

Black Awarding Gaps and Decolonisation Forum 2023

**An open forum about the data, student experiences and
ways forward**

Thursday 9 March 2023, 10.00 – 16.30

Student Services Centre, New Museums Site

Agenda

Time	Room	Activity
9.30 – 10.00	Atrium	Registration Coffee/tea offered on arrival
10.00 – 10.20		Welcome Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education, Professor Bhaskar Vira, and APP PAR Project students
10.20 – 11.20	Exam Halls C & D	Keynote Dr Paul Ian Campbell, University of Leicester <i>"My family's always like, make sure you pray that the person marking your work isn't racist"</i> : Identifying and measurably reducing racial inequities in higher education assessment
11.20 – 12.00		Panel 1: What does the data tell us? Dr Alexa Horner, Dr Katya Samoylova and Kayinsola Amoo-Peters Chair: Professor Toni Williams
12.00 – 12.45	Atrium	Lunch Exhibition/activities designed by APP PAR Project students
12.45 – 1.45	Lecture Theatre A	Panel 2: What is Cambridge doing? Joe Cotton, Jenni Skinner, Isabelle Higgins, and Dr Sanchita Pal Chair: Lord Simon Woolley
1.45 – 2.45	Exam Halls A & B, C, D (3 separate rooms)	Workshops Facilitated by APP PAR Project students 1. Transition in and through university 2. Decolonising teaching, learning, and assessment 3. Intersections of race and mental health
2.45 – 3.00	Atrium	Afternoon tea/coffee Exhibition/activities designed by APP PAR Project students
3.00 – 4.00		Roundtable Chair: Professor Jason Arday Respondents: Rumbidzai Dube and Mary Simuyandi
4.00 – 4.20	Exam Halls C & D	Final words and close Spoken word performance by Christabel APP PAR Project students

About

This Forum was originally proposed by students involved in the *Access & Participation Plan: Participatory Action Research Project* (the [APP PAR Project](#)). Over the last four years, multiple groups of student researchers have collaborated with the Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning to develop deeper insight into Black students' lived experiences of education at Cambridge.

A recurring theme across the APP PAR Project has been the need for shared understandings and conversation about the importance of more racially inclusive education amongst staff and students. Equally important has been the desire for a greater awareness across the collegiate University of Cambridge's commitment to eliminate degree awarding gaps, where Black British students are statistically less likely to be awarded a First or Good Honours degree compared to their white peers. The University has made a commitment to eliminate these inequitable degree outcomes and the last four years have seen larger numbers of Black student admissions as well as considerable investment in research on the reasons for these troubling statistics. This is the first open Forum for this research to be shared.

The coordinating team of current student researchers anticipate that this Forum is a chance to reflect and critically engage on strategies and practices to address inequitable educational experiences at Cambridge, including the range of decolonisation initiatives already underway across the University. We welcome your views, ideas, and questions to help the University move forward in a mutually beneficial way.

The programme has been co-designed by a team of student and staff researchers involved in Cycle 4 of the APP PAR Project and is supported by Cambridge's new Black Advisory Hub. The day will involve a spoken-word performance, workshops co-facilitated by student teams, panels on topics related to Black awarding gaps data and decolonisation initiatives at Cambridge, live illustration by James the Scribe, and other exciting activities designed by our student team.

Please take a few minutes to share your thought about the event in this [short questionnaire](#).

The Forum co-coordinators all warmly welcome you to this Forum and hope that you enjoy the day.

APP PAR Project Cycle 4 students:

Adaiah Hudgins-Lopez, Antonia Antrobus-Higgins, Cheyenne Williams, Doris Darkwah, Hadeal Abdelatti, Iman Abdul-Karim, Jordan Byrne, Myesha Jemison, Randy Forson

Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning staff:

Dr Ruth Walker, Dr Snigdha Dutta, Zeena Elhassan, Dr Amy Smail

Awarding gaps

The degree 'awarding gap' is the difference in 'top' degrees – a First or a 2.1 classification – awarded to different groups of students.

At Cambridge, there is a persistent awarding gap between the proportion of white British students receiving these degree classifications compared to their Black student counterparts, and for non-disabled students compared to students with declared disabilities, specifically mental health conditions. Although Cambridge's students perform at a higher level overall, our own Access and Participation Plan (2019) identified the awarding gaps experienced by Black students to be a recurring pattern which cannot be explained by previous education, socio-economic background or other intersecting variables such as gender or postcode: a Black student's racialized identity is the most stable predictor of their attainment.

While previously the term 'attainment gap' has been widely used, this term encourages perception that the gap is due to individual students' performance. Instead, the term 'awarding gap' is increasingly preferred across the HE sector as this recognises the systemic institutional factors that impact students' academic performance.

For more on initiatives underway to address the Cambridge Awarding Gaps, please consult the [Mind the Gap Toolkit](#).

Keynote: Dr Paul Ian Campbell

***“My family’s always like, make sure you pray that the person marking your work isn’t racist”*: Identifying and measurably reducing Racial Inequities in HE Assessment**

Dr Paul Ian Campbell (University of Leicester)



Abstract

The relationships between race and ethnicity and assessment in British Higher Education Providers (HEPs) are subtle and complex. They manifest in different aspects of the assessment process, which intersect and translate into unequal award outcomes and uneven levels of satisfaction and enjoyment for students from minority ethnic backgrounds, when compared to their White peers.

HEPs have responded to this situation by largely focusing on making course content inclusive, via a growing number of attempts to decolonize the curriculum. By contrast, seldom has this body of inclusion work examined ‘assessment’ as part of the plethora of racially exclusionary systems in HE, which contribute to the marginalisation and

privilege of students from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Consequently, we know relatively little with regards to some rather routine questions, such as: What race-based inequities exist in assessment and what is the extent to which these barriers are intrinsic to specific assessment types or connected to wider pedagogical practice? Or to the ways in which wider social and cultural factors – and proxies for race - such as socio-economic background, cultural capital, location and so on, intersect, influence and may contribute to inequities in satisfaction and to the performance of different heritage students in particular forms of assessment? How might we begin to measure and capture the efficacy of attempts to make the experience of assessment more racially equitable? Drawing on his sector-leading work in this area, Dr Paul Campbell, the inaugural *Director of the Leicester Institute for Inclusivity in HE*, reports on some of the introductory responses to these questions.

About Paul

Dr Paul Ian Campbell is the Inaugural Director of the Leicester Institute for Inclusivity in Higher Education. He is also an award-winning academic and Associate Professor in the Sociology of Race & Inclusion at the University of Leicester. His first monograph won the British Sociological Association’s Philip Abrams Prize in 2017 and he has published widely in the areas of race and inclusion in Higher Education and in sport. He has also led a number of cross-university Race Equity and Education projects and supports a number of UK universities in addressing racial inequalities in their curricular and assessment processes. Paul is also Chair of the University of Leicester Race Equality Action Group, University Distinguished Teaching Fellow and National Teaching Fellow. Paul’s work is sector-leading in developing and evaluating interventions for making HE [curricula and assessment racially inclusive](#) and he has published a number of ground-breaking reports on how to empirically move from [race inclusion theory to practice](#).

Panel 1

What does the data tell us?

Chaired by: Professor Toni Williams (Senior Tutor, Girton College)

- Dr Katya Samoylova (Head of Business Information and Strategic Insights)
- Dr Alexa Horner (Senior Researcher, Cambridge Admissions Office)
- Kayinsola Amoo-Peters (Cycle 2 APP PAR Project student researcher)

The speakers in this panel will provide an overview of the institutional data available at Cambridge that gives an insight into the awarding gaps that impact Black students, where they are statistically less likely than their white peers to be awarded a First class undergraduate degree. The quantitative data gathered by the Cambridge Admissions Office and the Business Information Team reveal statistical patterns that will help us identify 'explained' and 'unexplained' gaps in degree outcomes. To balance this, the qualitative data gathered by the student researchers over the last three years of the APP Participatory Action Research Project help us develop our knowledge and understanding of the lived experiences of Black students at Cambridge, to better enhance their educational experiences and eliminate the awarding gaps.



Chaired by: Professor Toni Williams

Toni Williams joined Girton College on 1 October 2022, as Senior Tutor. She is one of about [40 Black female full professors](#) (out of about 23,000 university staff at that rank) in the UK. Her academic discipline is Law, which she studied at Oxford University before undertaking a PhD in law and economics at Newcastle University. As career academic engaged in critical socio-legal research, scholarship and teaching in Canada and the UK since the mid 1980s, Toni had the privilege of supervising, lecturing, and supporting thousands of students and of collaborating with researchers in many different countries. Through her research and teaching she has sought to investigate how it is that law and its institutions create, reinforce, and amplify unjust and exclusionary social practices often at the same time as they purport to fix injustice. During the past seven years she has worked in senior leadership roles at the University of Kent, collaborating with staff and students to offer inclusive, transformational education and support pathbreaking research, particularly in law, criminology, sociology, and social policy. Unsurprisingly, it was Girton's distinctive combination of pioneering leadership of women's education, its fostering of innovative, significant and rigorous research and its commitments to challenging social relations and practices of exclusion and inequality that attracted her to the senior tutorship role.



Dr Alexa Horner

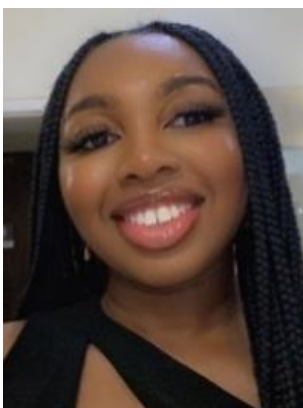
Alexa Horner has worked in the Cambridge Admissions Office as the Senior Researcher (Admissions and Widening Participation) since 2015. During this time her research topics have included undergraduate admissions 'gaps'/under-representation at Cambridge, the impact of financial support at Cambridge, and whether differentially lower admissions offers might be justified at Cambridge for disadvantaged or under-represented groups. Alexa recently joined the Black Advisory Hub's Data Analysis Action Group to advise on admissions-related data and analysis.



Dr Katya Samoylova

Head of Business Information and Strategic Insights (BISI), Academic and Financial Planning and Analysis (AFPA), Finance Division

Katya has worked for the University since 2011 in data reporting and analysis roles. Currently she is leading the team responsible for preparation and submission of student data returns to statutory bodies, provision of internal business information on student numbers and examination results, as well as management of student number planning and fee setting processes. Katya enjoys solving challenging analytical problems and learning new software, and hopes to learn to code properly one day. Prior to joining the University, she was a Reader in Phonetics at Newcastle University following a PhD in Linguistics and Phonetics at Oxford.



Kayinsola Amoo-Peters

Kayinsola is an undergraduate student studying Human, Social and Political Sciences at Murray Edwards College. She contributed to Cycle 2 (2020-2021) of the APP PAR Project, working with a research team to investigate how different courses provided students with opportunities to discuss issues related to race across their curricula. Her project's approach to representation in the curriculum suggests moving beyond tokenism and towards a top-down restructuring of courses to enact long-lasting change.

Panel 2

What is Cambridge doing?

Chaired by: Lord Simon Woolley (Principal, Homerton College)

- Joe Cotton (Communications Officer, Wolfson College)
- Jennifer Skinner (Library Manager, African Studies Library)
- Isabelle Higgins (PhD candidate, Sociology)
- Dr Sanchita Pal (Clinical Communications Skills Lead, Medical School)



Chaired by: Lord Simon Woolley

Lord Simon Woolley, Principal of Homerton College, was the Founding Director of Operation Black Vote, the internationally renowned campaigning NGO which he launched in 1996. Formerly an Equality and Human Rights Commissioner, in 2018 Lord Woolley was appointed by Prime Minister Theresa May to create and lead the UK Government's pioneering Race Disparity Unit. The Unit collects, analyses and publishes data on how crime, education and health are affected by ethnicity. Fostered and then adopted as a small child, Lord Woolley grew up on a council estate in Leicester, and left school without A-levels. He later returned to formal study via an access course and gained a BA in Spanish and English Literature at Middlesex University and an MA in Hispanic

Studies at Queen Mary University of London. He is passionate about educational access and the importance of recognising and supporting marginalised potential.



Isabelle Higgins

Isabelle Higgins is a PhD candidate in the Sociology Department at the University of Cambridge. She holds a double first-class honours degree in Sociology and Social Anthropology, and a master's degree in the Sociology of Marginality and Exclusion from the University of Cambridge. Her current research, which she began as an undergraduate, focuses on examining the digital mediation of transracial and transnational inequality in the USA, with a specific focus on exploring some of the ways in which intersectional

inequalities are reproduced in digital environments. In 2022, Isabelle held a research fellowship at the Kluge Centre, Library of Congress, a methods fellowship with Cambridge Digital Humanities and a participated as a fellow at the New School's Institute for Critical Social Inquiry.

Abstract

In this presentation I will reflect upon my experience designing and delivering two sets of teaching within the University of Cambridge: a course on 'Decoloniality in Social Science Research Methods' for graduate students, and 'study skills' sessions for undergraduate students in the social sciences. In both, I focus on identifying and examining the study/research cycle using decolonial theory and

encouraging students to think collaboratively about their own academic experiences through a decolonial lens. In these discussions, students have drawn attention to a range of inequities that shape their undergraduate and graduate learning within the University. It is some of these inequalities, as well as the 'teaching methodology' I have used to learn about these realities from students, that I will share. I will also present a reflexive and recursive consideration of how my own positionality (as a mixed-race, white-passing, White British and Afro-Caribbean woman from a low-income background) has shaped both my approach to teaching and my own movement through the University as an undergraduate and a graduate student.



Jennifer Skinner

Jenni Skinner is the Library Manager of the African Studies Library, and spent the formative years of her career in librarianship at the Social & Political Sciences Library (2002-2015), University of Cambridge. The African Studies Library supports the research and teaching needs of the University's Undergraduate and Postgraduate study of Africa, whilst being recognised as a modern Special Collection as part of the newly formed World Collections Department at Cambridge University Library. Jenni works closely with the Centre of African Studies to promote research from and on Africa, acting as a community hub for students, researchers, and the public who have connections to, and an interest in Africa and her diaspora. Jenni is a member of the [Decolonising through Critical Librarianship group](#), a representative of the [Race Equality Network](#) on the [Cambridge University Libraries Decolonisation Working Group](#), an representative on the [Black Student Advisory Hub Steering Group](#), and a [SCOLMA Committee](#) member.

Jenni will be presenting:

- Foundation and work of the Decolonising through Critical Librarianship group, and the Cambridge University Libraries Decolonisation Working Group.
- Project work linked to colonial photographic collections held at the University Library.



Joe Cotton

Joe Cotton is the Communications Officer at Wolfson College, having formerly managed communications for the Race Equality Network and the Department of Sociology, both at the University of Cambridge. He has been highly involved in supporting racial justice campaigns in Cambridge, including Decolonise Sociology, Black Cantabs, the End Everyday Racism campaign, the Black British Voices Project, and most recently the Black Advisory Hub as a member of their steering group. His MPhil dissertation investigated the decolonisation movement at Cambridge during its peak in 2017-18, and he is currently working on the creation of the new Camdecolhub online archive.

Abstract

How was decolonisation being defined in Cambridge during a high-point in momentum from 2017-2018? This research project draws on interviews from across ten different departments, as well as

participation in working groups and activist organisations, to paint a broad picture of a moment in Cambridge where the decolonial agenda was being formed, advanced and contested. From public rallies and occupations to reading groups and curriculum debates, the meaning of 'decolonising Cambridge' was constructed in many different ways, and with highly varying scopes.



Dr Sanchita Pal

I am a passionate about medical education and teaching. My current role at the medical school is as clinical communication skill (CCS) lead. I have been leading in developing the CCS session on racism, micro-aggressions, and bystander training (titled practical approaches towards equality, diversity, and inclusion); as well as having a key role in the faculty development work in this area. I am actively involved in teaching in many other departments, such as a teaching associate on the public health education group, a facilitator for clinical ethics and law, professionalism, and some undergraduate supervisions. I am also involved in more holistic support of students, as a pastoral advisor at the clinical school and a tutor at Lucy Cavendish College.

Abstract

Background: We will demonstrate the key drivers towards the clinical school initiative to tackle racism in medicine; mainly an open letter signed by over 2000 students at the height of the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020. An accompanying confidential survey exposed incidents of racism encountered by medical students.

Aims/Vision: To develop effective and sustainable strategy to begin addressing racism experienced by students and faculty. We established several Racism in Medical Education working groups comprising faculty and students, to address curriculum development, support systems, Implicit Bias (IB) and Active Bystander training (ABT) alongside faculty development.

What we did? We developed new methods of session creation, both collaboration across themes and co-creation with students. We have developed sessions, integrated them within the core curriculum and received positive feedback. We recognise the need for a system-wide multi-faceted approach to address racism and start to address inequality. We would like to share this cohesive anti-racism teaching, presenting our methods and results from the Communication skill theme.

Future directions? We discuss the challenges we currently face to continue momentum on these projects; by continuing to work closely with students, addressing inequalities in other areas and developing faculty initiatives.

Student-led workshops

At the heart of the Black Awarding Gaps & Decolonisation Forum will be three student-facilitated workshops. The student teams from Cycle 4 of the APP PAR Project have designed these workshops by drawing on previous APP PAR Project research projects, mainly from Cycle 2 (2020-2021) and Cycle 3 (2021-2022). The current students have selected these topics as the most immediately relevant for creating more racially inclusive educational experiences at Cambridge and for eliminating the Black awarding gaps. They welcome the opportunity for discussion with Forum participants interested in taking forward the student-led recommendations for action, recognising that no single solution will be the answer, but that forward momentum on a number of fronts is needed.

Workshop 1: Transition in and through university

- Doris Darkwah
- Jordan Byrne
- Zeena Elhassan

This workshop will review and extend findings from Cycle 2 of the APP PAR Project ([First-Year Transition](#)), which looked at different induction experiences of Black students in Arts/Humanities and STEMM courses. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on their own perceptions of a 'normative' educational experience at Cambridge, as well as the disciplinary assumptions that form the hidden curriculum in different fields of study. Strategies to strengthen Black students' sense of belonging while countering feelings - or assumptions - about 'imposter syndrome' will be explored through activities involving small group discussion and mind-mapping.

Suggested readings:

- APP PAR Project Cycle 2 (2021). [First-year transition](#).
- Osbourne, L., Barnett, J., & Blackwood, L. (2021). ["You never feel so Black as when you're contrasted against a White background": Black students' experiences at a predominantly White institution in the UK](#). *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 31(4), 383-395.
- Parker, H., Hughes, A., Marsh, C., Ahmed, S., Cannon, J., Taylor-Steeds, E... & Page, N. (2017). [Understanding the different challenges facing students in transitioning to university particularly with a focus on ethnicity](#). *New Directions in the Teaching of Physical Sciences*. 12.

Workshop 2: Decolonisation of teaching, learning, and assessment

- Antonia Antrobus-Higgins
- Cheyenne Naomi Williams
- Hadeal Abdelatti
- Myesha Jemison

This workshop extends the findings from student researchers in Cycle 2 of the APP PAR Project ([Representation in the Curriculum](#)) and Cycle 3 ([Decolonisation of Teaching and Learning](#)). It provides a space for participants to reflect on the relevance and potential impact of 'decolonisation' in their course or discipline and invites discussion about the variety of approaches that might contribute to a more racially inclusive educational environment, including student engagement and designing representation across the curriculum. The activities include a 'Jubilee: Middle Ground' exercise, considering the recommendations for action from previous student researcher projects, and small group brainstorming and discussion to outline actionable next steps for decolonisation and curricular representation at Cambridge.

Suggested readings:

- APP PAR Project Cycle 2 (2021) [Representation in the curriculum](#)
- APP PAR Project Cycle 3 (2022) [Decolonisation of teaching and learning](#)
- Arday, J., Zoe Belluigi, D., & Thomas, D. (2021). [Attempting to break the chain: reimaging inclusive pedagogy and decolonising the curriculum within the academy](#). *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 53(3), 298-313.
- Tran, D. (2021). [The TRAAC Model](#). *Decolonizing University Teaching and Learning: An Entry Model for Grappling with Complexities* (Chapter 3). Bloomsbury Publishing.

Workshop 3: Intersection of race and mental health

- Aadaiah Hudgins-Lopez
- Iman Abdul-Karim
- Randy Forson

The workshop will prompt a discussion on whether structural inequities within the learning environment at Cambridge can contribute to poor mental wellbeing that are exclusive to Black students. It extends the findings emerging from previous APP PAR Projects (e.g., Cycle 3 project on [Intersection of Race and Mental Health](#)). The workshop participants are invited to reflect on themes of hypervisibility, representation, belonging, expectations to represent among others through small group activities and consider the recommendations for action from previous student researcher projects.

Suggested readings:

- APP PAR Project Cycle 3 (2022). [Intersection of race and mental health](#)
- Arday, J. (2022). [No one can see me cry: Understanding mental health issues for Black and minority ethnic staff in higher education](#). *Higher Education*, 83(1), 79 – 102.
- Houghton, A.M., Anderson, J. (2017). [Embedding mental wellbeing in the curriculum: Maximising success in higher education](#). *Advance HE*.
- Joseph-Salisbury, R. (2019). [Institutionalised whiteness, racial microaggressions, and black bodies out of place in Higher Education](#). *Whiteness and Education*, 4(1), 1-17.
- Stoll, N., Yalipende, Y., Byrom, N.C., Hatch, S.L., & Lempp, H. (2022). [Mental health and wellbeing of Black students at UK universities: A review and thematic synthesis](#). *BMJ Open*, 12(2), e050720.

Roundtable discussion

Let's talk about Black awarding gaps: what are the ways forward?

Chair: Professor Jason Arday (Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge)

Respondents:

Rumbidzai Dube (Gates Cambridge Scholar, Politics and international Studies)

Mary Simuyandi (Head of Wellbeing, St. Catherine's College)

This last session of the Forum provides an opportunity for students and staff to reflect on the topics raised across the day and to contribute their ideas for practical next steps or 'ways forward' to address the awarding gaps that impact Black students at Cambridge. Recognising that there is no single 'silver bullet' to eliminating these awarding gaps, the facilitators will encourage discussion about ways to encourage racially inclusive teaching practices, to enhance the learning environments and to support individual students in their learning journeys into and through Cambridge.



Professor Jason Arday

Jason Arday is a highly respected scholar of race, inequality and education, with a particular interest in improving the representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people in higher education. He has recently taken up the post of [Professor of Sociology of Education](#) in the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. He has established himself as a leading scholar in his field, publishing extensively on subjects including the experiences of Black students in universities, the under-representation of ethnic minority people in academic careers, and the long-term impacts of racial discrimination in education.

He also believes that Cambridge's international standing means it could, and should, "lead the way as an inclusive space". "The University has some amazing people and resources; the challenge is how we use that capital to improve things for everyone and not just a few," Arday added. "Doing this right is an art: it requires real diplomacy, and everyone has to feel inspired to work together. If we want to make education more inclusive, the best tools we have are solidarity, understanding and love."



Mary Simuyandi

Mary has worked at the intersection of education and wellbeing for the past 15 years and is currently Head of Wellbeing at St Catharine's College, leading the Health & Wellbeing Team. She is currently engaging a range of stakeholders to explore what a student-centred positive learning environment looks like. In recognition of the interface between race and mental health, Mary has coordinated events such as a recent panel on health inequalities experienced by Black and Asian communities, and sits on the Black, Asian & Minoritised Ethnicity Student Advisory Group for to the strategic review of mental health within the University, and the Enhancing Collegiate Education Advisory Group exploring the attainment gap for Black students and students with declared mental health conditions.



Rumbidzai Dube

Rumbidzai Dube is a Gates Cambridge Scholar and PhD Candidate in Politics and International Studies. Her PhD research investigates the politics of territoriality within the contemporary regional politics of the African Union. Before coming to Cambridge for the MPhil in African Studies(2019), Rumbidzai had studied law at the University of Zimbabwe(LLB) and the University of Pretoria(LLM). She also had over a decade of professional experience working in development in Zimbabwe (her home country), and several other African countries with various Nongovernmental organisations, International Nongovernmental Organisations, and Intergovernmental Organisations, including the African Union and the United Nations. Rumbidzai is the former President of the Black Cantabs Research Society.

Related links

- Arday, J., Branchu, C., & Boliver, V. (2022). [What do we know about Black and minority ethnic \(BAME\) participation in UK higher education?](#) *Social Policy and Society*, 21(1), 12-25.
- Ugiagbe-Green, I., & Ernsting, F. (2022). [The wicked problem of B \(A\) ME degree award gaps and systemic racism in our universities.](#) *Frontiers in Sociology*, 7, 971923.
- Universities UK (2022). [Closing the ethnicity degree awarding gap: Three years on #ClosingTheGap.](#)

Poet



Christabel Okongwu

Hi there, my name is Christabel. I am a first-year undergraduate student reading Psychological and Behavioural Sciences at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. I became interested in spoken word as means of expressing topics that I am passionate about through a creative outlet, as I found this to be the most gratifying means of conveying my thoughts and feelings. Listening to other spoken word artists always touches and inspires me, and I hope that my own words can resonate with other people and reach a wider audience. To see any of my spoken word performances, feel free to follow my Instagram and TikTok: @Christabel_o

Live illustrator



James Baylay

Scribing for 22 years, James Baylay is a [live illustrator](#), having developed his skills from working in a broad range of setting and for a diverse range of clients. With a degree in Fine Arts, James' vision is to use scribing as a facilitation technique, ensuring that people feel listened to, and capturing content so it can be used to aid decision-making. He has recently scribed for NHS, BT, Channel 4, and on a number of themes including community engagement and well-being.

The team behind the Forum

APP PAR Project Cycle 4 (2022-2023) student researchers



Adaiah Hudgins-Lopez

Adaiah is a writer, dancer, and creative pursuing a PhD in Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge as a member of Trinity College. She is a 2021 and 2022 Gates Cambridge Scholarship recipient and a Graduate Member of the Centre for the Study of Global Human Movement.

Antonia Antrobus-Higgins

Antonia is a second year Sociology and Social Anthropology student at Murray Edwards college. She has been deeply passionate about how colonialism impacts our since she participated in Consented, after-school sessions on race, class and colonialism led by PhD student in which she listened to talks by academics such as Gurminder Bhambra and Adam Elliot-Cooper. In sixth form this inspired her to co-found the campaign 'Fill in The Blanks' which sought to mandate the critical teaching of colonial history on the national curriculum. She is seeking funding to go to Barbados to research how they teach the history of colonialism in their classrooms. Outside of university work, she sings karaoke at any opportunity so be wary when she is on the microphone.



Cheyenne Naomi Williams

Hi, I'm Cheyenne and I am in my second year studying French and Spanish at Girton. As an ethnic minority student from a lower socioeconomic background, Cambridge never seemed to be a tenable option for me. Since coming to Cambridge, I have committed myself to understanding the ways in which this institution can be made more accessible to those who feel the same way I did in order to make the student experience fairer and more enjoyable. My goal is to make a lasting impact on society and I feel this is a great step in the right direction.

Doris Darkwah

Hello! My name is Doris, and I am a 3rd year medical student studying at Selwyn College. I live in London, but I am originally from Ghana. My favourite ways to spend my time is with friends, reading books (especially anything fantasy!) listening to music and obsessing over fashion trends. Alongside my studies, I love dedicating time to causes that empower people just like me and this project has provided an amazing opportunity for me to do just that.



Hadeal Abdelatti

Hadeal Abdelatti is a first-year undergraduate student reading law. Alongside her studies she is very passionate about equality and social change. She engages with activism to reform the curriculum and create better representation in education. In addition to campaigning for education reform she has a strong interest in fighting against racial injustice, using her online platform to spark discussions which hope to challenge injustice in all its forms and to spotlight the work of young people who are making the world a better place.

Iman Abdul-Karim

Hello! I am Iman, a second-year student at Jesus College Cambridge, studying Psychological and Behavioural Sciences.

I live in London, however, my family are originally from Ghana. Aside from my studies I enjoy taking part in Access and Outreach work, both at Jesus College and with the 93% club. When I am not working I also really love to read, travel and play the clarinet.





Jordan Byrne

Jordan is a Cambridge Trust funded MPhil student based at St. Johns engaging with the Education, Knowledge, Power, Politics strand at the Faculty of Education. Her research explores belonging, race-making, and the 'violence of institutions' with a particular focus on the experience of the British-domiciled Afro-Caribbean community.

Looking through a postcolonial lens, she examines the complex socio-historical relationship between the Afro-Caribbean community and Britain, conceptualising universities as spaces in which constructed Black imaginaries can be confronted and dismantled, making room for

the reimagination of Black selfhood. Away from her research, she is the co-founder and president of the Cambridge Black Postgraduate Society and spends her time working on various HE projects.

Myesha Jemison

Myesha is a researcher, writer and creative based in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge. She is also a graduate student fellow at the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence. Myesha's dissertation investigates the history of information transfer via data mining, misinformation/disinformation, and surveillance in Kenya and Nigeria. Broadly, her interests centre on intersections between technology and inequity, cultural understanding and learning, and Black and Indigenous imaginations of future. Myesha spends her time highlighting Black and Indigenous narrative histories via Scholourship.com, travelling internationally (over 40 countries so far), and coding.



Randy Forson

My name is Randy Forson and I am a 3rd year MSt Architecture student at Queens College. I am originally of Ghanaian heritage but lived in Italy before moving to the UK ten years ago. Within my work I am particularly interested in the intersectionality of social justice within the built environment, socio-economic and environmental sustainability and digital innovation. At the Architecture department, I am part of the UNFOLD board. UNFOLD is a student led organisation which through talks, workshops, symposiums, social events and mini projects explores how architecture could be expanded as an area of knowledge and a

form of practice beyond Western perspectives.

Black Advisory Hub

Zeena Elhassan

Zeena is a Project Associate for the Black Advisory Hub and completed her MPhil in the Sociology of Marginality and Exclusion at the University of Cambridge in 2019-20. She is extremely passionate about social justice and community-led action, with a particular focus on race, migration, gender and how these areas intersect in various ways.

Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning

Dr Ruth Walker

Ruth is a Senior Teaching Associate with the Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning. She leads the APP Participatory Action Research Project (the APP PAR Project), which is now in its fourth annual cycle. Her work primarily focuses on encouraging inclusive teaching, learning and assessment practices, and in supporting the development of educational research projects, particularly those related to awarding gaps, with students and staff.

Dr Snigdha Dutta

Snigdha is a Project Associate at the Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning. In her role, she co-develops research informed initiatives to enhance inclusive education for undergraduate students, with a particular attention to their mental health and ethnicity. She has a background in mental health research, resilience in university students, and prior experience of working as a special needs educator in Delhi, India.

Dr Amy Smail

Amy is a Project Associate at the Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning, with a focus on evaluation and communications. Her academic background is in race, social justice, and education. Amy also previously worked at Universities UK, initiating and leading on the cross-institutional programme, 'Tackling racial harassment,' as well as consulting AdvanceHE on the initial phases of the Race Equality Charter.

The APP PAR Project

The [Access and Participation Plan Participatory Action Research Project](#) is an umbrella project that involves multiple student-staff partnered research projects. These use qualitative research methods to gather students and staff perspectives in order to develop knowledge and an evidence-base to catalyse practical steps forward to eliminate the awarding gaps reported in Cambridge's Access and Participation Plan. Students researchers develop qualitative research projects with staff partners at CCTL and contribute to the University's efforts to address awarding gaps impacting Black British students and students with declared mental health conditions. If you have any questions about the project, or would like to get involved in Cycle 5, please get in touch with [Dr Ruth Walker](#) and [Dr Snigdha Dutta](#).

Black Advisory Hub

Situated within Cambridge's Centre for Teaching and Learning, the [Black Advisory Hub](#) emerged in 2020 as an outcome to a student-led research project and a commitment by the University to eliminate inequitable degree outcomes for Black students in three phases. The BAH team facilitates student and staff engagement across the University on various anti-racist initiatives to form a centrally coordinated platform to enhance the overall experience of Black students at the University. The two co-chairs of the BAH Steering Group are Sonita Alleyne, Master of Jesus College, and Tyra Amofah-Akardom, PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education, with Zeena Elhassan as Project Associate (contact@blackadvisory.hub.cam.ac.uk).

The George Bridgetower Essay Competition

The second annual Bridgewater Essay Prize competition has been launched by the Alexander Crummel Fund Action Group for 2023. The purpose of this essay competition is to stimulate intellectual discourse on themes related to the work of the ACF Action Group and provide an opportunity for students to make original contributions to this important field of study. The value of the prize is £1000.

The two essay topic options are:

a) As suggested by the Legacies of Enslavement Report, "intellectual and scientific justification for racism, including those developed at Cambridge, have long played a significant role in underpinning and supporting everyday racist assumptions of racial inequality and particularly of Black inferiority." *To what extent does Cambridge, as an academic institution, challenge the myth of Black inferiority?*

b) The Legacies of Enslavement Report states "intellectual and scientific justification for racism, including those developed at Cambridge, have long played a significant role in underpinning and supporting everyday racist assumptions of racial inequality and particularly of Black inferiority." *To what extent is an academic institution like Cambridge implicated in the erasure and undervaluing of Black existence and knowledge-making in spaces like Cambridge?*

Submissions are accepted up to noon on **Monday 3rd April 2023** via email to gbesubmissions@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Notes

Cambridge Centre for Teaching & Learning

Student Services Centre

Email: cctleng@admin.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.cctl.cam.ac.uk

Black Advisory Hub

Email: contact@blackadvisory.hub.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.blackadvisory.hub.cam.ac.uk