

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Kingdom & Ireland to Host Inaugural Edition of Future Leaders Challenge UK&I

A groundbreaking platform shaping the future of human capital strategy in the hospitality and tourism industry

(United Kingdom, XX May 2025) — The United Kingdom & Ireland (UK&I) will host the first-ever UK&I Future Leaders Challenge (FLC) on **June 9th, 2025** at The Derby, part of the Megaro Collection Hotel Group. This one-day event will bring together top industry executives, educators, and emerging talent to shape the future of hospitality and tourism in the region.



With participation from 17 leading hospitality schools, as well as many major industry stakeholders in both the government, academic and private sectors, the UK&I Future Leaders Challenge aims to create a dynamic, collaborative platform that fosters innovation and strategic solutions to address critical workforce challenges. As the industry continues to grow, this initiative is set to drive meaningful engagement between students, academic institutions, and hospitality leaders, ensuring a strong pipeline of skilled professionals ready to lead the sector into the future.

“The UK&I Future Leaders Challenge allows us the unique opportunity to inspire the next generation of hospitality professionals and establish the region as a leader, and catalyst, for cultivating a highly skilled hospitality and tourism workforce,” said Hubert Ummels, Founder of the Future Leaders Challenge platform.

Throughout the one-day event, students will engage in skills-building workshops, industry networking sessions, and a recruitment fair designed to connect future leaders with career-defining opportunities. The event will also feature an industry summit, bringing together school directors, industry executives, and government representatives to strengthen collaboration and shape a unified human capital strategy—ensuring a future-ready hospitality and tourism sector in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Driving this vision forward is the **Strategic Board** which was formed with the strong support of **EP Business in Hospitality**, and is composed of distinguished leaders from across the hospitality and tourism industry. This board plays a pivotal role in guiding the Future Leaders Challenge, offering strategic direction, fostering collaboration between academia and industry, and ensuring that the initiative remains aligned with the evolving needs of the sector.

Strategic Board Members:

- Aiden McAuley, COO Managed Hotels, Europe North Africa, Accor Hotels
- Suzanne Speak, MD UK&I, Radisson Hotels
- Bill Toner, CEO, CH&CO
- Chris Chidley, CCO, Compass
- Chris Sheppardson, EP Business in Hospitality
- David Cochrane, CEO, HIT Scotland
- Dawn Lawrence, CEO, HJUK and Hospitality Universities United
- Doug Tetley, CEO, Delaware North
- Hubert Ummels, Founder, Future Leaders Challenge
- Kate Nicholls, CEO, UK Hospitality
- Maxcene Crowe, MCFM Global
- Robin Sheppard, President, Bespoke Hotels
- Russell Kett, Chair, HVS (Hotel Valuation Service)

Government and Industry Cross-Collaboration

The UK and Irish governments, alongside key industry stakeholders, will play an instrumental role in shaping the Future Leaders Challenge. By engaging at an executive level with hospitality and tourism executives and educational leaders, they will facilitate collaboration and drive strategic initiatives that support the long-term growth of the sector. Their involvement will also help enhance the industry's attractiveness by implementing policies and programs that address workforce challenges and highlight the vast career opportunities available in hospitality and tourism.

A core focus will be on supporting education and workforce development through initiatives that align academic training with industry needs, ensuring a steady pipeline of skilled talent. Additionally, government and industry leaders will work together on regional strategies to champion the importance of the hospitality and tourism sector within the broader economy, reinforcing its role as a driver of growth and employment.



Impact and Scale of the Initiative

The inaugural UK&I Future Leaders Challenge marks a significant milestone for the region's hospitality and tourism industry. The event will bring together 150 participants, including students from leading universities and professionals from over 20 industry-leading companies. With substantial participation from top-tier hospitality and tourism schools, the challenge represents a coordinated effort to align stakeholders and drive meaningful progress in talent development and workforce sustainability.

With its commitment to fostering collaboration, innovation, and excellence, the UK&I Future Leaders Challenge is set to establish itself as a premier talent development initiative, empowering the next generation of hospitality professionals and driving sustainable industry growth.

For more information on the UK&I Future Leaders Challenge 2025, please visit [\[please provide link for refreshed site\]](#).

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About the Future Leaders Platform

The Future Leaders Platform is the leading platform that creates a community to tackle (future) challenges in the hospitality and tourism industry across the globe. By connecting top-tier students, school directors, industry leaders and government representatives, the platform aims to collaborate on an annually selected, region-specific strategic topics. Through advocacy and impactful development programs, we aim to build a sustainable pipeline of skilled professionals, aligning educational outcomes with industry needs and shaping a forward-thinking human capital strategy for the region.

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