



City Research Online

City St George's, University of London

Citation: Finn, M. & Gupta, D. (2020). Race, Ethnicity and Equality in UK History: RHS Roadmap for Change II. London, UK: Royal Historical Society.

This is the published version of the paper.

This version of the publication may differ from the final published version. To cite this item please consult the publisher's version.

Permanent repository link: <https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/28697/>

Copyright and Reuse: Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the author(s) and/or copyright holders. Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, unless otherwise indicated, provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way. For full details of reuse please refer to [City Research Online policy](#).



Race, Ethnicity and Equality in UK History

RHS Roadmap for Change
Update II

Royal Historical Society

November 2020

Margot Finn and Diya Gupta



© The Royal Historical Society 2020. All rights reserved.
University College London,
Gower Street,
London WC1E 6BT.



This work is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. RHS Roadmap for Change II	3
3. Events responding to the 2018 <i>Race Report</i>	12
4. Engagements beyond the RHS: In-person and Online	18
5. History Departmental Responses	28
6. Looking Ahead	41
7. Selected Further Reading	42

PART 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the second *Roadmap for Change* update published by the Royal Historical Society (RHS). In October 2018, the RHS published *Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History: A Report and Resource for Change*, committing the Society to an annual audit of our own and our colleagues' efforts to promote equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in History with specific respect to race and ethnicity.¹

In December 2019, we published our first *Roadmap for Change* update, a 40-page document that surveyed RHS and other learned society efforts to promote racial and ethnic equality and provided information on responses to the Society's 2018 report by UK History subject groups, departments, faculties and schools.²

In *Roadmap II*, we begin by surveying the steps taken by the RHS since *Roadmap I* to improve the Society's own practices and performance with respect to race, ethnicity and equality, and note areas for future action. The third and fourth sections outline the ways in which RHS officers, the Society's Race, Ethnicity & Equality Working Group (REEWG) and the RHS Past & Present Postdoctoral Fellow have engaged with the historical community and wider Humanities and Social Science communities (including cultural organisations and the heritage sector).

2020 has been, of course, marked by a seismic increase in protest against racism in and beyond the UK, as the killing of George Floyd in May added new impetus to the Black Lives Matter movement, and to other ongoing efforts to enhance equal opportunities. The Society's efforts represent one small set of contributions in this much wider landscape. In *Roadmap II*'s fifth section, readers will find examples of cognate initiatives undertaken in the past year in UK History departments, faculties, schools and subject units. A bibliography of blogs and reports published in the past year concludes this document, offering a quick point of reference and augmenting the bibliographies in our 2018 and 2019 reports.

¹ https://files.royalhistsoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/08171054/RHS_race_report_2018.pdf (pp. 95-97). Also see: <https://royalhistsoc.org/policy/race/>.

² <https://files.royalhistsoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/17204804/RHS-REEWG-Roadmap-Update-Dec-2019-FINAL.pdf>.

PART 2. RHS ROADMAP FOR CHANGE II

In its *Race, Ethnicity and Equality in UK History* report (2018), the RHS identified 11 key goals by which to evaluate its own practices as an integral part of encouraging the discipline of History to tackle race and ethnic inequality in the UK. Here, following on from the 2019 *Roadmap for Change I* which measured our progress against these goals for 2018-2019, we report on our work for 2019-2020.

- 1. Maintain the Race, Ethnicity & Equality Working Group (REEWG) beyond the launch of this report, adding to its membership as needed, and continuing to fund its operation. Responsible: the President;**

REEWG has continued to meet since the publication of *Roadmap I*, although the frequency of its meetings has been affected both by UCU industrial action and by the COVID-19 pandemic. Meetings are now conducted via Zoom to reflect public health restrictions. REEWG is co-chaired by Drs Sadiya Qureshi and Jonathan Saha. Its membership is detailed here: <https://royalhistsoc.org/policy/race/>. The group's main work currently focuses on providing advice to historians based at UK universities and cultural organisations on their EDI efforts and the drafting of new resources to enhance the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic entrants into the History pipeline.

- 2. With the assistance of the Past & Present Fellow, develop a UK-based programme of workshops using this report, establishing what aspects of the report need revision or augmentation, and keeping records of new material to be added to a revised edition. Responsible: the President;**

With funding generously provided by the Past & Present Society, the RHS appointed Dr Shahmima Akhtar to a two-year postdoctoral Fellowship in 2019 to work with the President, Professor Margot Finn, and REEWG on EDI activities focused on race and ethnicity. Dr Akhtar took up a permanent Lectureship in History at Royal Holloway, University of London in September 2020. A second grant from the Past & Present Society allowed the RHS to appoint Dr Diya Gupta to this

postdoctoral fellowship for two years, with effect from 1 October 2020. Part 3 below details the workshops and other events that the two successive Past & Present Fellows and President of the Royal Historical Society, Professor Professor Margot Finn, have undertaken in this context.

- 3. Seek to engage all UK History heads of department/heads of subject, with the report, and survey them to determine how many and which History Departments have actively discussed this report in full or in part, and which, if any, changes have ensued. Report to Council and the Fellowship/Membership on these data, identifying examples of best practice. Responsible: the President;**

During spring 2020, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the RHS began to hold monthly Zoom meetings with UK History heads of subject, department, faculty or school. These Zoom meetings have opened up an additional channel of communication with History HoDs on EDI with respect to race and ethnicity. In October-November 2020, Professor Margot Finn again surveyed History HoDs for an update on their units' efforts. The responses to their survey can be found below in Part 5.

- 4. In the RHS General Purposes Committee, review the past five years of speakers and the current forward programme for BME³ diversity and inclusion, and use these data proactively to improve our record for 2021-22 (the next year to be scheduled). Responsible: the Hon. Secretary;**

The RHS Council's General Purposes (GP) Committee continued to monitor its role in programming the Society's lecture series. Close interrogation of the spreadsheet of past lectures informed future invitations to forthcoming speakers in order to

³ Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) is one of the terms generally used in the UK to describe people resident in the country who are of non-White descent. We have employed this acronym in *Roadmap II* for practical purposes. As with the 2018 *Race Report* and the 2019 *Roadmap I*, this usage is not a value judgment and not intended to imply a fixed or uniform set of identities, characteristics or experiences. We fully recognise that BME is an official category which greatly reduces complex ethnic, cultural and religious differences.

create a curated celebration of outstanding scholarship advancing inclusive and diverse histories.

RHS lecture programmes are set two years in advance. Lectures in 2020 reflected the Society's commitment to exploring diverse histories of place and periodisation, focusing on Lebanon (Dr Andrew Arsan), Uganda (Professor Derek R. Peterson), and early modern Jesuits in global context (Professor Simon Ditchfield). The 2021 programme continues this global focus and will foreground the work of eminent BME historians with a lecture by Dr Jonathan Saha (REEWG co-Chair) on colonial Myanmar, a Symposium at Bath Spa University on diversity in urban and rural contexts, and lectures across the year ranging from the 10th-century Mediterranean to industrial Britain.

5. In the RHS Membership Committee and in Council, discuss and devise specific strategies for attracting more BME Members and Fellows and proactively encouraging BME nominations to Council. Responsible: VP Equality & Inclusion, and Chair of the Membership Committee;

The criteria for RHS Fellowship and Membership was revised in 2019 in order to encourage applications from potential Fellows and Members with less traditional/more diverse ranges of experience.

In February 2020, the RHS began using a new online system for all applications to grant schemes, membership as well as ad hoc application processes such as job recruitment. For the first time, this system allows the RHS to collect anonymously and monitor EDI information first-hand. This is a clear step towards the goal of diversifying RHS membership outlined in the 2019 *Roadmap*.

The current Equality and Diversity form for Membership and Fellowship states:

From 2019 the RHS is collecting information about equality and diversity in the historical profession.

This data will help us to fulfil our legitimate interests as a Learned Society, to represent, support and advocate for history as a discipline and historians as a group. The data will help us to ensure the equitable allocation of Society resources and to better understand our changing membership.

This data will be disaggregated from any information that could identify an individual. The RHS will only use anonymised data. We will not use data collected via these forms for any other purpose.

While completing the form is entirely optional, we would be grateful if you would share this information with us.

We will continue to modify this message, encouraging more applicants to fill out the form. Now that the online application system has become well established, the next step will be for the RHS to analyse systematically the data that is collected in this way, and work proactively to address under-representation.

From the data that we have gathered between 7 January 2020 and 24 November 2020, 557 people have applied for RHS Fellowship or Membership, and 451 of them completed our optional EDI form for Membership and Fellowship. Of these 451 applicants, 73 (16%) identified as BME.

We are working towards increasing these numbers to ensure that our applicant pool is as diverse as possible. Addressing under-representation may also require the process of nominating Fellows to be updated to ensure that it does not create barriers to membership.

- 6. Review the content of our Historical Transactions blog, the Society's *Transactions*, *Camden Series* and monographs as well as our website with a critical eye for diversity and inclusion. Revise our (outdated) membership leaflet in ways that clearly signpost the Society's commitment to BME equality and inclusion. Responsible: the Literary Director(s) and Hon. Director(s) of Communication;**

The Literary Directors' efforts to address the gender balance of *Camden Series* editors is now bearing fruit. They hope to encourage submissions from editors from a diverse range of backgrounds and on diverse topics. They welcome informal conversations with prospective editors and are happy to give advice, including at the very earliest stages, for proposals. Professor Margot Finn has encouraged the Director of the Black Cultural Archives (BCA) to consider the series as a publication outlet for documents held by BCA.

As with the *Camden Series*, we are aware that while the gender balance of authors in our *New Historical Perspectives* book series has improved, further attention is needed with respect to race and ethnicity. Recruitment of a new co-editor of this series and new editorial board members will be undertaken in late 2020-early 2021 and EDI will be specified as a core value of the Society in this context.

The Society's journal, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, is scheduled to undergo major changes in 2021-22. Until now the journal has been composed from papers delivered at the RHS meetings, together with contributions from prize winners and some papers given at symposia sponsored by the society. As noted above, the General Purposes committee is mindful of EDI issues when considering who to invite to speak; the subsequent publication of these lectures in turn enhances the EDI profile of the journal. In the coming year, we will be moving to a new publication policy, accepting submitted articles as well as publishing papers delivered at RHS meetings. A robust peer-review process will be in place to determine which articles are published. The intention is to expand the content and representation of the journal including being mindful of EDI issues. Preliminary approaches to prospective authors have already been made in this area. *TRHS* does not currently have an editorial board, but one will be formed in the move to the new format, with attention paid to the diversity and breadth of historical research and the profession.

The RHS *LGBT+ Histories and Historians* report, published in September 2020, highlighted the importance of taking an intersectional approach to promoting equality within the

discipline.⁴ The report authors paid particular attention to the images and reading list that accompanied the report to ensure that diverse perspectives were presented. An equalities survey of history journal editors is also in development, and the RHS membership leaflet is being revised.

In early 2020, the RHS upgraded the functionality of its blog. One of the key aims of this was to enable the work of the REEWG group to be more centrally integrated into the RHS online presence. For example, the blog's Race Update series, authored by Dr Shahmima Akhtar and clearly sign-posted by a link from the homepage has provided a dedicated and quick-response forum to subjects related to race, ethnicity and equality in UK History Higher Education. One post about EDI concerns related to COVID-19 was the catalyst for a successful online event, jointly chaired by Drs Shahmima Akhtar and Hannah Elias (Institute of Historical Research) bringing together 30 invited specialists to consider the implications of teacher assessments on A-level results. The Race Update series will remain a permanently accessible online resource; from 2020-2021 this section of the blog will be developed further to incorporate new guidelines and resources being developed by REEWG members, as well as the work of Dr Diya Gupta. A particularly popular blog post reported on the 'From Margins to Centre' undergraduate conference, held at York in February and discussed in Part 3 of this Roadmap.

- 7. Work proactively with other UK-based History organisations to establish agreed practices and policies that promote BME equality, for example shared guidelines for conference and workshop organisers. Together with these organisations, advocate for new funding streams to conduct research on best practice for race and ethnicity equality in the Humanities and Social Sciences, for example at our annual meeting with the AHRC and ESRC. The EPSRC has recently funded 11 initiatives to address equality and diversity in Engineering and the Physical Sciences; the Wellcome Trust established a new team to advance these goals in 2017. Convincing our funding councils to join proactively in this activity should be a**

⁴ RHS *LGBT+ Histories and Historians Report* (September 2020), pp. 32-33: <https://royalhistsoc.org/policy/lgbt/>.

high priority in our discussions with them. Responsible: the President and the VPs for Research and Education;

As detailed in Part 3 below, the Society has worked proactively with several UK learned societies to draw attention to the need to improve EDI with respect to race and ethnicity in Humanities and Social Sciences subjects. In February 2019, the RHS and the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) organised a meeting at the RGS with representatives of Economics, English, Politics and Sociology to this end. In March 2020, RHS President Professor Margot Finn reported on the Society's efforts on this front to the British Academy's annual meeting with Humanities and Social Science learned societies and subject associations.

Independently of these efforts, Professor Professor Margot Finn served on the advisory group of the research team that produced the report *Race and Ethnicity in British Sociology* (2020) for the British Sociological Association (BSA).⁵ This is discussed more fully in Part 4 of this report.

8. Work more proactively with schools and teachers to address the obstacles at this level identified in the report to BME students' study of History. Responsible: VP Education;

The RHS works proactively with schools and schoolteachers through the Historical Association's schools' Higher Education Committee. This has been set up to improve knowledge transfer and support systems between teachers in both phases. The RHS is keen to support excellent practice in teaching and learning in schools. In 2019, it sponsored seven schools through the Historical Association's Quality Mark scheme, a collaboration that we look forward to continuing.

The new editorial team for the forthcoming Teaching Portal will include representatives from history teacher education. The Curriculum Conferences have, by design, included subjects calculated to enhance EDI in History. In April 2020, the Curriculum Conference included decolonising the curriculum. This was followed up in June, when the RHS hosted a Zoom discussion on predicted grades, university admissions and BME

⁵ <https://britsoc.co.uk/publications/race-and-ethnicity-in-british-sociology/>.

students, using History as an exemplar case. The meeting was organised by Drs Shahmima Akhtar and Hannah Elias (Institute of Historical Research).⁶

In March 2020, the RHS had one of its regular meetings with A-Level boards, where diversifying the curriculum was addressed. Two boards have also sought RHS advice and guidance about decolonising parts of their syllabus – in one case at A-Level, in the other at GCSE.

The Historical Association has been organising discussions of this topic since the summer of 2020 in which the RHS has been an active participant, together with the Runnymede Trust. The RHS has supported the Runnymede Trust's campaign to ensure that Black British history is included in the school curriculum, liaising with organisers to co-ordinate publicity through RHS communication channels, particularly Twitter.

9. Work proactively with History departments and with other bodies to improve the quality of the quantitative data on History as a discipline available to us. Responsible: Co-Hon. Directors of Communications;

This goal remains a work in process. The combination of industrial action in 2019-20, the COVID-19 pandemic and the severe dislocation to university admissions that followed the cancellation of A-Levels and Scottish Highers has precluded progress on this front. As per the actions outlines in the last *Roadmap*, this issue has again been raised at the RHS-convened meetings of Heads of Department as an issue needing both local and sectoral attention. The publication on 24 November 2020 of UUK's *Tackling Racial Harassment in Higher Education* suggests that the coming year may see greater institutional support for this important goal.⁷

⁶ The meeting report can be found here: <https://blog.royalhistsoc.org/2020/06/22/race-update-7-rhs-virtual-workshop-on-the-impact-of-the-covid-crisis-on-bme-student-admissions-in-higher-education-18-june-2020/>.

⁷ The report can be accessed here: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2020/tackling-racial-harassment-in-higher-education.pdf>.

**10. Seek further external funding, beyond the Past & Present Research Fellowship, for BME equality initiatives.
Responsible: the Hon. Treasurer and President;**

Professor Margot Finn has made preliminary inquiries to a number of companies that have, in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement, pledged funding for EDI initiatives that focus on race. These have not yet resulted in new funding for the RHS. Discussions are underway with other researchers active in this field about the possibility for the RHS to be a partner in funding bids being prepared for a UKRI scheme focused on race, ethnicity and equality that will open in 2021.

11. Report annually to Council and to our membership on progress made, or failure to make progress, on improving our record on BME inclusion and diversity: Responsible: Chairs of Educational Policy, General Purposes, Research Policy and Membership Committees.

The RHS Council considered a strategic review of the RHS response to COVID-19 in September 2020. This was designed to ensure that modifications made were beneficial to the Society's engagement with equality, diversity and inclusion. That report noted: 'In designing our online events and spaces, we need to be alert to the issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, to ensure that barriers to access are not replicated or amplified. COVID-19 has in some cases accelerated engagement with and adoption of digital solutions, though this remains dependent on existing inequalities, and understanding that is important to ensuring inclusive access.'⁸ The Council endorsed the report's recommendations, including a commitment 'that the RHS continues to be a supportive and progressive employer in its own right and embodies its own commitments to equality.'

A draft version of *Roadmap II* was circulated to Council prior to its finalisation, and the discussion of this document is on the agenda for the Council meeting of 27 November 2020. We are committed to providing another update on race, ethnicity and equality issues in late 2021.

⁸ RHS, *Strategic Reflections on the RHS Response to COVID-19* (September 2020), p. 30.

PART 3. EVENTS RESPONDING TO THE 2018 RACE REPORT

- **16 December 2019:** Professor Margot Finn attended the British Academy Humanities Strategy Group, where the *RHS Race Report* was discussed.
- **4 February 2020.** The RHS and Royal Geographical Society (RGS) jointly organised a meeting of learned societies (RHS, RGS-IBG, British Sociological Association or BSA, Political Studies Association or PSA, Economics, English, Runnymede Trust) on Equality and Diversity initiatives. Professor Margot Finn, President-elect Professor Emma Griffin and Dr Shahmima Akhtar contributed to this discussion, which also laid groundwork for the RGS and RHS presentation at the British Academy in March 2020.
- **13 February 2020.** The British Foreign Policy Institute held a discussion on 'Rethinking the British Empire and its Legacy Today'. The event was a conversation on the legacy of empire, how the UK can address its imperial past, and addressing views on empire in today's political climate. Dr Maya Goodfellow, Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow at the University of Sheffield; Professorial Research Fellow Simon Heffer, University of Buckingham; Emeritus Professor Sally Tomlinson, Goldsmiths, University of London and Emeritus Professor of French History Robert Tombs, University of Cambridge spoke at the event, as did Dr Shahmima Akhtar from the RHS: <https://bfpg.co.uk/2020/02/rethinking-the-british-empire-and-its-legacy-today-2/>.
- **17 February 2020.** Meeting at RHS (Professor Margot Finn; Richard Fisher, Vice-President & Chair of Publications Committee, RHS; and Dr Katherine Foxhall, Research and Communications Officer, RHS) with Dylan Law, the AHRC's lead on EDI. The discussion, which included both EDI and open access issues, led to Dylan Law's attendance at the British Academy's annual meeting with learned societies, at which the RHS gave a presentation on EDI issues.
- **24 February 2020.** Annual Human Rights Festival organised by Kingston Race and Equalities Council (KREC) and Kingston

University, where the Festival theme was Empire Legacies. The festival started with a KREC event – a conversation with community activists and academics entitled Legacy of Empire: Brutal Truths. Dr Shahmima Akhtar gave a presentation here: <https://www.kingston.ac.uk/events/item/3547/24-feb-2020-human-rights-festival-empire-legacies-human-rights-and-social-justice-perspectives/>.

- **28 February 2020.** The undergraduate conference ‘From Margins to Centre?’ at the University of York was part-funded by the RHS. It was a one-day conference to explore marginalised histories and the intersectionality between them, with a particular focus on LGBT+ history, women’s history, BME history and the history of disability. The event was aimed specifically at undergraduate students to involve them in the discipline. Dr Jonathan Saha (co-chair of REEWG) chaired a panel and Dr Shahmima Akhtar attended the conference. A report for the RHS’s Historical Transactions blog was written by organisers Olivia Wyatt and Clare Burgess: <https://blog.royalhistsoc.org/2020/07/09/from-margins-to-centre/>.
- **4 March 2020.** A departmental diversity and equality committee has been set up at Manchester Metropolitan University for staff thinking about reorganising and improving equality work within History, Politics and Philosophy. This was a two-hour meeting, which focused explicitly on questions of equality within the department along with the RHS *Race Report* and its implementation in different departments across the country. Dr Shahmima Akhtar gave a presentation on the RHS *Race Report* and engaged in discussion around good practice.
- **4 March 2020.** Professor Margot Finn met with Dr Hartwig Fischer, Director of the British Museum, at the latter’s request, to discuss race, ethnicity and equality with respect to History in museums.
- **6 March 2020.** At the Society’s annual meeting with UK examination boards, Professor Ken Fincham, Vice-President, Education at the RHS, Professor Margot Finn and representatives of the English, Welsh and Northern Irish examination boards discussed the extent to which the History curriculum and associated examinations in schools encourage or discourage

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils to study History. Two boards in particular are actively investigating this issue in dialogue with the RHS as well as the Historical Association.

- **9 March 2020.** Professor Margot Finn met, at their request, Paddy Rodgers and Stuart Bligh, respectively Director and Head of Research and Information at Royal Museums Greenwich (RMG), to discuss race equality in the museum context, and the ways in which RMG's research and outreach programmes might enhance their EDI profile.
- **10 March 2020.** Key EDI agendas in Humanities and Social Sciences were reported at the British Academy's Humanities annual meeting with learned societies and subject associations. Professor Margot Finn presented highlights from the RHS's past year of EDI activities, and circulated copies of the Society's 2018 *Race Report*.
- **23-30 April 2020.** The RHS hosted its first Virtual Curriculum Conference. Presentations on equality, diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum included Eoin MacGabhann's paper 'Planning for the Future A-level History Curriculum', Dr Katharine Burn's 'The Historical Association and history for BMEs' and Dr Peter D'Sena's presentation 'Decolonising the Curriculum'. More information can be found in this blog post by Professor Ken Fincham and Dr Peter D'Sena:
<http://blog.royalhistsoc.org/2020/07/07/curriculum-conference-report/>.
- **18 June 2020.** The RHS hosted a Zoom workshop led by Drs Shahmima Akhtar and Hannah Elias, Chair of the IHR Equality Working Group, on predicted grades, university admissions and BME students, using History as an exemplar case. Following the government decision to cancel summer examinations, this year's GCSE and A-Level grades were predicted by teachers and normalised by a nationally applied formula. This prompted debates around fears of existing structural disadvantages operating within schools and universities further discriminating against BME and under-privileged students. This event, with 30 invited attendees, considered how the problem of structural bias in our schools and universities may negatively impact BME students in particular and the means of mitigating these negative

impacts. More information is available on the RHS's Race Updates blog: <https://blog.royalhistsoc.org/race-update/rhs-virtual-workshop-18-june-2020/>.

- **22 June 2020.** Professor Margot Finn and Dr Shahmima Akhtar ran a workshop entitled 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in History' at the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities' annual summer school.
- **15 July 2020.** Professor Margot Finn and Dr Nicola Nugent of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) held a Zoom meeting to discuss appropriate ways of addressing published materials as well as archival and material collections in learned societies' possessions that use terminology now considered to be racist and/or offensive. A broader discussion of EDI amongst the personnel of UK academic disciplines was also initiated. Follow-up meetings have been conducted on these issues with the RSC in August and October 2020, with a joint blog addressing these issues planned for 2021.
- **23 August 2020.** Professor Margot Finn, drawing on material in the 2018 and 2019 RHS reports and REEWG's activities, contributed to a panel at the Globe Theatre, as part of their annual Shakespeare and Race programme. Entitled 'In Conversation: Reckoning with Our Past', the panel was led by Professor Farah Karim-Cooper, King's College London and also included novelist and academic Preti Taneja, and historian, actor and director Elliot Barnes-Worrell discussing British history, the colonial past, racial identity and how best to tell our collective stories.
- **21 October 2020.** A reparative histories of race roundtable was held via Zoom at the University of Bristol. Drs Shahmima Akhtar and Jessica Moody, Lecturer in Public History at the University of Bristol, were on the panel, chaired by Madhu Krishnan, Professor of African, World and Comparative Literatures at Bristol. Since the *RHS Race Report's* publication, further discussions have been held at Bristol during a History Department Away Day and the Faculty of Arts Centre for Black Humanities. This roundtable focused on race in history research: on the ethics and politics of research on race in relation to teaching and institutional responsibilities, and on new directions in research on race as a topic. The roundtable

was supported by the Centre for Black Humanities, a research centre that brings together colleagues working on the artistic and intellectual work of people of African descent, and the Decolonisation Research Cluster. More information can be found here: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/events/2020/october/what-is-the-reparative-history-of-race-211020.html>.

- **21 October 2020.** Professor Margot Finn and Dr Diya Gupta participated in a Black History reading group hosted by St John's College, Oxford, that discussed legacies of colonialism, and in particular considered the RHS *Race Report*. More information on St John's activities in this regard are available here: <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/discover/about-college/st-johns-and-colonial-past/>.
- **29 October 2020.** Dr Diya Gupta spoke on her own research into colonial experiences of the Second World War and highlighted examples of good practice from the RHS *Race Report* at NanoConference 05 - Reflection & Action: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in Philanthropy. The Zoom conference explored the history of EDI in the philanthropy sector, its present-day realities, the lived experiences of BME staff, and suggested practical actions necessary for change. A recording of the event is available here: <https://www.pyrotalks.com/nano-recordings/p/reflection-and-action>.
- **29 October 2020.** Dr Diya Gupta spoke about the RHS *Race Report* and the need to decolonise history for a podcast hosted by Pluto Press to mark the publication of Professor Dan Hicks's book *The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution* (2020). She was joined by journalist Nadine Batchelor-Hunt, co-director of the research and campaigning group Culture Unstained, Dr Chris Garrard, Pluto Press's Chris Browne and Professor Dan Hicks. The podcast can be accessed here: <https://plutopress.podbean.com/e/the-brutish-museums-decolonisation-and-the-benin-bronzes/>.
- **18 November 2020.** The North East Race Equality forum (NEREF) Zoom panel, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, included representatives from the Social Policy Association (SPA), British Sociological Association (BSA) and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) on the issue of racism in public policy, poor track record of

teaching and learning in social policy in higher education, racial harassment in universities and the RHS Report. This was organised by Gary Craig, Emeritus Professor of Social Justice at the Wilberforce Institute for the study of Slavery and Emancipation, Hull. Dr Jonathan Saha spoke on the RHS *Race Report* at this event.

- **18 November 2020.** Professor Margot Finn and Dr Diya Gupta facilitated discussion at an online event hosted by the History department of the University of Leeds. The History subject groups at Leeds Beckett, Leeds Trinity and the University of Huddersfield also participated in the event. The event focused on the RHS *Race Report* and developments since its publication, and considered issues of inclusivity and racism, under-representation and curriculum design.

PART 4. ENGAGEMENTS BEYOND THE RHS: IN-PERSON AND ONLINE

Many of the problems identified in the RHS's 2018 *Race Report* and discussed by REEWG extend beyond History as a discipline. The report continues to be mentioned positively and shared on social media both in the UK and beyond. In this section, we note known substantive examples of the impact or use of the RHS's equalities work focused on race and ethnicity by other organisations.

- **African Studies Association:** 'The Royal Historical Society's work on race, ethnicity and equality in UK History has had an important impact on the thinking and work on the African Studies Association (ASAUK) and of its officers. In its work the ASAUK has been concerned with questions of unequal knowledge production and dissemination, and has sought to address structural impediments to equal scholarly partnerships such as the UK's hostile visa regime. Its priority has been to promote equal partnerships with Africa based colleagues. In developing its strategic priorities, it has drawn on the example of the RHS's work. This has been in the forefront of our minds as we constituted our Council, sought to deepen our relationships with African Studies associations elsewhere in the world, and put together our workshops and conferences. We have learned from the RHS to pay heed to our Association's own history and to its own role in the production of knowledge. Many of our members are historians but the effect of the work done by the RHS has had an influence across the humanities and social science disciplines we represent.' *Professors Ambreena Manji (past President, ASAUK) and Ola Uduku (current President, ASAUK).*
- **Believe in Me CIC.** 'I am a community researcher and run a community interest company Believe in Me. It empowers young people and women through education. I specialise in South Asian heritage and history projects, most of my audience are South Asian from low socio economical communities, often where English is not their first language. I started learning about history back in 2016 when I wanted to find out more about the Indian contribution to the First World War. I realised that there are

projects for women like myself to learn further once we have left the education system. I last learnt history in school at Year 9. Over the Centenary of FWW I have had two national exhibitions and currently working on my third national project Indian Women and War. The project is funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund and supported by all the national research organisations. My project explores past histories and working with communities connecting to present South Asian women. We also work with the Armed Forces' current South Asian female personnel to engage with past histories. The reports by the RHS (gender, race and equality) are important to my work as we encourage young people to undertake history work and working with communities I encourage women to lead projects. I work with communities, academics and research organisations to ensure history is accessible to all. There is such a divide between communities and academics so I ensure that the projects include all.' *Kiran Sahota, Heritage and Education Consultant.*

- **British Sociological Association:** 'The Royal Historical Society's (2018) trailblazing *'Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History'* report has been an important catalyst in this regard. As well as highlighting the under-representation of BME students and staff in History, and detailing the racisms experienced by BME staff, the report also suggests that the 'narrow scope' of History curricula 'is an obstacle to racial and ethnic diversity in History as a discipline' (Atkinson et al., 2018: 9). A similarly focused report has been produced by the Social Policy Association (Craig et al., 2019), and related working groups have been established in the Political Studies Association, and the Royal Geographical Society.' (Page 7) It also notes: 'In keeping with similar findings from the Royal Historical Society (Atkinson et al., 2018), survey responses indicated that placing the responsibility on BME staff can act to absolve White staff, and the institution, of their responsibilities.' (Page 31) 'In 2019, following the lead from the RHS's ground-breaking report, the British Sociological Association commissioned a team of researchers at the University of Manchester's Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity (led by Remi Joseph-Salisbury) to conduct a review of racial and ethnic inequality in the Sociology discipline. Although less ambitious and wide-ranging in scope, the BSA report's methods and structure were modelled on the RHS report, and were fortunate to benefit from the advice of Professor Margot Finn, who joined the advisory board. Inspired by the RHS

report, the BSA report offers concrete proposals to tackle racial inequality in staffing (with a focus on ‘pipeline’), student attainment and curriculum, and has been positively received by the BSA Trustees. The report was published in October 2020: https://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/25345/bsa_race_and_ethnicity_in_british_sociology_report.pdf. The team also met with colleagues from a range of Arts and Humanities learned societies (including RHS) to discuss collective ways forward, particularly around support for PhD and early career scholars.’ *Professor Claire Alexander, University of Manchester.*

- **History UK:** ‘History UK continues to respond to the RHS’s reports on Race, Ethnicity and Equality. In 2020, it continued to co-fund a scheme (with the Social History Society, the Economic History Society, the History of Education Society (UK), History Workshop Journal, the Royal Historical Society, the Society for the Study of Labour History, and the Women’s History Network) to support Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) history in the UK. The second round of applications for the scheme closes in December 2020. We explicitly focused part of our Pandemic Pedagogy initiative on the issue of accessibility in online learning (<https://www.history-uk.ac.uk/the-pandemic-pedagogy-handbook/#happens-to-accessibility>). At our AGM in November, the Steering Committee decided to formally create the executive role of Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Officer and we will begin the process of appointing an individual to this role soon.

In 2021 History UK will be hosting an event(s) that explore issues of diversity and inclusivity in the discipline, provisionally called *History, Diversity and Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*. History UK’s event(s) will focus on three key areas of history teaching in Higher Education: content of courses, pedagogical approaches, and the representation and experiences of staff and students. It is hoped that for this teaching and learning focussed initiative, History UK will work in conjunction with the RHS REE working group in developing collaborative events and outputs.’ *Dr Sarah Holland, University of Nottingham.*

- **Institute of English Studies (IES):** ‘As I begin a project on inclusion and diversity in the past, present and future of English Studies, the Royal Historical Society’s 2018 report *Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History* has been an incredibly useful model for a discipline-

specific examination of one aspect of this work. I appreciate several elements of the RHS's approach: their acknowledgement of the urgency and scale of the task, of the need to interrogate their own structures and practices, and of their debt to the existing body of scholarship and policy-making by Black and Minority Ethnic historians and others.

The regular updates to the 2018 report, its positioning as a practical 'resource' and 'roadmap for change', its concrete recommendations and engagement with their implementation, through follow up discussions with heads of subject and department – it seems to me that all of these elements will help to build a strong foundation for a more inclusive, diverse and anti-racist historical community and discipline, which can be acted on at the departmental, school or institutional level and fed back into the national picture mapped out here in future years. The detailed explication of often hard-to-parse HESA statistics, in particular, provides vital context for benchmarking and measuring change – and the call for improved data is one heard and amplified by English Studies, also.

While I think departmental and disciplinary affiliations are only *one* aspect of staff and students' engagement with 'the university', they are of course a significant one, and the report is right to suggest equalities work should be at this granular level if real change is to be made. I particularly appreciate the RHS's consideration of students and staff alongside each other, as enmeshed and symbiotic partners in the university project. (Too often in the current climate they seem to be pitted against each other.) As I think through how elements of this report might be adopted by and adapted for English Studies, I am keen to develop the RHS's respondents' insights into the need to consider inclusion and diversity intersectionally: that class, gender, age, sexuality and disability, among other factors, must be considered alongside and in terms of their interplay with race and ethnicity. Reshaping institutional and disciplinary structures is urgent, necessary work, but the first step is knowledge and understanding of these structures, how they have historically included or excluded, and how they perpetuate this in the present – in order that a richer, more diverse future for all disciplines may be imagined and brought into being. Like History, however, English must move beyond an aim to 'diversify' if it is to dismantle

institutional and disciplinary racism, committing to a more radical, transformational anti-racist and decolonial practice and pedagogy.’ *Dr Sarah Pyke, TIDE Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of English Studies.*

- **Institute of Historical Research (IHR):** ‘The full impact of the *RHS Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History* report will take years to measure, but there is no doubt that this report has done the historical profession in the UK a great service. The report has opened up a significant conversation about how to make history in the UK less white – not only in the ethnic and racial backgrounds of the students and staff in our history departments – but also in our rendering of history as a field of enquiry and its articulation in public spaces.

Since the release of the report, the IHR has worked to enact many of the report’s recommendations both within the Institute’s internal culture, and through the Institute’s national remit to promote, facilitate and support historical research across the UK. This work has included: the creation of an open access resource with the Runnymede Trust that provides ‘Resources for Teaching British Histories of Race, Migration and Empire’ at all learning stages; establishing the IHR’s first Black British History Seminar; research guides for Black History created by the Bibliography of British and Irish History and the IHR Library; public engagement events that highlight latest currents in Black British history and curriculum reform debates; and working with the Historical Association, RHS and other partners as part of a steering group to review diversity in GCSE and A-Level specifications.’ *Dr Hannah Elias, Chair of the IHR’s EDI committee.*

- **London Arts and Humanities [AHRC] Partnership.** ‘A programme of mandatory training for all reviewers in LAHP has been rolled out this year, and there is a much greater emphasis on EDI (e.g. reordering application forms so that educational qualifications are at the end rather than the beginning). A link to the RHS report was included in the main presentation.’ *Professor Jane Winters, School of Advanced Studies.*
- **Norwegian Committee for Gender Balance and Diversity in Research:** ‘I work in Oslo for the Norwegian Committee for Gender Balance and Diversity in Research – in the secretariat.

Look up www.kifinfo.no/eng. Our body is a little like the Equality Challenge Unit – we are placed in Universities Norway (umbrella organisation for all universities and colleges) but answer to the Ministry of Education and Research. But we work with gender and ethnic diversity, the other grounds are followed up by other agencies. We are two senior advisers working in the secretariat – we follow up a committee that includes vice-chancellors, deans and professors from various regions. I found the part [of the RHS's 2018 *Race Report*] about how people in different roles and institutional units could put the findings into action very useful. I have recommended it to people working in the humanities at Oslo University, to the national humanities council and the Norwegian Academy of Music, among others. We meet colleagues in various contexts, but it is rare to find tools that are transferable despite national differences. Because there is a lot of resistance to diversity work, I find it comforting that some tools or findings are received well.' *Ella Ghosh, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Committee for Gender Balance and Diversity in Research.*

- **Royal Museums Greenwich:** 'Royal Museums Greenwich (RMG) engages on many levels with historical teaching and research within school and university contexts. The RHS *Race, Ethnicity & Equality* report informed the museum's ongoing and proactive efforts to address issues of diversity and inclusion within its provision to audiences. In particular, the museum leads an AHRC-funded collaborative doctoral partnership consortium entitled REACH (Revisiting and Enhancing Approaches to Collections and Heritage), and also runs an annual postdoctoral fellowship scheme. Both of these initiatives made full use of the report's recommendations to disseminate awareness of these opportunities through portals and organisations that connect with ethnically diverse student communities, and to encourage new perspectives on our collections.' *Dr Quintin Colville, Senior Curator: Research, RMG.*
- **Royal Geographical Society and London Arts and Humanities DTP:** 'The RHS report on race and ethnicity in UK History has had a significant impact on the work of the Royal Geographical Society (with Institute of British Geographers) and the AHRC London Arts and Humanities DTP. The RHS and RGS-IBG co-convened a workshop with other learned societies and subject associations to address EDI priorities and challenges across the arts & humanities

and social sciences. This was followed by a workshop co-convened by the RHS and RGS-IBG at the annual meeting of learned societies and subject associations at the British Academy, and the welcome decision to have EDI as a standing agenda item for future annual meetings. At the RGS-IBG, the report has helped to shape a UK-wide survey on equality, diversity and inclusion in academic Geography. The survey results are being presented to the annual meeting of the Heads of UK Geography in late November and will inform an action plan and series of workshops on decolonising the curriculum, anti-racist teaching and learning, and EDI priorities and challenges in fieldwork.

At LAHP, the report has directly informed our EDI action plan and helped us to embed EDI throughout our Strategy, 2020-25. Key initiatives to achieve positive change have included the launch of a new LAHP Student Ambassador Programme, with a particular focus on recruiting more Black and Global Majority students and those from other under-represented groups. LAHP students have also set up a new Black and Global Majority Network. LAHP also commissioned Advance HE (together with ESRC LISS-DTP) to complete a report on the recruitment and student journey of BME PhD students and will be discussing its recommendations at a workshop of EDI leads in LAHP's eight partner HEIs. The clarity of guidance around positive action in the RHS report has been particularly helpful in discussions with other DTPs and the AHRC. LAHP welcomes new URKI guidance about ring-fencing studentships for those from under-represented groups. At LAHP we are launching a new minimum number of awards to be made to UK Black and Global Majority students for entry in October 2021 (details tbc – see <https://www.lahp.ac.uk> for further information).’ *Professor Alison Blunt, Vice-President RGS-IBG (Research and Higher Education) and Director of LAHP; Dr Catherine Souch, Head of Research and Higher Education, RGS-IBG.*

- **Scottish Graduate School of Arts & Humanities.** ‘The aim [of the workshop referenced previously] was to reflect on the RHS reports and assist PhD students to incorporate EDI into varied work (which might be related to research, teaching, public engagement, or professional service) they might undertake during their doctoral studies and potential future academic or non-academic careers. A sizeable majority of attendees found the

event very useful, particularly appreciating the practical suggestions for ways to make teaching more inclusive and diverse, and in helping them see how they could work for change and that they were not alone in doing so. Building on the summer school session, a pair of workshops on ‘Cultural awareness and sensitivity’, and ‘British universities studying slavery’ have been planned for late 2020.’ *Dr Jacqueline Rose, School of History, University of St Andrews.*

- **Shakespeare’s Globe:** ‘As part of its Shakespeare and race initiatives, scholars at the Globe have been considering ways to influence and support a shift in the racial demographic of Shakespeare studies in UK higher education. The RHS race equality report showed evidence of the same issues in history as in Shakespeare studies and provided recommendations that would enable an increase in postgraduate study and academic participation in the field. In August of 2020, Shakespeare’s Globe hosted its first digital festival – the topic was Shakespeare and Race- a topic that has been a concern at the Globe since 2017. As part of this festival, a panel event was held in the indoor theatre – the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse – which consisted of Professor Margot Finn (President, RHS), Preti Taneja (novelist and academic) and Eliot Barnes-Worrall (actor). It was vital to the Globe organisers that the underlying discoveries of the report were aired in that public domain which streamed on YouTube – Professor Margot Finn discussed the importance of ‘full’ histories and the importance of including a focus on empire, slavery and colonisation in the teaching and writing of history in the UK. This and the report that informed this contribution was a centrepiece of the panel that enabled the other panellists to engage in public debate.’ *Professor Farah Karim-Cooper, Head of Higher Education & Research, Shakespeare’s Globe.*
- **Social History Society:** ‘The Social History Society (SHS) continues to develop activities in recognition of the under-representation, structural inequalities, and racism afflicting UK Higher Education Institutions. In 2019-20 we worked hard to expand our BME small grants scheme, which is now co-funded by eight learned societies: SHS, Economic History Society, Royal Historical Society, History of Education Society (UK), History UK, History Workshop Journal, Society for the Study of Labour History and Women’s History Network. In light of COVID-19, we have also expanded its remit to

include directly incurred research costs. In addition, we continue to support the small but active SHS BME Network.’ *Professor Naomi Tadmor, Chair, SHS.*

- **UK Council for Graduate Education.** ‘The RHS Report is a key text in UK Council for Graduate Education bibliography on BME Participation in Postgraduate Education: <http://www.ukcge.ac.uk/article/ukcge-publishes-bame-participation-in-postgraduate-education-the-442.aspx>.’ *Dr Owen Gower, Director, UK Council for Graduate Education.*

Social Media, Online Engagement and References in Publications

The RHS Research and Communications Officer, Dr Katherine Foxhall, works closely with REEWG and Dr Diya Gupta to try to ensure that the RHS online presence supports and signal boosts ongoing work, including grassroots and community projects and events, and to help improve the representation of Black, Asian and other under-represented historians in our discipline. In particular, this year the RHS has worked with colleagues at the Institute of Historical Research and Runnymede Trust to support the [#TeachRaceMigrationEmpire](#) initiative in changing the History curriculum.

Other engagements, along with references in podcasts and publications, include the following:

- Professor Margot Finn and Dr Sadiya Qureshi both featured as guests on Dr Sushma Jansari’s (Museum Detox) Wonder House podcast (January 2020). They discussed the need for the RHS *Race Report* and *Roadmap for Change I*: <https://thewonderhouse.co.uk/margot-finn> and <https://thewonderhouse.co.uk/sadiya-qureshi>.
- Dr Shahmima Akhtar was interviewed by journalist Helena Pozniak for the *Guardian* article on ‘Decolonise the Curriculum’ where she discussed the RHS *Race Report* (January 2020): <https://www.theguardian.com/global/2020/jan/27/im-used-to-being-the-only-brown-person-in-the-room-why-the-humanities-have-a-diversity-problem>.

- The *Race Report* was mentioned in a *Guardian* article by Lola Okolosie, 'Three ways for UK schools to improve their race relations now' (June 2020):
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/jun/23/three-ways-for-uk-schools-to-improve-their-race-relations-now>.
- Dr Sundeep Lidher mentioned the *Race Report* in her podcast (July 2020):
<https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/news/audio/view/teaching-migration-empire-and-colonialism-in-history-lessons/>.
- Nick Dennis's blog 'Doing the Work' (July 2020) notes the *Race Report*: <http://www.nickdennis.com/blog/2020/07/12/doing-the-work/>.
- James Rees, Marco Pomati and Elke Heins, *Social Policy Review 32: Analysis and Debate in Social Policy* (Policy Press, July 2020). This publication cites the *Race Report* (p. 1 and p. 5).
- Sarah Crook, 'Parenting during the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020: academia, labour and care work', *Women's History Review*, 10 September 2020, DOI: 10.1080/09612025.2020.1807690. The article cites the RHS *Race Report* (p. 8) and in its endnotes, (pp. 45-46).

PART 5. HISTORY DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSES

- **Birkbeck, University of London.** ‘Soon after the release of the RHS report on Race, Ethnicity & Equality in History, the department undertook a searching review of teaching provision. This resulted in revisions to our introductory survey courses which are now explicitly global, transnational and inclusive, and which critique ‘grand narratives’ and Eurocentricism. We are now reforming our compulsory hub skills modules in a similar vein. In October 2020 we convened a departmental working group for diversity and inclusion. Its first major role was implementing actions in response to data extracted on attainment gaps between white and BME students. The statistics revealed that while Birkbeck admits more students from varied backgrounds, percentage figures for BME students achieving good degrees are lower than elsewhere. In response, a system of peer mentoring, closer tracking of attainment by personal tutors, and drop-in forums have been introduced. We have also changed our summer exam system with the introduction of 48 hour seen-assessments as a way of addressing inequalities and barriers to progress. Currently, a survey questionnaire is being prepared to capture students’ experience, and their views of the blockages, inequalities and barriers to achievement. Meanwhile, African history has been strengthened in the department through two post-doctoral appointments in October 2020. A doctoral student working on Black bohemia and funded by the Diversity 100 scheme joined the department at the same time. The department is now bidding for a UKRI Future Leaders Fellow to work on the history of racialisation. We have scheduled internal staff seminars exploring issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement and are planning related public-facing events as part of our Discover the Past programme. In the medium term we are looking at putting on accredited and non-accredited short courses on themes of race, empire and migration and longer term at convening an interdisciplinary masters programme anchored in History.’

Professor Matt Cook, HoD and Dr Hilary Sapire, Department Equalities Lead.

- **University of Bristol:** ‘The RHS report has been a touchstone for discussions on issues of race and inclusion at three department meetings since 2018. This has resulted in a wider appreciation by all staff of the need to take responsibility to re-examine our curriculum and make the department a more inclusive environment for BME staff and students. Dr Su Lin Lewis has also coordinated the production of a report with contributions from every department in the Faculty of Arts on decolonising the curriculum. A key overall recommendation has been to engage discipline-specific bodies (eg. English Association, University Council of Modern Languages and Royal Anthropology Institute) to act as a more general point of advocacy and contact, and to undertake investigations around race and ethnicity, as with the Royal Historical Society’s 2018 *Race, Ethnicity & Equality Report*. In a series of events for Black History Month in October 2020 we hosted an international webinar on ‘What is the Reparative History of Race’ responding to the RHS report, featuring Kennetta Hammond Perry, former RHS P&P Fellow Shahmima Ahktar, and Jessica Moody.’ *Professor Simon Potter, HoD.*
- **University of Essex:** ‘We are committed to implementing the recommendations of the 2018 *RHS Race, Ethnicity & Equality Survey*. As part of broader university efforts, including its membership of the Race Equality Charter, department staff produced a statement in the summer of 2020 committing to a number of actions, one of which was a conversation event on decolonising the curriculum between staff and students. This was held as part of Black History Month, resulting in a rich discussion and further actions that are currently being implemented amid wider curriculum reforms. These include ensuring that our students are offered as wide a range of diverse modules as possible, through interdisciplinary collaboration with colleagues in other departments. All of these efforts are foundational to the department’s resubmission for the Athena Swan Bronze Award.’ *Dr Andrew Priest, HoD.*
- **University of Exeter:** ‘Since June 2020, the History Department, Exeter has constituted a Decolonising History Working Group, chaired by Nandini Chatterjee and Gajendra Singh. The working group is open to all members of the History department, including PhD, PGT and UG students. It has been working actively to discuss, create and apply a Decolonising the Curriculum programme.

The style of the group is deliberative and collaborative. One of the first activities of the group was producing a collectively written blog on the politics of unseating statues of historical figures: <https://imperialglobalexeter.com/2020/07/07/decolonising-the-curriculum-a-conversation/>. Since then, we have developed a programme of interviews, discussions and collective writing. The most recent of this is a discussion between Professor Richard Teye and Dr Priyamvada Gopal on Churchill as a historical figure: <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/events/churchill-empire-and-race/cer-opening-conversation/>.

Our main focus is the reform of our curriculum. After initial discussions, we decided to focus on the teaching of world history. For a start, we have had two long discussions open to all members of the department to discuss current dissatisfaction with the two modules called Understanding the Medieval and Early Modern World, and Understanding the Modern world, which are first year core modules. We have subsequently constituted a task group to design two alternative models of teaching world history. The group will consider various ways of doing this – including breaking down chronology and dividing the teaching into geographical areas.

We would very much like to learn what other departments around the country are doing with regards to the teaching of similar modules, and would like to consult with the RHS on this topic.

We are considering other curricular development possibilities, such as a ‘Decolonising’ pathway across departments, and an Open Access module on Race and racial identity.

We are making systematic efforts to actively engage with students, to make them partners in this process of reform. We also envisage a major role for PhD students, who are both our students and our colleagues, and cutting-edge researchers in their fields.’ *Professors Helen Berry, HoD, and Nandini Chatterjee, Chair of the Decolonising the Curriculum working group.*

- **University of Glasgow:** ‘In summer 2020 the university approved a permanent post in Transatlantic Slavery Studies to provide capacity for a MSc in Reparative Justice to be jointly offered with

the University of the West Indies. This is part of a historic £20m commitment to reparative research and teaching following a 2018 report on the university's past financial gains from the Atlantic slave economy. In October, History launched a Futurelearn MOOC, 'History of Slavery in the British Caribbean', which attracted over 9,000 learners in its first run.' *Dr Karin Bowie, Senior Lecturer in Scottish History.*

Goldsmiths, University of London. 'The RHS Roadmap for Change Update and the RHS Race, Ethnicity and Equality Report were extremely helpful in shaping our Department's commitments to anti-racist education. Since the publication:

1. A departmental reading group formed that met to discuss and share scholarship connected to histories of race and decolonisation.
2. The department redesigned its Year One undergraduate teaching, with a view to diversifying and further globalising our curriculum. We now offer a [BA History with a concentration in Global History](#). In addition, one member of staff will be teaching a new module on the history of decolonising history starting in 2021.
3. The department created a new EDI officer administrative role; a senior member of staff took it on, underlining the importance attributed to the role.
4. The department fulfilled a promise to students to create an Undergraduate and a Postgraduate BME Student Representative position, and to pay a bursary to office holder.
5. During Undergraduate induction week in the autumn term, the Department organised a special session specifically on race and racism in the academy. A History student who was part of the Goldsmiths Anti-Racist Action's (GARA) 137-day sit-in occupation of the main administrative building led most of the session at the Department's invitation.
6. The Department hired an outside consultant to conduct a mandatory anti-microaggression training session for all staff before the end of 2020.
7. Department representatives have met with the Dean of Students to examine BME attainment gap data for undergraduate students, and assess patterns of achievement and retention.
8. In Autumn 2020, our Department saw the launch of the UK's first taught [MA in Black British History](#). The Programme Convenor was appointed in 2019, and a second Lecturer in Black British

History was added to the teaching staff in 2020. This has added new, intersectional dimensions to our postgraduate offerings, alongside our MA Queer History, launched in 2017.’ *Professors Jan Plamper and Richard S. Grayson, HoD.*

- **University of Hertfordshire:** ‘History at Hertfordshire continues to review our curriculum to emphasise a diverse range of experiences and voices – we are just about to offer a new module in the history of the contemporary Middle East – and recognise that this needs to be an ongoing process of evaluation. Members of the subject group also sit on the committees of SHS and History UK, and contribute to the work of these organisations with regard to race and diversity. One welcome development is that we have recently been able to offer a 3 year PhD studentship (fee waiver and bursary) for BAME candidates in History.’ *Dr Daniel Grey, HoD.*

- **King’s College London.** ‘We have followed up our earlier discussions of the RHS report with two new appointments. A Lecturer in Black and Asian British History, Sundeep Lidher, has launched a new module on the history of migration and will deepen our existing connections to the Black Cultural Archives. A Lecturer in Colonial/Postcolonial British History, Liam Liburd, is designing a new module on the colonial past of King's College London and will lead public engagement in this area. We have reconsidered our recruitment processes in light of the RHS report and other evidence of unconscious bias: a representative of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is now routinely involved at shortlisting stage. We are also engaged in a major reform of our Y1 curriculum, which will give us further opportunities to reflect on the history of race and racism.’ *Professor Stephen Lovell, HoD.*

- **University of Leeds.** ‘The School has engaged actively with the issues raised by the Royal Historical Society’s *Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History: A Report and Resource for Change* since its publication in 2018. ‘Decolonising the curriculum’ has been identified as one of three main strategic priorities for 2020-21 and will inform the enhancement of UG and MA provision at all levels. We have committed to reviewing our existing provision to ensure that core/compulsory modules include diverse and inclusive histories, the work of historians from under-represented groups is reflected in all our teaching, and that we consistently offer

students an appropriate range of options when choosing what to study. With that in mind, building on expertise underpinning our long-running MA Programme in Race and Resistance, we launched a new module on Histories of Black Britain in 2019-20 and appointed our first Lecturer in Black British History in 2020-21. We have also hosted a number of events focused on teaching and researching of Black histories. We recognise that we still have a lot of work to do, and our Equality and Diversity Committee recently launched an ongoing initiative to produce localised guidance on various other issues raised by the report.’ *Professor Andrea Major, HoD.*

- **University of Leicester.** ‘We continue to use the RHS Report as a catalyst in our discussions at faculty level and in our engagement with our broader student body. This has included changes to our curricula, including the development of new sessions on decolonising the subject for our core Second Year module “Perceiving the Past,” which now kick off student engagement with that module, and also a series of open forum discussions with our Students Union. This month, too, has seen a regular series of weekly evening sessions dedicated to race and the US elections. Some of the pressure generated at School level has also been instrumental in developing the University’s BME GTA PGR Scholarships programme, which launched in 2021/22. I am pleased to report that one of these scholarships, which offers a full PhD stipend followed by a one year post-doctoral teaching placement, was won by a historian.’ *Professor George Lewis, HoD.*
- **University of Liverpool.** ‘One direct response to the RHS report was to fund a PhD student to address racial inequality in the department. This student secured funding for a BME graduate intern to assist on the curriculum audit project, with findings presented at the 2020 ICwS Decolonisation Workshop. Teaching awards have recognised existing efforts, namely Liverpool’s first global history module and Dr Heath’s innovative anti-racist pedagogy. Funding is now sought for staff training on racial inclusivity and BME student-led focus groups. The department has also worked with outside organisations, including a student-led consultation with the National Trust on handling problematic statues.’ *Professor Elaine Chalus, HoD.*

- **University of Manchester.** ‘History at Manchester has a new team-taught level 1 course, the Manchester History Workshop, led by Dr Kerry Pimblott which ‘focusses on recovering the lived experiences and contributions of the generations of multi-ethnic migrants who came to and shaped the city.’ Using the collections of the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre, Manchester Jewish Museum, and others, students create blog posts, films, and learning resources to highlight the diverse history of Manchester to wider publics. Dr Jesús Chairez Garza launched the Students of Colour network to build community and support among students of colour in History.’ *Dr Eloise Moss, Lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, School of Arts, Languages and Cultures (SALC).*
- **University of Oxford:** ‘Our work on race equality has continued, with redoubled energy in the wake of the killing of George Floyd. The main step we’ve taken is to set up a ‘Race Equality Action Group’ to identify local obstacles to race equality and develop policy to address them, to raise the profile of race issues in the Faculty, to think about our teaching, our environment and our curriculum, and to draw on external advice from more diverse departments in Britain and America: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/race-equality-action-group-reag>. We have continued and expanded our annual programme of events, and also our BME study day for school-age students which had double the attendance this year. We have also appointed our first Community History Fellow, with a remit to develop links between the Faculty and community groups in our very diverse city.’ *Professor John Watts, Head of the History Faculty.*
- **Queen Mary, University of London.** ‘At the start of 2019-20 we were using some of the recommendations of the RHS Race report to shape how we were addressing race, ethnicity and inequality in the School. Black Lives Matter encouraged me to reflect more deeply and critically about our theory of change, and whether piecemeal picking of recommendations was an effective approach. Talking with students and colleagues it was apparent that many doubted that institutional statements would lead to lasting change, and the School’s management team was determined to make sure that we could be held accountable to any commitment we made. We therefore decided to use the 32 recommendations that apply directly to School business (sections

4 a-e) as a road map for holistic change, committing to make specific and measurable progress against a goal drawn up against each recommendation by summer 2021. Over the summer of 2020, after consultation with a working group including staff and students, the Head of School and EDI lead drew up an action plan that laid out how we will achieve these goals. Such clear action – and reframing of ideas about how change happens in a School – would not have been possible without the RHS report.' *Professor Daniel Todman, HoD.*

- **Queen's University, Belfast:** 'History at Queen's Belfast is part of the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics. Regular 'History clusters' are the discipline's primary forum for debate and decision making. In tandem with the RHS prioritisation of race, ethnicity and equality, we have agreed a number of recent initiatives. The Centre for Public History's December 2019 conference was on 'Imperialism, Anti-Imperialism, and their Legacies in Public History.' This event was heavily subsidised with no registration fee and several travel/accommodation bursaries offered to ECR scholars (from BME backgrounds) with limited funding. In October 2020 staff and PGR students organised an online workshop on 'Decolonising the History Curriculum'. The COVID crisis has created many problems but we did employ it to our advantage via the development of an online MA module – 'From the "White City" to Black Lives Matter: public representations of Black history in the USA' – which has enabled us to draw on direct input of a number of leading scholars in the USA who worked with our own Dr Nik Ribianszky. The History Cluster also discussed our broader curriculum and reinforced our commitment to teaching on race, slavery, imperialism and post-imperialism across core undergraduate modules to ensure that all UG students have the opportunity to encounter these histories in a significant way. In summer 2020, we secured an extension to the temporary position of a specialist on the history of African-American history for 12 months and are now working on obtaining the University's commitment to a permanent post in this area. When History positions have been advertised recently, we have actively reached out to potential candidates from a BME background. The QUB History cluster is planning to offer a bursary at PGT level for a candidate from a BME background. We have also a CDA PhD studentship project on Ireland its connections

with the transatlantic slave trade and will seek funding for this in 2021.' *Professor Sean O'Connell, Disciplinary Lead – History.*

- **Royal Holloway, University of London.** 'EDI lead for History working on developing a strategy with the School and its Executive Committee.
 - 1) Ongoing work on developing a curriculum audit toolkit with a specific focus on rolling out a Decolonising toolkit throughout the School of Humanities. Aim to make it compulsory for example to check it at Validation point to evaluate programme/module design.
 - 2) School Education Committee has received the 2019/20 Student Outcomes report and noted its various results in terms of the attainment gap, showing specific areas of concern regarding the gap in achievement re: black students in comparison with white students. This was actioned at a School level working group, which reinforced data found in the UG Annual Reviews. A working group has been set up to request granular data from Strategic Planning & Change to evaluate more specific information about BME student achievement within Departments/demographics/at certain degree stages in order that we may achieve concrete goals. This will adopted as a SEC/ED&I project for 2020-21.
 - 3) Pilot BME mentorship scheme launched with 5 mentors (2nd and 3rd year History UG) and 5 mentees (1st year) taking part. This will be reviewed at the end of the year to see if it should be formally adopted into the college Peer Guide System.
 - 4) Organising a Seminar Series for Spring Term, with a specific focus on having diverse participants and attract diverse audiences of staff and students, including archivists, heritage sector, academics as well as poets and activists.

Overall school strategy on EDI is to prioritise community building events for BME students and staff between departments, and ongoing efforts to develop a mission statement, and collate/display what is already happening, whether on website etc.' *Drs Anna Whitelock, HoD, and Shahmima Akhtar, EDI Lead.*

- **University of Sheffield:** 'At Sheffield, we have continued to work towards the recommendations of the Race, Equality and Decolonisation report that staff and students produced in May 2019. We have made significant changes to our core Level 2 module, Historians and History, thoroughly revising the reading

list, placing more emphasis on the politics and sociology of the historical profession, and incorporating a reflective discussion of decolonisation. We have redesigned the Level 1 US History survey course around the long history of civil rights, added an optional module on Asian Britain at Level 2, and introduced a new Level 3 module entitled Conflict, Cultures and (De)Colonisation, which explicitly seeks to bring the past to bear on contemporary debates about race, globalisation, migration, and decolonisation. More broadly, we are working towards the University's Race Equality Strategy and Action plan.' *Professor Adrian Bingham, HoD.*

- **SOAS, University of London.** 'The RHS *Race and Equality Report*, and subsequent debates around, have been followed with great interest by colleagues in SOAS History, and have informed our own discussions about how students' experience history teaching at SOAS. We have been particularly struck by the statistical data presented in the report. The SOAS History UG student body stands out in contrast to the national picture: in 2017-18, 71% of students doing BA History (joint and single honours) at SOAS identified as BME. This is striking given the geographic focus of our programmes, which teach regional and global histories from the specific of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Our staffing body is much more in line with the national statistical picture, however, and many of the problems and issues raised in the report are as relevant for SOAS as anywhere else. SOAS's experience shows us that teaching a broader range of histories attracts students from a different background to more western focused programmes but the question of HOW you teach that history is paramount. The report has helped us to see this problem in the round and has provided us with a great point of discussion through which to engage our own students, and broader audiences, to think about the kind of work that's needed to create a notion of history as a subject that speaks to all people, regardless of race and ethnicity.

One example of this engagement is our audio drama project 'Decolonising History'. Working with Tamasha Theatre Company, and with funding from the Arts Council, we put together a playwright in residence project at SOAS History. We wrote a project description that provocatively read the statistics from the Race and Equality Report against those about our student body, and asked for writers who were interested in what counted as history and in what it meant and felt like to study history at SOAS

to apply. Five women playwrights of colour responded and joined the department to work with students and colleagues over a term. They each produced a 20-minute drama, recorded at SOAS radio studios, around the question of who gets to shape history, and what work is needed to 'decolonise' it. We held a series of collective listenings (where you sit in a theatre, dim the lights and listen to the plays together) in London (our premier was at SOAS), Birmingham and Manchester to packed audiences. Each show was followed by a panel talk featuring the writers, SOAS students and local activists working on themes of heritage and racial identities who discussed the themes of the plays and related them to their own experiences and work. The plays, and post-show talks, are now available to download for free and we have plans for more workshops and activities, at other universities, schools and community centres. We hope this will continue and help develop the important conversations about race and history, in which the Race and Equality report has played a crucial role'. *Dr Eleanor Newbigin, Senior Lecturer in the History of Modern South Asia, SOAS.*

- **University of Southampton:** 'Changes reported last year have become embedded, including an annual equality and diversity audit, equality and diversity issues given their own officer and dedicated space on board agendas, and continued work to diversify and decolonize curricula and reading lists across the department. The COVID-19 emergency has meant adopting a more incremental approach to transformation of core modules than originally planned, but we did conduct an extensive survey of our students during summer 2020 to find out what they thought 'decolonizing the curriculum' meant, what they thought of the goal itself, and how they thought it might best be carried out. The results (c. 90 responses) were themselves diverse in perspective, but often very thoughtful, and we are currently in the process of developing a detailed action plan to take to the department and to the students.' *Professor Kendrick Oliver, HoD.*
- **University of St Andrews:** 'We discussed the RHS *Race, Ethnicity & Equality Report's* finding and recommendations at various fora within the School, including the School's executive committee, EDI committee and at our full Staff Council. It was circulated to all students and is linked to on the EDI pages of our website. The School, through the EDI committee, has sought to implement

many of the report's recommendations. For example, we have instituted a training workshop for all colleagues who research and teach, including GTAs, which deals with encountering and challenging problematic behaviour (and one's own behaviour), including racism, in teaching and research settings. In September 2020 we established an 'inclusive curriculum working group'. The working group has an equal representation of students and staff from the School of History and is a pilot project addressing inclusivity and diversity, as well as ways of decolonising the curriculum, in the four 1st and 2nd year 'sub-honours' modules taught in first semester. The working group's aim is to produce detailed and practical guidance for curriculum revision and to recommend next steps in extending these to other modules.' *Dr Kate Ferris, Director for EDI.*

- **University College London (UCL):** 'The RHS *Race Report* has shaped much departmental activity in UCL History over the past two years. At the most recent departmental meeting we conducted a two-year review of the RHS report, focusing on Section 4.b (essentially on HR). This identified several areas for improved communication, staff training, and recruitment which are now in our action plan. The main goal for this year, however, is to obtain reliable data on the undergraduate Awarding Gap at the 2.i/First class boundary, and to better understand what the problems and possible solutions are. Reform of our main MA programme is underway, to offer clearer pathways to research in areas relevant to race, while the new MA in Public History will also foreground difficult histories. We are also working the Faculty to source philanthropic funding for graduate bursaries for UK BME students, but this is a tougher challenge in the current climate.' *Professor Eleanor Robson, HoD.*
- **University of Warwick.** 'The Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG) remains committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment and has welcomed two undergraduate members to represent the student voice. EDWG has made its commitment visible on the History departmental homepage and raised equality and diversity issues with staff to mitigate against the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on students and staff from marginalised and under-represented groups in recruiting, departmental events, and teaching & training. EDWG is currently focused on implementing the recommendations of the

RHS 2018 report to address the decolonisation of the curriculum using focus-groups to engage staff and students in a constructive dialogue.’ *Professor Rebecca Earle, HoD, and Dr Katayoun Shafiee, EDI Lead.*

- **University of York:** ‘The Department of History at York would like to mention a few developments relevant to *Roadmap for Change II*, which follow up on York's contribution to the original initiative:
 - Department of History students set up an annual conference in 2019 called 'From Margins to Centre?'. It continues to flourish and plans are in place for holding it in 2021:
<https://www.marginstocentre.com/about>.
 - We continue to make progress in redeveloping our curriculum to incorporate non-Western perspectives and to ensure diversity and inclusivity in who we include in our reading lists and the topics on which we teach: our new Stage 1 courses addressing World Histories, which embed these principles, were launched this autumn:
<https://www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/ba-history/>. The work is ongoing!’ *Professor Laura Stewart, HoD.*

PART 6. LOOKING AHEAD

During 2020-21, the Society's REEWG will continue to meet, with a goal of producing guidance documents to address the leaky pipeline in universities from undergraduate study into postgraduate and postdoctoral study. These materials will be workshopped in draft with university-based BME networks and groups to produce guidance that reflects feedback from both students and staff. Within the Society, Council will be exploring further ways of integrating its equalities work more fully. A *Roadmap III* document in a year's time will assess progress toward these goals.

The RHS will launch the new Teaching Portal in late November 2020, within which the Society's commitment to making progress will be clear. Contributions included at launch will include pieces on teaching Black and South Asian British histories, teaching world histories from African and Asian perspectives, and decolonising the curriculum. Relevant content within the blog's Teaching Portal and REE sections will be categorised and discoverable across the website, further ensuring that equality considerations are automatically embedded into RHS work.

Dr Diya Gupta, the new Past & Present Fellow from October 2020 onwards, is moving forward work on disentangling contested histories related to imperial collections in museums across the UK. She is part of a network of postdoctoral researchers and museum practitioners contributing to the Pitt Rivers's African restitution programme, led by Professor Dan Hicks. Diya focuses in particular on the project 'Devolving Restitution: African Collections in UK Museums Beyond London'. The programme 'brings together museums and grassroots diasporic, community and activist groups across the UK for six themed events, each addressing a different theme in African collections histories and opening up new dialogues with African claimants.' More information is available here:

<https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/african-restitution>.

You can follow our developments and the activities of the Race, Ethnicity & Equality Working Group here:

<https://royalhistsoc.org/policy/race/> and via Twitter – @RoyalHistSoc.

PART 7. SELECTED FURTHER READING

The following items augment the bibliographies of the 2018 *Race Report* and 2019 *Roadmap I*.

Bridget Byrne, Claire Alexander, Omar Khan, James Nazroo and William Shankley, *Ethnicity, Race and Inequality in the UK: State of the Nation* (Policy Press, 2020)

<https://www.accesshe.ac.uk/yYdlx0u7/Preparing-for-hyper-diversity-Londons-student-population-in-2030.pdf>

https://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/25345/bsa_race_and_ethnicity_in_british_sociology_report.pdf

<https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2020/07/23/new-report-calls-for-decolonisation-of-universities-in-order-address-the-silent-crisis-in-universities/>

<https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2020/10/31/weekend-reading-ucas-on-black-history-month-and-undergraduate-applications-the-unities-and-differences-in-2020/>

<https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2020/10/28/what-are-university-careers-services-doing-to-bridge-the-outcomes-gap-between-white-and-bame-graduates/>

<https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2020/11/02/white-under-achievement-in-education/>

<https://www.history.ac.uk/library/collections/teaching-british-histories-race-migration-and-empire>

https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/advance-he/AdvHE_Increasing%20Diversity_1580812786.pdf

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/tackling-racial-harassment-in-higher-education.aspx>

The Royal Historical Society
University College London
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT

020 7387 7532

www.royalhistsoc.org