

FAIR LSHTM

Concept document

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THE FIGHTING AGAINST INSTITUTIONAL RACISM (FAIR) COALITION

1 WHAT IS FAIR?

a. Mission

The LSHTM Fighting Against Institutional Racism (FAIR) Coalition is conceived as an internal network of all stakeholders at the School, including but not limited to the LSHTM Council, Senior Leadership Team, Faculty Leads, Heads of Departments (academic and services), academic staff, Medical Research Council staff, research partners, outsourced staff, students, alumni and union reps. This network will germinate from the groundwork laid by the BLM-LSHTM grassroots activist group and be taken up, led and run by the School itself. Ultimately, FAIR will put a spotlight on race-related issues and initiatives at LSHTM, long obscured by institutional silence, so that these can be addressed openly and constructively.

b. Objectives

The aims of the FAIR Coalition will be to:

- create a safer and more equitable environment for racially minoritized members of LSHTM,
- promote progress towards an anti-racist future by amplifying and empowering the voices of racially minoritized groups
- campaign for transparency and accountability from LSHTM for embedding anti-racist praxis at the institution;
- advocate for decolonization and anti-racist policies and practice at the School.

c. The Five pillars of the FAIR coalition

1. Connecting disparate initiatives at the School - The primary purpose of FAIR will be to connect the disparate initiatives and people throughout LSHTM who are working in this sphere on an individual basis, with common goals, but without the network required to make these actions sustainable. This network will make anti-racism a common theme running through all faculties and departments, and connect racially minoritized groups and others dedicated to racial justice with the information and resources they need. In other words, FAIR will not be a school group but rather an integral part of the institutional fabric at LSHTM.

2. Identifying and remedying gaps in anti-racism work at LSHTM - The FAIR network will help the People's Committee to identify the "knowledge gaps" in the current work being carried out to tackle racism in all its forms. Subsequently, it will advise, propose and support the implementation of actions and activities needed to fill these gaps. This will entail highlighting champions to work with, both internal and external to the School; planning or supporting events

(e.g. Black History Month, Brown Bag Lunch, etc), workshops and lecture series; and continually monitoring and evaluating the anti-racism initiatives at the School.

3. Resourcing of anti-racism actions/work/support - FAIR will be the platform to safeguard the proper resourcing and performance of anti-racism in all areas of work and study at LSHTM, ensuring that racially minoritized people are compensated and are never asked or expected to conduct anti-racism work for free. Local and specialized expertise is required to consult on and implement the wide range of anti-racism activities needed at the School. FAIR will work with Heads of Departments (HoDs), Black Lives Matter-LSHTM, and others to connect anti-racism consultants and experts with network members in need of guidance and support. The terms of reference will be agreed on based on the work required, and it will be fully commissioned.

4. Creating networks of racially minoritized groups - FAIR will mediate different forums for staff (academic and professional services), students and alumni. For example, a Black Africans network, Middle-Eastern/Northern Africa network, South Asian network, etc. These networks would be hosted via an online platform where staff (academic & professional services), students and alumni would have the opportunity to network, find mentorship opportunities and more. The networks will also allow for more targeted surveys on well-being. The results would be given to EDI. *To be discussed in more detail during our first meeting.*

5. Collecting and raising complaints from racially minoritized people - FAIR will support and advocate for racially minoritized people reporting bias incidents. As such, it will collate the information and raise the issues directly with the appropriate department, staff, or other party(s) concerned.

d. BLM-LSHTM role moving forward

Since June 2020, BLM-LSHTM has been working on a volunteer basis to develop presentations, documents and more. We have dedicated astronomical time to this work due to the desperate need for it, with requests from many members of the Institution including the LSHTM Council, SLT and numerous HoDs for your work, expertise and support. Our contribution has been influential and appreciated and our commitment to institutional reform has driven us. While we have decided to maintain our independence, we will be happy to continue to work together, including on heftier, resource-intensive projects. However it is not possible or appropriate to continue to undertake this unpaid work and so compensation will now need to be agreed on.

For example, we have just released the first part of our anti-racism toolkit (Decolonize LSHTM), for use by the LSHTM community. We plan on developing two more parts, Reclaim Diversity and Reimagine LSHTM, that link to the need for external review. Although we are proud of what we have achieved on a volunteer basis, formal commissioning of this work and future similar projects

is appropriate, given the intense and extensive work required of volunteers to prepare this document. We feel it would be a fair way to channel the School's resources towards anti-racism, without compromising BLM-LSHTM's legitimacy as an external agent.

An example of a possible compensation format is the recently shared LSHTM [Pentacell](#) project. Along similar lines, we propose that BLM members be compensated for their time by agreeing expected hours of work for a given project, along with hourly rates. We will continue to provide the guidance we are being continually asked to give, are well placed to give and are happy to give, but with fair compensation for the time and efforts invested.

e. Steering Committee - Forum for Anti-Racism Dialogue - proposed structure

We believe that the process to dismantle institutional racism and decolonize LSHTM has to be all-encompassing in order to bring about the cultural shift and School-wide structural change that is required. This will entail involving department heads from each faculty and professional services.

Proposed Forum membership:

- Chair - FAIR Coordinator
- Core Members
 - Heads of Departments & Heads of Services - there are currently 10 HoDs in Academia and 13 HoS in Professional services (usually 16 but Legal services is vacant and HR/EDI included below). In order to limit the scheduling demands on this very busy cohort, faculties might organize their department heads into small peer groups, with rotating attendance at the forum dialogue.)
 - Clare Matysova from the EDI office; Jenny Jenkin, Kessar Kalim and Kara Hanson from SLT; and Naomi Stewart from the communications team.
- Interest groups
 - DGH/SRC/Unions to offer internal perspectives and report back to their respective networks.
- Observers/resource
 - BLM to advise the Forum on its approach and plans, and to report back to its wider network.

Proposed Forum functioning:

Achieving our mutual goals of dismantling institutional racism requires those with power to take ownership for related actions, including the Forum for Dialogue.

The members of the Forum will devise a list of issues that can be tackled in the short-term at the department level. The objective is to identify immediate actions that can be taken towards dismantling institutional racism, while building momentum and laying the foundation for

continued work in the future. Each department will be in charge of one domain. The HoD will share this topic with their department and engage everyone to propose a solution and plan of action to move forward.

The plan will then be presented during the next meeting and, if approved, will be implemented across the other departments. There is currently a lot of duplication within the School, and the breadth of actions is overwhelming. That's why we propose spreading the tasks across the School and making each individual department and the School as a whole accountable.

Proposed agenda for first Forum meeting:

- Presentation of the idea by BLM-LSHTM to HoDs
- Create a list of workstreams and allocate these across departments
- Define the role of BLM-LSHTM
- Discuss FAIR Network (e.g. description attached or will be sent by the end of the week)
- Define the role of DGH/EDI
- Compensation and budgeting

Proposed Forum funding:

Each HoD will decide the type of support needed from the BLM-LSHTM group for each phase (e.g. presentation, definition of strategy, etc.), and BLM-LSHTM members involved would be compensated for their time (see below for proposed mechanisms).

2 FAIR STATUS WITHIN LSHTM

a. A new, innovative structure

- FAIR should be an independent collective that is not linked to SLT, similar to staff associations in other universities. While FAIR is independent, the collective will work with existing structures within LSHTM to build on their foundations and create a more equitable and productive system.

b. Staff

- A full-time FAIR coordinator - experienced in project management and anti-racism.
- A part-time assistant coordinator with IT/data management skills to work on the online platforms (e.g. website, staff/student networks, events).
- A part-time HR/finance assistant to manage requests and payments.

c. Funding

- An annual budget should be allocated to the structure.
- Earmarked donation from the Alumni campaign.
- Other initiatives hosted via FAIR (e.g. Walk the Talk project in development).

The funds will be used to organize events, compensate staff/students/alumni and contribute to anti-racist activities.

3 FAIR AND REC

a. Why do we think REC is not applicable to LSHTM at the moment?

How can one self-assess issues that they do not fully understand the issues at hand? Even racially minoritized people themselves may have normalized racist attitudes over time to better cope with the environment/culture at LSHTM. The LSHTM community is only just starting the process of decolonizing their minds. To ask them to self-assess at the moment does not seem realistic.

As an example, UCL created a BAME network in 2009, and the group is responsible for independently reviewing BAME issues and well-being. Compared to them, we are only at the beginning. Here is the link to their [application](#) and below an extract.

In a number of ways, I believe that our university is taking dynamic, pioneering steps and we are beginning to see this bear fruit. The university has had an Equalities and Diversity Accountability Framework in place since 2013, and this is firmly embedded in the annual appraisal process of my Senior Management Team. Each Dean and Vice Provost has equality objectives for their area, and both Council and I scrutinise performance against those objectives every year. The performance of individual Deans and Vice-Provosts against the achievement of their equality objectives, amongst other elements, informs their performance related pay. Moreover, equality and diversity is a key priority area in our 20 year strategy, 'UCL 2034'.

b. Why does REC need FAIR?

The FAIR Coalition would:

- ensure a better and more common understanding of institutional racism to prevent biases in the self-assessment process
- allow LSHTM to identify champions and highlight successful initiatives
- create a safe space for racially minoritized people to share their concerns without fear of retaliation
- create an organizational culture where discussing and analysing impacts on race equality becomes part of our regular activities