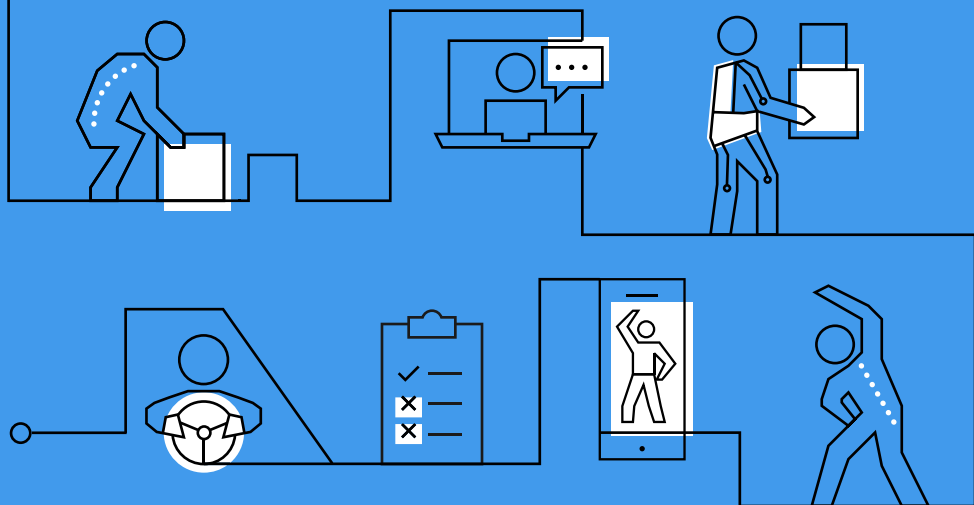




MSK innovation in the workplace

In partnership with **zinc**

Tuesday 13th October 2026
The Royal Society of Medicine,
London W1



Welcome

We created Joint Venture to champion innovation and entrepreneurship in musculoskeletal (MSK) health. It is difficult to think of a more important role for MSK health innovation than helping employers prevent work-related MSK conditions and enabling people with poor MSK health to stay in the workplace or get back into work.

The raising of the State Pension age and a challenging economic environment mean that many people face the prospect of longer working lives, which is a particular challenge for those in manual or physical roles. At the same time, more than half a million people report a (MSK) condition as a health reason for being economically inactive.

These are the challenges, but the focus of Joint Venture is on possibilities rather than problems. Its role is to champion the work of the UK's innovators and entrepreneurs, which is why the focus of this conference is on the ways in which safety tech, assistive robotics, therapeutics, ergonomics and other innovations can keep our workforce moving.

We believe this can be our next industrial revolution, harnessing the power of new ideas and new technology to allow all of us to live longer, happier, healthier and more productive working lives.

By helping people remain healthy, active and in work for longer, we can tackle one of the biggest barriers to workforce participation and unlock significant social and economic value. In doing so, we are aligned with the Government's ambition to drive sustainable economic growth, recognising that better MSK health is not only a health imperative but a major economic opportunity for the UK

Dr Arash Angadi,
CEO, Orthopaedic Research UK
Co-Founder, Joint Venture
MSK Innovation

Joint Venture is a community of innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, investors and others interested in driving innovation and entrepreneurship within musculoskeletal (MSK) health, hosted by Orthopaedic Research UK.

Through regular events, educational activities, policy work and investments, Joint Venture provides a forum for debate, acts as a force for positive change (especially in tackling systemic barriers to innovation) and supports entrepreneurs.

Join us: www.jointventure-MSK.com



About Joint Venture

Programme

08:45 - 09:30 Registration & Refreshments

09:30 - 09:35 **Welcome** Dr Arash Angadji,
CEO, ORUK & Co-Founder, Joint Venture

09:35 - 11:00 **SESSION 1:
Setting the Scene** Chaired by Polly Mackenzie,
Co-Founder & CEO, Zinc Innovation Partners

Policy Provocation Professor Chris Warhurst,
Director, Institute for Employment Research

Challenges & Opportunities Professor Melanie Jones,
Nuffield MSK Project, Cardiff Business School

Professor Gary Macfarlane,
Director, MRC/Arthritis UK Centre for Musculoskeletal
Health & Work

Claire Campbell,
Senior Fellow, Health Foundation

Elizabeth Bachrad,
Head of Programme Strategy, Business for Health

Tracy Riddell,
Head of Age Friendly Employers, Centre for Ageing Better

Patricia Stapleton,
Senior Policy Manager, Arthritis UK

11:00 - 11:20 Break

11:20 - 13:00 **SESSION 2:
The Future Starts Now!** Chaired by Omar Butt,
Co-Founder Vita Healthcare Solutions & Strategic
Development Lead (Health Innovation)
Imperial College London

Ergonomics Nichola Adams,
Founder & Ergonomist, Inspired Ergonomics

Robotics Professor Mike Wilson
Chief Automation Officer, MTC & Visiting Professor
of Robotics & Automation, Loughborough University

Innovators' Showcase Amit Arora,
Chief Commercial Officer, DochQ

Ari Eskandari
Founder, WellWhale

Kailash Manohara Selvan,
Founder, Spatial Cortex

John Pelling,
Founder, BACK-TRACK

Dr Reneira Balaghee,
Co-Founder, UPPITT

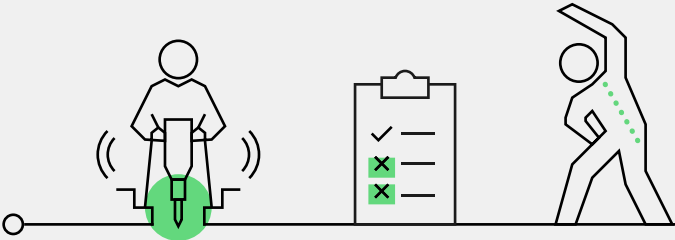
CASE STUDY
Innovation in Action Dr Shane Lowe,
CEO, Vitruue Health

David Rowbotham,
Global Head of Health & Safety, Bupa

Sonia Whiteley,
Head of Health & Safety, EBRD

Programme (cont.)

13:00 -14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00 -15:15	SESSION 3: Employers' & Regulators' Perspectives	Lina Chauhan, Musculoskeletal & Ergonomic Specialist, British Airways Harvey Tate, Head of Airport Innovation, British Airways Samantha Phillips, Head of Health & Wellbeing, Transport for London Chris Lucas, Head of MSK Intervention Design, Health & Safety Executive Kate Field, Global Head Human & Social Sustainability, BSI Group Jenny Rimell, Head of HR Consultancy & Training Make UK
15:15 -15:35	Break	
15:35 -16:00	SESSION 4: Keynote	Sir Charlie Mayfield, Chairman of QA Limited and Be the Business. Former Chairman of John Lewis Partnership & Leader of Keep Britain Working Review
16:00 -17:00	SESSION 5: Professionals' Perspectives	
	Role of OH Professionals	Nick Pahl, CEO, Society of Occupational Medicine
	GIRFT	Andrew Bennett, Community MSK Clinical Lead, GIRFT Philippa Norris, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust Luke Martin, Operational Healthcare Manager, GIRFT
	Investors	Emilie Syed, Investment Principal, Zinc
17:00 -17:15	Closing Remarks	
		Martin Thomas, Head of Strategy, ORUK & Co-Founder, Joint Venture



Speakers

Nichola Adams

CEO and Founder, Inspired Ergonomics

Nichola (MSc Ergonomics, C.ErgHF) leads an expert team of ergonomists and neurodiversity specialists. With over 20 years' experience in workplace health, she advises leading organisations, including law firms, universities and media companies, applying a biopsychosocial approach to optimise physical and cognitive wellbeing.

Dr Arash Angadji

CEO, Orthopaedic Research UK & Co-Founder, Joint Venture

Arash joined Orthopaedic Research UK in 2008 and became Chief Executive in 2016. Since then, he has been instrumental in shaping the organisation's strategy and driving its growth, with a focus on strengthening governance and expanding its research, education, and innovation programmes. Arash co-founded Joint Venture in 2025.

He holds a PhD in Medical Engineering, an MBA in Management, and is a member of the research committee at the Bone and Joint Infection Society (BAJIS).

Amit Arora

Chief Commercial Officer, DocHQ

Amit has spent 25 years in healthcare, insurance, and finance; held leadership roles at Bupa, Citibank, and GE. Launched and scaled Max Bupa's Direct Sales business, acquiring over 250,000 customers and building a \$30M+ portfolio. As CCO, Amit leads the growth of DocHQ through sales and partnerships with large corporates, health insurers & employee benefit platforms.

Elizabeth Bachrad

Head of Programme Strategy, Business for Health

Elizabeth is a population health researcher and strategist working at the intersection of health, work, economic participation and systems innovation. She advances approaches that position health as an economic and societal asset, connecting prevention, workforce health and inclusive growth. She is a two-time NIHR Work & Health award recipient, supporting research and innovation in business contribution to health outcomes, and is currently evaluating the MSK Trailblazer programme across Northwest and Central London.

Dr Reneira Balaghee

Co-Founder, UPPITT

Reneira is a neuroscientist, Postdoctoral Research Associate at Imperial College London and co-founder of UPPITT. Her PhD research focused on developing and validating wearable muscle-sensing technology for low back pain, which now underpins UPPITT's Smartbelt and its translation from research into real-world use.

Andrew Bennett

Community MSK Clinical Lead, GIRFT

Andrew provides expert clinical leadership to Sutton Health and Care Adult Community MSK Services as part of the St Georges, Epsom and St Helier Universities Hospital Group. He is also National Clinical Lead for Community Musculoskeletal within the NHS England Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) Programme. Prior to this role in GIRFT he was National Clinical Director for MSK Conditions for NHS England from 2019 to 2024.

Omar Butt

Co-Founder, Vita Healthcare Solutions & Strategic Development Lead (Health Innovation) Imperial College London

Omar Butt has spent his career helping new health technologies reach patients. Having brought MedTech products into NHS and private services, he now helps innovators build the evidence and market access strategies that lead to adoption. He has supported diagnostic and MSK innovators through accelerator programmes and helps decide in which MSK ventures ORUK invests.

Claire Campbell

Senior Fellow, The Health Foundation

Claire leads the work and health programme at the Health Foundation. Her focus is on engaging employers to recruit, support and retain people with health issues or disabilities, and on ensuring work doesn't negatively impact health.

Claire's previous role was as Chief Executive of social enterprise Timewise where she led employer change projects around job design, health and inclusion for a wide range of private and public sector projects. She has also led the HR Consulting and Research Team at the Institute for Employment Studies and held senior civil servant HR roles in DWP and DECC. She has a Masters in Work Psychology and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Lina Chauhan

Musculoskeletal and Ergonomic Specialist, British Airways

Lina Chauhan has extensive experience working across large corporate organisations including British Airways, BT Group and Transport for London. With a background in occupational health physiotherapy, she leads workplace musculoskeletal health initiatives and uses data, evidence and practical experience to support healthier, more productive workforces. Lina is also Vice-Chair of ACPOHE (the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Occupational Health and Ergonomics).

Ari Eskandari

Co-Founder and CEO, WellWhale

Ari is a tech entrepreneur building solutions that matter. He is a second time founder passionate about harnessing AI for good.

Kate Field

Global Head Human & Social Sustainability, The British Standards Institution (BSI)

Kate is an award-winning thought leader and keynote speaker specialising in the future of work, human performance, and workplace culture. With over 20 years' experience, she helps organisations navigate longevity, AI, psychosocial risk, and workforce change. Her work has featured in BBC Radio, The Times and Raconteur.

Professor Melanie Jones

Professor of Economics at Cardiff Business School and Head of the Economics Department

Melanie's research interest is in understanding the impact of disability on labour market outcomes using large scale data and she is currently leading a Nuffield Funded project on Musculoskeletal conditions, employment retention and job quality.

Dr Shane Lowe

Co-Founder & CEO, Vitru Health

Shane holds a PhD in biomechanics and has spent over 15 years building MSK technology to predict and prevent injury, and now applies that same science at scale through the workplace. He founded Vitru to move MSK support to the stage where it changes the outcome: before pain becomes a referral.

Chris Lucas

Principal Inspector, Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Chris has more than 25 years' experience regulating a wide range of industries and occupational health risks. He currently heads a team focused on improving outcomes for work-related MSKs using evidence-based interventions.

Professor Gary Macfarlane

Chair (Clinical) in Epidemiology, University of Aberdeen

Gary is Director of the MRC/Arthritis UK Centre for Musculoskeletal Health and Work as well as the Scottish Centre for Work and Health. He is an Honorary Consultant (Public Health) with NHS Grampian.

Polly Mackenzie

Co-Founder and CEO, Zinc Innovation Partners

Polly leads investment and venture-building partnerships that help scientists and innovators turn breakthrough research into scalable, impactful businesses. She brings two decades of experience across government, civil society and innovation, including serving as Director of Policy to the Deputy Prime Minister, founding the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute, and leading the think-tank Demos.

She served for three years as the first Chief Social Purpose Officer in the higher education sector, at the University of the Arts London. Polly also advises Family Business UK and the Future Governance Forum on purpose-driven growth and effective governance.

Kailash Manohara Selvan

Founder and CEO, SpatialCortex Technology Ltd

Kailash invented MOVA, a wearable sensing and analytics technology and has led MOVA deployments across rail, ports, logistics and infrastructure with organisations including Transport for Wales, LNER, and Portsmouth International Port. He previously spent over a decade in engineering R&D at Dyson. He is a Chartered Engineer (IMechE) and Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors.

Luke Martin

Operational Healthcare Manager, GIRFT

Luke has 18 years of NHS experience. He currently supports the GIRFT MSK portfolio including Community MSK, Chronic Pain and Adult / Paediatric Rheumatology.

Sir Charlie Mayfield

Chairman, QA Limited and Be the Business

Charlie is co-chair of Keep Britain Working (KBW), which is working with governments, nationally and regionally and over 200 employers to develop a 'workplace health system'. He was previously chairman of John Lewis Partnership and is lead non-executive at the Treasury.

Phillipa Norris

Advanced Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist and First Contact Physiotherapist, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Philippa holds a Greater Manchester Fairer Health for All Fellowship and has a strong interest in health inequalities, work and health, and population health improvement. Alongside colleagues, she led the Manchester WorkWell programme, supporting the integration of NHS and employment support services. She is currently the GIRFT Work and Health Clinical Advisor, supporting national work to strengthen links between community MSK services and employment support pathways.

Nick Pahl

CEO, Society for Occupational Medicine

Nick has held senior posts in the NHS, Hospice UK and MSI. He has completed a Windsor Leadership Trust and ACEVO next generation CEO training, a diploma in management, a degree in Economics and an MSc in Public Health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He is an honorary adviser for Global Health Partners and was Trustee of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

He is currently Trustee of the British Geriatric Society and Chair of ROSPA's National Occupational Health and Safety Committee. Nick received honorary membership of the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) and the FPH President's Medal in 2025. He currently judges for CIPD and MemCom workplace health awards. He also acts as Honorary Secretary of the International Occupational Medicine Society Collaborative.

John Pelling

Founder, BACK-TRACK Europe Ltd

John worked as an engineer in the US before moving back to the UK and launched BACK-TRACK in 2008.

Dr Samantha Phillips

Head of Health and Wellbeing, Transport for London

Samantha leads a team of about 60 OH specialists to support the health of TfLs circa 27,000 employees. She is an occupational medicine specialist, a Fellow of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and chair of the RSSB/DFT Train Drivers Medical Advisory Panel.

Tracy Riddell

Head of Age Friendly Employers, Centre for Ageing Better

Tracy has worked in the voluntary sector for over 25 years, providing front line support, managing and developing new services and more recently delivering large scale programmes of work. Tracy leads on the Age-friendly Employment work at the Centre for Ageing Better, including the Age-friendly Employer Pledge.

Jenny Rimell

Head of HR Consultancy & Training, Make UK

With 24 years' experience across the HR profession, Jenny progressed through senior HR roles before establishing and leading a successful consultancy. Her work focuses on employment law and commercial HR, helping organisations make confident, people-centred decisions that support performance and sustainable growth. Jenny brings deep expertise in Employee Relations, Work force planning, compliance, culture through performance engagement and dispute resolution and training, development & succession planning.

David Rowbotham

Global Head of Health & Safety, Bupa

David's has held his role since 2016. A chartered health and safety professional with over 20 years' experience across healthcare, financial services and real estate.

Patricia Stapleton

Senior Policy Manager, Arthritis UK

Patricia joined the charity in July 2021. She has over 15 years' policy experience, and previously worked for UK charities the Traveller Movement, Focus on Labour Exploitation, and for Doras Luimní in Ireland. Patricia oversees the policy function at Arthritis UK which includes employment policy, equitable access to health services, and national strategy. She has a PhD in Social Science from University College Cork, Ireland.



Emilie Syed

Investment Principal, Zinc

Emilie is a board director, advisor and investment professional working at the interface of academia, industry and private capital. A Nature-published Oxford University Research Scientist, she has a career spanning scientific research, technology commercialisation and venture capital, focused on healthcare, life sciences and deep technology. She holds a PhD in Systems Neuroscience and an MBA.

Harvey Tate

Head of Airport Innovation, British Airways

Head of Airport Innovation at International Airlines Group (IAG), Harvey leads the transformation of the customer journey and airside operations across one of the world's largest airline groups. He has over 30 years of aviation industry experience, and a proven track record bringing emerging technologies to BA's operation.

Martin Thomas

Head of Strategy, Orthopaedic Research UK & Co-Founder, Joint Venture

Martin has spent his career helping organisations campaign on important issues, from encouraging sustainability to improving public health. He has held leadership roles with some of the world's largest marketing services agencies and published three books on organisational responses to new technology.

Martin co-founded Joint Venture in 2025.

Professor Chris Warhurst

Professor and Director of the Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick

Chris is an internationally recognised expert on job quality and leads the NIHR-funded project Creating Healthy Jobs. He has published 18 books, the latest, *Work and Welfare in the Digital Age*, is published in 2027. He has been an advisor to several governments and the OECD and is currently a member of the College of Experts for the UK Government's Cabinet Office and the HSE's Advisory Group on Psychosocial Hazard Interventions.

Sonia Whiteley

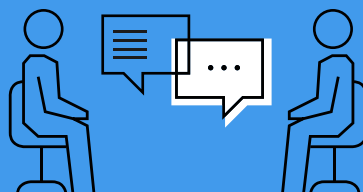
Head of Health & Safety, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Sonia leads health, safety and wellbeing across EBRD's global operations. She sits on the IOSH Board of Trustees and is Vice Chair of the IOSH Essex Branch.

Professor Mike Wilson

Chief Automation Officer, Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC)

Mike Wilson is recognised as a leading authority on the application of robot systems in the UK. Mike is Chief Automation Officer at the Manufacturing Technology Centre, Visiting Professor of Robotics & Automation at Loughborough University, member of the Department for Business, Innovation, Science & Trade Robot Advisory Group, and General Assembly member of the International Federation of Robotics. He was awarded 'The Manufacturer Top 100' status as one of the top 100 people in UK manufacturing in 2018. His book "*Implementation of Robot Systems*" was published in 2014.



Our Partner



Zinc exists to close the gap between scientific discovery and real-world impact. Zinc is a venture builder, investment fund, and innovation services provider. Zinc's fund invests in early-stage ventures building a better future for people and the planet. Through its Zinc Innovation Partners arm, Zinc works with research institutes, charities, corporates, and government bodies to support science-for-impact translation across the wider ecosystem, including venture building and talent programmes, and the design of novel funding mechanisms and institutions that help promising science move beyond the lab and into the world.

zinc.vc

Sponsors



BACK-TRACK is an award-winning wearable technology and behaviour-change system designed to reduce workplace musculoskeletal (MSK) risks. Worn discreetly on a waistband, it identifies common risk factors such as stooping, twisting and extended leaning, providing real-time haptic feedback to encourage safer movement. Combining wearable technology, data-driven insights and MSK education, BACK-TRACK helps organisations improve workforce wellbeing, reduce injuries and absence, and create a stronger culture of prevention.

backtrack.co.uk

Contact: john.pelling@backtrack.co.uk



Cardinus is a leading provider of workplace health, safety and wellbeing solutions, helping organisations reduce risk, prevent injury and support healthier, more productive employees. Our products and services help employers identify and manage risks associated with musculoskeletal health, ergonomics, manual handling, workplace safety and wellbeing across a wide range of industries and working environments. Combining innovative technology with expert-led consultancy, assessments, training and occupational health support, Cardinus enables organisations to create safer workplaces and improve workforce health outcomes.

cardinus.com

Contact: suhel.miah@cardinus.com



DocHQ

DocHQ combines AI and computer vision with expert clinical care from Chartered Physiotherapists to deliver a more flexible approach to virtual MSK recovery. Using intelligent movement tracking, the platform provides real-time feedback as you exercise, helping you correct your form and get more from every session. It works on any device with a camera, so you can access support wherever it suits you. Physios remotely monitor progress daily and adjust your programme to keep your recovery highly personalised but without the need for in-person visits.

dochq.co.uk

Contact: nick.heath@dochq.co.uk



For over 30 years Microlink has been at the forefront of workplace accessibility and innovation. We help organisations retain talent, reduce barriers, and support employee wellbeing through specialist assessments, ergonomic solutions, assistive technology and workplace adjustments. Whether addressing musculoskeletal conditions or other disabilities, our focus is simple: helping people work safely, comfortably and productively while enabling organisations to build more inclusive and successful workplaces.

microlinkpc.com

Contact: michael.buckfield@microlinkpc.com



SpatialCortex is a UK workplace safety-tech company, providing wearable sensor technology and analytics that capture posture and movement data to deliver HSE-aligned musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) risk assessments, mitigation suggestions, and training improvements. Its core products, MOVA MMH (manual handling) and MOVA SEAT (desk-based roles), help large employers, particularly in rail, ports, warehouse & logistics and manufacturing, proactively identify and reduce manual handling and MSD risks across their workforce, turning subjective ergonomics assessments into objective, data-driven insight that supports both compliance and injury prevention.

spatialcortex.co.uk

Contact: kailash.manoharaselvan@spatialcortex.co.uk



UPPITT is an Imperial College London spinout developing a wearable smartbelt that monitors core muscle activity and provides real-time biofeedback during exercise and everyday activity. Built on novel mechanomyography sensing technology, UPPITT aims to help people better understand and engage their muscles, supporting rehabilitation, prevention and long-term musculoskeletal health. Initially focused on low back pain, the technology has been developed and validated through research involving over 140 participants.

uppitt.co

Contact: r.seeamber18@imperial.ac.uk



Vitru Health

Vitru Health is the company behind VIDA, a technology platform built to support the early, preventive stage of musculoskeletal (MSK) care in the workplace, rather than waiting for a clinical referral. A large part of the MSK pathway plays out before someone ever reaches a physiotherapist or specialist, and that earlier stage – where low-cost, early intervention has the most scope to prevent escalation – is what VIDA is designed for.

It assesses movement and risk through computer vision and biomechanics, then applies a biopsychosocial model to identify who is likely to develop pain, so support can begin sooner. The approach builds on clinical diagnostic technology originally developed with orthopaedic surgeons and used in professional sport, with every algorithm clinically validated before it reaches a user.

Vitru has also partnered with Orthopaedic Research UK on the MSK Champion Certification, helping managers recognise and act on early signs of MSK risk in their teams.

vitruhealth.com

Contact: lauramitchell@vitruhealth.com



Wellwhale is an AI native preventive physiotherapy solution helping insurers and organisations cut musculoskeletal costs before they escalate. Through automated assessments, intelligent AI triage, and personalized preventive care plans, Wellwhale identifies risk early and guides employees toward the right care at the right time reducing claims, absenteeism, and surgery rates while improving workforce wellbeing and long-term health outcomes.

wellwhale.io

Contact: ari@wellwhale.io

Orthopaedic Research UK



Joint Venture was created and is hosted by Orthopaedic Research UK (ORUK). This charity supports entrepreneurially minded Early Career Researchers with funding, education, mentoring and networking support to help accelerate the translation of their research ideas into new products or services. In addition to being one of the most significant funders of musculoskeletal (MSK) research and innovation in the UK, ORUK is the first MSK charity to invest in start-up businesses.

www.oruk.org

