

About Our Speakers & Contributors



Alec Blacklaw

MD – Blacklaw Advisory and Founder – The Business Improvement Program, Australia & UK

Alec is a CPA, Economist, keynote speaker and thought leader & founder of highly acclaimed ***The Business Improvement Program*** delivered in Australia and the UK.

He is a practical business guy and has worn many hats having founded, grown, invested, advised and helped family business owners transition through generations, succession and exit.

Alec has learned from some of the best family businesses and leaders across the globe, and delivers his insights in a practical and energetic way that is focused on achieving maximum engagement, implementation and results.



Alfredo De Massis

Professor of Entrepreneurship & Family Business & the Founding Director of the Centre for Family Business Management at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy.

Alfredo continues to support family business projects as Professor at Lancaster University Management School.

Alfredo is the Associate Editor of the prestigious Family Business Review. He serves on the boards internationally, including in Italy, China, the US, Germany, and the UK.

His research shows how family business leaders balance economic and non-economic goals in strategic decision making, including complex digital transformations.



Andrea Calabrò

Director of the IPAG Entrepreneurship & Family Business Center and Professor of Family Business & Entrepreneurship at IPAG Business School, France.

He is Global Academic Director of the STEP (Successful Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Practices) Project Global Consortium.

He has published journal articles on family firms, internationalization, and corporate governance in leading international journals such as: Strategic Management Journal, Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice, Family Business Review, Harvard Business Review, Journal of Business Ethics, and Journal of Small Business Management.

He serves as advisor to family businesses and coaches next generation members.



Antonio Bunster

University degree in Agronomy, specializing in Winemaking and Viticulture.

Antonio lives in central Chile in on his family farm. During the early years of his career, he did winemaking stints in Chile and California mostly during harvest time.

After that, Antonio spent three years as Export Manager for an organic and biodynamic winery in the central coast of Chile.

After his father retires, he took charge of his family farm. It's there that they grow 30 hectares of sweet cherries, mostly for the Chinese market, and a little bit of cattle for beef.



Christian Mancier

Partner – Gorvins Solicitors, Manchester & family business advisor.

Christian specialises in leading corporate transactions including acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures, management buy-outs and private equity across a variety of sectors including manufacturing, recruitment, entertainment and leisure.

Christian acts for owner-managed and family-owned businesses in the SME sector providing holistic advice with a particular emphasis on succession planning.

He is an approved advisor to the support organisation Families in Business, is Chair of the Stockport Economic Alliance and is the past Stockport President of Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce.



David Dickson

Family business advisor, Non-Exec Chair – Western Pension Solutions, NED & trustee of multiple family businesses and trusts.

David Dickson has been advising family businesses for over 30 years. He now specialises in advising families on succession and governance matters.

In 2012, David was awarded a Fellowship by the International Centre for Families in Business for advising family companies on succession and governance. He has presented on this subject in both North America and Mainland Europe.

He is the non-executive Chair of Western Pensions Solutions, part of the Vestey Family Group. They are specialists in advising family businesses on the increasingly important matter of de-risking their Defined Benefit Pensions problems.



Dustin Pascoe

Nuffield Australia 2020 Scholarship winner.

Dustin has a Nuffield Scholarship to research the benefits of grazing crops to fill the winter feed gap in a changing climate.

Running a 1,450 self-replacing Merino ewe flock and growing cereals, hay and oilseeds across his 1,578-hectare farm, he has been grazing roughly half of his cereal crops to fill the winter feed shortage and split his exposure to frost risk.

He aims to gather data from around the world and quantify the pros & cons of grazing crops, and the impact it can have to a farming business.



Jimmy Stobart

Farmer, Cumbria and Nuffield Farming Scholar 2020.

Jimmy Stobart farms in the Eden valley in Cumbria with his brother, Tom.

The farm runs 260 wagyu cattle reared on a live weight contract, they mob grazed throughout the year with half of the cattle being out wintered.

The sheep flock comprises of 400 hill ewes, with the replacements wintered at home alongside 200 Texel x ewe lambs.

He has recently been awarded a Nuffield Scholarship and his topic is 'Effective monitoring methods that measure ecological outcomes in grazing systems'.

Jimmy also runs a contract shearing business working on farms throughout Cumbria and the UK.



Joseph H. Astrachan, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus & Affiliated Professor with the Centre for Family Entrepreneurship & Ownership, Affiliated Professor at Jönköping International Business School and Family Business Fellow at Cornell University.

Dr. Astrachan has received awards from family businesses for his entrepreneurship, management, and research. These include awards from the Family Firm Institute and the Family Business Network International.

He has 40 years' experience working with family companies and has spoken in over 35 countries. He has served on a total of 19 boards of privately-owned family businesses in many industries including: heavy equipment, automotive, high-tech, restaurants, building materials, food manufacturing, retailing and distribution, commercial & real estate, and healthcare.



Josip Kotlar

Associate Professor of Strategy and Family Business at the School of Management of Politecnico di Milano.

Josip Kotlar is a family business professor, speaker, and advisor. He is a board member and Research Director of the International Family Enterprise Research Academy (IFERA), and Associate Editor of Family Business Review.

Josip's research has been published in leading academic peer-reviewed journals, received more than 3,000 citations, won several awards, and is frequently featured in business press and media.

His work aims to help large and small family-owned companies to develop purposeful strategies that leverage innovation to create value for them and for all their stakeholders.



Ken McCracken

Family business consultant and author.

Ken McCracken is one of Europe's leading family business consultants and teachers.

His work includes 'Succession planning for family businesses and family offices', 'Creating effective governance for these enterprises' and 'Education and training for the different generations in an enterprising family and for their advisers.'

Ken is a Fellow of the Family Firm Institute, a former recipient of the FFI Award for Outstanding Interdisciplinary Achievement.



Kimberly Eddleston

Schulze Distinguished Professor of Entrepreneurship at the D'Amore-McKim School of Business, Northeastern University. & Fellow at Cornell University's Smith Family Business Initiative.

Professor Eddleston's research focuses on family businesses and the careers of entrepreneurs. She is particularly known for research that explores how the family can be a resource or constraint to the business and how they can remain innovative through generations.

She is the Founding Editor of FamilyBusiness.org and has won multiple awards for her research including best paper awards from the Family Firm Institute.

Over the years, she has consulted with numerous family businesses and has led a consulting course at Northeastern University that has assisted more than 150 businesses to date.



Professor Kiran Trehan

Vice Chancellor for Partnerships and Engagement, Professor of Entrepreneurship, Director of the Centre for Enterprise, Leadership, & Diversity at the University of York.

Professor Trehan is a key contributor to debates on leadership, enterprise development and family business. She has led a number of support initiatives and has published journal articles, policy reports, books in the field.

She has a national & international reputation in a senior research, publishing in peer reviewed journals of a high quality, presenting at a range of policy and research events, conferences and symposia with policy-makers, public services and community networks to promote family business.



Dr Linda Murphy

Vice Chancellor for Partnerships and Engagement, Professor of Entrepreneurship, Director of the Centre for Enterprise, Leadership, & Diversity at the University of York.

Linda has a BA in European Studies and an MSc and a double doctorate.

After managing her own family business, she joined University College Cork as a lecturer, where she teaches at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Her research interests are family business continuity, with an emphasis on careers of the next generation, socioemotional wealth and resilience.

She has published in Family Business Review and the Journal of Family Business Strategy, and her most recent article was awarded best journal article in Family Business Review.



Mairi Mickel

FFI Advanced Qualified Family Business Advisor and Consultancy Owner.

Mairi's specialises in family dynamics, governance and communication. She supports generational and business transitions through a blend of coaching, mediating and advising, and holds safe spaces for family businesses to make collective decisions about their future together.

Mairi continues to be an active 4th generation owner of her 95 year old Scottish construction family firm, Mactaggart & Mickel Group Ltd, and holds an independent director role on a 2nd Generation Family business in Colorado.



Marnie Millard

Group Chief Executive for Nichols PLC.

She joined the company in 2012 as Managing Director of the UK Soft Drinks Division and was appointed to her current role in May 2013.

As well as her executive responsibilities, Marnie is a non-executive Director for Finsbury Foods, non-executive Chairman for UA92 and is Vice President of the Management Board for the BSDA and was recently appointed as an advisor to the Board of Trade.

Marnie was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2018 in recognition of her contributions to International Trade business in the North West.



Matt Bennett

Chief Executive at DRB Group - Deeside, North Wales.

Matt is the CEO at DRB Group Ltd, delivering project and maintenance solutions to industry.

He is also a Business Wales Mentor, active member of the IoD, as well as the CBI.

Matt believes strongly in a people-centred approach to every challenge.



Matt Hutchinson

Senior Business Projects Manager at Lancaster University.

Having worked in and around family businesses since he was 14 (or maybe a bit younger), Matt has seen first-hand how many family firms get it right and almost as many get it wrong.

He's now working at Lancaster University leading on the development and delivery of a range of business engagement activities, including the Family Business Excellence Programme.

These programmes aim to help more businesses get it right, drawing on cutting edge academic research and the transformational power of peer networks.



Nigel Watson

Writer and editor, Nigel Watson Corporate Histories.

After a short period in the world of accountancy, Nigel was able to harness the understanding he gained of business with his love of history by developing a career researching, writing and producing corporate histories.

He won his first commissions in his early 20s and has since gone on to write the histories of 135 clients.

While these include schools, universities and professional bodies, most of them have been businesses, and of the latter, family businesses make up more than half of all his commissions. They range across almost every business sector, from construction and engineering to chemicals, food and drink, manufacturing, textiles, timber and waste management.

He has also written the biographies of three prominent businessmen, including the founder of Portakabin.



Phil Weir

Co-owner of a dry stock farm in the Waikato.

Phil holds a Master's degree in Marine Management from Dalhousie University and a Bachelor of Social Science from Waikato University.

He is a Nuffield Scholar for 2020 and will investigate industry collaboration, farmer representation and the structures that make it successful.

As an Agribusiness Consultant, Phil has focused on business development, project work and land use diversification. He is the author of a report for Waikato Regional Council which looks at options for the region and the farmer decision making processes required to make change successfully.



Dr Roger King

Adjunct Professor of Finance, Senior Advisor and Founding Director of Tanoto Center for Asian Family Business and Entrepreneurship Studies – Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

Dr King currently is a Member of the Editorial Board of Journal of Family Business Strategy, Honorary Court Member of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, member of the Board of Governors at Tel Aviv University and Member of SKOLKOVO Academic Council.

He is a graduate of the University of Michigan, BSEE; New York University, MSEE; Harvard Business School, AMP; and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, PhD..

His teaching and research interests are entrepreneurship, family business and corporate and family governance.



Steve Kempster

Professor of Leadership Learning and Development at Lancaster University Management School.

Steve has published widely, including five books on topics such as how managers learn to lead, purpose and leadership, and responsible leadership.

He leads an international group of colleagues exploring how responsible leadership can be realised – known as ‘The Good Dividends’. A book entitled ‘Good Dividends: Responsible Leadership of Business Purpose’ has captured the group’s work and has been recently published.

Steve may be better known to alumni as the Full-time MBA Director (1998-2003) or as a tutor teaching leadership on both the Full-time MBA and EMBA for the last 20 years.



Tom McGinness

Global Leader of Family Business for KPMG Private Enterprise.

Tom is an experienced Senior Partner with a demonstrated history of working with large family businesses and private companies providing tax, accounting and advisory support with a focus on tax, family governance and succession planning.

He has been a partner for 20 years specialising in personal and corporate tax for HNWIs and international entrepreneurial groups.

In his role, the key objective is to build their global family business consulting practice and family office offering given this is a significant and important market for him personally and KPMG.