

A scenic mountain landscape with a hiker on a trail. The foreground shows a dirt path winding up a hillside covered in autumn-colored vegetation (red, orange, and green). In the background, there are majestic mountain ranges under a clear blue sky. A hiker is visible on the path, moving away from the viewer.

10MB!

SUMMIT OF MINDS

CHAMONIX MONT-BLANC
13 – 15 SEPTEMBER 2024

THEMATIC PROGRAMME

Registrations:	From 9.00 Friday 13th Sept 2024
Core Programme:	14.00 Friday 13th Sept -13.00 Sunday 15th Sept 2024
Pre-Summit:	Walkshops, Micro Sessions & Picnic: 10.00 – 13.00 Friday 13th Sept 2024
Post-Summit:	Walkshops & Micro Sessions: 13.00 – 16.00 Sunday 15th Sept 2024

OUR PRISM – YOUR ANTIDOTE TO SILO THINKING



The Summit of Minds’ programme aspires to help you make sense of what’s going on in the world by viewing it ‘holistically’ through a prism of five major macro categories, how they evolve and interact. Why? Because any global issue of any significance necessarily belongs to one of these five key categories.



That said, there is much arbitrariness in assigning a session to a specific macro category (because macro issues are by nature interdependent and almost always overlap and conflate with each other), but for the sake of simplicity, each session is categorised by its dominant theme. In all of them you will find authoritative individuals, renowned or less so, but always ‘long’ on insights. To this conceptual framework for the Summit of Minds, we always add a sixth dimension: wellbeing, simply because if we aren’t well physically and mentally, we cannot think clearly and make the right decisions.

FORMATS

Brain-Pickings: engage in a candid conversation long on insights with leading thinkers and practitioners.

Brainstormings: engage in a solution-seeking round-the-room discussion with a group of domain specialists, each with a particular perspective.

Experiential Activities: make the most of exceptional muscle- and mind-stretching exercises.

Literature Live: seize the chance to exchange directly with authors and film makers on their latest work.

Walkshops: combine brain-pickings and brainstorming with walking.

ECONOMICS

GOVERNANCE TRANSITIONS – LOOKING AHEAD, WHAT ARE THE BEST MODELS FOR FAMILY BUSINESSES?

(Brainstorming)

Why: in family enterprises, navigating the transition from pure family governance to a model that includes external, independent directors or chairs is a defining moment. What: discuss the complexities and nuances of governance transition and glean actionable insights from concrete examples of the transformative process.

LONG-TERM ASSET-OWNERS - HOW SHOULD THEY BE INVESTING? (Brainstorming)

Why: in essence, long-term asset owners such as endowments, family-owners, pension funds, or sovereign wealth funds invest with a time-horizon that fundamentally differs from that of the financial market. What: brainstorm what this means and argue about some of the dos and don'ts.

THE FINANCIAL MARKETS - AN OUTLOOK (Brain-Picking)

Why: last June, the most classic asset allocation of 60% equities /40% bonds ascended to an all-time high (Bloomberg's global index), proving that the financial market remains immune to the pessimism in the zeitgeist. What: Discuss whether this can last.

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY – AN OUTLOOK (Brain-Picking)

Why: the IMF forecast global growth at 3.2% this year and next, while reiterating that the medium-term outlook remains the weakest in decades because of two culprits: low productivity and global trade tensions. What: discuss what lies ahead of us.

THE LONG-TERM - HOW TO BEST THINK AND PREPARE FOR IT? (Brain-Picking)

Why: in an age of accelerating complexity and radical uncertainty dominated by short-term thinking, taking the long view matters more than ever. What: explore extreme and not so extreme scenarios that will provide a framework for inventing hedging strategies - whatever may happen.

Introduced by:

SIMON COMMANDER, “THE CONNECTIONS WORLD: THE FUTURE OF ASIAN CAPITALISM” (Literature Live)

ENVIRONMENT

ADAPTATION - IS IT THE ONLY VIABLE LONG-TERM CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY? (Brain-Picking)

Why: adaptation, mitigation and resilience are the three most common strategies for dealing with climate change. As extreme-weather events accelerate in number and intensity, reducing vulnerability seems to be the most sensible strategy. What: discuss whether this is true and what this entails.

GOOD4NATURE START-UP PRIZE – AWARD CEREMONY AND GALA DINNER

What: an international start-up prize awarded in favour of nature-positive economy.

NATURE - HOW TO BEST VALUE IT? (Brain-Picking)

Why: nature is taken for granted and largely unaccounted for. Yet, degrading the environment degrades the economy by creating material and financial risks since more than 50% of world-GDP depends directly or indirectly on services rendered by nature. What: discuss why and how to attribute an explicit value, monetary or otherwise, to natural capital.

THE GREEN TRANSITION – AN OUTLOOK (Brainstorming)

Why: decarbonising the economy is moving forward fast but also going backwards, since the green transition seems unable to keep pace with rising energy demand. At current levels, global investment is at less than half of what is required (\$9-10tr a year) to achieve net zero targets by the early 2030s. What: brainstorm on how to fix this global market failure.

TRANSFORMING FINANCE FOR A NATURE-POSITIVE economy (Brain-Picking)

Why: the whole financial sector has a critical contribution to make in reversing nature loss and implementing a nature-positive economy. Asset managers, asset-owners, banks and insurers - all have a specific role to play to allocate and scale capital towards nature. What: discuss how this can best be achieved.

WATER: WHY IT'S SUCH A COMPELLING THEME (Brain-Picking)

Why: water – the most elemental substance on our planet - shapes societies and economies. In 2021, its global economic use value was estimated at \$58tr, but funding gaps for water infrastructure and innovations remain significant. Momentum is growing around water. What: discuss the significant momentum growing around water and what it entails.

DAVID DREWRY - “THE LAND BENEATH THE ICE” (Literature Live)

GEOPOLITICS

A VISION OF THE WORLD AND OF THE US-CHINA RIVALRY (Brain-Picking)

Why: over the past decades, Kishore - a former President of the UN Security Council and “Asia’s most influential thinker on today’s transforming global order” (Martin Wolf) has been the voice of Asia’s rise. What: discuss his vision of the world and how the US-China rivalry might pan out.

AUTOCRACIES - DO THEY OFFER A PATH TO ECONOMIC SUCCESS OR JUST FALSE PROMISES? (Brain-Picking)

Why: establishing a causation between political illiberalism and GDP per capita is hard, with academics disputing which political regime - democracies or autocracies – is more conducive to growth. What: discuss some of the evidence and make up your own mind.

CHINA – WESTERN DYNAMIC – AN ASIAN PERSPECTIVE (Brain-Picking)

Why: China-Western (and particularly US) relations have become so acrimonious that a large-scale decoupling and a ‘cold war’ erupting in some form of conflict looks like a plausible scenario. What: discuss from an Asian perspective what’s coming and what is required to prevent an escalation and reduce the risks of miscalculation.

DOING BUSINESS IN CHINA – WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE? (Brain-Picking)

Why: with an intensity that depends on each specific industry, investing in and trading with China is getting tougher and less predictable. What: discuss what this means in practice and how the situation is likely to evolve.

EUROPE - WHAT’S ON THE CARDS? (Brain-Picking)

Why: Europe is facing the triple whammy of a weak economic outlook, tough external challenges, and a dispiriting internal dynamic (characterised by the rise of populism and the far-right). What: discuss the immediate challenges and plausible mid- and long-term scenarios.

GEO-ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICS - MUCH MORE TURBULENCE TO COME? (Brainstorming)

Why: the world is fragmenting, with the geopolitical landscape becoming ever more worrisome. Meanwhile, economic power is increasingly used to achieve geopolitical goals. What: brainstorm how bad it could get, how to manage escalation, prevent risks of miscalculation and sleepwalking into a major crisis.

THE MIDDLE EAST – AN OUTLOOK (Brain-Picking)

Why: the Middle East is nonpolar: a region where no one seems to be in charge. The US is an ineffective hegemon, likewise its great-power rivals; neither the Gulf states nor Israel, can fill the void, and Iran can only be a troublemaker. What: discuss how the situation is evolving and what is needed to restore a ‘sense of balance’ in the region.

RUSSIA – AN OUTLOOK (Brain-Picking)

Why: as Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and confrontation with the West continues, the question of what comes matters more and more. Ideas abound of what might happen with today’s imperial kleptocracy. What: discuss plausible paths forward and identify the forces shaping Russia’s future.

ARMEN SARKISSIAN - “THE SMALL STATES CLUB – HOW SMALL SMART STATES CAN SAVE THE WORLD” (Literature Live)

SOCIETY

ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES – WHAT ARE SOME NEW IDEAS? (Brainstorming)

Why: for several decades, rising inequality and real wage stagnation at the bottom and middle of income distribution has been a feature of (most) advanced economies. What: brainstorm about the changes required to achieve a system perceived as fairer.

THE THREE “PS” (POLARIZATION, POPULISM AND POST-TRUTH) – HOW ARE THEY IMPACTING SOCIETY AND BUSINESS? (Brainstorming)

Why: the three Ps - polarization, populism and post-truth - that form the foundation of autocracy are engulfing large parts of the world. What: discuss the impact they are having at the country and international levels and what is needed to buck the trend.

TRUST AND SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS – WHAT’S GOING WRONG AND HOW TO PUT IT RIGHT? (Brain-Picking)

Why: survey after survey shows that trust in most institutions is at an all-time low while social connectedness – a strong determinant of mental health – is regressing in many high-income countries. What: discuss how to improve both, and our societal wellbeing in the process.

MENTAL HEALTH OF THE YOUNG – WHAT’S GOING WRONG AND HOW TO PUT IT RIGHT? (Brainstorming)

Why: the youth mental health crisis is real and global, with more than 200 million children and teenagers worldwide struggling with a mental health disorder. What: discuss how to disentangle the various factors - social media and others - that impact mental health, and the different measures that could positively address the issue.

WORK IN THE FUTURE - WHERE TO FIND MEANING AND PURPOSE? (Brain-Picking)

Why: the pandemic changed our perception of why, how, and what people do for a living, with a rising number feeling disengaged at work and wondering what makes their work worthwhile. What: discuss the purpose of work and its place and value in our lives.

ALEXANDRE DES ISNARDS – “LA VISIO M’A TUÉ” (Literature Live)

CHRISTOPHER WONG MICHAELSON – “IS YOUR WORK WORTH IT? HOW TO THINK ABOUT MEANINGFUL WORK” (Literature Live)

FLORENCE NOIVILLE - “KUNDERA - ECRIRE, QUELLE DRÔLE D’IDÉE !” (Literature Live)

FRANÇOIS-XAVIER OLIVEAU - “LA CRISE DE L’ABONDANCE” (Literature Live)

VIOLETTE BOUVERET ET JÉRÉMY LAMRI - “OSER LE COURAGE : UNE VALEUR NÉCESSAIRE À LA SURVIE DES ORGANISATIONS” (Literature Live)

TECHNOLOGY

EVERYTHING ‘TECH’ – WHAT’S THE POTENTIAL AND WHERE’S IT TAKING US? (Brainstorming)

Why: while AI is changing everything - from medicine, wellness and food to arts, finance, and wars -, it is not yet “revolutionising” everything. What: brainstorm whether the progress made by AI is over-hyped, where the technology is progressing the fastest, and how to govern the process of AI adoption.

MISINFORMATION, AND DISINFORMATION THE ROLE OF GENERATIVE AI – WHAT CAN BE DONE TO COUNTER IT? (Brainstorming)

Why: many AI industry leaders warn about AI changing “the course of history, but not necessarily for the good”, while the WEF Global Risk Report ranks disinformation as the most severe global risk anticipated over the next 2 years. What: brainstorm how AI exacerbates existing political and societal divides and what can be done to mitigate this risk.

VC AND START-UPS: FROM SEED TO SUCCESS – WHAT DOES IT TAKE? (Brainstorming)

Why: across all industries, 10% of startups fail within the first year, while about 90% fail before reaching ‘maturity’. What: brainstorm what success requires and how to overcome a journey fraught with many challenges.

JÉRÉMY LAMRI – “GENERATIVE AI AT WORK: RESHAPING THE FUTURE OF SOCIETY” (Literature Live)

PHILIPPE AGHION - “25 RECOMMANDATIONS POUR L'IA EN FRANCE” (Literature Live)

PRANJAL SHARMA - “THE NEXT NEW: NAVIGATING THE FIFTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION” (Literature Live)

WELLBEING

A TASTE OF TRAIL RUNNING

Why: There are multiple way of experiencing the mountains. What: hike and run on the trail led by a professional trailer and glean insights from his experience and tips on how to pace yourself and make the most of this particular way of enjoying nature and the mountains

BREATH WORKS – A PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE TO BREATHE ‘BETTER’ (Experiential Activity)

Why: how we breathe is closely linked to the regulation of our nervous system and in turn impacts us and how we relate to others. What: hike gently, learn how to breathe differently and see where this can lead.

CULTURAL TOUR OF CHAMONIX

Why: to discover some of the hidden and not so hidden treasures of Chamonix. What: A walking tour with a special focus on the history of mountaineering – and more besides.

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS: HOW BEST TO HAVE THEM? (Brainstorming)

Why: Many of us avoid having difficult personal and professional conversations because we are afraid of conflict and hope the issue will resolve itself, which it almost never does. What: discuss the psychology that underpins difficult conversations and explore some of the game-changers for successfully having one.

EXPERIENTIAL ART ATELIER - DRAWING TOGETHER (Experiential Activity)

Why: shared experiences create bonds and there is creativity in us all. What: put your eyes and hands to work in several fun and open-ended experiences using art materials. No art skills required: just bring your curiosity, your gaze, and a dose of spontaneity!

LEADING WITHOUT A GUIDE – A PRACTICAL EXERCISE IN DECISION-MAKING (Experiential Activity)

Why: mountain guides exist for a reason – to lead you successfully through treacherous terrain. What: you become the guide (under the strict supervision of mountain guides!) to understand what mountaineering can teach us about making better decision in conditions of high uncertainty.

NEUROSCIENCE AND WELLBEING – HOW TO BECOME A MORE RESILIENT LEADER? (Experiential Activity)

Why: physical exercise and mental preparation tend to produce strong and enduring beneficial effects on wellbeing. What: discuss how this can help decision-makers become better and more resilient leaders.

PHYSICAL MOVEMENT AND THE ART OF NEGOTIATION (Brain-Picking)

Why: science tells us that physical exercise changes the structure and function of the brain, for the better. If moving and thinking are intertwined, so are moving and negotiating. What: discuss how physical movement can significantly help in leading successful negotiations.

PUSHING THE LIMITS OF HUMAN CAPACITY – ARE THERE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT? (Brain-Picking)

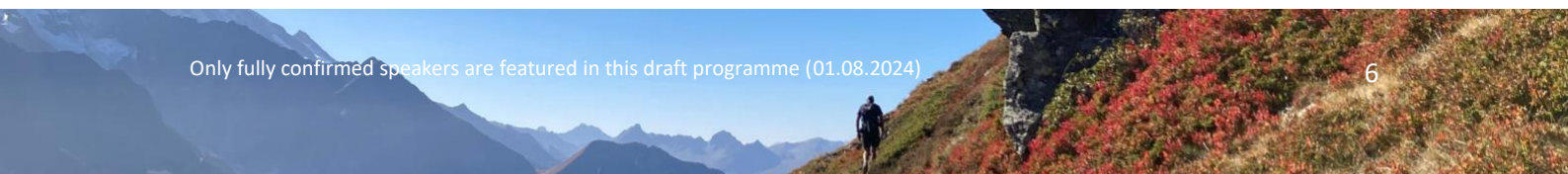
Why: Outstanding achievements (mental and physical) can be a source of inspiration. What: discuss with two remarkable athletes what lies behind their success and glean what this could mean for the rest of us.

LONGEVITY - WHAT IS THE LATEST SCIENCE SAYING? (Brain-Picking)

Why: Behind the hype, longevity research is progressing at a fast pace. It won't let us live forever but will make our lives better in smaller but tangible ways. What: discuss what this is all about and how to improve our 'healthspan' (living better for longer).

THE POWER OF MUSIC - HOW DOES IT IMPROVE OUR WELLBEING? (Brain-Picking)

Why: research empirically confirms that singing, playing an instrument or listening to music can improve wellbeing and quality of life, and also provide a clinically significant boost to mental health. What: discuss why and how this 'works'.

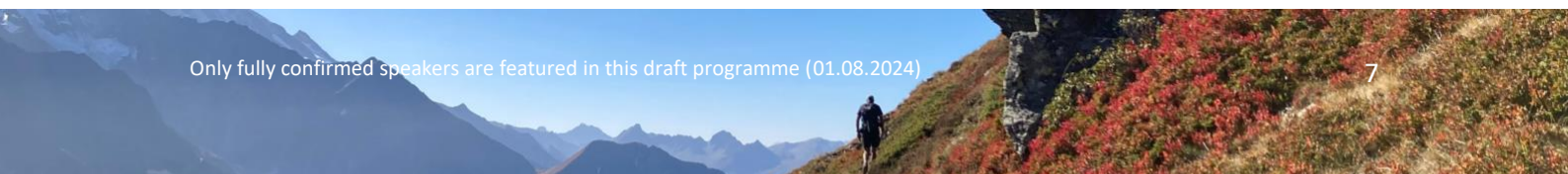


A WALK IN THE WOODS – WHAT CAN NATURE DO FOR OUR WELLBEING? (Experiential Activity)

Why: greater awareness of the richness and diversity of a natural environment helps us not only to appreciate and protect it but also reflect about our own relationship with nature. What: walk in the company of an Alpine biodiversity expert and learn more about what nature can do for our wellbeing and vice-versa.

WAKE UP WELL WITH RECORD-BREAKING RUNNER, SKY-RUNNER, AND SKI-TOURER (Experiential Activity)

Why: “the mountains are calling”! What: start your day ‘running’, quite literally.





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