



**Credit Union Conference
Manchester, 24th November 2023**

**Disturbance and Transformation:
Owning the Future**

SWOBODA RESEARCH CENTRE



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I. Introduction to this report

This report is a summary of the presentations and panel discussions from the Swoboda Research Centre Conference themed *Owning the Future*, and the pre-conference Leadership Dinner, which took place on 23rd and 24th November 2023 in Manchester.

115 participants from the US, GB and Ireland attended the event, where they were able to listen to experts and practitioners and engage in conversations on what the future might look like for their credit unions.

In the morning session, delegates heard from Professor Karen Elliott from the University of Birmingham and Dr Leda Glyptis, an author, and adviser and non-executive director with FinTech businesses. Karen shared some of her research findings on the role of credit unions in bridging the digital divide, data ethics and governance while Leda proposed ways for credit unions to make best use of the technology available to meet their members' needs. Karen was joined for an Expert Panel by Paul Rooney, Executive Director at Constituent, and Assistant Professor Andrea Lagna from Alliance Manchester Business School.

In the afternoon, a Practitioner Panel of credit union CEOs (James Berry, Teresa Manning, Séan Murray and Paul Norgrove) discussed their approach to the challenges of digital. Then George Hofheimer from the US, formerly of Filene Research Institute and now co-founder of The Strategy Circle, delivered an extended, participative session on how credit unions can develop a strategic response to the issues of the day.

Presentations, videos and photographs from the day can be found [here](#), or visit www.swobodacentre.org.

Photography: Cassandra Lane, cassandralanebranding.com

Video: The AV Guys, <https://www.theavguys.co.uk>

II. Swoboda Leadership Dinner



On the eve of its conferences, Swoboda organises a leadership dinner, exclusively for CEOs and senior staff from its member credit unions. This year, the Dinner took place in the spectacular surroundings of the recently refurbished Manchester Museum. Fifty-three guests assembled under the impressive skeleton of a sperm whale to discuss and share ideas on contemporary credit union issues in Ireland and Britain.

Diners are seated to facilitate the maximum possible interaction and participation. The focus is on building networks and connections between Swoboda members which is as important as sharing knowledge and ideas about credit union development.

George Hofheimer, the former head of research at the Filene Research Institute, who gave the keynote presentation at the conference itself, was our after-dinner speaker. George's engaging and dynamic style of delivery brought the evening to life and prompted a range of questions and reflections among participants. His theme was contemporary trends in credit union development in the United States and how these have, or may have, resonances in Ireland and Britain.

He stressed the importance of credit union collaboration. He noted the ongoing trend for mergers between credit unions, and described the importance of the recently announced merger between the two US trade associations, CUNA and NAFCU to form a new organisation from 1st January 2024, 'America's Credit Unions'. George spoke of the importance of the development of collaborative credit union service organisations (CUSOs), including now for taking equity investments in fintech businesses, and about strategic collaborations between credit unions. But he was keen to stress the values of credit unions retaining the human touch with their members. He also set out some of the current challenges faced by US credit unions, including of which was liquidity and the retention of savings at a time when banks are offering increasingly attractive interest rates on deposits and many families are squeezed through the cost-of-living crisis.

III. Conference welcome and introductions

Nick Money (Swoboda Research Centre)

Nick Money welcomed participants to Manchester and to the Conference.

Nick provided an overview of the development of the Swoboda Research Centre (Swoboda) since its launch in 2017. Named after its lead founder, the late Ralph Swoboda, the centre draws inspiration from the Filene Research Institute in the USA. Nick explained how having been involved in setting up Filene in the USA, Ralph wanted Europe to have something similar.

Swoboda has grown to include 60 credit union members and five corporate members. It has produced 40 publications involving 38 authors, sponsored 30 podcasts and held 10 conferences. Swoboda's vision is to be the leading credit union research organisation for

British, Irish and European credit unions and their stakeholders. Nick advised that in 2024 Swoboda would be refreshing its subscription packages and seeking to grow its membership in order to do more for the movement.

Turning to the topic for the day, Nick said, “This Conference is about looking at the future,” and that the event aimed to explore members’ future expectations. Nick suggested that in the near future, technology-driven demands from members might include bespoke communications that anticipated individual needs, ‘always on’ services, and more flexibility in products, such as 24 hour loans. The Conference was an opportunity to explore the risks and opportunities to come.



IV. Keynotes: Where is the train going, and do credit unions have to get on board?

What are the big drivers of change in society and financial services, how powerful are they and why do credit unions have to take notice?



Serving the Under-served: Physical-Digital Society, Professor Karen Elliott (University of Birmingham)

A behavioural psychologist and sociologist, Karen has conducted research on a range of topics that are relevant to credit unions, including the potential of Blockchain and Bitcoin to disrupt the financial system and the role of credit unions in bridging the digital divide. Karen discussed the digital dilemmas through

the concept of ‘wicked problems’ that needed untangling and looked at issues around digital identity for KYC (Know Your Customer), data ethics and governance – corporate digital responsibility.

She had several tips for credit unions, including:

- Strive to work together to solve common problems.
- Explore how to use knowledge and data safely and to benefit their members.
- Stretch beyond automating what they are already doing.
- Conduct risk assessments as part of their digital transformation.
- Acknowledge that different people will have different technological readiness levels, both within credit unions and their members.
- Seek to build from scratch by working with tech companies that are more agile, rather than carry the weight of existing infrastructure like regular banks do.
- Take consumers on their digital transformation journey and maintain that relationship with them whilst working with other credit unions as well.

Karen concluded by encouraging credit unions to apply for research and development funding to work with universities, notably in the UK through the [UKFin+ scheme](#).

The Technical Realities of an Ethical Mission, Dr Leda Glyptis (author and NED)

Leda, presenting via Zoom, explored the technical challenges credit unions are faced with, arguing that the technology used by most credit unions was not built or designed for them or their particular needs.



"A lot of it is too big for credit unions," she argued, mentioning some of the problems that come with using legacy technology, such as high maintenance costs, a high operating risk and a scarcity of the skills required for maintenance and development.

"Some banks have technology that dates back to the 1970s or earlier," Leda said, adding that this should not need to be the case with credit unions.

She explained that some of these legacy programming languages are not taught anymore and there are fewer and fewer experts who know how to patch the system when issues occur.

"The risk factors holding Tier 1 banks back don't apply to you. Ask yourself who are the providers best equipped to solve your problems, not those of big banks," she said, arguing that vendors should be part of the solution and seek to partner with credit unions in succeeding in their mission.

To navigate this complex landscape, she encouraged credit unions to explore the following questions:

- Are your vendors using best-in-class technology?
- Are you leveraging your collective bargaining power, as a movement?
- Are you paying for more than you are using?

"Each of you individually may not be the biggest buyer of these vendors, even the biggest ones. But collectively, you represent a huge part of the financial services. That collective bargaining all of a sudden makes you a much more powerful buyer," she said. Leda concluded by pointing out that using cheaper tech enables mission-driven financial institutions like credit unions to provide more affordable services to their members and fulfil their mission.

V. Expert panel: How far and how fast?

What are the big drivers of change in society and financial services, how powerful are they and why do credit unions have to take notice?

Karen Elliott joined Paul Rooney, Executive Director of Constituent, and Assistant Professor Andrea Lagna, Alliance Manchester Business School, for a panel discussion followed by a plenary question and answer session. Andrea and Paul individually offered some observations before the Q&A.



Andrea Lagna (Alliance Manchester Business School)

Andrea told credit unions not to lose their community focus and mission to serve members, as they progress in their digital transformation journey. He also pointed out that the technology used in financial services was not developed with the unbanked in mind and argued technology could be used to build that sense of community and empathy, such as in the case of some micro-lending institutions.

Paul Rooney (Constituent)

Paul also agreed that credit unions should take control of their technology, adding that this should only be an enabler for them to deliver for their members. Paul said he seeks to enable credit unions to ask the right questions and identify the best technology for them. Paul also mentioned that some new platforms present a range of offers for credit unions. He noted that some credit unions have already invested in their own technology and platforms, which could become available to other credit unions as well [see Teresa Manning contribution in VII.



Practitioner Panel: How to Respond?]. He also warned that credit unions need to learn from the mistakes of the past, and not get carried away with technology and forget about the business. “Technology is only an enabler, the bigger picture is also the business change,” he said, adding that some members may want face-to-face or over-the-telephone services. “It goes back to serving the members the way they want to be served,” he said.

Q&A, facilitated by Nick Money



Asked whether credit unions should be worried about the power of AI, Karen expressed concerns over some decisions being taken behind closed doors in Silicon Valley. However, she added that technology, as it stands, can only do what it is trained to do and cannot replace human beings as of yet.

On the same issue, Andrea added that sometimes hardware infrastructure and built-in programmes can break or experience glitches in the system, something the financial services sector, including credit unions, needs to be worried about, in the context of machine learning being widespread. Paul agreed with the other panellists, adding he was not concerned the world would be “taken over by robots” yet either.

Concerning security and privacy, the panel highlighted that anything digital can be tracked. Karen talked about corporate digital responsibility, which, she said, is being taken into account even before the design stage. “GDPR doesn’t become important until it goes wrong, this is

human nature, we want the ease of navigation when we use digital but only care about it when it goes wrong,” she explained.

VI. Over to you: energised or frozen? Structured small group and plenary discussion

The Expert Panel Q&A session concluded with Dr Paul A. Jones asking Conference participants to discuss at their tables the issues raised. Participants were encouraged to explore the following questions:

- ‘Your feelings about the digital future - is it exciting and scary?’
- Your thoughts on the digital future - is this an opportunity for credit unions or risk?
- Do you think there is a tension between the personal touch and the developments in technology? If so, can it be managed?’



The feedback from the tables revealed that participants were generally excited about the opportunities the future could bring, such as being able to open accounts in minutes. However, they raised the following issues:

- Credit unions must be careful not to split their membership and continue to provide face-to-face service for members who want these while expanding the digital offer - people who cannot use financial services due to ill health or other reasons must continue to be served by their credit unions.
- Technology can be exciting, but credit unions must ensure the other aspects of their business work well before embarking on a digital transformation journey.
- Credit unions should consult with their members to find out what they want, rather than make assumptions.
- A good use of technology can mean credit union staff have more time to serve those who need in-person support.
- Credit unions should know what they want from technology providers rather than expect to be told what they should want from the same provider.
- Credit unions should not be scared about moving forward but should find someone within the movement who can spearhead and collaborate when there’s an issue - there will be people within the movement who can help with any digital problem.



VII. Practitioner Panel: How to Respond?

How are leaders in the sector addressing the future?



Paul re-stated Swoboda's commitment to research being put into action, and introduced a panel of CEO practitioners, asking them to share their thoughts, ideas, and worries about digital credit union transformations.

James (Great Western Credit Union, GB) said Great Western sees itself as a fintech with users at the forefront of everything it does. He talked about the importance of shifting culture within the sector from being comfortable with how things worked to accepting that things need to change. He then highlighted the importance of building a culture focused on how to continue innovating.

Teresa (Clockwise Credit Union, GB) described Clockwise's strategy, which was adopted in 2017 in response to the failure of the British national Credit Union Expansion Project. Clockwise had built an open platform using cloud-based technology that they believed includes everything its members would want and expect. She explained that while the majority of Clockwise members want services such as 24/7 loans, 5% prefer face-to-face interactions and fear being digitally excluded. The credit union tries to meet both expectations.

Séan (Comhar Linn INTO Credit Union, Ireland), whose credit union's name translates as "to co-operate", talked about some of the lessons learnt from Covid-19 around adaptability and resilience. He also mentioned the increasing influence of Revolut, a fintech business, which has become a verb in Ireland, so prevalent is the use of its person-to-person payments. Séan also shared his surprise at some findings from member research undertaken by his credit union that revealed deep generational differences.

Paul (Serve & Protect Credit Union, GB) warned that digital transformation is part of the strategy, but it should not be an end in itself. "We need to be careful about being commercially sensitive and demanding of suppliers rather than regard them as an extended family," he said. His credit union onboarded 1,000 new members this year and is open 35 hours a week. "Human tasks need human interaction," he explained.

Asked whether it is time for credit unions to join forces and provide better services through technology, the panellists made the following points:

- Mergers can be beneficial, particularly for credit unions seeking to achieve scale, yet strategic mergers are not happening.
- There are other options available for credit unions wishing to come together and collaborate to get bigger and invest in new technology, including credit union service organisations (CUSOs), which would ensure credit unions have a say in the development of the technology and co-ownership. Teresa suggested this is a potential pathway for the Clockwise platform.

- Credit unions could benefit from UKFin+ grants funding for knowledge partnerships. These offer direct access to research expertise and graduate talent, embedding knowledge and research for long-term benefit.

VIII. From vision to strategy

A participatory session to help leaders translate the big issues into action, led by George Hofheimer (The Strategy Circle, USA)



The former head of research and development at the Filene Research Institute, George provided international insights and observations to help attendees convert their vision into a successful strategy.

He started by describing the credit union sector in the USA, where an average credit union has assets of US\$300m-350m. If they were ranked as one entity, credit unions would be the third financial services provider in the country, behind only JP Morgan and Bank of America.

According to George, several trends have emerged over the past few years in the USA:

- More strategic mergers between credit unions.
- Credit unions are struggling to find deposits that are not high-cost, leading to liquidity challenges and / or reduced lending.
- There is a resurgence of CUSOs.

Based on his experience in the sector, George described how credit unions in the USA tend to evolve, going through different stages:

1. Survival: After being founded, survival is an issue for most credit unions.
2. Growing: After the survival phase, credit unions go through a growing phase when they take some risks.
3. Thriving: during the thriving phase credit unions start thinking a lot like bankers and hire people with a banking background, which leads to a lack of differentiation between them and banks, and fewer risks.
4. Differentiation: After thriving, they start asking themselves why they are there and start taking more risks in pursuit of their mission.



George addressed the issue of differentiation in his recent book, *Banking on a Human Scale*, which argues that in a world dominated by scale and technology, smaller community-based financial institutions like credit unions, have the chance to serve more people (and serve them better) by making banking more human.

During his presentation, George pointed out that in the US customer satisfaction used to be higher in credit unions than in banks, but in 2021 banks started doing better because credit unions were behind in terms of technology. This is beginning to change as credit unions catch up.

George talked about the key elements of banking on a human scale, such as:

- Starting with the consumer in mind.
- Researching appropriately, using qualitative methods, and talking to people to discover new insights.
- Keeping innovation boring by having a 70-20-10 mindset (70% of resources and human capital in the core business, 20% in the new developments but just 10% on radically new ideas).
- Focusing on people's needs inside and outside the credit union.
- Creating an environment where the flow can happen.
- Setting clear goals.
- Focusing on the collective difference - the co-operative element can illustrate the difference if effectively done.

To allow participants to discuss among themselves, George asked them to explore three strategy-making questions with other people at their table:

- What problem are you trying to solve?
- What policies do you have in place to solve the problem?
- What coherent actions do we conduct to enforce these policies?

After discussing among themselves, participants were given the example of a US credit union that has recently adopted a new strategy to solve the problem of financial security of women, whom they identified as their target market. To achieve this, it adopted a range of supporting policies and coherent actions, including building internal opportunities for women and funding scholarships for women to study STEM and financial services subjects.

George concluded his presentation by providing some strategy-making takeaways for credit unions, such as:

- Identify a big world problem.
- Seek to solve the problem in a new way.
- Focus on a deep and narrow solution.
- Create a system where the average people can solve this problem.



IX. Conference closing remarks

Dr Paul A. Jones (Swoboda Research Centre and Liverpool John Moores University)

Paul wrapped up the Conference by sharing what he had retained from the day's discussions. He made the following points:

- Digitisation is the way forward and many credit unions are taking steps but when dealing with vendors they need to ask the right questions and demand the right services rather than just accept what they are given at high cost.
- Collaboration with vendors, CUSOs and other credit unions is needed.
- Banking on a human scale is what credit unions are about and some credit unions are worried digitisation could prevent them from doing that. However, digitisation could allow them to serve members better, giving them more time to talk to people.
- Credit unions must include staff members in their digital transformation journey.
- It is important to work on a strategy.

Looking to 2024, Paul flagged that Swoboda had several papers in preparation, including on governance (CEOs on the board); values, strategy and marketing (looking at the Co-operative Bank's Ethical Policy); collaboration (corporate credit unions in Ireland); and addressing liquidity challenges in GB.

The next Swoboda conference will be held in Ireland on 24th May 2023 and will focus on collaboration. The Swoboda team looks forward to seeing you!



Thank you to Swoboda's corporate members

Swoboda would like to thank its Corporate Members for their support. Our Corporate Members are reputable suppliers to the sector who wish to support the work of the Centre.

The logo for AsOne, with 'As' in black and 'One' in green.The logo for Cantor Fitzgerald, with 'CANTOR' in blue and 'Fitzgerald' in a black script font.The logo for CUFA, with 'CUFA' in large blue letters and 'CREDIT UNION FINANCIAL ANALYTICS' in smaller blue letters below it.The logo for ECCU Assurance, featuring a teal icon of hands holding a globe with silhouettes of people inside, followed by 'ECCU' in large teal letters and 'ASSURANCE' in smaller teal letters below it.The logo for OCWM LAW, with the text in white on a black rectangular background.The logo for SOLUTION CENTRE, featuring a teal circular icon with a white bullseye and the text 'SOLUTION CENTRE' in white on a black rectangular background.

In addition to recognition in publications and at conference, corporate members of Swoboda Research Centre can avail of free exhibition space at Swoboda events. Contact Nick Money (nick.money@swobodacentre.org) for details.

Leadership Dinner Sponsor

Swoboda's members-only pre-Conference Leadership Dinner is sponsored by **Heritage Credit Union**.



Heritage Credit Union is delighted to be sponsoring this Leadership Dinner and to continue to support the Swoboda Centre. It is absolutely vital that research continues which is dedicated to helping credit unions and other community finance providers address strategic and sustainability requirements into the future.

Contact Heritage Credit Union's CEO: alan.roche@heritagecu.ie

Non-Member Exhibitors

Unity Trust Bank is supporting Swoboda by exhibiting at the Conference.

Unity Trust Bank is an award-winning, ethical, commercial bank that uses banking to improve the lives of local communities across the UK.



Speaker biographies

James Berry is CEO of Great Western Credit Union and has led the organisation since 2007, as well as having played a number of roles within the sector at a national level.



Great Western Credit Union (GWCU), formerly Bristol Credit Union, extended its membership area from the former Avon county into Gloucestershire, Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire in 2021 to build on its digital transformation which was initiated in late 2019 just before the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

GWCU now has a modern IT ecosystem which delivers tangible member benefit and enables service 24/7 across the now very broad geography. GWCU has also been through a considerable cultural and operational shift, moving toward an empowered team working with a continuous improvement approach delivering high levels of growth in membership and social impact.

Contact James: JamesB@gwcu.org.uk



Professor Karen Elliott is Chair (Full Professor) of Practice in Finance and FinTech at Birmingham University Business School and Co-Director of the FinTech MSc Degree Programme. She has been named as 'Standout #35 Women in FinTech Powerlist by Innovate Finance' for Policy and Governance 2019, 2020 and listed for the new Hubs (governance) category in 2021. In addition, is an Advisory Board member to Incuto and We are Digital, championing access to fair and affordable finance. Karen co-leads FinTrust, Agency, and the UKFin Network+ projects (£1.2m/£3.5m/£2.5m EPSRC/UKRI) with Prof van Moorsel to optimise trustworthy and ethical AI, engineered to deliver citizen transparency, fairness, and inclusion. Likewise, co-led Finclusion (Gates Foundation/Turing Institute £100k), which explored verifiable credentials for vulnerable groups, focusing on dementia in the digital economy following her mother's diagnosis. A member of the Prime Minister's Champions Group for Dementia, Corporate Digital Responsibility, ForHumanity, Radix, the IEEE Global Initiative Planet Positive and an Ambassador for the Digital Poverty Alliance, Karen creates a fusion of academic and practical ethical considerations at the individual and societal level, seeking to find balance for an equitable digital society while protecting and sustaining the planet.

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Dr Leda Glyptis is a seasoned fintech executive and former banker, with two decades working in financial services transformation and technology functions. Leda works as an advisor to boards and executive teams for companies of all sizes, supporting leadership teams in transition.



Leda served as Chief Client Officer of 10x Banking, the founding CEO of 11:FS Foundry, Chief Innovation Officer of Qatar National Bank and in innovation and transformation roles at BNY Mellon. Leda sits on the board of Flagstone IM and has held a number of NED positions in fintech firms in Europe.

Leda is a frequent keynote speaker at flagship industry events globally and is the author of the highly acclaimed #LedaWrites column on Fintech Futures and the book '[Bankers Like Us: Dispatches from an Industry in Transition](#)' (Taylor and Francis, 2023).

Leda has a BA from the University of Cambridge and an MSc and PhD from the LSE.

Contact Leda: ledaagapiglyptis@gmail.com



George Hofheimer has 25 years' experience advising the consumer finance industry. George was the head of research and development at Filene Research Institute, the credit union industry's think tank for 15 years. Previously he was the chief learning officer at CUES, the credit union industry's leading executive education association for 8 years. He has conducted hundreds of advisory engagements with consumer finance organisations across the globe and authored dozens of research reports. Most recently George published a book entitled [Banking on a Human Scale](#), and he is launching a credit union service organization (CUSO) called The Strategy Circle (www.strategy.coop). George began his career in international business development, including as a member of the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers in the former Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan. George obtained his MBA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Contact George: george@hofheimer.org

Dr Paul A. Jones is a co-founder and Director of Research at [Swoboda](#), and also Reader in the Social Economy at Liverpool John Moores University, where he heads up the [Research Unit for Financial Inclusion](#). He is also visiting lecturer in the social economy at the Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague. Paul has had over twenty-five years' experience in academic, action and evaluative research in credit union organisational development, financial services for lower and moderate-income households, and money and debt advice services.



Paul is a director of Enterprise Credit Union on Merseyside, GB, and chairs the Audit & Risk Committee at Manchester Credit Union.

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Andrea Lagna is Senior Lecturer in Financial Technology at Alliance Manchester Business School, University of Manchester. He conducts research at the interface of Information Systems and Political Economy. His current work explores the business and societal impact of financial technology and artificial intelligence. His latest peer-reviewed paper titled '[Making the world a better place with fintech research](#)' was published in *Information Systems Journal*.

Contact Andrea: andrea.lagna@manchester.ac.uk

Teresa Manning MBE is CEO at Clockwise Credit Union, serving communities across the English midlands. Teresa was a founder member of Clockwise which began in 1992. Serving first as Treasurer, she then became the first paid member of staff as the credit union administrator. As the credit union has grown, Teresa has held roles including Loans Officer, Credit Controller, Finance and Compliance Manager, Operations Manager, General Manager and, since 2016, Chief Executive. In 2020, Teresa was awarded the MBE for services to credit unions and financial inclusion. This year, Clockwise has implemented a core banking system replacement using a cloud-native platform built in-house.



Contact Teresa: teresa.manning@clockwise.coop



Nick Money is Director of Development at Swoboda Research Centre, responsible for growing the scale and impact of the organisation. Nick has advised the executives and boards of co-operatives, credit unions and other non-for-profit organisations on governance, strategy and business development, but is now focusing on running Swoboda! Nick is an associate with the Research Unit for Financial Inclusion at Liverpool John Moores University. He is also a consultancy project supervisor for students on the MBA programme at the Alliance Manchester Business School and a PhD candidate at University College Cork. Prior to consultancy, Nick worked in a variety of head of function and managerial roles at The Co-operative Bank plc. Nick is an honorary Life President at Co-operative Credit Union and a director of South Manchester Credit Union, both in GB.

Contact Nick: nick.money@swobodacentre.org

Séan Murray is the Chief Executive of Comhar Linn INTO Credit Union, having joined them in 2018. Comhar Linn is one of the largest credit unions in Ireland, with assets of €280 million and 25,000+ members, serving primary school teachers and their families throughout Ireland.



Séan is a founding Director of Payac Services CLG, a company set up in 2015 to develop and lead Irish credit unions' entrance into the current account market and is also Chair of the management committee for the Credit Union Development Association (CUDA).

Séan was previously the CEO of Life Credit Union in Kildare and, prior to that, worked in International Banking with Citi. He brings practical insight into strategy, leadership, product and project management, board governance and managing risk and compliance matters while delivering strategic growth with excellent member experience.

Among many other qualifications, Sean has an MBS in Business Practice from University College Cork and the Irish Management Institute.

Contact Séan: smurray@intocreditunion.ie



Paul Norgrove is the CEO of Serve and Protect CU serving over 44,000 police, prison, military, fire and health service personnel and their families across Great Britain. Prior to joining the credit union, Paul worked in the not-for-profit sector.

Paul is the current President of the Association of British Credit Unions Ltd (ABCUL) Board of Directors. During his time on the Board, Paul has supported a number of key initiatives for positive change including the Democracy Working Group and as the associations first serving Board representative of the ABCUL Inclusivity Group.

In 2014 Paul received the prestigious World Young Credit Union Professionals (WYCUP) scholarship, World Council of Credit Unions, and continued to give back to the next generation of credit union leaders serving on the WYCUP Steering Committee and as a Co-founder of the ABCUL Young Professionals Network (YPN).

Paul is a member of the Association of Accounting Technicians (FMATT) and holds an Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA), Birmingham City University.

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Paul Rooney is an accomplished transformational executive, non-executive and MBA graduate - inspired to realise the full potential of organisations within the scope of ethical and sustainable methodologies.

Paul has served two decades in leadership and strategic roles within diverse environments including an impressive political and legal career; all of which demonstrate an embedded ethics, values, and integrity. His track record in successful business improvement is based upon systems thinking; specialising in appraising business processes in the evaluation of the potential presented by technology propositions. Appointed by Government and others for his expertise in governance, strategy, and analysis, Paul has received national recognition for his leadership, innovation, and public policy activities across ethical finance, policing and responsible investment. Paul has an MBA with Distinction from Strathclyde Business School.



Contact Paul: paul@constituentassociates.com

Attendees

Swoboda welcomes to this Conference attendees from credit unions in GB and Ireland, trade associations, regulatory bodies, universities and researchers, suppliers and other stakeholders.

Lewis Acton, No1 CopperPot CU	Pat Egan, Unify CU
Ian Adderley, Financial Conduct Authority	Karen Elliott, Birmingham University
Barry Andrews, Consultant	Gareth Evans, Financial Inclusion Centre
Mike Barry, First Rate CU	Colin Farrell, Dundalk CU
David Batten, Hoot CU	Rachel Farrell, Swoboda Research Centre
Karen Bennett, Enterprise CU	Karen Farrow, Just CU
James Berry, Great Western CU	David Fawell, Co-op CU
Hollie Bickerstaffe, Pennine Community CU	Stephen Fealy, Dundalk CU
Matt Bland, Co-op Credit Union	Andrea Fejos, Essex University
Derek Bodey, Manchester CU	Robin Fieth, Building Societies Association
Damien Brady, Palmerstown CU	Mark Fleet, Leeds CU
Fergal Brehony, 1872 Culture	Kathryn Fogg, Pennine Community CU
June Campbell, Just CU	Ciara Forde, Financial Conduct Authority
Chris Canham, Hoot CU	Simon Foreman, Clockwise CU
Neil Cartwright, Unity Trust Bank	Melanie Foster, Stockport CU
David Castledine, GMB CU	Shannen Gibbons, Coventry University
Alex Christopoulos, Aviva Foundation	Leda Glyptis, NED and Advisor
Jack Clarke, Enterprise Ireland	Gill Green, Sopra Steria
Kevin Cleary, Donore CU	Joseph Hall, Lancaster University
Michelle Clegg, Cash Box CU	Paul Hancock, Sheffield Credit Union
Michael Connolly, Life CU	Martin Hardy, Dundalk CU
Liellah Currey, Commsave CU	David Harris, Pennine Community CU
Ciara Davies, Metro Moneywise CU	Tina Harrison, Capital CU
Adrian Davies, nestegg	Marcela Hashim, Prudential Regulatory Authority
Peter Davis, Leicester University	John Haslam, Stockport CU
Gabriel De Oleo, bankish	Patrick Heaphy, Youghal CU
Sallyanne Decker, Greenwich University	David Hensley, enryo
Dina Devalia, Quantuma Advisory	Alan Hignett, HEY CU
Caroline Domanski, No1 CopperPot CU	George Hofheimer, The Strategy Circle
Gerard Dunne, Heritage CU	Samantha Homer, Capital CU
Diane Edge, Metro Moneywise CU	Catherine Hooton, No1 CopperPot CU
Chantelle Edmondson, Pennine Community CU	Bridget Jacob, Swoboda Research Centre

Paul A Jones, Swoboda Research Centre	Sean Murray, Comhar Linn INTU CU
Herbert Kalule, Singlify	Magda Niemczyk, Pennine Community CU
Michael Kelly, Life CU	Paul Norgrove, Serve & Protect CU
Paddy Kelly, XRS	Reon Odendaal, Unity Trust Bank
Robert Kelly, ABCUL	Lauren Peel, Fair4All Finance
Andrea Lagna, Alliance Manchester Business School	Andrew Rabbitt, incuto
Lauren Langton, incuto	Nigel Rabbitts, Serve & Protect CU
Colm Lawless, Heritage CU	Lisa Ridgway, No1 CopperPot CU
Martin Logan, South Manchester CU	Alan Roche, Heritage CU
Sean Lynch, Citysave CU	Paul Rooney, Constituent
Anita Mangan, Bristol University	Maarten Rooney, Singlify
Teresa Manning, Clockwise CU	James Sallows, TransaveUK CU
Janine Marengi, Saveeasy CU	Ian Sibbald, TransaveUK CU
Irene Mari, Serve & Protect CU	Debbie Smith-Hands, ABCUL
David Martin, HEY CU	Irene Southerland, Enterprise CU
Dominic Masterson, Commsave CU	Andrew Smailes, Financial Conduct Authority
Mark McAlpine, Sopra Steria	Gerard Spain, Pennine Community CU
Stacy McGrath, Palmerstown CU	Matthew Stevens, HEY CU
Andy McBeath, Manchester CU	John Tuohy, Comhar Linn INTU CU
Lee-Anne McCready-Foreman, No1 CopperPot CU	Simon Veale, AsOne Business Development
Geoff McKay, Central Liverpool CU	Dawn Vear, UK Credit Unions
Nick Money, Swoboda Research Centre	Anca Voinea, Co-op News
Christine Moore, Manchester CU	Tia Warbrick, Pennine Community CU
Colette Morgan, SaveEasy CU	Anne Marie Ward, Ulster University
Dawn Morris, Unity Trust Bank	Paul Weston, ECCU Assurance
Jo Moscrops, No1 CopperPot CU	Tony Woods, Commsave CU
Richard Munro, Commsave CU	Sheenagh Young, South Manchester CU
John Murphy, Palmerstown CU	Vicky Zuiderent, Radish

About the Swoboda Research Centre

The Swoboda Research Centre (Swoboda, www.swobodacentre.org) is a not-for-profit research organisation incorporated in 2016 in Dublin, Ireland. Its mission is to undertake high quality research, to lead on ideas and innovations, and to explore tested solutions related to credit unions, co-operative banks and similar not-for-profit providers of community-based financial services in Europe.

The Centre is rooted in values of co-operation, participation, social and financial inclusion, transparency, integrity, and excellence. Much of its work is done in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University.

Swoboda is financially supported by the subscriptions of its members, by donors desiring to support its work, and by project grants from foundations, governmental bodies, and others who commission specific research that is consistent with the Centre's mission and values.

Although the Centre seeks suggestions and critiques on its work from its members and other funders, it is an entirely independent organisation, and it is solely responsible for the work it performs and publishes. The contents of its research papers and any opinions they may contain are in each case solely those of their authors, and they should not be attributed to members, funders or any other third parties.

Swoboda holds two conferences each year, featuring speakers on topics of immediate, practical importance to credit unions. The conferences bring together sector professionals and volunteers, along with government regulators, trade association and other co-operative organisation representatives, charities and NGOs, and providers of services to the sector. Attendance is free for Swoboda members, the number of free delegates depending on membership level.

Please consider joining other leading credit unions by becoming a member of the **Swoboda Research Centre**.

For more information, please contact Nick Money, +44 7540 259053, nick.money@swobodacentre.org.

Membership of the Swoboda Research Centre

*Denotes Founding Member. These organisations supported the inauguration of the Swoboda Research Centre in 2017

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Comhar Linn INTU Credit Union*, Ireland

Core CU*, Ireland
Dundalk CU*, Ireland

Health Services Staffs CU*, Ireland

Credit Union Gold Members

Blanchardstown CU, Ireland
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Central Liverpool CU*, England
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Dubco CU*, Ireland
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Glasgow CU, Scotland

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Clonmel CU, Ireland
Community Credit Union, Ireland
Co-operative CU, GB

Donore CU, Ireland
Great Western CU, England
HEY CU, England
Hoot CU, England
Just CU, England
London Mutual CU*, England
Manchester CU, England
Member First CU*, Ireland
Metro Moneywise CU, England
Naomh Breandán CU, Ireland
Palmerstown CU, Ireland

Partners CU, England
Penny Post CU, England
St. Jarlath's CU*, Ireland
Salford CU, England
SaveEasy CU, Wales
Stockport CU, England
South Manchester CU, England
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