



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF  
RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

## **Session 5: What does it mean to be a global alliance in an age of growing nationalism and regionalism?**

Panellists:

**Professor Anne Ferguson-Smith**

*Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, Arthur Balfour Professor of  
Genetics, University of Cambridge*

**Professor Bhaskar Vira**

*Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education (incoming), Professor of Political  
Economy, University of Cambridge*

**Professor Pauline Rose**

*Professor of International Education and Co-Director of the  
Cambridge Global Challenges Strategic Research Initiative,  
University of Cambridge*

Moderator:

**Professor Stephen J. Toope**

*Vice-Chancellor, University of Cambridge*

*(no paper)*

## Session 5: What does it mean to be a global alliance in an age of growing nationalism and regionalism?

The changing geopolitical landscape is making it more complicated to pursue the international research collaboration that is critical to our mission as global, research-intensive universities. Increased tensions between nations and alliances have increased the risks we face in working internationally. At the same time, universities in many countries are operating in political contexts in which arguments of national self-interest are receiving greater emphasis in government and public discourse. The Presidents will hear from a panel about the nature of these challenges and what practical measures are available to us as leading national universities and a global alliance. The subsequent discussion will begin with Mr. Don Filer (YALE), Professor Fujii (UTOK) and Professor Phakeng (UCT) sharing their different institutional perspectives.

### Speakers



#### **Professor Anne Ferguson-Smith**

*Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, Arthur Balfour Professor of Genetics, University of Cambridge*

Professor Anne Ferguson-Smith is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and International Partnerships at the University of Cambridge. She is the Arthur Balfour Professor of Genetics (since 2015). Formerly, she was the University's Head of the Department of Genetics. She became the President of the Genetics Society in 2021, and is a member of the UKRI BBSRC Council.

Professor Ferguson-Smith is a mammalian developmental geneticist and epigeneticist. An expert on genomic imprinting, her team studies the epigenetic control of genome function with particular emphasis on epigenetic inheritance. Her group is made up of both experimental and computational scientists and current research focuses on three themes: (i) stem cells and the epigenetic programme, (ii) functional genomics and epigenomics, and (iii) the interaction between the environment and development, health and disease within and across generations.

She was elected to EMBO in 2006, joined the UK Academy of Medical Sciences and the Society of Biology in 2012, and became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2017. In 2014 she was awarded the Women in Science Heirloom Award for contributions to life sciences. In 2019 she was awarded the Feldberg Prize and in 2021 the Buchanan Medal and the Society for Reproduction and Fertility, Anne McLaren Distinguished Scientist Award. Professor Ferguson-Smith became Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research in 2021 and was appointed to the Research and International Partnerships role in 2022. She is a Fellow of Darwin College.



**Professor Bhaskar Vira**

*Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education (incoming), Head of Department of Geography, Professor of Political Economy, University of Cambridge*

Professor Vira's research focuses on the political economy of environment and development. He is concerned, in particular, with the often-hidden costs of environmental and developmental processes, and the need for scholarship to draw attention to the distributional consequences of public policy choices. His work focuses on the ways in which large-scale economic, societal and environmental transformations are governed, the values that frame how human societies engage with each other and with nature, and the networks of

formal and informal institutions that are intertwined in everyday decision making across a variety of spatial and temporal scales.

He has led large-scale intellectual and policy-oriented projects that involve interdisciplinary conversations across the natural and social sciences. Trained as an economist, but with a portfolio of research that now engages across the critical social sciences and their interface with the biological and environmental natural sciences, he inhabits the interdisciplinary intellectual 'borderlands' of a number of disciplines (Human Geography, Development Studies, Institutional Economics, Environmental Studies and Conservation), while being firmly rooted in the political economy tradition.

Professor Vira was Founding Director (until September 2019) of the University of Cambridge Conservation Research Institute, one of the University's Interdisciplinary Research Centres. He is closely involved with the Cambridge Conservation Initiative, and the Global Food Security Interdisciplinary Research Centre at Cambridge, and also works with the Centre for Science and Policy, Cambridge Zero, and the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership.

He has contributed to international science-policy panels, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the UK National Ecosystem Assessment, and IUFRO-led Global Forest Expert Panels. In 2018, he was honoured with the Royal Geographical Society's Busk Medal, in recognition of his contributions to interdisciplinary research on environment and development.

His research links across the Department's thematic research groups, with a focus on Vital Geographies. His projects also relate to work in Infrastructural Geographies and the Geographies of Knowledge. He is a member of the Political Ecology research group, which meets regularly to discuss research in progress, to hear visiting speakers, or to discuss published papers.



**Professor Pauline Rose**

*Professor of International Education, Faculty of Education,  
Co-Director of the Cambridge Global Challenges Strategic Research  
Initiative, University of Cambridge*

Professor Pauline Rose is Professor of International Education and Director of the Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre in the Faculty of Education. She is also Senior Research Fellow at the UK Department for International Development. Prior to joining Cambridge, Pauline was Director and Senior Policy Analyst of the EFA Global Monitoring Report – during which time she led reports on youth, skills and work, on teaching and learning, on governance, on marginalization and on conflict – and Reader in international education and development at the University of Sussex.

Pauline is author of numerous publications on issues that examine educational policy and practice, including in relation to inequality, financing and governance, democratization, and the role of international aid.

Her contribution to large collaborative research programmes with teams in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, close work with international aid donors and non-governmental organisations, and provision of evidence-based policy aimed at education for all, has focussed on making a positive impact on the lives of the world's poorest 3 billion people.



**Professor Stephen J. TOOPE**

*Vice-Chancellor, University of Cambridge  
Chair, IARU*

Professor Toope returned to Cambridge as Vice-Chancellor in 2017 after a distinguished career as a scholar and academic leader. His academic interests are in international law, human rights, international legal theory and international development.

Born in Montreal, Canada (1958), he studied History and Literature at Harvard, before earning degrees in common law and civil law at McGill University (1983). He completed his PhD at Trinity College, Cambridge (1987).

After leaving Cambridge he worked as Law Clerk for the Chief Justice of Canada. In 1991 he became Research Director at the Office of the Special Representative concerning the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People. He then served as Dean of Law at McGill University (1994-1999) and in 2006 became the President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of British Columbia (2006-2014). He later became Director of the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs (2015-2017).

Professor Toope has also worked as a consultant to Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Canadian International Development Agency, and a number of United Nations' agencies. In 1994 he was a delegate on the UN's observer mission to the first post-apartheid South African General Election. Between 2004 and 2007 he was Chair and Rapporteur of the UN's Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances.

He has been Chair of the Board of Universities Canada and President of Canada's Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. He also served as Director of the Public Policy Forum, the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, and of the Royal Conservatory of Music.