

Thriving Futures 2026

AI & Innovation: A Rupture not a Transition?

4-5 May 2026 | Catolica Porto Business School

PRE-SYMPOSIUM WEBINAR: IS SUSTAINABILITY FALTERING? (4 MAY)

Wayne Visser

Webinar Host & Panel 2 Facilitator | Director, Catolica Centre for Thriving Futures; Professor of Practice in Regenerative Business, Innovation and Technology, Catolica Porto Business School

Prof. Wayne Visser is Director of the Catolica Centre for Thriving Futures (CCTF) and Professor of Practice in Regenerative Business, Innovation and Technology at Catolica Porto Business School. A globally recognised thought leader at the intersection of sustainability, innovation, and systems transformation, he is the author of over 40 books including *The Age of Alchemy*, and host of the Purpose Inspired podcast. His research and teaching explore how organisations can move beyond incremental sustainability towards regenerative and thriving futures. He has held academic positions and fellowships at leading institutions worldwide, including the University of Cambridge, and has spoken and consulted for hundreds of organisations across more than 70 countries.

Martin Calnan

UNESCO Chair for Futures Literacy (FAST) | Director of Executive Education, Ecole des Ponts Business School, Paris

Martin Calnan is Director of Executive Education at Ecole des Ponts Business School (EPBS) in Paris, where he designs transformative learning experiences for leaders navigating complexity and uncertainty. He holds the UNESCO Chair for the Future of Value (FAST) at EPBS, building on Futures Literacy to expand our capacity to use the future as a tool for sensing emergence rather than merely predicting and controlling outcomes. With an eclectic background spanning luxury marketing, digital entrepreneurship, and organisational consulting, Martin brings an unconventional perspective to leadership development. His work explores how futures literacy can reframe value creation, strategic foresight, and the relationship between anticipation and organisational change.

Cam Danielson

Co-Founder, Conscious Leadership Institute & One Earth Leadership

Cam Danielson is Co-Founder and Principal of the Conscious Leadership Institute and One Earth Leadership Consortium, organisations dedicated to growing the inner capacity of leaders to meet the complexity of today's world. With over 35 years of global leadership development experience, he has designed executive programmes and led coaching engagements for organisations including 3M, The Nature Conservancy, NASA, Schneider Electric, and Trane Technologies. He spent two decades leading executive education at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, is faculty at CEDEP in Fontainebleau, and is a former US Air Force officer. His published research includes *Beyond the Horizon: Glimpses into the Lives of Exceptional Leaders*, drawn from his work on contemplative practice and leadership development.

Pamela Fuhrmann, PhD

Co-Founder, One Earth Leadership & Conscious Leadership Institute

Pamela Fuhrmann is Co-Founder of the Conscious Leadership Institute. She supports leaders in the ongoing work of development — creating space to reflect, to question, and to see more clearly the patterns that shape how they lead and relate. With nearly two decades of international experience in leadership development, Pamela has partnered with organizations such as Aditya Birla Group, Engie, Hollard International, Kohler, Schneider Electric, SCOR Reinsurance, Trane Technologies, and Standard Bank. Her work is informed by graduate studies in depth psychology and mythology, as well as adult development, coaching, and ecopsychology. She brings an integrative perspective that connects inner development with more conscious forms of leading, relating, and being in an interconnected world.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Isabel Braga da Cruz

Pro-Rector, Universidade Católica Portuguesa (Porto Campus)

Prof. Isabel Braga da Cruz is Pro-Rector of Universidade Católica Portuguesa, with responsibility for the Porto Campus and the university's national sustainability agenda. An alumna of UCP herself, she holds a BSc in Food Engineering and a PhD in Food Science and Engineering from the School of Biotechnology, where she is also Associate Professor. She has led the Porto Campus since 2017, overseeing seven academic units and seven research centres spanning biotechnology, law, arts, education, theology, health sciences and business. Her career bridges academia, industry and entrepreneurship — including roles as Knowledge Director at PortugalFoods, and as founder of Wedotech and Wedoeko. For the 2024–2028 mandate, she has taken on the additional portfolio of sustainability, working to align and integrate UCP's environmental and social commitments across all four of its national campuses.

KEYNOTE: A WORLD BEYOND LIMITS AND HOW TO GET THERE

James Arbib

Co-Founder, RethinkX & Stellar World Initiative

James Arbib is a thought leader, historian, investor, and philanthropist whose work sits at the intersection of technological disruption and civilisational change. As co-founder of RethinkX, a leading independent think tank analysing technology-driven disruption, he has shaped global conversations on the convergence of energy, transport, food, and AI systems. He is the founder of Tellus Mater, a philanthropic foundation exploring technology's potential to address humanity's greatest challenges, and co-founder of the Stellar World initiative. His latest book, *Stellar* (2025, co-authored with Tony Seba), named one of the Financial Times' top economics books, argues that converging technologies make a world of superabundance and human flourishing not merely possible, but inevitable.

BRIEFING: AI REGULATION AND APPLICATION FOR INNOVATION

Pedro Freitas

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, Universidade Católica Portuguesa

Pedro Freitas is Assistant Professor at the Porto School of Law at Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, where he is also an affiliated researcher at the Catolica Research Centre for the Future of Law. He holds a PhD in Criminal Law from the University of Minho and has published over 100 scholarly works spanning criminal law, criminal procedure, data protection, and technology law. An active contributor to EU-level policy dialogues on AI and cybersecurity, he co-edited the Springer volume *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Artificial Intelligence and the Law* (2024) and has presented research on the EU AI Act, GDPR, and digital rights at conferences across Europe. He is a recognised voice on the legal, ethical, and regulatory dimensions of artificial intelligence.

Pedro Rodrigues

Assistant Professor & Vice-Dean, Faculty of Biotechnology, Universidade Catolica Portuguesa

Pedro Miguel Rodrigues is Assistant Professor and Vice-Dean at the Faculty of Biotechnology of Universidade Catolica Portuguesa (ESB-UCP) in Porto, and an integrated member of the Research Centre for Biotechnology and Fine Chemistry (CBQF-UCP). Holding a PhD in Biomedical Engineering, he coordinates the Data Science in Biomedicine Postgraduate Programme and co-coordinates the Bioengineering degree. His research applies digital signal processing and artificial intelligence to the diagnosis of neurodegenerative, cardiac, and speech diseases, as well as to smart biosensors and monitoring systems for agri-food and biomedical applications. His work exemplifies how AI is transforming health sciences, moving from algorithmic pattern recognition towards clinical diagnostic tools with real-world impact.

PANEL 1: HOW AI IS CHANGING BUSINESS

Lyal White

Panel Facilitator | Faculty, Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria

Prof. Lyal White is a faculty member at GIBS, University of Pretoria, where he directs the Porter Institute Africa Hub and leads programmes in leadership and global engagement. Founder of Contextual Intelligence and member of the OneEarth Leadership Consortium, his work explores how context and trends shape business across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. He is widely published and a regular media commentator. A former founding Director of the Johannesburg Business School, he has taught at leading institutions worldwide. A certified business coach, Lyal is committed to purpose-driven leadership and people development as cornerstones of long-term strategy.

Sara Mendes

Innovation Manager, Sogrape Vinhos

Sara Mendes is Innovation Manager at Sogrape Vinhos, one of Portugal's most prominent wine groups, where she coordinates open innovation initiatives, startup scouting, and piloting of emerging technologies across the organisation. Working at the intersection of corporate strategy and ecosystem-driven innovation, she collaborates closely with startups, academia, and Sogrape Ventures, the group's corporate venture capital fund, to translate early-stage technologies into scalable business opportunities. Sara holds an Executive MBA and brings experience in strategy, cross-functional project development, and structured execution. Her work reflects a conviction that sustainable competitive advantage increasingly comes from an organisation's ability to sense, engage with, and integrate external innovation.

Ahmed Tokyo

Director of Applied AI, Mindera

Ahmed Tokyo is an AI engineer and technology executive who relocated from Palo Alto to Porto to contribute to Portugal's emerging AI ecosystem. He currently serves as Director of Applied AI at Mindera, bringing extensive leadership experience from roles as CTO of Plural.com and VP of Engineering at Humanform.ai. A published researcher in biofeedback and pervasive computing, He focuses on building human-aligned intelligence systems at the convergence of technology and human experience. His work reflects a deep commitment to ensuring that AI development remains anchored in human values, and he is an active voice in the conversation about what it means to build AI that genuinely serves people rather than merely optimising for performance metrics.

Felipe Ferreira

Head of Strategy, Data & AI, Worten Portugal

Felipe Ferreira leads the Strategy and Data & AI team at Worten, Portugal's market-leading electronics retailer and the country's most visited website. With over two decades of experience spanning food and non-food retail, he has driven major digital transformation programmes and operational excellence initiatives across supply chain, logistics, and industrial engineering. Known for bridging business strategy and technology implementation, Felipe has managed complex international projects and built high-performing cross-functional teams. His current work places him at the forefront of applying AI to retail strategy, using data intelligence to drive competitive differentiation in one of Portugal's most dynamic and consumer-facing sectors.

PANEL 2: HOW AI IS CHANGING SOCIETY

Facilitator: Prof. Wayne Visser — see biography in the Welcome & Introduction section above.

Pedro Santa Clara

Full Professor of Finance, Nova SBE | Founder, Shaken Not Stirred

Prof. Pedro Santa Clara is Full Professor of Finance at Nova School of Business and Economics and a former faculty member at UCLA Anderson School of Management. Holding a PhD from INSEAD, he has published extensively in top finance and economics journals and served as a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. In 2019, he pivoted to education entrepreneurship, founding Shaken Not Stirred and leading the launch of 42 Lisboa (2020), 42 Porto (2022), and TUMO centres across Portugal, institutions designed to democratise access to technology education. A founding partner of Atrium Portfolio Managers and Data4Deals, Pedro brings a rare combination of academic rigour, institution-building experience, and a commitment to expanding opportunity through innovation.

Paulo Dimas

CEO, Center for Responsible AI

Paulo Dimas is CEO of the Center for Responsible AI, a 22-partner consortium bringing together AI startups, research institutions, and industry leaders to develop the next generation of AI products grounded in responsibility and ethics. Previously, as VP of Innovation at Unbabel, a world-leading AI-driven language technology company, he joined

when the team numbered just twelve and helped drive growth that secured over EUR 100 million in funding, with Unbabel recognised by Fast Company as a top-three global enterprise innovator in 2020. With roots in research dating to age 16 at INESC, Paulo is a natural bridge between academia and industry, and a sought-after speaker on the challenges, opportunities, and ethical imperatives shaping the future of AI.

Joao Costa Ribeiro

Open Innovation Intelligence Lead, Galp

Joao Costa Ribeiro is Open Innovation Intelligence Lead at Galp, where he oversees an innovation portfolio exceeding EUR 150 million, integrating AI and advanced data strategies into one of Europe's leading energy companies. A software engineer by training, he has developed a practice he calls 'Intelligence Architecture', the design of systems that fuse human and machine intelligence for complex, high-stakes environments. Beyond his corporate role, Joao is an award-winning professor at Porto Business School and the University of Bergen, teaching business innovation and technological convergence. He authored the Haiflow Field Guide on human-AI collaboration and is a recognised public voice on the ethical evolution of AI, exploring its frontiers through research and creative practice.

CCTF PROJECTS AND COURSES + CLOSING

Wayne Visser, Pedro Freitas and Pedro Rodrigues contribute to this session. See their biographies above.

STRATEGIC DIALOGUE: WHAT DOES LEADING FROM THE FUTURE MEAN?

Lyal White, Martin Calnan, Cam Danielson, Pamela Fuhrmann facilitate this session. See their biographies above.