hris Ward | Phil Harvey | Dan Geoffrey | Mark Earls HERDmeister

ike Butcher | Richard Corfield | Jim Knight | Anton Howes

1/3

asmine Boudiaf | RSA Helena Blair | Pip Wilson | Alex Mecklenburg

something new together

RSA Digital Summit: Insights & Recommendations

Prepared by: Ann Longley, 26 Jan 2021
With support from:
Peter Clitheroe, Yasmine Boudiaf and
60+ Fellow Participants

RSA

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

2. Recap of current state

3. Why we need to leap ahead

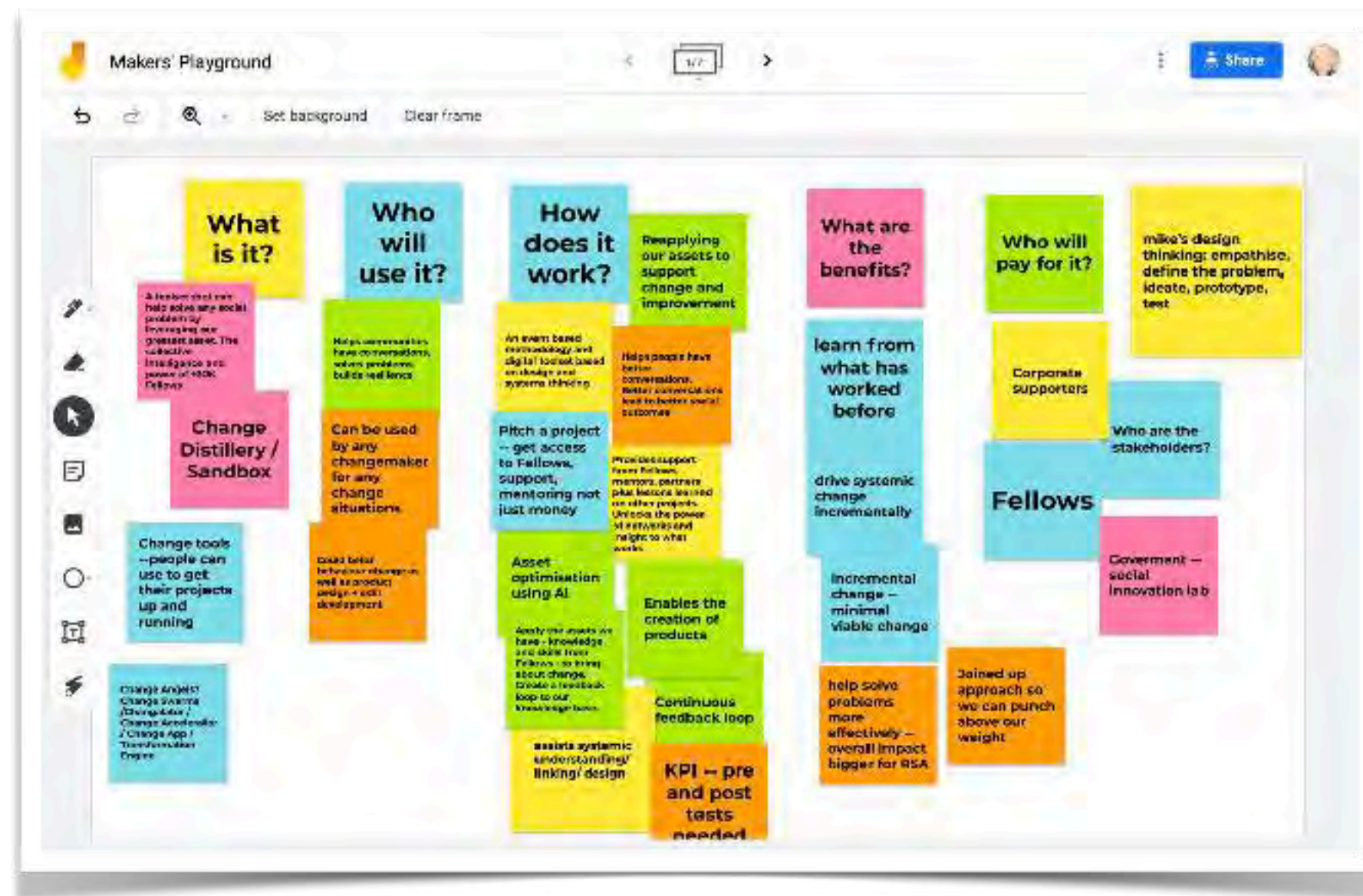4. Summary of Summit Insights

5. Recommend-ations

something new together

RSA

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

2. Recap of current state

3. Why we need to leap ahead

4. Summary of Summit Insights

5. Recommend-ations

something new together

RSA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*This report was created by reviewing **video** transcripts for each breakout group to identify patterns and conclusions. The report was also peer reviewed. .*

The RSA held an inaugural **Digital Summit** on 16 October 2020 to inform its digital strategy and plans to improve its Fellowship Experience (FX). Digital experts were invited to share their ideas relating to six themes. 66 Fellows attended the three hour design event (see **Appendix**).

The event was Fellow-led and staff supported, a model and ethos many Fellows believe signifies an effective way forward.

This report* distills the Summit's insights and ideas and provides recommendations for next steps.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Digital Summit Focus*

✳ Make it easier for Fellows to connect with each other & connect to what is on offer (as soon as possible)

✳ Define and provide the best possible digital tools for changemakers (longer term)

✳ Deliver value for money with a strong business case for investing in digital – critical for the RSA's sustainability

✳ Avoid past pitfalls of focusing too much on tech by putting people at the forefront of the strategy

✳ Adopt a 'fellow-centric design approach'

✳ Work as 'one organisation'; RSA staff to support Fellows' social improvement interests

*The Summit, with its specific focus on technology, experience design and Fellow engagement, aimed to compliment commissioned research.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conclusions: The need to improve the FX digitally is long overdue. The Summit participants unanimously agreed that the RSA has a tremendous opportunity to unlock the potential of its 30,000+ strong Fellowship to increase its impact.

The RSA is currently not effectively grasping this opportunity.

To do so effectively, will require digital and cultural transformation.

something new together

RSA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fellows would like the RSA to do more than move from *'broadcast' to 'engagement'* (the RSA's stated intention); they seek **'empowerment'.***

Fellowship empowerment, supported by the best possible digital tools, will require an enormous mindset shift and new ways of working.

Thus, the digital strategy is not just of a technical nature
* It requires a clear vision informed by Fellows
* Inclusive Fellow-centric leadership behaviours
* Collaboration with the Digital Steering Group and the Fellowship Council to implement.

something new together

RSA

Empowerment means authority and agency to act with minimal friction and gatekeeping.

SUMMARY OF INSIGHTS

UNLOCK THE FELLOWSHIP TO REALISE THE RSA'S USP

TECHNOLOGY CAN ENABLE AND AUGMENT THE RSA'S IMPACT

SEEK EMPOWERMENT NOT JUST ENGAGEMENT

A CONVENING AND DESIGN APPROACH IS NEEDED

OUR IMPACT IS NOT BEING OPTIMISED BY DATA

THE RSA DOES NOT NEED TO BUILD ITS OWN PLATFORM

something new together

RSA

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

NEW MINDSETS & BEHAVIOURS WILL UNLOCK THE FELLOWSHIP POTENTIAL

TO MAXIMISE IMPACT ALIGN TECH WITH RSA STRATEGY

DEFINE AN EMPOWERMENT VISION AND ROADMAP

CONVENE THE RSA WAY AND ADAPT PROVEN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

OPTIMISE OUR IMPACT WITH INSIGHTS FROM DATA

LEVERAGE EXISTING TECH

SUMMARY OF IMMEDIATE ACTIONS FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

Stop focusing on technology only

Adopt new mindsets and modern ways of working

Agree what good looks like

Evaluate lessons learned from the past

Define value proposition & improve FX journeys

Test, validate & refine vision & roadmap with Fellows

Conduct experiments to actively engage Fellows

something new together

RSA

ILLUSTRATIVE ROADMAP

Now

Engage with Fellowship Council; adopt an agile service design approach

Start with the end in mind (backcast from a clear vision / north star co-designed with Fellows)

Review what we've learned (e.g. IEN, RSA USA), the assets we can leverage; agree and hone our convening methodology

Select MVP focus (problem framing) including new behaviours & tech in a kick off workshop with Fellows

Scope and validate the pilots MVP(s) with Fellows

Next

Run series of pilots / experiments

Evaluate pilots based on clear goals

Work openly to build a movement (GDS* model) sharing progress on RSA website and social channels

Regularly convene with Fellowship Council and activists

Work with the Marketing, Fellowship Engagement and Research teams to redesign the Fellowship experience in a joined up way

Later

Develop corporate partnerships within the tech sector

Explore corporate partnership with Microsoft (e.g. run a design workshop / hackathon)

Cultivate sponsored residencies to cover skill gaps, e.g. Data Scientist in Residence

Keep improving the Fellowship experience with ongoing feedback and optimisation

Continuous staff development in service design and Fellowship empowerment

something new together
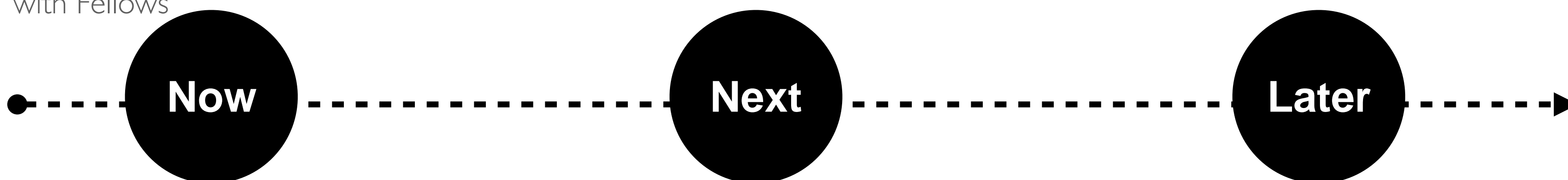
RSA

*Government Digital Service (GDS)

CONTENTS

something new together

RSA

THE FX* NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

*By FX we mean the end-to-end journey or **Fellowship Experience** from awareness through to becoming and being a Fellow*
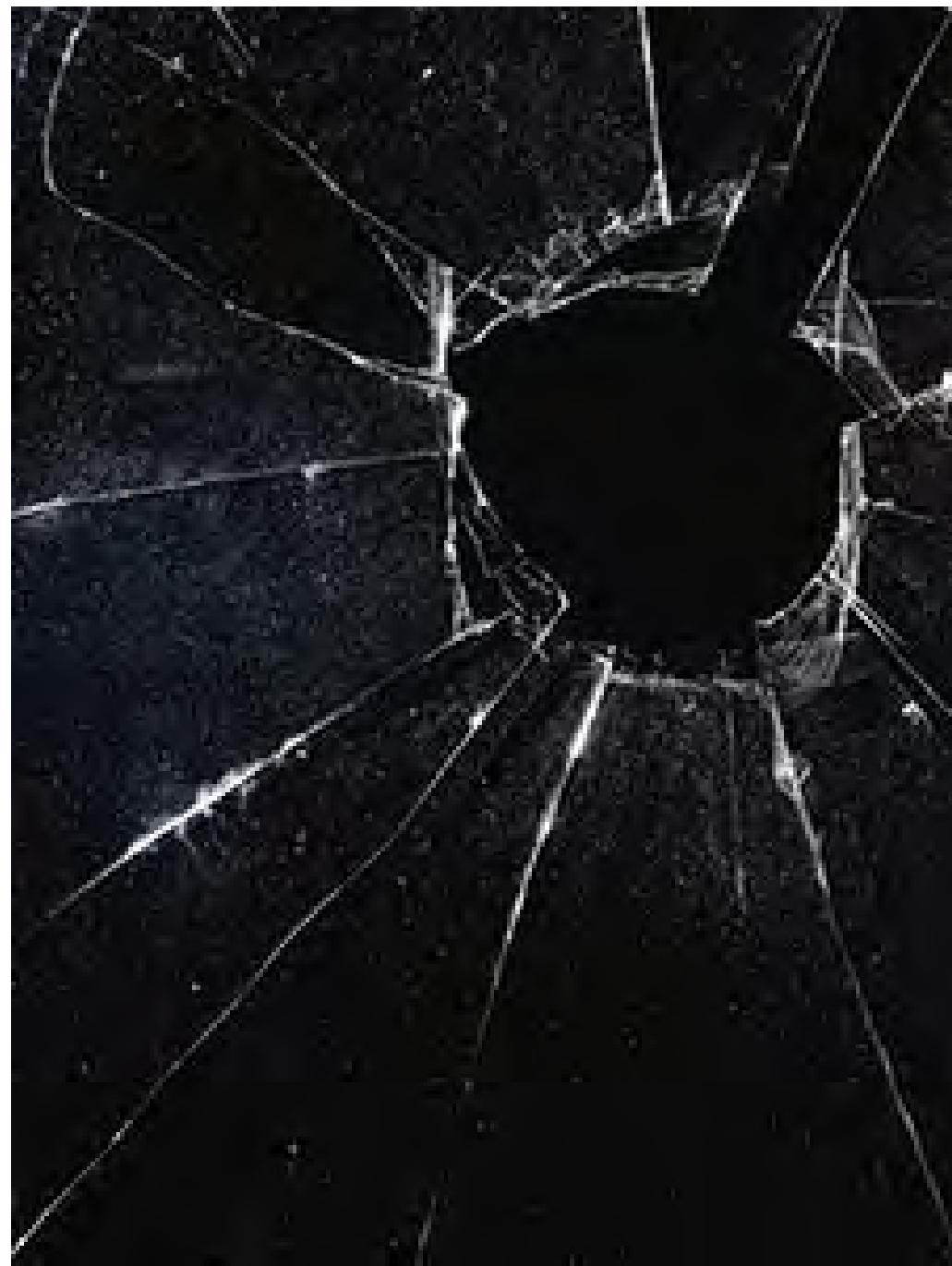
It is fragmented — activity takes place on many platforms

It is not easy to connect with other Fellows and sign-posting is poor

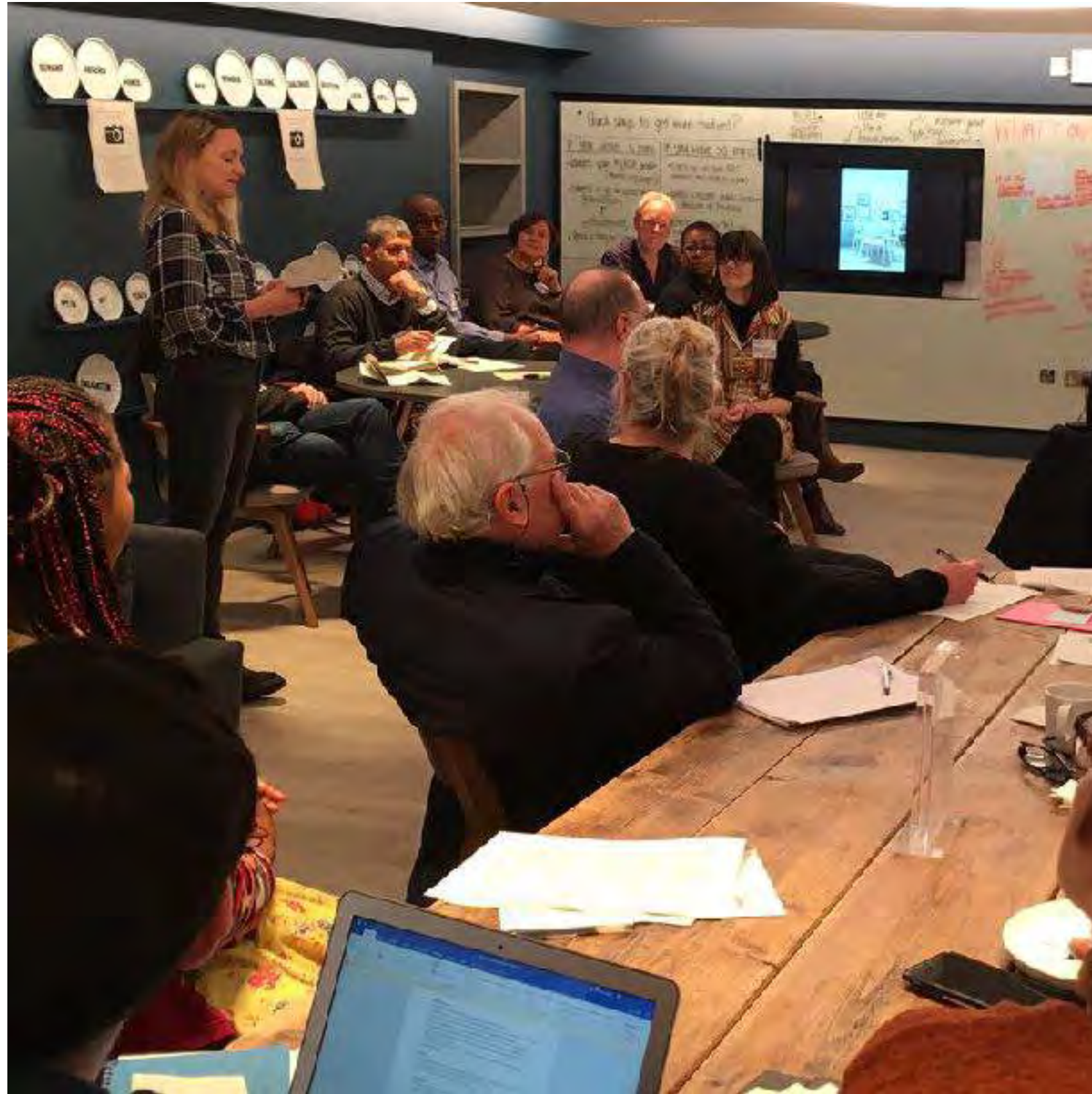It lags behind expectations and its potential

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

2. Recap of current state

3. Why we need to leap ahead

4. Summary of Summit Insights

5. Recommend-ations

something new together

RSA

GETTING IT RIGHT IS MISSION CRITICAL

COVID–19 has disrupted the RSA's traditional face-to-face model

❋ Digital has a critical role to play in supporting the RSA's mission now and in the future

❋ Digital tools for changemakers can help the RSA punch above its weight and remain relevant

To leap ahead, lay the foundations for successful digital and cultural transformation

something
new
together

RSA

HOW MIGHT WE LEAP AHEAD?

Tap into the collective wisdom of the Fellowship and empower it
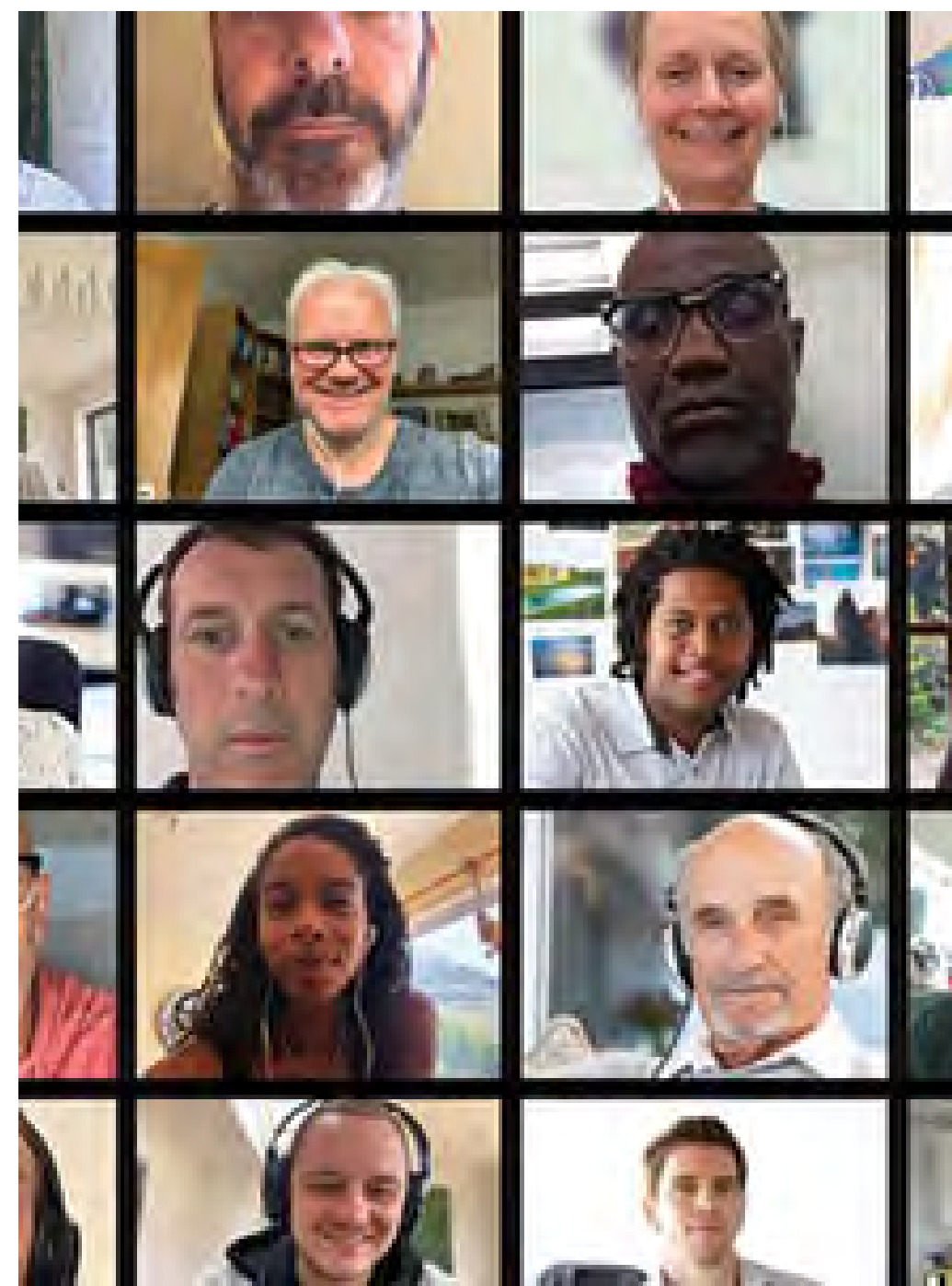
Give Fellows a strong reason to want to connect — make it easy

Lead (within our means) – to ensure relevance and maximise impact

something new together

RSA

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

2. Recap of current state

3. Why we need to leap ahead

4. Summary of Summit Insights

5. Recommend-ations

something new together

RSA

FELLOWS HAVE A DESIRE TO LEARN ABOUT EFFECTIVE CHANGE AND ACCESS SUPPORT

Yemi Adeola, Fellowship Councillor, 2020

" *"A big reason for joining is having access to networks one wouldn't have otherwise."*
Yemi Adeola, Fellowship Councillor, 2020

" *"Don't just provide funds, provide access to know-how and expertise"*
Dino Myers-Lamptey, FRSA, The Barber Shop Founder

something new together

RSA

THE COLLECTIVE POWER OF THE FELLOWSHIP IS UNTAPPED*

"THERE'S SO MUCH GREAT STUFF OUT THERE - EXPERTS GENERATING FABULOUS DOTS. THE CONCERN NOW IS THE SCARCITY OF PEOPLE OR SYSTEMS WHO CAN CONNECT THEM AND THE EXPONENTIAL VALUE OF INTEGRATED THINKING ACROSS THEM." - VIKRAM MANSHARAMANI

RSA DIGITAL UNLOCKING THE COLLECTIVE ADVANTAGE

RSA

A SPECTRUM FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE COLLECTIVE

MY BRAND WITHIN THE RSA

OUR CONTRIBUTION AS A COLLECTIVE
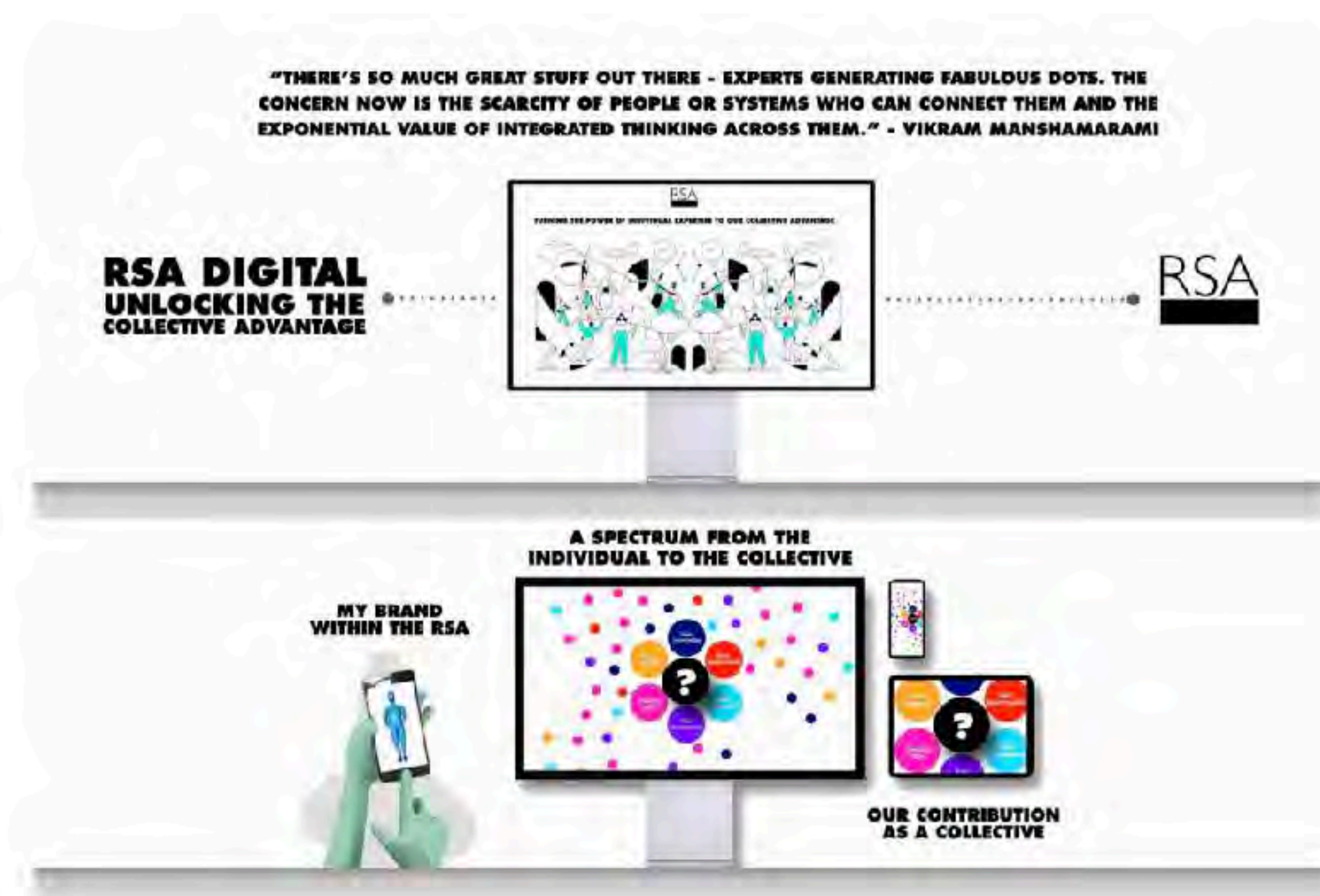
A Vision For The Digital RSA:
A 'world' where infinite combinations of unique and creative talent are brought to bear (convened) to tackle a wide range of societal challenges and opportunities. At the same time a 'space' for wondering and invention. Individuals encountering increased levels of 'serendipity' within a deliberately designed ecosystem/ecology. We described this as a push/pull model."
— **John Caswell***

something new together

RSA

*John Caswell of Group Partners synthesising the conclusions of the Virtual Coffee House breakout group

DIGITAL TOOLS AND DATA CAN HELP THE RSA SCALE ITS IMPACT
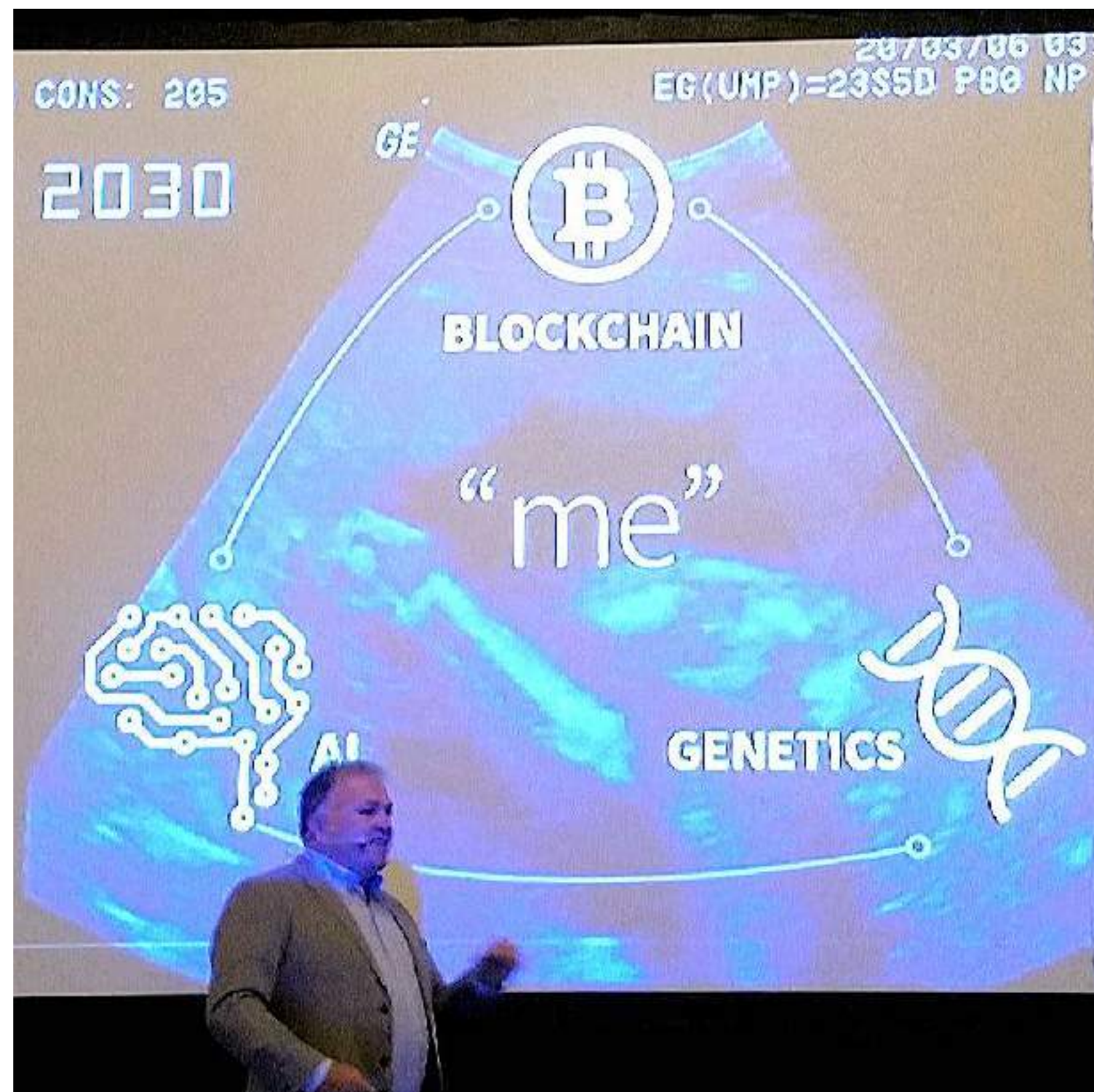
> ❝ *"How do we make 'connected problem solving' the norm — the RSA's 'killer app'?"*
> **Jonathan Tavss, FRSA, Co-Founder of the RSA's Augmented Society Network**
>
> **Let's grasp this opportunity to have exponential impact.**

Image Source: Jonathan Tavss, Founder of Kaleidoko Ltd, presenting The Majority Report

EFFECTIVE TECH MEETS HUMAN NEEDS

Technology on its own is not enough. Knowing how technology can be applied to augment humanity is what makes it work.

" *"We realised a design methodology was needed to ensure the power of technology solves real human problems"* **Mike Butcher, MBE, Founder of Techfugees, TechCrunch Editor**

something new together

RSA
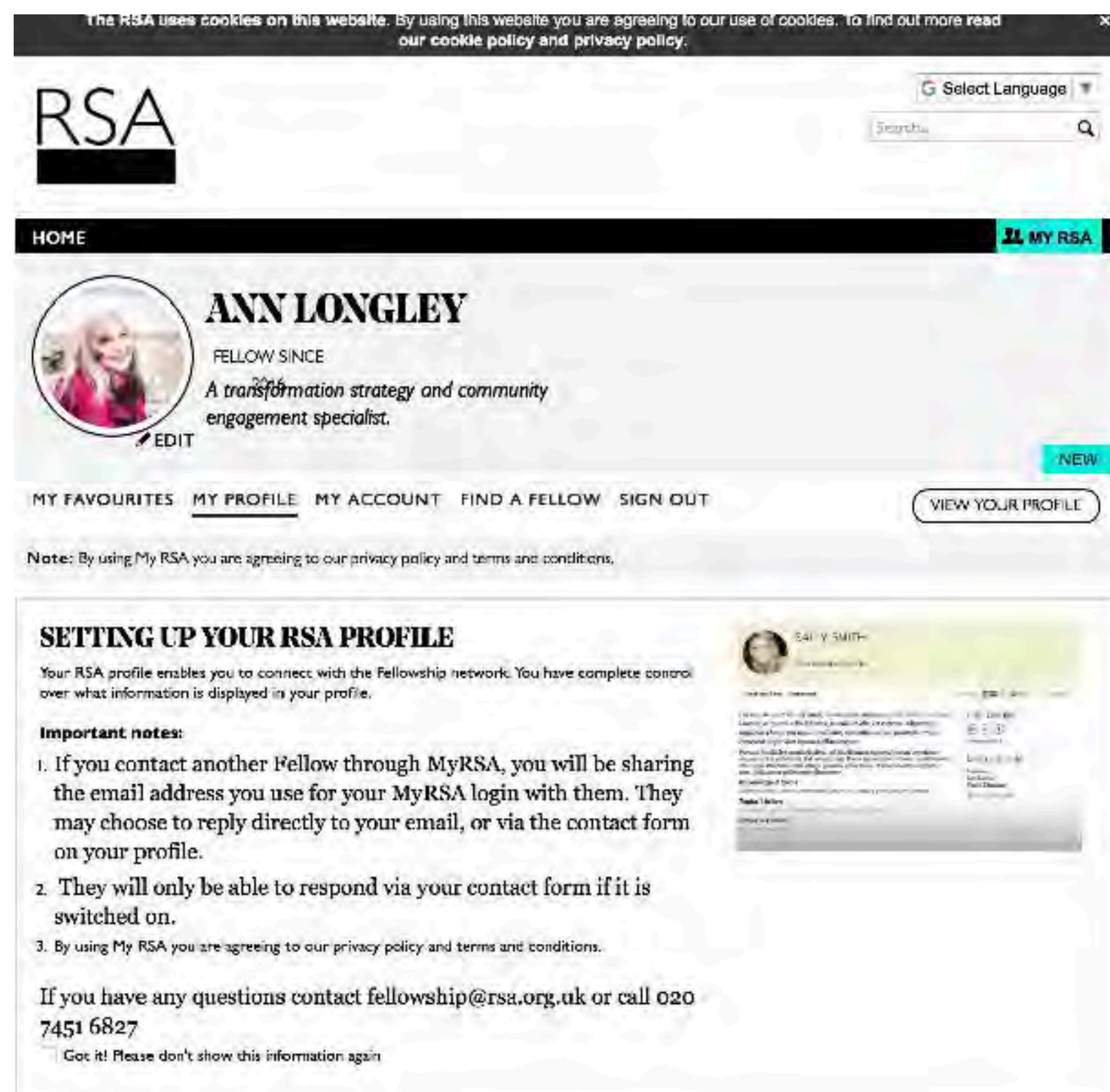
CONNECTING IS HARD

People join to be part of a community, but it is not easy to crack the RSA Fellowship code.

We are not empowered to connect. **My RSA** has limited functionality and no clear value proposition.

The Fellow's Forum and other groups are not promoted and so under-utilised. Not all groups are actively managed. Many platforms are used with no single sign on.

something new together

RSA

FELLOWS WANT EMPOWERMENT — NOT JUST ENGAGEMENT

※ The RSA is good at broadcasting content and has won awards for it. It now wants to shift to digital engagement.

※ Fellows want empowerment.

Who decides what we need and how do we begin to shift towards co-designing the future state?

something new together

RSA

BELONGING IS CRUCIAL

❝ "My big need, is that the platform or whatever we do next, it's got to make people proud to be a member of the RSA. It's got to give a sense of belonging … and it's got to allow the RSA to evolve"
Don McLaverty, Fellowship Councillor Chair

Fellowship Councillors are Connectors who can help accelerate transformation.

something new together

RSA

AN EMERGENT SPACE FOR IDEAS TO FORM IS IN DEMAND

*Several groups discussed the importance of an emergent space expertly convened by the RSA

'Forced serendipity' (connections between Fellows with different backgrounds and interests) can help drive and inspire new thinking.

Creating an emergent space for new ideas relies on an open empathetic mentality and cultivating ecosystems.

How do we foster a space for 'free-ranging' conversations that allows for balanced discourse and productive outcomes and action?

The RSA can develop and hone its approach to convening with experiments building on what has worked elsewhere (e.g. Taiwan).

something new together

RSA

DON'T SHY AWAY FROM DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

" *"Having better conversations will help us change better."*
Dino Myers-Lamptey, FRSA, Founder, The Barber Shop

The previous Fellows' platform was *not* smart or intuitive — how can we build changemaking intelligence into the next generation platform?

something new together

RSA

WE'RE NOT MEASURING IMPACT

The Innovation Education Network (IEN) adds value using the network effect.*

* It matched a school in New York with a learning opportunity with the Chester Zoo – transcending geography to fill an educational need

We can't effectively harness this potential without measuring and promoting it. Better signposting will augment network performance.

*The Learning Lab breakout group with **Lord Jim Knight** and **Chris McLean**, IEN*

something new together

RSA

*The 'network effect 'is a phenomenon whereby increased numbers of people involved continuously improve the value of a thing.

THE DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY IS A NEW WAY OF BEING

Improving the Fellowship experience and unlocking the potential of the Fellowship as a network is as much about mindset shifts and new behaviours, as it is about technology.

Focus attention on customer experience, value propositions and better signposting.

Base further investment on proof of concepts that focus on behaviours not just technology.

something new together

RSA

SUMMARY OF INSIGHTS

UNLOCK THE FELLOWSHIP TO REALISE THE RSA'S USP

TECHNOLOGY CAN ENABLE AND AUGMENT THE RSA'S IMPACT

SEEK EMPOWERMENT NOT JUST ENGAGEMENT

A CONVENING AND DESIGN APPROACH IS NEEDED

OUR IMPACT IS NOT BEING OPTIMISED BY DATA

THE RSA DOES NOT NEED TO BUILD ITS OWN PLATFORM

something new together

RSA

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

2. Recap of current state

3. Why we need to leap ahead

4. Summary of Summit Insights

5. Recommend-ations

something new together

RSA

HARNESS THE COMMITMENT OF FELLOWS TO BUILD A MOVEMENT
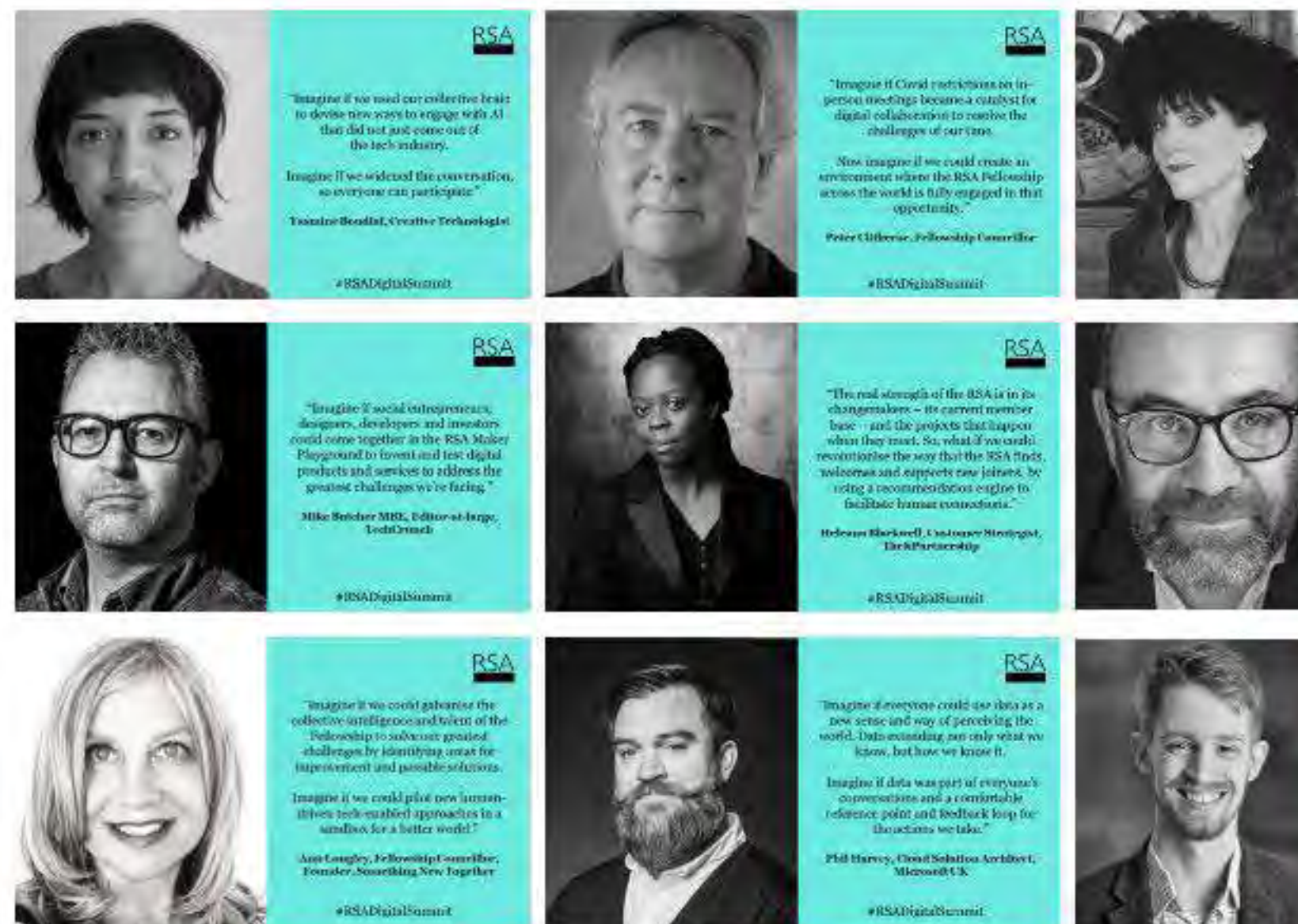
The RSA has an incredible network of Fellows who want to get involved, and do more than pay their fee

✳ To boost Fellow satisfaction and create a beautiful experience, tap into the wisdom of the Fellowship.

✳ Many Fellows are willing and able to act as an extension of the RSA team — the Summit proved their talents can be harnessed. Hold the next design workshop as soon as possible.

ATTRACT AND RETAIN FELLOWS AND PARTNERS WITH PARTICIPATORY EVENTS

The RSA can engage new and lapsed fellows whilst bolstering its digital skills through events like the RSA Digital Summit.

- Attendees of the Summit such as **Phil Harvey**, a Solutions Architect, from Microsoft, expressed interest in future opportunities with the RSA including hackathons.

- Prospective fellow **Trisha Brandon**, wrote a blog post. Several lapsed fellows including **Heleana Quartey** and **John Caswell** also participated and shared content.
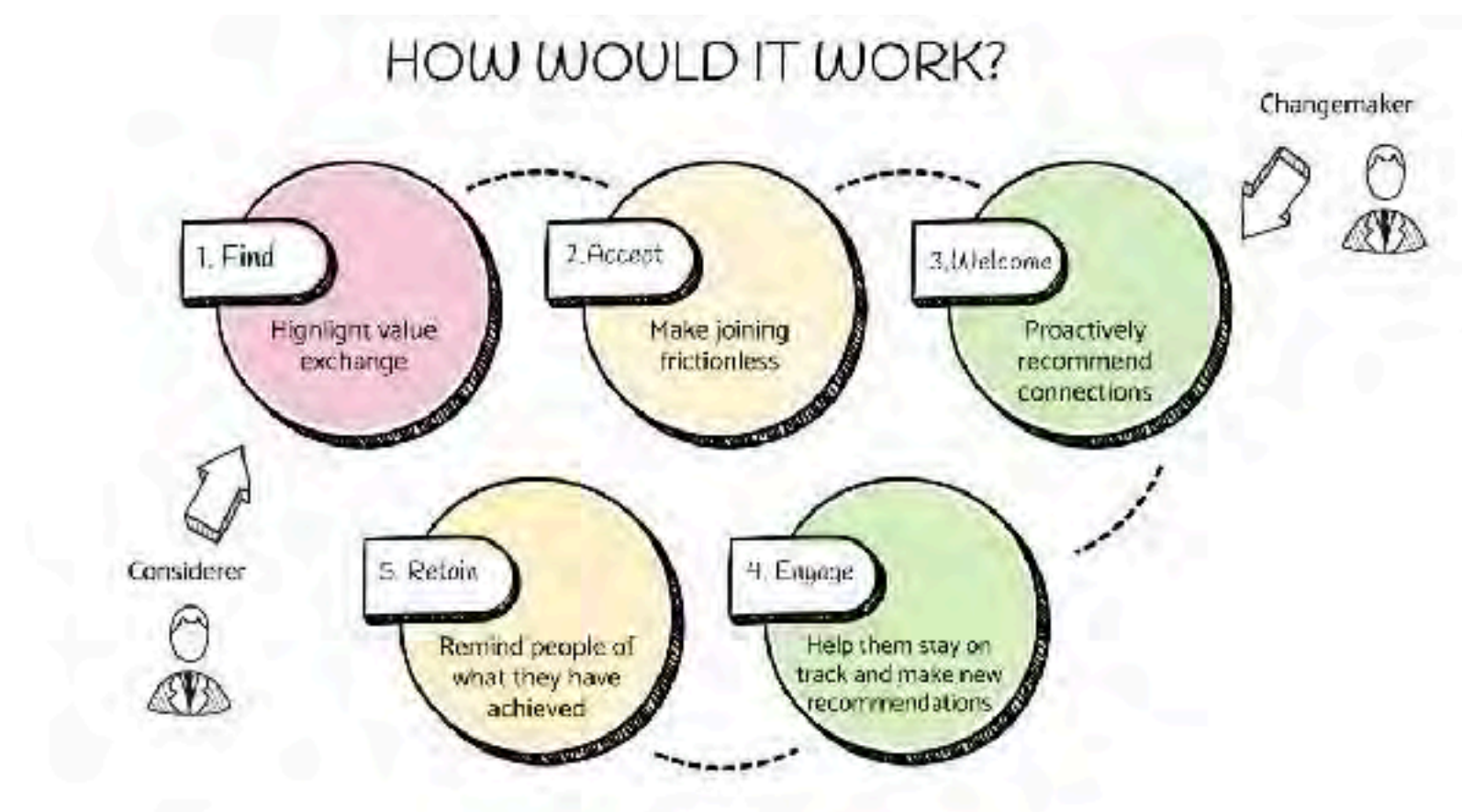
something new together

RSA

TRANSFORM TRANSPARENTLY

❋ Handling 30,000+ agendas can be challenging

❋ Establish clear priorities and communicate openly to manage expectations and model new behaviours

Involve Fellows in experiments that are evaluated openly so we can all learn what works.

something new together

RSA

Working openly by sharing projects and progress is another aspect of the GDS approach that the RSA can adopt.

HELP FELLOWS LEARN WHAT MAKES EFFECTIVE CHANGE & ACCESS A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

HOW WOULD IT WORK?

1. Find — Highlight value exchange

2. Accept — Make joining frictionless

3. Welcome — Proactively recommend connections

Changemaker

Considerer

5. Retain — Remind people of what they have achieved

4. Engage — Help them stay on track and make new recommendations

THE NAVIGATOR

A recommendation engine that proactively facilitates the human connections needed to start and support social change projects

Ecosystems accelerate change:

The RSA has a unique opportunity to apply technology in the pursuit of positive social and environmental impacts. Technology can automate and augment access to relevant expertise and networks.

An ecosystem approach can be applied to enrich existing initiatives like Catalyst and core research programmes.

Provide the best possible tools to help change-makers connect to the help and support they need.

Image Source: Heleana Quartey

something new together

RSA

The breakout groups identified many ways to improve the current FX experience and programmes like catalyst. See Appendix.

CREATE A LEARNING LAB POWERED BY TECHNOLOGY

> " *"Our fellowship is made up of the most extraordinary influencers, visionaries, thinkers, experts, doers. Imagine if we could unlock the problem-solving potential. Imagine if our RSA could become* **a living lab for deliberative democracy — enabled by technology** *— where we could share our learnings openly, so the country and the world can learn from our experience."*

Katz Kiely. FRSA, Founder, Beep and Frontline.live

something new together

RSA

A STRONG VISION WILL MOBILISE A MOVEMENT

"THERE'S SO MUCH GREAT STUFF OUT THERE - EXPERTS GENERATING FABULOUS DOTS. THE CONCERN NOW IS THE SCARCITY OF PEOPLE OR SYSTEMS WHO CAN CONNECT THEM AND THE EXPONENTIAL VALUE OF INTEGRATED THINKING ACROSS THEM." - VIKRAM MANSHAMARAMI

RSA DIGITAL UNLOCKING THE COLLECTIVE ADVANTAGE

A SPECTRUM FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE COLLECTIVE

MY BRAND WITHIN THE RSA

OUR CONTRIBUTION AS A COLLECTIVE

Setting a direction of travel that everyone wants to get behind will build momentum, generate participation, and help new behaviours take root.

Although the strategy may evolve, start somewhere based on a clear hypothesis.

The RSA with its Fellows can determine the best way forward by conducting experiments and finding out what works. The vision can be refined over time based on what works and gains traction.
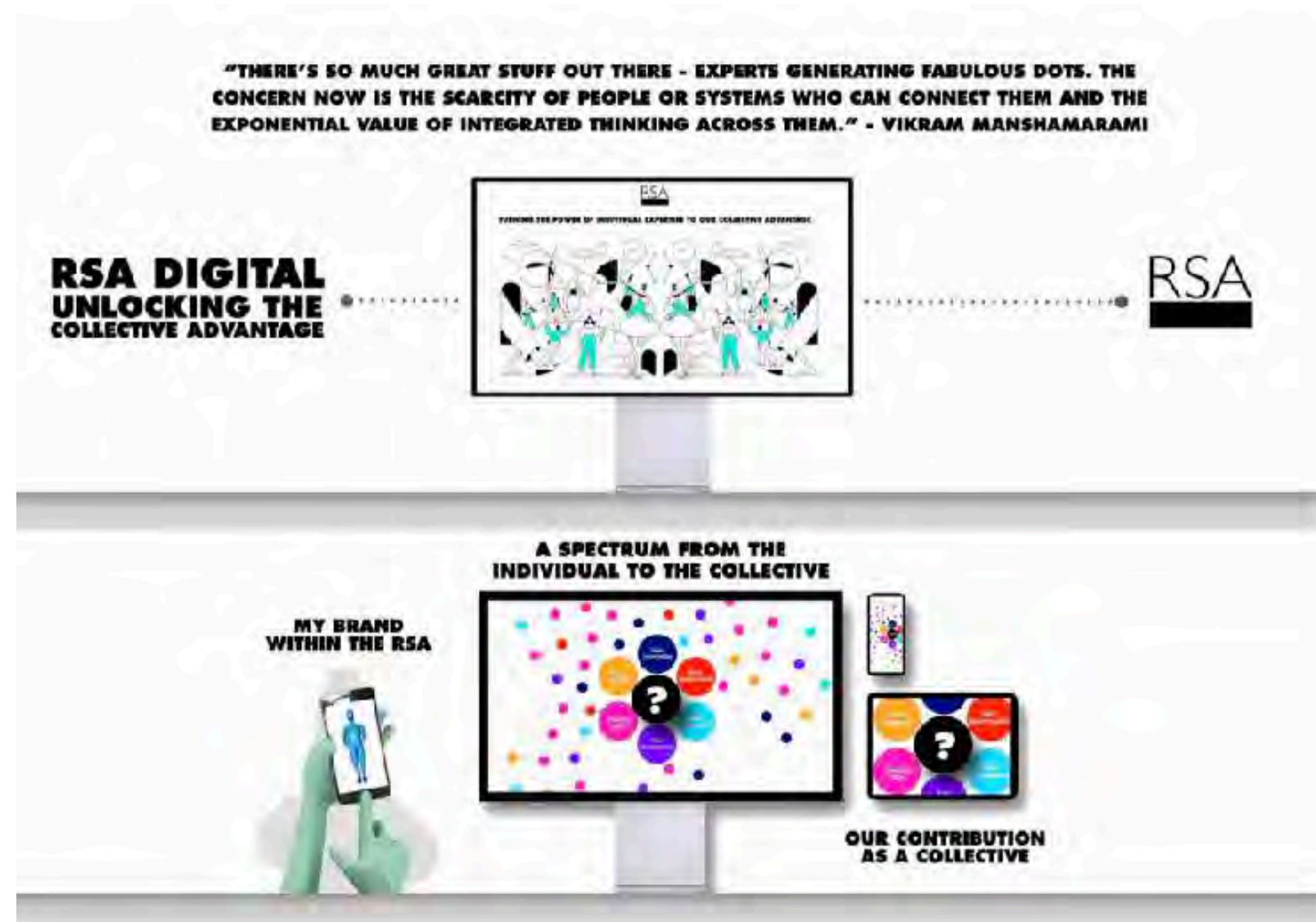
Image Source: John Caswell, Group Partners

DRIVE CHANGE WITH A STRONG VISION AND BEAUTIFUL FX

The Learning Lab breakout group, facilitated by **Lord Jim Knight, FRSA**, explored a vision for a college of informal learning that is action focused and has peer networking at its heart. It integrates the learner journey work that the RSA is doing, acknowledges that we've got lots of great content, but creates greater accessibility to it and to Fellows.

"Motivating Fellows to want to engage, to properly engage with their profiles and be able to become accessible themselves (without it becoming a directory), but through a **beautiful user experience** *that allows us to release the richness of peer-to-peer learning and keeps us motivated."*

something new together

RSA

*****Lord Jim Knight** summing up ideas from the Learning Lab breakout group*
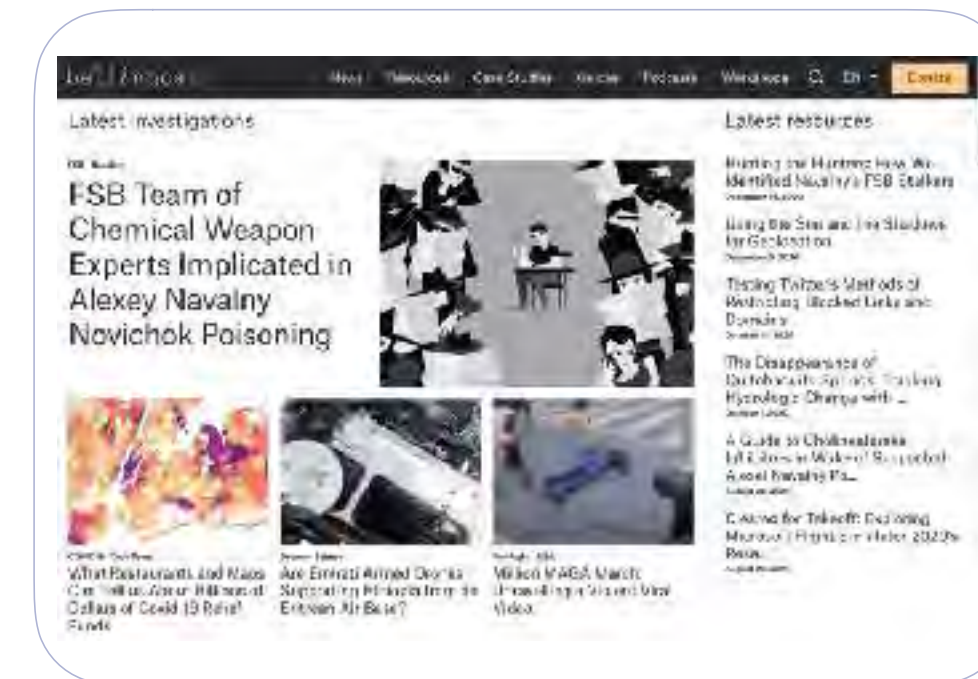
GAIN INSPIRATION FROM THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE*

Tortoise Media: Democratises the media agenda

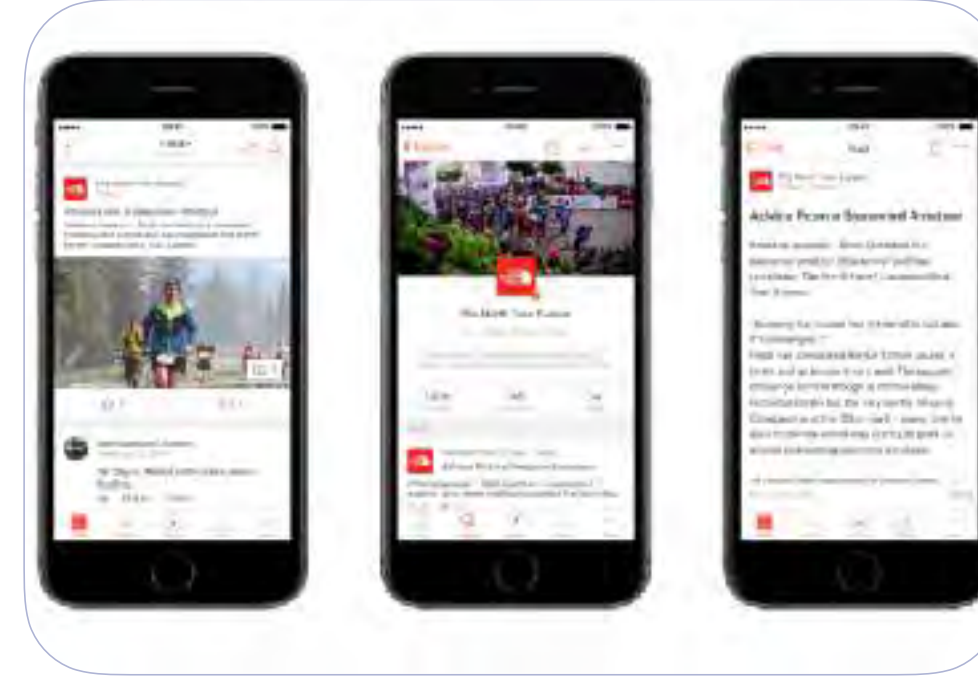

VTaiwan: Troll-proofs democracy

Bellingcat: Global collaboration to combat human rights abuses

Kalido.me: Speed dating and professional match-making

Sensemaker: Overcoming bias by harnessing self-signified distributed cognition

Strava: Tracking progress & recognising achievements

These are just some of the exemplars identified during the Summit

KEEP PROTOTYPING NEW WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH FELLOWS*

**Yemi Adeola,
Fellowship Councillor, 2020**

**Jemima Gibbons,
Fellowship Councillor, 2012**

*"Yemi said that he's met more people in this digital summit than he's met before. **Why not scale up this kind of experience?** Actually, this is a really great way to get to know (almost like you are speed dating) all the fellows.*

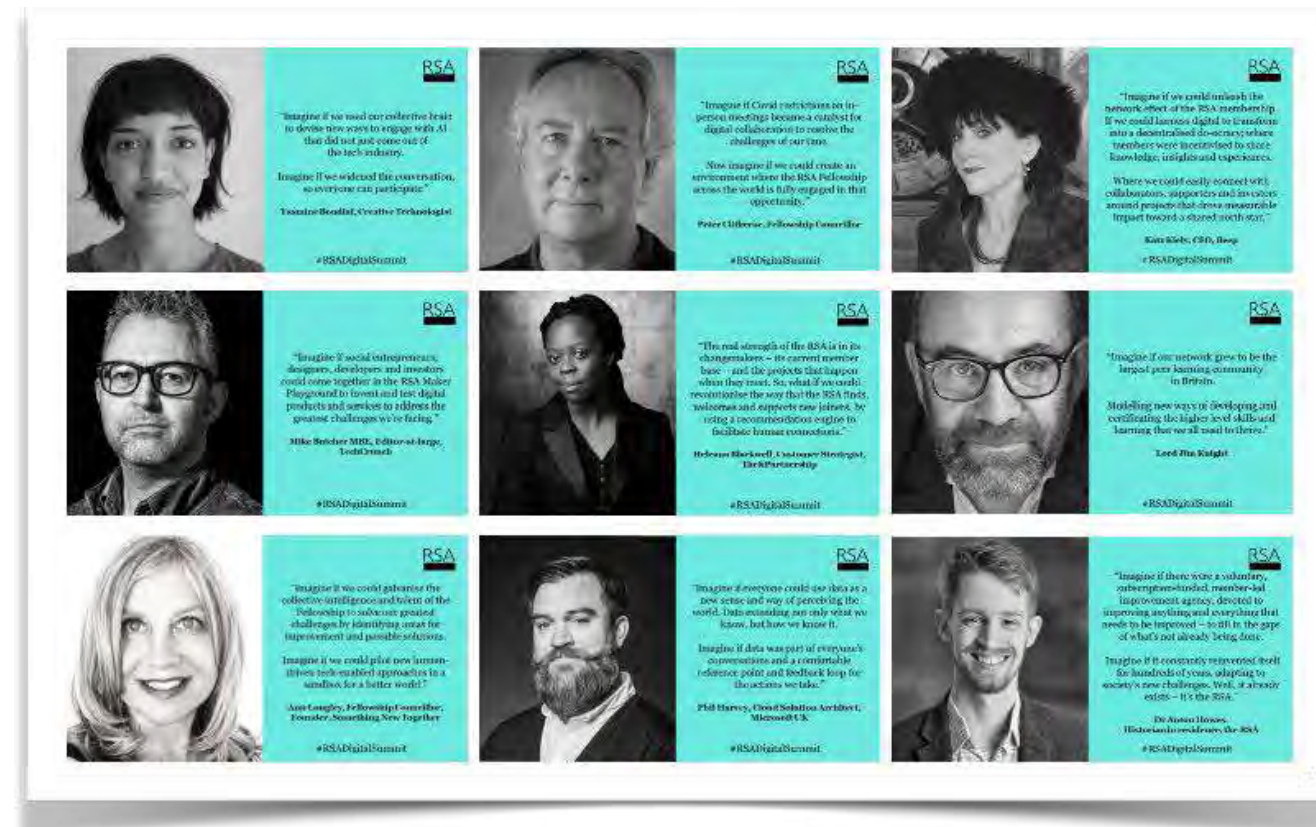*You're just like chatting to them and really quickly getting a feel for what they're about. And yeah, it's really nice."*
**Jemima Gibbons, Fellowship Councillor, 2012
Jemima's live blog of the RSA Digital Summit**
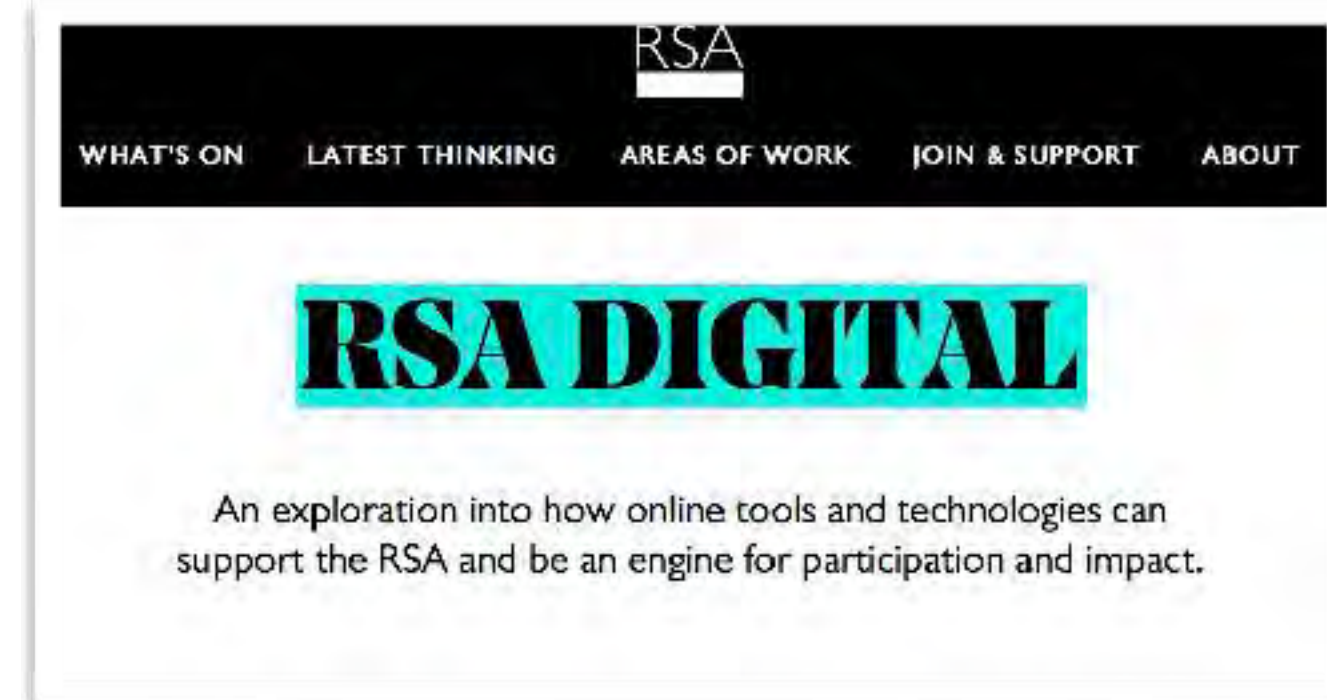
something new together

RSA

*Comments refer to working in pairs in the RSA as a platform breakout group during the Summit

BUILD A MOVEMENT WITH FELLOW-GENERATED COMMUNICATIONS

Social campaign

Webpage to share progress

Fellow-generated content

INVEST IN SERVICE DESIGN

Discovery — Understanding context and problems to solve
Alpha — Testing options by prototyping
Beta — Building and refining options
Live — Continuously improving

Home Office

Digital, Data and Technology

Follow / adapt the proven GDS approach and <u>principles</u> to designing digital services.
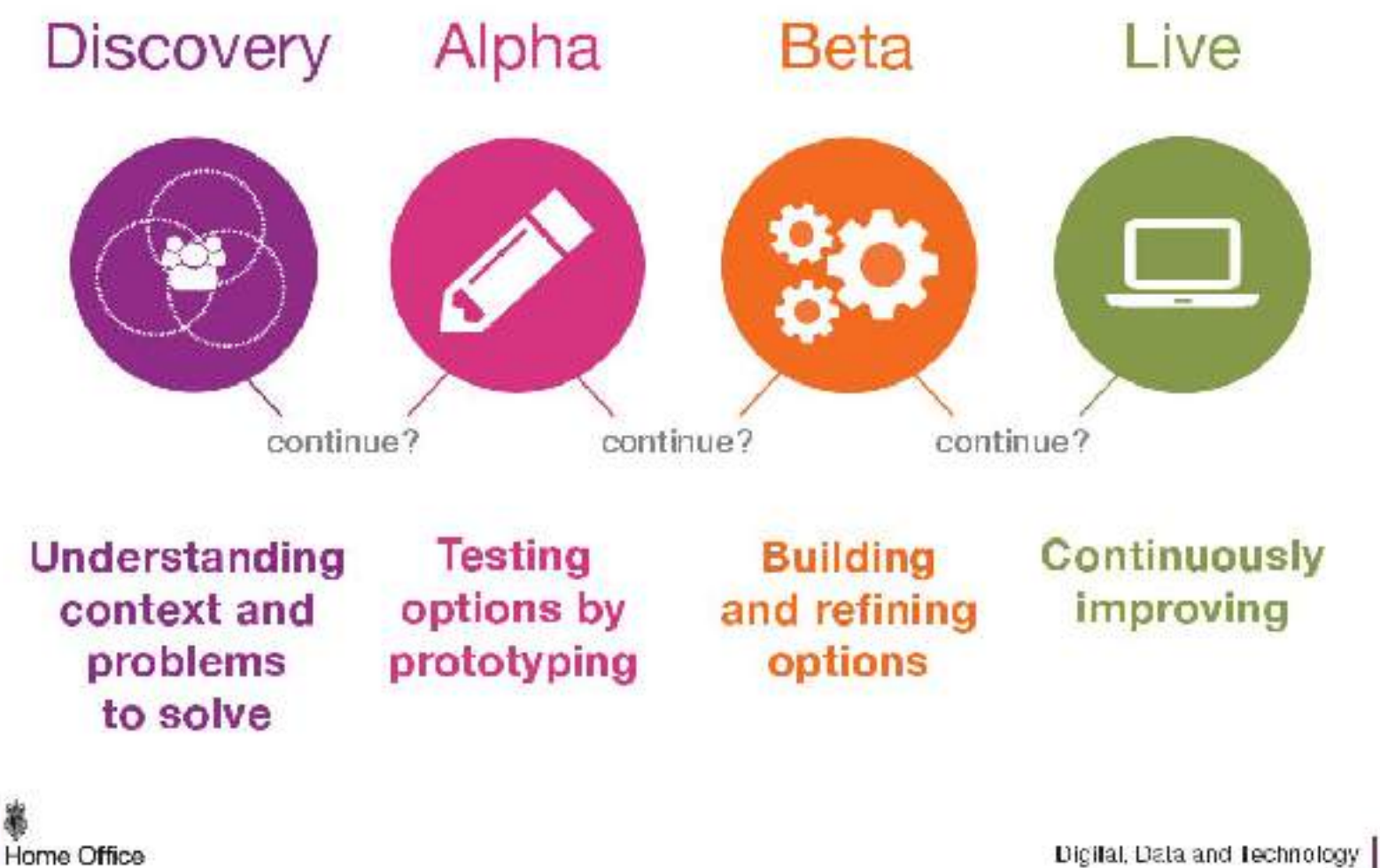
⁕ Support existing staff initially with an external expert to transfer knowledge

⁕ Recommended roles for the service design team include Business Owner, Delivery Manager, / Agile Coach Technical Lead / Product Manager, Digital Service Designer, UX designer, User Researcher, Data Analyst, Content Designer, Content Creator, Community Manager.

something new together

RSA

CONVENE TO BE GREATER THAN THE SUM OF OUR PARTS

❋ Platforms in the past haven't worked when they've not been staff supported and actively managed

❋ Share The RSA's 'Living Change' methodology with Fellows so it can applied to their initiatives

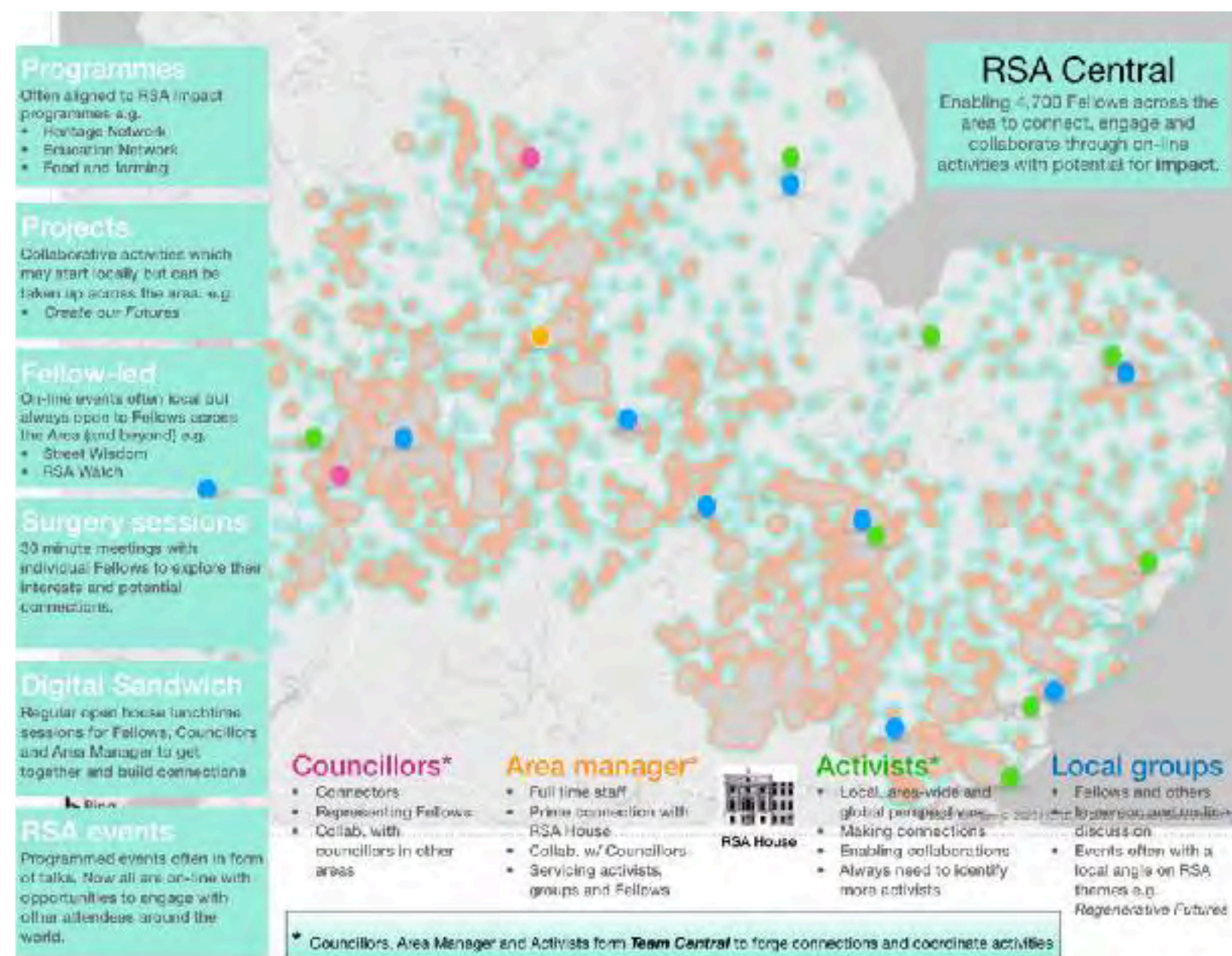**Accelerate change and unleash the network effect by convening the RSA way.**

something new together

RSA

USE INSIGHTS FROM DATA-TO TRANSFORM

Audit the existing landscape:

※ What Fellowship activity can we leverage?

※ What have we learned about what works?

※ How do we measure success and optimise impact?

Engage with current activists via the Fellowship Council*. Focus on incremental improvements and next steps — define the MVP(s) with them.

something new together

RSA

Fellowship Councillor, Clare Gage to join Digital Steering Group from Feb 2021

AI CAN HELP US LEARN WHAT WORKS

Source: **Phil Harvey, Microsoft**

Learning how to harness AI to analyse data can open up new opportunities for the RSA

※ Gathering and sharing data with communities may empower them to make decisions

※ We can learn about effective changemaking from our archive

※ Build this intelligence into our platform

DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL

Explore how existing tech can be plugged into our platform using APIs; seamlessly stitch toolsets together when possible with a single sign-on (SSO).

Base further investments in technology on proof of concepts that focus on behaviours not just technology.

Focus attention on quick wins including improving the Fellow Experience, empowering value propositions, and brilliant basics like signposting.

something new together

RSA

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

NEW MINDSETS & BEHAVIOURS WILL UNLOCK THE FELLOWSHIP POTENTIAL

TO MAXIMISE IMPACT ALIGN TECH WITH RSA STRATEGY

DEFINE AN EMPOWERMENT VISION AND ROADMAP

CONVENE THE RSA WAY AND ADAPT PROVEN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

OPTIMISE OUR IMPACT WITH INSIGHTS FROM DATA

LEVERAGE EXISTING TECH

something new together

RSA

APPENDIX: SUMMIT THEMES, INTENTIONS, PARTICIPANTS, AND OUTPUTS

THE SUMMIT THEMES

Descriptions and links to artifacts

RSA as a platform

— an open accessible inclusive platform and digital toolset for Fellows to use to develop their own collaborative initiatives (decentralised) and for the RSA's research teams to use to engage Fellows on the programmatic work of the RSA (centralised).

Katz Kiely provocation Jamboard

RSA Navigator

— how to crack the RSA code and get the most out the RSA / how might it work / how can the RSA make it easier for Fellows to make the most of what is on offer and attract support for their own initiatives? How can RSA make the experience more personalised and improve it as it gets to know Fellows better?

Heleana Blackwell provocation Jamboard

RSA Virtual Coffee House

— how do we use digital to recreate the serendipity associated with attending the RSA's Coffee House and networking events? How can we create / curate the most stimulating opportunities for discovering how to create a positive future? How can we promote existing networks, bring together Fellows locally, and internationally at scale virtually?

Anton Howes provocation Jamboard

something new together

RSA

THE SUMMIT THEMES

Descriptions and links to artifacts

From Insight to Action

— how the RSA can identify opportunities for action by harnessing the power of data and technology. How can the RSA listen, engage, and respond to opportunities for social impact powered by AI-driven insight tools and tech

Phil Harvey provocation
Jamboard

Learning Lab

— how might the RSA facilitate learning within the RSA and beyond using digital tech & a blended approach? How can the RSA facilitate learning journeys via the greatest possible access to experts, peer learning and stimulating thought-fora?

Lord Jim Knight provocation
Jamboard

Makers Playground

— how might we create an applied research programme which results in digital tools and products for changemakers? Imagine if we could commission programme-inspired product and service design experiments or Fellow ideas; move the RSA from just thinking into doing and action, from abstract to concrete

Mike Butcher provocation
Jamboard

something new together

RSA

DIGITAL SUMMIT INTENTIONS

* Begin a dialogue, spark ongoing creativity and collaboration

* Unlock the creativity and wisdom of RSA's Fellowship to think like a system / act like an entrepreneur

* Create a new blueprint for Fellowship engagement and attraction

* Build a diverse network / ecosystem / community of support for the RSA's digital transformation

* Feel good, have fun — this is a solution-focused creative event designed to spark joy — a safe space for setting imaginations free
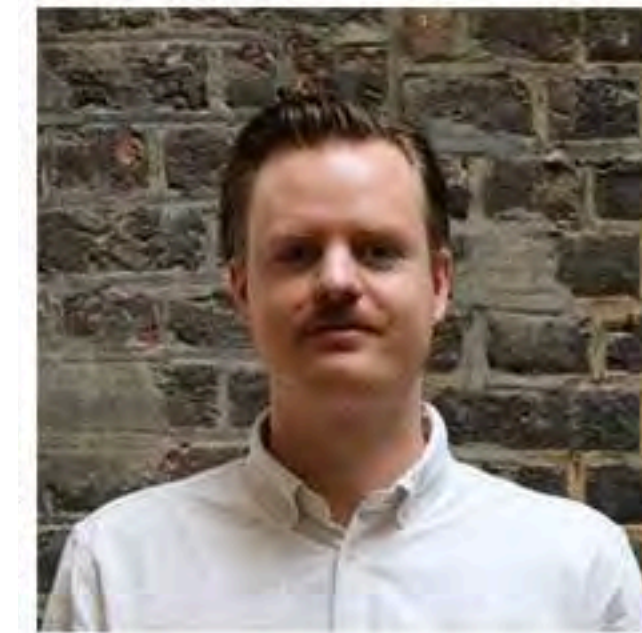
something new together

RSA

THE CORE ORGANISING TEAM

Ann Longley, FRSA
Strategist
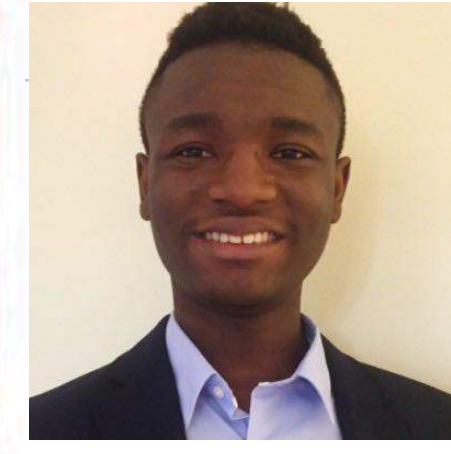
Peter Clitheroe, FRSA
Filmmaker

Yasmine Boudiaf
Creative Technologist

Chris Ward
RSA Head of Digital

WE JOINED FORCES TO HELP THE RSA ACHIEVE BETTER OUTCOMES — TOGETHER WE ARE GREATER THAN THE SUM OF OUR PARTS

something
new
together

RSA

A SNAPSHOT OF PARTICIPANTS*

something new together

RSA

Thank You

For further information and to continue this conversation,
please contact ALongleyCouncillor@rsa.org.uk