



Future
Governance
Forum

THREE YEAR STRATEGY

Transforming the state
to renew the nation

April 2026

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Introduction



Nathan Yeowell,
Founder and
Executive Director

The Future Governance Forum (FGF) is more than a traditional, policy-focused think tank: we concentrate on the *how* as much as the *what* of policy design and implementation.

Since launching in November 2023, we have built a reputation based on the combination of smart politics, original thinking and a commitment to practical delivery.

With our experience and expertise in politics, public administration and policymaking across the UK, we convene across our networks to make detailed recommendations based on what works.

So far, we have focused on some of the key building blocks of better government: pioneering new structures and behaviours at the heart of Whitehall, promoting new systems of devolution and place-based collaboration, and proposing new models of investment and infrastructure support to promote sustainable economic growth.

Looking ahead, we will expand upon these, concentrating on work that promotes the transformation of the British state: repairing and rebuilding the institutions, services and markets that help shape and support the rhythms of national life.

This new, three-year strategy sets out how FGF will undertake that task: outlining our priorities, approaches and preferred programmes of work for the rest of this parliament.

Our aspirations

The United Kingdom is stuck.

The clashes and crises of the twenty-first century have left us weakened and exhausted - and the complexity and dangers of the world we live in are only increasing.

The promise of national renewal feels far off, a slog the country feels ill-equipped to bear. Yet it is a promise worth preserving and fighting for. As political legitimacy becomes increasingly contested, the need to create new shared assumptions of a better, hopeful future, and to nurture progressive coalitions in defence of renewed political and civic purpose, is greater than it has been for half a century or more.

More muscular, progressive government has the potential to take bold and effective action to address this need. But right now, the state itself is acting as an obstacle to that happening. Systems and institutions are out of step with today's realities - distant from people's lives and far too slow to help us shape a better future for everybody.

We need to build the state's capacity to deliver results that people experience in their lives - living up to the promise a government should make to its citizens and strengthening democracy by proving that it can work.

This will be FGF's guiding purpose for the remainder of this parliament.

We can't command the future if we're stuck in the past. This strategy aims to put FGF at the forefront of designing and sustaining a country that works.

The Future Governance Forum: transforming the state to renew the nation.





To achieve this we will:

1. Develop our emerging critique of the state.

We have done much of this work already - notably across our *Mission Critical* and *In Power* workstreams - but for our future analysis and recommendations to be as sharp and coherent as possible, we need a robust and well-understood critique of the status quo. Our solutions and recommendations will address real, not imagined problems.

2. Design, test and develop ambitious and practical plans to transform how the state works and operates.

Having established our credentials over the past two years, we will now adopt a broad definition of 'transforming the state' to cover government structures, networks, behaviours and cultures; institutions and the mechanics that underpin them; public service reform; new approaches to markets, investment and local/regional economies; the interplay between sectors, and between citizens and the state; and an overall approach to statecraft: how the power of the state is organised and deployed.

3. Build compelling networks and communities across sectors, geographies and levels of experience and seniority.

Our commitment to bringing together politicians, experts and practitioners to help steer and refine our output has been one of the most satisfying and impactful aspects of our work to date. We will continue, and strengthen, our highly-networked, collaborative approach: increasingly joining up the work of our various standalone panels and networks; and creating new opportunities and processes to bring individuals and organisations together, to make connections, provide training and build capabilities.

4. Grow coalitions of public support for our work.

This will include a renewed focus on public narrative-building and design, combined with more proactive coalition-building and participation in events with other think tanks, campaigning and civil society organisations where our objectives and policy/delivery priorities align. These will be supported by a greater emphasis on public engagement and wider media activity to accompany our ongoing private influencing strategies.

Our work

Over the lifetime of this strategy, most of our work will be organised around three pillars:

Vital Institutions

Vital Institutions will focus on the need to renew and redesign existing institutions and establish new ones, fit for the future and built to last. We will be concentrating on issues such as leadership, dynamic capabilities, accountability, cultures, and cross-institutional and outcomes-driven collaboration. Work has already begun with initial projects looking at the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the establishment of Great British Railways.

Better Services

Better Services will focus on the need to reimagine public services that are more responsive, reliable and better attuned to individuals' and communities' needs. We'll look into the application of policy but also consider wider issues such as behaviours, culture, experience and practice - with a project on codifying next-generation public service practice already underway.

Progressive Markets

Progressive Markets will ask how we rethink markets and unlock investment to help promote sustainable economic growth, delivering greater prosperity for people, places and sections of the UK economy. We'll cover topics including financial institutions and mechanisms; investment and infrastructure principles and vehicles; comparative economic analysis and practice. Projects are already underway on addressing barriers to clean energy regeneration, expanding access to finance for entrepreneurs and promising scale-ups in under-represented regions of the UK.

These three pillars are an evolution of our 2023-26 workstreams:

In Power, **Mission Critical** and **Rebuilding the Nation**.

We are also continuing with two of our established workstreams:

Impactful Devolution

Impactful Devolution will continue to contend with the meaningful - and permanent - devolution of power across the UK. It will act as the principal banner for our continuing work with the devo-focused economic consultancy Metro Dynamics and for our joint collaboration via the Growth and Reform Network of UK local and combined/strategic authorities.

Rethinking Migration

Rethinking Migration will continue to ask how we might deliver a more effective asylum system that sustains greater public confidence, while remaining consistent with the principles of international law and progressive values.

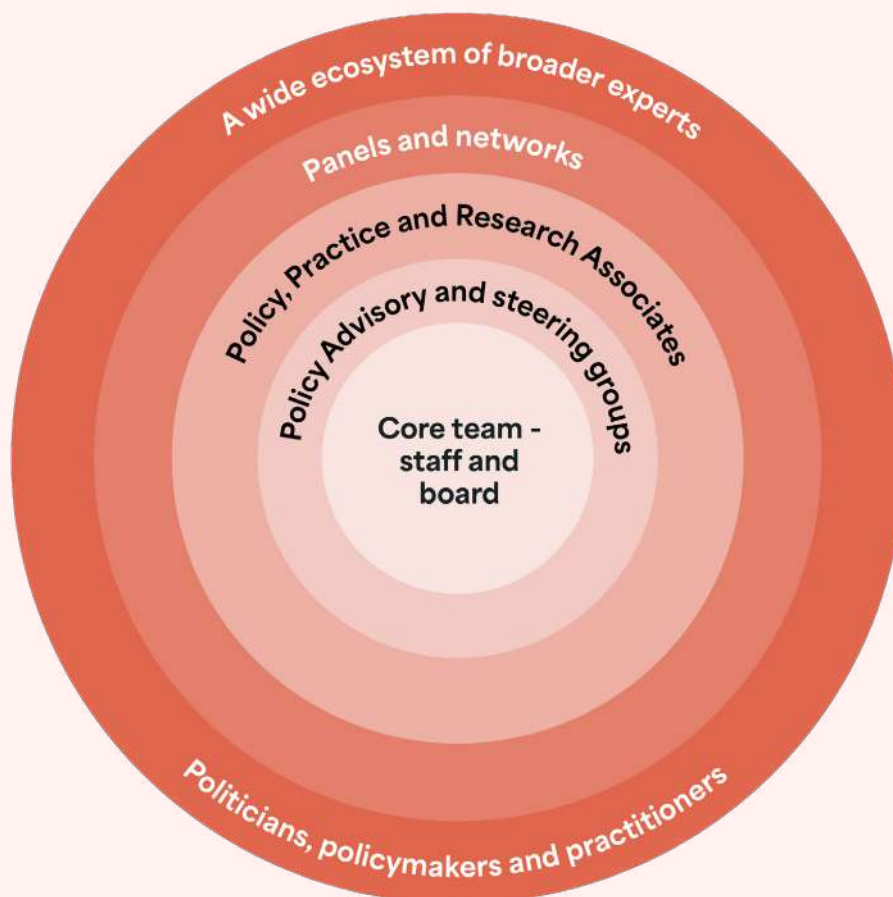
For more information on our five original workstreams see the 'Our impact' section, pages 20-25.



Our people

Our **core team** leads our research, convenes our networks, and delivers our impact, combining political, official and wider expertise across different levels of both the public and private sectors and civil society.

The core team is supplemented by a diverse range of contracted **Policy, Practice and Research Associates** who bring specific sectoral or practical expertise and act as lead researchers, facilitators or trainers on individual projects. We also leverage a **wide ecosystem of broader experts**, including politicians, policymakers and practitioners and from across our three formal networks (see 'Our approaches and design principles').



A core part of this ecosystem is our **Policy Advisory Group**, whose members draw on senior public, private and social sector experience to inform FGF policy and research.

Alongside our permanent networks, we also convene **bespoke steering groups for individual projects**, bringing together experts across disciplines and geographies to test theories and proposals as part of our networked, collaborative approach to research.



Staff



Nathan Yeowell
Founder and
Executive Director



Adam Terry
Deputy
Director



Grace Wyld
Head of Policy
and Research



Hamida Ali
Head of Learning
and Partnerships



Dan Corry
Chief Economist



**Beth
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Senior Policy
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Alex Bevan
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Emily Graham
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Bruno Dent
Researcher



Gil Richards
Researcher



**Chiara
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Research Assistant



Joe Derrett
Media Manager



Max Roche
Communications
Coordinator



Terrie McCann
Development
Adviser



Claire Holloway
Operations
Manager



Priyansha Madan
Operations
Officer

Board



Helen MacNamara
Chair



Piali Das Gupta
Non-executive
director



Roger Harding
Non-executive
director



Polly Mackenzie
Non-executive
director



William Perrin
Non-executive
director



Joanna Reynolds
Non-executive
director



Nathan Yeowell
Founder and
Executive Director





Our approaches

Our work is organised around two distinct but complementary practices:

Policy and research

We design and deliver high quality research projects looking at particular areas of state transformation and the implementation and execution of policy priorities. We seek to build an evidence base for how progressive policies survive contact with reality so that their impact is felt by people in their lives and their interactions with the state.

Learning and partnerships

We build and nurture broad coalitions of leaders across all tiers of government, civil society and business by sustaining and expanding our formal and informal networks. We do this principally through our three satellite networks (see below), learning from members' experience and rigorously testing ideas for successful policy implementation.

There is a critical feedback loop between these two practices: the insights and case studies from our learning and partnerships work feed into our policy and research evidence base, informing hypotheses and recommendations which are then tested via our learning and partnerships work.

In this way we are able to develop research and practical recommendations that are much more thorough, rigorous, creative and ultimately impactful than would be possible using our core team alone and by assuming we have all the expertise we need in-house.



Through our three satellite networks - the **Growth and Reform Network**, our **Social Insights Panel** and our **Business Panel** - we bring together experienced leaders from local and regional government, civil society, and the private sector, connecting national policymakers with the people shaping change on the ground. Through this exchange of insight and experience - the forum at the heart of our project - we **co-develop, test and refine the ideas we advocate**, putting our organisational values into practice.

Growth and Reform Network

A network connecting mayors, chief executives, local leaders and practitioners with Westminster and Whitehall to drive local growth and shape the future of public services. Founded by FGF and Metro Dynamics.

Membership of almost 30 local and strategic authorities across the UK.

Social Insights Panel

A panel bringing together leading voices from civil society to share insight and advise on how government can respond to the UK's most complex social challenges.

Convened by former Shelter and Women's Aid CEO, Polly Neate.

Business Panel

A forum connecting senior business leaders with one another and with experts and national policymakers to exchange insights and test emerging policy ideas.



Our design principles

FGF has a clear view about how the state should work. As part of promoting this vision we will pilot six design principles, formalising and advancing our existing ways of working; making the design and delivery of future work easier and more effective; and communicating clearly with partners how we work. We will iterate and supplement these principles over the course of this three-year strategy.

1. We position our work where FGF can add most value: political, practical, and rooted in reality.

Our work should always be:

- **Political:** our advice and recommendations fit the real world of politics and the dynamics that influence that world: constraints, incentives, timing, trade-offs, and decision-makers' room for manoeuvre. That means being politically-literate; not party-scripted.
- **Practical:** our recommendations are usable by the people and organisations that need to implement them: we set out clear steps, roles, routines, tools, and realistic pathways to delivery.
- **Rooted in reality:** our work resonates with how the state operates today, with the experience of frontline teams, and the lived experience of people when they interact with various layers of government. Yet this does not mean reducing our ambition or being limited by the status quo.

In development, we will test the feasibility of our ideas with the people and organisations tasked with implementing them, not just the people and organisations that agree with us. **In delivery,** we will not publish anything that we are not confident will survive contact with the real world.



2. We design for end-to-end adoption by relevant audiences.

FGF's differentiation is not just providing the outline of a solution, but in thinking about who will ultimately adopt our recommendations - and then giving them a clear operating model, a meaningful decision, and/or a credible delivery plan.. **In development**, this means we define our primary and secondary audiences (including what we want them to decide, change, fund or stop) and our draft operating models (including what roles, routines and capabilities are in scope) upstream. **In delivery**, we aim to build pathways to easy adoption, including audience journey maps and wider engagement packs, as well as supporting implementation so that our products are used, not just read.

3. We measure impact by use and behavioural change, not just outputs.

We want to measure success by whether people and organisations engage with our ideas and use our work. Crucially, we want to know whether it changes decisions, behaviours, structures and day-to-day practices, rather than just counting the number of publications we put out or events we put on (although wider intellectual engagement is crucial, too!). **In development**, we always define what 'good' looks like, build feedback loops into our plans, and decide how we will iterate our products and engagement if adoption falters. **In delivery**, we follow through after launch and share updates publicly and privately when and where appropriate, to strengthen credibility and maximise impact.

4. We work across our networks to shape, test and iterate our proposals.

FGF's various networks - be they formal or informal, longstanding or ad hoc - are an unmatched resource to diversify our inputs, challenge our assumptions, improve our proposals, and make our products much easier to adopt and harder to dismiss. **In development**, we run structured engagements with our networks to input, review and test our work. **In delivery**, we engage with and activate our networks to help promote and drive forward the distribution and adoption of our ideas.

5. We write to be understood, not to sound clever.

If target audiences misread or misinterpret our work, then we have failed. Density and over-complexity is not rigour. We want all of our products and wider intellectual property to make sense to lay readers, technical experts and everybody in between. **In development**, we strive to ensure that all engagement uses as straightforward a tone as possible, with basic readability tests (so minimal jargon, clearly defined terms and limits on acronyms) embedded into all our projects. **In delivery**, we will provide and publish our work in various formats, such as short briefing notes, slide decks, video explainers and 'how to' packs alongside formal reports.

6. We protect our USP and act to strengthen the resilience of our influence.

FGF stays grounded in the distinctive spaces we have staked out, and faithful to the pillars we have built, nurturing and strengthening our networks to further our reach and improve adoption. **In development**, we scope each project clearly against defined criteria - saying no to things that are not for us - and we prioritise formats that can be repeated and strengthened to reinforce our USP. **In delivery**, we map out and pursue multiple routes into government and/or relevant institutions and sectors, removing single pathway dependency.





Our values

Across the team, we have debated and distilled a set of four, core values that help determine how we behave; how we make decisions; and how we define and reach for quality in all of our work.



We are collaborative

What this looks like:

We build with others to ensure that our work is compelling, useful, trusted - and adopted.

- We strive to involve people who will use the work early, not as a final tick-box consultation exercise.
- We work across silos, with people in both strategic and operational roles, and we broker relationships that help encourage real progress rather than the avoidance of hard choices.
- We share credit and design for shared ownership, not dependency on FGF - but our partnership work is ongoing; we don't just 'handover and hope'.
- We create spaces where people can debate and disagree, and still move forward - allowing a diverse range of voices to contribute, rather than letting the loudest or most articulate voices dominate the discussion.
- We convene people for a purpose, and we work in the open: then share what we heard, what changed, and why.





We are inquisitive

We always ask why things are the way they are - and how they could be better.

What this looks like:

- We listen, and we don't assume we already know what the problem is. We seek descriptions of first-hand experience and perspectives we don't usually hear.
- We repeatedly ask "why?" until we find out what is really driving - or obstructing - outcomes, challenging ourselves to avoid the safe and familiar answers.
- We strive to remain open. We change our minds when well-made arguments or evidence of lived realities challenge our assumptions.
- We go and see how things work in practice, not just how they are supposed to work, and build in feedback loops so our products improve with use.
- We are healthily sceptical. We don't treat strong opinions or healthily-made assertions as facts.
- We stay future-focused, exploring the art of the possible, not simply referring to what has been done before, and continuing to learn after a product has been delivered, published or launched.

We are courageous

We are willing to take on tired systems and rhetoric, and say hard things kindly - in order to promote change that is real.

What this looks like:

- We seek out and define the underlying causes of problems, not just the consequences.
- We work at pace, so change can happen quickly - but without letting urgency become an excuse for sloppy thinking or weak delivery.
- We aim to make clear recommendations, rather than just listing options, designed to ensure that decision-makers act, not just nod along.



- We balance trade-offs and risks - never wishing them away - as part of the process.
- We challenge power respectfully when it blocks progress; we don't stay silent to preserve relationships or access.
- We raise risks early and invite honest discussion, rather than quiet avoidance. We face uncertainty head-on and don't pretend that it doesn't exist.
- We act out our values, even when challenged, rather than hiding behind vague language to avoid discomfort.
- We write and speak with a clear point of view and a clear idea of what happens next, honest about what it will take to implement our recommendations.

We are practical

We turn ideas into clear, usable plans and tools that help people and organisations deliver meaningful change in the real worlds they inhabit.

What this looks like:

- We design for policy delivery, not announcement, always accompanying big ideas with a pathway to them becoming a reality.
- We translate our thinking beyond abstract concepts - into steps, practices, and responsibilities that can be understood by everyone, not just a handful of insiders.
- We ensure every product names who it is for, what it helps them do, and how to use it. And we design with real constraints in mind: capacity, politics, and risk.
- We aim for our work to be sustainable so it can be repeated and/or scaled, and we don't confuse being published with being used.
- We focus on achievable paths to delivery and implementation.
- We choose depth over breadth: fewer priorities, done well.

Our impact

Track Record

Since launching publicly in 2023, FGF has made a significant contribution to thinking about how the country could be governed differently. We have carried out work on issues ranging from reforming the centre of government to empowering places across the country, from fixing our broken asylum system to unlocking more investment in infrastructure - many of which have been taken up by the government.

We are trusted by the most senior political leaders, advisers and officials in the country to provide grounded expertise on how to deliver in government - **combining a deep understanding of public administration with a sharp instinct for political strategy and messaging.**



Into Power / In Power

Our flagship project for 2025, In Power 01 was the culmination of an in-depth investigation by FGF into reform at the very heart of government: No.10 Downing Street. This was followed by Power Failure, a report by Policy Associate Phil Tinline exploring how power operates in the British state: where it lies, how this undermines effective government, and what needs to change to make it work for the public.

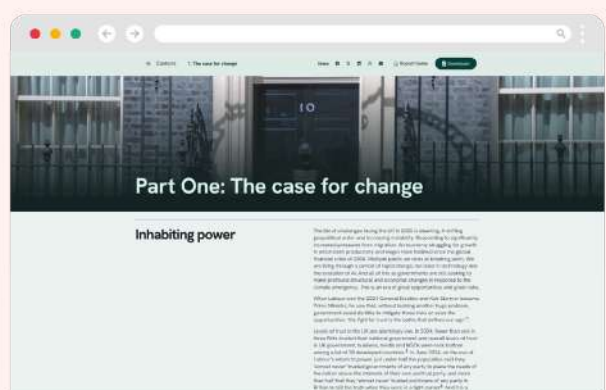
This work built on FGF’s Into Power series from before the 2024 general election, where we spoke to Joe Biden’s 2020 team, Anthony Albanese’s 2022 team and David Cameron’s 2010 team about how political parties can best make the transition from opposition into government.



Impact

During the research phase of In Power 01, we liaised closely with senior political and civil service figures in No. 10, the Treasury and the Cabinet Office.

In September 2025, a series of changes to Sir Keir Starmer’s No. 10 operation were announced, including the appointment of a new Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister and steps to clarify roles and responsibilities. These were closely aligned with our recommendations in the report, and an early sign that the work has made an impact.



Mission Critical

Our Mission Critical series took Labour's 'mission-driven government' governing philosophy and looked at how to translate that theory into meaningful action.

We have published reports on embedding mission-driven behaviours across the British state, and forming stronger partnerships with business and trade unions, with civil society, and with communities and citizens themselves.



Impact

- The principles of mission-driven government set out in Mission Critical 01 are being taken forward as part of the government's test, learn and grow, and wider public service reform, programme.
- Mission Critical 02 recommended establishing a new stakeholder-facing No. 10 unit, which inspired the creation of the No. 10 Partnerships Unit.
- Director Nathan Yeowell gave evidence before the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee for its 'Mission Government' inquiry.
- We have run training sessions with local and strategic authorities, and presented findings to officials in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and No.10.



Rebuilding the Nation

Our Rebuilding the Nation series explores how the government can leverage more public and private investment to spur economic growth and rebuild our crumbling infrastructure.

We have made recommendations on pension reform that delivers for savers and the economy; new models of public-private partnership; creating an environment for promising scale-ups to thrive; and addressing long-standing barriers to innovation.



Impact

This work has helped to inform:

- The Chancellor’s Mansion House pension reforms and the new Pension Schemes Bill.
- Changes to the UK’s fiscal framework announced at the 2024 Budget, unlocking over £100bn of additional capital investment over this Parliament.
- The 10-Year Infrastructure Strategy and subsequent Autumn 2025 Budget, which committed to using public-private partnerships (PPPs) to finance certain major infrastructure projects.



Impactful Devolution

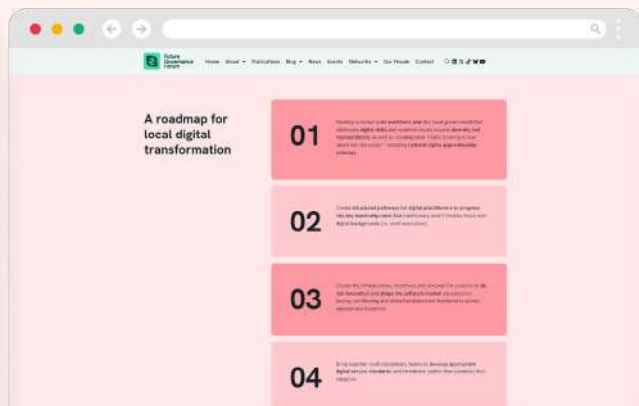
This series looks at how government can meaningfully and permanently devolve power in what is currently one of the most centralised countries in the world.

We have published research on devolution as part of a national growth strategy, local government digital transformation, regional industrial strategy, and setting up the next generation of strategic authorities for success.



Impact

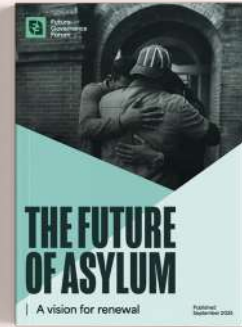
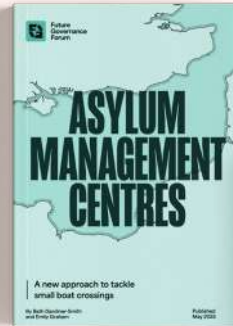
- Recommendations set out in Impactful Devolution 01 for statutory ‘Local Growth Plans’ were adopted by the government, with further recommendations widely reflected in the English Devolution White Paper.
- GDS Local, a newly established specialist unit in the Government Digital Service, reflects many of FGF’s recommendations put forward in Impactful Devolution 02.
- The Autumn Budget 2025 saw the revival of ‘Total Place’ pooled public service budgets - recommended by FGF and New Local in our joint January 2024 paper with former Labour minister John Denham.



Future of Asylum

We are seeking answers to the question: how can the UK deliver an asylum system that works effectively, is consistent with international law, and sustains public confidence?

Focusing on one of the most politically salient and challenging areas of public policymaking and delivery, this project has sought to surface new thinking and innovations to provide the ideas that will power a system fit for the future.



Impact

- ‘Asylum Management Centres’ (published in May 2025) put forward a ‘1-in-1-out’ admissions and returns framework between the UK and France. This model was taken up and agreed by the UK and French governments in July 2025 and is currently being piloted.
- Our ‘The Future of Asylum: A vision for renewal’ essay collection was launched at a packed event at Labour Party Conference 2025 and has been read and disseminated widely among MPs and policymakers in Westminster and Whitehall.



Next steps



Nathan Yeowell,

Founder and
Executive Director

This new strategy sets out the big issues we want to focus on at FGF over the next three years, along with the values we want to live by and some of the methods and partnerships we want to promote. What it does not do is confirm is a detailed work programme: we all know that the best ideas come from collaboration, discussion and innovation and that the political context both domestically and internationally is highly dynamic.

We have consulted on the production of this strategy - but now we want to go further and work with our funders and partners, and with politicians, policymakers and practitioners across the country, as we shape our work between now and the end of this parliament.

So, if you have thoughts on this strategy, have ideas about our pillars and design principles, or if you would like to collaborate with us, then please send us a message: let's take the conversation further and see what we create together.

Email us at: director@futuregovernanceforum.co.uk

And to find out even more about us,
visit our website: www.futuregovernanceforum.co.uk





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