



Facing the Future, Shaping the Now

SDF Festival of Learning and Development



“The storm doesn’t break
those who learn to
navigate its waves.”

Will be held on
10, 11 and 12
November, 2025

About the SDF

The SDF is a non-for-profit charitable organisation. It aims at developing people and organisations to realise their potential.

The SDF is a space for creativity, connection and co-creation. Our values are collaboration, innovation and sharing practice.



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**9:00-9:55
THE AI EFFECT: EXPLORING
THE IMPACT IN L&D**

Egle Vinauskaite,
Learning Strategist – Nodes

2

**10:00-10:45
AUTHENTIC TEAM LEADERSHIP
FOR TRANSFORMATIVE TIMES –
UNDERSTANDING YOUR
'LEADERSHIP SUPERPOWERS'**

Jo Keeler, Belbin

3

**11:00-11:45
FLIP THE SCRIPT ON
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT –
START WITH THE HUMAN**

Jimi Wall, Upwrd

4

**12:00-12:45
RE-CONNECTING ROLES
AND RELATIONSHIPS IN A
WORLD SHAPED BY AI**

Charlotte Axon, Tailored Thinking
and Gary Butterfield, Joy Junction

5

**2:00-2:55
STEADY HANDS IN SHIFTING
SANDS - LEADING THROUGH
COMPLEXITY IN HIGHER
EDUCATION**

Professor Christina Hughes,
Women Space

6

**3:00-3:45
KEEPING SHIPSHAPE IN
CHOPPY WATERS - TOOLS
AND TECHNIQUES FOR
UNDERSTANDING AND
DEVELOPING YOURSELF AND
OTHERS IN TIMES OF
UNCERTAINTY AND CHANGE**

Sue Marwood and Rachel
Holmes, TMSDI

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**4:00-4:45
AI LITERACY FOR L&D –
MOVING BEYOND PROMPT
ENGINEERING TO SOLID
UNDERSTANDING AI,
AUTOMATION AND THE
DIGITAL SHIFT**

Dr Stella Lee, Paradox Learning



1

**9:00-9:55
CURIOSITY: THE SECRET
INGREDIENT FOR A
WINNING L&D STRATEGY**

Stefaan van Hooydonk,
Global Curiosity Institute

2

**10:00-10:45
COACHING WITH COURAGE
IN THE AGE OF AI**

Rebecca Rutschmann,
Viva la Coaching

3

**11:00-11:45
ETHICAL AI - STEERING L&D'S
NEXT TIDE**

Dr Marie Oldfield,
Institute of Science and Technology

4

**12:00-12:45
BEYOND THE TOOLKIT -
WHAT NEW COACHES AND
MENTORS REALLY FACE**

Andry Anastasis-McFarlane,
The Learning Moment

5

**2:00-2:55
SCALING DEEP - REIMAGINING
OUR ROLE IN CHANGE**

Sarah Hubbard, Advance HE

6

**3:00-3:45
NAVIGATING CHANGE WHILE
MANAGING BAU - THE HEI
CHALLENGE**

Hedda Bird, 3C Performance
Management Specialists

7

**4:00-4:45
LEADING THROUGH CHANGE -
BUILDING ADAPTIVE CULTURES
IN UNCERTAIN TIMES**

Mamta Gera, The Leader In You



1

**10:00-10:50
LEADING THE LEADERS:
SHARING OUR LEARNING TO
STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT**

Helen Walker,
University of Huddersfield

**10:00-10:50
A LAB COAT, A QUILL, A
COMPASS: A GAME TO HELP
RESEARCHERS BREAK DOWN
DISCIPLINARY BARRIERS AND
INCREASE THEIR
COLLABORATIONS**

Stefania Silvestri and Fiona
McBride, University of Liverpool

2

**11:00-11:50
FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT -
DRIVING STRATEGIC GROWTH
IN ACTION THAT EMPOWERS
STAFF CAREER
DEVELOPMENT THROUGH
MENTORING.**

Kirti Swift, Laurie Gallagher and Jenna
Maloney, King's College London

**11:00-11:50
EVP 4 ECR: INTRODUCING THE
UNIQUE VALUE OFFER TO
ATTRACT EARLY CAREER
RESEARCHERS**

Kasia Bronk and Megan Webb, UCL

3

**12:00-12:50
SUPPORTING LEADERS,
MANAGERS AND TEAMS
THROUGH CHANGE AND
UNCERTAINTY**

Vicki Love, University of Sussex

**12:00-12:50
SAME SKILLS, DIFFERENT
CONTEXT- DEVELOPING
ACADEMIC LINE MANAGERS**

Leigh Beales, University of Sheffield

