



ASPEN
INITIATIVE
UK



Aspen UK Seminar

Leadership Challenges in Uncertain Times

Moderated by Ruth Girardet

9 – 11 October at Wilton Park, Sussex



Aspen UK Seminars

Aspen UK convenes leaders from a variety of sectors at seminars to help them address their own ideas and values, and to explore effective solutions to pressing social issues.

We believe that most decisions we make are moral, not technical or economic, and that leaders need opportunities to reflect on what they believe, and why.

Aspen UK is the opposite of a club – we bring people together who may disagree with each other. We help them address their own ideas and values, and then to explore effective solutions to pressing social issues. explore effective solutions to pressing social issues.

Leadership Challenges in Uncertain Times

This seminar will ask its participants to consider some of the fundamental issues driving our rapidly changing political, economic and social landscapes. We will begin with the big picture of the state of democracy and Western Liberalism, and then address the underlying tensions between equality and freedom. In doing so, we will explore what effective leadership looks like in challenging times.

Throughout the discussions, we will draw on the roles of personal and collective responsibility in driving effective change. By welcoming the expertise of participants from a variety of sectors, we hope to broaden each individual's perception of the kind of change required in order to thrive in our professional and public spheres.

WHEN

13:00 on 9 October -
14:00 on 11 October

WHERE

Wiston House, Wilton Park,
West Sussex

Aspen Initiative UK

The UK is experiencing unprecedented political and social divisions. The need for debate on critical issues, and for real, values-based leadership to address those issues, has never been stronger. Aspen UK is uniquely placed to make a contribution to that debate.

Aspen UK carries out its mission by assembling leaders for seminars and other convenings, which deepen their knowledge of critical political and social issues and enhance their analytical and problem-solving skills, encouraging reflection, engagement and analysis.

The programmes offer a safe environment for participants to debate political and social issues of the day and confront different perspectives, allowing participants to be more informed, and ultimately encourage them to consider their own contribution to a good society.

The first conversation to happen should be about values and principles; then you can have the conversations about costs, and what we as a society can afford.

John Lancaster



The Aspen Method

Each Aspen Seminar convenes leaders from the corporate, political, creative, academic, and third sectors, to address their own ideas and values, and to explore effective solutions to pressing social issues.

Aspen seminars are designed around carefully selected readings which range from classical political thought to contemporary literature of global origin. These readings provide an insightful, common starting point for a productive exchange of ideas. Participants receive the readings a month in advance and are asked to study them carefully.

The readings are chosen by the seminar's professional moderator, whose role is to guide the discussion. The moderator will not lecture, and will not provide answers, but will ask questions about the texts and ensure that each participant has the chance to be heard.

Seminars follow Chatham House Rules of non-attribution. This creates the neutral space required for intense, interactive conversations which encourage insight, clarity and innovative thinking.

Our aim is to create the conditions for that rare occurrence - a genuine conversation about the things that matter.



Moderated by Ruth Girardet



Ruth Girardet has been moderating Aspen Institute seminars since 2013. She has over twenty years of professional experience in corporate responsibility and corporate ethics, and extensive knowledge of how the corporate and charity sectors can work together to address issues of social justice.

Ruth grew up in Berlin and studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Oxford. She also holds a degree in Social Sciences from Humboldt University in Berlin, and a degree in Applied Ethics from the University of Leeds.

From 2007 to 2013, Ruth was the Group Corporate Responsibility Director at Tesco Plc, formulating company strategy across a wide range of governance and ethical issues. She then went on to become CEO of the social justice charity Just for Kids Law from 2016 to 2018.

Ruth is currently a Member of the Council for the Open University, the UK's largest open-access university with 175 000 students. She is also training as an Executive Coach with the Tavistock Clinic, which uses a systems psychodynamic approach to help senior leaders understand and address the dynamics that impact on their effectiveness.

The Aspen Network

At Aspen UK we are committed to building communities of actively engaged and enlightened leaders, inspiring them to work for the common good.

Participants of our seminars often choose to stay in touch with one another, to continue their conversation after the Aspen weekend. Attending a seminar means you join the Aspen network, and will be invited to specially created Aspen UK alumni events.

We arrange other, shorter 'conversations' and events to help our Alumni stay connected and engaged.



SYIMA ASLAM
CEO and Artistic
Director, Bradford
Literary Festival.



"The careful curation of both the delegate list and the course content, and the rigour with which Aspen and my fellow delegates approached the topics for discussion, left me inspired, challenged, and ultimately, better informed. Connecting with peers from a variety of backgrounds in this unique setting was not simply an opportunity to network, but to lay the foundations of lasting, real and mutually supportive relationships across sectors."

The Aspen Network

'The seminar was an unprecedented and unique opportunity for me to engage in deep discussions with a diverse group of leaders that I would not typically come across in my professional and social lives. This helped me grow by engaging and debating diverging yet thoughtful perspectives and really echoed values of respect, listening, openness that are in such short supply today. I already feel that I will become a better leader for this and know that I will look back at this time, several years from now, as a genuinely life changing event.'

PIERRE MERCIER

Managing Director and Senior Partner at Boston Consulting Group



'I met some great people during the Aspen Seminar, and we were a diverse group in terms of roles and backgrounds. The group bonded exceptionally well and I'm sure we'll keep in touch – it was a great personal and business networking opportunity.'

CHRISTOPHER STEELE

Founder of Orbis Business Intelligence Ltd.

POLLY MCKENZIE

CEO of Demos
Founder of the
Money and
Mental Health
Policy Institute.



'The Aspen programme helped me to take the space to think deeply about the challenges we all face, and how my organisation could best contribute to solving them. Two days of discussion and debate helped me to find new answers to old problems, and some new problems too!'

Upcoming Seminars

Aspen UK has two more seminars and a number of other events planned for 2020. The following are already confirmed and will also be held at Wilton Park:



Aspen UK Seminar – Leadership Challenges in Uncertain Times

Moderated by Ruth Girardet

5 – 7 June, Wilton Park, Sussex

Aspen Executive Leadership Seminar – Leadership, Values, and the Common Good

Moderated by Maria Blair

18 – 20 September, Wilton Park, Sussex

The power of the Aspen seminar is the diversity of the attendees. We have some resources to assist attendees who are unable to cover the full cost of the seminars. For more information on scholarship places, write to enquiries@aspenuk.org.