

Black Researcher Consortium launches to address gaps and ‘supercharge’ existing provision for Black researchers

Black researchers and Black-led organisations collaborate with major UK organisations to address the underrepresentation of Black researchers, and increase retention and progression

Thursday, 3 April 2025 sees the launch of the Black Researcher Consortium (BRC), a new strategic approach designed by Black researchers and Black-led organisations to combat the alarming underrepresentation of Black researchers in the UK. Led by Black researchers and Black-led organisations, it is being developed in collaboration with eight major organisations from across the world of research to drive change and address the gap in provision for Black researchers.

The Consortium will focus on the progression and retention of researchers with Black heritage*. This move comes in response to data showing startling underrepresentation of Black individuals in research positions. Black people make up 4% of the country’s working-age population. Whilst Black students earn 8% of the UK domiciled undergraduate student population places, they are less likely to start a postgraduate degree, making up 5% of postgraduate researchers. This has increased from 4% in the last 3 years. Black academics are underrepresented in UK HE (around 3% of all academic staff, and of early-career staff, but thought to be lower amongst postdoctoral researchers). Fewer than 1% of professors are Black (equating to just 140 UK-domiciled Black Professors)¹.

The Black Researcher Consortium is being developed to take a comprehensive approach to bridge the gap in provision for existing and potential Black researchers by bringing together Black-led organisations and community groups, Black early career researchers, and researchers in academia and industry, to create an infrastructure which supercharges existing provision, specifically by;

¹ The report produced by CRAC-Vitae and commissioned by the Royal Society is soon to be published.

- addressing the gaps in support for Black researchers, including opportunities for networking, mentorship, and skill development;
- enhancing access, opportunities, and training for Black researchers across academia, industry, government, and other sectors;
- serving as a valuable resource for organisations, research institutions, and universities seeking expert advice on fostering inclusivity and diversity in research environments.

By shining a light on, collaborating with, and amplifying existing provision by Black-led organisations for Black researchers, the Consortium seeks to create a more equitable and inclusive research landscape in the UK.

With seed funding through Elsevier Foundation and CRAC-Vitae, the BRC is collaborating with the four National Academies (Academy of Medical Sciences, British Academy, Royal Academy of Engineering and Royal Society), plus UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Wellcome Trust. Together, their funding secures the future of the BRC until at least 2030.

An open recruitment process is now underway to identify the first Consortium Director.