

# ‘Bridging Divides’ – Annual Conference 2019



This year’s conference content will be assembled around a central theme of ‘Bridging Divides’:

*“Employee share ownership (‘ESO’) started life more than a hundred years ago as a means principally of bridging the divide between the owners of capital and the providers of labour. That ESO has evolved and endured to this day is testament to its power to align interests, and share success and wealth amongst those whose expertise and labour helped to create it. In a world – both virtual and real – where divisions and differences seem to be emphasised over similarities and common ground, what role could ESO now play in bridging these divides? How can we ensure that best practices are shared across teams, siloes, industries, geographies and ESO-related disciplines? And how can we foster the broader adoption of ESO as a uniting, inspiring force for good in our companies, our communities and our country?”*

Regular attendees will recall that in previous years our conference themes have included: ‘Making Good Decisions’, ‘British Success on the Global Stage’, ‘The Future of Share Plans’ and ‘Ownership Matters’.

Our aim in setting an overall theme is firstly to help set share plans in a broader context and secondly, to set the scene for the inclusion of content on emerging and topical subjects with an impact on share plans.

We issued our **Call for Speakers** earlier this month and with it, a list of suggested break-out session topics, including **‘Bringing your unicorn to market – upcoming IPOs from Silicon Valley and beyond’, ‘Private companies’ governance & the Wates Review’, ‘CEO Pay Ratios – report in haste, repent at leisure?’** and **‘The fall-out from Carillion & Persimmon – lessons for shareholders, RemCos and advisers (and politicians)’**, to name just a handful. As ever, these are just suggestions so alternative ideas remain very welcome, as do plan issuer case studies. Don’t forget, plan issuers speaking at the conference get to attend for free...

In previous years we have been over-subscribed for speaking slots, which I suppose is a nice problem to have, but still a problem! The number of excellent speakers applying for break-out sessions now habitually outstrips the break-out space available at any of our conference venues, regardless of size and configuration. Those sessions that we just can’t fit into the conference schedule could be re-purposed as a webinar, roundtable discussion or even as part of a stand-alone roadshow or half day seminar.

We trialled the idea of a **mini-roadshow** in January this year in partnership with our friends at GEO’s UK Chapter (and generously supported by our members Deloitte and Pinsent Masons in Birmingham and Edinburgh respectively), to a very positive reception, so this is likely to become an annual fixture. It gives us an opportunity to reach a broader audience outside of the London ‘bubble’ and to showcase local firms and issuers.

Setting the schedule for our Annual Conference is my absolute favourite - but trickiest! - task here at ProShare each year and it is to the credit of the many talented, experienced, knowledgeable individuals in our industry that we are so spoiled for choice with great topics, creative formats and engaging speakers.

*If you'd like a copy of the Speaker Brief and details on how to apply, just drop a line to [conference@proshare.org](mailto:conference@proshare.org). The deadline for applications is Friday 31 May 2019.*

*ProShare's Annual Conference will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019, at etc.venues 155 Bishopsgate, London. Online ticket bookings will open soon.*