

## AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR PANEL



**Lucy Fisher – The Daily Telegraph Deputy Political Editor, Journalist and Author**

Breakout Session: *From Putin to Partygate: life as a political journalist*

Lucy Fisher is an award-winning journalist and author. She is Deputy Political Editor at The Daily Telegraph and a regular broadcaster on the BBC and Sky News - frequently appearing on the Today programme, Newsnight and Westminster Hour. In March she will move to become Chief Political Commentator at Times Radio.

Previously she was Chief Political Correspondent, then Defence Editor, at The Times.

Lucy is currently based in a draughty, mouse-infested office in Parliament, but has reported from around the world, including Brussels and Washington, as well as Afghanistan, Iraq and the Arctic.

Her latest book *Women in the War: The Last Heroines of Britain's Greatest Generation* was published by HarperCollins last September.

She left St Mary's Calne in 2007 and went on to read Classics at Oxford. She now lives in Islington with her husband.



**Amy Kent – Owner of Amy Kent Bespoke Rugs**

Breakout Session: *Being successful in a creative company*

Amy always had her heart set on a career in the creative industry. Having studied Art here at St Mary's, she went on to study History of Art at UEA. Amy loved this course and University as it was one of the few places at that time that studied World Art, including anthropology. She was also lucky enough to study in Venice as part of the degree, and also in Florence in her gap year. Amy went straight into

working in the creative world with Sotheby's, but quickly realised that the 'art' jobs did not seem to be the ones that paid the best. After this, Amy 'yo-yoed' for a few years between PA positions and the more 'arty,' including picture research with a Publisher. Amy realised that if she wanted success and creativity together, she would need to set up her own company (this is not always the right way for everyone however). Whilst working as an interior designer in London, Amy felt there was a real gap in the market for bespoke, high-quality rugs. There seemed to be nothing between the 'off the shelf' rugs at Peter Jones, and those from the Rug Company who were the only bespoke rug company at the time. That was when Amy started, in 2005 at age 27, and ever since has tried to focus on the business and creative side equally: as to succeed in this type of business you need both.



**Sonja Leith – Head of Improvement and Change at Wiltshire Police**

Breakout Session: *Preventing bad things happening - a Career in Policing*

Sonja is the Head of the Improvement and Change Department at Wiltshire Police. Sonja has a BA in Psychology and MSc in Forensic Psychology and joined Wiltshire Police as an Intelligence Analyst in 2003. She has since worked in a number of different fields including running the Crime Prevention Department and the

Intelligence Department. Sonja has an MSc in Forensic Psychology from the University of Kent and is a mum of two. She also loves being outside in nature and whenever she can, travelling to explore the world.



**Emily Nott – Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Innovate UK**

Breakout Session: *Diversity and Inclusion in Innovation*

Emily leads on Innovate UK's work to promote diversity and inclusion in business innovation. She has introduced high profile campaigns and programmes for Women in Innovation and Young Innovators.

Emily has been involved in a number of programmes, including the design and delivery of the the infocus Women in Innovation Awards in 2016, establishing the Young Innovators' Awards and a new partnership with The Prince's Trust in 2017 and kicking off a global review of diversity and inclusion in business innovation in 2018.

Prior to Innovate UK, Emily worked in a variety of roles in organisations across the UK research and innovation landscape, including Research Councils and Government Departments, and has many years of experience supporting business-university collaboration and knowledge transfer. Emily also has a PhD in Chemistry.



**Claire Walker – CEO of Firefly Communications**

Breakout Session: *A Life in PR & Communications – shaping reputations, building brands*

Claire used to play competitive tennis, which taught her a lot in terms of strategy, dedication, follow-through, accuracy, positive thinking, and the importance of winning. Claire still plays tennis regularly, but these lessons have guided her through her career. She has always applied bundles of energy, contagious enthusiasm, and imaginative approaches to her work. No client assignment is too challenging.

Claire founded Firefly Communications Group in 1988. She works closely with the Firefly teams in London, Munich and Paris, supporting clients on a range of challenging communication briefs. Claire has been a member of the Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA) board since 2000 and is a chairman of the PRCA Professional Practices Committee, which serves to uphold the PRCA Code of Conduct dealing with complaints and investigations into disputes and breaches.