

NURTURING BRILLIANCE

# National Senior Stretch

# 2024

For Years 10–13

UNLEASH YOUR POTENTIAL

[WWW.THRIVINGMINDS.ORG](http://WWW.THRIVINGMINDS.ORG)



# About



## Senior Stretch Study Day 2024

Are you a more able or ambitious student eager to unlock your full potential. Join us at Senior Stretch 2024, where you'll embark on a transformative journey of self-discover, innovation and intellectual growth.

### ABOUT SENIOR STRETCH

**Senior stretch is an annual gathering** of exceptional young minds, designed to foster creativity, critical thinking, and personal development. Join us in the pursuit of nurturing brilliance, fostering lifelong learners, and creating a world where able and ambitious students thrive as knowledgeable, well-rounded citizens in a global community. Together, we can unlock your full potential and pave the way for a brighter future. This year's theme, "Nurturing Brilliance: Unleash Your Potential," will inspire you to explore your passions, embrace challenges, and connect with like-minded peers from around the world.

### WHAT TO EXPECT

**Keynote Speakers:** Engage with renowned experts and visionaries who will share their insights on unlocking your potential.

**Peer Networking:** Connect with gifted students from diverse backgrounds, exchange ideas, and forge lifelong friendships.

**Discussions:** Participate in thought-provoking discussions on contemporary issues and global challenges.

**Critical thinking and Problem solving:** Explore new ideas and develop strategies for real-world challenges.

### London



**Wed 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024**  
Bloomsbury Baptist Church,  
Shaftesbury Avenue

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### Oxford



**Thu 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024**  
Oxford Town Hall,  
St. Aldates

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# Programme

## TOP GUN: WISDOM FROM THE SKIES

MAJOR ALEXANDER FOGASSY

Join us for a memorable experience with Major Fogassy, a **fighter pilot** in the US air Force, and re-reflect with him on what it takes to "ace" whatever field you pursue. This talk will give you insights into making decisions under pressure, and how to set ambitious goals and be inspired to achieve them, even when the odds seem stacked against you. In this unique address, Major Alexander Fogassy will share insightful anecdotes from his military career as an F-16 pilot, not only offering a glimpse into the high-stakes world of combat-oriented leadership, but sharing the principles you need to soar to success. An exceptional opportunity to learn about outstanding leadership, teamwork, and facing adversity head-on.

## OXBRIDGE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – DOES A SNAIL HAVE CONSCIOUSNESS?

JULIE ARLISS

Oxbridge interviews are known for their academic rigour. Practicing these questions helps more able students refine their critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills, which are valuable for overall academic growth. Challenge yourself, expand your knowledge and develop valuable life skills by exploring this genuine Oxbridge question, 'Does a Snail Have Consciousness?' Surely this is one of the most difficult questions in the Universe! What is consciousness, how do we identify it and how did it evolve? Embark on an incredible journey into your mind, where you'll acquire the skills, confidence, and adaptability essential for exceptional achievement.

## DIVE INTO THE PROFOUND VOID: JOIN OUR INTRIGUING TALK ON EXISTENCE AND NOTHINGNESS!

DR NICHOLAS WAGHORN

Are you ready to explore the enigmatic world of nothingness? Prepare to be captivated by the cosmic void and how scientists and cosmologists grapple with the concept of nothingness in the vast expanse of the universe. The question of whether something can come from nothing is a deep and unresolved question. This talk will explore a fundamental and complex topic with rich intersections across many subject areas. You will explore the nature of reality & existence and examine the deep implications for science, philosophy and spirituality of the concept of 'nothing'. Whether you're a scientist, a spiritual seeker or simply curious about the mysteries of existence this talk promises to expand your horizons. In the realm of nothingness, profound insights await. Join us on this unmissable voyage.

## UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF SOCIAL PHYSICS: A FASCINATING TALK YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS!

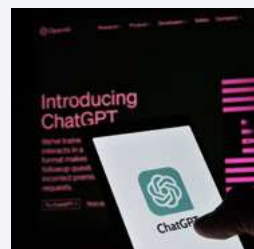
JULIE ARLISS

Unravel the threads of Social Physics and be part of the revolution that's shaping our future. Learn how artificial intelligence and big data are unlocking hidden insights that drive innovation and decision making. Join us for an enlightening talk where you'll dive into the science behind our social interactions and discover the keys to a more connected world. **Connect the dots** by discovering how seemingly unrelated events and behaviours are interconnected, revealing the hidden tapestry of human society. Big data and Social Physics are changing the world – be at the forefront of this exciting transformation.

## DEBATE: EXPLORING THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE MODERN WORLD

DR MARK LEWNEY AND  
LIAM BEKIRSKY

AI represents one of the most rapidly advancing fields of technology. New breakthroughs and applications continually emerge, pushing the boundaries of what is possible. The prospect of revolutionary change and disruption generates excitement but, what are the risks? There is a wide ranging, ongoing, discussion of the implications of artificial intelligence and, in this debate, we will examine the ethical, societal, economic and technical implications of AI technologies. For critical thinking, a global perspective, interdisciplinary learning, problem solving and future career opportunities this is a not to be missed debate.



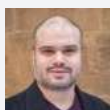
# Speakers



**Julie Arliss** — Julie Arliss is an outstanding Gifted Educator, nurturing brilliance through a holistic approach. At the heart of Julie Arliss' philosophy lies a deep commitment to unlocking the unique potential within every gifted student. She believes that gifted education is not just about cultivating academic excellence but also fostering holistic development, instilling a love for lifelong learning, and nurturing the well-being of each student. Thriving Minds provides talented students with the tools necessary to cultivate critical thinking, analyse complex problems, and innovate. This philosophy encourages students to question the status quo, explore new ideas, and develop solutions to real-world challenges. In placing great value on mentorship and guidance students benefit from the wisdom and expertise of educators who not only teach but also inspire and support them on their educational journey. Through steadfast commitment to this philosophy, numerous more able and ambitious students have not only achieved academic excellence but have also grown into compassionate, innovative and socially conscious individuals. Julie Arliss' legacy extends far beyond the conference platform, influencing the lives of students who carry these values with them throughout their lives.



**Major Alexander Fogassy** — Major Fogassy is not the typical leader; his almost 12 years as an Air Force officer has equipped him with a well-rounded and impactful leadership skillset. As an accomplished F-16 pilot with multiple operational tours (and deployments) under his belt, Major Fogassy has taken on challenges unique even in the exceptional profession of a combat aviator. As part of his Professional Military Education, he is currently studying for a DPhil at Oriel College, University of Oxford, furthering his leadership abilities and decision-making processes as part of a rare USAF sponsorship. In Oxford Maj Fogassy competes on the University Athletics team, rows for his college, and plays American Football (he was a member of the university team for the 2021-2022 season). After departing Oxford, Maj. Fogassy will advance with his career, with possibilities ranging from returning to the cockpit to taking on a strategic advisory role within the Pentagon.



**Dr Nicholas Waghorn** — Renowned scholar and philosopher Dr Nicholas Waghorn leaves a lasting impression on his audiences. His dynamic delivery, threaded with touches of humour, inspires audiences and makes deep thought relatable and memorable. He is a distinguished Oxford academic known for his expertise in the questions associated with existence, nothingness and the meaning of life. He is a member of the Philosophy Faculty, University of Oxford, and a Research Fellow of Blackfriars Hall with many publications to his name.



**Dr Mark Lewney** — Dr. Mark Lewney, a distinguished individual with a Ph.D. in physics, boasts an impressive 24-year tenure as a Senior Patent Examiner at the UK Intellectual Property Office. His expertise lies in the fields of speech recognition, telecommunications, and neural network applications. Dr. Lewney has been a sought-after speaker on the subject of AI, having taken the podium at numerous science festivals and conferences across Europe. His profound interest in AI is further exemplified by his Master's thesis in LLM, which delved into the realm of computer-generated works. As we witness the ever-growing presence of Artificial Intelligence, it's worth noting that it's not just becoming pervasive in novel inventions but also actively generating new innovations on its own. A remarkable testament to this is a UK patent application from last year, which legally recognised an AI as the inventor—a sign of the rapidly evolving landscape of technology and intellectual property. Dr Lewney will advocate against AI in the debate.



**Liam Berkisky** — Liam Berkisky holds the position of Vice President at the Oxford Artificial Intelligence Society, a dynamic organisation dedicated to fostering an inclusive and interdisciplinary Artificial Intelligence community. The society's mission encompasses education, collaboration, networking, and employment opportunities, all with the aim of propelling innovation and fostering enduring societal benefits. Liam is concurrently pursuing a doctorate at the Oxford Internet Institute, where his research resides at the intriguing intersection of sociology and network analysis, knowledge mobilisation, user experience design, and education making him a truly multi-talented expert in this field. Liam Berkisky will passionately advocate in favour of AI.



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# Registration



**Early Bird Registration** (until November 13, 2023): ..... £35.00  
**Regular Registration** (after November 13, 2023): ..... £37.50

Registration includes access to all conference sessions & networking.

## HOW TO REGISTER

Visit our website at [Thrivingminds.org](https://Thrivingminds.org) to register online or download the brochure. For inquiries, email us at [headoffice@academy-ltd.com](mailto:headoffice@academy-ltd.com)

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Connect with us on social media using **#SeniorStretch2024** to stay updated and interact with fellow attendees before the conference.

## DON'T MISS OUT!

Senior Stretch 2024 promises to be an extraordinary experience that will ignite your passion, inspire your intellect, and empower your future. Register today and prepare to unleash your full potential!



**“Outstanding education is the compass that guides us towards the limitless horizons of knowledge and empowers us to navigate the complexities of the world.”**



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