

POCSquared S2 Episode 4 Shownotes

- The problems with the Race Equality Charter

- WONKHE.com article:

- <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/racial-equality-in-higher-education-is-it-really-one-step-forward/>
- Lack of BAME population in many universities means more white people have to become allies to make change happen – lack of achieving REC in many universities is because white allies are not willing to do the work
- *“With a lack of BAME staff in HEIs and specifically in leadership positions the ability to meet certain metrics may even take a decade of change to manifest.”*
- *“There are always concerns that the REC, as with any equality-based achievement, might be used by institutions for point scoring to gain a competitive advantage over other institutions.”*
 - A very good point brought up -> this highlights the **advantage of grassroots movements** as they centre the voices of the oppressed and are not used as a “gold-star” badge of achievement to slap onto the university in order to entice students and **increase revenue**.
- *“Although UKRI has updated the stance on equality and diversity, there is yet to date, clear recommendations that HEIs show similar engagement with the REC.”*
 - *So why has this not just happened to the REC, given strong statements on equality and*

diversity from important funders? This is partly about UKRI's own performance – ethnic minority principal investigators submitting UKRI grant applications are roughly 10% less likely to be successful than white principal investigators over a sustained period. -> Again, **structural racism issues are brought up, non-white PI's aren't as successful with grant applications**

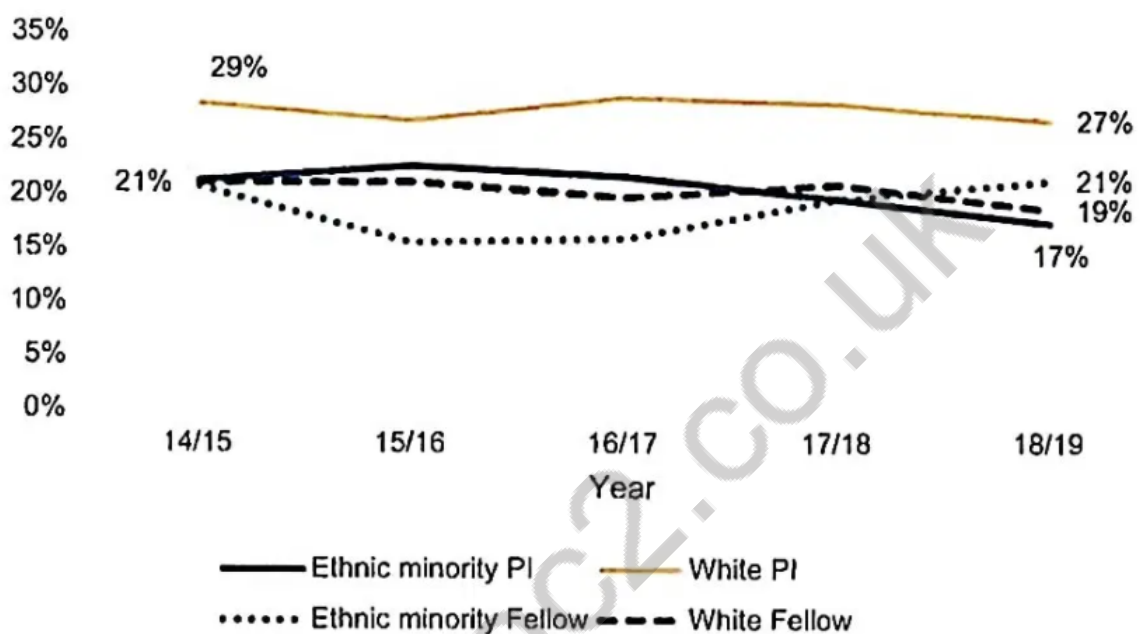


Figure 1. Success rates of UKRI submitted applications by ethnicity for principal investigators (PIs) and fellows over a 5-year period.

- Tokenism will be a problem that will arise from the REC if not handled properly:
 - “..can make these schemes be viewed as **tokenistic gestures**, and instead of integrating staff, cause **further segregation and (self-) stigma for BAME staff.** “

- Article (LSE Blog): White academia: will the Race Equality Charter make a difference?

- <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/tackling-race-inequality-in-higher-education/>

- Very few BAME people at higher levels in academia:

- *“But the staff body is nowhere near as diverse as the student make-up. BME academics are less likely to be in senior decision-making roles compared to their white colleagues; 8.5 per cent of white staff compared to 6.4 per cent of BME staff are in such roles and they are also more likely to be on fixed term contracts. **And of the 14,315 professors in the UK only 70 are Black, and shockingly only 17 of these are female**, while there are only 20 deputy or pro vice-chancellors who are BME compared to the 530 of the majority who are white.”*

- <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/equality-higher-education-statistical-report-2015>

- Statistics from the ECU which back this statement

- Investigating higher education institution and their views on the Race Equality Charter:

- Report (Sept 2018) on how Higher Education views the Race Equality Charter

- (From the conclusions section):

staff). All respondents in member and non-members institutions stressed their concerns around resources and funding allocated to staff who were involved with the REC - often this burden fell on the shoulders of the Diversity and Equality staff who were already inundated in their day to day roles.

- As mentioned in the podcast episode, **all the extra REC work would go to EDI staff** (and possibly the sole WOC on the team)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing on our findings, we suggest the following recommendations. However, we are aware that what is primarily needed is a significant cultural and attitudinal shift in HEIs regarding the contribution BME academics make to HEIs, and an acknowledgment and recognition of institutional racism and structural disadvantages in HEIs. The

- Awareness that institutional racism is the primary force stopping BME academics from rising to higher levels in academia and that this needs to change first

- From the recommendations section:

2. Formalising and making unconscious bias training mandatory for all senior staff in HEIs (level 6 or equivalent). We



7. All HEIs to recognise that the category BME is a crude composition that needs to be broken down when HEIs are
- **Making unconscious bias training mandatory and making sure that BME individuals in an institution are not lumped together** is a really important change that needs to be implemented to improve the charter
- From the references section:

REFERENCES

Ahmed, S (2007) 'You end up doing the document rather than doing the doing': Diversity, race equality and the politics of documentation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (4): 590-609.

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- As mentioned in the podcast episode, schemes like the **REC become a box ticking exercise** much like the Athena SWAN charter – **documentation becomes the main goal rather than actually pushing for proper reform.**

Media recommendations:

- Karel:
- Webcomics with Black Leads:
 - <https://joamettegil.tumblr.com/post/129254047960/web-comics-w-black-leads>
- Thug Notes (YouTube playlist):

- <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLghL9V9QTN0jTgA1qrhWrBCB Ln4xIVIB>
- **Pruthvi:**
 - Novel: The Three Body Problem (Author: Cixin Liu)
 - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Three-Body-Problem-Cixin-Liu/dp/1784971553>
- **Sehher:**
 - Film: Soul (2020)
 - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2948372/>

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