A LAIFE SCOTLAND PROGRAMME

GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION

Leadership Programme

Shaping the Future through Scottish Experience

A seven-day executive benchmarking programme across Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling, designed for senior higher education leaders seeking practical insight, partnerships and action.

SCOTLAND ◆ EXECUTIVE BENCHMARKING ◆ APRIL 2027



18–24 April 2027 ◆ Edinburgh ◆ Glasgow ◆ Stirling

Designed and academically led by

STIRLING CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC LEARNING AND INNOVATION

Delivered in partnership with

ماجستكس للتدريب
Majestix Training UK Ltd.

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A LAIFE SCOTLAND PROGRAMME

The programme in brief

A seven-day executive benchmarking programme across Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling, designed for senior higher education leaders seeking practical insight, partnerships and action.

Dates	18–24 April 2027
Cities	Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling
Cohort	12–25 leaders
Framework	The LAIFE Model, five lenses
Outcome	A 90-day leadership action plan

Designed and academically led by
Stirling Centre for Strategic Learning and Innovation

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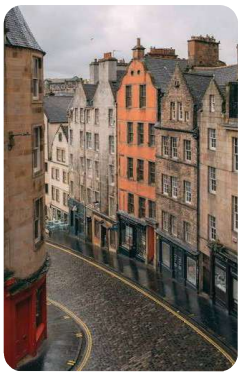
The setting

01 | Why Scotland

A nation-scale case study in innovation

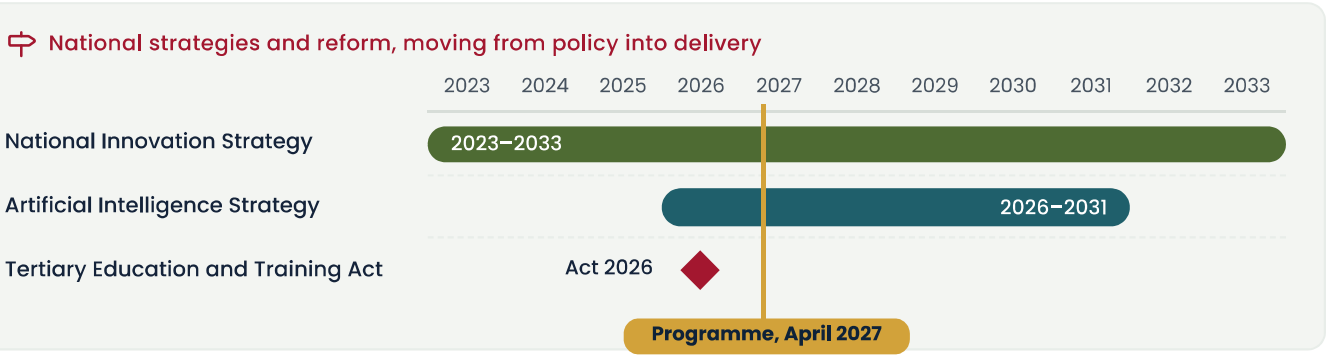
Scotland offers an unusually concentrated setting in which higher education, public policy, advanced research and innovation infrastructure can be studied together.

The programme is timed to engage with strategies and reforms moving from policy into delivery.





A connected learning ecosystem



A ten-year innovation ambition

Scotland's National Innovation Strategy 2023–2033 aims to position the country among the world's most innovative small nations, with stronger commercialisation, entrepreneurial campuses and international collaboration.

A current national AI strategy

Scotland's Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2026–2031 sets a responsible, inclusive growth agenda and a delivery programme spanning government, industry, academia and public services.

An international education platform

Scotland's International Education Strategy links student and staff mobility, research, knowledge exchange and economic value, creating a practical context for institutional partnerships.

A changing tertiary system

The Tertiary Education and Training (Funding and Governance) (Scotland) Act 2026 reforms and simplifies funding and governance across post-school education, skills and apprenticeships.

Why this matters to an international delegation

The value lies in seeing the connections: how national intent becomes institutional strategy; how research becomes capability, enterprise and public value; and how leaders build learning systems that remain adaptive under pressure.

POLICY
National intent ›› institutional strategy

›

RESEARCH
Capability, enterprise and public value

›

LEADERSHIP
Learning systems that adapt under pressure

Evidence base: Scottish Government National Innovation Strategy 2023–2033; Scotland's Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2026–2031; Scotland's International Education Strategy; and the Tertiary Education and Training (Funding and Governance) (Scotland) Act 2026.

At a glance

02 | Programme overview

A strategic week for higher education leaders

This executive benchmarking programme combines peer-level dialogue, institutional visits and applied workshops so delegates return home with decisions, relationships and a practical action plan, not simply a record of places visited.

7	3	5	12–25
DAYS IN SCOTLAND	CITY ECOSYSTEMS	LAIFE LENSES	LEADERS PER COHORT

What makes it different

- A coherent learning architecture built around the LAIFE Model.
- Access to policy, university, research and innovation perspectives in one journey.
- Daily reflection converts observation into institutional application.
- A final 90-day action plan and structured pathway to partnership.

Designed for

- Presidents, rectors, principals, vice-chancellors, provosts and deputies.
- Senior leaders in research, innovation, internationalisation and quality.
- Ministry, funding, accreditation and qualifications leaders.
- Boards and executive teams developing international or transformation strategies.

The leadership promise

Delegates examine how a small, internationally connected nation links policy, institutional leadership, research capability and industry collaboration. Each visit is framed by a question, followed by facilitated reflection and translated into an action that can be tested at home.



Programme status

Indicative outline. Host organisations, contributors, sequence and timing are confirmed for each cohort and may be adapted to the delegation's priorities.

Indicative programme

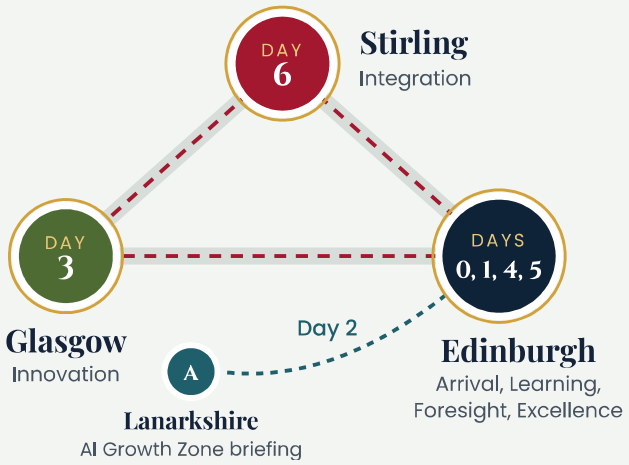
03 The seven-day journey

Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling

A focused cohort of 12–25 leaders moves from shared learning to a practical 90-day action plan.

DAY 0	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6
Arrival	**Learning**	**AI**	**Innovation**	**Foresight**	**Excellence**	**Integration**
Edinburgh	Edinburgh	Edinburgh / Lanarkshire	Glasgow	Edinburgh	Edinburgh	Stirling
	L	A	I	F	E	

Three city ecosystems



Schematic, not to scale. Day 2 is based in Edinburgh / Lanarkshire.

A deliberate daily rhythm

The programme follows a deliberate rhythm: morning insight, afternoon application and a short facilitated synthesis.

Morning
Insight

Afternoon
Application

Close of day
Short facilitated synthesis

Programme dates	Cohort size	Final output
18–24 April 2027	12–25 leaders	90-day action plan

The programme framework

04 | Five lenses, one leadership journey

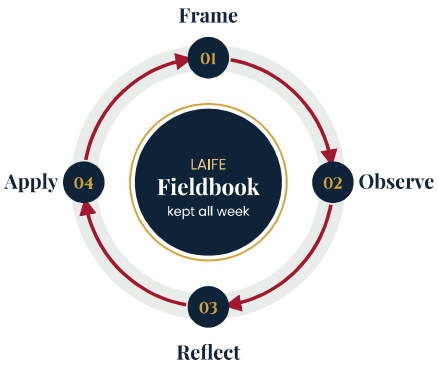
The LAIFE Model

The LAIFE Model is the intellectual spine of the programme. It prevents institutional visits from becoming isolated presentations and gives delegates a common language for observation, discussion and transfer.

L	**Learning**	**EXPLORE** Policy, lifelong learning and system reform	**TAKE HOME** A system-learning map for the delegate's institution	DAY 1
A	**Artificial intelligence**	**EXPLORE** Responsible adoption, capability and infrastructure	**TAKE HOME** An AI leadership question set and priority action	DAY 2
I	**Innovation**	**EXPLORE** Commercialisation, ecosystems and industry partnership	**TAKE HOME** A partnership opportunity statement	DAY 3
F	**Foresight**	**EXPLORE** Future scenarios for higher education and work	**TAKE HOME** A focused institutional scenario and implication	DAY 4
E	**Excellence**	**EXPLORE** Quality, performance and organisational learning	**TAKE HOME** A 90-day improvement commitment	DAY 5

How the week is sequenced. The week follows the LAIFE Model in order, one lens per day: Learning, Artificial intelligence, Innovation, Foresight and Excellence across Days 1 to 5.

L Day 1 › A Day 2 › I Day 3 › F Day 4 › E Day 5



How the learning cycle works

Each delegate maintains a LAIFE Fieldbook throughout the week. The closing symposium converts the five lenses into one 90-day leadership action plan.

01 Frame
Define the leadership question before each engagement.

02 Observe
Study policy, practice, evidence and context.

03 Reflect
Compare the Scottish case with delegates' own systems.

04 Apply
Capture a decision, experiment or partnership action.

LAIFE Fieldbook
Maintained throughout the week

» L A I F E »

90-day action plan
Converted at the closing symposium

Indicative programme, Days 0, 1 and 2

05 Daily schedule

Arrival, policy, learning, artificial intelligence

DAY 0 — Edinburgh — Arrival

Morning

Delegate arrivals, airport or station transfers, hotel check-in and programme registration.

Afternoon and evening

Welcome reception and briefing dinner. Introductions, cohort expectations and an orientation to the LAIFE Model.



DAY 1 — Edinburgh — Learning — L

Morning

Scottish Parliament visit and policy briefing on tertiary education, skills, funding and governance reform.

Afternoon and evening

Sector roundtable with university, funding and policy perspectives. Facilitated comparison: what enables a system to learn? Evening reflection.

DAILY OUTPUTS

- Personal leadership question for the week.
- System-learning map: policy, funding, institutions and stakeholders.
- Three transferable observations and one risk to avoid.

DAY 2 — Edinburgh / Lanarkshire — Artificial intelligence — A

Morning

University and research engagement focused on robotics, responsible AI, interdisciplinary capability and the future of work.

Afternoon and evening

Briefing on Scotland's AI Strategy 2026–2031 and the Lanarkshire AI Growth Zone. Action lab: institutional AI priorities, governance and capability building.

DAILY OUTPUTS

- A responsible AI leadership checklist.
- One prioritised AI use case and the capability needed to deliver it.
- A governance question covering risk, people, data and value.



Indicative hosts: Scottish Parliament, University of Edinburgh, Universities Scotland, Scottish Funding Council, Heriot-Watt University, National Robotarium and relevant AI ecosystem partners. Venues and contributors require written confirmation.

Indicative programme, Days 3 and 4

05 Daily schedule

Innovation, foresight

The middle of the week moves from strategy to infrastructure and practice, showing how universities connect research, entrepreneurship, industry and responsible technology adoption.

DAY 3 — Glasgow — Innovation — I

Morning

University leadership dialogue and a session on the role of a technological university in regional innovation and economic development.

Afternoon and evening

Visit to the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland and an industry–university roundtable. Workshop: translating ecosystem design into partnership opportunities.

DAILY OUTPUTS

- An innovation-ecosystem map for the delegate's institution or region.
- A partnership proposition linking academic strengths to industry need.
- Questions for evaluating commercialisation and knowledge-exchange models.

DAY 4 — Edinburgh — Foresight — F

Morning

Futures masterclass at the Edinburgh Futures Institute: drivers of change, scenarios and implications for higher education.

Afternoon and evening

Data, AI and innovation ecosystem engagement through the Bayes Centre and/or Edinburgh Innovations. Delegate scenario lab and institutional implications.

DAILY OUTPUTS

- One plausible future scenario for the delegate's institution.
- Implications for strategy, people and partnerships.
- A foresight question to take into the remaining visits.



Indicative hosts: University of Strathclyde, Strathclyde Business School, National Manufacturing Institute Scotland, Edinburgh Futures Institute, Bayes Centre and Edinburgh Innovations. Exact contributors remain subject to written confirmation.

Indicative programme, Days 5 and 6

05 Daily schedule

Excellence, action, commitment

The final phase integrates the week's evidence. Delegates move from insight to a credible plan, identify partnership pathways and make a visible leadership commitment.

DAY 5 — Edinburgh — Excellence

Morning

Briefings on funding, investment, quality and national performance. Discussion: balancing accountability, innovation and institutional autonomy.

Afternoon and evening

Stirling Centre workshop on organisational learning and excellence. Cultural programme in Edinburgh and informal peer networking.

DAY 6 — Stirling — Integration

Morning

Visit to the Stirling Centre at Stirling University Innovation Park. LAIFE synthesis and 90-day action planning.

Afternoon and evening

Leadership action presentations, facilitated partnership conversations, certificate ceremony and closing commitments. Stirling heritage visit and gala dinner.

Engagement principles

Relevance first

Each engagement answers a defined leadership question linked to the LAIFE framework.

Dialogue over presentation

Sessions prioritise exchange, challenge and candid comparison.

Evidence and context

Delegates examine what worked, what remains difficult and what cannot simply be copied.

Partnership with purpose

Introductions focus on credible opportunities for research, mobility, executive education or system collaboration.



University of Stirling, with the Wallace Monument

Indicative contributors: Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Funding Council, institutional quality leaders and Stirling Centre faculty. Certificates are issued by the Stirling Centre; any additional co-branding or endorsement is subject to written confirmation.

People and delivery

06 | Programme delivery

Leadership and delivery team

The Stirling Centre provides the academic architecture and leadership learning. Majestix provides recruitment, delegate services and operational delivery. A single coordination plan connects content, hosts, travel and participant experience.



Professor Alaa Garad

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR AND ACADEMIC LEAD

Professor of Strategic Learning and Business Excellence; President and Founder of the Stirling Centre; author of *The Learning-Driven Business* and creator of the Learning-Driven Organisation Model.

Leads: programme architecture and academic quality; LAIFE masterclasses, reflection and action planning; Scottish stakeholder engagement and follow-on partnerships.



Dr Ismail Farhat

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR AND DELIVERY LEAD

Director of Majestix Training UK Ltd, with 30+ years of experience organising executive workshops and study programmes across Europe, North America and the MENA region. Portfolio includes higher education innovation and digital-leadership programmes in Finland and China.

Leads: delegate liaison; invitation letters, visa process and travel coordination; accommodation, transport, hospitality and on-the-ground delivery.

Division of responsibility

Stirling Centre

- Programme design and academic decisions
- Academic architecture and leadership learning
- Certificates are issued by the Stirling Centre

A single coordination plan

Content, hosts, travel and participant experience

Majestix Training UK Ltd

- Recruitment, delegate services and operational arrangements
- Accommodation, transport, hospitality and on-the-ground delivery
- Invitation letters, visa process and travel coordination

Programme design and academic decisions remain with the Stirling Centre. Delegate services and operational arrangements are coordinated by Majestix. Host participation, named contributors and institutional endorsements are secured separately for each cohort.

Why the Stirling Centre

- **600+** organisations assessed
- Princess Royal award
- BQF and EFQM roles
- Creator of the Learning-Driven Organisation (LDO) Model and author of *The Learning-Driven Business*

Invited contributors

07 | Programme contributors and speakers

Invited, subject to written confirmation

The proposed speaker line-up is indicative. Participation and the final programme are subject to written confirmation.



Invited

Alyn Smith MSP

Minister for Innovation, Technology and Tertiary Education



Invited

Humza Yousaf

Former First Minister of Scotland



Professor Liz Bacon

Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Abertay University

Invited



Professor Alaa Garad

President, Stirling Centre

Programme Director



Vicki Miller

Chief Executive Officer, VisitScotland

Invited



Charlotta Cederqvist

Head of Business Engagement, Bayes Centre, University of Edinburgh

Invited



Professor Julie Anne Jacko

Dean of Innovation & Engagement, University of Edinburgh

Invited



Professor Jennifer Davidson OBE

Founding Executive Director, Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures, University of Strathclyde

Invited



Professor Robert MacIntosh

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of the West of Scotland

Invited



Heather Thomson

Chief Executive Officer, The Data Lab Innovation Centre

Invited

Delegate logistics

08 Hotels and travel

Suggested arrangements for a smooth arrival and stay

Hotel recommendations

Main accommodation option

Leonardo Royal Hotel Edinburgh

Second choice

Leonardo Hotel Edinburgh Haymarket

Both are practical central locations with transport connections.







Hotel recommendations are indicative; availability and rates are confirmed separately for each cohort.

Travel recommendations

Arrival transfer

Edinburgh Airport — approximately 8 miles — Hotel

From London or Manchester

London or Manchester — rail — Edinburgh Waverley — station to hotel — Leonardo Royal Hotel Edinburgh

For UK-based participants, rail to Edinburgh Waverley is recommended over domestic flights, particularly for senior delegates travelling from London.

Visa and ETA support

UK Standard Visitor visa invitation letters will be provided upon request.

Delegates from visa-exempt countries may need a UK Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) instead of a visa.

Before you travel

Participants should confirm travel dates, accommodation preferences and visa requirements with the programme team. All arrangements remain subject to final cohort confirmation.

Fees and inclusions

09 | Programme investment

Options for individuals and delegations

Fees below reflect the seven-day programme taking place 18–24 April 2027. A formal quotation is issued for each delegation once participation requirements and programme customisation are agreed.

Early-bird offer: 10% off Registrations confirmed by 15 January 2027

OPTION 1

Programme only

£5,500 GBP per participant

£4,950 early-bird per participant — **Save £550**

Excludes hotel accommodation.

OPTION 2

Programme and hotel

£6,200 GBP per participant

£5,580 early-bird per participant — **Save £620**

Includes hotel accommodation (4–5*), six nights with VAT and breakfast: check-in 18 April, check-out 24 April. Departure arrangements after the closing gala dinner are confirmed in the formal offer.

Included in both options

- ✓ Scheduled university, government and innovation-site sessions and visits.
- ✓ Consultant fees and workshops.
- ✓ Ground transport during the published programme.
- ✓ Daily lunches, welcome dinner and closing gala dinner.
- ✓ Cultural and civic programme items listed in the final itinerary.
- ✓ LAIFE Fieldbook, digital resources and certificates.

Not included

- ✗ International flights and airport charges.
- ✗ UK visa fees, travel insurance or medical costs.
- ✗ Personal expenses, optional activities and meals not listed.
- ✗ Travel or accommodation outside confirmed programme dates.
- ✗ Additional institutional visits requested after quotation.

Cancellation policy

100%	50%	✗
Refund 60 days or more before the start	**Refund** 45 to 59 days before the start	**No refund** Under 45 days before the start

The final delegate agreement will confirm the applicable terms.

Group and custom delegations

Group rates may be available for five or more delegates from one institution. Ministries, university systems and partner networks may request a private cohort, adapted learning priorities or an extended sector focus. All prices, inclusions and payment terms are confirmed in the formal offer and delegate agreement.

Important: The itinerary and speakers may change; final details are confirmed in writing. Fees, payment terms and cancellation terms are governed by the formal offer and delegate agreement.

Scotland, 18–24 April 2027

10 | Join the April 2027 cohort

Begin your Scottish benchmarking journey

The Global Higher Education Leadership Programme will take place from 18–24 April 2027. Early confirmation is recommended where delegates require a UK Standard Visitor visa or ETA.

Registration pathway

01 Enquire
Share delegation size, role profiles and preferred dates.

02 Shape
Agree programme priorities, format and commercial option.

03 Confirm
Complete registration, payment and invitation-letter process.

04 Prepare
Join the pre-departure briefing and define a leadership question.

A seven-day journey

Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling

A focused cohort of 12–25 leaders moves from shared learning to a practical 90-day action plan.



University of Stirling

Contact the programme team

Stirling Centre for Strategic Learning and Innovation

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Leadership Programme

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Scan for programme details
stirlingcentre.org.uk/laife-scotland

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