OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

2019 is shaping up to be a year of significant change, and CAs need to be equipped with the knowledge and expertise necessary to decode the shifting landscape.

Whether it’s the far-reaching consequences of technological advances in the forms of automation, AI, blockchain and robotics, or the roles that each of us can play in rebuilding trust in business and eroding unethical practices, all our members can realise the extent of their own talents in making this vision a reality.

With that in mind, we are delighted to announce the CA Agenda, a new thought leadership and insight series, which officially launches on 5 March 2019 at St Paul’s Cathedral. Set against this historic backdrop, we usher in a new era for ICAS and its members with key anchors for our activities across Technology, Trust and Talent.

The CA Agenda will engage:
- CAs
- Employers
- Industry leaders
- Parliamentary, legislative and regulatory stakeholders
- Prospective and current students
- The wider public

It will tackle global issues on a macro-scale, key issues for the profession and what our members truly need to navigate and succeed.

AIM

ICAS will bring the issues that matter into sharp relief with a keen eye on the future by delivering rich, insight-driven content, events and professional development opportunities, setting out key matters for CAs and where ICAS can support and nurture.

FIND OUT MORE

For full details on the CA Agenda for 2019, visit icas.com/CAagenda
THEMES

TECHNOLOGY

Globally, there are multiple technology issues confronting the accountancy profession, business and the wider public that need to be addressed. The evolution of artificial intelligence coupled with automation and robotics have changed traditional roles – and created entirely new ones.

How will rapid advances in technology re-shape the way that business, accountancy and audit functions operate? How will new technologies be regulated in the public interest and how will knock-on effects to jobs be monitored? What opportunities will new technologies bring to accountancy and business, and how can CAs stay ahead of the curve and prepare for change?

With an exponential rate of change that will dwarf that of the average human, a light must be shone on the questions that face us.

Blockchain and cyber security are also rising high on the agenda – a few years ago, the distributed ledger was largely unheard of, and now it has become a pervasive topic threaded through currency to marriage licenses to marine insurance and more.

With it comes increased transparency but also increased risk to complex computer systems, which are under duress from orchestrated digital attacks. Knowledge is power, and that power is increasingly an online entity. Who holds our information, and how they use or protect it is a question for everyone.

We will address all of these topics with an aim to demystify and educate, as well as deliberate on what the future will hold for mankind.

ICAS will seek to influence the broader macro agenda and government policy and understand where we need to be positioned to ensure and assure the future of the accountancy profession.

TRUST

We are collectively facing a time of declining public trust in audit, accountancy, corporate governance and business. With rising scepticism and instant access to information on negative fall-outs from bad decisions, everyone must ask themselves how they can play an instrumental role as an architect in rebuilding and maintaining public trust.

What role can CAs play in rebuilding trust and how can they impact high-level decisions that may have negative consequences for the wider public? What does business need to do to insur against unethical practices? How can we champion responsible corporate behaviour in the interests of society?

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Trust is not just an issue for the board or executive leadership, it’s what we do as individuals every day, and ICAS has an integral role to play. The Trust theme will investigate the potential solutions for building an ethical business and address what ICAS is doing as a professional body to help restore trust – and where there should be further development.

CAs have a unique view of the inner workings of business, and therefore an implicit role in eroding unethical practices. If each action is committed as if under the scrutiny of the wider public, would that change the proposed course? What decisions need to be made, and how will people be supported in those decisions – for example, do we have enough protections for whistleblowers, and are they rigorously enforced?

These are the questions ICAS will respond to and appropriately voice any concerns – for the good of the public, for the good of business, and for the good of the profession.
THEMES

TALENT

ICAS prides itself on having a wealth of hugely-talented members that deploy their skills to a wide range of businesses, boards, advisory roles and more. We are also acutely aware of the changing talent needs and workforce, as well as new ways of working and business practices.

All of us need to take diversity from buzzword to byword – when values are intrinsically lived rather than set out as aspirations, and to think about what will make this a reality. Does the answer sit in our hiring or promotion strategies and how do we root out bias?

What kind of leaders will business need in the future? How can CAs add value and realise their potential in a rapidly changing and hyper-connected world?

It’s essential that we are instrumental in supporting our members to future-proof roles and ensure future CAs are well-prepared for the shifting landscape, whether that’s a new type of leadership, or an entirely new skillset to operate and provide visionary direction.

We must focus on how ICAS can help CAs develop their skills for the future, add value in the face of a rapidly-changing environment, and embrace the skills needed to help build trust and navigate alongside technological advances.

What rings true today might not be true tomorrow, and the talents that may have been disregarded in the past could be essential for the future. Long-standing perceptions of a CA need to be erased so that our members can embrace their potential and value-adding activities that can be delivered through the right support network and the right training and development.
CHANNELS

CA Agenda: Technology | Trust | Talent will be delivered through numerous mechanisms, including:

- Intelligent multimedia content and thought leadership pieces
- Policy-driven insight and engagement
- Social media
- Dedicated events
- Curated professional development courses

The three strands of the CA Agenda will run through everything we deliver, with the overarching goal of a connected journey for our members, business and the wider public, that hits the mark and addresses key concerns on a macro and micro-scale.
HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

MEMBER GENERATED CONTENT
We want our CAs to join the conversation and share their own insights across Technology, Trust and Talent, whether that's a written piece, speaking at an event, or a video for social media – the medium is not so important as the message that our members will deliver. To register your interest or find out more about getting involved, contact us at caagenda@icas.com.

ATTEND EVENTS
ICAS will host dedicated events throughout the year on the themes of Technology, Trust and Talent, and attendance is encouraged to help share ideas, gather insights and ensure you stay ahead of the curve in a changing profession. Look out for the latest CA Agenda events on our website at icas.com/events.

SPREAD THE MESSAGE
These conversations and the issues we seek to tackle are not isolated to CAs – they should be held in your place of business, with your friends and peers, across social media. Just like CA potential, there is no limit!

SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA
You can join the conversation by using #theCAagenda and connect with us on:

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/the-institute-of-chartered-accountants-of-scotland

Twitter: @ICASaccounting @ICAS_students

EXAMPLE POST:
I’m contributing to the #theCAagenda by sharing my thought leadership piece on why accountants need to embrace machine learning. Read more at www.examplewebsite.com. What are your thoughts?
UNDERTAKE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Whether you’re looking for a general update, technical update or something more specialised, our professional development offering has got it covered.

Open to both members and non-members, our course offering covers a wide range of topics and are specifically designed for accountancy, finance and business professionals. They tackle all three elements of Technology, Trust and Talent, whether it’s learning about big data and business analytics, decoding your moral personality or nurturing your team, for example.

All our courses and training can help you meet your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements for the year. Find out more at icas.com/professional-development.

FIND OUT MORE

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