

# 2026 PROGRAMME



## TUESDAY 13TH OCTOBER - CROWNE PLAZA BELFAST

### Morning

#### Beyond the Booking

Future-proof your business with fresh thinking on leadership, innovation & how to make a lasting impression.

BEYOND THE BOOKING ⌚ 09.45 £ 40

#### Does AI know your business?

Adam Hamadache explains how AI sees your business and how to improve its visibility, accuracy and chance of being recommended.

#### The F-Word

Pól Ó Conghaile on how "Friendliness" remains hospitality's greatest competitive advantage.

#### Help or Hindrance?

Suzanne Speak and Claudia Ivanova Fotev of Radisson explore how hotels can embrace AI while keeping people their greatest asset.

#### Fearlessly Human

Dr Paul Redmond explores why, in a rapidly changing world, the leaders who succeed will be those who care, connect and inspire.

*Supported by Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland.*

### Afternoon

#### The Leadership Lunch

Spencer Metzger, Michelin star chef talks about life and leadership.

THE LEADERSHIP LUNCH ⌚ 13.00 £ 60

Hosted by Pamela Ballantine and featuring the Rising Star Awards supported by Alkimii and Excel Recruitment, this is a celebration of stellar talent and a fascinating insight into hotel life.

*Supported by Alkimii, Excel Recruitment, Bunzl Rafferty Guest Amenities, Calor, Classic Drinks, Coca-Cola HBC NI and Sysco.*

#### Member Mixer

Sample some alcohol-free beverages in the Delegate Lounge.

MEMBER MIXER ⌚ 14.30 £ FREE TO MEMBERS

#### AGM

Annual General Meeting for NIHF Members takes place at 15.30.

AGM ⌚ 15.30 £ FREE TO MEMBERS

### Delegate Lounge

Networking before and after the seminars.

*Supported by Bunzl Rafferty Guest Amenities, Coca-Cola HBC NI, Henderson Foodservice and SD Bell.*



## WEDNESDAY 14TH OCTOBER - CROWNE PLAZA BELFAST

### Morning

#### Business Breakfast

Insight, intelligence and ideas for the road ahead with your host, Mark Simpson.

BUSINESS BREAKFAST ⌚ 08.00 £ 40

#### The Performance Picture

Aoife Roche reveals the latest hotel performance figures, bringing the story behind the numbers from global to local.

#### The Business of Breakfast

Rethinking the morning market with Scot Turner; looking at changing trends, guest expectations and the economics of eating.

#### Room for Growth?

An expert panel considers investment, expansion, market demand and the changing dynamics shaping hotel growth.

*Supported by AIB Bank, Musgrave MarketPlace, Percipient, Savills, STR, Sumer NI and Visit Belfast.*



### Talking Tourism

New perspectives on the future of Northern Ireland tourism.

TALKING TOURISM ⌚ 10.30 £ 35

#### The A-B-C of Economics

Andrew Webb examines the policies that could Add, Build and Create a stronger, more competitive tourism sector.

#### Island Opportunities

Industry leaders consider how we can unlock the island's tourism potential and grow the visitor economy.

#### It's Hip to Be Cool

Dr Tara Shine considers whether cool summers could become our hottest tourism opportunity.

#### Going Places

Laura McCorry and Alice Mansergh discuss Northern Ireland's tourism ambitions and potential at home and overseas.

*Supported by Brother Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland.*

### Afternoon

#### Speaker Lunch

Adriaan Bartels on luxury hotels and his journey to Cashel Palace.

*Supported by Foot Anstey, Bibendum Wines, Coca-Cola HBC NI and Henderson Foodservice.*

SPEAKER LUNCH ⌚ 13.00 £ 60

### Evening

#### The Gala Ball

A spectacular evening of flavours from around the world with delicious cocktails and fine wine.

*Supported by Linencare, Bunzl Rafferty Guest Amenities, Coca-Cola HBC NI, Diageo, Pattison & Co, SBD Events and Spiritly.*

GALA BALL ⌚ 19.30 £ 129

*All prices subject to VAT at the current rate.*

#### Additional Support

*Bank of Ireland, Bunzl McLaughlin, Johnsons Belfast, Robb Brothers and Winterhalter. Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council, Belfast City Council, Mid & East Antrim Borough Council and Newry, Mourne & Down District Council.*

[hospitalityexchange.org.uk](https://hospitalityexchange.org.uk)