



SCHOOL OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
FUTURES

**#NSxNG**

# A National Strategy for the Next Generations

**PILOT PROGRAMME  
REPORT**



nextgenstrategy.org



# Foreword

“ Foreign policy is an area where we haven’t traditionally been connected to what the public wants and needs... We need a balance between participatory government and understanding what the public and future generations want — and government being able to make the decisions and the tough/unpopular choices. Fusing those two things together is a big cultural change that everyone needs to get used to.”

(FORMER FCO PRINCIPAL PRIVATE SECRETARY, NSxNG WORKSHOP)

## National Strategy for the Next Generations

Over June-October 2020, SOIF convened a group of partner organisations to conduct a pilot programme to explore the potential for a new way of making national strategy for the UK. One that is more participative, future-focused and historically-informed.

This was our ‘proof-of-concept’ pilot to test how a different, more participative approach to developing national strategy can be done, and to explore the kind of results, insights and experiences it yields - for Government and for citizens.

This paper summarises key insights from the process, with a view to supporting those within HMG working on national strategy issues, including the Integrated Review, public engagement, civil service reform and machinery of government. It builds on the interim paper to HMG, submitted in September (at Annex XIII). We are already in conversation about this approach with ‘early adopters’ (those supporting innovation in this area) in No.10, Cabinet Office, FCDO and MOD among others. This paper aims to support that continuing exchange.

It is written by the School of International Futures (SOIF). It includes input from our delivery partners; however, responsibility for the final product, editorial decisions and any errors is SOIF’s alone.

## Terms used in this paper

We use the following abbreviations: NSxNG (National Strategy for the Next Generations); Citizens’ Assembly (for the Citizens’ Assembly tester session); workshops (Agora youth workshops); survey (public online survey). Quotations are (unless otherwise indicated) from our citizen/public participation programme of activities (survey, workshop or Citizens’ Assembly).

## About the coalition

The NSxNG coalition is run by SOIF and supported by our delivery partners. It believes that a future national strategy should:

- Represent the interests of future generations
- Be participative, and support citizens to have a voice in national futures
- Build a more meaningful, united and plausible national narrative
- Draw on past, present and future insights

Our mission is to give the UK’s next generations a central role in shaping our country’s future place in the world. We believe we must consider the lessons of history, listen to the diverse voices of the present, imagine the world our grandchildren will inhabit and act as stewards of their future. We aim to surface new and ambitious ideas for the UK’s future global role through a systematic programme that explores future national strategy by putting the views of the future leaders and citizens of 2045 front and centre.

## Core delivery partners

Our core delivery partners include:

- the Democratic Society
- the APPG for Future Generations
- Today for Tomorrow
- the University of Cambridge Centre for the Study of Existential Risk
- Agora
- Restless Development
- Shout Out UK
- RUSI
- Kings College London’s Grand Strategy Centre.

Together with the wider NSxNG coalition, we bring diverse expertise in national security, strategy, complex systems, applied history, technology, foresight, participation and deliberation.

# Executive Summary

## Context for our pilot and the path ahead

**How can a more agile, future-focused and participative approach to national strategy equip the UK to weather the challenges of the 21st century?**

This paper presents the findings from a four-month pilot (or ‘proof of concept’) bringing together experts and young people in the UK to explore an approach to National Strategy that looks out a generation with next generation voices.

The three tenets of our approach are foresight, applied history and public participation. In this ‘proof-of-concept’, we sought to show how strategic foresight and public participation can supply the insights and orientation from which a new national strategy and new national narrative can be built.

🗨️ **This programme is emphasising exactly the right things: we need a new national strategy, including a new national story – separating ourselves from the facile analogies drawn from our past.** 🗨️

(FORMER FCO PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARY)

The 2020 Integrated Review (IR) of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy provided the catalyst for the pilot. Brexit presents the UK with an opportunity to think and act differently and ambitiously – and COVID-19 gives the country an imperative to do so. Given the compressed timings for the Integrated Review, this pilot was conducted by NSxNG delivery partners in a voluntary capacity. We used a series of participative processes, including a Citizens’ Assembly test session.

The pilot has caught a wave of interest and appetite to do things differently both across the national strategy community, and from citizens.

We see the Integrated Review as the start of a journey over the next five years to build a National Strategy that reorientates the UK, defines our new ‘strategic personality’, and improves our resilience and agility. That journey must be based on citizen engagement (building the ‘connective tissue’ between Government and public in this traditionally closed area of strategy-making) and exploring the fluid future in a hopeful, exploratory way.

For the UK to go forward boldly as a country, we need cross-generational consensus that provides a clear and legitimate basis for the UK’s international role. Our planned work in 2021 can provide the first year of citizen input to this participatory process. We want to help government to develop a more meaningful, united and plausible national narrative and strategy, fit for an uncertain future; to reflect the interests of

next and future generations; and to be participative, giving citizens more of a voice in national futures.

We and our partners in the NSxNG coalition are united by a vision for a more agile, future-focused and participative approach to National Strategy. We will now run a full programme to model how to put this approach into practice through 2022, building on the appetite, methodology and insights from our pilot.

## Why now: The UK is at a point of systemic transformation

In our discussions, both experts in our networks and citizens in our participatory formats recognised that the next 25 years will bring changes in our external environment that will impact the UK significantly: from environmental and ecosystemic impacts, to emerging technology, shifting demography and value shifts that will have impact nationally as well as globally.

Our leadership will be under increasing pressure to demonstrate impact and influence in addressing ongoing global challenges: poverty, development, peacekeeping, hybrid conflict social justice, biodiversity, human rights, governing emerging technology – the list goes on.

Government cannot navigate these emerging pressures and uncertain expectations in isolation, or by focusing only on the short term. Only a long-term strategic horizon and citizen engagement will support a resilient national strategy for this complex environment.

🗨️ **Plan ahead by at least two generations. Aiding the current generation by sacrificing future generations will doom the UK from a global strategic standpoint.** 🗨️

(18-24 YEAR-OLD SURVEY RESPONDENT)

Meanwhile, our participants’ strong message to HMG was that they see the UK’s global influence as declining and our ability to shape the environment diminishing. Yet our country’s leadership will need to address future global challenges, particularly where they impact on the UK.

A wider definition of security is needed that looks beyond traditional security domains, and takes a systems perspective to look beyond symptoms such as populism to understand the underlying drivers and their interconnections. If our national security paradigm is expanding to be more centred on human security; if our national resilience and security depends ever more on the people (whether in terms of public health, innovation, cyber threats, disinformation, polarised discourse), then the people need to be onside.

Experts will remain best placed to inform public deliberation, and detailed considerations around resources and capabilities, but a continuing engagement with the views of the UK public should inform the parameters, broad principles, and overall direction of UK foreign policy. That is our clear recommendation (see section IV).

We need to explore future perspectives in order to understand the UK's future role in the world. But critically also to understand what the UK can do now to prepare for and shape the future. Action needs to be taken today: our participants emphasised in particular building new alliances, sustaining existing relationships through hard work, getting ahead of resource scarcity, improving preparedness for extreme risks, shoring up the supply chain and transitioning to a green economy before we're forced into it.

Being on the front foot in planning for the long-term can be hard, when confronted by major strategic shocks such as COVID that dominate the short-term horizon and will have long-term implications. But even if you don't see 2020 as a turning-point globally, our process brought out a strong message from citizens (our participants) that the UK cannot afford to sit and wait for 20-30 years to allow an attrition of its current global position.

Three premises can help us navigate beyond the short-term:

- **National Security Strategy is best seen as Whole-of-Nation Strategy**, in terms of linking up foreign and domestic policy issues and apparatus. Technology, health, migration, data, reputation connect what happens at home to abroad, and are critically important for our posture and position overseas. Effectively linking the two requires both a whole-of-government approach (Whitehall departments) and local engagement (in communities). See section IV for public views on this.
- **Strategic confidence and a proactive global posture require a longer time horizon.** We need to look out at least 25 years (or a generation). Looking ahead only 5-10 years, say to 2030 - whilst tempting at a time of high turbulence and uncertainty - makes it harder for policymakers to think genuinely differently: to explore our future environment, the opportunities/threats there, and how we respond. Considering our future on a longer time horizon and exploring alternative scenarios opens up more optimistic dynamics and opportunities. A shorter time horizon encourages linear thinking (people are tempted to forecast continuation, or worsening, of the current situation).
- **Harnessing the creative input and energy of citizens is not a nice-to-have but a must-have in uncertain times.** The British people are a key part of our national resilience. Effective policy posture in the face of turbulence requires Government to lead in a networked approach (as a "systems steward") rather than in a top-down mode, in order to harness the insights from people's lived experience into policy development and implementation. This will require moving beyond the artificial divide of foreign and domestic policy that did not make sense to our participants.

Building a prosperous, fair and socially just future is the global challenge of our time. There is a role for every country to play in securing this, and the UK will need to determine its own contribution. Our pilot process underlined that people are really keen to contribute to shaping their country's future in the wider world - and that they are committed, across the spectrum, to seeing the UK act as a force for good, with a strongly values-based overseas policy and a stewardship role in shaping multilateral governance to support a better world (including planning for a post-Sustainable Development Goals framework).

### **The voice of the next generation: possible building blocks for a future national narrative.**

Five key messages emerged from the pilot.

- **It's time for an honest reassessment - perhaps a 'managed, relative decline'.** This emphasis on tackling head-on the issue of relative decline underlines the urgent need to work on a new national narrative that can inspire pride and hope in our future role.
- **Make the hard choices - and reorient fast to survive.** Our work revealed an appetite for honest language and clear choice-making. Whatever choice is made about the UK's future role, our respondents underlined that the world is changing fast and the UK cannot afford decades agonising over its own role.
- **Keep putting values at the centre - acting as a force for good and steward for a rules-based system.** We heard a strong sense that values and multilateral engagement must remain at the core of what the UK contributes - but that we must also address the domestic issues that undermine our moral authority. Participants emphasised that the UK has a global role to play, covening others - or leading<sup>1</sup> - on climate change, social justice, welfare, challenging aggression, responsible innovation, mediating conflict, and disrupting the spread of corruption and misinformation. The UK can contribute to building a healthy, prosperous fair world, drawing on our skills and past achievements in bringing actors together around global issues and building multilateral cooperation frameworks.
- **Build the assets to support UK influencing, especially on innovation.** The UK has significant soft power levers, including through our networks, ideas, innovation and influence. A stronger role in 'innovation diplomacy' and building effective governance regimes should be supported by investing more in UK research, science and tech and building a strong base in innovation exports; improved social security; a 'green transition'; and doubling down on education.
- **Recognise we must put our own house in order domestically.** Participants stressed that our future global role would hinge on 'domestic' issues such as devolution, State of the Union, health, the economy, social security, social mobility, affordable housing.

<sup>1</sup> See Page 17.

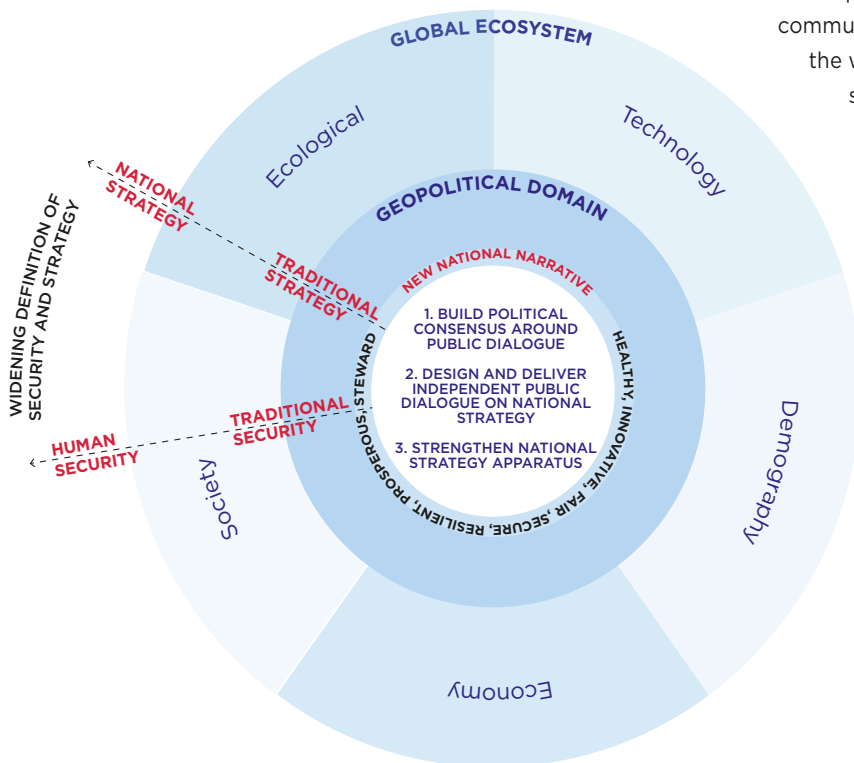
# Recommendations

We recommend that the Integrated Review is the beginning of a five-year National Strategy journey to build a new national narrative and supporting governance apparatus, suitable for integrated, future-facing and agile national strategy and policymaking. Wider civil service reform programmes should support this journey, not least the FCDO merger, and the UK should leverage opportunities such as the G7 presidency, and planning for major events (for example, hosting COP26 ).

We see three key areas where progress is necessary to sustain this journey. The UK needs:

1. Political consensus around public dialogue with our political leaders committed to the outputs of such a dialogue. Without this it will be harder to sustain the journey.
2. An independent public dialogue on National Strategy that is well-designed and conducted. Political consensus around strategy needs public consensus, and dialogue is a critical tool for building public consensus by giving people influence.
3. National security apparatus that is orientated to support whole-of-government, agile and future-facing national strategy, and that encourages stewardship of future generations' wellbeing.

Recommendations and ideas for how this can be achieved are summarised below and in Section 5.



## 1. Build political consensus around public dialogue

- Bring political leaders, including next generation leaders, together to listen to public narratives that are optimistic but realistic
- Build a broad-based bipartisan understanding of the challenges and opportunities of the UK's 2045 operating environment
- Develop cross-party approaches and mechanisms for responding to citizens' proposals

## 2. Design and deliver an effective independent public dialogue on National Strategy

- Use leading practice in engagement, to design and build effective relationships with the public, individually as well as through existing networks and representatives of industry and civil society. Listen first, understand lived experiences and diverse public perspectives, and make time and space for deliberation and exchange.
- Connect public engagement to all national strategy programmes.<sup>2</sup> Use public participation to set high-level parameters, principles and direction.
- Move beyond polling to listen to and understand public perspectives, drawing on expert input and data alongside deliberation and other modes of participative engagement (for instance discussion kits, Citizens' Assemblies). Build associated capability and civic literacy, and incorporate international perspectives.
- Look specifically at how different generations and communities see the UK's past, present and future role in the world and how to give younger Britons a greater sense of national pride and role in our future national story.

**Figure 1.** Building a new national narrative and supporting governance apparatus suitable for integrated, future-facing and agile national strategy. In the centre are our three core recommendations. Surrounded by elements suggested by participants for a new national narrative. Nested around this is the geopolitical domain, the traditional focus of national strategy and security.

A wider definition of security is needed that looks beyond traditional security domains, to understand the underlying drivers and their interconnections, and expands our definition to include a stronger focus on human security.

<sup>2</sup> The 2019 Open Government Action Plan makes a commitment to public participation and states: "Due to the fast pace of technological change, it is essential to create flexible, open, inclusive structures for the citizens to engage in a dialogue with the government, civil society, academic experts, and businesses."

### 3. Strengthen national strategy apparatus

Public sector machinery that is currently oriented to national security strategy needs to become whole-of-government, agile and future-facing. It needs to encourage the active stewardship of future generations' wellbeing.

To achieve this, we recommend a focus on four outcomes:

#### 3.1 Programmes, policy and regulation that reflect national strategy, future generations and existential risk

##### Build the obligation to consider future generations' wellbeing

- Set new obligations on Ministers to act for the long-term, and designate Select Committees and other oversight bodies (such as an ombudsman or Future Generations Commissioner) to scrutinise HMG on this basis
- Pre-emptively evaluate major policy decisions and proposed legislation (including in areas such as infrastructure and Research & Development) for long-term and intergenerational impact
- Learn from the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which is successfully encouraging more concern for the future in Welsh public bodies.

##### Widen national security scope and community to a concept of National Strategy across whole of government and beyond

Take previous integrated approaches (like Fusion and One HMG) much further into a truly cross-Whitehall strategic endeavour with incentives for genuine deep collaboration.

- Align domestic ministries (DfE, BEIS, HO, MOJ) and local authorities behind the UK's National Strategy given the communities, levers and assets they contribute.
- Align civil service reform efforts (including around relocation out of London, procurement and financing) to support this agenda, and reflect in design and implementation of big UK policy events like COP26 and complex policy decisions like deterrence.
- Harness the power of big data carefully in engaging with the future. Technical mechanisms, like forecasting tournaments and algorithms, can be effective solutions for technical problems but are ineffective solutions to democratic problems.
- The National Strategy should take a lead in ensuring that

(extreme) risk management improves globally by setting a risk budget and encouraging UK and international commitments to spend a target amount of GDP on risk prevention.

#### 3.2 Incentives that drive behaviour and culture change to support citizen engagement through wider and more diverse processes

The scale of the task – to build a domestic dialogue/national conversation and relative consensus around the UK's role in the world – is significant. Many 'early adopters' in the key HMG institutions recognise this.

Recommendations to support this transition include:

- Incorporate notions of "stewardship" and "wellbeing of future generations" into purpose and mission of civil service.
- Develop a participatory long-term policy making guide for the Civil Service; incorporate principles into the Green and Magenta books; recognise successful endeavours and innovations across the public sector and beyond.
- Establish a presumption of listening first: understand the places where people exchange (and self-organise), the topics they raise, the language they use. Build upon an understanding of different communities' (including Generation Z) perspectives.
- Ensure each policy area has incentives for reaching out to inclusive platforms to engage young people – and local communities and religious groups among others – from across all of the UK to debate, discuss and decide important issues.

#### 3.3 Capability and skills development within the national strategy community as well as wider civil service

- Broaden policymakers' use of Horizon Scanning and Foresight (including on science and technology) through supporting of departments' and NDPBs' own work as well as the Chief Scientific Advisers and GO-Science.
- Radically improve the teaching of strategic thinking skills (and associated leadership, whole-system analysis, iterative learning through implementation) to civil servants, Ministers and MPs. Reward progress in HR Learning & Development, hiring and performance decisions.
- Support the UK public (including businesses, citizens, diaspora, universities) and the excellent locally employed staff in embassies worldwide to build these skills. Building the skills for national resilience and dialogue is a whole of society effort.
- Empower young people through an improved civic education offer and fresh approaches to teaching perspectives on the UK's global history to understand the most effective pathways for change, to articulate themselves on the issues they care about, and to be resilient to misinformation.<sup>3</sup>

🗣️ **It is vital to upskill young people...those who will experience the effects of the new strategy throughout their lives...and build their knowledge and understanding of British democracy and Britain's role in the world.** 🗣️

(NSXNG YOUTH PARTNER)

<sup>3</sup> For detailed recommendations on upskilling young people in political literacy and media literacy, see Annex X from Shout Out UK.

**3.4 Review existing institutions, structures and processes to ensure they are future-oriented, agile and resilient.**

- Reorient the Treasury and machinery of government (including NAO, Select Committees) around a long-term, systems approach with stronger consideration given to second order effects, and a new National Strategy Council that replaces the NSC.
- Strengthen the work of existing institutions and teams with long-term and cross-cutting perspectives, like MOD's DCDC, GO-Science (especially foresight team) and the Government Foresight network, UKRI and links with Universities
- Incorporate the functions and skills of long-term thinking, foresight and planning into the new FCDO and a re-energised and reformed diplomatic machine.
- Give the 'Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission' a long-term brief - including working out new oversight mechanisms to represent Future Generations.
- Establish effective risk institutions, for example a National Institute for Extreme Risks, an independent Chief Risk Officer (CRO) for HMG and associated unit to support departments and hold ministers to account for departmental risk response plans (for further ideas on risk management, see Annex VI).
- Drive international institutional innovation - explore bringing the representation of future generations into international organisations.



# Contents

This paper starts by introducing the NSxNG approach, then presents headline findings across the issues we helped participants explore in our participative activities (online survey, workshops, Citizens' Assembly tester session, Grand Strategy seminars). The structure is as follows:

## 1 Approach

Overview of the NSxNG programme. What is distinctive about our approach to the development of national strategy. Including our focus on (i) strategic foresight, (ii) public participation and (iii) historical insight as indivisible aspects of national strategy development; and our emphasis on bringing a diverse public voice, in particular the voices of future generations, into the process of shaping our country's future place in the world.

## 2 The 2045 environment

A summary of what our participants highlighted as the key uncertainties, drivers, threats and opportunities for the UK to 2045; including climate change, new tech upsides/downsides, weakening of the state, rise of cross-border identities, and the importance of relational influence.

## 3 People's visions for the UK's role in 2045

A set of four contrasting visions: the positive (a motor of innovation, a middle-ranking convening power, the specialist state) and the negative (an unmanaged decline). Reflections on the importance of public emotion in thinking about national strategy and finding new sources of pride and hope.

## 4 Policy implications

High-level 'key messages to Government' that emerged from participants' contributions to our events.

## 5 Recommendations

Policy and operational recommendations for building a more resilient, agile, future-focused and participative approach to national strategy, by supporting the civil service and political leaders in engaging the public in a moment of strategic refocus (or rebuilding 'a new strategic personality').

## 6 Continuing the NSxNG Journey in 2021

An outline for continuing the NSxNG journey in 2021, weaving together different forms of public engagement with expert evidence on historical and future trends. It will include outreach via networks together with a full Citizens' Assembly process, as well as activities with youth groups in our network to bring the debate on these issues to more young and under-represented voices.

### List of Annexes:

<b>Annex I:</b>	Pilot methodology
<b>Annex II:</b>	The world in 2045
<b>Annex III:</b>	Public views on the UK's historical role
<b>Annex IV:</b>	Democratic Society Citizens' Assembly test report
<b>Annex V:</b>	Emotions and Foreign Policy, Dr Claire Yorke
<b>Annex VI:</b>	Recommendations on extreme risk management – from researchers at the University of Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute and University of Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Existential Risk
<b>Annex VII:</b>	KCL Centre for Grand Strategy seminar series summary
<b>Annex VIII:</b>	Submission – Restless Development
<b>Annex IX:</b>	Submission – APPG for Future Generations
<b>Annex X:</b>	Submission – Shout Out UK
<b>Annex XI:</b>	Anticipatory Democracy and National Strategy: Clem Bezold, Institute for Alternative Futures
<b>Annex XII:</b>	Introducing a National Strategy for the Next Generations
<b>Annex XIII:</b>	Interim report to HMG on NSxNG pilot programme, Sept 2020



# 1. The NSxNG Approach

We are a coalition with a vision for doing national strategy differently – and are committed to running a programme to do so in 2021-2022

## Our mission

This programme aims to bring a diverse public voice, and in particular the voices of future generations, into the process of shaping our country’s future place in the world. While other areas of policy are opening up to public voice and participation, national strategy has remained an elite, government-led, behind-closed-doors endeavour. There is a growing recognition (both in the UK and internationally) of the need to build intergenerational fairness into policymaking, expanding our moral responsibility ‘forward’ to the future generations who will inherit the long-term consequences of our actions.

**Foresight, public participation and historical insight** are the three interdependent tenets of our approach, woven through our design of this pilot programme. They are indivisible – for example, thinking about the future is informed by citizens’ sense of the UK’s historical role and legacy. The NSxNG approach is outlined in detail in Annex XII.

## Why now?

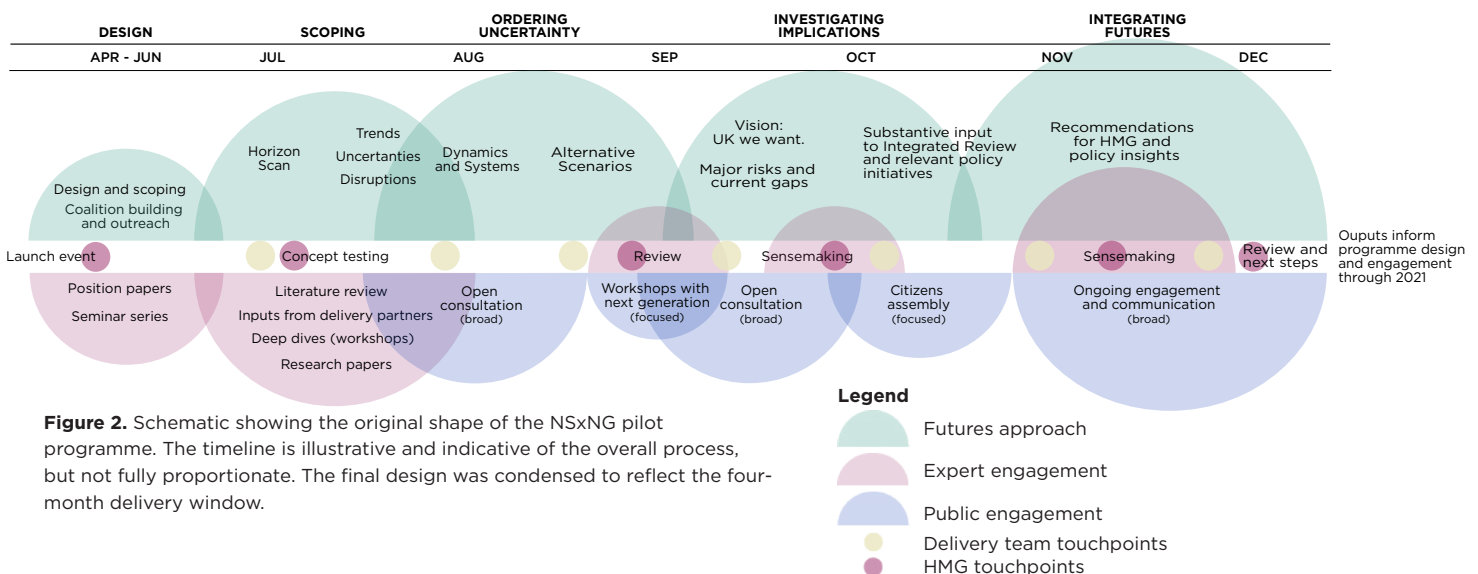
This year’s Integrated Review has been called “a once in a generation chance to reset our international policy” (Seely, Foreign Affairs Committee 2020).<sup>4</sup> The post-Brexit moment forces the UK to reflect on its future global role, its external operating environment, and the tools and alliances it will need to achieve the best possible position. COVID-19 has intensified the need to proactively shape the UK’s future, domestically and internationally, as we ‘build back better’.

**Our theory of change** is long-term. We aim to change norms and expectations of how the UK’s role in the world is set, by supporting transformation at three levels:

- **Influencing HMG** (with the Integrated Review as the first input-point). The Integrated Review should be seen as the beginning of a five-year National Strategy journey to build a new national narrative and supporting governance apparatus. Wider civil service reform programmes, should support this journey, not least the FCDO merger.
- **Supporting a wider national conversation about the UK’s future role** with high-quality public deliberation among the public including future generations, to drive a more considered debate about the UK’s role in the world and to build consensus.
- **Building the capability of both HMG and the public to have an ongoing dialogue about the UK’s role** so that we build on one-off ‘set-piece’ national conversations or events to thicken the ‘connective tissue’ between Government and the public on national strategy issues. This will include injecting discussions of the UK’s place/role in the world into existing local and community forums and a full Citizens’ Assembly in 2021.

## Our wider coalition

We have drawn on rich networks in Government, think-tanks, and academia and assembled a coalition with expertise in national security, strategy, complex systems, applied history, technology, foresight, participation and deliberation. We have brought together ‘insider’ perspectives with those of voices not usually asked their views about the UK’s global role: via youth networks (British Youth Council, UKYouth, National Lottery Community Fund) and next generation thinktanks (such as Common Vision).



**Figure 2.** Schematic showing the original shape of the NSxNG pilot programme. The timeline is illustrative and indicative of the overall process, but not fully proportionate. The final design was condensed to reflect the four-month delivery window.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Telegraph (17 August 2020)

**The 2020 Integrated Review provided the catalyst for us to work on a proof of concept of a National Strategy that looks out a generation with next generation voices.** Given the compressed timings, this was done by partners in a voluntary capacity.<sup>5</sup>

Our pilot programme involved seminars held by KCL Centre for Grand Strategy, a detailed online survey, three virtual foresight workshops and a ‘tester session’ for a Citizens’ Assembly. It had the following objectives:

- **Consider the lessons of history to explore the history and future of Grand Strategy-making.** We drew on discussions about the impact of historical narrative, identity and lived experience in our historians’ seminars (see Annex VII) to design questions in our Citizens’ Assembly session and survey about people’s views of the UK’s past and how this affects their view of the future.
- **Listen to diverse voices today, seeking out particularly the ‘next generation’ of leaders and citizens** (the under-35s). Existing institutions and ways of thinking developed under the old paradigm are not able to imagine or explore the future (in foresight terms, the challenge of ‘Horizon 1’ institutions imagining a ‘Horizon 3’ future) – policymakers need to go beyond the traditional national strategy/security community to connect to people’s lived experiences, hopes/fears/emotions and values.<sup>6</sup> (See section 3).
- **Imagine the world our children and children’s children will inhabit and act as stewards of their future.** In our Citizens’ Assembly session and workshops, we supported participants to explore alternative futures out to 2045 and beyond, and their implications for policy and strategy development today (‘backcasting’ to 2030 and 2020).

do unto future generations what you would have had past generations do unto you...

(JANE DAVIDSON, ORIGINATOR OF THE WALES WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT, NSxNG SEMINAR – QUOTING PHILOSOPHER JOHN RAWLS)

We reached out via multiple networks. In total, we engaged in depth with around five hundred young people, many of who were engaged through multiple activities. Some were under 18 (we had people contributing to our workshops from their secondary school classrooms), many were 18-24; most were under 35 (73% of survey respondents, 90% of participants in workshops and 80% of participants in the Citizens’ Assembly session). The group were representative of what our partners Restless Development call “a generation of increasingly connected global citizens”; although given the pilot nature of this endeavour, largely a self-selecting group with prior interest in national strategy or foreign policy (see Methodology – lessons learned, Annex I).

<sup>5</sup> We learned in June 2020 of the shortened IR timeline and agreed with key HMG stakeholders to provide initial input by September. The NSxNG partners committed to tackle this work without external resources (funding) yet in place, and within this collapsed timeframe.

<sup>6</sup> See an introduction to Three Horizons thinking at [h3uni.org/practices/foresight-three-horizons](https://h3uni.org/practices/foresight-three-horizons) and an academic article by SOIF’s Andrew Curry on the Three Horizons approach at [h3uni.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Seeing\\_in\\_Multiple\\_Horizons\\_Connecting.pdf](https://h3uni.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Seeing_in_Multiple_Horizons_Connecting.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> In our survey, overall, respondents emphasized opportunities more than challenges.

**The results are striking, both in terms of the appetite for this work and the substance (see participants’ Visions and messaging to Government (‘Policy Implications’, section IV).**

We recognise the impact of both the compressed timeframe and small size of the sample population consulted in the pilot. Nonetheless, our approach has caught a wave of interest and appetite to do things differently both in the national strategy community, and from citizens to contribute to the national strategy-making process.

Our pilot suggests the public appetite exists to contribute to these conversations:

- We built a network of interested collaborators and partners, with over 80 organisations – think-tanks, advocacy groups, locally-based networks and youth participation groups keen to connect international thinking into their existing work.
- The citizens we consulted were pragmatic, constructive, and while recognising challenges ahead, ambitious for their country.<sup>7</sup> The desire to help the UK ‘pivot’, and shape a positive future, came through strongly. Instead of grandstanding or inflexible statements of positions, we managed to get into genuinely productive dialogue.

**This IR can be just the start of a journey over the next 5 years to build a National Strategy, and a new national narrative, based on citizen engagement and looking forward. One that engages the fluid future in a hopeful and exploratory way.**

A resilient HMG national strategy would need to:

- Look out at alternative futures over the long-term
- Build new visions to make “Global Britain” a reality – including new partnerships and policies
- Work out how to build the ‘connective tissue’ between government and people on national strategy issues, as well as examining processes, structures, people, partnerships and institutions to deliver national strategy better.

**This paper provides early indications of what this process could look like.** We explore the world in 2045 (section II), alternative visions for the UK (section III), policy implications (section IV), and recommendations for building the ‘connective tissue’ between Government and public in this area (section V). Whilst on a modest scale, due to the pilot nature of our programme so far, we thus offer a blueprint for the approach that SOIF and partners would take in a wider 2021 programme.

## 2. The 2045 environment

We here summarise how people responded to prompts around the possible 2045 environment.

We provided a digest of the key trends and drivers (from major future trends scans conducted by the US National Intelligence Council<sup>8</sup>, DCDC at the UK MOD<sup>9</sup>, and ESPAS<sup>10</sup>) and asked participants to give their feedback on: 1) what they thought was most interesting about the drivers, shocks, disruptions and uncertainties presented; 2) what was missing and important; and 3) potential threats and opportunities for the UK.

Going through this process was important as a means to an end. It helped participants to consider our changing global operating environment (given the UK, like all actors, is principally an ‘environment-taker’ not an ‘environment-maker’ in a future world), and to provide an informed foundation from which participants develop insights around 2045 scenarios and implications.

This illustrates a feature of well-designed participatory foresight processes – to use expert input to support interesting explorations by participants of less obvious interdependencies, implications, visions and responses.

The key drivers/trends, uncertainties, threats and opportunities highlighted by our participants in the survey, workshops and Citizens’ Assembly session are summarised in this chapter, with additional detail available in Annexes II and IV.

### Key drivers of change and trends

- **Climate change and its impacts**, particularly resource scarcity and forced migration, presenting global and local challenges
- **Erosion of values and the rise of alternative (non-democratic) systems of government**
- **Rise of technology**, including the need to manage/have new governance frameworks on technology ethics
- **Demographic changes and impacts on migration.** Demographic shifts will be unevenly globally distributed, with dramatic population growth expected to 2100 in Africa and aging populations in Europe and, from mid-21st century, in Asia
- **Erosion of the power/sovereignty of the state**, including increasing diffusion of power to regional, city level, transnational corporations and networks

- **Continued rise of cross-border identities.** Individuals and communities may increasingly identify across nation-state borders.
- **Rise of China.** China’s geopolitical implications and economic success may force other states to realign their values or interests.

### Key uncertainties

- **Multilateral systems** and whether they would find new purpose, or reform, to manage climate change and other emerging issues (e.g. AI, data management), or cease to be relevant.
- **Emerging technology and Artificial Intelligence** including the uncertain upsides or downsides that they bring (“AI presents both the greatest threat and the greatest opportunity going forward”); and potential to drive inequality
- **A resurgence in ‘the local’**, from self-sufficiency to political engagement
- **Climate change** and its potential to increase empathy for climate migrants, or ramp up hostility.

### Key threats for the UK

- **Climate change / environmental systems collapse** and their impacts
- **Global supply of food and vital resources**
- **Technological threats** including potential failure to devise adequate multilateral norms to govern emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, or a failure to equip the workforce for the Fourth Industrial Revolution
- **The rise of transnational identities and self-organising groups** threatening the basis of the nation-state
- **Identity changes**
- **Extreme risks** such as pandemics (see Annex VI).

### Key opportunities for the UK

- **A generational values shift** that may support a different definition of national purpose and wellbeing
- **The growing role of cities**
- **The growing importance of relational influence** (the ability to get things done through good relationships with a range of other global actors), where the UK currently performs well.<sup>11</sup>
- **The chance to put in place the world’s most robust system for extreme risk management** (see Annex VI).

<sup>8</sup> *Global Trends. Paradox of Progress.* Office of the Director of National Intelligence, United States. Accessed 15 October 2020. <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/global-trends-home>

<sup>9</sup> *Global Strategic Trends. Sixth Edition.* Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom. 2019. [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/771309/Global\\_Strategic\\_Trends\\_-\\_The\\_Future\\_Starts\\_Today.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/771309/Global_Strategic_Trends_-_The_Future_Starts_Today.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> *Global Trends to 2030. Challenges and Choices for Europe.* European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS), 2019. [https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/ESPAS\\_Report.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/ESPAS_Report.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> See the UK’s ranking in the 2018 Atlantic Council paper on Power and Influence [hcss.nl/sites/default/files/files/reports/Power%20and%20Influence.pdf](https://www.hcss.nl/sites/default/files/files/reports/Power%20and%20Influence.pdf) and commentary on relational power in recent ESPAS report [www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/ESPAS\\_Report.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/ESPAS_Report.pdf)





# 3. People's Visions

## Four contrasting visions for the the UK's role in 2045

The four visions are shared here as short vignettes. They give a sense of what our participants thought was achievable and desirable for the UK in 2045. These Visions are not mutually exclusive. The first three are positive, the fourth more negative.

The process of visioning allowed people to explore in detail what the UK might look like as a future 'force for good' in the world. These kinds of illustrative visions can provide the building blocks and language for a new, inspiring, consensus-based national narrative that can inspire a sense of pride and hope in our future role. This is a pragmatic response to the UK's need to manage its relative 'decline', and reframe its thinking. The clear message is that the UK should take an active, anticipatory decision to position itself in relation to the likely future, instead of an idealised past.

## Visions

### THE MIDDLE-RANKING CONVENING POWER

A world of rapid change, high uncertainty, and existential risk favours small, nimble, responsive actors. Accepting a role not as a global leader but as a middle-ranking convening power would build on long-established UK strengths (our relational power - ability to get things done through good, broad-based relationships with a wide range of other states - and convening power). This role would involve the UK actively managing its own decline.

- "The UK's future will be best served by accepting the fact that it has now fallen to the status of mid-level power, and to manage that transition."
- "My 2045 vision? The UK has carefully directed and monitored its steady decline from the position of power it held in the 20th century. It has adjusted its ambitions to be within its reach, and still enjoys a position of influence globally, which it uses to promote its fundamental values."
- "The UK - small but nimble. Adaptable to a changing world and seizing opportunities."
- "Though materially no longer a great power, Britain acts as a conduit and network facilitator amongst various states."

On the international stage, participants imagined the UK:

- acting as a convening power or 'gravity well' bringing together smaller (often ad hoc) groupings in the multilateral system - 'minilateralism'.
- maintaining our 'relational power' making sure we don't haemorrhage our current level of relational influence ...
- "becoming more collaborative - don't approach partnerships with other countries from a leadership position."

### A MOTOR OF INNOVATION

A striking number of young people saw a future for Britain in this space. "Tech Britain" was a strapline suggested by one young respondent. Others imagined a world where "the UK is now a technological leader in the Fourth Industrial Revolution with a skilled workforce it can rely on"; where "we are more innovative and technologically advanced than ever before"; where the UK would "become exemplary at the things that we already do well: provide space and funding for research and innovation and to be a beacon of how to use technology for social good."<sup>12</sup>

Many saw the UK as having a strong historical grounding in innovation - not just in technologies but in new ideas:

- "I see the UK as an innovator in the past that led the world to change and adopt new ideas, methods, products and systems" (aged 18-24 y.o.)
- "We are the country that embraces the future but adopts it alongside our past" (another 18-24 y.o.)
- Fields such as biosecurity, biodefence, cyber were cited; there was a particular appetite in our workshops and Citizens' Assembly session for the UK to develop and export more green tech: "saving the world and supporting British businesses at the same time".

<sup>12</sup> Though not suggested specifically by participants, the UK could also use its strengths in science/research to focus on pioneering robust biosecurity through UK ARPA, shaping new global standards on emerging security threats like cyber-weapons, and building a Global Partnership for AI (GPAI) and steering it towards activities such as robust scientific investigations into future trajectories of AI. The UK is one of the few countries with several globally renowned research institutes focusing on avoiding and preparing for extreme risks, "once-in-a-century" events likely to happen in our lifetimes; an area of expertise that the future world will demand more.

## THE SPECIALIST STATE

Our participants thought that, by 2045, most states may increasingly seek not to compete across the board (militarily, economically, culturally), but to specialise – whether in particular industries, regions or as leaders on values. Many were attracted by the idea of the UK cultivating a USP, or specialism, making choices around our focus, building national consensus around and pride in a more defined role – and refocusing our ‘nation-branding’ efforts abroad.

Comparisons were made with lower-ranking, but distinctive powers with strong soft power and brands globally – participants mentioned Switzerland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden.

- “A country more akin to a Norway or Denmark than either a regional or global power”
- “We may yet operate as something like a Norway or Singapore but with true global leadership: an individual player recognised as innovative and forward-looking, helping to shape a better future.”

## IN DENIAL – AN UNMANAGED DECLINE

Across all our activities, participants voiced one consistent fear: that the UK will refuse to accept the new reality of its diminished status, and avoid making the difficult strategic choices to proactively reorientate itself (or set its new ‘strategic personality’). Participants noted that history (from post-Soviet Russia to China’s ‘century of humiliation’ narrative) vividly shows the lasting impact of a sense of national humiliation when a decline in status is seen as externally imposed and resisted by the political elite. They also recognised that no country is going to adopt the concept of decline as its national strategy and this would need careful framing.

- “My expectation is that the UK will, in 2045, be recovering from a period of 20 years of moribund insignificance brought on by populism and its neglect of real-world future challenges. By then climate change will be biting.”
- “There was too much focus on the past and dwelling on issues. Not accepting changes and taking strides that the UK pioneered for most of history. The ageing population and lack of focus on future generations inhibited growth” (18-24 y.o.)



## Hopes, fears, emotions – what underpins our national role, identity and narrative?

In all our participative activities, we heard both explicit and implicit reference to the way that hope, fear, and other emotions underlie public views on the UK's current, past and future role in the world, our national identity and national narrative. It came through clearly that young people want to feel hope and pride about the UK's future role. This public interest is substantiated by new academic work on the interplay of emotions with national strategy (see Annex V by Dr Claire Yorke, Yale University). As Dr Yorke argued in our NSxNG historians' seminars, we must consider the emotional dimension in developing future UK strategy: what do we want people to feel about Britain's place in the world? What are the sources of pride, hope and vision that we want to evoke?

When it comes to building a new national narrative, how can we use constructive, inclusive conversations across all communities and generations to build a more nuanced, and more unifying, national narrative – one that unites around pride and hope in a fresh, future role?<sup>13</sup>

### Hopes

- **"My hope** is that being British is going to be a good thing for my future... We need some sound policy decisions to make being British a hope in and of itself." (Citizens' Assembly participant, 20-29 y.o.)
- **"Being a forerunner**, doing something new" (Citizens' Assembly participant)
- "I believe that the people in this country are **empathetic and passionate about the freedoms and liberties that we often take for granted**" (Survey respondent, 18-24 y.o.)

### Fears

- Fear of a nation **"clinging to comforting rhetoric and delusory mythologies of our past"** (NSxNG Survey)
- **"We're already past managed decline"** (Citizens' Assembly participant).
- "Without having the same international influence which the UK had in the 20th century, it **struggles to make its voice heard and have much of an effect.**" (25-34 y.o. female)
- "I fear us losing or fragmenting our country" (Citizens' Assembly participant); **"First we lose Scotland, then Wales, then North Ireland, then London – then what are we?"** (Citizens' Assembly participant)
- **"Populism.. we renege on the international order** that we have been creating since post WW2" (Citizens' Assembly participant)

### Emotions

- Anger about exclusion, injustice and the **"betrayal of a generation"** (NSxNG Survey)
- **"Embarrassed** about the UK's place in the world - increasingly over the last 4 years" (Citizens' Assembly participant)
- **"Worried!** We are losing credibility." Citizens' Assembly participant)

☞ **Ultimately national strategy should put the citizens of that nation first and foremost, and this is hard to achieve if it is not aligned with the personal bond the individual feels to the nation.** ☞

(18-24 YEAR OLD, NSxNG SURVEY)

☞ **Don't know what the next 10-20 years should look like but if there's no part for me, I will fuck off.** ☞

(20-24 YEAR OLD, PARTICIPANT)

<sup>13</sup> One survey respondent (aged 25-34) told us: "I would be very proud of the UK if it were a force for good in the world. I would like to see it lead the way on issues of sustainability and social justice."

# 4. Policy implications

Having explored the external environment, our workshop and Citizens' Assembly session participants considered the implications for the UK in policy/operational terms. Five key messages emerged:

## 1. It's time for an honest reassessment – perhaps a 'managed, relative decline'

One of the strongest messages across our activities was the desire for both Government and society to take this post-Brexit, mid-COVID moment to honestly take stock of the UK's position in the world. People wanted a more honest public debate and narrative from the top about the UK's future role – avoiding idealizing the UK's role either in the present or past. Whilst Government may not choose to adopt the language of relative decline, our participants' emphasis on it underlines that there is an urgent need to work on a new national narrative that can inspire pride and hope in our future role.

Participants overwhelmingly felt that the UK should accept its status as a medium-ranking power and maximise influence at that level (“adjust to the reality of UK power today/in future” ... “we're a second rate power but we think that we're a first rate power” ... “consolidate a middle / facilitator/ neutral status”... “we should accept being less of a presence”).

Citizens' Assembly session participants were also worried about Britain increasingly becoming the 'demandeur' and the “vulnerability” this created in our foreign policy. For example, “looking for trade deals post-Brexit - needing China despite China being a security threat”.

**My top priority for UK policymakers for the next 25 years? A recognition of /adjustment to the realities of the UK's place in world.**

(WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT)

## 2. Make the hard choices - and reorient fast to survive

Our work revealed a high level of public anxiety around the lack of engagement with real choices, and an appetite for honest language and clear choice-making. As one 18-24 year-old survey respondent put it: “Even when the UK has had strategic reviews it has found it too politically difficult to make clear decisions and has hedged on them... But we're frankly at the point where any decision is better than none. The UK simply needs a strategy.”

Over 2020-30, participants were concerned about the post-Brexit reorientation of the UK risking “loss of USP”, and confusion about our future role (“I expect that the UK will struggle with its identity going forward”). They feared damage for the UK on the world stage during this transition period – in terms of reputation (“we are losing credibility”) and

relationships (“the UK has a very different perception of itself to how others see us ... we expect to be seen as a great power and a sensible country – with our reputation of having a model democracy & legal system”). They stressed the need to focus on 'relational power': “We need to get used to the idea that clout is no longer going to be something given to us for who we are but something we earn in what we do. We need to make ourselves useful and make new and broader alliances.”

## A force for good?

Our historians' seminars underlined that people right across the political spectrum want the UK to be a force for good in the world: that an ethical foreign policy remains both plausible and popular. We asked survey respondents what it would mean to them for the UK to be a force for good in the world:

- “The UK should strive to become a pioneer and leader for change, a nation that others can look at and follow.” (18-24 year old, survey)
- “Implementing aid programmes to help other countries affected by climate change or humanitarian crises.” (workshop group)
- “Leading by example to work towards a more peaceful world that looks after the planet and its people.” (18-24 year old, female, survey)
- “Using our power as a force for good, disrupting the spread of corrupt regimes, providing humanitarian aid and mediating the aggression of other global powers.” (18-24 year old)
- “Three things: leadership on the climate, leadership on justice (particularly tax and financial justice), leadership on poverty alleviation at home and abroad.”
- “Continuing to deliver foreign aid and stabilising operations.” (25-34 year old, survey)
- “Acting as a mediator in disputes between other nations. Taking a progressive lead and setting an example on issues such as climate change, social justice and welfare.” (25-34 year old, female, survey)
- “If the UK continues to advocate and promote the values it historically has (law and order, freedom of thought and worship, free trade and enterprise, democracy etc.) then it cannot help but be a force for good.” (25-34 year old, survey)

Whatever choice is made about the UK's future role, our young respondents underlined that the world is changing fast and the UK cannot afford decades of delay agonising over its own role: "I think change should occur relatively quickly as other regions of the world gain global influence, we will lose it" (18-24 year old) ... "If the UK is not able to keep up with the pace of change it may be left behind" (18-24 year old). Specific choices such as prioritising economic/trade interests versus human rights were cited, as was the importance of aligning resource/funding behind the choices made (e.g. financing clean energy if that's where the UK sees its future).

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## Policy Kitchen: key ideas

Participants co-created 30 ideas on the Policy Kitchen platform (see Methodology, Annex I). Stand-out ideas included:

- Power shifts to the cities – and the countryside?
- The UK as a global leader in green tech
- Wider opportunities for the UK in tech
- New definitions of national wealth/wellbeing
- Information, misinformation and civic education

Read the ideas on:

[www.policykitchen.com/group/41/stream](http://www.policykitchen.com/group/41/stream)

### 3. Keep putting values at the centre – acting as a force for good and steward for a rules-based system

We heard a strong sense from our young contributors at the workshops and Citizens' Assembly session that values and multilateral engagement must remain at the core of what the UK can contribute on the world stage – but that to support our position on values, we must address the domestic challenges and injustices that undermine our moral authority on these issues.

What, then, did people think acting as a force for good meant for the UK in 2045?

- **Refreshing our historic values:** Participants suggested that extending the UK's historic values – such as law and order, freedom of thought, democracy, human rights, free enterprise – into the future would mean the UK leading

on climate change, aid and development, human rights, and humanitarian assistance; helping reinvigorate the multilateral order (including reform efforts so the system reflects new realities and can meet new challenges); responsible innovation; challenging aggression; mediating conflict and disrupting the spread of corruption and misinformation.

- **"With the rise of alternative governance models, we need to up our game on values."** This makes 'leading from the front' particularly important: concern was voiced about the UK being (seen as) hypocritical over values – a consciousness that values-based campaigns (Girls' Education, PSVI, FGM, Modern Slavery etc.) could be seen as too "monodirectional", patronizing and post-colonial.
- **The UK cannot determine its own posture in isolation from the wider global picture.** Increasingly, in a COVID world, we need a vision for what a sustainable future globally looks like – the UK can help lead that dialogue (for example, around what will replace the SDGs).
- **The language of leadership or global leadership was problematic for many of our participants** – because they felt it implied something (a) nostalgic and outdated and (b) unlikely to reflect the UK's global stature by mid-21st century. Instead, it may be appropriate to think in terms of the UK working to demonstrate global stewardship (of responsibilities towards citizens, migrants, the environment, future generations, etc).

🗨️ **If we focus on how to improve our own society then we can become a blueprint for how others could follow.** 🗨️

(25-34 YEAR OLD, NSxNG SURVEY)

### 4. Build the assets to support UK influencing, especially on innovation

The mid-21st century environment will put a premium on the UK wielding its soft, indirect, networked power and leading through ideas, innovation, inspiration and influence. We heard concerns about attrition of the UK's influencing capabilities as our international reputation takes a hit – but also optimism about the UK's potential soft power role in specific areas. As one Citizens' Assembly group put it: "there are some areas where the UK is a leading power and can be an inspiration – science and technology, soft power, influence". Another foresaw "the UK being the forerunner for something that hasn't been done – in education, the environment, or tech – that's what we can rally behind."

Potential areas of focus suggested were:

- 'Innovation diplomacy' focused on low-carbon technologies, infrastructure and soft skills (see Vision 2, A Motor of Innovation). This would mean investing in UK research, science and tech and building a strong base in innovation exports.



- Investing more in research/tech: “Become exemplary at the things that we already do well: provide space and funding for research and innovation and be a beacon of how to use technology for social good. Could we have a genuinely tech-driven health service? Can we continue to lead the way in terms of scientific research and share the benefits with the world?”<sup>14</sup>
- Improved support to citizens (one vision for 2045: “the UK has led the way in raising the quality of life for its citizens regardless of background. It has strengthened its social safety nets which in turn has led to improved innovation”).
- A green transition (“We need a green new deal to get well ahead of the transition to the green economy. We can change the economy we have or have change forced upon us, and the latter will be much less pleasant.”)
- Doubling down on education: Citizens’ Assembly participants suggested re-purposing UK universities as hubs for inclusion, engagement and innovation. Workshop participants wanted the UK to use its world-class educational institutions as tools of soft power, promoting values of peace and tolerance. They also recommended a strengthening of civic education.<sup>15</sup>

📖 **The narrative of British history is of good ideas helping to shape the planet: the industrial revolution, Adam Smith and the ‘Invisible Hand’, the NHS.** 📖

(25-34 YEAR OLD, NSxNG SURVEY)

## 5. Recognise we must put our own house in order

Younger participants were worried about whether the UK could position itself as a global leader on values without ‘putting its own house in order’ domestically. When asked to name the top five changes affecting the UK’s role in the world in 2045, survey participants cited ‘domestic’ issues such as devolution and public policy (health, economy, social issues) alongside issues like global leadership and foreign affairs; and younger respondents were particularly likely to emphasise the ‘domestic’ issues (such as social mobility).<sup>16</sup> In our Citizens’ Assembly session, people raised zero-hour contracts, affordable housing and pension schemes – “if the UK wants to be a leader, we need to address these issues.”

Participants also raised State of the Union concerns, asking how plausibly we could talk about a single national strategy by 2045 in light of the possible breakup of the Union: “I doubt there will be a United Kingdom by 2045. I expect that the 4 current nations of the UK will be strong independent countries”. While a 2030 horizon might allow us to assume the territorial integrity of the United Kingdom, looking out to 2045 this is less clear. One 18-24 year old. put it: “confusion about the Union and national identity will become increasingly difficult to align... If a population does not feel united then how can a nation progress to sorting bigger challenges?”

<sup>14</sup> See also annex VI on the potential for the UK to show global leadership on extreme risk management

<sup>15</sup> See also recommendations on political literacy from partners Shout Out UK, based on work in over 1000 UK secondary schools (Annex X).

<sup>16</sup> See p12, Differences of emphasis by age

# 5. Recommendations

Recommendations for integrated, future-facing and agile national strategy and policymaking.

## KEY CHALLENGES

We have argued that the next few turbulent years require us to broaden thinking about national security strategy to think instead about our National Strategy in the widest sense – to begin a **National Strategy journey to develop a new national narrative and supporting governance apparatus.**

If we dedicate the time and resource to begin that journey now, we will put the UK in a far better place for the long-term. Flows of technology, health, migration, data, reputation, knowledge, finance mean what happens at home and abroad are indivisible. What we say and do domestically matters to our posture and position overseas, and vice versa. Thus domestic policy tools and stakeholders are critical to this journey, which requires a whole-of-government approach as well as local engagement.

We recommend that the Integrated Review is the beginning of a five-year National Strategy journey to build a new national narrative and supporting governance apparatus. Wider civil service reform programmes, should support this journey, not least the FCDO merger, and the UK should leverage opportunities such as the G7 presidency, and planning for major events (for example, hosting COP26 ).

We see three key areas where progress is necessary to sustain this journey. In brief, the UK needs:

1. Political consensus around public dialogue with our political leaders committed to the outputs of a public dialogue, and a new national narrative that respects public consensus. Political leaders and citizens must go on the journey together to define a new narrative for the UK's role in the world that is optimistic but realistic (instead of caving in to the pressure to deny loss of power or 'decline'). Without this it will be harder to sustain the journey.
2. An independent public dialogue on National Strategy that is well-designed and conducted. This requires space for deliberation and confronting difficult choices, which forms a sustainable foundation for consensus-building.
3. National security apparatus that is orientated to support whole-of-government, agile and future-facing national strategy, that encourages stewardship of future generations' wellbeing. This requires fit for purpose institutions, culture, processes, and people in Whitehall and across the public sector.

## RECOMMENDED RESPONSES

We here give our recommendations under these three key challenges, with a number of detailed proposals for consideration:

### RECOMMENDATION 1:

#### **Build a political consensus around the need for public dialogue on National Strategy**

We need a participative national dialogue to build a more nuanced, and more unifying, national narrative – one based on constructive, inclusive conversations across all communities and generations. One that unites around pride and hope in a fresh, future role (see Annex V).

A cross-party approach or bipartisan support to an inclusive national dialogue process is critical. The transformative potential of effective dialogue and an effective strategy apparatus will be limited if political discourse continues to peddle idealised visions of the UK's past and future role. As we heard from our participants, talking-up the UK's power and future role is simply storing up public disillusionment and political backlash for the future. This is not an easy topic to broach in a civil service-oriented review, but it cannot be honestly shied away from.

The engagement of the next generation of political leaders, and bringing in the older generation to share their experiences, may be an interesting approach (see intergenerational panel proposal in our 2021 outline programme) would be to listen and understand public perspectives, hopes and fears in a much more nuanced way than polling, in order to collaboratively explore language that frames the UK's role in a changing world in a positive, future-focused way rather than the downbeat, backward-looking "managed decline".

This introduces our second recommendation.

### RECOMMENDATION 2:

#### **Build a public National Strategy dialogue**

Public engagement, or 'deliberative democracy', is designed to complement representative democracy at work in Parliament and Government.

Effective public deliberation around emerging complex issues can come up with better results than politicians, experts, and business alone. This is the evidence from ScienceWise, an innovative HMG public engagement programme on emerging Science and Technology issues which SOIF have been working on.<sup>17</sup> The 2019 Open Government Action Plan makes a commitment to public participation based on similar findings.

<sup>17</sup> Now held by UK Research & Innovation (UKRI).

The case for public dialogue on national strategy issues has been made for some time.<sup>18</sup> International interest has now significantly expanded and many innovations are ongoing in this area globally. There is good evidence on what works well – and, inevitably, even more examples of poor government engagement.

Based on good practice from HMG's Open Government and Open Policy Making agendas, Involve and others (including SOIF's work with the Government Office for Science, ScienceWise, the UN, NATO and OECD) the key features of good engagement are:

#### Building relationships with the public:

- An ongoing dialogue – not one-off set-pieces.
- Ensure neither extractive nor disrespectful of people's input and time, by providing feedback and impact/evidence of change.
- Build on existing relationships between Government and communities.
- Engage individually as well as through existing networks and representatives of industry and civil society.

#### Examples of recent international innovation in public dialogue:

- Slovenia Vision 2050. Slovenia creates a vision for 2050 using a national dialogue process.
- Wales we want 2030. Wales We Want public dialogue as part of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- Our Singapore 2022 and We Are One. Our Singapore Conversation facilitates dialogue with citizens and specifically youth around their fears, hopes and aspirations.
- Japan 2060 with Unborn Generations. Municipal workshop reconciling intergenerational conflicts with imaginary future generations.
- Deliberating France's Infrastructure. Public debate about planned large-scale infrastructure developments.

#### Listening first:

- Go to where people are having conversations already, rather than creating new separate platforms.
- Listen to the language, concerns and how they are framed.
- Get to the subtext behind the language used and offer open spaces for deliberation (e.g. a Citizens' Assembly) rather than simplified, stark choices (as in polling).
- Ensure outreach is in different formats and modes to connect into people's preferences.

<sup>18</sup> PASC Inquiry 2012: Strategic thinking in Government: without National Strategy, can viable Government strategy emerge?, [publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmpublicadm/1625/1625.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmpublicadm/1625/1625.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> We asked about these issues in our survey and Citizens' Assembly tester session (CA) to get to the subtext. Sample question from our Citizens' Assembly tester session: "What personal experiences have you had (conversations, relationships, places, people) that have shaped how you think about the UK's place in the world?"

<sup>20</sup> The 2019 Open Government Action Plan makes a commitment to public participation and states: "Due to the fast pace of technological change, it is essential to create flexible, open, inclusive structures for the citizens to engage in a dialogue with the government, civil society, academic experts, and businesses."

<sup>21</sup> As one of our CA participants put it: "Does the public know what the national interest is? The national interest must be to protect the public. So if you give all the consequences to the public, would the correct strategic choice be made? Or should we leave the experts to it, or the elitwho've historically been trained to understand all this? I don't want this to sound elitist. Is what the public wants at odds with what the nation needs?"

#### Having rich and meaningful exchanges connected to people's lived experiences:

- Ask about people's hopes, fears, feelings about the issue, and connect to the head, heart and hand. Sustained participation processes (unlike polling, or written submissions to Government inquiries/reviews) allow Government to understand not just stated views on the UK's role in the world but what lies behind them (emotions, experiences, aspirations).<sup>19</sup>
- Provide time and space for deliberation and exchange to understand nuanced issues. In-depth, sustained participative activity over time (such as a Citizens' Assembly, which typically runs over multiple weekends) offers far more meaningful insights than polling, which offers oversimplified binary choices and can't get to the reasons behind people's stated views.
- Understand that it is at the local level or topic of interest that issues typically connect into people's lives – frame the conversation there.

“We need to make the whole endeavour of thinking about the UK's role in the world more systematic and open.”<sup>99</sup>

(FORMER NO.10 FOREIGN POLICY ADVISER)

Based on these lessons learned, we recommend that HMG:

- Expand public engagement on all national strategy programmes.<sup>20</sup> Use public participation to set high-level parameters, principles and direction – not the detail. The public recognize that they are not always best placed to opine on the detail.<sup>21</sup> As long as the parameters of the engagement are clear, expectations will not be inflated<sup>20</sup>.
- Engage with the public not just as 'customers' of external policy but as co-creators.
- Seek to understand how identities, emotions and lived experiences inform and shape perspectives not just on the UK's current role in the world, but also on its past and its future. As one of the NSxNG coalition put it: "what's dangerous is if you start from policy you don't know how that policy conversation sits within lived emotional experience. Everybody views it through their local lens of lived experience".<sup>22</sup>
- Look specifically at how different generations see the UK's past, present and future role in the world and how to give younger Britons a greater sense of national pride and role in our future national story. Recognise the risks (of political

disengagement, radicalisation) of pursuing a national narrative that excludes/alienates younger generations and causes them to disengage from the UK's global role<sup>23</sup>. As one young CA participant said: "a better understanding of the generations and how they've shaped British history could give the younger generation the confidence that they could have agency and shape the future of Britain just as previous generations did".

- Support the public to build their understanding of issues around the UK's place in world. Can we expect the British people to uphold our collective interests without a clear understanding of what those interests are, or without feeling trusted to do so? Public understanding is needed to clarify how exactly our outward-facing strategy serves domestic priorities - as one CA participant asked: "Who is the strategy serving? Who is it actually for?" Another remarked: "I wasn't even aware that people were coming up with a national strategy."

### RECOMMENDATION 3:

## Build effective long-term national strategy apparatus

This century requires a governance eco-system that is agile and encourages active stewardship of future generations' wellbeing, while adapting to emerging trends and shocks. Civil servants and public officials will need skills in complex systems

**Ensure the UK becomes more participative... It's crucial to seize this moment of uncertainty to give people a stake in writing (or rewriting) the guiding project.**

(NSxNG WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT)

thinking, foresight, and citizen engagement and an apparatus to match. This Integrated Review is an opportunity to embed ways to enable integrated, future-facing and agile national strategy and policymaking. Further reform can also occur through wider civil service reform programmes, not least the FCDO merger and planning for major events (hosting COP26).

Based on international- and UK-based research and experience, and refined in an ongoing study by SOIF for the GO-Science Futures Team on "mapping foresight governance ecosystems across ten countries", SOIF has identified key components of an effective intervention to build an effective long-term national strategy apparatus, using a Foresight Governance Capability Matrix.<sup>24</sup>

We set out below various initiatives HMG can take to support this agenda, using the four elements of the matrix:

### A. Programmes, Policy and Regulation: future generations and existential risk

Government should build obligation to consider future generations' wellbeing. Long-term policy making, that looks to 2045 and beyond (strengthening the UK's position for the rest of the century) requires us to:

- Set new obligations on Ministers to act for the long term, and designate Select Committees and other oversight bodies (such as an ombudsman or Future Generations Commissioner) to scrutinise on this basis.
- Pre-emptively evaluate major policy decisions and proposed legislation (including in areas such as infrastructure and R&D) for long-term/intergenerational impact,<sup>25</sup> including potential harm, unintended consequences, implications (including for unborn generations) and intergenerational fairness. SOIF and Gulbenkian<sup>26</sup> have developed an Intergenerational Fairness assessment framework to support both policy development ex ante and policy scrutiny ex post. This tool is currently in trial phase with the APPG for Future Generations.
- Learn from the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which is successfully encouraging more concern for the future in Welsh public bodies. Lord Bird has laid a Private Members' Bill in Parliament based on the Welsh Bill.

**National security scope and community should be widened to a concept of National Strategy across whole of government and beyond, open to innovation:**

- Take previous integrated approaches (like Fusion and One HMG) much further into a truly cross-Whitehall strategic endeavour with incentives for genuine deep collaboration.
- Align domestic ministries (DfE, BEIS, HO, MOJ) and local authorities behind our national strategy approach given the communities, levers and assets they contribute.
- Align civil service reform efforts (including around relocation out of London, procurement and financing) to support this agenda, and reflect in design and implementation of big UK policy events like COP26 and complex policy decisions like deterrence.
- Harness the power of big data carefully in engaging with the future. Technical mechanisms, like forecasting tournaments and algorithms, can be effective solutions for technical problems but are ineffective solutions to democratic problems.

<sup>22</sup> Others made the link between the sense of security/insecurity at local level and national – e.g. during our CA event: "What are the connections between the different levels of security? Or different levels of fragility - local, city, community, country/nation/international?"

<sup>23</sup> A survey participant, citing the BLM and XR campaigns, added: "ignoring the public, especially on issues such as sovereignty and immigration, will only destabilise the country more."

<sup>24</sup> 20 Years of UK Government Foresight", Cat Tully for The Health Foundation 2019

<sup>25</sup> See Annex IX, APPG for Future Generations submission.



- The national strategy should take a lead in ensuring that (existential) risk management improves globally by setting a risk budget and encouraging UK and international commitments to spend a target amount of GDP on risk prevention.

### **B. Communications and Culture: valuing the longer-term and others' contributions**

The scale of the task – to build a domestic dialogue/national conversation and relative consensus around the UK's role in the world – is significant. Building a wider and more diverse process, that engages with citizens in a two-way exchange, will require behaviour and culture change. Many 'early adopters' in the key HMG institutions recognise this. Recommendations to support this transition include:

- Incorporate notions of "stewardship" and "wellbeing of future generations" into purpose and mission of civil service.
- Develop a participatory long-term policy making guide for the Civil Service; incorporate into the Green and Magenta books; recognise successful endeavours and innovations.
- Establish a presumption of listening first: understand the places where people exchange (and self-organise), the topics they raise, the language they use. Build upon an understanding of different communities' (including Generation Z) perspectives.
- Ensure each policy area has incentives for reaching out to inclusive platforms to engage young people – and local communities and religious groups among others - from across all of the UK to debate, discuss and decide important issues.

### **C. People and Skills: building futures literacy and systems thinking**

It is important to build the capability and skills of the national strategy community as well as wider civil service. Our recommendations include:

- Broaden policymakers' use of Horizon Scanning and Foresight (including on science and technology) through supporting the work of Chief Scientific Advisers and GO-Science.
- Radically improve the teaching of strategic thinking skills (and associated leadership, whole-system analysis, iterative learning through implementation) to civil servants, Ministers and MPs. Reward progress in HR L&D, hiring and performance decisions, and build this into talent schemes to better prepare future leaders.

- Support the UK public (including businesses, citizens, diaspora, universities) and the excellent locally employed staff in embassies worldwide to build these skills. Building the skills for national resilience and dialogue is a whole of society effort.
- Empower young people through an improved civic education offer and fresh approach to teaching perspectives on the UK's global history to understand the most effective pathways for change, to articulate themselves on the issues they care about, and to be resilient to misinformation.<sup>27</sup>

### **D. Institutions, Structures and Processes: not a silver bullet, but still important**

The current reforms within the civil service open up the opportunity for change. Ideas include:

- Reorient the Treasury and machinery of government (including NAO, Select Committees) around a long-term, systems approach with stronger consideration given to second order effects, and a new National Strategy Council that replaces the NSC.
- Strengthen the work of existing institutions and teams with long-term and cross-cutting perspectives, like MOD's DCDC, BEIS, GO-Science (especially the foresight team) and the Government Foresight network, UKRI and links with Universities,
- Incorporate the functions and skills of long-term thinking, foresight and planning into the new FCDO and a re-energised and reformed diplomatic machine.
- Give the 'Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission' a long-term brief - including working out new oversight mechanisms to represent Future Generations.
- Establish effective risk institutions, for example a National Institute for Extreme Risks, an independent Chief Risk Officer (CRO) for HMG and associated unit to support departments and hold ministers to account for departmental risk response plans. (For further ideas on risk management, see Annex VI).
- Drive international institutional innovation – explore bringing the representation of future generations into international organisations.

🗨️ **In this changing world order national resilience is the bedrock of strategic advantage; resilience of society, not just government. And so, we need greater societal participation in our future strategy making to build this national resilience.** 🗨️

(NSxNG COALITION PARTNER)

<sup>26</sup> How to design policies that are fair to future generations, Apolitical, 2020 [apolitical.co/en/solution\\_article/how-to-design-policies-that-are-fair-to-future-generations](https://apolitical.co/en/solution_article/how-to-design-policies-that-are-fair-to-future-generations)

<sup>27</sup> For detailed recommendations on upskilling young people in political literacy and media literacy, see Annex X from Shout Out UK.

# 6. Next Steps

## Continuing the journey

2021 will be a critical year for implementing ideas from the Integrated Review, and other reforms, as we begin the National Strategy journey outlined above. Over this time, Phase II of the NSxNG programme will continue to address the 3 key challenges set out in Section V above. The core NSxNG partner group will continue to spearhead the programme and activity, engaging our wider coalition of 80+ organisations closely.

## Key programme elements

The key **elements of our 2021 programme** will be:

- Guiding groups of citizens from different backgrounds through a **rigorous foresight journey** to build an understanding of different views and surfacing areas of consensus. This will include drivers of change, systems mapping, alternative scenarios, developing a vision and strategic narratives. It will use different forms of engagement suitable for the audience from virtual workshops to SMS, telephone surveys to face-to-face (socially distanced) engagement.
- Engaging a core group of citizens through a full **UK-wide Citizens' Assembly** on the UK's future role in the world – they will set the agenda, engage with the foresight material, and commission 5-10 deep-dive areas of focus.
- Convening a series of **expert seminars** (convening activists, academics, business and next generation think-tankers) and commission polling to provide input into citizens' explorations of these in-depth issues.
- Inspiring **grassroots-level work with youth groups and other less represented groups – including local, diaspora and religious groups**, some of which we are already engaging. This workstream would seek to understand in particular how lived experience and domestic policy impacts on narratives, hopes/fears and views on the UK's role in the world, and to integrate issues of international/global role into local-level conversations (where the majority of public engagement happens). We have the elements of a train-the-trainer structure in place, so that grassroots groups can feed back the results of their discussions into the programme.<sup>28</sup>

## Stakeholder groups

The design of the NSxNG 2021 will also be informed by a series of **NSxNG stakeholder groups** (see below). We will:

### Continue building our 'next generation ambassadors' group

We have begun to assemble a group of members from different backgrounds, finding ways for them to tap into the views of their generation and feed those back to Government – including:

- Taking the diverge/converge workshop format to groups of young people in their networks (in universities, schools, youth groups, and the youth networks in the NSxNG coalition).
- Presenting to the APPG on Future Generations and cross-Government Strategy Directors' group (on invitation).

“The UK can be a beautiful place – at our best we are multicultural, appreciate difference and can live together”

(20-24 YEAR OLD, PARTICIPANT)

**Propose a cross-party 'intergenerational panel'** to include an older, experienced individual and one young person from each political party to inform the process. We aim to build on our Parliamentary launch this autumn to engage cross-party on the NSxNG approach.

**Convene a senior council group to advise and guide NSxNG Phase II** (starting with those who helped us launch the NSxNG coalition: Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, Lord Peter Ricketts, Tom Fletcher, Jane Davidson, Myles Wickstead, Mitch Mitchell, Gillian Stamp).

**Involve interested parties in the civil service (at any seniority) who wish to gain closer insight into public opinion on these issues through the NSxNG process** (i.e. hear in depth what the public have to say).

<sup>28</sup> A number of organisations have offered to host future NSxNG sessions, hackathons, and other forms of engagement at local levels.

## Outcomes

We will continue to focus on the outcomes that we set ourselves at the beginning of the NSxNG journey:

### 1. Understand the future context

To understand the environment and shaping forces of our future context; to develop a level-headed and open-eyed appreciation of external realities and risks; and thereby prepare for and navigate alternative realities and potential disruptions.

**Outcome:** a national strategy that is more focused on being nimble and quick to respond to changing times ahead, instead of consuming energy on narrow interests and sectional differences.

### 2. Develop collective visions and ideas

To collectively dream of a better future for the UK in the world, and harness energy, opportunities and ideas to make that a reality.

**Outcome:** a national strategy that is more visionary, capable of mobilising and inspiring people in all sections of society, and better reflecting people's hopes and fears.

### 3. Develop new ways of working

To help build the institutional capability and anticipatory governance structures within the government to flex and adapt, as well as building the futures literacy of the national strategy community (broadly defined).

**Outcome:** a national strategy apparatus in government able to convene, co-create and deliver a participatory, resilient and agile National Strategy for the Next Generations.

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- the APPG for Future Generations
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- Cat Tully, Managing Director

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**#NSxNG**

# A National Strategy for the Next Generations

**ANNEXES**





# Annexes

<b>Annex I:</b>	Pilot methodology
<b>Annex II:</b>	The world in 2045
<b>Annex III:</b>	Public views on the UK's historical role
<b>Annex IV:</b>	Democratic Society Citizens' Assembly test report
<b>Annex V:</b>	Emotions and Foreign Policy, Dr Claire Yorke
<b>Annex VI:</b>	Recommendations on extreme risk management - from researchers at the University of Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute and University of Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Existential Risk
<b>Annex VII:</b>	KCL Centre for Grand Strategy seminar series summary
<b>Annex VIII:</b>	Submission - Restless Development
<b>Annex IX:</b>	Submission - APPG for Future Generations
<b>Annex X:</b>	Submission - Shout Out UK
<b>Annex XI:</b>	Anticipatory Democracy and National Strategy: Clem Bezold, Institute for Alternative Futures
<b>Annex XII:</b>	Introducing a National Strategy for the Next Generations
<b>Annex XIII:</b>	Interim report to HMG on NSxNG pilot programme, Sept 2020

# Annex I

## Pilot Methodology

The NSxNG approach has three interdependent features integrated into the strategy-formation process: strategic foresight, applied history and public participation. We have brought to bear a set of specific tools to help inform collective thinking about the UK's future. In particular, SOIF and partners' expertise in participative foresight and public deliberation informed the design of the journey for participants to explore our future in different ways (survey, workshops, and Citizens' Assembly tester session).

### Our methodological approach

**A structured engagement with participants across multiple deliberative formats, asking them to consider the future using strategic foresight and exploring their views of the past.**

We focused on a process that delivered:

**Public deliberation** – spaces for deep exchange and exploration of differences of views such as workshops and Citizens' Assembly tester session. While much more compressed than a full Citizens' Assembly, this session gave us the opportunity to explore not just headline views but what lies behind them; to engage with citizens in a two-way exchange; and to understand nuances. This kind of engagement is particularly fruitful when exploring issues that are personal or sensitive.

“It was heartening to see the future is in creative, energetic and safe hands.”

(WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT, 20-29 YEAR OLD)

A Citizens' Assembly format also helps:

- surface the language/vocabulary, imagery and framing that people use
- deepen public understanding of complex topics (via 'inputs' - written, in-person talks, Q&A)
- build accountability

**Participative foresight.** Using foresight to look out to an uncertain long-term future in a structured way allows people to:

1. break out of linear assumptions about the future (that it will resemble the present/that trends will continue) and imagine contrasting alternative scenarios
2. build shared visions of desirable, but achievable, futures
3. identify the critical path between the present and the desired future
4. identify specific implications for policy/decision-making today, including operational implications (e.g. use of specific capabilities/tools and levers).

**Historical insight** was threaded through all our activities – the survey and Citizens' Assembly included specific questions around perceptions of the UK's historical role and legacy, to draw out the impact of historical awareness and divergent narratives on views of the present/future.

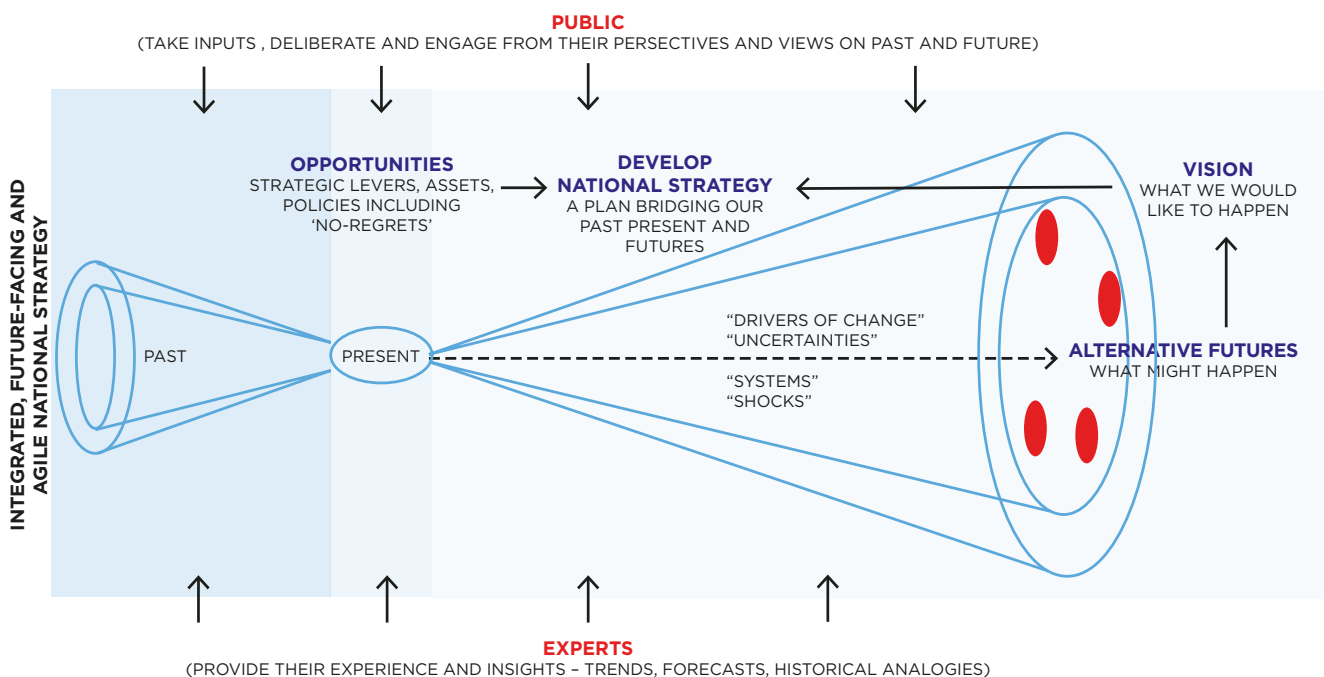


Figure 5. Building a new national narrative and supporting governance apparatus.

## Our key activities (Jul – Sep 2020)

**A. Seminar series on ‘Grand Strategy’ (Jul-Aug 2020):** Our academic partners at the KCL Centre for Grand Strategy and Engelsberg Programme for Applied History, Grand Strategy and Geopolitics convened a four-part seminar series over the summer. The seminars explored, in turn; the value of applied history; the history and future of defining ‘Grand Strategy’ and National Strategy; the relationship between national identity and national strategy; and how historical insight and foresight can interact to shape national strategies. Attendance was largely a mix of policy-maker, think-tank and academic audiences (see Annex VII summarising findings).

**B. In-depth survey (Aug 2020):** Our survey, using foresight techniques, asked people for their views on both the UK’s historical role in the world and its future. We focused our questions on thematic areas of change in the external environment based on a scan of the key literature on global trends to 2050. We asked questions about relative importance of issues and priorities (on which the quantitative analysis/graphics in this report are based), but largely asked for free-form answers on issues such as their vision for the UK’s role in the world in 2045; what they would like (with the benefit of hindsight) to look back from 2045 to tell a young person about the UK’s strategy from 2020 onward; and what being a ‘force for good’ means. Of our 100 respondents, the majority were aged between 18-24 (43%) and 25-34 (30.4%). Segmenting our survey by age allowed us to identify differences in focus: for example, younger groups also focused on specific technologies more than older groups, mentioning biotechnology and artificial intelligence, and were more likely to focus on social mobility and migration. Dr. Iulia Cioroianu, computational social scientist and Prize Fellow at the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Bath, kindly helped us analyse the data.

**C. Youth outreach foresight workshops (Sep 2020):** SOIF jointly designed and delivered a series of three participative workshops, structured using foresight tools, with Agora (the youth foreign policy think-tank). Attendance was overwhelmingly young (90% of attendees were under 35). Due to time and resource pressures in delivery, our outreach reached largely ‘self-selecting’ groups – i.e. those with a pre-existing interest in issues of UK foreign policy and national strategy (university students, Masters’ students, young professionals from public/private sectors, young Europeans based in the UK), but also school pupils (16+).

These workshops took participants through a series of guided exercises; raw outputs from the ‘ideation’ phase are captured on Agora’s Policy Kitchen platform (a policy crowdsourcing tool), and can be viewed at [policykitchen.com/group/41/stream](https://policykitchen.com/group/41/stream).

The structure was:

1. ‘Diverge’ workshops (x2): explored the external environment to 2045. Workshop groups were given some prepared analysis of key themes shaping the world to 2050 (based on major future trends scans conducted by the US National Intelligence Council<sup>29</sup>, DCDC at the UK MOD<sup>30</sup>, and ESPAS<sup>31</sup>); identified the key trends/drivers of change ahead; pinpointed which issues might present threats/opportunities to the UK; asked about potential outcomes, implications for the UK, and the UK response.
2. ‘Converge’ workshop: focused on the UK’s response to the major trends, opportunities and threats identified (by the same participant groups) in the Diverge workshops. SOIF presented on the ‘how’ of national strategy delivery (toolkit – diplomatic, defence, intelligence, soft power etc). Participants jointly designed visions for the UK’s role in the world, articulated the principles that might underpin that role, and what the UK should do more of / less (including backcasting from 2045 outcomes to 2020 and 2040 priorities – capabilities, tools, relationships, resourcing etc).

We were careful to **reduce jargon** and explain the language used in foresight and government (e.g. ‘drivers’, ‘scenarios’, ‘tools/levers/capabilities’). **Digital tools** were used to increase interaction with the themes at/between the workshop events (participants edited, commented on, and otherwise engaged with their group’s and other groups’ ideas on the Policy Kitchen site).

**D. Citizens’ Assembly tester session (Sep 2020):** DemSoc selected 40 participants from a wider sample, ensuring representation that mirrored the population as a whole as much as possible across key indicators (educational level, place of residence/birth, knowledge of national security issues). We deliberately selected a higher proportion of younger participants, to represent the ‘next generation’ voices this programme focuses on. Due to the lack of funding at this stage and time pressures, the group was, however, not representative of the UK population as a whole. London-based, university educated people with some prior knowledge of foreign policy/national strategy were overrepresented. We did not follow the norm in Citizens’ Assembly processes to compensate

<sup>29</sup> *Global Trends. Paradox of Progress*. Office of the Director of National Intelligence, United States. Accessed 15 October 2020. <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/global-trends-home>

<sup>30</sup> *Global Strategic Trends. Sixth Edition*. Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom. 2019. [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/771309/Global\\_Strategic\\_Trends\\_-\\_The\\_Future\\_Starts\\_Today.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/771309/Global_Strategic_Trends_-_The_Future_Starts_Today.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> *Global Trends to 2030. Challenges and Choices for Europe*. European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS), 2019. [https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/ESPAS\\_Report.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/ESPAS_Report.pdf)



participants financially for their time. The result was that we heard a broad convergence of outlook and had less disagreement than would be normally expected. Due to time constraints (a single, 'tester' session over 3.5 hours as opposed to multiple sessions over 8 weekends, as in a full process) there was also a tendency to end up talking in more general terms. A full Citizens' Assembly would allow much more discussion of hard choices, compromises and bring together more polarized views to allow them to engage in dialogue with each other.

Despite these caveats, the session provided excellent insights into the kind of tangible and useful outputs and insights that a virtual CA could provide on National Strategy conversations even under constrained conditions. There were rich exchanges generating lots of practical ideas and policy/political insights, demonstrating different ways of exploring complex foreign policy and future issues to build consensus and respect differences. It also provided very helpful lessons on how to shape the design and facilitation of a much longer event series, and how such processes can helpfully enrich a wider public engagement programme.

**🗨️ | wholeheartedly stand by the participatory approach to political discussions ... venturing into the foreign policy space, which is notably male dominated and often old fashioned, is refreshing for the next generation of 'leaders'. 🗨️**

**(WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT, 20-29 YEAR OLD)**

In a full Citizens' Assembly process on the UK's future role, DemSoc propose (at Annex X) bringing together about 100 randomly selected citizens, meeting over about eight weekends, ideally, though not necessarily, in person; with three sessions devoted to citizens' learning and exploration of the future, and the rest to deliberation and to the creation of a set of recommendations on the UK's future strategy.

A note on representation/inclusion. We recognise that our participants were not representative of the UK as a whole. Whilst we did strive for good gender balance, we did not manage to secure participation by lower socioeconomic groups, or those with lower levels of completed educational qualification, and there was also a London bias to our participation. However, importantly given our focus, we did secure a very large representation of under-35 voices. We will learn the lessons and adjust the process (with appropriate funding in place) for our 2021 programme. The Citizens' Assembly format, in particular, has much more to offer in bringing in less-heard voices. As set out at Annex IV, DemSoc would typically work through truly random or near-random selection, and an incentive payment to ensure that turnout rates were high.

## Methodological lessons learned

Having run this phase of the programme as a pilot, it is important that we learn the lessons from what worked well/could be improved. Those lessons include:

- Participants responded well to the strategic foresight journey – with the different stages of alternative scenario exploration, creativity, analysis and historical trends, narratives and visioning. Feedback suggested appetite for more of this kind of structured interaction that enables a constructive conversation about differences of view – SOIF/ partners could create material/packs to spin-off these conversations into more localised spaces (communities, schools, organisations). One form of engagement that appears to be regularly overlooked in democratic literature is collecting the outputs of locally-organised discussions using packs or kits. These deliberations are obviously not representative, but offer a different form of legitimacy based on their potential to scale. There are relatively few examples of these being used to inform policy and one legacy of NSxNG could be to prototype this as a new method for distributed consultation.
- Deliberation spaces that enable intergenerational exchange provide interesting insights, but we also need to provide, in the process, spaces for young people to exchange ideas among themselves (level of comfort/inhibition).
- As expected, it remains a real challenge to ensure more diverse voices, particularly with a stronger mix of socio-economic/educational background/regional representation. How we will address this: see Annex IV from the Democratic Society.
- Even more types of engagement will be needed – from polling to longer-deliberations and experiential design that brings issues to life in ways for different people to engage with. The pilot was very helpful in clarifying how to address the key design challenge around weaving together a single journey where different types of engagement build on each other.
- We heard real appetite from citizens to hear directly from civil servants and politicians, to help shed light on how issues play out in 'real world' decision-making.
- Capability building will need to be an even greater aspect of the programme than we expected – and will be a very important output in itself. Enabling participants to be able and feel confident to contribute is a critical long-term outcome in itself. Building young people's civic skills and education is the motivating factor of some of the key partners' involvement in this project.
- The importance of supporting network- and relationship-building between groups to build a community of individuals/organisations interested to continue the conversation, and ultimately so that the coalition has a self-sustaining life of its own – and the NSxNG approach outlives the timeframe of the programme itself.

# Annex II

## The World in 2045

In this annex, we present findings on what participants across all our pilot activities cited as the key drivers of change, trends and uncertainties, threats and opportunities over the period 2020-45. Participants also gave their views on the implications or possible responses by the UK – presented below.

### Key threats to the UK (2020-2045)

#### 1. Climate change or environmental systems collapse and their impacts

There was concern about the impacts of climate change on the UK. This included climate migration and refugee crises, social destabilisation, humanitarian crises, economic impacts, increased conflict risks at intra- and even inter-state level driven by resource scarcity, and pressure on health sectors including the NHS).

**Implications or UK response:** workshop participants wanted to see a holistic approach to integrated challenges such as environmental collapse, inequality and access to social services, which would require future-focused investments, dialogue and assistance to developing countries. They felt the UK should take a leading role in ensuring fair international burden-sharing in the response to climate change (“accountability & responsibility for own (climate) actions”).

#### 2. Global supply of food and vital resources

A striking number of younger survey respondents were concerned about supply chains, food supplies, and self-sufficiency in the event of major disruptions. A number called for increased focus on UK-based manufacturing industries to ensure security of supply. Workshop and Citizens’ Assembly session participants raised “how to avoid a scramble for resources”, “over-reliance on imported food”, the risks of “authoritarian elites leveraging resources for political gain”, growth in resource-linked corruption, “fear being at the mercy of the parts of the world that resources come from; especially if talking about having certain values we prioritise as a country”. Workshop participants imagined a world where sustainable small-scale farming became the norm, where we “produce and consume more locally,” and there was a renewed value placed on ‘the land’.

**Implications or UK response:** Workshop and Citizens’ Assembly session participants wanted policymakers and citizens to develop forward-planning in these areas:

- How can the UK shore up its supplies of food, energy and other vital resources, and help others protect theirs? How could we “develop policies on energy focused on future generations (e.g. building up energy capacity today)”?

### THREATS



### OPPORTUNITIES

**Figure 6.** Word cloud depicting the most frequent terms in survey respondents’ answers to questions about future opportunities vs. future challenges. Red words are words associated with threats; Blue words are associated with opportunities for the UK out to 2045.

- How can the UK help build a multilateral architecture to agree a fair division of access to vital resources – preventing conflict, and helping disadvantaged states cater for their needs? Participants suggested lobbying to expand the mandates of existing institutions, such as the WTO, or creation of new (regional) institutions mandated to ensure supply of vital resources across all countries.
- How might issues around food supply reshape our relationship to our land, and to what we value about where we live?

#### 3. Technological threats.

Numerous threats were identified in this area, including:

- Social dislocation and economic stagnation caused by changes to the future of work - with 40% of people potentially displaced by the Fourth Industrial Revolution by 2045.
- The risk that tech intensifies inequality.
- Techno-utopianism and inadequate regulation: “cautious of the fetishisation of tech as a silver bullet – an overreliance on tech could make us consume ourselves into oblivion.”
- Alternative information sources/spread of misinformation causes further social/political polarisation (a growing problem as people are increasingly social media natives).
- New forms of conflict: hybrid wars, data insecurity, cyber security, quantum computing (“there could well be a

scenario where one or two states (or companies) have the ability to look at the world's data"). Increasingly 'tech-heavy' forms of conflict will also blur moral boundaries and judgements. Conventional warfare is better understood by the public; it's easier to build the narrative and communicate around it.

**Implications or UK response:** young people in our workshops wanted to see "much higher degrees of data regulation and the development of international information-sharing infrastructure"; and new global norms developed on the ethics of AI/tech in warfare. They also wanted to see more investment in civic education and critical thinking education to enable young people to critically engage with what they read online and participate more in politics; help address the democratic deficit; and increase demands for social justice.

#### 4. Threats related to the UK's internal situation.

Three key threats here were repeatedly raised across our events:

- the impact on our international reputation and relationships of our domestic policies
- State of the Union concerns
- hypocrisy on our values – the UK could only project itself as an international leader on values (human rights, democracy, rule of law) if it followed those values at home.

See detail on all these under Policy Implications (Main report, Section 3).

#### 5. Identity changes, including the rise of transnational and self-selecting identities

Many aspects of changes to identity concerned our participants:

- the loss of a unitary national identity ("in the UK and abroad, there will be less of a national identity to rally around")
- the rise of transnational identities (an opportunity but also a threat): "we are in such a global generation"
- the probable continued rise of identity politics (echo chamber ideologies, calcification of identities/positions framed as mutually exclusive, erosion of trust in news sources and all sources of authority).

Participants saw all these changes as risking destabilisation and the further resurgence of the new wave of authoritarian regimes.

**🗨️ We looked past the nation state and realised diplomacy is something you can do with cities, institutions, people and organisations. 🗨️**

(18-24 YEAR OLD, NSXNG SURVEY)

## Key opportunities for the UK (2020-2045)

### 1. A generational values shift that may support a different definition of national purpose and wellbeing

Key quotes from participants: "moving beyond GDP as a key measure of national success. A redefined concept of wealth, living standards and growth... towards the environment". "The Greta Thunberg generation will take up positions in businesses, and be more willing to work on these issues than former generations". A workshop group asked: "Do we have to be wealthier than our parents?" and Citizens' Assembly session participants commented: "A good life is not necessarily the same as a sustainable life... How can we create an equitable economy that serves human beings first, rather than what feels like the other way round?"

### 2. The growing role of cities

One particular opportunity for the UK could be if – as some in our workshops anticipated – cities become a more important, or even the primary, political organising unit. Workshop participants suggested we needed to rethink citizenship and participation in political processes on a sub-state level. What would it mean for migration to transcend traditional state boundaries (with 'city passports' attracting investment but excluding the disadvantaged, for example) or for cities to cultivate their USP based not just on economic opportunities but lifestyle and values?

While the UK may no longer be in the G7 by 2050, London is likely to remain one of the leading world cities. What can we do to maintain London's reputation as a diverse, multicultural, dynamic centre, and capitalise on London (and other UK cities) to help the UK retain its global stature?

### 3. The growing importance of relational influence

Participants were optimistic about the UK's ability to influence via a network of allies/partners, though many were concerned at the current erosion of our relationships and reputation. They saw opportunities for the UK to use its relational influence to continue to show leadership – including:

- Strengthening international mechanisms/advocate for international leadership on shared/new challenges – especially new governance mechanisms/regulatory frameworks for new threats/issues such as internet/data management, the militarisation of space and AI/robotics in conflict.
- Positioning itself as a leader on internationalism, collaboration and connectedness; an alternative to isolationism and identity politics.
- Widening circles of allies: "it would be helpful for the UK to have more and broader alliances which cross regional and cultural blocs" (survey respondent); "not seeing other countries as 'circles' or predefined groups but ... picking off allies and partners".

# Annex III

## Public views on the UK's historical role

Questions of the impact of history (and perceptions of the UK's history) were woven throughout our participative activities. Our survey, workshops and Citizens' Assembly tester all tested how people's perspectives on the UK's past informed their hopes/fears/expectations of our future – and vice versa.

A selection of quotations are presented here, grouped by theme:

### 🗨️ The history is present in Whitehall: it's subconscious and underpins the assumptions that frame policy. What Nina Silove would call 'Grand Behaviour' 🗨️

(NSXNG YOUNG HISTORIANS' SEMINAR)

#### New Narrative

- How can we find “a different way of telling a story of our past” (Citizens' Assembly session participant)?

#### Imperial Legacies

- “What really happened in our past - are we sugarcoating it or can we have an open discussion to say, these are the dark parts of our country” (under-25, Citizens' Assembly tester session)
- “The Dutch are a positive example of how a former imperial superpower can transition to lower-mid level force for good in the world with dignity. Russia is an example of what happens if you do not manage that transition well.” (respondent, age 25-34).
- “The UK learned in the latter half of the 20th century that free peoples would not accept being ruled from Westminster. The right to self-determination was worth almost any cost, and cooperation was paramount. Looking forward, we should remember the lesson that cooperation among nations, on equal terms, is the best way of achieving our goals.”
- “With the loss of empire and standing, the UK needs to look at how other nations that have had their standing destroyed and rebuilt – Germany and Japan are good examples, i.e. how did they rebuild their economies and standing after WW2? The UK needs to reflect on its diminished position and decide on how it wants to rebuild itself, with a stronger economy and a realistic position in today's and tomorrow's regional and global context.”

#### Lessons from History

- “The lesson that you should learn the lessons from history. Anglo-Scotland should take a leaf out of Germany's book, and face its history. It is only in this way that it will be able to have an easy, constructive and honest relationship with the family of nations.”
- “I hope [the right historical analogy for the UK is] not the fall of Rome - a powerful capital rendered helpless after centuries of regional underdevelopment leaves the rest of the collective weak and unable to support the centre from external influences.”
- “WW2, the idea that we require strong relationships and coalitions all the time, whether in peace or conflict. We need this in order to maintain our influence on the world stage.” ... “The lesson is that sometimes we must be willing to fight for peace, and we must understand when the correct time to do so is” ...
- “I believe the edge gained through the allied code breaking at Bletchley Park under Alan Turing was significant in changing the way war is conducted. I believe the UK should be looking to anticipate the next developments in technology rather than simply looking to keep pace with current trends. Although difficult to predict, I foresee Artificial Intelligence radically changing the way in which strategic decisions will be made.”
- “Being at the forefront of the industrial revolution allowed the UK to shape the international order as it expanded globally. The nation at the forefront of the current technological revolution will have the ability to shape the nature of the order as it expands, not physically, but into cyberspace. Which will be equally important over the coming centuries.”
- “The early 1960s planning and haggling over Britain's place in the world, particularly the Future Policy Study 1960-70. The discussions, evaluation and compromise that took place is an excellent example of a rigorous assessment of how to moderately plan for the future.”



# Annex IV

## Democratic Society Citizens' Assembly test report



democratic  
society

# **A National Strategy for the Next Generations**

## **A report on the Citizens' Assembly Test**

## About the test event

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The **purpose** of this event was to test the format for a citizens' assembly on a national strategy.

The **inputs** included contributions from invited speakers and the [findings from recent engagement workshops](#) facilitated by Policy Kitchen, which informed the discussion topics for session #8. The full agenda can be seen in the next section.

## Recruitment

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44 participants were selected from an open recruitment call. We aimed for a balanced group from across the UK, with a slight skew towards younger generations. Although recruitment time was short and we used very informal networked recruitment, we were able to recruit a full panel of 44, although young people were overrepresented in the final group, we had a spread from across the UK, all age ranges and ethnic backgrounds. There was a skew towards those with a higher-than-average level of education, largely due to the nature of the recruitment, which was networked based rather than truly random.

## Democratic Society reflections on the process

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The recruitment and planning stage for this event was very short, and its nature as a test event meant that we did not include some features that a full citizen assembly programme would include as a matter of course, such as:

- Truly random or near-random selection
- An incentive payment to ensure that turnout rates were high
- A long information stage, followed by several separate deliberation sessions
- Formal creation of recommendations.

However, the discussions gave us a good sense of what was possible. Something as broad as “future strategy” for a whole country sounds like an impossibly large topic, but participants rapidly centred themselves around the things that they would like the UK to be known for, and which policies and practices they saw as positive or negative for the UK's ability to exercise hard and soft power.

Given the time available, these conclusions were naturally “top of head”, and did not draw on extensive evidence sessions. However, they were a clear pointer to the starting point for a citizen assembly process around a new national strategy.

We would suggest a core process that is a relatively standard citizen assembly, made up of about 100 randomly selected citizens, meeting over about eight weekends, ideally in person (if coronavirus conditions permit). About three of those sessions should be devoted to learning, and the rest to deliberation and to the creation of a set of recommendations on the UK’s future strategy.

A clear question raised by the participants in our test event is how the abstract and often complex issues of international relations can be handled in a citizen assembly format, which by definition includes the full range of citizens, including those who might struggle with foreign affairs and international relations policy thinking.

In our view, the complexity risk is relatively easy to manage.

The event should not be framed directly as about the UK’s future strategy. Instead, a framing such as “how the UK should act in the world”, or something similar, would emphasise a combination of concrete action and values that would allow citizens to make recommendations without needing more information and background than can be reasonably provided for in the time allowed.

Before and alongside the citizen assembly process, we would suggest a series of enriching activities, designed to demonstrate the value of the assembly process, but also to deepen its discussions.

There are three enriching activities that we would suggest.

The first is an idea/suggestion gathering phase online, to create an understanding of what citizens’ first ideas on the topic might be. This also gathers a group of online participants who can then follow and communicate about the process.

The second is an active outreach campaign during the early phase of the citizen assembly meetings, using the model of the French *Conventions Citoyennes sur le Climat* to gather voices from civil society and other organisations to contribute to the discussion in the room and give the sense of a broad national conversation.



The third, related to that, is to host one or more deliberative events outside the UK, to get the views of citizens in other countries as to the role that they would like the UK to play.

The structure of the citizen assembly and related processes should be one that connects into and draws from other related engagement activities, for example those around the Scottish Citizens’ Assembly on the Climate and numerous local deliberative activities.

There should also be provision for continuing the work into 2022 and beyond through a structured engagement approach that brings new participants into deliberation while also allowing those who have already been involved to stay engaged and to act as ambassadors for the process.

Anthony Zacharzewski  
 October 2020

## Running order

The table below presents the planned running order. In the event, we had a relatively large no-show rate so not all the break out groups ran.

	Time	Session	Details	Speakers
1	15:00	Introduction	Purpose of the day Agenda Conversation guidelines	Kelly McBride & Anthony Zacharzewski (Demsoc)
2	15:10	Overview: National Strategy Programme	Setting the scene Necessity of futures approach Why 2045 is important	Cat Tully (SOIF)

3	15:15	Learning input: What is a National Strategy?	Speaker 1: Ashlee Godwin	Ashlee Godwin
4	15:25 (20m)	Discussion	Group introductions <i>Prompt questions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you feel about the UK's place in the world right now?</li> <li>• What personal experiences have you had that have shaped how you think about the UK in the world? Now or in the past. (eg conversations, moments, particular places)</li> </ul> <i>Questions for speaker Q&amp;A (pink post-its)</i>	<i>Group Facilitators</i>
5	15:45	Learning input: What is the UK's place in the world in a generations time?	Speaker 2: Pupul Bisht (NGFP Winner), SOIF team member (3-4 min)  Speaker 3: Pippa Goodman (youth ambassador, programme) (3-4 min)	Pupul Bisht & Pippa Goodman
6	15:55 (20m)	Discussion	<i>Prompt questions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where do you see opportunities for the UK?</li> <li>• What hard choices might we need to make?</li> </ul> <i>Questions for speaker Q&amp;A (pink post-its)</i>	<i>Group Facilitator</i>
7	16:15	Q&A with speakers	Each group to be invited in turn to ask a question by the Lead Facilitator.	Lead All speakers
	16:30	BREAK		
8	16:40 (30m)	Deliberation: What are the key elements of a national vision and narrative in 2045 in relation to...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Technology and Resources (Annie)</li> <li>2. Climate change (Ola)</li> <li>3. Social cohesion, equality and justice (Alexa)</li> <li>4. Security and conflict (Jana)</li> <li>5. Values and interests in global politics (Alex)</li> </ol>	<i>Group Facilitators</i>  Script

			<p><i>Discussion prompts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key elements, hopes and fears</li> </ul>	
9	17:10	Plenary: Report back from tables		Participants
	17:20	BREAK		
10	17:30 (30m)	Discussion: Key insights and messages	<p><i>What are your key insights and messages around what we need to take into account in the design and facilitation of a future assembly process on a national strategy?</i> These could be, for example, principles, choices, framing and language, opportunities, learning, engagement.</p>	Script
11	18:00	Plenary: Report back from tables		Participants
12	18:20	Final outcome and close		Cat Tully & Anthony Zacharzewski
	18:30	END		

## Discussion highlights: How do you feel about the UK right now?

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- Uncertainty about what role the UK wants to play in the world.
- Doesn't seem to be a cohesive narrative post-Brexit or a plan as to what will happen to foreigners.
- The UK expects to be seen as a great power & a sensible country, with a reputation for having a model democracy & legal system. However, this has been undermined in recent years.
- It's got amazing schools, a lot of culture, people from across the world – a great place to be.
- It's very polarized at the moment.
- Areas where we are a leading power, but on hard influence, we overestimate what we can do.
- Lacking forward momentum, stagnating.
- I don't know where we can add value in bringing about the future I would like to see.

## Discussion highlights: What personal experiences have you had that have shaped how you think about the UK in the world?

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- Brexit and the COVID crisis.
- Living in other countries has shaped my experience and perspective on the UK and how I see it. Being in Asia, there's a feeling of newness and energy in developing markets.
- Anything that America does, we follow. We don't have a distinct UK perspective or policy, besides the NHS - and even that's been overdone and overused.
- Coming to the UK from the outside, you see that the transition of UK of a great power to a medium power has been going on for a long time.
- It feels like we're in between two worlds, one that's more green / democratic / prosperous, and the one we're in.
- The UK is more regarded as economic power than a geopolitical one.

## Discussion highlights: Where do you see opportunities for the UK?

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- A new narrative for 'what is British': when a young person in 2045 meets a British person, what are the stereotypes going to be?
- Being leaders in tech and innovation.
- Opportunity for UK to promote values in collaboration and in being a role model.
- Starting with British values - explore opportunities that different generations can get behind, that we all believe in and care about. E.g. Freedom of expression / speech, democracy, education
- Investing in democratic processes in different countries, from the grassroots up.
- Recognition of different opinions within the UK.
- Fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange with other countries, promoting our values of openness & acceptance.
- Positioning UK as an actor in international bodies.
- Great universities - but really expensive and student debts. Great democratic system – but a monarchy.
- London - strong sense of identity though an imbalancing impact on other cities.
- A forward-looking emissions reduction perspective with the benefits highlighted.
- The only problem that is genuinely a global problem is climate change. There is a specific opportunity for the UK to take a tech lead, provide solutions for storage of green electricity and be a source for international resolution for the green problem.
- Being more compassionate and caring and looking after people, especially with a generation of people that will live longer.
- Being more diverse in terms of thought, taking the principle of Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park and expanding it nationally.

## Discussion highlights: What hard choices might we need to make?

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- Risk of national fragmentation.
  - A lot of trade-offs between being a convener or a collaborator, and between economics of trade and prioritising human rights.
  - Sovereignty versus leadership through cooperation.
  - Climate change and biodiversity.
  - Devolution and the role of London.
  - Moving past the politics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

- Taxing wealth and managing tax across borders.
- Investment decisions on science and research.

## Discussion highlights: Participant reflections on the process

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- These events are a proven model. We should create accessible and participatory processes as diverse as possible by age, gender, region etc.
- Citizen voices can be used to understand and make recommendations on the trade-offs.
- Expert information comes from all sorts of expertise and citizens recognize that.
- You don't want to create a focus group but allow for deeper deliberation.
- Citizen participation will be better accepted than a policy directive from on high.
- Experts have been trained to understand policy choices, citizens will need training too.
- Citizen voices can expand the envelope of possible policy decisions, and make recommendations on difficult parts of the process.
- Expert evidence will need to be brought in early.
- It will be essential to create the widest possible participation, and ensure participants are diverse.
- The eligibility of non-UK citizens will need to be considered – we should be as inclusive as possible.
- We should have parts of the process involving young people.
- Vocabulary such as “Global South” is offputting, it will need thought in advance.
- How do you handle issues where you can't morally start from a neutral position – such as climate change?
- Very rare for citizens assemblies to focus on something an individual can actually change. The good thing about CAs is they bring back agency and act as an antidote to apathy. But what happens to the outcome?
- It's no good involving citizens if we don't have a good understanding of the aim, and the means we have to achieve it.
- Need to understand how a citizen participation process can engage with sensitive material, particularly about Britain's future options and international rivals.
- Three hours all at once is a lot. Preparatory material would help.
- Make use of imagery rather than inaccessible technical language, to ensure that it is memorable and accessible to young people.

- Visioning or meditation on the UK's role in the world in 2045 would help, because it's such a difficult zone of thinking to get into.
- The question has to be more specific than "What do you want the UK's role in the world to be?". I just know my community, not the outer bounds.

# Annex V

## Emotions and Foreign Policy, Dr Claire Yorke.<sup>32</sup>

In recent years, Britain has gone through a series of dramatic changes, most notably the decision to leave the European Union, and the global pandemic. These events have revealed disparate experiences of what it means to be British and how people think and feel about the country and its place in international affairs. In looking to the future and building back better, **ideas of foreign policy and national strategy have to consider not only what type of country Britain wants to be, but how it wants people to feel about its evolving role in the world.** Although often overlooked, emotions are central to effective foreign policy and national security and deserve far greater attention in any future vision.

### Why emotions matter

Emotions put the human experience front and centre. How people feel within society has implications for how they experience ideas of security, community, stability and prosperity. **Although often dismissed as irrational and unquantifiable, emotions offer invaluable sources of data and information.** For political leaders and policy-makers emotions enable them to connect with their audiences, and to move people to support policies or change their behaviours for the collective good. Compassion, for example, has been a powerful feature of politics during the pandemic to mobilise a sense of community and boost morale. Equally, a misalignment between rhetoric and action can contribute to a decrease in public trust in government institutions, harming efforts to foster collective action.

Emotions are therefore integral to strategy. Strategies offer a vision of how a country wants to be, and implicit within that are signals about the identity of a country and how governments want people to feel about it. **A nation's strategy articulates what people should fear, and what unites them, and seeks to cultivate support.** Emotions give these visions power and resonance and connect people in communities around certain ideas. Ideas of national pride and hope for a different role in the world, for example, have been key to arguments about Britain's decision to leave the European Union. **As this report details, there are new visions of British leadership, such as in championing climate change action, or leading in innovation, that offer new avenues to inspire people to feel proud to be British.** Equally, there is evidence of sources of shame or humiliation that foster grievances or anger within society. Looking externally, emotions can be used to connect with

other countries as part of foreign policy initiatives, and to build shared visions around common issues.

### Emotional Resilience

How people feel about their country and its choices inform not only public perceptions and support but also contribute to the ability of people to respond to, and recover from, threats. Work on resilience typically focuses on structural and systemic vulnerabilities, such as in critical national infrastructure, or supply chains. Yet at times of crisis, there is often an accompanying emotional toll and trauma. This has been noticeable at a societal level in the response to COVID-19. **To withstand future threats and challenges, as well as to help society build back better, emotional resilience is required at the collective level. This involves emphasis on the importance of fostering public trust, offering hope, and cultivating cohesion and compassion in order for society to adapt and rebuild.** If built into preparedness planning, emotions can prepare people to accept the certainty of risks, whilst equipping them to respond proportionately and collectively.

### The Role of Empathy

Engaging with emotions in this space involves the use of empathy to help understand and interpret people's different lived experiences. This approach is about understanding not only what people say, but where they attribute meaning, and how emotions such as anger, pride, shame, fear and hope are expressed. Strategic empathy involves understanding the perspectives of other people or other countries: their context, experiences, needs, interests, perceptions. Empathy has multiple applications, but in this context two stand out: Firstly, **empathy can help policy-makers to understand how the domestic population thinks and feels about Britain's foreign policy and the stories they tell about Britain's role in the world. It can reveal how people connect different meanings to identities, and the emotional power and resonance these ideas and meanings have and how and why they shift.** It can identify where stories might be at odds with the intended official discourse<sup>33</sup>.

Secondly, strategic empathy can help policy-makers to understand how other countries view Britain, and their experiences of its foreign policy both historically and in response to current events and policy developments. **There can be a disconnect between how Britain views itself and projects**

<sup>32</sup> Dr Claire Yorke is an author, researcher and policy advisor who works on empathy and emotions in international relations, politics and leadership. She obtained her PhD from the Department of War Studies, King's College London, and recently completed a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship at Yale University.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Colley (2017), 'Is Britain a force for good? Investigating British citizens' narrative understanding of war', *Defence Studies*, 17:1, 1-22, DOI: 10.1080/14702436.2016.1256209



**its image, and how it is perceived and experienced by others. Empathy can help bridge this divide and inform a richer, more nuanced, and sensitive approach to foreign policy that speaks more directly to foreign actors.** This process, however, is not easy. It involves a conscious practice of self-reflection, which forces us to confront alternative lived experiences that may contradict our vision of the world and our assumptions about how it works. This is visible in the much-needed recent discussions about the blind-spots of British history, including Britain's imperial policies, and the oppression, marginalisation, and violence that accompanied it.

### Measuring and Interpreting Emotions

Incorporating emotions into policy design and implementation means embracing the complexity, messiness, subjectivity and nuance of emotions. As part of this, attunement to public moods and atmospheres can yield insights into what ideas and messages resonate within society, yet they are intrinsically difficult to measure with certainty.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, some efforts to capture this are already in place. YouGov data,<sup>35</sup> for example, records weekly changes in the UK's public mood and emotional shifts that can give an indication of how emotions are shifting within society and how these might correlate to policy initiatives or events.

Despite a current emphasis on quantitative metrics in governance, capturing this data can also be achieved through a greater use of qualitative methodologies that use discourse analysis or semiotics to interpret dominant narratives and signals within society. It involves **speaking with people about their perceptions and how they feel, understanding the narratives people use, and what gives them meaning and significance. This can be done by expanding forums and opportunities for national dialogue and participation within politics.** This will help to empower people, and provide valuable sources of information for governments and officials about the impact of policies, which can in turn contribute to more citizen-centric approaches.

### Conclusion

Incorporating a greater understanding of the role emotions play within society and the importance of emotional well-being at the personal, collective, and national level will contribute to greater resilience and help the country better to withstand these future challenges. A considered foreign policy should therefore involve both a reasoned judgement of interests and objectives, with a balanced and judicious analysis of the emotional dynamics of policy. Moreover, **by embracing the potential of emotions, it offers opportunities to rebuild public and societal trust, and work with the public to foster national pride and construct renewed identities that recognise the changes the country has experienced and create a shared vision of what type of country Britain wants to be in the world.**

<sup>34</sup> See, for example: Erik Ringmar (2018), 'What are public moods?', *European Journal of Social Theory* 21, no. 4, 453-469. And Claire Yorke (2020), 'Reading the Mood: Atmospheric and Counterterrorism,' *The RUSI Journal* 165, no. 1: 64-73

<sup>35</sup> See Britain's mood measured weekly. You Gov [yougov.co.uk/topics/science/trackers/britains-mood-measured-weekly](https://yougov.co.uk/topics/science/trackers/britains-mood-measured-weekly).

# Annex VI

## Recommendations on extreme risk management

These recommendations come from researchers at the University of Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute and University of Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Existential Risk.

### Establishing UK global leadership on extreme risk management

In our response to Covid-19, it is possible that we become very good at pandemic preparedness and response, but fail to adequately prepare for other equally serious risks. The UK must seize the opportunity to learn lessons from Covid-19, ensuring that we are better prepared for the highly destructive events that we know will happen in our lifetimes, and our children's lifetimes.

This note sets out recommendations for how the Government can better manage extreme risks, and establish the UK as a global leader in preparedness for the volatile century ahead.

The UK is already an academic world leader in the field of extreme risks. By implementing these recommendations, the Government would become a world leader too. It would have put in place the single most robust system for extreme risk management in the world - one that will endure for generations to come

We are living through a once-in-a-century event, while embarking on a once-in-a-generation Integrated Review. There will never be a better time to make these changes.

#### 1. Establish an independent National Extreme Risks Institute (approx. £6 million per year, or a one-off £200 million endowment)

This Institute would be tasked with assessing the Government's approach to identifying and preparing for extreme risks, and making recommendations to the UK Government for how it can improve its management of these risks.

Its areas of focus would be restricted to potentially catastrophic natural and anthropogenic risks, including risks from AI, pandemics, bioweapons, nuclear war, extreme climate change scenarios, and currently unforeseen risks. This would avoid any undue overlap in the focus of the existing Centre for Disaster Protection.<sup>36</sup>

Not only would this new Institute provide a long-term vehicle for implementing all key recommendations in this space, but it would be the first UK public body to be exclusively incentivised to deal with extreme risks, many of which are not currently under the management of any particular Secretary of State.

The Institute's role would include:

- Carrying out **depoliticised risks assessments** (including of long-term and novel risks);
- **Submitting its recommendations to a new Government Office of Risk Assessment**, which would oversee the identification, assessment and mitigation of risk (see Recommendation 2 below);
- **Issuing a flagship report** ahead of each National Security Risk Assessment and Spending Review;
- **Suggesting reforms to the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) process** including that the NSRA captures novel risks, future risks and low probability high impact risks;
- **Suggest reforms to the National Risk Register** - for instance, extending the timescales of the National Risk Register, so that risks identified on a greater than two-year timescale should be assigned to a particular Secretary of State.

We would recommend a team of between 10-15 experts, ranging from Deputy Director-equivalent grade to Permanent Secretary-equivalent grade, along with 3-5 support staff.

The Institute should sit outside of the Government, and be set up as a legally independent entity. This could be achieved through setting it up by way of a charitable trust, a Royal Charter, or as a company limited by guarantee.

<sup>36</sup>Centre for Disaster Protection. [www.disasterprotection.org/about](http://www.disasterprotection.org/about)

## 2. Create a new Government Office of Risk Assessment, headed by a government Chief Risk Officer (approx. £15 million per year, or a one-off £500 million endowment)

A new Government Office of Risk Assessment, headed by a government Chief Risk Officer (CRO), would work closely with the proposed new National Extreme Risks Institute (see Recommendation 1 above), to embed best practice from industry and elsewhere into UK government risk management.

Whereas the Institute would be the equivalent of the 'third line' in private sector risk management<sup>36</sup> - effectively an audit function for the effectiveness of government's risk management - this office and the CRO would serve as the "second line", accountable for risk management - overseeing the identification, assessment and mitigation of risk. Government departments are "first line" - the 'owners' of risk who are accountable for its mitigation.

Without a CRO, no one is accountable for risk management, which means that it tends not to happen amidst the tyranny of the urgent. And without the 'three lines' structure set out above, checks and balances are lacking and risk owners don't get held to account to mitigate their risks.

This office would incorporate, but be bigger than, the existing Civil Contingencies Secretariat, and would:

- Implement the recommendations of the proposed new National Extreme Risks Institute (see Recommendation 1 above);
- Have powers to assign responsibility for risks to ministers and hold them to account for their risk response strategy;
- Play a leadership role in ensuring that risk management improves globally - for instance by convening CROs from around the world.

This would cost £15 million per year, on top of the funds already given to the Civil Contingencies Secretariat.

To ensure proper coordination, we would recommend an Oversight Committee to bring the three lines of risk infrastructure together - with the CRO reporting to its Chair, as well as to the appropriate departmental head (which would likely be the relevant Permanent Secretary). This Committee would be chaired by the Institute.

## 3. Establish a National Institute for Biological Security within the Cabinet Office or DHSC (approx. £3 million per year, or a one-off £100 million endowment)

Whereas the planned new National Institute for Health Protection will likely focus on managing the UK's response to immediate public health threats, such as Covid-19, this Institute would focus specifically on future large-scale and high-priority biological threats. It would be tasked with prevention of and preparedness for such threats, regardless of their origin, and its mission would be to ensure the biological security of the UK.

To achieve this, the Institute would focus on the four areas of highest priority:

- Preventing and countering the threat of biological weapons from both state and non-state actors, treating them as a comparable challenge to nuclear weapons;
- Developing effective defences to biological threats, helping bring horizon technologies (especially pathogen-blind diagnostics) to technical readiness;
- Promoting responsible biotechnology development across the world; and
- Developing talent and collaboration across the UK biosecurity community, cementing the UK as a world leader in safe and responsible science and innovation.

## 4. Put funding towards high priority biosecurity, AI and other high-impact R&D projects (approx. one-off cost: £500 million)

To ensure the UK stays at the cutting edge in this field, we recommend funding research in the following areas - either through the new UK ARPA, or through UKRI as part of the new R&D roadmap<sup>37</sup>:

- **£200 million towards high priority biosecurity R&D projects:** For example, our current suite of interventions to a novel biological threat can either be rapidly deployed (e.g. non-pharmaceutical interventions) or can be highly effective (e.g. vaccines), but not both. Innovative technologies both now and in the future can help close this gap, and should be urgently prioritised for development.
- **£200 million towards high priority AI safety R&D projects:** Promoting technical AI safety research is critically important - not only due to the negative externalities of unsafe systems, but because it will bolster the UK's competitiveness as the EU advances its Trustworthy AI legislative agenda.
- **£100 million towards improving the accuracy of long-term forecasts:** We recommend extensive research into improving forecasting techniques, for example through the use of quantified falsifiable predictions, and full inference cycle tournaments, as proposed by Philip Tetlock<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> Internal audit: three lines of defence model explained. ICAS, 2017 [www.icas.com/professional-resources/audit-and-assurance/internal-audit/internal-audit-three-lines-of-defence-model-explained](http://www.icas.com/professional-resources/audit-and-assurance/internal-audit/internal-audit-three-lines-of-defence-model-explained)

<sup>37</sup>UK Research and Development Roadmap. HMG, June 2020 [gov.uk/government/publications/uk-research-and-development-roadmap/uk-research-and-development-roadmap](http://gov.uk/government/publications/uk-research-and-development-roadmap/uk-research-and-development-roadmap)

<sup>38</sup>See [twitter.com/PTetlock/status/1175766811494817793](https://twitter.com/PTetlock/status/1175766811494817793) and [www.sas.upenn.edu/tetlock](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/tetlock)

# Annex VII

## **KCL Centre for Grand Strategy seminar series summary**

## National Strategy for the Next Generations Seminar Series: Recommendations

The National Strategy for the Next Generations project was the result of a shared vision between The Centre for Grand Strategy at King's College London and the School of International Futures. While we believe that the making of national strategy should be a more open and inclusive process across society, we also believe that sound policymaking should incorporate two core tenets of our own academic programme: **applied history** and **grand strategy**. Towards this end, the Centre for Grand Strategy co-hosted a seminar series examining these themes and the way in which they might benefit the National Strategy for the Next Generations.

### Applied History and a Next Generation National Strategy

The concept of applied history is a recent initiative which builds on an ancient practice: namely, that the study of history might be used towards practical ends. History, as the preeminent historian John Robert Seeley once wrote, is the 'School of Statesmanship.' **As we set out to think about and prescribe solutions for British strategy in the coming months and years, the use of historical study, we believe, should be a starting point — a kind of intellectual spring from which questions are raised and ideas flow.** In line with this approach, the Centre for Grand Strategy hosted the first of four seminars, focusing on applied history. In May, historians Dr Alix Green and Dr Robert Crowcroft discussed the concept of applied history and the ways it should be tailored to policymaking. More so than offering simple analogies or predicting possible futures, the study of history instead provides policymakers and the public with a kind of 'warning system.' In other words, those interested in crafting future national strategies might be more aware of the potential dangers and pitfalls of pursuing a particular course. Dr Crowcroft echoed a famous line from the historian RG Collingwood, who once wrote that a historical grounding can provide a timely notice: Beware, 'there is a tiger in that grass.'

### Grand Strategy and National Strategy: Past Conceptions and New Approaches

Related to the practice of applied history is the concept of grand strategy, which served as the second theme of our seminars. In recent years, grand strategy has become a popular term both within academia and across government. But all too often, professors and officials are split on the definition and utility of the concept, a confusion which often renders the term too ambiguous or too complex for practical use. **We believe that grand strategy is wholly relevant to the National Strategy for the Next Generations project, provided that the public and policymakers begin to conceptualise it on a different plane — one that is at once less rigid in its definition and humbler in its aims.** Our second seminar on 'Grand Strategy and National Strategy: Past Conceptions and New Approaches' sought to restore conceptual clarity to the ambiguities around the concept: conceived of as 'big picture', long-term thinking. Dr David Morgen-Owen and Dr William James each discussed the ways in which grand strategy has, in practice, evolved from narrower military uses to encompassing a government-wide strategy. It is crucial that **policymakers look beyond the electoral cycle or reactive crisis management, to proactively consider the long-term national interest and anchor day-to-day decisions to steer the course.** In so doing, it is essential that **all tools of statecraft — economic, military, information and so forth — are leveraged to serve those ends, so that different government agencies are not working at cross-purposes.**



## **British Identity and National Strategy, Past and Present**

The third seminar in the series examined the extent to which notions of national identity — from historical narratives of past glory to debates over Britain’s relationship with other European countries — shape a national strategy. How can the UK develop a new narrative that informs and guides its role in the world? How and by whom are national narrative and identity shaped, and how readily can they be changed? And what should be the role of public emotion in national strategy? In response, Dr Thomas Colley shared his research findings that **people right across the political spectrum want the UK to be a force for good in the world** – an important learning for the British government as it develops a future national strategy in its ongoing Integrated Review. An **ethical foreign policy** remains both plausible and popular. Additionally, Dr Russell Foster made the case for an *Alltagsgeschichte* approach — a form of everyday history or micro-history that encourages us to look at the little, everyday interactions which shape people’s identities and ideologies. Finally, Dr Claire Yorke underlined the importance of emotions in shaping citizens’ thinking about their country’s place in the world. Examples range from Brexit to the Chinese ‘century of humiliation’. **In developing future British strategy, we must consider the emotional dimension.** What do we want people to feel about Britain’s place in the world? **What are the sources of pride, hope and vision that we want to evoke?**

## **National Strategy and Foresight – Probing an Uncertain Future**

The final session in the seminar series looked to the future. The formulation of national strategy is inherently tied to the art of foresight. Yet, a long history of failed predictions of global affairs has encouraged wide-spread scepticism of long-term forecasting. The seminar explored the inherent tension between prediction and uncertainty in the context of British national strategy and the natural linkages between applied history and foresight. Drawing on her experience from working with long-term strategic planning in government and the private sector, Cat Tully, founder and director of the School of International Futures, discussed the value of foresight for the formulation of British national strategy. **Foresight is a structured and systematic way of thinking about the future, and in these times of volatility Britain needs disciplinary and alternative approaches so that its forward-facing strategy can benefit from the agency and inclusivity that participatory foresight provides.**

Thereafter, former Minister Jane Davidson identified key lessons from the Welsh efforts to put the well-being of future generations at the heart of the country’s National Strategy. The Welsh National Assembly members voted for the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 — a grand strategy to deliver on the sustainable development goals, with which it aligns. Too often, the gap between what countries claim they want to do, and what they actually enact is a wide one. **Ambition must be accompanied by process, and the Welsh experience reveals the crucial importance of Britain enshrining its long-term intentions into law, since law is more permanent than policy.** Legal instruments should therefore be used to enshrine the conception and practices of a National Strategy for the Next Generations in many different areas of government and society. **There must be clear leadership, to ensure the delivery of the provisions; governmental creation of appropriate support mechanisms; and the inclusion of diverse voices and a participative approach to enable the strategy to become a people’s act.**

**In this way, the National Strategy for the Next Generations will draw on the lessons of the past, an understanding of contemporary British identity and strategic narratives, and a systematic approach to the future, to provide a concrete framework and benchmark for thinking about the future, which British policymakers can act upon accordingly.**

# Annex VIII

## Submission – Restless Development

Half the world is under 30. Nine in ten young people live in developing countries. In the next decade the world's poorest countries will see their populations become dramatically younger. We are in an era of what we call Peak Youth.

This generation has the potential to solve the world's greatest challenges and deliver the Global Goals. From mobilising to stop the spread of Covid-19 around the world - including the spread of dangerous misinformation online<sup>39</sup> - to adapting to the threat of climate change, young people are already leading the way in their communities to respond to global threats, challenges and vulnerabilities.

The UK Government has been a world leader in its work with young people, partnering with youth around the world to ensure their voices are heard on the global stage, as well as championing youth responses to global threats, such as the community response to Ebola led by young Sierra Leoneans in 2014.

Restless Development urges the UK Government to continue building its partnership with global youth by putting them at the heart of its vision for Britain's role in the world. The opportunity is too significant to miss; a generation of young people, bigger than any other, mobilising to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals and build resilient, stable and open societies.

### **The UK Government's record on partnering with young people**

In 2016, the Department for International Development (DFID) launched a progressive Youth Agenda,<sup>40</sup> recognising young people as “agents of social change”. The Agenda committed to putting young people at the heart of DFID's work, including engaging young people as advocates on the international

stage, one of the very first UN member states to show this leadership. DFID put this into practice in 2015 and 2016 by inviting youth delegates to participate, with the Secretary of State for International Development, in the UK Government's UN General Assembly (UNGA) delegation, and once again in 2018 by including a young campaigner on the Government's delegation to the International AIDS Conference (IAC) to represent the views of young people. It also hosted the first ever Youth Summit in 2015, designed and delivered in partnership with young people with the aim of ensuring young people's perspectives on global issues and solutions to big global challenges were heard<sup>41</sup>.

### **Recommendations for engaging young people in policy-making**

#### **1. Put young people at the heart of national strategy**

National strategy will not hit the mark if the 1.8 billion “Peak Youth” generation of young people have not been involved in its development. From British young people, a generation of increasingly connected global citizens bringing their expertise, experience and aspirations to policy-making, to young people living in the countries in which the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) operates sharing their analysis and solutions to big development challenges, the issue is clear: without partnering with young people, the UK government will not develop policy solutions that tackle emerging threats and respond to global opportunities.

Supporting youth advocates to engage in global policy-making platforms ensures young people can have access to important policy- and decision-making spaces. It offers them an opportunity to learn how relevant policy and negotiation processes work, and then to share these insights and process

<sup>39</sup>Social Media Companies Fail to Tackle Anti-Vaccine Misinformation. Restless Development, Sept 2020 [restlessdevelopment.org/2020/09/social-media-companies-fail-to-tackle-anti-vaccine-misinformation](https://restlessdevelopment.org/2020/09/social-media-companies-fail-to-tackle-anti-vaccine-misinformation)

<sup>40</sup>Putting young people at the heart of development: The Department for International Development's Youth Agenda. DFID and UKAid, 2016 [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550229/DFIDyouthagendaapproach4.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550229/DFIDyouthagendaapproach4.pdf)

<sup>41</sup>There are several examples of best practice from governments that have delivered Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to the UN High-Level Political Forum previously, including:

- The Governments of Denmark and the Netherlands highlighted in their VNRs how they have implemented Youth Delegate Programmes to raise awareness and increase ownership of the SDGs among young people nationally;
- A number of governments, including Denmark, Jordan, Mexico and the Netherlands, have included UN Youth Delegates on their official delegations to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York.

These governments created space for their Youth Delegates to co-present their VNRs to ensure key issues that are affecting young people were given particular attention, further highlighting the important role young people have in leading SDG implementation, follow up and review processes in partnership with governments;

outcomes with other young people across their networks. This dynamic approach to accountability would demonstrate in practice the UK Government's commitment to its Open Government National Action Plan, to increase its impact by working with and learning from young people and partners<sup>42</sup>.

By partnering with young people to create forums for problem-solving and policy-making, the UK Government could also harness the knowledge and expertise of young people and bring a much wider, diverse constituency to policy-making in the UK and overseas, grounding national strategy in lived realities. By extension, engaging this young demographic in the process will build their interest, knowledge and experience, potentially creating a pipeline of rich, policy-making talent across the UK - and beyond - that would only benefit the ongoing development of national strategy<sup>43</sup>.

## 2. Partner with young people as experts

Young people are experts in the opportunities and challenges that their communities face and must be included in policy-making if long-term, sustainable change is to happen. One way in which Restless Development works with young people in this way is through data-driven, youth-led accountability initiatives that hold governments and development partners accountable for commitments<sup>44</sup>, provide evidence-based solutions, and improve service delivery and policy implementation. For example in Sierra Leone, through the Ebola response young leaders saw the power that collecting data in real time with communities could have, and wanted to continue to be involved after the crisis ended in monitoring services and working with communities to develop action plans to address issues. From this, the model emerged for a programme called "Strengthening Accountability, Building Inclusion" which has been implemented in every district of the country in partnership with national and international NGOs,<sup>45</sup> funded by UK Aid. Restless Development's Youth Accountability Volunteers (YAVs) mobilise young people to collect data about the availability and quality of service provision, and work with communities to develop action plans aimed at improving public

services, which have resulted in improved school infrastructure, water supply, and health facilities<sup>46</sup>.

## 3. Consider the context - youth engagement principles

Young people will engage with policy-making in different ways and from different contexts. To engage a wide and diverse audience, it is important to consider the barriers that might stand in the way of young people being involved in the development of national strategy, from the overuse of an overly academic lexicon and session structure in policy-making forums through to an assumed shared set of cultural experiences which might inadvertently exclude young people based on their race, sexuality or socioeconomic background. Restless Development urges the UK government to develop a set of youth engagement principles, in partnership with a panel of young people, in order to ensure policy-making spaces are accessible and inclusive to young people living across the UK and beyond.

## 4. Continuing the conversation - beyond the policy-making table

Engaging young people in policy-making does not end at the policy-making table; sharing back outcomes and continuing the conversation are crucial. At Restless Development, our experience is that being accountable to young people, partners, communities and other people and groups with whom we work helps us to learn and adapt as an agency.

Building feedback loops into policy-making processes to ensure that young people and their communities can have their say on proposed ideas and how policies are working is key, as well as being transparent about how decisions are made. The Restless Development approach goes beyond one-way, post hoc information flows to a focus on learning with three elements: radical transparency that shares the how in addition to the what, two-way information flows that prioritise feedback, and using feedback to inform decision-making.

<sup>42</sup> UK Government, 'Open Government Partnership National Action Plan, 2016 - 2018' (2016) [www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-open-government-national-action-plan-2016-18/uk-open-government-national-action-plan-2016-18](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-open-government-national-action-plan-2016-18/uk-open-government-national-action-plan-2016-18)

<sup>43</sup> A notable example comes from the Government of Denmark, which launched its Strategy: The World 2030 in 2016, making young people a key focus. It commissioned Restless Development to undertake a review to inform how the government could optimise and operationalise the new strategy's youth focus within Danish development cooperation. The result is the review report 'Youth Leading the World 2030'. The review identifies 19 recommendations for Danida to operationalise its new strategic focus on youth - both as a standalone focus and also mainstreamed across its development cooperation. Each of the recommendations includes practical 'how to' suggestions, along with examples of 'promising practice'. The recommendations were directly informed by inputs from young people, mapping Danida's current portfolio of youth engagements and including inputs from Danida's development partners. In addition, the review draws on research, innovations and practice from the wider development sector. Based on the review, Danida has developed tools and guidance notes to ensure that development practitioners across the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including in embassies, can meaningfully incorporate young people into their programming.

<sup>44</sup> See Youth Led Accountability, Restless Development [restlessdevelopment.org/youth-led-accountability](http://restlessdevelopment.org/youth-led-accountability)

<sup>45</sup> See What is accountability, and why should it be powered by young people? Restless Development [wearerestless.org/2019/03/11/what-is-accountability-and-why-should-it-be-powered-by-young-people/](http://wearerestless.org/2019/03/11/what-is-accountability-and-why-should-it-be-powered-by-young-people/)

<sup>46</sup> See:

- SABI: The community-led project making change in Maborie [wearerestless.org/2020/01/08/sabi-the-community-led-project-making-change-in-maborie](http://wearerestless.org/2020/01/08/sabi-the-community-led-project-making-change-in-maborie)
- How Aberdeen Community Succeeded in Demanding Increased Water Supply, SABI. [sabi-sl.org/aberdeen-community-succeeded-demanding-increased-water-supply/](http://sabi-sl.org/aberdeen-community-succeeded-demanding-increased-water-supply/)
- ABI Facilitated Ward Action Plan Improves Access to Health Services [sabi-sl.org/sabi-facilitated-ward-action-plan-improves-access-health-services/](http://sabi-sl.org/sabi-facilitated-ward-action-plan-improves-access-health-services/)

**5. Policy-making and policy implementation are interlinked: partnering with young people at all stages makes policy stronger**

Restless Development strongly believes that taking a participatory monitoring and accountability approach ensures sustainable development programmes and policies work for everyone, with no one left behind. A participatory approach ultimately ensures a framework where all people - including youth - can have ownership of development Goals and Targets, with those living in poverty shaping their own futures and driving development. The hypothesis behind Restless Development's approach to accountability is simple: empower young people with data, skills and networks; connect them to meaningful opportunities to participate in review processes and engage with decision-makers; and they will take the lead in holding governments accountable for their policy and investment commitments.

Here is an example of this youth-led model in practice:

*Working with The Development Alternative consortium, we have trained volunteers in Uganda and Madagascar to monitor development programmes, record any problems, and work on the solutions to those problems. So far our volunteers have worked with 308 community members to monitor and improve 18 projects worth £97 million. Young volunteers are using a digital tool - the DevCheck app - to monitor livelihoods projects in their area. Through monitoring, young people are discovering problems with the projects, and identifying improvements that can be made to these projects. Young people are engaging their community to hear their thoughts about the project too. Using the data generated from visiting the project together with community feedback young people are collaborating with development actors and community members to problem solve and create more effective and accountable projects, whilst proving the case for youth-led solutions.*

*Young people are also taking data and information about livelihoods needs and opportunities gathered over time to national and global policymakers and advocating for youth- and community-led solutions to development issues. This means our model works on two levels. It generates fixes and better delivery at local level through feedback on programme delivery, and also enables young people to advocate for systemic change and hold development actors to account, using evidence generated through monitoring and community mobilisation at national and global levels. By putting youth leadership and community engagement at the core of this approach we expect to show that development has an alternative.*

# Annex IX

## Submission - APPG for Future Generations



## **APPG For Future Generations For NSxNG**

### **Policy Recommendations**

This annex seeks to highlight three tangible areas of policy that could be considered as part of the Integrated Review. As well as reconsidering our approach to security and the UK's national strategy, we must also acknowledge that a long-term approach to policy making would ensure that national strategy works for future generations.

#### **1. Create better incentives for policy makers to act for the long-term**

Improved incentives for policy makers to act for the long-term would shift the institutional bias away from short termism. A way in which this could be applied is to set and keep long-term targets, as well as undertaking forecasting work on the long-term impact of potential policy decisions.

The changes could sit alongside a requirement (ideally in legislation) that all Secretaries of State are required to assess the extent to which they have fulfilled these obligations, or an oversight body to assess that obligations and targets have been met.

#### **2. Improve the Treasury's ability to act for the long-term**

Our second recommendation would be to improve the Treasury's ability to work for the long-term. This could be achieved by reforming the Treasury's fiscal rules and spending mechanisms to support long-run investments, prevention spending and long-term value for money.

It is important for the Treasury to consider second order effects, because policy changes or efficiency savings in one area should not lead to costs elsewhere. This would also serve to reduce the silo-isolation of current Government departments, and cultivate a holistic approach to policy making.

A way in which to do this is to have the standard long-run discount rate decline more quickly and the pure time preference part of the discount rate should be lowered to 0%. Economic analysis is used to inform ministers who have a strong preference for policy goods now rather than later, and as such pure time preference is effectively double counted in the overall decision making. There is also a strong economic case for 0% (Stern, Dasgupta). If not reduced to 0%, the guidance should allow greater use of the intergenerational wealth transfer discount rate when appropriate (and not restrict it to models of 50+ years).

#### **3. Adopt the key asks contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill**

UK policy makers could draw on the example provided in Wales by the [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#), which is successfully encouraging more concern for the future in Welsh public bodies.

Lord Bird has laid a Private Members' Bill in Parliament based on the Welsh Bill. It had its second reading in the House of Lords on 13 March 2020. The Bill includes:

- a. A requirement on public bodies to act for the long term;
- b. A Commissioner for Future Generations to support and oversee how the Government works for future generations;
- c. The production of Intergenerational Impact Assessments for draft legislation; and
- d. A Select Committee for the Future to scrutinise legislation for its effect on future generations, and hold Ministers accountable for short-term decision-making.

# Annex X

## Submission - Shout Out UK

## **Shout Out UK's Recommendations**

### **i The world in 2045 (understanding the environment and shaping forces of the future context for UK global role/position).**

A new national strategy presents a great opportunity for learning from the past and ensuring that *all* citizens' views are included in national decision-making, especially those who will experience the effects of the new strategy throughout their lives - young people. Young people mobilise effectively around specific issues, such as climate change, mental health, the economy and their education. From conducting our Political and Media Literacy programmes in over 1,000 secondary schools across the country, we have noticed that while young people are passionate about these issues, they are oftentimes not equipped with the necessary knowledge and self-confidence to communicate their needs and interests to their democratic representatives. This has ultimately resulted in feelings that their voices are misrepresented and has been a key driver behind perceptions that politics and democratic participation are simply 'not for them'. To ensure that the next national strategy is truly representative of the next generation, it is vital to upskill young people and build their knowledge and understanding of British democracy and Britain's role in the world - outcomes, which we have been successfully achieving through our Political and Media Literacy programmes. In doing so, they are aware of the most effective ways to voice their concerns on topical issues and will possess the necessary character skills to provide effective recommendations to policymakers.

### **ii. Policy implications (strategic choices; what to do now/in 2030)**

Youth voices should be an inseparable part of framing narratives around national strategy and policymaking for the future. Our 'next generations' Vision for 2045 as an education network working with young people revolves around ensuring that the youngest citizens in British society are an active part of shaping and co-creating with their democratic representatives the national context they want to live and thrive in. One of the most effective ways of ensuring that youth voices are reflected in national discourses and decisions is by empowering young people to speak their minds on the issues they care about and educating them on how they can make positive changes to society. For this reason, we believe that Political Literacy should be an inseparable part of statutory education and should be introduced as a GCSE, and not only an optional A-Level subject. By initiating such systemic change, young people will be better prepared to actively participate in national discourses and effectively communicate what they would like to see included in national strategies for years to come.

### **iii. Recommendations on doing national strategy differently/better, e.g.:**

Shout Out UK proposes several methods through which youth voice can be listened to and subsequently reflected in decision-making and national strategy building.

1. **Effective upskilling** of young people in Political and Media Literacies as a part of their statutory education, in order to ensure that they understand the most effective pathways

for change and are able to articulate themselves on the issues they care about by leaning on fact-based information, as opposed to misinformation.

2. **Enhanced communication** between policymakers and civil society organisations - This could involve policymakers conducting regular scoping sessions with civil society representatives that work with young people.
3. **Regular check-ins and consultation sessions** with teachers, schools' Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs) and youth practitioners to ensure that they have enough capacity to effectively upskill the young people they work with.
4. **Providing an inclusive platform** for young people from all parts of the UK to debate, discuss and decide on key topics they would like to see included in a national strategy.

## **About Shout Out UK**

Shout Out UK (SOUK) is a youth education network that aims to engage young people with politics and democratic participation. We achieve our mission by delivering educational programmes on Political Literacy and Media Literacy and individual workshops on topics, such as Social Activism, Human Rights, International Relations, Employability Skills and Training, Debating & Public Speaking, to name a few.

We have delivered our work to over 1,000 secondary schools and colleges across the country and have engaged over 30,000 young people, ensuring that they receive the necessary knowledge and character development provision to become active and engaged citizens both on local and national level. In March 2020, we received the Nesta Democracy Pioneer Award for our outstanding work around Political Literacy and youth democratic engagement.

# Annex XII

## Introducing a National Strategy for the Next Generations



# What is a ‘National Strategy for the Next Generations’?

The time is ripe for a new approach to designing a long-term, outward-facing national strategy for the UK out to the middle of the century. The national strategy we need is one that will shape and define our country’s role in the world after a crossroads moment in our national story, given Brexit and COVID-19. There is a pressing national need and - based on consultations, both inside and outside HMG - strong interest in:

- a) thinking from first principles about Britain’s role in the world, and
- b) designing a new long-term national vision and positioning that puts at its heart the needs, wellbeing and interests of future generations of Britons (young and old alike).

The country – all generations, all ages – will have jointly experienced a period of uncertainty unprecedented in recent decades. Faced with existential risk and an intense collective experience, many people are more willing to:

- a) look beyond short-term self-interest towards future generations’ long-term interests; and
- b) move beyond divisive narratives and re-hashing ideological interpretations of history to focus on a better shared future for the generations that come next.

There is a growing sense that we need to collectively build ‘a new normal’ after the COVID crisis with a more unifying national narrative, and take the moment to ‘relaunch’ a refreshed Britain not just domestically but on the world stage. To do that, we will need more than a new strategy document developed in the traditional way (closed-door, top-down) and closely held at the heart of Government.

## Our approach

*Definitions:* When we talk about ‘national strategy’ we mean this in the widest sense - not just a moment for HMG to develop ‘a national strategy’ on paper or in concept, but a moment when we set the overall orientation and direction of travel for the country’s future direction. Any good ‘future-ready’ strategy must also be ‘emergent’ – capable of change as conditions change.

Our approach has 3 interdependent features: an integral role in the strategy-formation process for foresight, applied history and public participation. The combination is distinctive:

- i. the **discipline of strategic foresight** to take a systematic, analytical approach to explore possible futures for Britain’s role in the world in the context of an uncertain and complex global environment, shaped by technological disruptions and other external drivers;
- ii. **applied history**, to (a) build in an even-handed appreciation of the impact and lessons of Britain’s global past; (b) apply, where appropriate and with due care, historical insight; and (c) develop a deeper understanding of global perceptions of the UK; and
- iii. a **central role for the public**, who would explore the future and the past to help the UK build a new national strategy using a diversity of fresh views and with greater legitimacy.

This programme has been initiated through a collaboration between the School of International Futures (SOIF) and the KCL Centre for Grand Strategy, with support and input from the centre of government, and key civil society and participation experts. SOIF bring international expertise and networks in intergenerational policy-making, government foresight, and participative, emergent national strategy development; KCL academic rigour in tackling questions of Grand Strategy and ‘applied history’.

## Outcomes

Starting now, we aim to begin to **assemble a coalition of interested parties** who share our belief and commitment to develop a *new kind of national strategy* for the UK, and to start a new *independent nation-wide, participative conversation* about Britain’s future place in the world. This coalition will include organisations and groups working in national strategy, industry, tech, civil society, civic participation/public engagement, community organising (particularly representing younger, less-heard voices), and media – a wider constituency than is usually involved in policymaking/strategy development.

We aim to work with this coalition to:

- a) Co-create, design and draw on global best practice to **run a facilitated foresight public dialogue** and **build a national vision**, systematically exploring uncertainty, scenarios, and strategic options, reaching the widest possible public and informed by expert inputs.
- b) Explore the applied history insights for strategy-making today (through a series of **seminars** run by KCL) and explore plausible alternative futures for the UK in the world (through **foresight workshops** run by SOIF).
- c) Build momentum behind **Government engagement** in this approach, by including key Government stakeholders ‘on the journey’ (building on existing HMG capabilities and interest), targeted dissemination of our findings and recommendations for enhancing Whitehall machinery of government and capability, and strengthening the network within HMG supportive of this approach.
- d) **Inform the Integrated Review** process being led from the Cabinet Office, and (more widely) future national strategy development processes, including by building an enduring network of stakeholders/groups interested in this approach to national strategy.

## Get involved

Let us know if you’d like to join our discussions, participate at a strategic level on guiding the project, or contribute in different ways (contact Sophie on [sophie@soif.org.uk](mailto:sophie@soif.org.uk)).

### ***Endnote: Why ‘next generations’?***

Our vision is of a national strategy for Britain’s future in the world that actively designs in the (future) needs, wellbeing and interests of future generations (young and old alike). This isn’t about pitting generations against each other. Terminology differs (SOIF have worked on intergenerational fairness for Portugal’s Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Vision 2040 for Government of Oman, and future generations with the Welsh Government; here we talk in terms of the *next generations*). The key point is to put the needs of future citizens at the heart of the decisions we make today.

# Annex XIII

**Interim report to HMG on NSxNG pilot programme, Sept 2020**

## I. A National Strategy for Next Generations

**A unique moment:** The post-COVID, post-Brexit moment forces the UK to reflect on its future global role, its external operating environment, and the tools and alliances it will need. This year's Integrated Review has been called "a once in a generation chance to reset our international policy" (Seeley, FAC 2020).

The School of International Futures (SOIF), the Democratic Society, Agora, Alpenglou, the APPG for Future Generations, the University of Cambridge Centre for the Study of Existential Risk, Restless Development, Shout Out, RUSI, and Kings College Grand Strategy Centre have come together to lead a [network](#) to respond to this unique moment in the UK's national story.

**We believe we must consider the lessons of history, listen to the diverse voices of the present, imagine the world our grandchildren will inhabit and act as stewards of their future.** We aim to surface new and ambitious ideas for the UK's future global role through a systematic programme that explores future national strategy by putting the views of the future leaders and citizens of 2045 front and centre. Phase I of this programme is ongoing; Phase II will take place over 2021.

**Our mission is to give the UK's next generations a central role in shaping our country's future place in the world.** To do this, the coalition harnesses its members' expertise in national security, strategy, complex systems, applied history, technology, foresight, participation and deliberation together with the voices of UK citizens of all generations.

This first submission paper provides early inputs from Phase I. It explores alternative futures in 2045, the stories next generations want to tell about the UK's role, and some lessons we've learned about doing national strategy differently. It is based on an independent process engaging our expert coalition and over 500 young thinkers, through a seminar series, foresight-focused online survey and two virtual workshops, and a prototype Citizens' Assembly.

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*"Plan ahead by at least two generations. Aiding the current generation by sacrificing future generations will doom the UK from a global strategic standpoint."*  
(18-24 year-old survey respondent)

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To go forward boldly as a country, we need cross-generational consensus that provides a clear and legitimate basis for the UK's international role. As trust in political institutions continues to decline, we believe it is possible to build new trust and legitimacy through process, if that process is designed well and executed with integrity.

*Deliberative* participatory input (along the lines of the process we are following) can help build a shared sense of ownership of national strategy and the hard choices it involves. Importantly, it provides representation for voices from the future, including the voices of those who have not yet been born. [Read survey responses in the Annex starting at p9.](#)

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*"It is vital to upskill young people...those who will experience the effects of the new strategy throughout their lives...and build their knowledge and understanding of British democracy and Britain's role in the world"* (NSxNG partner)

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## II. The World in 2045

### *External Operating Environment, Driving Forces, Alternative Realities and Associated Risks and Opportunities*

Never before have we known so much about the (possible) future. Big data, modelling and technology forecasting mean we can project and understand many of the driving forces in motion. This section sets out the key trends highlighted through our research and survey.

**What kind of world is the UK preparing for: the megatrends shaping 2045.** Experts and citizens alike increasingly recognise that the next 25 years will bring changes in our environment and ecosystem that will have many knock-on effects on migration, biodiversity, natural resources, and the food system. That came through strongly in our survey work.

Alongside changes in our natural world, we will see continued technological advances in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, energy production and space exploration. These shifts – including the way we transition to a zero-carbon economy - will drive significant changes in our global economy. **How the associated benefits and costs are distributed across our global and local communities (and – critically - across generations) is one of the defining questions shaping the UK's 2045 operating environment.**

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*“In this changing world order national resilience is the bedrock of strategic advantage; resilience of society, not just government. And so, we need greater societal participation in our future strategy making to build this national resilience” (NSxNG coalition partner)*

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The extent to which governments, corporations and people engage **proactively** and **collaboratively** with these megatrends and dynamics will drive very different futures. As COVID-19 demonstrates, despite growing geopolitical tensions and localisation of responses, the world will be more interconnected than ever. It will be even less possible to disaggregate national interest from global developments. The world will be more multipolar than ever, with sovereignty at the state level ever more eroded, identities under threat, and soft power and relational influence (at the state and sub-/supra-state levels) playing as important a role as hard power.

These known and interdependent forces out to 2045 create emerging opportunities as well as threats in the global environment; they will play out in different ways we cannot predict, but that we can sense, shape, and prepare for. **National governments will need to scan the horizon for early signals, be nimble, and ready to respond to alternative scenarios. The pace of change will remain relentless and its direction unpredictable.**

The UK government will need to be foresighted, responsive and resilient as it faces uncertainties including: Will state actors remain the predominant organising model through the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century? Will environmental and climate challenges drive more global governance in the long run? Will nation states, citizens, corporations or other organisations be instrumental in developing new responses to the climate challenge? Will the UK's neighbourhood, and the Union itself, pull closer together or break apart? How will the political system respond to continued and emerging threats like populism and 'anti-politics'? Are new technology platforms increasing or decreasing the trustworthiness of information in the public domain? How are the public responding? Will liberal and international interventionism disappear or resurge? How will the changing nature of conflict affect perceptions of security, identity and behaviours?



Young people understand this uncertainty around the future and, we found in our discussions and survey data, largely accept it. Their insights into the future environment were strikingly lacking the idealism we often hear in public protest or media debate – **the young British people we asked were pragmatic, cautious and while recognising a changing world, still ambitious for their country, the UK.**

For these reasons, national strategy must recognise and be shaped by changing national values. What people value and prioritise is rapidly changing. **In particular, we need to recognise that identities are rapidly shifting, and conventional concepts in national security such as growth, threat and self-interest are more contested than ever before.**

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*“This programme is emphasising exactly the right things: we need a new national strategy, including a new national story - separating ourselves from the facile analogies drawn from our past” (former FCO PUS)*

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While our young respondents have limited formal foreign policy knowledge, they understood the need to promote and defend UK interests. But they defined these interests in a new way. Given the global context that defines their lives and opportunities, **shared values were prominent in their thinking about the future.**

As inequality grows and experiences diverge, **a unified national identity becomes increasingly difficult to maintain. But for some of our young respondents, it’s also undesirable.** In their own lives they’ve learned that power comes from exploring and exposing more, and more divergent, identities, not a single, unified narrative.

Our young respondents also see **that new modes of self-organisation and self-verification (think Hong Kong Umbrella Movement meets Bitcoin) will provide more power to the average citizen** through group-level accountability and transparency. More bottom-up power means less top-down authority. Or, as one 18-24-year-old participant put it, “policymakers will need to adjust to the reduced influence they may wield.”

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*“We looked past the nation state and realised diplomacy is something you can do with cities, institutions, people and organisations. And where people did not share our values, the UK became recognised as a great mediator and builder of bridges” (18-24 year-old respondent)*

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Younger people understand the limitations of perpetual growth as we exceed our planetary boundaries. **Many in the UK, even the privileged, already experience a reality of scarcity - of resources, of certainty, of jobs.** Their survey responses highlighted a stark focus on future supply of food, water, the need for self-sufficiency, to keep food supplies, manufacturing, and education close to hand to ensure survival, income, and the ability to pivot skills as technologies such as AI present both threat and opportunity.

And what do we need to be secure from? Climate change, pandemics, and cyber-warfare are planetary and systemic, not localised between enemies or isolated by borders, even as old geopolitical insecurities remain. This changes the nature of the threats we will face, and the meaning of the security young people seek. **The people we consulted saw the need to place human security at the centre of a future national strategy.**

### III. A Next Generations' Vision for 2045

#### *Implications for UK Strategy and Narrative, and Associated Policies, Alliances, Levers*

When you read the stories our participants tell about their imagined UK in 2045, the lessons they take from history and their desires for the future, there is real emotion. Hope and pride, but also anger. Anger about exclusion, injustice and the “betrayal of a generation.” And fear of a nation “clinging to comforting rhetoric and delusory mythologies of our past.” Our seminars underlined **the role of emotions in the national strategy landscape must be recognised.**

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*The United Kingdom's role in the world was one beset by high ideals and opportunities for a few, that were never really clear to the many. (35-44 year-old respondent)*

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But across the responses, much more unites than divides. There is a common theme around the need to develop a self-aware, mature and collective narrative of the UK as a nation, recognising our flaws and virtues in a measured way – without hyperbole. **There was a sense of a real opportunity in having a national dialogue based on a sense of tempered pride and pragmatic awareness of what can be achieved.** A balanced view of what the UK can contribute as a global power. And a desire to jointly imagine a better future and work towards it.

People believe there is opportunity for the UK to lead in a way that draws upon **our historical strengths – notably, in developing new ideas and new technologies (see Annex p16) - while flexibly responding to the world that's emerging.** Our [historians' seminars](#) underlined that people right across the political spectrum want the UK to be a force for good in the world: that an ethical foreign policy remains both plausible and popular.

Our respondents embrace the UK's historic values— law and order, freedom of thought, free enterprise, democracy — and wanted to extend them into the future. They saw this meaning the UK leading **on climate change, social justice, welfare, challenging aggression, responsible innovation, mediating conflict, and disrupting the spread of corruption and misinformation** around the world. The ways in which the UK can be a force for good in the world should (they told us) leverage attributes and assets that are overseen by the domestic ministries – **and national strategy needs to be seen as a whole of government endeavour.**

#### **How the UK should lead on the world stage**

**Our young respondents' replies emphasised in particular the need for the UK to lead by example, and to make values central.** They see the United Kingdom wielding its soft, indirect, networked power and leading through ideas, innovation, inspiration and influence. “Playing a cleverer game. Making ourselves useful.” In practice, this means avoiding diverting diplomatic energy into “winning” or proving Brexit a triumph. Instead, they emphasised the importance of about leading by example: through influence, information, and alliances, particularly making sure we don't haemorrhage our current level of relational influence in the decades ahead by cultivating close ties with existing and new allies.

A multilateral rules-based international system is in the interest of the UK as a player that is looked to as a leader and is invested in these institutions. Its legacy position on the UNSC means it is well-placed to be a leading player in reform and innovation of the UN system.

The UK needs to think more holistically about security and diplomatic influence as being a whole-of-society endeavour in which civil society and the public are vital elements. It will become more important to connect domestic policy and conversations at local or community level (for example *Global Manchester* or diaspora community groups) to big-picture conversations on international trade, security and peace. In a more complex, interconnected and multipolar world, the UK will need to build more complex multilateral alliances and governance systems and have strategies based on different relationships.

## Strengths to Invest In

Our historic strength in innovation should translate from past to future -- the UK has led, several young people highlighted, in “good ideas helping to shape the planet.” More specifically, our respondents see strength in influencing global trajectories around biosecurity, biodefence, cyber and other technology: positioning the UK as the face of responsible, cutting-edge innovation. Including pioneering robust biosecurity through UK ARPA, shaping new global standards on emerging security threats like cyber-weapons, and building a Global Partnership for AI (GPAI) and steering it towards activities such as robust scientific investigations into future trajectories of AI. The UK is one of the few countries with several globally renowned research institutes focusing avoiding and preparing for extreme risks, “once-in-a-century” events likely to happen in our lifetimes, an area of expertise that the future world will demand more.

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*Being at the forefront of the industrial revolution allowed the UK to shape the international order as it expanded. The nation at the forefront of the current technological revolution will have the ability to shape the nature of the order as it expands, not physically, but into cyberspace. Which will be equally as important over the coming centuries. (35-44-year-old)*

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English as the global lingua franca gives us unmatched potential to shape global culture and thus global values. This extends through our global institutions, such as the British Council and BBC, but also through football, art, music and entertainment. Other strengths come from less obvious places. In a world of rapid change, high uncertainty, and existential risk favours small, adaptive, nimble and responsive actors. Our diminishing scale may well become an inherent advantage.

## Choices to Make

Above all, our respondents urge the UK begin taking action now, building new alliances, sustaining existing relationships through hard work, getting ahead of resource scarcity, improving emergency preparedness, shoring up the supply chain and transitioning to a green economy before we're forced into it. **They fear the UK will refuse to accept the new reality, of a diminished status in an ever more volatile world, and avoid making the difficult strategic choices a meaningful future role demands.**

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*Even when the UK has had strategic reviews it has found it too politically difficult to make clear decisions and has hedged on them... But we're frankly at the point where any decision is better than none. The UK simply needs a strategy. (18-24 year-old respondent)*

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## IV. Doing National Strategy Differently

### *Recommendations on why and how to build participatory and anticipatory structures*

In conclusion: HMG must work for the long-term, counter-balancing the natural tendency of decision-makers to focus on the present. **This century requires an *anticipatory democracy*** (Toffler, 1970): a governance eco-system that is agile and encourages active stewardship of future generations' wellbeing. While experts will remain best positioned to inform the resources and capabilities, it is not only the right thing to do **but also a source of competitive advantage that open societies need to mobilise**, that citizens inform the principles, values and broad priorities of our national orientation and provide a solid foundation for action.

As the stewards of this process, civil servants and politicians will need leadership, design and delivery skills around complex systems thinking, foresight, analysis (of history, science and technology) and citizen engagement. **This Integrated Review is an opportunity to take a major step forward in exploring integrated, future-facing and agile future national security strategy and policymaking.** But it is only the start of a possible journey of reform – below we have identified what next steps HMG can actively take to support this agenda over 2021, using the four elements of the SOIF Foresight Governance Capability Matrix:

#### **A. Programmes, Policy and Regulation: *future generations and existential risk***

Government should have **some obligated mode for building in future generations**. Long-term policy making, that looks beyond 2045 for the UK to be in a good position internationally for the rest of the century, requires **environments driven by outcomes, not targets**, including:

- **Set new obligations** on Ministers to act for, and Select Committees to scrutinise, the long term
- **Pre-emptively evaluate major policy decisions** (including infrastructure and R&D) for potential harm, unintended consequences, implications (including for unborn generations) and intergenerational fairness. [SOIF and Gulbenkian](#) have developed an Intergenerational Fairness assessment framework to support policy development ex ante and scrutiny ex post.
- Enable cross-nation governance innovation exchange especially Wales' regulatory FG Act.

**National security scope and community should be widened to a concept of National Strategy** across whole of government and beyond, open to innovation:

- Take previous integrated approaches (like Fusion and One HMG) much further into a **truly cross-Whitehall strategic endeavour with incentives for genuine deep collaboration**.
- Integrate domestic ministries (MOJ, BEIS, HO) and local authorities into a national strategy approach given the communities, levers and assets they contribute.
- **Align civil service reform efforts** (including around redistribution out of London, procurement and financing) to ensure support this agenda, and also reflect in design and implementation of big UK policy events like COP26 and upcoming complex policy decisions like deterrence.
- **Harness the power of big data carefully in engaging with the future.** Technical mechanisms, like forecasting tournaments and algorithms, are ineffective solutions to democratic problems.

**A greater, consistent focus on (and investment in) UK soft power** and leadership. Build the apparatus of values-based foreign policy and levers of UK soft power, with a special focus on alliances around culture, youth and universities/research. Recognise the community role of the arts sector: develop new approaches for mutual collaboration on overseas policy across different UK communities, e.g. in "Capital of Culture", regional, city or borough endeavours.

The national strategy should take a lead in ensuring that (existential) **risk management improves globally by setting a risk budget and encouraging UK and international commitments to spend a target amount of GDP on risk prevention.**

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*“We need to make the whole endeavour of thinking about the UK’s role in the world more systematic and open” (former #10 Foreign Policy Adviser)*

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## **B. People and Skills: building futures literacy and systems thinking**

It is important to build the capability and skills of the national strategy community as well as wider civil service. Ideas include:

- **Broaden policymakers’ use of Horizon Scanning and Foresight** (including science and technology trends) through supporting work of Chief Scientific Advisers and GO-Science.
- **Radically improve the teaching of strategic thinking skills** (and associated leadership, whole-system analysis, iterative learning through implementation, listening skills) to civil servants, Ministers and MPs. Reward progress in HR L&D, hiring and performance decisions.
- Support the UK public (including businesses, citizens, universities) and the excellent locally employed staff in embassies worldwide to build these skills. **Building the skills for national resilience and dialogue is a whole of society effort.**
- **Empower through education young people** to understand the most effective pathways for change and to articulate themselves on the issues they care about by leaning on fact-based information, as opposed to misinformation.

## **C. Communications and Culture: valuing the longer-term and others’ contributions**

The scale of the task – to build a domestic dialogue and relative consensus around the UK’s role in the world – is significant. Building a wider and more diverse process, that engages with citizens in a two-way exchange, is a much bigger ambition than for the Integrated Review. This will require – as is already recognised in many of the key HMG institutions – behaviour and culture change. Ideas to support this transition include:

- Develop a participatory long-term policy making guide for the Civil Service/incorporate approaches into the Green and Magenta books and recognise successful endeavours and innovations.
- Incorporate “stewardship” and “future generations” into **purpose and mission of civil service.**
- **Establish a presumption of listening first:** understand the places where people exchange (and self-organise) and the vocabulary and topics covered. Build upon an understanding of different communities (including Generation Z) perspectives.
- **Provide an inclusive platform for young people – and local communities and religious groups** among others - from across all of the UK to debate, discuss and decide important issues.

## **D. Institutions, Structures and Processes: not a silver bullet, but still important**

The current reforms within the civil service open up the opportunity for change. Ideas include:

- Give the ‘**Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission**’ a **long-term brief** - including working out new oversight mechanisms to represent Future Generations.
- **Reorient the Treasury** and machinery of government around a long-term, systems approach with stronger consideration given to second order effects, **and a new National Strategy Committee.**
- Incorporate many of these functions and skills into the new **FCDO and a re-energised and reformed diplomatic machine.**
- Establish an independent **Chief Risk Officer** (CRO) and associated unit to carry out depoliticised risk assessments, support departments and hold the minister to account for its risk response plans.
- **Drive international institutional innovation** – explore bringing the representation of future generations into international democratic institutions.



## V. In Conclusion

### *Where 'A National Strategy for the Next Generations' is going next*

The coalition we have already assembled behind this project suggests a groundswell of interest in doing national strategy differently. While we hope to influence the Integrated Review and the workstreams flowing from it, strategy must be understood as a gradual and constant process, and our 'theory of change' is long-term and around changing norms and expectations of how the UK's role in the world is set. While experts will remain best positioned to inform the capabilities and resources, it is only right that citizens inform the principles, values and broad priorities of our national orientation.

The NSxNG coalition believes that a future national strategy should:

- Represent the interest of future generations
- Be participative, and support citizens to have a voice in national futures
- Build a more meaningful, united and plausible national narrative
- Draw on past, present and future insights

Through 2021, in Phase II of this Programme, we aim to prototype what this future national strategy could look like, with the following outcomes:

1. To understand the environment and shaping forces of our future context; to develop a level-headed and open-eyed appreciation of external realities and risks; and thereby prepare for and navigate alternative realities and potential disruptions.
  - Outcome: a national strategy that is **more focused on being nimble and quick to respond to changing times ahead, instead of consuming energy on narrow interests and sectional differences.**
2. To collectively dream of a better future for the UK in the world, and harness energy, opportunities and ideas to make that a reality.
  - Outcome: a national strategy that is **more visionary, with a stronger focus on the UK's history of innovation and good ideas, capable of mobilising and inspiring people in all sections of society.**
3. To help build the institutional capability and anticipatory governance structures within the government to flex and adapt, as well as building the futures literacy of the national strategy community (broadly defined)
  - Outcome: a **national strategy apparatus in government able to convene, co-create and deliver a participatory, resilient and agile National Strategy for the Next Generations.**

These are our goals for 2021 and beyond. We know there are many barriers to involving the public in foreign policy, defence, development and security. But by combining different data and approaches, we are designing and piloting a model that is applicable beyond the UK. The programme continues over the next couple of months as our proof-of-concept that a different, and more participative approach to developing national strategy, can be done and can yield better results, both for Government and for citizens.

*We will share our final Phase 1 paper on 15<sup>th</sup> October. This paper is written by School of International Futures. While it is based on inputs from our NSxNG coalition partners, responsibility for the final product, editorial decisions and any errors is SOIF's alone.*



## Annex I: What's unique about our programme?

Whilst many organisations and groups are exploring the UK's recovery and reorientation post-COVID, this work takes a longer-term perspective and focuses primarily not on the UK's domestic situation but its wider role in the world. We believe it is distinctive in 3 ways:

1. Marshalling public participation, applied history and strategic foresight in the design of the programme.
2. Truly looking out a generation to the longer-term future.
3. Explicitly bringing in outside and new, different voices - but without a particular drum to beat. We aren't an advocacy group trying to get HMG to prioritise climate action or human rights. We are listening to what less-heard voices tell us and acting as a conduit (and compressor) for getting them directly to HMG.

## Annex II: Initial survey feedback

**I. Who were they?** Half of our initial round of survey participants were 24 and under, with a wide range of expertise and interest in the subject of national strategy (0 no expertise, 10 very high).

For example:

- *Low expertise but. moderate interest as it will have an effect on mine and future generations. (3 out of 10)*
- *Strategic studies / a vague interest in global current affairs. (5 out of 10)*
- *Interested greatly in policy and keep up to date with most current affairs. I studied a degree in environmental science and therefore have a great interest in environmental policy and its influence on world current affairs. (7 out of 10)*
- *I don't have a particular area of expertise. I am interested in popular participation and the way in which democracy can be most beneficial to all. (4 out of 10)*
- *Primarily in Environmental policy and Climate Change, however I am always seeking to remain informed of wider global and national issues across the world - not only with regards to the UK. (8 out of 10)*
- *Interested in climate change and tackling inequality. Very interested in improving wellbeing and giving people opportunities. Have campaigned and worked with progressive organisations like Restless, OFOC, Youth Access that are focused on global or national issues. (2 out of 10)*

**II. The world in 2045: drivers and trends** Exploring drivers and trends, we asked our network and our survey respondents which issues they felt were currently overlooked or set to have the greatest impact on the UK's standing in the world by 2045. The aim was to understand the external environment and shaping forces behind the future context for the UK's global role. A sizeable majority mentioned **climate change** and its impacts (from migration to resource scarcity). Others regularly mentioned were the continued rise/impact of **China**, and a more **multipolar** world with less sovereignty/less power held at nation-state level (and more at level of cities, regions, etc).

More original (and perhaps of more interest) were the emphasis on 4 areas:

### 1. Politico-social disunity and the decline of the nation state:

- Respondents identified that **identity, values and social cohesion** would be major future drivers of change. *“I expect that the UK will struggle with its identity going forward” ... “in the UK and abroad, there will be less of a national identity to rally around” ... “There is a lot of anger, particularly from young people, in society these days” ...*
- Populism, whether around climate issues, migration or national identity, were all flagged as rising issues. *“I think **rising inequality in the UK will have the biggest impact on the UK’s future between now and 2045.**”*
- They drew attention to the impact by 2045 of **state of the Union** questions, specifically an independent Scotland. One 18-24 y.o. said: *“confusion about the Union and national identity will become increasingly more difficult to align... If a population does not feel united then how can a nation progress to sorting bigger challenges? If the UK wants to be a part of the force for good in the world these need to be straight.”* Another commented: *“I doubt there will be a United Kingdom by 2045. I expect that the 4 current nations of the UK will be strong independent countries.”*
- Some explored the **future of the nation state** and where political power would lie by 2045: *“I feel it is very naive to expect the nation state of 2045 to resemble the nation state of 2020. Power is held at multiple levels from the subnational to the supranational, and the concentration of interest on national level power is very old fashioned.” “Decentralized organisations, applications and finance in an accelerating world will be used as a method of providing increased power to the average citizen, though group accountability and transparency... policymakers will need to adjust to the reduced influence they may wield” (18-24 y.o.)*

**2. Resource scarcity and the future of jobs** were highlighted by a strikingly large number of younger respondents, who were concerned about supply chains, food supplies, self-sufficiency in the event of major disruptions and increased conflict.

- A number called for increased UK-based manufacturing industries.
- Young respondents emphasised their concerns around the future of jobs. *“the UK needs to better prepare for the future of jobs. COVID-19 has highlighted the limited resilience of many industries and how many employees do not have the skills needed to pivot industries.” “AI presents both the greatest threat and the greatest opportunity going forward”.*
- Several also flagged the impact of **global population growth** on migration.

### 3. The changed future of security

- *“we need institutional change to rethink what we need to be ‘secure from’”.*
- The **meaning of security**: *“What does security mean to people today, and what will it mean to them in a generation? Is it important to sensitise the public to issues around their own (in)security in all its diverse forms?”*
- An emphasis on both geopolitical threats (Russia, China) and the rise of **new technologies in conflict and cyber** (*“the new way of cyber war will change the dynamic of modern conflict.” (18-24 y.o., female); “as the world develops so will warfare, and the UK should prepare mostly for cyber threats.” (18-24 y.o.)*

**4. Values vs interests:** younger respondents with limited foreign policy knowledge/experience clearly understood the need to promote and defend UK interests, but values came up time and again (see *2045 Visions* below).

- One respondent wrote: **“The greatest challenges ahead are systemic and planetary - we have to identify British self-interest in tackling those, and we can only tackle those by rebuilding an international order, using diplomacy and whatever strategic leverage we have at our command.”**

### III. The world in 2045: shocks, disruptions, uncertainties

Survey respondents placed emphasis on shocks and disruptions around resource/supply restrictions and a sped-up climate change. This table summarises their inputs:

Resource disruptions	Climate	Political / Geopolitical	Conflict
<p>“A major shock to international <b>food supply lines</b>. This is most likely to come through an unexpected natural event - a global collapse of grain harvests, a volcanic eruption, etc.”</p>	<p>“Feedback loops bringing us rapidly to a point of devastation in the <b>climate emergency</b>”</p> <p>A key uncertainty is <b>whether climate challenges will actually help drive a more globalized governance</b> - and if so, how far driven by states, vs citizen or organizational networks?</p>	<p>A break down of the Union</p> <p>The disappearance of <b>liberal democracy...</b> or its resurgence.</p> <p>A full withdrawal of the United States.</p> <p>A fully integrated Europe</p>	<p>“<b>A 1914 moment</b> where an insane, unnecessary war happens owing to a dysfunctional international system.”</p>
<p>“Disruption to supply of food if (when) global warming causes crops to fail”</p>	<p>“<b>New tech</b> leading to different choices around carbon and/or around the global distribution of wealth”</p>	<p>“the <b>commercialisation of space</b> ... corporations gaining a foothold in this new market first and being able to command greater priority than governments.”</p>	<p>“<b>Unexpected and escalating nuclear conflict</b>”</p>

### IV. What lessons can we draw from the past for the UK’s future?

- “Being at the forefront of the **industrial revolution** allowed the UK to shape the international order as it expanded globally. The nation at the forefront of the current technological revolution will have the ability to shape the nature of the order as it expands, not physically, but into cyberspace. Which will be equally as important over the coming centuries.”
- “I hope it's not the **fall of Rome** - a powerful capital rendered helpless after centuries of regional underdevelopment leaves the rest of the collective weak and unable to support the centre from external influences.”
- “**WW2**, the idea that we require strong relationships and coalitions all the time, whether in peace or conflict. We need this in order to maintain our influence on the world stage.”

...“The lesson is that sometimes we must be willing to fight for peace, and we must understand when the correct time to do so is” ... “I believe the edge gained through the allied code breaking at Bletchley Park under Alan Turing was significant in changing the way war is conducted. I believe the UK should be **looking to anticipate the next developments in technology** rather than simply looking to keep pace with current trends. Although difficult to predict, I foresee Artificial Intelligence radically changing the way in which strategic decisions will be made.”

- “The **early 1960s planning and haggling over Britain's place in the world**, particularly the Future Policy Study 1960-70. The discussions, evaluation and compromise that took place is an excellent example of a rigorous assessment of how to moderately plan for the future.”
- “The lesson that you should learn the lessons from history. Anglo-Scotland should **take a leaf out of Germany's book, and face its history**. It is only in this way that it will be able to have an easy, constructive and honest relationship with the family of nations.”
- “The UK learned in the latter half of the 20th century **that free peoples would not accept being ruled from Westminster**. The right to self-determination was worth almost any cost, and cooperation was paramount. Looking forward, we should remember the lesson that cooperation among nations, on equal terms, is the best way of achieving our goals.”
- “With the loss of empire and standing, the UK needs to **look at how other nations that have had their standing destroyed and rebuilt – Germany and Japan are good examples**, i.e. how did they rebuild their economies and standing after WW2? The UK needs to reflect on its diminished position and decide on how it wants to rebuild itself, with a stronger economy and a realistic position in today's and tomorrow's regional and global context.”

“the history is present in Whitehall: it's sub-conscious and underpins the assumptions that frame policy. What Nina Silove would call 'Grand Behaviour'” - NSxNG young historians' seminar

## V. UK Visions – Next Generation perspectives

We asked the following question in our survey to explore views around the 'Force for Good' agenda within HMG and what it means to young citizens: “Thinking ahead to 2045, what would it mean for you for the UK to be a force for good in the world?”

Replies emphasised **the need for the UK to lead by example, and to make values central**:

### UK LEADING BY EXAMPLE

- “The UK should strive to become a **pioneer and leader for change**, a nation that others can look at and follow.” (18-24 y.o.)
- “Leading by example to work towards a more **peaceful** world that looks after the planet and its people” (18-24 y.o., female)
- “Acting as a **mediator** in disputes between other nations. Taking a progressive lead and setting an example on issues such as climate change, social justice and welfare.” (25-34 y.o., female)

- “Three things: leadership on the **climate**, leadership on **justice** (particularly tax and financial justice), leadership on **poverty alleviation** at home and abroad.”
- “Maintainer of a **rules based international** order to the best of its ability (a Western perception of one) and a champion of humanitarian values, in balance with more traditional aspects of power and interest.”
- “The key characteristics of the British role throughout our recent history are 'leadership' and 'global presence'”
- “The UK should look to be the voice of reason throughout the world.”

## VALUES AT THE HEART OF FOREIGN POLICY

- “I would be **very proud** of the UK if it were a force for good in the world. I would like to see it lead the way on issues of sustainability and social justice.” (survey respondent, 25-34)
- “To be a regular contributor to **humanitarian aid missions** and to challenge the aggression of other global powers, particularly China and Russia” (respondent, 18-24 y.o.)
- “If the UK continues to **advocate and promote the values** it historically has (law and order, freedom of thought and worship, free trade and enterprise, democracy etc.) then it cannot help but be a force for good.” (survey respondent, 25-34)
- “I believe that the people in this country are **empathetic and passionate about the freedoms and liberties that we often take for granted**, so I can see this translating to the UK being a force for good” (respondent, 18-24)
- “The UK has used its power as a force for good, disrupting the spread of corrupt regimes, providing humanitarian aid and mediating the aggression of other global powers.” (18-24 y.o.)
- Levelling-up domestically and promoting the SDGs overseas were also cited multiple times as examples of the kind of role the UK should play.

Other responses included:

*“It would mean **for the UK to do much as it does currently**. For us to act morally and to protect the free peoples of the world wherever they might reside. However we could be a force for good without entering into larger conflict. For example very few, if any, could argue that the fight against piracy or drugs is morally wrong. To be an international "police force", protecting the high seas from criminal activity.”*

*“To **bring stability wherever we can**. We have some fantastic skills and specialisations that should be used to benefit people from less fortunate areas. Linking in maintaining security on the world stage, particularly in the maritime domain, making sure we allow freedom of navigation and trade.”*

*“For a UK to be a force for good it would need to: maintain the security of the world’s oceans, protecting the rights of ocean-goers. Insist on immediate and effective policies protecting the climate. Be a champion of human rights across the world being resolute in sanctions on those who would otherwise neglect such rights. Promote stability in areas where currently instability prevails displacing large quantities of people.”*

*“It will depend on the geopolitics of 2045, but it would be helpful for the UK to have more and broader alliances which cross regional and cultural blocs - as opposed to presenting themselves as representatives of a European liberal and (post)imperial hegemon. It must also **rid itself of the habit of supporting brutal and fascist "strong men" such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in our day**, or whoever the 2045 equivalent is, in a misguided belief*

that that will provide regional security. Rather it should attempt to support security by encouraging de-escalation and detente between regional powers.”

“For the UK to be a force for the positive, not negative, we need the UK to be outward looking rather than pull up the drawbridge, **a greater tendency towards internationalism, globalism without neglecting our nation state.**”

“We need **more long-term thinking in policy-making**. Many of the risks that affect us are global in nature - the UK should build on its strong research base in extreme risks, and become a global leader in preparedness for the volatile century ahead.”

“I think the UK's uses will remain in the **protection of smaller, less developed countries** through counter terrorism, counter narcotics and general anti trafficking campaigns, however I do also believe more violent threats will appear as tensions rise and believe UK will step up and be at the forefront of dealing with more traditional war also.”

“**Focus on education, renewable energy and social / community healthcare**. We should invest significantly in preparing for the future of these three areas and **help other countries to do the same, exporting the know-how and associated products and services.**”

“Reached a more durable internal political settlement - renewed democracy, devolved power, more balanced political system - that has accepted its limits, utilizing its residual strengths - language, cultural expertise, global connectivity - to promote democracy, civil rights, new economic models of well-being and ecological viability. **A country more akin to a Norway or Denmark than either a regional or global power.**”

“Become exemplary at the things that we already do well: **provide space and funding for research and innovation and to be a beacon of how to use technology for social good**. If we focus on how to improve our own society then we can become a blueprint for how others could follow: could we have a genuinely tech-driven health service that works, an education system that works? Can we continue to lead the way in terms of scientific research and share the benefits of that with the world?”

## VI. UK’s role over 2020-2045: making the right strategic choices

Asking respondents to draw on their view of what the UK’s likely role might be over the period 2020-45, we asked: ‘Imagine that it is the year 2045. You are telling a teenager about the role the UK has played over the last twenty-five years. What do you say?’

Responses to this question divided the optimists from the pessimists - suggesting both the opportunities and risks ahead in the period 2020-45 to make the right strategic choices and set the right strategic direction:

The Optimists	The Pessimists
<p>“I would want to say that the UK has done our best to confront the <b>challenges in the spirit of the WW2 generation</b>, shown some backbone and has come through the other side having played a crucial role involving ourselves in <b>humanitarian disaster relief</b> across the globe.” (18-24 y.o.)</p>	<p>“There was too <b>much focus on the past and dwelling on issues</b>. Not accepting changes and taking strides that the UK pioneered for most of history. The ageing population and lack of focus on future generations inhibited growth.” (survey respondent, 18-24)</p>



<p>“Our role will depend <b>whether we can find a way to maximise our thought leadership</b>. If we wait for an orthodoxy to develop and then follow it, we will be a middling power with very little relevance.... If we <b>can state and then pursue an ambitious and proactive view, building on our inbuilt advantages</b> (the language, our central bank, a highly educated population) we may yet operate as something like a <b>Norway or Singapore but with true global leadership</b>: i.e. an individual player recognised as innovative and forward-looking, helping to shape what we see as a better future.”</p> <p>“Maintaining some elements of the old narrative (Britain being a leader in a global system), the new narrative should circle around Britain being a form of network. Though materially no longer a great power, Britain acted as a <b>conduit and network facilitator</b> amongst various states.”</p>	
<p>“The UK has led the way in <b>raising the quality of life</b> for its citizens regardless of background. It has strengthened its social safety nets which in turn has led to improved innovation. The UK is now a technological leader in the Fourth Industrial Revolution with a skilled workforce it can rely on.”</p>	<p>“Reality belatedly arrived in the UK and the country had recognised that it was no longer a major world power. It was not just the Government that had changed mindset, but also <b>the people had changed, with the younger generation coming through</b> and the influence of immigration.”</p> <p>“Without having the same international influence which the UK had in the 20th century, it has <b>struggled to make its voice heard and have much of an effect globally.</b>” (25-34 y.o., female)</p>
<p>“In those days we thought countries were really important and special - much much more so than your city or your continent or your language. People still believed in the idea that nations had absolute control over what took place within them, and none over what took place elsewhere. ... The result was a strong feeling of alienation, as people invested their hopes in national governments and then didn't understand why they weren't able to deliver. ... It looked like the UK might go this way for a while but ultimately they did start to realise that the world they now lived in required them to play a cleverer game. They invested in things like Peacekeeping and made themselves useful. We looked past the level of the nation</p>	<p>“My expectation is that the UK will, in 2045, <b>be recovering from a period of 20 years of moribund insignificance brought on by populism and its neglect of real-world future challenges</b>. By then climate change in particular will be biting and collaborative action underway in which the UK (or perhaps its separate constituent nations by then) will play a role.”</p>

<p>state and realised that diplomacy is something you can do with cities, institutions, people and organisations - not just with states. And <b>where people did not share our values the UK became recognised like Norway before it as a great mediator and builder of bridges.</b>"</p>	
<p>"It was amazing to witness <b>how fast the UK pivoted</b> towards tackling the national issues that brought us to this point"</p> <p>"The UK has carefully directed and monitored its steady decline from the position of power it held in the 20th century. It <b>has adjusted its ambitions to be within its reach</b>, and still enjoys a position of influence globally, which it uses to promote its fundamental values"</p>	<p>"I would apologise. <b>Short termism and knee jerk politics</b> have damaged the prospects of our successors already. Any success in collaboration for a better future would be better than nothing but likely not to have undone all the damage we have done."</p>

### VIII. Policy and operational implications for HMG

What implications might be drawn from these survey findings and our work with partners and the NSxNG network so far? Prior to our workshops and 'mini' Citizens Assembly, these are necessarily preliminary.

**i. Measured orientation, posture and national narrative:** Our seminar series highlighted that UK citizens right across the political spectrum support the UK being a force for good in the world – although they define it differently. Many respondents commented on the UK's struggle to accept imperial/post-colonial decline or manage its way into a new role. *"I feel the Dutch have demonstrated a positive example of how a former imperial superpower can transition to lower-mid level force for good in the world with dignity. Russia is an example of what happens if you do not manage that transition well."* (respondent, age 25-34).

In our survey, we asked about what a **new national narrative** might look like - helping respondents think about overall orientation, positioning, and the domestic debate around/ framing of the UK's future role in the world. Respondents emphasised two striking areas:

- a. **The potential for the UK to lead in tech and innovation:** Several young respondents emphasised this. *"Tech Britain"* was a strapline suggested by one young respondent; another, *"That we are more innovative and technologically advanced than ever before"*. An interesting theme from many young survey respondents was the extent to which they saw the UK as historically an innovator - not just in technologies but in new ideas. *"I see the UK as an innovator in the past that led the world to change and adopt new ideas, methods, products and systems"* (aged 18-24 y.o.) ... *"We are the country that embraces the future but adopts it alongside our past"* (another 18-24 y.o.) ... *"the narrative of British history is of good ideas helping to shape the planet: the industrial revolution, Adam Smith and the 'Invisible Hand', the NHS etc."* (25-34y.o.)
- b. **The importance of speed of adaptation:** given the pace of change in the external environment. A common theme emerging from young respondents was the sense

that change is happening fast and the UK needs to up the pace of change in its response to avoid haemorrhaging influence: *“I think change should occur relatively quickly as other regions of the world gain global influence, we will lose it”* (18-24 y.o.); *“If the UK is not able to keep up with the pace of change it may be 'left behind’”* (18-24 y.o.). One respondent suggested the tagline: *“The UK - small but nimble. Adaptable to a changing world and seizing opportunities.”* Others suggested: *“The UK is a **leader in innovation, security, and human rights**. It does business across the world and is known for its strong resilient government, diplomatic relationships, quality of outputs both goods and services, and its technologically advanced security forces who deploy across the globe to enhance peace and prosperity.”*

## ii. Make the hard choices:

People recognise that decision-making in this area presents **dilemmas**. One survey respondent (25-34) urged Government to take decisions instead of fudge them: *“Even when the UK has had strategic reviews it has found it too politically difficult to make clear decisions and has hedged on them. For example: - the UK has not decided whether wants to deepen its strategic partnership with the EU, deepen its special relationship with the US, diversify its relationships and become “Global Britain” or retreat inwards and become insular Britain. Instead it has tried to do all four in different respects. The UK has not decided whether it wants to continue to maintain at least the illusion of a position as a top tier global power, in which case it will probably need to invest more than it currently does in its armed forces and will definitely need to invest far more than it does in soft power and diplomatic capabilities, or whether it wishes to manage its transition towards a mid-level power. Instead it has tried to do the former on the latter’s budget and has looked silly. I feel that the UK’s future will be best served by accepting the fact that it has now fallen to the status of mid-level power, and to manage that transition. But we’re frankly at the point where any decision is better than none. The UK simply needs a strategy.”*

Another commented: *“I think the UK Government has a mindset that precludes any **new choices that have a realistic chance of success, and we need to wait until the next generation to come through**. All today’s Government can do is to manage national debt and not seek to play expensive status-seeking roles in the world.”* (survey respondent, 55-64 y.o.)

## iii. Avoid ceding ground to others in a fast-changing world:

NSxNG coalition members underlined the dangers of ceding strategic ground to others whilst pursuing post-Brexit related objectives (around trade deals for example), by:

- Using **soft power assets**: English as the global lingua franca was mentioned frequently: *“The UK therefore has an unmatched potential to shape global culture and thus global values.”*
- Using **existing relational power strengths**: *“We need to get used to the idea that clout is no longer going to be something given to us for who we are but something we earn in what we do. We need to make ourselves useful. We also need to make new and broader alliances, and ditch some of our more problematic allies.”*

## iv. Get ahead of resource scarcity and diversify supply chains to protect from unpredictable shocks.

## v. Make the green transition:

*“We need a green new deal to get well ahead of the transition to the green economy. **We can change the economy we have or have change forced upon us, and the latter will be much less pleasant**. We also need to think outside the growth paradigm and consider new models for the economy such as Raworth’s Doughnut.”*

## IX. Why a public participation approach to national strategy? Survey and network views

*“In this changing world order national resilience is seen as being the bedrock of strategic advantage; resilience of society not just government. And so, we need **greater societal participation in our future strategy making** to build this national resilience.”*

*“A new national strategy presents a great opportunity for learning from the past and **ensuring that all citizens’ views are included in national decision-making**, especially those who will experience the effects of the new strategy throughout their lives - young people....it is vital to upskill young people and build their knowledge and understanding of British democracy and Britain’s role in the world”*

*“The experts know best, but **if your people aren’t convinced**, how do you expect them to support you?” (18-24 y.o., female)*

*“National strategies will need to **build greater national trust**. Without this trust the types of innovative strategies and approaches we need to maintain our advantage (including levelling up or sustaining the Union) look lame.”*

*“Ultimately national strategy should put the citizens of that nation first and foremost, and this is hard to achieve if it is not **aligned with the personal bond the individual feels to the nation**.” (respondent, 18-24 y.o.)*

*“here in the UK Brexit opened up radically different, and on some points hostile, visions of what the national interest might be... **the old elite development of grand strategy is vulnerable to forces within, as much as outside, the nation**. Which makes a process of public engagement, as proposed here, absolutely vital” (NSxNG partner).*

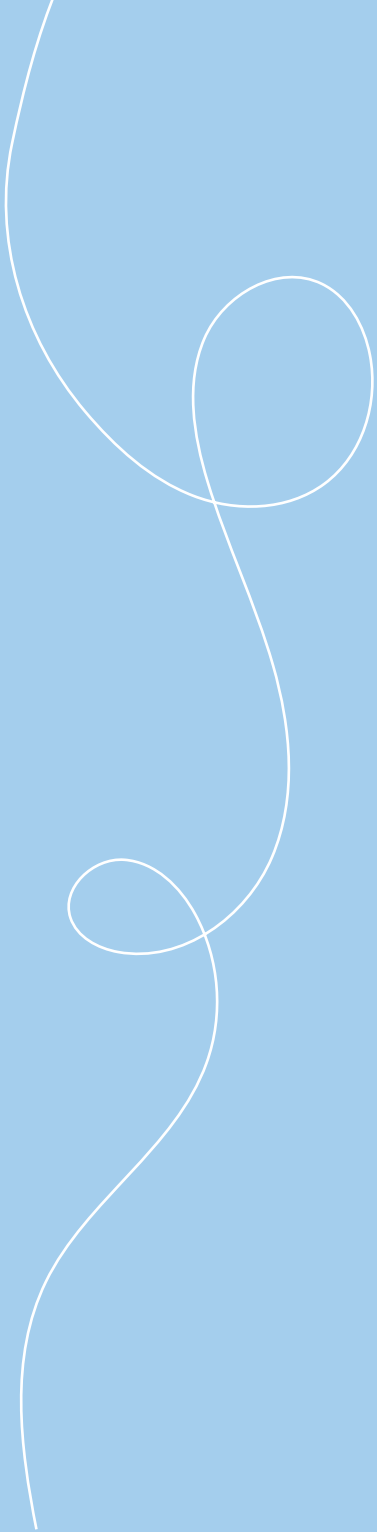
*it’s the Rawlsian theory of justice: **do unto future generations what you would have had past generations do unto you...**”*

*“We can provide the perspective of youth. **We need to be asked** to be able to contribute.”*

*“What do you think me (or my peers) can contribute? A perspective that is **currently ignored**.”*

*“what’s dangerous is if you start from policy you don’t know **how that policy conversation sits within lived emotional experience**. Everybody views it through their local lens of lived experience”.*

ENDS



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