



Silently Loud: Racism in Academia in UK

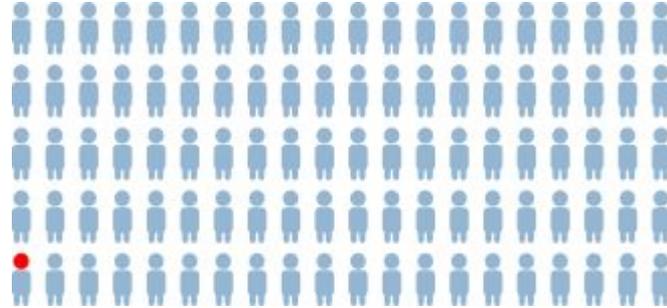
Dr. Ruby Zelzer – Paper Whispers

Black people in academia: The status quo

Racism in academia in UK is real and its ultimate result is the near absence of Black professors.

<1

Black professor
for every 100
professors in UK



53

Black women
professors in UK
out of a total of

23000

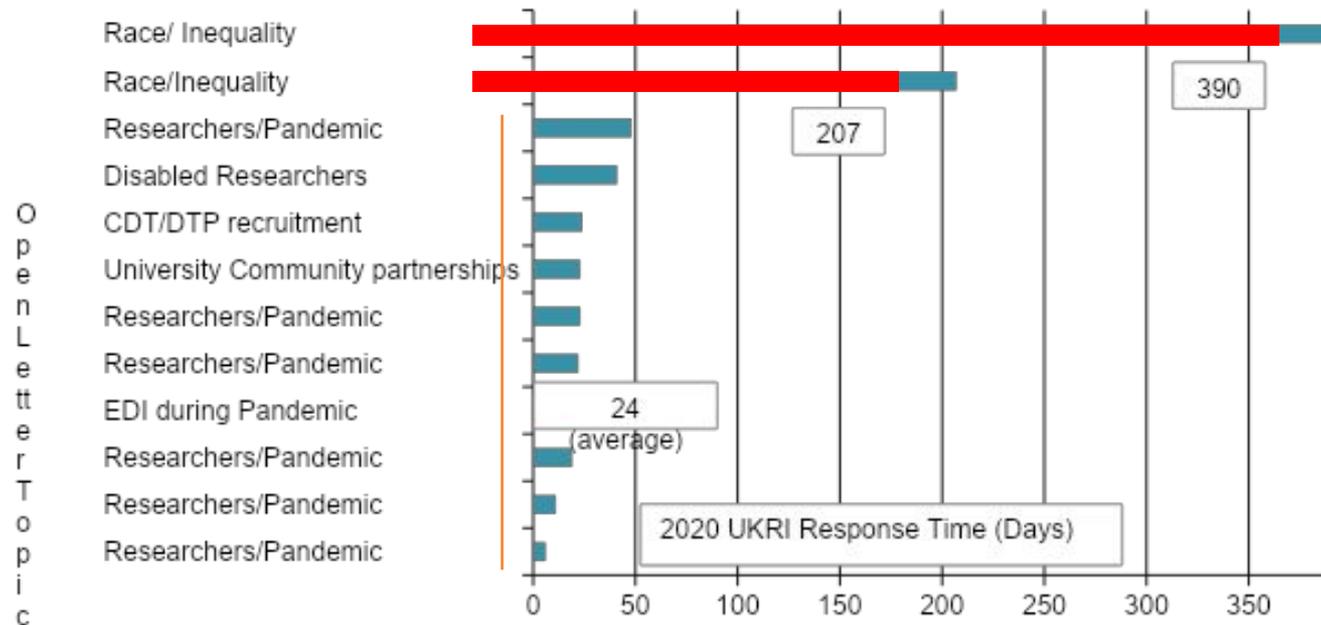
In STEM subject areas, many disciplines have just 0 or 1 Black professor in the whole of UK

Inequity in funding

UKRI is the largest funding body in UK and a 2020 case study highlights how current processes in policy, panel and funding allocation maintain systemic racism. An open letter sent to UKRI on this issue did not receive a response for over a year despite a 24 day average for all other letters.

£0

In 2020, no awards were made to Black academic PIs in a **£4.3 Million** UKRI/NIHR funded study to explore Covid-19 and its disproportionate impact on **Black and minoritised people** in UK. One panel member was a co-investigator on 3 of the 6 successful grants.



Ref: UKRI open letter, Ladders4action, Paper Whispers FOI request to UKRI

The Broken Pipeline

It is important to note that at undergraduate level, Black people do enter into academia but progression through to professorial level is very rare. There is attrition at every stage leading to a near elimination of Black people and especially, Black women, at higher levels of academia. A ground breaking report – The Broken Pipeline Report from Leading Routes highlighted this .



8.7% of first year entrants into undergraduate study in UK were Black

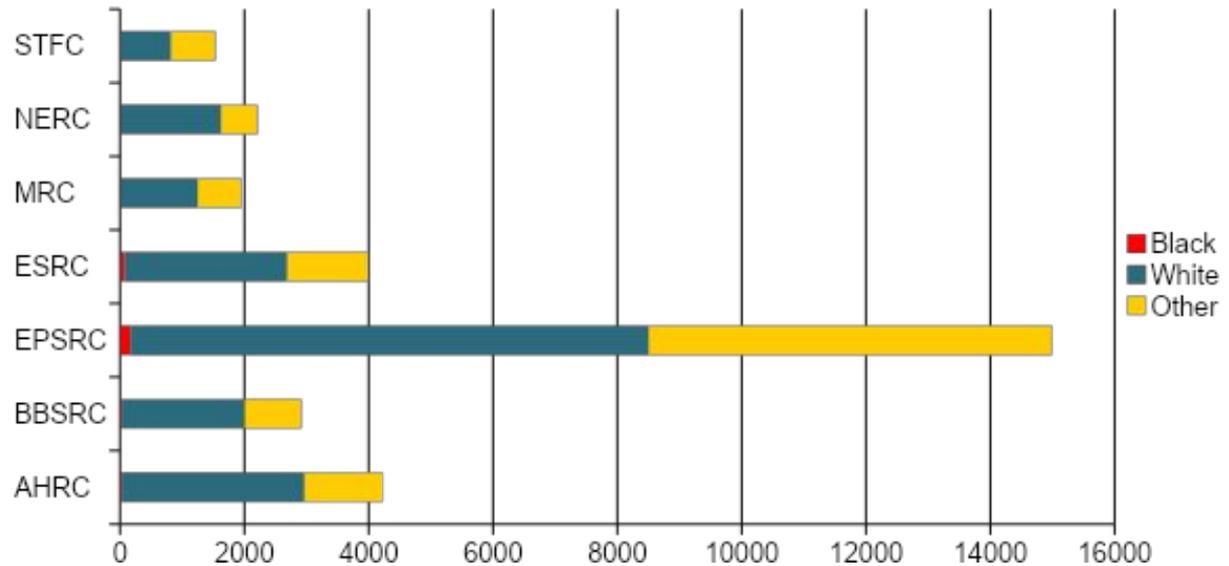
4.6% of first year entrants into postgraduate research study in UK were Black

Less than **1%** of professors in UK were Black

Follow the money! Career Stage 1: Getting a PhD

A common saying is that in order to find the problem, you must follow the money. In academia in UK, this means looking at who gets funded by UKRI. Starting at PhD level, you can note that very few Black people receive studentships from UKRI. Some councils such as STFC funded 0 Black students in a 5 year period, and further just 325 places out of 31525 were awarded to Black PhD students across all UKRI councils.

PhD Studentship Awards 2015/2016 to 2019/2020

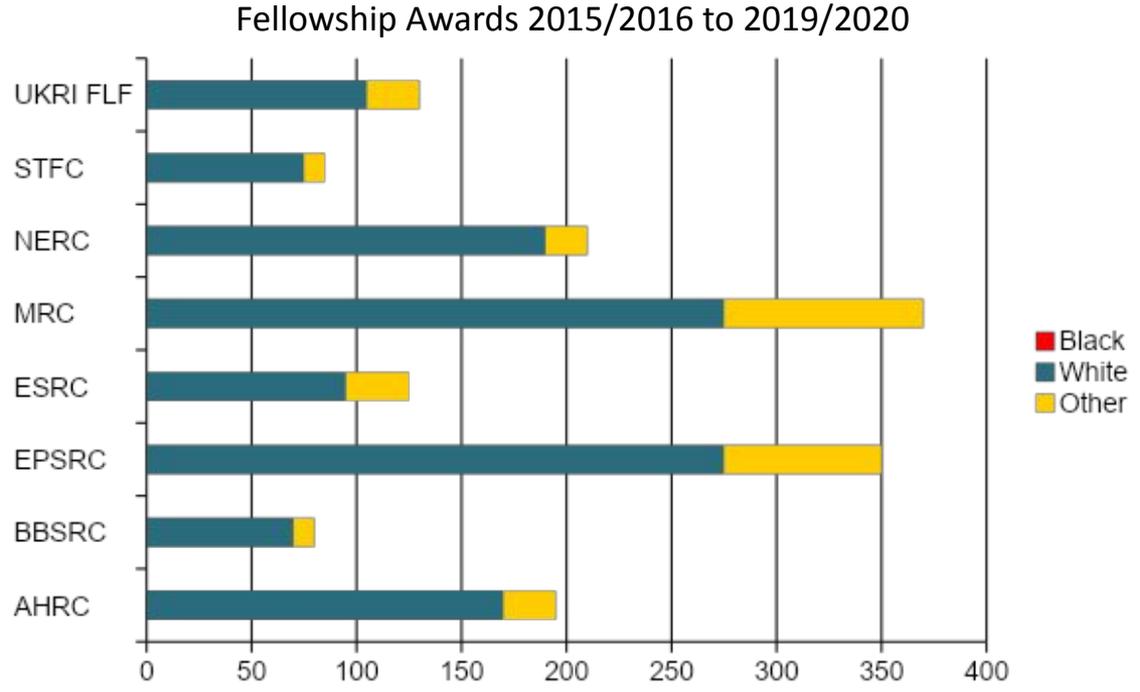


Ref: UKRI EDI Data

Follow the money!

Career Stage 2: Postdoctoral fellowships

Continuing to follow the money at the next career stage after a PhD, there were **NO** recorded postdoctoral fellowships to Black PhD graduates between 2015 and 2020. The UKRI EDI data reports either a direct 0 or leaves a blank space but without explanation as to why the data is not recorded. It is important to note that such fellowships are often esteem indicators for Universities in UK looking to hire new lecturers.



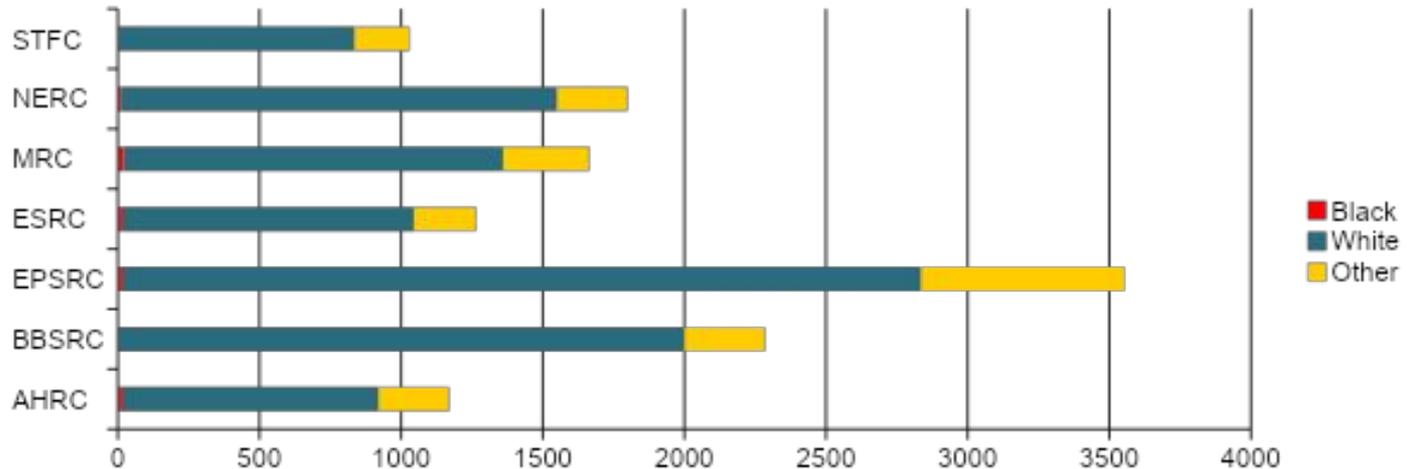
Ref: UKRI EDI Data

Follow the money!

Career Stage 3: Early career lectureships to professorships

At the final stage where permanent lecturers and professors compete for funding, there is again a near absence of Black Principal Investigators (PI) receiving awards. Once more, Universities use this criteria to determine who to promote with ability to attract funding regularly being key to faster promotion. However, there were just 75 awards to Black PIs over a 5 year period out of total of 12695 awards. Systemic racism is present and clear within the largest funding body in UK - UKRI.

PI Awards 2015/2016 to 2019/2020



Resistance to Racism in academia

The data you have seen has been collated as part of the effort to resist racism in academia. It serves as a reminder that collecting the data is important but further, taking action as a result of knowing what the data means is important. There are people and organisations invested in true representation of Black people in academia. Some of these are listed below as well as key reading on the subject of institutional and systemic racism in academia. Finally, on a personal note, I recommend non-traditional methods such as social media to publicise knowledge of systemic racism to a very large audience in a way that print journals cannot.



Dr. Ruby @PaperWhispers · 8 Jun

There was an audible gasp today from the response to my question about Wellcome disaggregating figures from BAME to Black. The response being Black people receiving research funding cannot be disclosed as the number is so low that to disaggregate would deanonymise the data. 1/n

[Show this thread](#)

5.19K 1.4K 48

Impressions ⓘ
622K

Social media is a powerful tool for building community as well as for taking action.

People and Organisations

Paper Whispers

Leading Routes - Broken Pipeline Report

Staying Power – Prof. Nicola Rollock for UCU

Ladders4action

TIGER in STEMM