

ANTI-RACISM PROGRAMME

PROJECT OUTLINE 2020-21

Distinction and Diversity
in Higher Education

GuildHE

GuildHE Research



Foreword



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Chair, GuildHE
&
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GuildHE and its members believe in a fair and equal society where anyone, regardless of background, is able to gain a higher level qualification free from stigma and prejudice. To drive cultural, social and economic change we must take a lead in addressing systemic barriers, work with our communities to improve social cohesion and ensure that our organisations are living up to our values. That is why I am delighted to announce a new Anti-Racism programme for GuildHE members, that will support us all in tackling race-based inequalities and improve the opportunities and experiences of our staff and students of colour. Anti-racism means more than just reviewing our policies and procedures, it is an active process of challenge and change. The allyship training we will introduce as part of our programme is, for example, one way to embed meaningful progress in our sector and wider society.

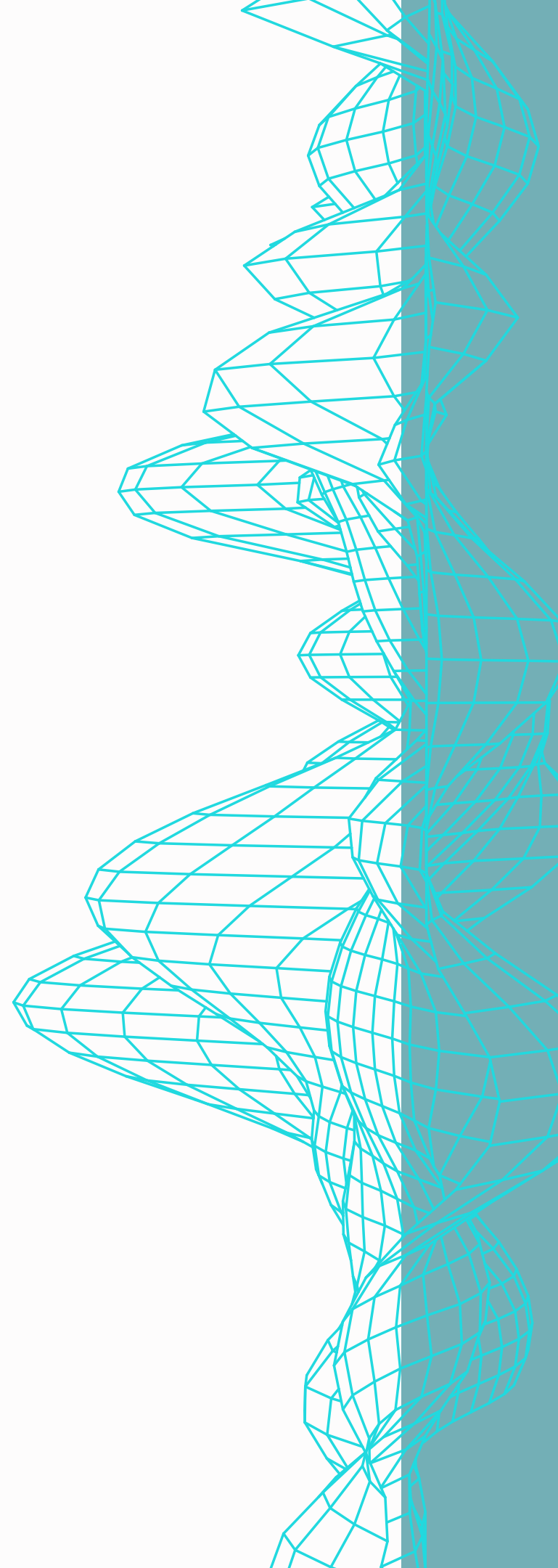
I recognise that our diverse membership will be at different stages of embedding change within their organisations. We hope that our new resources and events will be beneficial, regardless of where you are on the journey. This is, of course, not the only work needed to ensure equality in higher education, and there is more to be done to tackle the systemic barriers for other protected characteristics. But we must make more impactful progress in ensuring race is not a barrier to accessing higher education and the industries with which we work, and in improving the experiences of our staff and students from all racial backgrounds. We therefore look forward to the participation of your organisations in this important initiative.

Introduction

Whilst there has been a steady stream of focused activity in the sector to bring to light the inherent inequalities in the education system and the way in which universities must act to combat systemic racism, progress has been slow. The Black Lives Matter Campaign has highlighted just how much further we need to go as a society, and that racism is still a significant social issue in all parts of the world. Many GuildHE members have produced personalised responses to your students and communities in response to the call for swifter and more impactful action within HE, and we believe there is more we can do centrally to support members to develop your strategies and action plans going forward.

There have been many national research projects looking into the experiences of the Black community within education and in the workplace and it is clear that the issue of inequality is systemic and cultural. This programme of work aims to support GuildHE members to collectively share experiences and work together to tackle these inequalities within your institutions, and to drive quicker and more meaningful change for our diverse staff and students.

This document will set out our suite of activities and resources for members which we will be delivering over the next academic year and beyond. All of these resources, events and leadership activities will be completely free to members.





ANTI RACISM

We are embracing the Anti-Racism approach to this work. It has been clear that whilst noble, the historic work in equality and diversity has not led to the change we need, nor is progress quick enough. But structuring our activities towards Anti-Racism, we are consciously realigning our work to be more action focused, taking a whole institution approach, and ensuring that our HE communities have meaningful discussions about allyship and challenging the systemic barriers to race equality.

The BAME label in race equality work does not capture the full complexities of the experiences of different ethnicities, each with their own historic obstacles and ingrained prejudices. We will be mindful that this, and Intersectionality is important to highlight, particularly how gender impacts on the experiences of our diverse communities, and we will collate content with these intricacies in mind.

Contents of Programme

Action Learning Set

A space for our members to confidentially share experiences and help each other work through complex challenges. These groups are a great way for leaders of local change programmes to work together to find solutions and to provide support to each other. The Sets will meet every two months and members can nominate one staff member to attend.

Monthly Policy Briefings

There is a lot of published research out there highlighting what the systemic barriers are and how best to make progress quickly. We will put out monthly thematic briefings outlining the literature in these areas in order to inspire your local project groups and provide additional evidence to help you make meaningful change.

Monthly Guest Speakers

We will work with national anti-racism leaders to put together a monthly workshop series on learning more about systemic oppression in the UK context and tackling inequalities. These will all be delivered virtually to allow the greatest number of members to attend.

Bespoke Network Discussions & Allyship Training

GuildHE runs a number of practitioner networks including in Admissions, Quality, HR, WP and Students' Unions. We will deliver a bespoke workshop in each of these networks to help embed anti-racism across your institutions and support your staff to actively engage in equality work.

End of Year Symposium

The end of the first year of the project will conclude with a symposium for members to meet, share their project activities and continue to be inspired for phase two of the project. We will put a call out for case studies in April, and the event will take place on:

15th July 2021

GuildHE Research

Without meaningful change in access to postgraduate education, better support for early career researchers and better understanding of the barriers to equality in the research community we will never resolve the lack of BAME leadership within our institutions. GuildHE Research will deliver a specific project to help members address the issues of the BAME talent pipeline.

