

A WOMEN LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION
EXCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

LEADERSHIP MASTERCLASS

*Unlocking Future Proof
Leaders 3.0*

ASTON UNIVERSITY
BIRMINGHAM, UNITED KINGDOM

PROGRAM DATE: 17 - 26 OCTOBER 2026

While others adapt, you'll lead. Join Aston University at the epicenter of GenAI and leadership innovation to master the strategies that define tomorrow.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The **Leadership Masterclass: Unlocking Future-Proof Leaders 3.0** is an intensive and forward-thinking leadership development programme designed to empower senior leaders with the insights, strategies, and tools required to navigate today's volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world — and beyond.

This programme is a **collaboration between Aston University Alumni Association Malaysia (AUAAM), Women Leadership Foundation, and Aston University**, marking the third leadership masterclass following two successful cohorts since 2024.

AUAAM is a vibrant network for Aston University graduates based in Malaysia, fostering personal and professional relationships through networking, mentoring, and career development opportunities. **Women Leadership Foundation** is a non-profit organization committed to empowering women from all backgrounds to achieve leadership positions through advocacy, research, and professional development programs.

Delivered by a distinguished faculty from Aston University in partnership with key Malaysian leadership figures, this **immersive ten-day experience** will blend cutting-edge academic research, industry practice, and experiential learning.

Participants will critically examine contemporary frontiers in **leadership theory and practice**, focusing on **ethical and responsible leadership**, the strategic integration of **Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)**, and the development of high-impact leadership mindsets fit for the future.

10 DAYS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| DURATION | 10 DAYS (17-26 OCTOBER, 2026) |
| LOCATION | Aston University, Birmingham, UK |
| COHORT SIZE | Limited to 30 distinguished participants |
| TARGET AUDIENCE | CEOs, C-Suite Executives, Board Directors from Malaysia's leading corporations, GLCs, PLCs, and high-growth enterprises |

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Aston-Malaysian Strategic Alliance:** A high-level synergy of UK academic rigor and Malaysian industry expertise designed for the VUCA landscape.
- **The Future-Proof Mindset:** Intensive development of high-impact leadership strategies to navigate and command global uncertainty.
- **GenAI & Strategic Integration:** A deep dive into the frontiers of Generative AI and its practical application in enterprise leadership.
- **Ethical Frontiers in Leadership:** Critical examination of responsible governance and ethical frameworks for the modern era.
- **The Immersive Experience:** A nine-day blend of cutting-edge research and experiential learning delivered by a distinguished global faculty.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Driving Results



The 10-day curriculum is meticulously designed to balance strategic depth with practical application. Each day explores a critical dimension of transformative leadership through immersive learning, case discussions, and experiential activities.





PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Overview

DAY 1 - 17 OCT 2026, SAT

- Welcoming Reception by Aston University
- Treasure Hunt : Getting to know Birmingham

DAY 2 - 18 OCT 2026, SUN

- Setting the Scene
- POST VUCA World
- Leadership Challenge
- Dialogue Session With Industry Leader

DAY 3 - 19 OCT 2026, MON

- Developing Strategic Thinking
- Communication For Leaders

DAY 4 - 20 OCT 2026, TUES

- External Site Visits
- Dialogue Session With Industry Leader

DAY 5 - 21 OCT 2026, WED

- Leading with Purpose, Not with Fear
- Ethical Leadership and Workplace Bullying

DAY 6 - 22 OCT 2026, THURS

- The Future of Work with Gen AI
- Pitch it Right

DAY 7 - 23 OCT 2026, FRI

- Group Assignments
- Rehearsal Pitch it Right

DAY 8 - 24 OCT 2026, SAT

- Leadership Circle Profile
- Coaching as a Leadership Tool

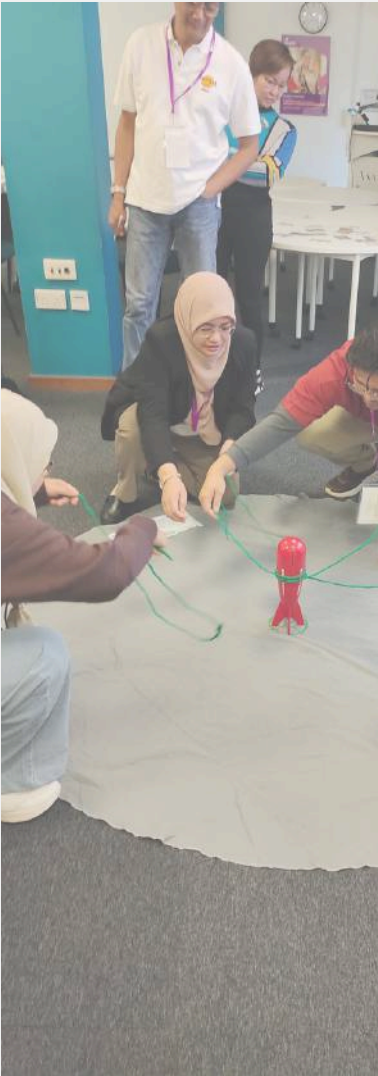
DAY 9 - 25 OCT 2026, SUN

- Pitch to Perfection!
- Programme Evaluation
- Fireside Chat/Up close & personal
- Graduation Dinner

DAY 10 - 26 OCT 2026, MON

- Return of Graduation Robes
- Final Check-out / Departure

Day 1: Institutional Foundations & Ecosystem Synergy



Full-Day Intensive: Treasure Hunt “Getting to Know Birmingham”

- *Strategic City Integration & Institutional Briefing*

Unpack the historical and economic foundations of Birmingham and examine Aston University’s pivotal role within the city’s innovation ecosystem. Explore the strategic alignment between institutional excellence and regional growth to set the context for the days ahead.

- *The Treasure Hunt*

Engage in a high-stakes, team-based exploration designed to foster cross-functional synergy and rapid problem-solving. Through a curated treasure hunt across the city’s key landmarks, participants will test adaptive leadership frameworks and build foundational trust within their peer networks.

TRAINER



Dr. Elinor Vettrano

Associate Dean for Engagement and Development
Aston Business School

Day 2: Architecting Leadership for Global Disruption



Morning Session:

Setting the Scene

Explore the convergence of programme objectives and Aston’s vision, utilizing LCP–Quest profiling to identify individual leadership challenges and cognitive frameworks.

Afternoon Session:

POST VUCA world

Evaluate the theoretical underpinnings of fragile, non-linear environments, mapping advanced theory to practice to enable strategic operation in a disrupted world.

Evening Session:

Leadership Challenge

Apply a design-led approach to refine leadership contexts, concluding with an expert-led synthesis on the complexities and opportunities of leading through modern disruption.

Evening Dialogue:

Dialogue Session With Industry Leader

Insights from a senior leader on thriving through institutional and industry change.

TRAINER



Dr. Elinor Vettraino

Associate Dean for Engagement and Development
Aston Business School

Day 3: Leadership Intelligence: Strategy & Synthesis



Morning Session:

Developing Strategic Thinking

Exploring advanced strategic mindsets to transform volatility into organizational opportunity through rigorous cognitive mapping.

TRAINER



Dr. Azni Zarina Taha
Executive Director of UMGiving
Universiti Malaya

Afternoon Session:

Communication for Leaders

Developing the linguistic precision and adaptive communication styles necessary for command-level engagement and stakeholder alignment.

TRAINER



Dan March
Consultant

Day 4: Global Connectivity & Sectoral Synergy



Morning External Visit:

Birmingham Global Chamber of Commerce

A site visit to the Birmingham Global Chamber of Commerce to examine the mechanics of cross-sector international trade and the management of global market expansion.

Afternoon External Visit:

MTC Training Centre

An immersive tour of the MTC Training Centre, exploring the convergence of innovation across the utilities, food, and hospitality sectors to identify future-ready operational strategies.

Evening Dialogue:

Dialogue Session With Industry Leader

Insights from a senior leader on thriving through institutional and industry change.

TRAINER



Dr. Elinor Vettrano

Associate Dean for Engagement and Development
Aston Business School

Day 5: Purposeful Governance & Ethical Leadership



Morning Session:

Leading with Purpose, Not with Fear

An exploration of purpose-driven leadership, specifically localized and contextualized to the Malaysian socioeconomic experience.

TRAINER



Datuk (Dr.) Hafsah Hashim

Chairman
Women Leadership Foundation

Afternoon Session:

Ethical Leadership and Workplace Bullying

A research-led interactive session examining the critical boundaries between ethical and non-ethical leadership practices in a globalized world.

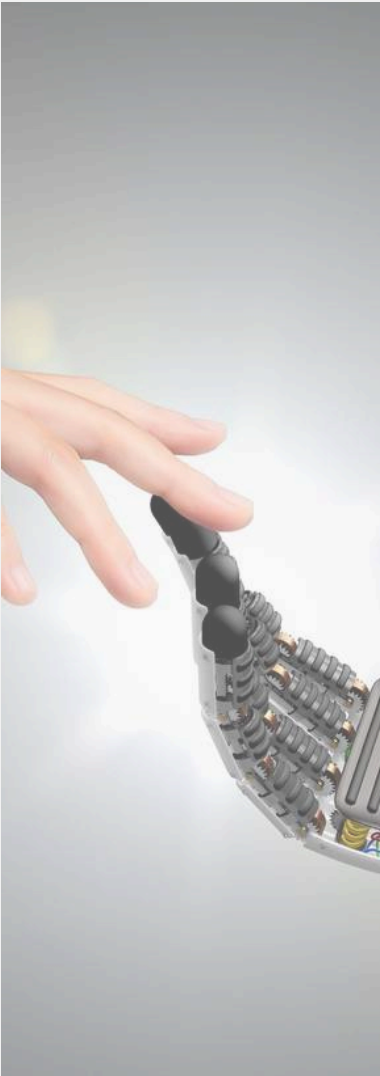
TRAINER



Professor Roberta Fida

Organisational Behaviour and Organisational
Psychology
Aston Business School

Day 6: AI-Driven Leadership & The Architecture of Influence



Morning Session:

The Future of Work with Gen AI

Exploring the future of work with AI at its core, focusing on the strategic frameworks leaders use to navigate the transition from traditional to augmented workflows.

Afternoon Session:

Pitch it Right

An interactive session on the mechanics of innovative storytelling, designed to translate complex leadership solutions into compelling, actionable pitches.

TRAINER



Aimee Postle

Leadership Coach
Aston University

Day 7: Strategic Storytelling & High-Stakes Simulation



Full-day Intensive: Pitching Practice

- *Strategic Rehearsal:*

A final alignment session to stress-test arguments and ensure readiness for the formal Monday challenge.

TRAINER



Aimee Postle

Leadership Coach
Aston University

- *Group Assignments:*

The transition from theory to practice; the team works collectively to address all requirements received from the trainer and finalize submission.

TRAINER



Dr. Elinor Vettrano

Associate Dean for Engagement and Development
Aston Business School

Day 8: Leadership Diagnostics & The Coaching Framework



Morning Session:

Leadership Circle Profile

A deep-dive exploration of the self as a leader, utilizing the Leadership Circle Profile (LCP) as a diagnostic tool to examine behavioral drivers and executive presence.

Afternoon Session:

Coaching as a Leadership Tool

Unpacking the theoretical foundations of coaching as a high-level leadership instrument, focusing on practical application to enhance institutional collaboration.

TRAINER



Dr. Elinor Vettrains

Associate Dean for Engagement and Development
Aston Business School

Day 9: Leadership in Action: The Final Showcase



Morning Session:

Pitch To Perfection

A high-stakes pitch of leadership solutions before a distinguished panel of Malaysian and Aston University advisors.

TRAINER



Aimee Postle

Leadership Coach
Aston University

Afternoon Session:

Programme Evaluation

Unpacking the theoretical foundations of coaching as a high-level leadership instrument, focusing on practical application to enhance institutional collaboration.

TRAINER



Dr. Elinor Vettrano

Associate Dean for Engagement and Development
Aston Business School

Graduation & Gala Dinner

A night of celebration and high-level networking, featuring an intimate dialogue with an industry leader.

Uniting Talents, **Fueling Innovation**

Meet our dedicated team of professionals who have contributed their expertise, passion, and collaboration to drive our success.



Dr. Elinor Vettraino is the Associate Dean for Engagement and Development for Aston Business School, and Director of the Centre for Enterprise, Coaching and Innovation at Aston University.

She is the founder and director of Active Imagining, an organizational development, coaching and leadership consultancy, and is a director of Akademia UK, through which she runs training for academics, consultants and practitioners who are developing programmes or working processes based on the principles of the Team Academy model of entrepreneurship education originating from Finland.

Elinor's main areas of research and scholarship are based on understanding the impact and possibilities of harnessing the capacity of the Team Academy philosophy fosters transformational learning, and how the application of arts-based pedagogies might support the development.



Roberta Fida is a full Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Organisational Psychology (tenure track) at Aston Business School. She is the Head of the Leadership and Management Department and Department Research Director. She is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist of the British Psychological Society and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA). Roberta is also the lead of the Threat and Security stream of the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology's Impact Incubator (EAWOPi) and the convenor of the Work & Organization working group of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA).

Her research interests are related to work stress and unethical behaviour at work. In particular she is interested in understanding why people might behave unethically and how we can prevent this. She is known for her continuous research on the role of moral disengagement and self-efficacy. She has published more than 80 papers in scientific journals including *Human Relations*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *British Journal of Management*, *Work, Employment and Society*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *Group & Organization Management*, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *Personality and Individual Differences*.

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Aimee Postle is an independent consultant, coach and trainer with 15 years' experience in PR, marketing, coaching and university lecturing. A former PR agency board director, she has worked with over 100 clients, trained international teams, and supported membership organisations and trade bodies.

At Aston University, she coaches MSc, BSc and MBA students, focusing on leadership, enterprise, and career development. Through her consultancy, she provides marketing strategy for global brands, develops training programmes, and authored the Cox Automotive Insights Report 2020 & 2021. Passionate about sustainability and workplace wellbeing, her research explores flexible working in UK SMEs



Dan March has been a consultant since 2010, facilitating communications and leadership development training for senior management in scores of blue-chip organisations; most recently in 2025, he has coached C-Suite Banking Officials in Kuwait, senior NHS leaders & board members in the Telecoms Industry.

He has written, developed and run workshops on Presentation Skills, Having Difficult Conversations, Influencing & Persuading, Executive Presence, Consultative Selling and Storytelling for MBA students at many of the world's leading business schools including Saïd (Oxford), Judge (Cambridge), Chicago Booth, LBS and Bayes.

After reading Modern Languages at Oxford University, Dan worked in business development roles rising to become a Sales Director in the oil and gas industry. He is also a trained, professional actor with a huge bank of acting experience across TV, radio and advertising. Alongside this, he has twenty years of live comedy experience as a stand-up doing live and recorded shows. He draws on his improvisation background to help others think on their feet, manage themselves with confidence and communicate with impact.

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Datuk (Dr.) Hafsa Hashim was the Chief Executive Officer of the SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp. Malaysia) for 13 years and 11 months. She served the Government for almost 37 years at various Ministries, including the Ministry of International Trade & Industry.

In addition to her role as the Chairperson of the Women Leadership Foundation (WLF), she is also currently the Chairperson of USAINS Holding Sdn Bhd, an Independent Non-Executive Board Director of Zurich Takaful, Zurich Life Insurance, a Board of Trustees member at the Malaysia Innovation Foundation, and a Board Director at Southampton University Malaysia.

She also holds the position of Adjunct Professor at Petronas Technology University (UTP), the National University of Malaysia (UKM), Kelantan University of Malaysia (UMK), and Putra University of Malaysia (UPM). She obtained her MBA from Aston University in 1995.



Dr. Azni Zarina Taha (PhD, Aston University) is the Executive Director of UMGiving at Universiti Malaya. She previously served as Executive Director of UMCCed and Deputy Director of UMConsult. With a PhD in strategy and organizational change, an MBA from Universiti Malaya, and a BSc from the University of Missouri, she is recognised for her expertise in management education and strategic development.

She teaches corporate strategy and management subjects, including change management, service innovation, and international business, and has supervised four PhD students. Her research has been published in journals such as *Operations Management Research* and *Tourism Management*.

As a consultant, Dr. Azni has advised ministries and organisations including the Ministry of Economy, KPDN, MATRADE, KWAP, ITC, and in projects like the Aerospace Industry 4.0 Readiness Index.

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Councillor Sharon Thompson MP, Deputy Leader of the Labour Group and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills.

Sharon Thompson specialises in transforming systems from the inside out. She is the embodiment of what happens when lived experience meets executive leadership. She is a barrier-breaking senior executive combining lived experience with 20+ years public sector expertise, driving systemic change across £multi-billion programmes while championing local communities.

Currently Deputy Mayor of West Midlands Combined Authority serving 2.9M population and Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council, Sharon has delivered measurable impact through housing policy innovation, workforce development, and regional economic transformation.

She is committed to scaling community-centered approaches from local innovation to national policy adoption.

Sharon was voted Brummie of the Year at the Birmingham Awards in 2025.



Gareth Wilson is the Head of Capgemini's Banking and Capital Markets Business in the UK. A leader with a proven track record for the developing long term client relationships and the successful management of large scale, complex, business critical client engagements. Strong business management skills combined with an understanding of clients' value drivers, and an ability to both shape and deliver sound commercial propositions, evident through business integration success at several clients most notably Barclays and Lloyds Banking Group.

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Ron Hornby is the AlixPartners Co-CEO.

Ron Hornby is a professional services Co-CEO and technologist. His background combines start-ups, large corporates, global consultancies, and academia. He focuses on the fintech industry and other sectors enabled by technology platforms. He is a Professorial Fellow at Aston University, where he contributes to thought leadership at the intersection of business, technology, philosophy, and society. His current passion is to advocate for a realistic post-AI world that benefits humanity. This requires a robust business and societal response to ensure the world gets the AI future it wants.



Nick Holzherr is the Founder of Git.Law and Whisk.com

Nick Holzherr is an entrepreneur and a company builder. He founded Whisk.com which was acquired by Samsung, and he also funded Git.Law which offers free, open-source legal templates powered by GenAI technology to help company builders.



CAPTURED MOMENTS MASTERCLASS UNLOCKING FUTURE PROOF LEADERS 1.0 (2024)

CAPTURED MOMENTS
MASTERSCLASS UNLOCKING FUTURE PROOF
LEADERS 2.0 (2025)



PARTICIPANTS FEEDBACK

FROM LEADERSHIP MASTERCLASS 2.0

(2025)

Leadership clarity and personal reflection

This programme made me pause and reflect deeply on why I lead, not just how. The sessions on purposeful leadership challenged me to think about legacy, responsibility, and the kind of leader I want to be remembered as. It was not theoretical. It was real, practical, and closely connected to my working life.

Practical leadership skills and immediate application

What stood out most was how practical the learning was. From communication to coaching, I could apply the tools immediately at work. The coaching session, in particular, changed how I listen, ask questions, and engage my team rather than trying to fix everything myself.

Communication and executive presence

The communication sessions were a game changer for me. I learned how to manage difficult conversations, understand different leadership styles, and even turn nervous energy into confidence. These are skills every senior leader needs, yet rarely gets to practise properly.

Programme design and learning experience

The programme was thoughtfully designed, with each module building naturally into the next. It felt like a complete leadership journey, from self-awareness to strategy, communication, and pitching. The mix of classroom learning, group work, and site visits kept the experience engaging throughout.

Cohort experience and exposure

Learning alongside leaders from diverse industries and backgrounds was incredibly enriching. The discussions, teamwork, and shared challenges broadened my perspective and reminded me that leadership is not a solo journey, but a collective one.

Peer learning & connections

One of the most valuable parts of this programme was the opportunity to learn alongside leaders from very different industries and backgrounds. The conversations, teamwork, and shared experiences helped me see leadership challenges from new perspectives and build meaningful professional connections beyond my own sector.

Data Privacy Note: Feedback was gathered anonymously to protect participants' identity and ensure the integrity and sincerity of the responses provided.

REGISTRATION FREE

RM35,900 Per Pax

Secure Your Spot with a RM6,000 Deposit
Upon Registration

**Price excludes 6% SST*

- ✓ Lectures & Site Visits
- ✓ Site Visit Transportation
- ✓ Accommodation for 10 nights
- ✓ Breakfast & Refreshments
- ✓ Graduation Dinner
- ✗ Flight tickets
- ✗ Dinner on personal basis

WAYS TO REGISTER:

SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW:



**REGISTER
HERE**



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Gain insights into our strategic direction, growth prospects, and upcoming initiatives as we look towards an exciting future.

Mastering Complexity, Leading the Frontier



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