

Think

new things

Make

new connections

Programme

The role of the Fourth Estate in democracies: how should the news and information ecosystem evolve to meet audience needs and strengthen democracy in a turbulent political, technological and commercial landscape?

5-7 December 2024

*Participants and observers are reminded of the private and confidential basis on which Ditchley Foundation conferences are held. All those participating do so in their personal capacities, not as spokespeople for any country or institution. All proceedings take place under the 'Ditchley Rule', whereby all contributions are unattributable and interventions are made in strict confidence; this also applies to exchanges that take place outside the formal sessions. Those present are free to draw afterwards on the substance of what has been said, but not under any circumstances to reveal to any person not participating in the conference who it was that said it. The Rule will be scrupulously observed in any Note later produced on the conference by Ditchley. The verbal discussions will **not** be recorded.*

A note about the programme:

An in-person/residential Ditchley conference.

Legend:

PST Pacific Standard Time
EST Eastern Standard Time
GMT Greenwich Mean Time
CET Central European Time

DITCHLEY

Day 1	Thursday 5 December
	Arrivals: Guests arriving by train will be collected from the 1053 GMT service from London Paddington , arriving at Charlbury Station at 1205 GMT .
1245 GMT	Lunch
1355 GMT	Participants take their seats in the Library .
PLENARY I	Election report card: how has journalism held up around the world in a bumper year of elections? What are the issues – both expected and unexpected – that have emerged? And what have we learned to help us move forward?
1400 GMT	Welcome The Director, James Arroyo, opens the conference and explains how the conference will unfold. Introductions Director introduces the Speakers.
	After introductory remarks from the Speakers, interventions are invited from the participants.
1520 GMT	Closing remarks
1530 GMT	Tea in the Saloon
1555 GMT	Participants take their seats in the Library .
PLENARY II	The disinformation dilemma: have we been catastrophising? And is that distracting us from the more pressing threats at hand to a free media?
1600 GMT	Introductions James Arroyo introduces the Speakers.
	After introductory remarks from the Speakers, interventions are invited from the participants.
1720 GMT	Closing remarks
1730 GMT	Coffee in the Saloon
1755 GMT	Participants take their seats in their breakout groups .
Working Group discussions – Session One	
1800 GMT	Participants separate into three working groups.

1925 GMT	Working Groups End
1930 GMT	Close Drinks in the White Drawing Room
2000 GMT	Dinner <i>Seating plan displayed in the Hall</i>
2215 GMT	For those guests who will have been notified that they will be accommodated at The Bell hotel, transport leaves Ditchley for the hotel.

Day 2	Friday 6 December
0815 GMT	Transport leaves The Bell for Ditchley.
0830-0910 GMT	Breakfast
0915 GMT	Participants take their seats in the Library .
Plenary III	Meeting the audience where they are: if people are not consuming news in the way that they used to, how does the media landscape evolve in response to this? What should the media be doing to assess its own actions and approaches to its role in society?
0920 GMT	Introductions James Arroyo introduces the Speakers.
	After introductory remarks from the Speakers, interventions are invited from the participants.
1030 GMT	Closing remarks
1040 GMT	Coffee
1100 GMT	Participants take their seats in their breakout groups .
Working Group discussions – Session Two	
1105 GMT	Participants separate into their working groups.
1235 GMT	Working Group discussion closes.
1245 GMT	Buffet lunch
1405 GMT	Participants take their seats in the Library .
PLENARY IV	Reports from the Working Groups
1410 GMT	Welcome James Arroyo welcomes everyone back. <i>The Rapporteur and Chair of each working group will provide the main points, as they see them, to have emerged from their discussion, before the remaining members of that group are invited to add their comments.</i> <i>Each session will last approximately 30 minutes.</i>

1415 GMT	Presentation of Group A's discussions	
1445 GMT	Presentation of Group B's discussions	
1515 GMT	Presentation of Group C's discussions	
1545 GMT	Group photo, followed by afternoon tea	
1615 GMT	Participants take their seats in the Library .	
PLENARY V	Conference Rapporteur presentation	
1620 GMT	The Conference Rapporteur will provide their reflections on the discussions over the course of the conference, identify unresolved questions or areas where agreement was not reached, and highlight any conclusions or concrete recommendations that may have emerged. Brief final interventions from the participants	
1655 GMT	Director's closing remarks	
1700 GMT	Conference closes	
1715 GMT	Transport leaves Ditchley for The Bell for those who wish to change for dinner	
Conference Briefing		
	The following session will bring an invited audience from the wider Ditchley community, via Zoom, to hear a presentation of the main findings, lines of discussion and conclusions (if any) from the conference, and to participate in a Q&A, all subject to the Ditchley Rule.	
	In-person participants	Remote participants
1715 GMT	Panellists, and those wishing to participate, take their seats in the Library for a post-conference presentation to a wider Ditchley audience.	A Zoom Waiting Room will be in operation until the formal start time of 1730 BST. <i>You will be sent a separate Zoom link for this briefing.</i>
0930 PST 1230 EST 1730 GMT 1830 CET	Briefing for an invited Ditchley audience, followed by a Q&A: <i>The role of the Fourth Estate in democracies: how should the news and information ecosystem evolve to meet audience needs and strengthen democracy in a turbulent political, technological and commercial landscape?</i>	
1030 PST 1330 EST 1830 GMT 1930 CET	Briefing closes	
1900 GMT	Transport leaves The Bell for Ditchley	
1915 GMT	Drinks in the White Drawing Room	
2000 GMT	Black-tie Dinner and overnight <i>Seating plan displayed in the Hall (kindly provide ample notice if you decide to withdraw from dinner)</i>	

2230 GMT	Transport leaves Ditchley for The Bell.
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Day 3	Saturday 7 December
	Guests accommodated at The Bell:
0800 GMT	Breakfast at The Bell
	Shared transfers to Heathrow Airport arranged as necessary.
	Guests accommodated at Ditchley:
0800 GMT	Breakfast (<i>please place your luggage outside your door before you go to breakfast</i>)
0945 GMT	Transport leaves Ditchley for Charlbury station for the 10.11 service to London Paddington, arriving at 11.23.
	The House will remain open until 11.30am for those who would like to take a walk in the grounds or continue their conversation.

Luggage

It is helpful if your luggage is labelled with your name, so that your luggage may more easily be directed on arrival and departure.

If you are staying at The Bell:

On Thursday afternoon, your luggage will be transferred to the hotel, and our Staff will arrange your check in. You will receive your room key on Thursday afternoon and will have immediate access to your room on arrival after dinner on Thursday evening.

If you are staying at Ditchley:

Please place your baggage (other than hats, coats and hand luggage) outside your bedroom **by 8am** on Saturday, so that it may be collected and brought to the Hall ready for departure. Individual arrangements will be made should anyone need to leave earlier.

Please note: Luggage will be arranged in the Hall according to whether you are travelling by train, to the airport or by car. Please check that your luggage is in the correct place prior to your departure and avoid placing belongings in the vicinity of luggage destined for the station or airport if that is not where you are travelling.