James Tooley is professor of education policy at Newcastle University. He is the author of *The Beautiful Tree* (Penguin), briefly a best-seller in India and winner of the “2010 Sir Antony Fisher Memorial Prize,” based on his groundbreaking research on low-cost private education in India, China and Africa. This research was awarded gold prize in the first International Finance Corporation/Financial Times Private Sector Development Competition, and was profiled in an American PBS documentary alongside the work of Nobel Laureate Mohammed Yunus.

Building on his research, Tooley has dedicated himself to creating working models of innovative practice in low-cost private education to help showcase its potential to extend access to, and improve educational opportunities for the poor. He is cofounder and chairman of Omega Schools, a chain of low-cost private schools in Ghana, which in four years grew to 40 schools with 20,000 students. He is also patron of the Association of Formidable Educational Development, an association of 3,000 low-cost private schools in Nigeria, chief mentor of the National Independent Schools Alliance (India) and founder of other private school associations in Sierra Leone, Liberia and South Sudan. Previously he has taught and researched at the universities of Oxford and Manchester, his first job was a mathematics teacher in Zimbabwe.