

Northern Race Equality Conference

Programme



9 April • Bradford

Northern Race Equality Conference

Foreword from the Programme Partners

Hey there!

Welcome to the Northern Race Equality Conference 2025 (NREC25)! We're absolutely thrilled to have you join us for this special event. It's not just any conference—it's a gathering of passionate activists, advocates, organisations, lawyers, researchers, and academics all committed to building a better society where racial justice is the norm. And we're so excited to do this right here in Bradford!

You're the Heart of This Conference

Honestly, the magic of NREC25 comes from YOU. Your stories, your ideas, and your passion are what make this event truly special. We're all here to learn, share, and grow together. It's coordinated by an awesome team—the Race Equality Network, the Ella Baker School of Organising, and Inclusive North—and they've designed this conference to be interactive, educational, and most of all, welcoming.

A Huge Thank You

Seriously, thank you for being here. By showing up, you're saying you care about making a change, and that means the world to us. This is our collective opportunity to become stronger, more effective champions of equal rights and justice.

Let's Make Today Amazing

We're pumped for the day ahead and hope you are too. Let's dive into some great discussions, workshops, and activities.

Let's Disagree Well

There are going to be a lot of discussions today, exploring different ideas and viewpoints, it is inevitable that we won't agree with everything that we hear. Let's ensure that we treat each other with respect, especially when we disagree. And let's turn every disagreement into a learning moment, an opportunity to see the same issues from a different perspective. Disagreeing well is one way in which we deepen our understanding.

We Want to Hear from You

Before you head out today, we'd love for you to fill out the [evaluation sheets](#). Your feedback helps us make future events even better.

Stick Around for Some Fun

Don't rush off after the conference! We've got some entertainment lined up, and it'd be awesome if you could join us. Let's keep the conversations going and enjoy each other's company.

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Looking Ahead: Building a National Racial Justice Policy Forum

We're also excited about the future and want to get your thoughts on something important. We're thinking about setting up a National Racial Justice Policy Forum and would love for you to be a part of it. Your insights and ideas could really shape what this forum becomes. So, if you're interested in helping us build something meaningful, let us know!

You can [express your interest](#) at the end of the conference [feedback form](#). If you'd like to discuss the National Racial Justice Policy Forum further please contact nadim@raceequalitynetwork.org.uk.

Meet the Conference Programme Partners!

Race Equality Network (REN)

REN is at the heart of racial justice work in the North. They're all about action — bringing communities and organisations together to tackle inequality and uplift marginalised voices. From local grassroots efforts to big-picture policy conversations, REN is always in the mix, making change happen one step at a time.



Ella Baker School of Organising (EBSO)

Inspired by civil rights hero Ella Baker, this team is all about empowering people with the skills and confidence to stand up and organise for justice. Whether you're brand-new to activism or a seasoned organiser, their workshops and resources are super helpful and always down-to-earth. They're all about people power and making real change, from the ground up.



Inclusive North

These folks believe the North should be for everyone. Inclusive North champions fairness, equity, and strong inclusive leadership across the region. They work with communities, decision-makers, and organisations to make sure voices from all backgrounds are heard loud and clear. Their mission? To build a North where everyone belongs and thrives.



Thanks again for being here. Let's make today count!

Cheers, **The Conference Programme Partners**

9 April • Bradford

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Please note: if you are looking at this programme on a device, rather than in paper form, all **bright blue** words (and logos) are clickable - to help you find out more information and navigate through the programme.

If you have a print copy of the programme and would like to access the links, you can find a virtual copy of the programme at: tinyurl.com/NREC-prog

The Venue, access & driving to the venue

The conference will take place within the **Richmond Building in the University of Bradford**, Richmond Rd, Bradford, BD7 1DP. You can find [information on visiting the campus here](#). The campus is approximately 10 minutes walk from the Bradford Interchange. You can access a [campus map here](#) - which includes information on how to get there. The Richmond Building is number 1 on the map. The Richmond building is fully wheelchair accessible. You can find [information on disabled parking here](#). The Great Hall, where registration will take place, is situated on the first floor of the Richmond Building and can be accessed via stairs or a lift.

If you're driving, the best route in is to drive down Manchester Road, take a left after Bradford Live onto Thornton Road. At the first set of traffic lights take a left onto Legrams Lane and at the mini round about take a left onto Shearbridge Road. At the next mini round about take a left again onto Great Horton Road where you should be able to find on street parking. The nearest pay and display car park is on Wilton Street, off Morley Road. Whilst the university has a visitors car park, we can't guarantee that you will get a space on the day, however there is a lot of on street parking available near the university.

The Rooms - Renamed

We have chosen to temporarily rename the rooms we are using after heroes from racialised minority communities. Some of their names are relatively well known, others more obscure. We hope you will take the time to read a little about each of them. It is people that make our movement, and it is good to celebrate them - click on the blue links to find out more.

- [Sivanandan Hall](#) (Great Hall)
- [Olive Morris Hall](#) (Small Hall)
- [Martin Luther King Room](#) (D3)
- [Jayaben Desai Lecture Theatre](#) (JSB Lect)
- [Margaret Busby Room](#) (D5)

Quiet room & prayer room

The Margaret Busby Room (D5) will be available as a quiet room / prayer room 11 am - 2 pm

Stalls

We have some brilliant stalls, you can find them in the Great Hall and Small Hall, they include:

- [The Commonweal Collection](#)
- [Working Class Movement Library](#)
- [Debt Justice](#)
- [Educate Against Islamophobia](#)
- [Voice 4 Change](#)
- [Stand Up to Racism](#)
- [Co-Production Collective](#)
- [Independent Working Class Education Project](#)
- [Theatre In Flow](#)
- [BASE X LTD](#)
- [Greater Manchester Tenants Union](#)
- [European Drom](#)
- [Black and Brown Rainbow](#)
- [RECLAIM](#)

Lunch & refreshments

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided during the breaks in the Small Hall.

Our conference sponsor, [My Lahore](#), who are rooted in the heart of Bradford, have provided a delicious vegetarian and vegan lunch for us today. The food will be served right outside the Great Hall, on the balcony. We have catered for those who have requested a meal with special dietary requirements such as Gluten Free.

Thank you [My Lahore](#)!



Timetable

Wednesday 9 April 9 am - 4.30 pm

Time	Activity	Location
9.00 am - 10.00 am	Registration - with refreshments & ice breakers	Sivanandan Hall - Great Hall
10.00 am - 10.30 am	Opening Plenary, Intros and Keynote Speech	Sivanandan Hall - Great Hall
10:35 am - 11:35 am Workshop 1	Trade Union and Workers' Rights	Olive Morris Hall - Small Hall
	Racial Justice is Asylum Justice	MLK Room - D3
	Race equality through building resilience and influencing policy	Jayaben Desai - Lecture Theatre
11:35am - 11:50 am	Break	Olive Morris Hall - Small Hall
11:50am - 1.00 pm Workshop 2	Prevent: Surveillance or Safety	Jayaben Desai - Lecture Theatre
	Building a Movement	Sivanadan Hall -Great Hall
	Local to the International	Olive Morris Hall - Small Hall
	Defeating the Narratives of Division	MLK Room - D3
1.00 pm - 1.45 pm	Lunch	Sivanandan Hall - Great Hall
1.45 pm - 2.30 pm Workshop 3	How to Get Organised, Campaign and Win	Olive Morris Hall - Small Hall
	Leaders of Colour: Breaking Barriers, Building Futures	Jayaben Desai Lecture Theatre
	Ways to address the awarding gap in HE	MLK Room - D3
2.30 pm - 2.45 pm	Break	Olive Morris Hall - Small Hall
2.45 pm - 3.25 pm Workshop 4	Antidotes to the Red Pill: Addressing Gender-Based Violence from a Black Feminist Lens	Sivanandan Hall - Great Hall
	Progress in the North: Coast-to-Coast	MLK Room - D3
	Investors in Black and Racially Minoritised Communities	Jayaben Desai - Lecture Theatre
	All Black Lives Matter	Olive Morris Hall - Small Hall
3.30pm - 4.30pm	Closing Plenary	Sivanandan Hall - Great Hall
4.30 pm - 5.30 pm	Networking Opportunity	Sivanandan Hall - Great Hall
5.30 pm - 7.30 pm	Join us for a social	My Lahore restaurant

Feedback: We'd love to hear your feedback, please fill in our [feedback form](#) to let us know your thoughts

Session Descriptions

9am - 10am

Registration, refreshments & ice breaker

Location: Sivanadan Hall (Great Hall)

Registration opens at 9.00 am and will take place in the Sivanadan Hall (Great Hall) of the Richmond Building. We will run an ice breaker and have refreshments available. It will be an opportunity to situate yourself and meet fellow attendees. All you need to bring to register is yourself, and we'll ask for your name to check you in.

If you arrive after 09:55, please go straight to the Opening Plenary, or a session of your choice.

10am - 10.30am

Opening Plenary

Location: Sivanadan Hall (Great Hall)

Facilitators:

The opening plenary will kick off with a warm welcome to Bradford by REN CEO, Humma Nizami. The plenary will be an opportunity to re-emphasise the commitment we have all made to respect difference, and to highlight some of the themes we will explore over the weekend: intersectionality, power, a new government, and the state of our movement. We will touch on some of the big questions at the conference.

MP Naz Shah, will deliver a keynote speech around tackling Race inequality in the current political climate. Naz Shah is the Labour Member of Parliament for Bradford West, elected in 2015. An advocate for social justice, equality, and human rights, she focuses on issues such as domestic violence and Islamophobia. She has been recognised in The 500 Most Influential Muslims annually since 2022 and is known for her fearless commitment to speaking truth to power. Her personal journey—overcoming significant challenges to become a political leader in the British Parliament—continues to inspire many. Additionally, she has recently been appointed as the UK Trade Envoy to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

We will hear from REN Programme Manager Nadim Qureshi about the development of the National Racial Justice Network.

Before we move into the workshops, be prepared to laugh your socks off with Bradford comedian, Kashif Ahmed!



Humma Nizami
REN CEO



MP Naz Shah



Nadim Qureshi
REN



Kash Kureshi
Comedian

10:35am – 11:35am

Trade Union and Workers' Rights

Location: Olive Morris Hall (Small Hall)

Facilitators:

This workshop explores how trade unions can effectively support workers of colour in combating workplace racism, discrimination, and structural inequality. While unions have a proud history of fighting for workers' rights, many Black, Asian, and minority ethnic workers still face barriers—from pay gaps to harassment and lack of representation in leadership. Participants will share experiences, discuss strategies for holding unions accountable, and explore how rank-and-file members can push for meaningful change.

We will look at:

- The history of trade unions.
- Building solidarity by centring anti-racism in campaigns and linking workplace struggles to broader movements.
- Challenging workplace racism through collective action, bargaining, and legal support.
- Amplifying voices of colour by ensuring fair representation and tackling internal biases.

Together, we'll ask: How can unions become true allies in the fight against racism at work?



Wilf Sullivan
EBSO



Safiyya Patel
TUC

Racial Justice is Asylum Justice

Location: Martin Luther King Room (D3)

Facilitators:

Asylum Justice is Racial Justice seeks to look at the various inequalities facing refugees and asylum seekers, racial injustices in the asylum system, immigration and the worsening hostile environment. Understanding the ways in which racism plays a powerful role in who receives protection and safety, the story of racism within the UK asylum system can be traced to Britain's imperial past and the impact it still has today. The session aims to discuss the important issues around asylum justice, dismantling the hostile environment and building collective solidarity.



Haleemah Alaydi
Refugee Action



Ben Whitham
Refugee Action

Race equality through building resilience and influencing policy

Jayaben Desai Lecture Theatre (JSB Lecture Theatre)

Facilitators:

We will explore influencing policies and overcoming barriers to government influence, especially for small organisations. Also, introduce Voice4Change England's Catalyst Programme, building resilience and influence to tackle race inequalities. Our free organisational infrastructure support offer includes identifying needs, tailor-making 121 support and capacity building.

We'll present our policy workshop on developing impactful policies for our communities. Topics include analysing the policy ecosystem, understanding national sentiment, influencing local and national government, making an impact as a small organisation, developing organisational policies (through our ACEVO partnership, Home Truths 2), and using storytelling for policy influence

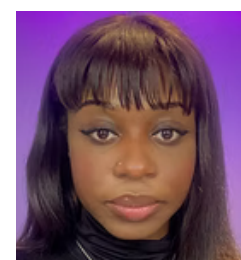
Questions:

- How do we know what organisational development support you need?
- What are your organisational priorities?
- What are your current engagement influencing policy and decision making forums?
- How do you break barriers to influence local and central government to make a difference as a small organisation?

📺 [Click here to see a short video about the session](#)



Dr Sharmin Shajahan
Voice4ChangeEngland



Christabelle Quaynor
Voice4ChangeEngland

11:50am – 1.00pm - page 1 of 2

Prevent: Surveillance or Safety

Jayaben Desai Lecture Theatre (JSB Lecture Theatre)

Facilitators:

The Prevent Duty, part of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, requires public sector workers to identify and report individuals at risk of "radicalisation". Despite government claims of safeguarding communities, critics argue it disproportionately targets Muslims, fostering mistrust and stigmatisation. Reports highlight its chilling effect on free speech, education, and community relations, with many feeling surveilled rather than supported.

This session explores Prevent's real-world impact, examining concerns around racial and religious profiling, securitisation of public services, and the erosion of trust. We'll discuss how communities can challenge Prevent, including legal avenues, grassroots activism, and alternative safeguarding approaches that prioritise social cohesion over securitisation. Join us to explore strategies for resistance and solidarity in the face of discriminatory policies.



Shezana Hafiz
Cage



Dr Layla Aitlhadj
Prevent Watch

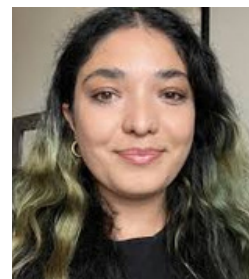
Hamzah Naveed
Mend

Building a Movement

Location: Sivanandan Hall (Great Hall)

Facilitators:

Building a Movement seeks to look at ways we can create solidarity connections in our society, through various communities and sectors. The session is hosted by Baobab Foundation, accompanied with facilitators from various fields. The central question of the session seeks to ask how can we utilise our existing resources to tackle inequalities and racism, and what is missing from our spaces? In the format of a World Café, we will look at ways to build a series of movements, relating to topics such as young people, migrant justice, arts and culture etc.



Amy Tara Bullard
Baobab Foundation



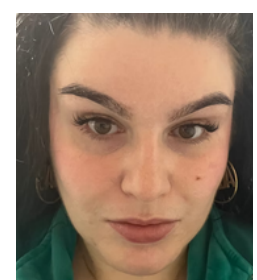
Jawad Anjum
Migrants Organise



Anthony Riach
Riachbros



Kofi Gyamfi
RECLAIM



Lolo Brookes-Jones
RECLAIM

11:50pm – 1.00pm - page 2 of 2

Local to the International

Location: Olive Morris Hall (Small Hall)

Facilitators:

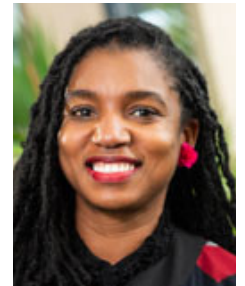
Throughout this session we'll explore the central question 'how do international events impact our local communities?'. The session aims to look at the ways in which international events and narratives have an impact on our local communities. What can we do to build solidarity connections? How do we build collective solidarity? It will be in a World Café format style and each table will represent a topic such as climate justice, migrant justice etc.



Dr Tiffany Holloman
Uni of Bradford



Fatima Mahmood
REN



Dr. Pedi Obani
Uni of Bradford



Rabbi Herschel Gluck



Rivka Shaw
GMIAU



Fatou Jinadu
GMIAU

Defeating the Narratives of Division

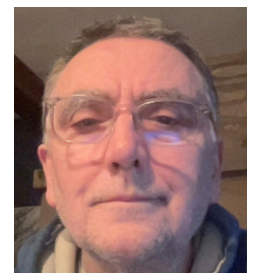
Location: Martin Luther King Room (D3)

Facilitators:

Around the world people are increasingly voting for authoritarian populist leaders who promise to solve all our problems by directing hatred towards minorities. These 'leaders', and the narratives of division that they pedal, have no solutions to our problems, and indeed, once in positions of influence, their actions will only make matters worse, as they pursue, ever more vigorously, the very economic policies that got us into this mess: deregulation, union busting, privatisation and starving the public sector of funding, so they can cut taxes to the already super-rich. Yet in the UK, at the moment, we seem to be following that international trend towards divided communities and support for politicians with contempt for notions of equality, human rights and the rule of law. This session explores how we can reverse this trend in our communities.



Taranjit Chana
ROTA & EBSO



John Page
EBSO

 [Click here to see a short video about the session](#)

1.45pm – 2.30pm

How to Get Organised, Campaign and Win

Location: Olive Morris Hall (Small Hall)

Facilitators:

In the midst of a cost of living crisis, rise of racism, worsening inequalities and the attack on our civil liberties, there has never been a more important time to build a strong movement to challenge those in power! It is time to give a voice and power back to those who demand change. The session will look at examples of campaigning throughout history, both on a local and national level, and their successes! We will explore the concept of organising, campaigning tactics, provide a step-by-step guide on identifying the issues and rallying to create change, build solidarity and mobilise the community to fight and win.



Bilal Hussain
RunnymedeTrust



Piers Telemacque
REN

Leaders of Colour: Breaking Barriers, Building Futures

Jayaben Desai Lecture Theatre (JSB Lecture Theatre)

Facilitators:

With the rise of worsening racism and increasing inequalities, the session will look at the career and personal journeys of four leaders of colour. This live panel discussion with industry leaders will tackle a crucial question: What does it mean to be a leader of colour in this current day? This powerful panel discussion will delve in to lived experiences and bold insights around career progression and will unpack the hard truths—why progress has stalled, what the data reveals, and how we can change the narrative. Expect a thought-provoking, solutions-driven conversation that challenges norms, ignites action, and places you at the forefront of driving lasting change.



Saj Zafar
LeadHERship Academy



Humma Nizami
CEO, REN



Naz Zaman
CEO, Inclusive North



Jeremy Crook OBE
CEO, ARE



Yvonne Field OBE
CEO, Ubele Initiative

Ways to address the awarding gap in HE

Location: Martin Luther King Room (D3)

Facilitator:

This masterclass explores the work of co-creation in developing creative resources to engage colleagues and students in anti-racist practice. Building on Ricardo Barker's film 'Re:Tension', 'Mind the Gap' extends the co-creative process to sectoral co-creation. In 2024, I led a co-creation project with staff and students from LTU and with other London based universities to gather student and staff voices around the degree awarding gap. The output of this work is a film which was launched in January 2025. The film is a provocation and a call to action to think about how pedagogy influences student success or indeed perpetuates indifference, disengagement and the wicked problem of the awarding gap. This masterclass will include screening particular scenes from the film, activities exploring students' lived realities at university versus our own perceptions, and grounded in student voice, actions that staff can take to address the awarding gap in higher education.



Dr Syra Shakir
Leeds Trinity University

2.45pm – 3.25pm - page 1 of 2

Antidotes to the Red Pill: Addressing Gender-Based Violence from a Black Feminist Lens

Location: Sivanandan Hall (Great Hall)

Facilitator:

The release of the Netflix drama *Adolescence* has sparked discussions about gender-based violence, radicalisation, toxic masculinity and 'knife crime'. It's easy to get lost in the noise, with the loudest voices demanding more punitive solutions - from banning phones in classrooms, to more police in schools.

When big issues hit the mainstream, it's crucial for us to sharpen our analysis, and to explore - and to present - alternatives. Anti-carceral activists, from writers like Angela Davis, to Leah Cowan; and grassroots groups, from the English Collective of Prostitutes to Level Up, have long advocated for responses to gender-based and other violence that don't replicate and exacerbate harm, especially to marginalised communities.

In this session, we'll use the resource from Abolitionist Futures, *Addressing Gender-Based Violence: Carceral Reforms vs. Abolitionist Strategies* to explore alternative solutions to the problems of violence, and the steps we can take at home and in our communities to support each other through these conversations.

📺 [Click here to see a short video about the session](#)



Emmanuelle Andrews
(she/her)

Investors in Black and Racially Minoritised Communities

Location: Sivanandan Hall (Great Hall)

Facilitators:

This session will address key questions around racial justice and the structural barriers: How we empower communities of colour to drive their own transformation? What role can funding play in creating more equitable opportunities? Through interactive activities and collaborative discussions, participants will explore real-world challenges faced by Black and racially minoritised leaders and communities. The session will focus on practical strategies for overcoming obstacles, with an emphasis on community-led solutions and collective action. By the end, attendees will walk away with new tools and insights to support racial justice initiatives and influence funders to create meaningful change. Join us as we work together to build stronger, more empowered communities, inspired by the principles of The Phoenix Way (TPW).



Swati Pujari
Pathway Fund



Naz Zaman
Inclusive North



Ashfaq Ghulab
Impact Hub

2.45pm – 3.25pm - page 2 of 2

All Black Lives Matter

Location: Olive Morris Hall (Small Hall)

Facilitator:

We know, of course, that we need to unite to defeat racism, and we recognise how we are constantly 'othered' and excluded within society. But, too often we allow division to weaken our movement. These artificial divisions can be based on faith, ethnicity, sexuality, or 'colourism', etc. To build our strength we need to acknowledge and address the divisions within our own communities and learn to celebrate our incredible diversity. This session will explore how we name and address the divisions within our communities and build a genuine unity, based on respect.



Taranjit Chana
ROTA & EBSO

Progress in the North: Coast-to-Coast

Location: Martin Luther King Room (D3)

Facilitators:

Join us for Coast to Coast, an interactive workshop that forms a key part of the wider Northern Listening Journey. The session begins with Jenni Vine, who will lead by sharing compelling research on social cohesion and a framework for democratic renewal. Her insights set the stage for an engaging conversation about how communities across the North can be well connected. Following her presentation, the workshop shifts into an interactive format where creative prompts and storytelling inspire you to share your experiences. We invite you to reflect on how you and those around you feel about your local area—its strengths, challenges, and the collective power of its people. This is a space to generate ideas on building a more connected North, because when communities come together, we are truly stronger. Bring your voice and vision as we explore amplifying the Northern voice. Join us to shape our future.



Abbie Bradshaw
People's Powerhouse



Dr Jenny Vine
Belong Network

3.30pm - 4.30pm

Closing Plenary

Location: Sivanandan Hall (Great Hall)

The purpose of this conference is not just to provide us with an opportunity to rethink and reevaluate where we are in the struggle for race equality, but to stimulate strategic choices in what we do next. This session will reflect on what we have discussed today, what new thinking it has promoted, and perhaps most importantly, what we plan to do next. With a mixture of workshop and panel discussion we hope to surface what has been learned throughout the day, and what new opportunities it has created for collaboration.



Emmanuelle Andrews
(she/her)



Taranjit Chana
ROTA & EBSO

Facilitators:

Feedback!

Well, what do you think?

We would love to have your feedback. Please fill in our [feedback form](https://forms.gle/4XJTBLbEV17yzVwh7) to let us know your thoughts and reflections: <https://forms.gle/4XJTBLbEV17yzVwh7>



Join us for a social?

Location: Sivanandan Hall - Great Hall

We hope you enjoyed the conference and had a good time networking. The Great Hall will be available 4.30 pm - 5.30 pm to give attendees an opportunity to network and build connections with each other, so feel free to stay on.

Then, if you are not in a rush to get back home, a few of us will be getting some food (yes more food) together after the conference, and you are more than welcome to join us.

We will be walking down the road to [My Lahore](http://www.mylahore.co.uk) restaurant at 5.30pm (just a five minute walk from Bradford University). The restaurant is wheelchair friendly and provides a wide range of halal, vegan, vegetarian and Gluten Free food options. To find out more about their menu go to: www.mylahore.co.uk



Fatima Mahmood
REN



Piers Telemacque
REN

Facilitators:

Thank you for taking part!

