

Maura O'Neill

Lecturer | Distinguished Teaching Fellow at Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley

Berkeley, CA, US

Expert in entrepreneurship, leadership, blockchain, and policy

About

Maura O'Neill is a lecturer and distinguished teaching fellow at the Haas School of Business. Relentlessly focused on sourcing and scaling breakthrough ideas, she has been thrilled to grow businesses, teach, and mentor others wanting to make a big difference. In 2009 she was appointed by President Obama to be the first Chief Innovation Officer of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Serving until 2013, she was responsible for inspiring and leading breakthrough innovations in foreign assistance and development worldwide. O'Neill is best known for adapting venture capital and drug discovery methods to global development by co-creating the Development Innovation Venture Fund that has expanded into the Global Innovation Fund. She served as a member of the White House Innovation Cohort assisting in innovation across the federal government. Prior to joining the Administration, she served as a Chief of Staff in the U.S. Senate. In 2019 O'Neill returned to the U.S. Senate to serve as Senior Domestic Policy Advisor to Senator Ron Wyden and the Senate Finance Committee on access to capital for women and people of color as well as combating bias and discrimination in AI/deep learning/algorithms. A serial entrepreneur, O'Neill founded four companies in the fields of electricity efficiency, smart grid and customer info systems and billing, e-commerce, and digital education. In 1989, she was named the Greater Seattle Business Person of the Year. Currently she is teaching at Berkeley Haas and previously at Stanford and Columbia University. She is a three time winner of the Berkeley Haas Earl Cheit Award for Excellence in Teaching. She advises start-ups, global companies, foundations and government agencies and co-leads the Aspen Institute Global Health Ideas Incubator. She has MBAs from Columbia University and Berkeley Haas and a PhD from University of Washington, where her research focused on narrow-mindedness and the errors it can lead to in science, medicine, business, and political decision-making. She helped found the public charter school Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women (grades 6-12) and continues to serve as vice chair that is the subject of an award-winning film, STEP.

Areas of Expertise

Women and Racial/Ethnic Equity, Breakthrough Innovation in Private & Public Sectors, Blockchain & Cryptocurrency: Strategy, Regulatory Policy & Opportunity Identification, Entrepreneurship & New Venture Finance, Executive Leadership, Narrow-mindedness & Unconscious Bias, Unconscious Bias in AI & Algorithms

Selected External Service & Affiliations

Vice Chair, Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women, Guest Curator, Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship, External Advisor, PATH for the Global Innovation Countdown 2030, Member, Clinton Global Initiative, Sr. Domestic Policy Advisor, Senator Wyden & US Senate Finance Committee, Jan 2019-present

Positions Held

At Haas since 2005

2005 ? present, Lecturer, University of California, Berkeley 2014, Lecturer, School of Engineering, Stanford University 2014, Lecturer, Columbia University 2010 ? 2013, Senior Counselor and Chief Innovation Officer, U.S. Agency for International Development 2009, Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor, Energy and Climate for Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture 2008 ? 2009, Chief of Staff, U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senate 2006 ? 2008, Lecturer, Columbia University 2005 ? 2008, Chairman, Fourteen40 (www.cafescribe.com) 1999 ? 2001, Chairman and CEO, ImproveMyBusiness.com 1995 ? 1997, President and CEO, ConneXt

Education

University of Washington

PhD Interdisciplinary (Psychology, Biology, and Business)

Columbia University

MBA Business

University of California, Haas School of Business

MBA

University of Washington

BA, magna cum laude Environmental Studies

Honors & Awards

Berkeley Haas Cheit Award for Excellence in Teaching

2016, 2017, 2018

Businessperson of the Year, Seattle Chamber of Commerce

1989

North American Participant, NATO Advanced Study Institute on Energy Efficiency and Utility Industry, Portugal

1987

Environmental Excellence Award, Rotary Club of Seattle

1992

Academic Awards

- PhD nominated for top dissertation across all departments and schools (2009) - Columbia University Distinguished Service Award (2004) - University of California, Berkeley Haas School of Business ? Dean?s Council of Student Presidents, Haas Community Fellow & Graduation Speaker

Beta Gamma Sigma

Academic Business Honor Society

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