

Overt stem



stem
summit



stem
awards

Inspiring Innovation
Connecting Minds
Shaping the Future

How can the Oxford–Cambridge Arc become a global benchmark for integrated STEM innovation, education and inclusive opportunity?



Celebrating STEM Excellence

Across the Oxford–Cambridge Arc

From primary pupils to global tech leaders, the Overt STEM Summit & Awards spotlights everyone shaping STEM across the Arc.

Why the Arc?

From Oxford to Cambridge, this is one of Europe's most productive tech corridors, creating skilled jobs, attracting investment and delivering global solutions.

Summit + Awards: Two Platforms, One Purpose





The Summit turns insight into action, connecting educators, innovators, investors and policymakers on capital, skills and career paths. The Awards celebrate achievements that inspire talent, forge partnerships and strengthen the Arc's reputation. Together we advance Collaboration, People and Opportunity.

Building on the Success of the MK STEM Awards

After two standout years in 2024 and 2025, the event evolves into the Overt STEM Summit and Overt STEM Awards for 2026, now Arc-wide. We honour people and teams, and convene the community to collaborate, share insights, and unlock capital, skills, and pathways for regional impact.



Our Vision

-  To establish the Oxford–Cambridge Arc as a leading STEM innovation hub.
-  To foster collaboration between academia, industry, and government for lasting impact.
-  To inspire the future workforce of diverse STEM leaders.
-  To celebrate innovation, leadership and community impact.

How We Will Do This

Convene STEM stakeholders across sectors

Deliver expert-led sessions and workshops.

Showcase talent and facilitate cross-sector mentoring.

Create a Measurable strategy for delivering change in the sector



Why It Matters

“The UK faces a critical STEM skills gap threatening innovation. This region has great potential to become a global STEM powerhouse. Now is the time to unite vision, talent, and take action.”



Not another conference. The Overt STEM Summit brings educators, SMEs, researchers, civic leaders and emerging talent together to co-create a practical framework, rooted in the Oxford–Cambridge Arc and owned by its communities. So, what starts in the room turns into action across the region.

We will do this by forging cross-sector connections, backing people to progress in their careers, and widening access to the skills, investment and networks that turn ideas into impact.

Core Themes

Collaboration



Building bridges between academia, industry, training providers and the wider business community to accelerate shared innovation.

People



Championing diverse talent with clear career pathways, inclusive opportunities and support for the needs of today's STEM workforce.

Opportunity



Opening doors for people and organisations to progress. Expanding access to skills, investment and networks that turn innovation into regional impact.



The outputs of the summit will focus on bringing these themes together, to foster new solutions and innovation in the space.



Who It's For and What To Expect

The Overt STEM Summit is where the Arc comes together to turn ideas into action.

Education & Skills – shaping tomorrow's STEM talent.

Industry & Employers – driving scale, investment and recognition.

Government & Civic Leadership – shaping policy and place.

SME & Community Innovation – sparking solutions from the ground up.

Expect lively debate, SME showcases, routes to funding, and a co-created framework for the region's STEM future. Delegates span founders, employers, educators, civic leaders, students and early-career talent.

Summit Aims

Offer opportunity for relationship building

Bring together a diverse set of regional business

Reimagine STEM as inclusive, creative, and future-ready

Spark cross-sector collaboration, networking and regional innovation

Build a shared vision across academia, industry, government, and the creative sectors

Highlight regional strengths

Be reflective of the issues that face the sector

Co-create a Framework for STEM opportunity and inclusion

Building on the 2024 and 2025 MK STEM Awards, the Overt STEM Awards celebrate excellence across the Oxford–Cambridge Arc. We recognise individuals, teams and organisations advancing STEM and, with the Summit, turn their stories into partnerships and practical action.



Awards Purpose

Acknowledge new standards of excellence and innovation.

Celebrate innovation, leadership, and community impact.

Inspire future talent by showcasing success stories.

Recognise outstanding contributions across research, education, and industry.

The Impact of These Awards



- Spotlight STEM heroes and raise the bar for excellence.
- Promote benchmarking and continual improvement.
- Boost team morale with recognition by a respected jury.
- Build relationships to drive collaboration and attract support across the region.
- Connect winners with the Summit to share playbooks and open opportunities.

Take Part

22 Awards will span across a variety of topics, celebrating Excellence, Innovation, and Impact Across the STEM Ecosystem in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

Education & Inspiration

- STEM Education Trailblazer
- STEM Enrichment Initiative of the Year
- Cross-Curricular STEAM Integration Award
- Education for Sustainable STEM Futures



Emerging Talent & Career Journeys

- Future Force in STEM – School Age (5–18)
- Future Force in STEM – Further/Higher Education (18–30)
- STEM Career Reboot Award



Industry, Innovation & Enterprise

- STEM Research Excellence Award
- Sustainable STEM Solution Award
- STEM Start-Up of the Year (SEED Award)
- AI Impact Award



Mentorship, Equity & Inclusion

- Mentoring Excellence in STEM
- Women in STEM Champion
- DEI in STEM Award
- STEM Ambassador Award



Collaboration, Community & Regional Leadership

- STEM Team of the Year
- Employer–Education Partnership Award
- Greentech Collaboration Award
- Arc Collaboration Award (NEW)



Special Recognition

- Lifetime Impact in STEM
- Overall STEM Champion
- Heartfelt Recognition (Founder's Award)



We welcome entries from individuals and teams across the Oxford–Cambridge Arc, including schools, FE/HE, start-ups and SMEs, major employers, research organisations, professional bodies and charities.

Find full details of categories, eligibility and the entry process at:

<https://events-together.co.uk/Overt-Stem-Awards>

Become a Speaker



We're calling for contributors from across the Oxford–Cambridge Arc to turn discussion into action at the Overt STEM Summit. Share real-world insight, practical playbooks and lived experience the region can adopt and scale.



Who we want: leaders, innovators, educators, policy makers, industry pioneers and community voices.

What to pitch: sessions on skills, collaboration, innovation ecosystems, inclusion, leadership and policy.

Formats: talks, panels, workshops, case studies and demos.

To find out more, visit: <https://events-together.co.uk/Overt-stem/summit>

Become a Judge



Join the Overt STEM Awards judging panel and help set the standard for excellence across the Arc.

Who we want: experienced practitioners from education, industry, SMEs, research, civic and professional bodies, reflecting the region's diversity.

What to do: review entries against clear criteria, take part in a short virtual consensus meeting, and optionally provide feedback to finalists.

What you bring: sector insight, integrity and a commitment to inclusive, fair assessment.

To find out more, visit: <https://events-together.co.uk/Overt-stem/awards>



Meet The Team



Meena Chander:
Meena is the CEO of Events Together and boasts an impressive track record in the global corporate events and exhibitions industry.

Six years ago, she launched the ‘This Is Us’ Conference, marking Milton Keynes’ first Diversity and Inclusion Conference. In 2023, she built on this success by introducing the ‘This Is Us’ D&I Awards. 2024 and 2025 saw the birth of the MK Stem Awards.

Continuing with the success of these event, In 2025, Meena launched the Overt Stem Summit and Awards, expanding out into the wider Ox-Cam arc.



Tony Lake
Event Producer

Founder and Director,
Production Live

Events Industry



John Smith
Board Member

Found and Director,
Company

Local Government



Jane Smith
Board Member

Found and Director,
Company

Local Government



John Smith
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Jane Smith
Board Member

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John Smith
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Jane Smith
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John Smith
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Jane Smith
Board Member

Found and Director,
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Local Government



John Smith
Board Member

Found and Director,
Company

Local Government

What people say about us

"It is exciting to see the amazing talent and what Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas have to offer with regards to STEM."

Yiannis Koursis OBE FRSA,
CEO
Bedford College Group



"Diversity is really important and this event is proof that it is happening."

Karl Digby,
Learning & Development Manager,
Nifty Lift

niftylift

"The Awards amplifies Milton Keynes reputation as a high tech, high skill, high wage economy and one of the UK's best cities for tech."

Dr Julie Mills OBE DL,
Chair
Women Leaders UK



Find out More

The Overt STEM Summit & Awards take place on **3 March 2026** at:

MK Conference Centre, Strudwick Drive, Oldbrook, Milton Keynes, MK6 2TG.

Early Bird tickets are available for a limited time – **book now to secure your place and be part of shaping the Arc's STEM future.**

All tickets will be available on <https://events-together.co.uk/overt-stem/tickets>

Full event details <https://events-together.co.uk/overt-stem>



Support Us

Partner with the Overt STEM Summit & Awards and showcase your commitment to innovation, inclusion and regional impact.

Our sponsorship packages offer brand visibility, networking opportunities and direct engagement with STEM leaders across the Oxford–Cambridge Arc.

Request our supporter pack today and discover how you can play a leading role in shaping the future of STEM.

Find out more: events-together.co.uk/overt-stem/sponsor

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Find out more

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Supported By

** Alternative back cover with sponsor
logo (update/print version?)



Find out more

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