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YOUNG LEADERS

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Biographies and pen pictures of UK-Italy Young Leaders 2026



Matteo Augello is a fashion historian with 15 years of experience in education and cultural institutions. He is based in London, where he collaborates with the *Italian Cultural Institute* on their fashion programming. He is a member of the Scientific Committee at the *Fondazione Antonio Ratti* in Como, Italy, and combines curatorial work with teaching commitments at universities in London, Milan and Dubai. Augello is specialised in fashion and costume history, performing arts and heritage marketing. His first monograph, *Curating Italian Fashion: Heritage, Industry, Institutions* (Bloomsbury, 2022) is the first extensive account of fashion exhibitions in Italy. He is currently researching the archive of actress Gloria Swanson at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas. His mission is to foster cultural exchanges and make academic research accessible. He is often invited as speaker by renowned institutions such as the *British Film Institute in London*, the *Fashion Institute of Technology* in New York City and the *Art Academy of Latvia* in Riga. He also took part in radio programmes such as *Words and Music* on BBC Radio 3 (2021) and was a leading contributor to the series *Fashion. An Italian Revolution* produced by Sky Documentaries (2024).



Delfina Belli is an Associate at The Future Society (TFS). She focuses on Global AI Governance and supports the organization of The Athens Roundtable on AI and the Rule of Law. Before rejoining TFS in 2025, she served as Parliamentary Assistant to the International Secretary of the Italian Democratic Party, where she coordinated multilateral and international engagements, contributing to the party's global strategy. Previously, she worked in the cabinet of former Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta, then Secretary of the Italian Democratic Party. From 2019 to 2021, Delfina was an AI Policy Researcher and Project Manager at The Future Society in Paris, contributing to early editions of The Athens Roundtable supporting academic teaching, and coordinating research with international partners. She holds an Executive Master's in

Innovation and Management in Public Administrations from the University of Rome Tor Vergata (cum laude), focusing on AI governance. She also earned a Master's in International Economic Policy from Sciences Po Paris and a BA in Global Governance (cum laude) from the University of Rome Tor Vergata.



Joseph Matthew D'Urso is a journalist and author specialising in football and politics. In June 2025 his first book was published: *More Than A Shirt: How Football Shirts Explain Global Politics, Money and Power*. It was named a Guardian and Waterstones Sports Book of the Year. He is now working on a second book, touching on similar themes, the world's most popular sport and how it tells bigger stories of the world we live in. Before becoming an author, he spent a decade working as a staff journalist for BBC News, The Athletic, and the Times and Sunday Times, covering British and international politics, as well as football. He has a weekly e-mail newsletter on Substack and regularly posts on Instagram and YouTube as well as writing for a variety of publications. He has a BA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, and an MSc in the Social

Science of the Internet, both from Oxford University. He was born and raised in Birmingham in the UK, but his grandfather's family came from Minori on the Amalfi Coast, so he is a dual citizen. When it comes to supporting a national team, he is very much English, unfortunately.



Aldo Glielmo is a research scientist at Banca d'Italia, where he develops artificial intelligence methods for central banking, with a broad interest in translating advanced AI research into tools that can inform policy and support the public good. His career spans over a decade of interdisciplinary research, moving from AI applications in fundamental physics to economics and finance. He holds a PhD in physics from King's College London, during which he also conducted research at the International Centre for Theoretical Physics and at the Alan Turing Institute. Subsequently, he worked at the International School of Advanced Studies and conducted visiting research at Harvard University and at the Santa Fe Institute. Since joining Banca d'Italia, he has developed the institution's

first open-source software packages, and carried out projects at the intersection of AI and economics.

He was awarded the best thesis prize in computational physics from the Institute of Physics. He is the author of more than 40 publications with over 1,600 citations, and is a member of the ELLIS Society, a pan-European network of excellence in AI. Aldo is a dual Italian-British national, he is based in Rome and maintains active collaborations with academic and institutional partners in the UK.



Francesca Inglema is a cultural entrepreneur and the founder of Bianca Arte, a London-based contemporary art advisory working with private collectors and institutions. Through exhibitions, talks, and educational initiatives, she develops cultural programming that connects artists, collectors, and organisations while fostering dialogue between the worlds of art, finance, and business. Recent projects include Banca Generali in Milan and Buccellati in London, bringing together cultural and commercial communities across Italy and the UK. Through Bianca Arte, she advises collectors on the art market while promoting wider access to contemporary art. Before founding Bianca Arte, Francesca spent eight years in finance between London and Milan. She began her career at J.P. Morgan Private Bank in London, and she later joined Goldman Sachs Global Markets, where she covered European institutional clients and helped establish the firm's post-Brexit Equities presence in Milan, opening new client channels and contributing to regional market growth. Francesca was educated in the United Kingdom, holding an MSc in Finance from the London School of Economics

and a First-Class Honours BSc in Business Management from King's College London.



Krishan Kuruppu completed a BA in Politics and International Relations at the University of Westminster, followed by an MLitt in International Security Studies at the University of St Andrews. During his studies, he undertook an internship at the Italian Consulate in London, gaining first-hand diplomatic experience and exposure to bilateral institutional engagement. While at Twitter, Krishan worked within the curation team in a product-focused capacity, leading content and policy coverage for Italy's 2022 general election across UK and Italian teams. He coordinated the platform's first active collaboration with the Italian government in the post-Brexit context, ensuring trusted, bilingual election information was accessible while safeguarding neutrality, accuracy and platform integrity. He also served as an editorial advisor to the Armani Group, and created and co-hosted an independent podcast focused on features, commentary and current affairs. At Bloomberg LP, he manages financial and news data powering the Bloomberg Terminal, strengthening news discoverability across the UK, Italy and beyond. He collaborates with London, Milan and Rome bureaus, and his work supports improved news coverage, greater data accessibility, and the advancement of rigorous

product standards in the age of AI.



Benedetta Maisano was born in Milan and has lived between Italy and the United Kingdom for most of her life. She graduated in Philosophy from the University of Cambridge, where she also completed a second diploma in Economics. She began her career in early-stage investing, developing a growing focus on agritech and climate technologies. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, she returned to Italy to join Fondazione Enea Tech as an Investment Manager, helping deploy public capital to support Italian entrepreneurs building companies in strategic deep-tech and climate sectors. She later joined Planet Farms, one of Europe's leading controlled-environment agriculture (CEA) technology companies, which has raised nearly €200 million

in equity to date. At Planet Farms she became Head of Corporate Development, where she leads strategic projects and the company's international expansion, including its growth into the US and the UK.



Niamh Morgan is Head of Stakeholder Engagement at the British Council, championing cultural relations on the world stage. Her work with major UK festivals and the international Seasons of Culture programme drives partnerships that open doors for creatives and organisations globally. Niamh has led work for flagship cultural moments, including the Venice Biennale, UK City of Culture, and Frieze Art Fair; convening diverse partners to shape high-impact programmes that shift perceptions and strengthen international exchange. Before joining the British Council, Niamh spent a decade working across the creative industries, running multi-million-pound campaigns, producing content with major media partners, and launching her own teaching venture. Her work is rooted in deep international experience: she has lived in London, Rome, Hong Kong and Mexico City, built networks across Europe, Africa and Latin America, and fallen in love with Italy, where she completed a Master's in Cultural Diplomacy. She is particularly passionate

about how storytelling, culture, and people-to-people exchange can shift narratives, strengthen relationships, and support local regeneration. Niamh thrives on building communities out of strangers; connecting ideas and people that might otherwise never meet.



Alberta Pelino is the Founder & President of the Young Ambassadors Society (YAS) and the Founder & CEO of Fibi-Investing Empowers. After completing her studies in Economics (at the University of Rome Tor Vergata and Bocconi University), Alberta worked in commodities and energy derivatives trading in London, including roles at Goldman Sachs and Mercuria Energy Trading. She founded Fibi, an EdTech and social impact start-up focused on reducing the financial gender gap and promoting women's financial independence through a platform that combines structured learning with AI-enabled personalization and digital tools to help users translate education into practical financial decisions. At 19, she founded YAS, the non-profit organisation that manages the official youth engagement groups for the G7 and G20 (Y7/Y20), in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. YAS promotes youth empowerment and youth participation in global decision-making through collaborations with Italian and international companies and institutions. Outside of work, she enjoys boxing, martial arts and yoga, and loves travelling and discovering different cultures around the world.



Mara Pometti is a pioneering architect of AI experiences and Vice President of Agentic Experience Strategy, a totally new role and proposition she developed at Mastercard. At Mastercard, she develops new experiences for the emerging agentic economy, where intelligent systems act on behalf of businesses across payments, operations, and financial ecosystems. She explores how AI can transform financial interactions into adaptive, safe, and context-aware systems that support businesses in real time. Previously, at McKinsey's QuantumBlack, she led the design and development of AI solutions and advised global clients on AI strategy across banking, pharma, and telecom. As a Technology Council Fellow, she spearheaded R&D on AI explainability and agents. Before McKinsey, she built and led the AI strategy practice for IBM's former Chief AI Officer, helping scale enterprise adoption of technologies such as IBM Watson. Her career, however, began in data journalism, grounding her in both the rigor of data science and the power of narrative. Mara is the author of two books on data and AI published in Italy. She serves on the advisory boards

of the AI Summit London and The National AI Awards. In 2025, Mara has been nominated among the finalists of the AI National Awards 2025; in 2024, she has been recognized among the Top 10 AI Leaders in the UK and Europe and Top 10 most influential women in AI in the UK and Europe.



Martina Riva is the Deputy Mayor for Sport, Tourism and Youth Policies of the City of Milan, Italy, a role she has held since October 2021. In this capacity, she oversees the development of sports policies, the promotion of tourism, and initiatives dedicated to youth engagement and empowerment. Her work focuses on expanding access to sport and well-being, strengthening social inclusion through physical activity, modernizing the city's sports infrastructure, and supporting major international events hosted in Milan, including the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. She also supervises the municipal sports company Milanosport and coordinates policies aimed at managing tourism growth and preventing overtourism in the city. Before entering the city's executive administration, Riva worked as a lawyer in the banking and finance department of international law firm Ashurst in Milan. She was admitted to the Italian Bar in 2018. She has been active in public life since a young age, serving as a member of Milan's District Council and participating in civic and volunteer initiatives. In 2024 she

took part in the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program for emerging European leaders.



Digby Willoughby is Country Head for Italy at Clearstone Energy, a UK developer specialising in low carbon energy and data-centre infrastructure. He leads the company's expansion into Italy, taking projects from origination to a ready-to-build state, and in doing so, provides a direct route for UK capital into the Italian energy transition. After early operational experience in mining and logistics in Johannesburg, Digby joined Clearstone where he has spent seven years delivering over 1GW of projects across the UK. He now applies that track record in Italy, where he has built the company's local platform from the ground up and is progressing 1.6GW of projects. His work sits at the centre of two of the most consequential infrastructure challenges facing both countries: energy security and digital resilience. Delivering projects across both markets has given him a grounded perspective on where UK and Italian frameworks align, and where they do not. Digby holds a degree in Politics and International Relations from the University of Kent. When not working, he enjoys learning about Italian history, climbing in the Dolomites or training for the upcoming Rome marathon.