

THE *good* LOBBY
**SUMMER
ACADEMY**

20-23 July 2026
Bilbao, Spain

— Agenda



MONDAY, JULY 20	
13:00-13:30	REGISTRATION
13:30-14:00	WELCOME & SETTING THE SCENE
	Alberto Alemanno , Jean Monnet Professor of Law, HEC Paris & Founder, The Good Lobby
14:00-15:00	WHY DEREGULATION IS WINNING: DEMISTIFYING EUROPE'S ANTI-REGULATION LOBBYING
	Europe is experiencing a deregulation moment framed as simplification in the name of competitiveness. Bringing together civil society voices and progressive corporate actors from across the advocacy spectrum, the session maps the rhetorical strategies driving the simplification agenda, identifies the fictions embedded in the competitiveness framing, and explores how progressive actors can reclaim the narrative. Moderator Alberto Alemanno, Professor of Law, HEC Paris & Founder, The Good Lobby Speakers Carlota de Paula Coelho, Senior Policy Manager, B Lab Global Julia Manresa, Strategic Communications & Media Officer, AVAAZ Liesbeth Van Den Bossche, EU Campaign Manager, WWF
15:00-15:30	COFFEE BREAK
15:30-16:30	CASSANDRA SAYS MIDNIGHT IS NOW: PRESERVING EUROPE'S FRAGILE FUTURE
 	It's 2031, and the warnings nobody heeded have come due. Led by superforecaster Regina Joseph, this interactive simulation puts participants in the shoes of policymakers, technologists, and civil society actors racing to map the EU's AI existential risk landscape before it's too late. Drawing on the Europe 2031 scenario, teams will forecast – with real confidence intervals – where current trajectories lead by the end of 2026, and design the mitigation strategies that might still bend the curve. The clock is already running. Speaker Regina Joseph, Founder, Sibylink
16:30-17:30	SPAMMING THE REGULATOR: CORPORATE STRATEGIES AND CAPTURED RESEARCH TO MINIMISE COMPETITION OVERSIGHT & LESSONS ON EPISTEMIC INEQUALITY
	Regulation is facing myriad pressures from political polarisation to attacks on science and overreliance on interest-driven lobbies. Among the latter is the strategy of spamming the regulator. The strategy consists of an oversupply of expert economic reports that contain complex modelling and unverifiable assumptions with the objective of overwhelming competition investigators while disguising the accumulation of market power. “Spamming” not only makes it harder to determine what is factually true but also diminishes the scope for shared, evidence-based understanding in public policy.

	Speakers Ioannis Lianos, Professor of Global Competition Law & Public Policy, University College London Helena Malikova, Intelligence Team, Foreign Subsidies Directorate, DG COMP, European Commission
17:30-18:15	WHO WILL BE OUR TRUTH TELLERS?
Keynote	Europe's biggest stories are being told. But are they being told right? Former New York Times correspondent and EU Scream podcast host James Kanter cuts through some dominant narratives on European current affairs and asks what's being left out. He'll also prompt the audience to consider who – from influencers and civil society to think tanks and academia and institutions – might be best placed to do a better job in an era of epochal changes in politics, technology, security and the climate. Speaker James Kanter, Founder & Editor, EU Scream
18:30-21:00 SOCIAL PLAN	GUIDED WALKING TOUR, BRIDGE CROSSING FOLLOWED BY PINTXO POTE (food & drinks)
TUESDAY, JULY 21	
9:30-10:30	HOW TO CAMPAIGN UNDER HOSTILE CONDITIONS?
Knowledge insights Practice insights	Political polarisation and attacks on civil society are reshaping how campaigning works, and established approaches are no longer sufficient. At the same time, increasingly constrained and less representative decision-making processes are making it harder to influence outcomes. The current political situation is reshaping more than budgets, it's forcing a fundamental rethink of how campaigns are built, run, and sustained. This session asks the harder question: how to hold the line and how does campaigning itself evolve when the structural conditions that enabled it are gone? Moderator Alberto Alemanno, Professor of EU Law, HEC Paris, Founder, The Good Lobby Speakers Julia Manresa, Strategic Communications & Media Officer, AVAAZ Julie Berdin, Political Officer, Eurogroup for Animals Liesbeth Van Den Bossche, EU Campaign Manager, WWF
10:30-11:00	COFFEE BREAK
11:00-12:00	LOBBYING FOR THE YOUTH AND FUTURE GENERATIONS
Knowledge insights Practice insights	Future generations remain structurally underrepresented in political systems shaped by short-term incentives. This session explores key institutional design challenges, strategies for building political support for long-term governance, and the role of narratives in making future-oriented politics resonate beyond expert circles. Combining insights from political theory and practical advocacy experience in Germany, the session engages participants in exploring the tensions and trade-offs of representing future interests in democratic policymaking.

	Moderator Alberto Alemanno, Professor of EU Law, HEC Paris, Founder, The Good Lobby Speakers Joseph Foti, Principal Advisor, Emerging Issues, Open Government Partnership Jonathan Hoffmann, Senior Project Manager, Bertelsmann Stiftung Willem van Dam, Team Lead, Oxfam
12:00-13:00	AI AGENTIC RULEMAKING: WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN AI BEGINS MAKING THE RULES?
	In this session, we will discuss the difference between agents and other types of AI. We will look at how this might change regulation and rulemaking for the better. Case studies from anti-bribery and pollution control will provide interesting thought experiments. As a group, we will explore questions such as what will it mean to have dynamic compliance and enforcement? (And what are the technological antecedents to do this well?), and how will this shape how rules are written? How will this shape lobbying and advocacy around those rules? How will this change the nature of policy capture? Assuming dynamism and agentic "discretion" in enforcement and compliance, what tools of transparency do we need? What capabilities for oversight are underdeveloped, and where are there new opportunities for performance measurement? Moderator Alberto Alemanno, Professor of EU Law, HEC Paris, Founder, The Good Lobby Speakers Joseph Foti, Principal Advisor, Emerging Issues, Open Government Partnership Regina Joseph, Founder, Sibylink
13:00-14:00	LUNCH BREAK (Simulation game preparation)
14:15-15:15	THE QUIET RETREAT? CORPORATE ADVOCACY, POLICY HUSHING, AND THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSITIONS
 	As climate, nature, and broader sustainability agendas become increasingly politicised, many companies are reassessing how visibly they engage in public debate. While some continue to advocate for ambitious policies, others are choosing caution, silence, or behind-the-scenes engagement, a phenomenon sometimes described as "policy hushing." This panel will explore what this quiet retreat means for sustainable transitions. If companies that support the transition leave the room empty, do they risk allowing the enabling conditions for change to be delayed, diluted, or blocked by actors less willing to move? Moderator Facundo Etchebehere, Co-Founder, Ambition Loop, Former VP, Danone, France Speakers Sarah Cerange, Advocacy and Collective Action, B Lab France Julia Manresa, Strategic Communications & Media Officer, AVAAZ Katrien Martens, Co-Founder, The Protein Project Franck Saint-Martin, Global Public Affairs Lead, Nestlé
15:15-15:45	COFFEE BREAK
15:45-16:45	WHO SPEAKS FOR BUSINESS? TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, POWER AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Practice insights Knowledge insights	Business associations are among the most influential, yet least scrutinized corporate lobbying actors. Their funding and internal governance remain typically opaque. Their agenda is often obstructive, unaligned with many of their members' stated policy positions. Drawing on The Good Lobby's research findings, this session explores where governance and regulation fall short, and what a more responsible model of collective business representation could look like. Moderator Dieter Zinnbauer, Senior Advisor, The Good Lobby Speakers Facundo Etchebehere, Co-Founder, Ambition Loop, Former VP, Danone, France Christian Verschueren, Chairman of the Board, Natagora
17:00-20:30 SOCIAL PLAN	VISIT TO GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM & FREE NIGHT IN BILBAO (Bus available for those returning to the hotel after the visit)
WEDNESDAY, JULY 22	
9:30-11:00	GETTING KIDS HOOKED: COMMERCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH, LOBBYING STRATEGIES OF ADDICTION AND COUNTER-STRATEGIES TO RECLAIM CHILDHOOD
Knowledge insights	Commercial actors have increasingly been implicated in the development of environments that promote addiction and poor health outcomes, particularly for children. These actors, which have included the tobacco and alcohol industries for decades, now also encompass the advertising and technology, the ultra-processed food (UPF) and the gambling industries. This panel proposes to reflect on the impact that the commercial determinants of health have had on our living environments, not least the digital environment that children inhabit, with a specific focus on 1) the lobbying strategies that they have deployed to get children addicted to their products, and 2) the counter-strategies that policy actors have developed (or could develop) to protect children's physical and mental health from harmful products and commercial practices. It will adopt a comparative approach, considering several industry actors from tobacco, alcohol and UPF to gambling and social media, as well as various country case studies from Europe and beyond. Speakers Juan Collado Perez, Graduate Teaching Fellow, University of Liverpool Sebastien Fassiaux, Visiting Professor, ESADE Law School Amandine Garde, Professor of Law, Liverpool University Christie Maike, EU Policy Manager, Reset Tech May van Schalkwyk, Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh
11:00-11:30	COFFEE BREAK
11:30-13:00	BEYOND POLITICAL PHILANTHROPY: HOW PRIVATE WEALTH CAN DEFEND CIVIC POWER
	Civil Society has had a bad year. Advocacy impact has been diluted by executive decision-making/maladministration in public institutions, political regression, funding gaps and anti-NGO rhetoric. Delays, restrictions and withdrawals of bilateral or European Commission funding continue to place more and more NGOs in survival mode. Narratives to undermine the role and space for civil society are abundant. This session asks what political philanthropy means when nearly everything is political, and how foundations can better support advocacy, resilience, and progressive change. It explores what philanthropy is doing, what it could do differently, and how private wealth can help defend civic power without replacing it.

	Moderator Neil Campbell, Senior Advisor, The Good Lobby Speakers Martino Cortese, Founder, Fondazione Nidi Fioriti Elsa Özmen, Senior Philanthropy and Fundraising Advisor, Independent
13:00-14:00	LUNCH BREAK
14:00-15:00	MORE THAN COMPLIANCE: COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR THE FUTURE OF RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS
 	How to keep impact-driven businesses engaged in advancing and scaling responsible business conduct while making sense of fast-moving legislative agendas? Here we would like to present some of our coalitions, where B Corps convene to think outside the box – that is, beyond compliance with EU legislation – to innovate and improve corporate performance. Speakers Sarah Cerange, Head of Community, Advocacy & Collective Action, B Lab France Carlota de Paula Coelho, Senior Policy Manager, B Lab Europe
15:00-15:30	COFFEE BREAK
15:30-16:30	THE LONG NOW: LOBBYING AS FUTURE-MAKING
	Most lobbying is treated as short-term: winning access, shaping amendments, or reacting to the latest crisis. This session looks instead at lobbying as future-making: the slow construction of relationships, narratives, expertise, norms, and institutions that shape decisions years ahead. It asks how influence operates when its payoff is deferred, and what ethical responsibilities arise when actors help design the political and social futures others will inherit. Speaker Dieter Zinnbauer, Senior Advisor, The Good Lobby
16:30-17:30	UNCOVERING MISLEADING CONSENSUS AND LACK OF TRANSPARENCY IN CORPORATE LOBBYING
 	The success of corporate lobbying depends on many different factors. One of those factors can be the ability to present a united front of ‘the industry’s position’ which carries a lot of weight with policy makers. However, research conducted by the Social Lobby Map demonstrates these claims can be misleading. Drawing on our research into lobbying around the EU CSDDD, this session will present practical examples of how misleading representations of industry unity are constructed and communicated. By looking into these practices, the session aims to contribute to broader discussion on transparency and accountability, and democratic legitimacy in corporate lobbying on social policy. Speakers Jana Hoess, Analyst, EIRIS Foundation Peter Webster, CEO, EIRIS Foundation
17:30-18:30	SIMULATION GAME PREPARATION
20:00-23:00 SOCIAL PLAN	FAREWELL DINNER AT RESTAURANT MIGAEA, GETXO

THURSDAY, JULY 23	
9:30-10:30	REBUILDING HOPE: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ADVOCACY IN A TIME OF POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY
	When governments cut public spending, corporations write the rules, and advocates are stretched too thin to fight back, who speaks for children? Across Europe, the political conditions for protecting children's rights are deteriorating: rights-based language is being co-opted for marketing, far-right governments are prioritising short-term interests, and civil society organisations closest to these issues are running on empty. This panel asks the hard questions: How did we get here? What is the cost of inaction? What do genuinely child-centred policies look like? How do we rebuild hope in times of political uncertainty? Speakers Martino Cortese, Founder, Fondazione Nidi Fioriti Amandine Garde, Professor of Law, Liverpool University
10:30-12:30	SIMULATION GAME (COFFEE BREAK AVAILABLE IN THE ROOM)
	Session Lead Regina Joseph, Founder, Sybilink
12:30-13:00	WRAP UP AND CLOSING REMARKS
	Alberto Alemanno, Professor of Law, HEC Paris & Founder, The Good Lobby



**The Good Lobby
Summer Academy
takes place at Gran
Hotel Puente
Colgante**

**Calle de Doña, Maria Diaz
de Haro K., 2, 48920
Portugalete, Bizkaia**

Monday, July 20

Bar Tremendo

Plaza Zubiko, s/n, 48930 Areeta / Las Arenas, Biscay, Spain

Tuesday, July 21

Guggenheim Museum

Abandoibarra Etorb. 2, Abando, 48009 Bilbao, Bizkaia, Spain

Wednesday, July 22

Restaurant Migaea

Av. Algortako Etorbidea, 12, 48992 Algorta, Biscay, Spain

