human Sustainability, Relational Coordination, and Worker Outcomes, specifically exploring work engagement, proactive work behaviour, and job satisfaction. I currently collaborate as an Adjunct in Management at the University of Glasgow and am pursuing a postgraduate certificate in Inclusive Education: Research, Policy and Practice at the School of Education, University of Glasgow. Additionally, I serve on the board of directors of SOL spa, an international company. I am passionate about teaching, research, and consultancy, with a focus on bridging the gap between professionals and academics to foster sustainable, positive organizational change. Fluent in Greek, English, and Italian, I also enjoy traveling, reading, writing, photography, the arts, walking, and organic food.



Clare Reid
(Prosper)

Clare's role at Prosper fulfils her passions.

Clare looks after our Policy team and leads on government and stakeholder engagement, Peer Works and Young Engineers and Science Clubs. She loves working with our fantastic, talented team across all of these areas and getting to meet the most amazing array of people in her daily work. She really enjoys finding out about what's going on in their worlds, uncovering future trends and bringing people from diverse industries, sectors and backgrounds together to make a difference. Outside of work you'll probably find Clare cooking up a storm in the kitchen, on a bike or up a hill walking and talking with family and friends.



Scott Barnett
(NHS)

Experienced Information and Cyber Security Leader with strong people and risk management skills, broad technical expertise, and strategic insight into cyber security, cybercrime, and customer security. Proven track record in delivering risk and threat assessments to guide proactive security investments. Skilled communicator, experienced lecturer, and adept at translating technical concepts for business audiences. Well-connected in the cyber security and digital fraud communities, with experience across both private and public sectors in governance, risk management, project delivery, and budget control. Police-trained intelligence analyst with a logical, methodical approach to crisis response.



Susan Love
(ACCA Scotland)

Leading external engagement and public affairs in Scotland for the world's leading accountancy professional body, ACCA. In previous role, served as an experienced senior manager covering policy and external affairs in one of Scotland's most respected and successful campaigning and membership organisations, with a background in local and national politics. Particular expertise in business and economic development and a board member of Scotland's economic development association (EDAS). Key skills lie in the integrity of policy work, understanding of membership bodies and developing relationships. Proud to be a member of the Senior Advisory Panel of Women in Public Affairs Scotland.



Richard Robinson
(Audit Scotland)

Richard is Audit Scotland's performance audit lead for Scottish devolved fiscal powers, wider public finances and the reform agenda. In recent years this has included auditing the Scottish Government's approach to Covid-19 spending, the public sector workforce and financial planning. He began his career in financial audit in England where he gained his CIPFA qualification before moving to Scotland to focus on performance audit. Richard has represented Audit Scotland as an expert lead for the fiscal framework, national long-term performance outcomes and equalities budgeting. He believes in the importance of the close links between financial and performance reporting to show the difference public money makes. Richard is a keen proponent of public sector reform, heading up Audit Scotland's engagement with a wide variety of public sector leaders on reform activity and the role of public audit.



Stuart Bain
(COSLA)

Stuart Bain has worked in local government for 24 years and has been with COSLA for the last 6. He has been Chief Officer for the Employers' Team since December 2023. Before taking on his current role he worked as a Policy Manager in the team on all its areas of work including, but not limited to, working on national pay negotiations, terms and conditions, pay modelling and calculations, supporting Employer's work with Scottish Government, providing support to the Resources Spokesperson, and liaising with professional advisers in councils across Scotland. Before joining COSLA Stuart carried out a wide range of HR roles in Fife Council. Prior to that he had HR roles in Boots the Chemist. He started his HR/OD career with a major UK photo-processing company way back in the long-ago-time when we used to take our holiday snaps on film. (Stuart still sometimes uses film for his holiday snaps.)



Prof. John Finch
(University of Glasgow)

John is Professor Marketing in the Adam Smith Business School and was Head of the Adam Smith Business School from January 2016 to July 2023, leading the School through a period of significant development and growth. Currently, he is Associate Dean for East Asia for the University of Glasgow's College of Social Sciences. John is the lead investigator for the University of Glasgow's contribution to the Innovate-UK funded project Financial Regulation Innovation Lab – a partnership with FinTech Scotland and the University of Strathclyde.



Elaine Morrison
(Scottish Enterprise)

The majority of my life has involved contributing to opportunities which help to improve Scotland as a place to live, work and do business. Scotland is an amazing country and while economic times can be tough, it is resilient, innovative and determined. Every individual has a responsibility to play their part, and I am hugely grateful for the opportunity to help individuals or business take their dreams forward. My greatest offering is the ability to listen, innovate to find the right solution, and bring together the private & public connections who can help move your business forward.



Kevin Boyd
(Quest Corporate)

An experienced finance professional providing high quality advice, guidance and practical help to SMEs on accessing and structuring the right debt finance for their business. Kevin also has a long-established banking career with Shawbrook and Santander. He heads up the debt advisory side of Quest Corporate looking to find solutions for clients from the many sources of debt funding now available. Kevin also works closely with the other Quest Directors where debt and equity funding need to be aligned.



Prof. Jonathan Beaverstock
(Future Finance)

Professor Beaverstock is an experienced leader within the University of Bristol as well as having enjoyed a full career in many other prestigious UK universities. He is also a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Professor Beaverstock is an interdisciplinary scholar whose current research and teaching interests focus on the internationalisation and clustering of financial and professional service firms in the City of London, and the role of FinTech ecosystems in driving the productivity of UK city-regions.



Gillian Fleming
(Mint Ventures)

Gillian is a Strategic Advisor, Non-Exec Director and Angel Investor for start-up and spin-out companies with a background in sales and marketing for the energy and engineering sector. She has 25 years' experience in the entrepreneurial ecosystem both advising and nurturing early-stage ideas across multiple sectors to successfully transition to company creation and as an experienced venture capitalist. As honorary professor and entrepreneur in residence at the University of Stirling she provides strategic input to the International Business Advisory Board and supports women to consider entrepreneurship as a career. On a mission to make angel investment more accessible to women both founders and potential investors, Gillian is Co – Founder, Director and MD of Mint Ventures (Syndicate) Ltd, a women-led angel group focused on investing in women led and diverse teams with an environmental, ethical or social purpose. Gillian is an Entrepreneurial Scotland Saltire Fellow, motivational speaker and judges for various accelerator programs and business competitions.



Daniel Williams
(University of Glasgow)

Daniel is a Research Assistant at the Adam Smith Business School, University of Glasgow, currently working on a pilot project with the Scotland Productivity Forum on how crowdfunding can improve data on business value and de-risk follow on investment. He previously worked as a research associate for the Isle of Man government, leading a research project investigating employability trends in a localised economy to inform policymaking decisions in both the private sector and at governmental level. Daniel holds an M.Sc. in Politic & Technology from the Technical University of Munich and a B.A (Hons) in International Relations & Politics from the University of Sheffield. His research interest includes decarbonisation trends, innovative intersections between business, politics & technology, and scale-deep initiatives.



Melanie Morris
(Deeply Brilliant You)

Mel is a dynamic business strategist and coach dedicated to unlocking the full potential of people and businesses. Founder of Deeply Brilliant You, Mel blends no-nonsense business planning with targeted skills gap training to help individuals and organizations turn vision into actionable growth. With extensive experience building successful businesses and mentoring start-ups, SMEs, and global brands, she excels at transforming ideas into practical strategies for success. Mel's personalized coaching and training empower teams to thrive by boosting productivity, enhancing well-being, and reducing burnout. Her energy and passion inspire people to become their best selves, driving businesses further. Ready to energize your business? Mel is the secret ingredient to unlocking your Deeply Brilliant potential.



Roan Lavery
(Free Agent)

Roan is the co-founder and CEO of FreeAgent, an online accounting software company based in Edinburgh. Over the past 15 years Roan has helped build FreeAgent from a weekend side project to one of the leading software companies in the UK, with over 130,000 customers. Roan's career has charted an unconventional path from design to product to CEO, with a common thread throughout that companies live or die on their ability to build products that solve real customer problems through exceptional user experiences.



Sheryl Newman
(Appetite for Business)

Sheryl Newman is the founder and driving force behind Appetite for Business, a multi-award-winning company specializing in Microsoft 365 solutions. Leading a team of 16 experts, Sheryl helps £1M+ businesses streamline operations, scale efficiently, and maximize productivity. With firsthand experience in managing SME challenges, she is dedicated to empowering businesses to unlock the full potential of Microsoft 365 through simplified processes, actionable insights, and practical training. A passionate advocate for diversity and accessibility in tech, Sheryl champions the inclusion of women in the industry and the creation of accessible digital tools.



Gwilym Gibbons
(Crichton Trust)

Gwilym is a social impact entrepreneur and senior leader with a strong track record in culture, heritage, and education leadership within rural and social enterprise settings. A passion for whole system and circular economy development focused on enabling places to be creative and healthy for people and the planet. He has an extensive track record in sustainable growth through partnership, collaboration, and innovation. He has been Chief Executive of The Crichton Trust since April 2018 where he has led the development of a bold new vision for a new way to work, live, study and play – cross-generational, age-friendly and adaptive, low carbon and tech-enabled while staying highly socially connected.



Dr Sam Ross
(Melting Pot)

Sam joined the Melting Pot in January 2024, bringing along an established enthusiasm for growth and challenge. Sam founded a mental health and isolation charity in 2016 before moving on to a transformation project in a Fife charity. She loves change projects so much that she then completed a PhD in change in UK universities. Sam is at her best when she's had time to make a mess in the kitchen or has been munroing in the Scottish Highlands.



Sarah Kenhard
(SOSE)

Sarah brings nearly 30 years of experience of business development and improvement in a number of organisations across the Life Sciences, Food and Drink and public sector. Her recent appointment means she leads a team of Business Specialists at SOSE and works with businesses in the South of Scotland to help them develop, be more efficient, innovate, grow and be profitable. With a focus on Productivity and Continuous Improvement, Sarah is keen to meet with businesses in the region and hear first-hand of their experiences and challenges in these areas.

SPECIAL GUEST



Tom Athur MSP

Minister of Employment and
Investment

Thomas Compton Arthur MSP (born 1985) is a Scottish National Party (SNP) politician. He is the Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) for the constituency of Renfrewshire South, having been first elected in 2016 and re-elected in 2021. He has served as Minister for Employment and Investment since 2024.

PRODUCTIVITY INSTITUTE SCOTLAND FORUM

Chair



Carolyn Currie
(WES)

Carolyn has enjoyed an extensive career at a senior level. Roles include Head of Business Lending at NatWest Group, managing the multi-billion-pound lending book and Head of Women in Business, leading the initiative to over 200 trained, specialist staff across the UK. Now CEO at Women's Enterprise Scotland she works to enable more women to realise their business aspirations, guiding research and the development of start-up and scale-up support. She gives evidence to the Economy Committee in the Scottish Parliament and has contributed policy papers to the World Economic Forum and the Think-20. She is a Chartered Banker, a founding Director of Mint Ventures business angel syndicate and chairs the Productivity Institute in Scotland.

Co-Lead



Prof. John Tsoukalas
(University of Glasgow)

Professor John Tsoukalas joined the Adam Smith Business School in 2011, after a career at Nottingham University, School of Economics and the Bank of England. Since 2021 he has been Deputy Head of School for planning and resourcing. He holds an undergraduate degree from the Athens University of Economics and Business and a PhD degree from the University of Maryland, USA. He has held visiting positions at the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, San Francisco, and Johns Hopkins University.

Co-Lead and Speaker



Prof. Bridgette Wessels
(University of Glasgow)

Bridgette's research focuses on productivity, work, regional growth and digital innovation. She has also focused on social exclusion and digital divides, financial exclusion and the e-economy, social media and political inequality, health inequalities and telehealth, welfare services and (digital) identity, local journalism and inclusion and e-policing, ethnicity and communities. She is addressing the developing uses of AI for business and the public sector.



The 2025 Scottish Productivity Week promises to inspire collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and innovation, offering actionable insights for businesses, policymakers, and stakeholders to unlock Scotland's productivity potential.