

Top Science Quango Packs new Equality Advisory Board with Anti-Israeli Academics

Investigations by Policy Exchange can reveal that many of the members of Research England's new 'Expert Advisory Board on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion', announced yesterday¹, have shown support for radical anti-Israeli views, whilst others have been active in promoting other controversial and politically contested views on race and gender.

Research England is a Government arm's-length body that disburses £2bn a year of taxpayer's funding for science and research.

The Chair of the Advisory Board, Dr Kamna Patel, recently retweeted a post on X (formerly Twitter) that described Israel's actions in Gaza as 'apartheid and genocide'. Another member, Professor Kate Sang, described the Home Secretary's instructions to police to clamp down on Hamas supporters as 'disturbing' and has retweeted a post including the phrase 'from the River to the Sea', a proposition interpreted by many people as a call for the destruction of Israel. A third member, Professor Dibyesh Anand, has retweeted posts referring to 'extremist Israeli settlers' carrying out 'their own terrorist violence against Palestinians.

Head of Security and Extremism at Policy Exchange, Dr Paul Stott, said:

This is further evidence of the continued politicisation of the public sector in a way that privileges radical and contested views. It is legitimate for academics to express such views, but they cannot be allowed to predominate, especially on government bodies. It also casts further doubt on Research England's controversial plans to politicise science funding, increasing the focus given to 'people and culture' at the expense of scientific excellence.'

"It is a sign of the times Research England selects individuals with such deeply politicised views to sit on an Expert Advisory Board for Equality. At a time when antisemitic attacks on Jewish people have increased by over 1000%, those tasked with upholding equality and diversity should be promoting unity, not division.

As well as the members who have expressed controversial views on the conflict between Israel and Hamas, other members of the board have promoted radical and politically contested theories such as 'decolonising the curriculum' or gender ideology. The Chair, Dr Kamna Patel, has produced a Youtube video called 'Blueprint for Decolonising: Dr Kamna Patel – Race and Space', while Professor Ilaria Boncori is the author of an article called "Rethinking gender diversity: Transgender and gender nonconforming people and gender as constellation". Professor Stacey Johnson has criticised the Government's decision to ensure good value when promoting equality and diversity in the NHS.

Research England says the Advisory Board will "provide strategic advice on the prioritisation of key EDI issues in building research capacity and opportunity as well as delivering research that is more inclusive and representative of the population, and provide external guidance on the evidence base.

They will also provide key insights with regard to evaluating the EDI impact of existing funding mechanisms and policies."

Research England is currently consulting on a controversial plan to change how the £2bn of research funding it distributes each year is allocated, by reforming the Research Excellence Framework, or REF.

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/news/research-england-appoints-expert-advisory-group-in-edi/>

It is proposing to slash the amount of funding awarded for excellent research outputs to 45%², and raising the importance of ‘people and culture’, which includes equality and diversity considerations to 25% of the total. Research England’s proposals have been criticised by the Russell Group of leading research universities, which have said, “*A key challenge with the proposed approach is in finding metrics which can measure research culture objectively*”³. The Vice Principal of Research at Glasgow, Professor Chris Pearce, has said, discussing the quango’s proposals, that, “*The ever-increasing emphasis on environment threatens to undermine the drive for excellence*” and that the proposed changes are “*like judging a world-famous artist not by the quality of their paintings or sculptures, but by how attractive their studio is.*”⁴

Research England has previously indicated that the ‘People and Culture’ strand would include a consideration of a university’s ‘EDI data’ and that the REF will be “*underpinned by the principles of equity and inclusion, and will include a number of measures to support equality, diversity and inclusion*” – raising further concerns of the possible role of the new Advisory Board in shaping the future of UK science funding.

Members of the Expert Advisory Board

- Dr Kamna Patel, University College London (Chair)
- Dr Arun Verma, University of London (Deputy Chair)
- Professor Dibyesh Anand, University of Westminster
- Professor Ilaria Boncori, University of Essex
- Professor Tara Dean, London South Bank University
- Professor Stacy Johnson, University of Nottingham
- Professor Kate Sang, Heriot Watt University
- Jane Smith, Institute of Physics
- Dr Louise Preston, The University of Sheffield
- Rachel Van Krimpen, University of Nottingham
- Dr Lexi Webster, University of Southampton

Posts made and reposted by members of the Expert Advisory Board are below:

² With a further 5% awarded attached to a statement describing collaborative activities and how research outputs contribute broadly to the discipline in question, and 25% awarded for engagement and impact.

³ <https://www.researchprofessionalnews.com/rr-he-government-playbook-2023-10-culture-shock/>

⁴ <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/ref-2028-mustnt-forget-about-research-outputs/>

Dr Kamna Patel reposted



Azadeh Mashayekhi @az_mashayekhi · Oct 21

Together with my colleagues @dpu_ucl we wrote this collective statement on the situation in Gaza and Israel and called for peace and justice and an ending to the ongoing genocide and apartheid

particular military intervention. We also acknowledge that October 7th is not where this story starts.

The siege and indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza must stop before more innocent women, men and children lose their lives. Humanitarian aid must be allowed to enter the area and civilian hostages must be released as required by international law. In accordance with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, without water, food, electricity and medicines thousands more will inevitably die. A UN expert group has described the indiscriminate targeting of civilians as a war crime; a term that covers both the Hamas attack and the response of the Government of Israel.

The occupation of Palestinian territories and the apartheid system imposed on its people must also end, including the sixteen-year confinement of the population of Gaza. We look forward to a time when Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Muslims, and people from any faith or creed and none, can live prosperous lives in peace.

We condemn the silence of governments, including that of the UK, in relation to Israel's multiple transgressions of international and human rights law. Without justice and respect of human rights for all, peace and stability will remain elusive, something humanity cannot afford.

In solidarity,

Carmen Montoya, Graduate Teaching Assistant, DPU, UCL
Khalid Nassef, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Nico Ali, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Adriana Allen, Professor of Development Planning, DPU, UCL
Marta José Arfellez, OWS Project Manager and Communications Lead, DPU, UCL
Alia Asani, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Giovanna Avallio, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Pam Bamberg, Lecturer, DPU, UCL
Candice Beane, Professor of Urban Design and Critical Theory, DPU, UCL
Donald Brown, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Luis Carlos Borrero, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Michael Casey-Gilman, Research and PhD Programme Administrator, DPU, UCL
Alexandra Zhuzhen Cheng, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Nathor Cozzano, Research Fellow, DPU, UCL
John D'Grazia, Professor of Urban Policy and International Development, DPU, UCL
Vitali Danant, Graduate Teaching Assistant, DPU, UCL
Harry Davidson, Professor, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL
Erikina Fernandez, DPU Associate
Josep Fort, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Luis Garcia Fernandez, Graduate Teaching Assistant, DPU, UCL
Francisco Garcia Gonzalez, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Sara Gonzalez Ortiz, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Aislinn Greene, Graduate Teaching Assistant, DPU, UCL
Lina Griffin, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Josephine Hawkes, Programme Administrator, DPU, UCL
Alban Hovson, Graduate Teaching Assistant and PhD Candidate
Pascale Hoffmann, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Sonia Hoque, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Candice Johnson, Professor of Urbanism and Disaster Risk Reduction, DPU, UCL
Barbara Epstein, Professor of Urban Development Planning, DPU, UCL
Alexander Mordkhai, Media and Communications Officer, DPU, UCL
Naji Makarem, Associate Professor of the Political Economy of Development, DPU, UCL
Michael Mantoni, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Golin Marx, Professor, DPU, UCL
Ajayish Manoharish, Lecturer, DPU, UCL
Sofiano Mastromarino, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Caroline Moser, Honorary Professor, DPU, UCL
Balazs Muntzar, Former Director, DPU, UCL
Nwagwu Okpara, Departmental Manager, DPU, UCL
Catalina Ortiz, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Kamna Patel, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Geoffrey Payne, former DPU staff member
Diego Pizarro Quevedo, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Jordana Ramalho, Associate Professor, DPU, UCL
Caroline Rigon, Graduate Teaching Assistant, DPU, UCL
Andrija Rigon, Professor of Participatory Development Planning, DPU, UCL
Hanadi Saadoun, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Kerth Sangam, former Lecturer (Teaching) DPU, UCL
Chris Seel, Unit Administrator, DPU, UCL
Gregory Tabacco, Lecturer (Teaching), DPU, UCL
Melissa Toprak, PhD Candidate, DPU, UCL
Eugene von Bernath, Lecturer (Teaching), DPU, UCL
Patrick Wakely, DPU Associate
Julian Walker, Professor of Inclusive Social Policy, DPU, UCL
Michael Wells, DPU Director, UCL
Liam Winstanley, Former Senior Lecturer, DPU, UCL
Tim Wickham, Lecturer (Teaching), DPU, UCL
Helen Wood, Professor of Urban Planning, DPU, UCL



6

14

501





Kate Sang voted yes 🇺🇸 🇮🇸 @katesang · Oct 8

This is disturbing

Suella Braverman urges police to crack down on Hamas support in UK



213



↳ Dibyesh Anand 🇮🇳 reposted



Yair Rosenberg @Yair_Rosenberg · 20h

Important on-the-ground @gcaw reporting from the West Bank, where extremist Israeli settlers are using the cover of the war to accelerate their own terrorist violence against Palestinians:



45

371

746

108K



↳ Kate Sang voted yes 🗳️ reposted



Adam Johannes @DrRoundglasses · Oct 22

...

My personal journey from being a liberal supporter of Israel, vaguely concerned about Palestinians, to a supporter of a free Palestine from the river to the sea. May be useful for someone starting on the same journey...



5

↻ 61

♥ 134

📊 9.8K

🔖 ↗



Stacy Johnson MBE @misssdjohnson · Oct 20



“They tried to bury us...they didn’t know we were seeds” Mexican proverb.

Department
of Health &
Social Care

29 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

19 October 2023

Dear colleague,

On 24 March 2023, I wrote to the Department of Health and Social Care’s agencies and partner organisations setting out how we should ensure good value for money when it comes to improving diversity and inclusion (DE&I) across the health family.

This included explaining that these issues are everyone’s responsibility and should be addressed through normal management processes rather than using external providers or dedicated roles within organisations.

In the Department, we have been focused on delivering efficiency so that we can move resources from the back office to the frontline. This has included reducing headcount (FTE) by one in six, and we have no standalone diversity roles. Much of this efficiency has been delivered by applying a recruitment freeze. Other parts of the health family, including NHS England, are also making progress on this.

I am therefore concerned that many local NHS organisations are actively recruiting into dedicated DE&I roles. Current live adverts include jobs with salaries of up to £96,376, which is above the basic full-time pay for a newly promoted consultant. There are also examples of continued use of subscriptions to external organisations on DE&I issues. I do not consider that this represents value for money, even more so at a time when budgets are under pressure as we work to tackle the backlog left by the pandemic.

I believe that we should devolve more to integrated care systems. Therefore, as you are responsible for managing a significant proportion of the NHS budget at a local level, I wanted to ensure that you are taking a similar approach to the Department to secure value for money.

I would appreciate it if you could work with NHS organisations in your area to review with a view to ceasing recruitment into standalone DE&I roles and external subscriptions to redirect these resources into frontline patient care.

Should organisations wish to take a different path then they should be willing to justify in public why such roles add more value than additional medical or healthcare staff.



1



2



7



1.1K



 **Prof Ilaria Boncori** @BoncoriIlaria · Sep 18 ...
Very excited to have our article accepted and soon to be published online (DOI: 10.1111/gwao.13073) in Gender, Work and Organization.

“Rethinking gender diversity: Transgender and gender nonconforming people and gender as constellation” Saoirse C. O’Shea and Olga Suhomlinova.

1 2 22 1.6K

 **Prof Ilaria Boncori** @BoncoriIlaria · Sep 18 ...
In this paper, we offer an alternative to the binary cisnormative metaphor of gender as a ‘spectrum’, by theorising a more inclusive metaphor of a gender constellation, thus promoting multidimensional, non-hierarchical, dynamic approaches to gender diversity.

2 71



Blueprint for Decolonisation: Dr Kamna Patel - Race and Space