

# **LSHTM Council Meeting**

**Presentations Prepared by**

## **Black Lives Matter – LSHTM**

**July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020**

**1-2:30pm**

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. SETTING THE SCENE FOR CHANGE.....</b>	<b>2</b>
– <b>AMBER ROSE CLARKE: INTRODUCTION - POWER AS NON-DECISION MAKING .....</b>	<b>2</b>
– <b>LENNA CUMBERBATCH: AN HONEST VIEW OF LSHTM.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. INSTITUTIONAL RACISM AND THE WHITE ACADEMIC FIELD.....</b>	<b>2</b>
– <b>AMBER ROSE CLARKE: WHITE WOMAN ALUMNI EXPERIENCE AT LSHTM .....</b>	<b>2</b>
– <b>VANESSA ANGLADE: BLACK WOMAN ALUMNI EXPERIENCE AT LSHTM .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. ACCOUNTABILITY &amp; DEMANDS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
– <b>EMILIE KOUM BESSON: WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ACCOUNTABILITY? .....</b>	<b>5</b>
– <b>EMILIE KOUM BESSON: WE WANT TO RECLAIM DIVERSITY &amp; INCLUSION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
– <b>AMY GIMMA &amp; JIM TODD: WE NEED TO REIMAGINE LSHTM - THE NEED FOR EXTERNAL REVIEW .....</b>	<b>9</b>
– <b>JULES SHEN: WE MUST DECOLONIZE LSHTM &amp; CLOSING.....</b>	<b>11</b>

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This presentation was a collaborative effort and we would like to thank all the contributors that were not able to attend this meeting.

Also, we would like thank Mr. Don Robert and the members of Council for the invitation. We will be sharing a comprehensive document of our demands in the coming days and are looking forward to supporting both Council and SLT members in their efforts to fight racism at LSHTM.

## **1. SETTING THE SCENE FOR CHANGE**

### **– Amber Rose Clarke: Introduction - Power as non-decision making**

At LSHTM, the Health Policy Process and Power module teaches us about policy making and agenda setting. During the course, we learned from Steven Lukes that there are Three Faces of Power. The second face of Power, called Power as “non decision making” describes the ability of powerful groups to control the agenda to keep threatening issues out of sight.

For a long time, that form of power has been associated with the tobacco industry or the pharmaceutical sector but recently, reading about the experiences of Black women employees and advocates at Women Deliver, a leading global advocate for gender equality and the health and rights of girls and women in LMICs and seeing their CEO being suspended temporarily, we wondered:

How has LSHTM managed to keep our voices and complaints out of the agenda for so long?

**Hand over: Introducing Lenna - we asked Lenna Cumberbatch, former EDI manager at LSHTM between 2017 and 2018, to come and share her honest view of LSHTM and the challenges she encountered while working there**

### **– Lenna Cumberbatch: An Honest View of LSHTM**

Former EDI manager 2017/2018 - Toxic environment - Bullying and harassment culture at LSHTM known in the profession - high turnover of EDI manager

**Hand over: Lenna transition sentence to introduce Amber & Vanessa to speak about LSHTM’s reputation**

## **2. INSTITUTIONAL RACISM AND THE WHITE ACADEMIC FIELD**

### **– Amber Rose Clarke: White woman Alumni experience at LSHTM**

#### **My student experience**

The School teaches students, a large number of whom are White and from the Global North, how to research, design and analyse health programmes for implementation in the Global South, without any recognition that the Development Industrial Complex remains based on/ in the project of Colonialism and neo-Colonialist thought and practice.

The school seems to pose this as appropriate for the field of public health as if it is somehow conducted in a vacuum. This couldn’t be further from the reality and thus LSHTM’s stance is not a-social or a-political.

On the contrary, such a stance serves to preserve the status quo; one in which the true history and legacy of European colonialism is erased, denied and unaccounted for.

The fact that LSHTM positions itself as teaching ‘best practice’ in an industry that was *born* from Colonialism and continues to sustain and perpetuate Colonial global dynamics of power (which are inherently racial), without thoroughly educating students on this history and current global architecture, serves to send people to work in global health so dangerously unaware of their white saviour, subject-object complex, is horrifying.

### **My learning and unlearning**

Re-educating myself is not something I should have had to do straight after a MSc at LSHTM, but I did.

I left LSHTM having never heard the terms ‘Bretton Woods’, ‘Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)’, ‘Neo-Colonialism’, ‘the Development Industrial Complex’, ‘Critical Development Studies’ and having never heard the names Franz Fanon, Walter Rodney or Arturo Escobar. These lists goes on and on.

The texts and theories which are centred in learning at the School are disproportionately from schools of thought and scholars who are White and from the Global North. LSHTM does not acknowledge or engage with the rigorous critiques of our industry that come from the fields of critical race and development studies among several others, in their main streams of education.

### **Could I recommend the school?**

From what I have just articulated, and having read the 100 testimonies that accompanied the original BLM - LSHTM letter, how could I? LSHTM is not currently fit for purpose and it needs REFORM.

### **The BLM - LSHTM movement**

The BLM - LSHTM movement was born out of this need for reform.

In the space of 8 days, nearly 1000 people wrote and put their names to what can only be described as horrific experiences of the institution across that can be surmised as INSTITUTIONAL RACISM.

That should not be the case, and we shouldn’t need to have organised as quickly and tirelessly as we did, but we did. The sheer amount of unpaid labour that it has taken to organise this grassroots movement into a non-hierarchical, structured collective is colossal. Keep in mind also that many people doing this unpaid work are BIPOC who are living through a type of trauma and I and most of you all and the SLT will never understand. Yet they and we as their allies do this work because LSHTM HAVE REFUSED TO.

LSHTM needs an overhaul. We need reimagining and reform. And we are here to hold the Institution to account for their ongoing silence. I’ll pass over to Emilie Koum Besson now to speak about this accountability, and about reclaiming diversity and inclusion.

### **– Vanessa Anglade: Black woman Alumni experience at LSHTM**

Background in International Development with double minors in Feminist studies and African studies

Attended LSHTM 2017-2018 Reproductive Sexual Health Research

Throughout undergraduate experiences I engaged with critical race theory through student activism and courses during undergrad.

Why this is important: education is emancipatory, how can one begin to deconstruct or comprehend the violence they are experiencing when it is normalized and black experiences are systematically dismissed, discredited or belittled. Being armed with the language and knowledge to articulate one's experience is a revolutionary act.

As a world-renowned PH institution LSHTM is representative of institutionalized racism, this is not a question of whether systemic racism is present here but rather how it manifests.

As a University LSHTM is a gate keeper of knowledge, Universities as institutions determine what types of knowledge are valuable and from whom. Without the legitimization of such institutions too often the valuable work of scholars of colour is dismissed or doesn't make it into our reading lists and curriculums, when they do it is often deployed in an exoticized and tokenistic manner. The subtext that is understood by such erasure is that such scholarship simply does not exist, an outlandish and blatantly racist assumption.

When anti-racism work is done within the framework of the university too often knowledge about critical development or critical race theory are reduced to anecdotal evidence and lived experience, while it is important to hold space for such experiences it is important to acknowledge the long history and body of scholarship that already exists by academics of colour.

To allocate such serious, strenuous and necessary work to POC students and staff volunteers only serves to sanitize the public facing image of the university while continuing to extract unpaid labour and unrecognized emotional labour from POC volunteers who still have their own jobs and studies to worry about.

To be a person of colour and exist within the framework of western universities is to have the double burden of navigating a hostile environment and holding the institutions meant to be educating us accountable. This labour is inappropriate but remains ever necessary. Pay, hire and acknowledge scholars of colour, honour their work, honour and value their knowledge.

This is how western Universities uphold, maintain and perpetuate white supremacy in academia and its trickle-down effects into on the ground actions.

One of the things that immediately raised red flags to me as a student at LSHTM is the careless use of language and the very orientalist, voyeuristic, and reductivist manner in which developing countries are referred to. One cannot teach public health in isolation or in suspension of political economy and history.

Too often students make such reductivist comments and are not challenged by professors meant to help us grow into a field so that we may confidently address the PH issues we claim to be passionate about, it doesn't make sense to purport to do good if the associated externalities do more harm than the good of the work itself

### **How have we come to this place?**

Had we not been in this social climate, would you hold space for this reckoning? I am unconvinced that we would be here having these discussions and addressing the Universities role as a purveyor of institutional racism. Too often change of this nature only ever comes from the need to preserve one's self-interests in this case the university's legacy and reputation. There is nothing pleasant about experiencing racism, and I am well aware that in order to be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the white university institution or any white supremacist organisation those who are actively victimized by the same institution are expected to address perpetrators in a calm and inviting manner, one devoid of emotion, it is important to hold space for

this incredibly legitimate and subdued rage. There is nothing polite about experiencing or navigating racism and to be honest I find it ridiculous that in confronting racism we are adhering to white supremacist ideals of order, politeness and respectability politics in order to hopefully be heard or hope to appeal to your charitable benevolence.

In such forums often times the disturbing use of tragedy porn is employed to make black suffering tangible to white people. I do not believe in such engagement. Why should I have to make racism tangible for white people, why should we have to cut ourselves open to prove that we can bleed it is truly ludicrous.

The circulation of viral videos like George Floyd's murder are representative of this morbid fetishization. Why is it that white people need to be able to watch black death from the comfort of your living rooms where you can press play, pause and rewind over and over to begin to empathize with our plight? Better yet this positions white voyeurs as evaluators, measuring, analysing and debating the legitimacy of our lived experiences and pain.

When we go out into the world with these degrees in many ways, we are dangerous and LSHTM gives students license to be unrepentantly so. You have a responsibility to your students and the communities with whom they engage and enter in the future.

LSHTM is not complacent, you are complicit.

And now I'd like to hand over to Emilie who will discuss accountability and meaningful diversity and inclusion

### **3. ACCOUNTABILITY & DEMANDS**

#### **– Emilie Koum Besson: What do we mean by Accountability?**

Good afternoon, my name is Emilie and on June 2nd, I wrote a letter to hold LSHTM accountable to its silence.

Accountability is one of those big words that is important to all but has different meanings to each of us. The definition that talked to me the most is *“an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions”*.

While the timing of that letter was influenced by the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and many before and after then, the reality is we often wonder who LSHTM Leadership feels accountable to?

For example, on June 16th, 2020, staff, students and alumni were informed that Professor Debra Jackson, a white woman and an alumni, was appointed as the first holder of the 'Takeda Chair in Global Child Health' to help reduce deaths in LMICs.

Absolutely no information was given about the recruitment process but considering the fact that the School has trained dozens of LMICs students for the past 100 years, was there really no local expertise? How is it that LSHTM is so proud to train LMICs but doesn't seem to want to hire them and especially in Senior positions?

Today, I am talking to business executives, so let me translate it into your world. In December 2019, the World Economic Forum introduced the notion of “Stakeholder Capitalism”. It is defined as “ a system in which corporations are oriented to serve the interests of all their stakeholders. Among the key stakeholders

are customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders and local communities. Under this system, a company's purpose is to create long-term value and not to maximize profits and enhance shareholder value at the cost of other stakeholder groups”

At the moment, BIPOC presence at LSHTM seems to only benefit LSHTM Leadership and reputation with total disregard for its key stakeholders.

These issues became a literal public health concern when we got informed that LSHTM guards and cleaners, who are outsourced and almost all Blacks and visible minorities have not been given PPE since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is a short testimony collected last week.

“We know scientists say people who work at night have shorter life expectancy than people who work normal day hours. Both the school and the company we work for they don’t show concern for people... We get 9 days less paid holiday than LSHTM staff. White people don’t work at night for our company. If white people worked at night, we wouldn’t be treated like how we are now.

People don’t care about us.

Things have to change;

We get no masks or gloves. But we need gloves as we open so many doors and handle so many packages. All the night staff here go to the cleaners’ cupboard to get gloves. We got small hand sanitiser bottles last week .

We didn’t get help with transport during the pandemic. A number of us were driving but when congestion charge came back, we stopped as we cannot afford it. We use public transport when other people in the building have received payments to reimburse congestion charge. We didn’t ask, but nobody offered this to us.”

### **This is unacceptable.**

We, the LSHTM Community, want to remind LSHTM Leadership that they are accountable to US.

Therefore, we demand that LSHTM Senior leadership members make it their mission to orient their actions and decisions towards serving the interests of academic staff, professional staff, outsourced staff, research partners and all the communities LSHTM engage with.

To do so, starting from now, we will deploy our efforts to:

#Reclaim Diversity & Inclusion - #Reimagine LSHTM - #Decolonize LSHTM

#### **– Emilie Koum Besson: We want to Reclaim Diversity & Inclusion**

What does “Reclaiming Diversity & Inclusion” mean to us?

There is a strong belief that LSHTM is a diverse and inclusive institution because of the work done in countries all over the world.

“LSHTM can’t possibly be racist” we hear. LSHTM works in LMICs and welcomes students from different backgrounds each year.

But let's be clear, that is not what Diversity and Inclusion is about. This is just statistics and good advertising.

When I compiled the testimonies to share with SLT, I was surprised to see the number of “anonymous” testimonies. Many people also messaged me privately and the fear was real and palpable. I myself was scared and while I was congratulated for my courage, it was at the cost of my health and mental wellbeing.

Organizational culture is not written anywhere and to understand it, it takes to talk to people that look like you. As an example, one single testimony was endorsed by 39 students.

Based on the content of the testimonies, the KEY TERMS and PATTERNS/REALITIES that can summarize the organizational culture of LSHTM are:

- Hierarchical
- Bullying
- Racial stereotypes
- Colonial discourse
- Racism
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Intimidation
- Fear

The organizational culture ensures that employees, staff and even alumni feel like coming forward and speaking up bears a high cost. Additionally, an institution that was created on a colonial basis and never questioned its past, most likely developed a colonial structure.

So, when trying to define the organizational culture of LSHTM as diverse and inclusive, “remember that Black Indigenous and People of Color clearly feel at the mercy of LSHTM and that speaking up could be at the cost of their career.

Without structural changes, no diversity and inclusion will ever work.

Moreover, failure to make the necessary structural changes could lead to loss of business. As an example, the Wellcome Trust, one of LSHTM most important donors, updated its grant policy in 2019 to reflect its value that “bullying and harassment of any kind, in any context, is unacceptable”. Their new policy insists that all people working at Wellcome or involved in Wellcome-funded activities should be able to work in an environment where everyone is treated, and treats others, fairly and with respect.”

This is far from what you have read in the letter and heard so far.

The BLM collective has minimized fear and isolation while increasing joy and connection.

We want LSHTM to move away from what is “fit” but focus on helping BIPOC thrive in this white supremacist world. For example, a visible minority woman shared that for the past 8 years, she has been discouraged from applying for a promotion and has remained in a research fellow position while her white

male counterparts have been encouraged and promoted. On top of racism, those accounts of sexism, stresses the need for change.

As such, we demand LSHTM Leadership & Council to TRANSFORM the diversity & Inclusion strategy and implement the following “9 steps to inclusion”:

1. Create a Global Diversity Council made up of outside leaders dedicated to advice on Diversity & Inclusion - In that space, the definition of Diversity should cover not only differences in race, gender, and sexual-orientation, but also geographic location, education, work styles, ethnicity, and communications style, among others.
2. Promote EDI manager to at least Grade 9 or Senior Management position. This Chief Diversity Officer would report to the Global Diversity Council and not to Director and SLT
3. Link Diversity and Inclusion targets to Director and senior leadership compensation - each member of the SLT would be accountable for owning their diversity goals and metrics and for prioritizing the retention, recruitment, and development of underrepresented groups in the company’s leadership ranks
4. Link Diversity and Inclusion targets to heads of academic department and faculty research degree coordinator performances and compensation. Each professional would be accountable for owning their diversity goals and metrics and for prioritizing the retention, recruitment, and development of underrepresented groups for research assistant, research fellow and PhD positions. (e.g. increasing sponsorship and offering family packages)
5. Conduct Performance & Development Reviews for professors to be completed by their staff
6. Link Diversity and Inclusion targets to head of professional services departments performances and compensation. Each professional would be accountable for owning their diversity goals and metrics and for prioritizing the retention, recruitment, and development of underrepresented groups for managerial positions. (e.g. promotion and mentorship of BIPOC)
7. Train Diversity & Inclusion Focal points that will be equipped with the skills and information to help them champion change within their department, teams, working groups. It will be more effective than a one-off training session. Inclusion is an ongoing process through which people incorporate new habits into their daily lives. Studies have shown that when those habits are put into action in an environment that supports honest conversations real change becomes possible.
8. Hire counsellors from BIPOC origins able to consult in different languages (e.g. arabic, swahili, etc.). Would you want to see a counsellor and speak to her/him/they in a foreign language?
9. Hire career advisers that can speak to the experience of BIPOC. We all know that job search for BIPOC is challenging so they should be advised accordingly.

We believe that those 9 steps represent the pathway to true diversity & inclusion at LSHTM.

**Reclaiming Diversity & Inclusion at LSHTM, is only our first goal. Now Amy and Jim will tell you how we plan to Reimagine LSHTM.**



– **Amy Gimma & Jim Todd: We need to Reimagine LSHTM - The need for External review**

Good afternoon. My name is Amy Gimma, I am a Research Fellow at the school as well as an Alumna of LSHTM.

- Call to action/ Why a review –
  - On behalf of the LSHTM community, we call on the Council and SLT to initiate an external review of the Schools practices in staffing, research, partnerships, and education by a qualified, independent and external reviewer.
  - This will require the SLT and council to dedicate resources to an independent entity outside of the organization to review current policies and practices, interview current and former staff on experiences, provide recommendations, and engage in routine monitoring.
  - An external review is a required first step to build an evidence-based foundation to create comprehensive short- and long-term action plans to address systemic racism and structural discrimination at the school, in part brought to light by the testimonies you have heard here today
- **UCU Chair, Jim Todd, who represents academic staff at LSHTM, will add his testimony in support of an external review:**
  - support of the request for an external review of LSHTM practice - we have little trust in the internal review process to produce an acceptable way forward for other issues, so for this issue we really need to have a proper external review in order to take the process forward
- Why external?
  - LSHTM does not currently have the required foundation, internal expertise, or understanding of anti-racism studies in fact, many of our practices at the school continue to perpetuate structures which are exploitative and discriminatory in nature.
  - Many senior academics, including members of the SLT and Deans of Faculty, have demonstrated a willingness to learn about how structural racism impacts their studies, however, they have also demonstrated a lack of expertise in this field. In addition, the history of the SLT's inaction and non-transparent decision making has created an atmosphere of distrust, and we fear that the LSHTM community will not fully engage with an internal review.
  - The School's insistence that we have sufficient expertise in-house suggests conscious negligence and is at times offensive, as it suggests a wilful inaction to address repeated reports of racism and discrimination from BIPOC students, staff, and alumni. We hope that this is not the case.
  - The Race Equality Charter has been described by our current EDI coordinator to be insufficient for an organisation which engages in global research and holds the wealth of power that we embody in our field of study. The SLT and EDI coordinator have proposed modifying the charter to address some of our concerns, but this in-house solution is not adequate.

- As such, the failure to properly support and respond to an external evaluation entrenches LSHTM as an academic institution which does not recognize the invaluable role that anti-racism and anti-colonial research, methodologies, and practices have in tackling racism and deconstructing colonialism in our global institutions.
- We ask that the School recognizes the legitimacy of these formal disciplines which draw upon specific expertise, and which we do not currently have in house.
- The reality is that hundreds of years of injustice cannot be repaired quickly or easily; it requires specific and appropriate expertise.
- Where does LSHTM expertise will be useful?
  - We recognize that researchers and implementation specialists at LSHTM are among the most esteemed in the world, which means that once we have the evidence, we have the ability to promote change and create a healthier, more diverse institution - and one that better represents the alumni and many students that have built their foundation here at LSHTM.
  - The community has already generated many creative solutions and ideas, which will continue to be collected and shared with the SLT and Council.
- The selection of reviewer
  - We encourage the council and SLT to rely on the many groups that represent the LSHTM community, including BLM, DGH, and all unions active within LSHTM to lead the development and planning of the review.
  - Crucially, the LSHTM community MUST have the power to select and approve of the reviewer or reviewers, due to the conflict of interest involving SLT members and the extent of their influence in the field of global health
- Dissemination of findings
  - It is imperative that the findings of the report are made publicly available and that the SLT/Council hold a public meeting to review and discuss the findings, In addition we must pledge to use the findings as an evidence based route towards the ideals of social justice.
- Expected timeline
  - We urge LSHTM initiate the external review as soon as possible, to be completed over the next 6 to 12 months.
  - The SLT and council should plan to allocate additional funding over the next 4 or more years to develop and act upon an implementation plan.
- Closing statement
  - In light of growing anti-racist activism lead by the global BLM movement, all institutions will be scrutinized for how they have historically engaged in and responded to racism and discrimination in the past, and more importantly how their leadership addresses their current practices and initiates reforms to avoid repeating mistakes of the past. I have no doubt that this will define your legacy here at the school. We hope that you take this

opportunity to properly reflect on our practices and prepare for the future. We need to ask ourselves, what is the role of a University today, and what type of university do we strive to be?

**Handover: Amy transition sentence - We need LSHTM to fully acknowledge its colonial past and Jules will present our proposal for immediate action next.**

– **Jules Shen: We must Decolonize LSHTM & Closing**

Hi, I'm Jules. I'm a MSc alum and part-time RD student. I also work as a data scientist at the (UK) Health Foundation, with many alumni including our Chief Executive who recently spoke at LSHTM Week (Dr Jennifer Dixon).

I'm showing the "LSHTM Values" slide to you, which was shown to me at my first student orientation in 2015, and which I have shown other students and audiences since. I have been a student ambassador to encourage MSc and RD applications, and presented at a Career Services advice panel about recruitment routes to my former profession (management consulting). I have changed only the title below, as a call for all of us to act today.

**If you really believe in ALL these values...**

The School seeks to foster and sustain a creative and supportive working environment based upon an ethos of respect and rigorous scientific enquiry. We are committed to:

- Excellence and creativity
- Knowledge translation and innovation
- Sharing expertise to strengthen capacity
- Partnerships based on mutual respect
- Equity and diversity
- Financial and environmental sustainability

*Courtesy of Robert Irving*

*Courtesy of Ricki E Kantrowitz*

Living Wage  
Stonewall DIVERSITY CHAMPION  
Athena SWAN Bronze Award  
POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE  
LONDON SCHOOL of HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE


This is a nice slide (or it was in 2017) from our central branding team. This is a perfectly nice statement of 'post'-colonial values. But it is vague, and nonspecific statements risk becoming empty.

**[a further testimony]** For the most part, I loved my MSc at LSHTM (Public Health in Developing Countries 2016) and I have thoroughly enjoyed teaching on an MSc module (Economic Evaluation) since

2017. But two years ago, I stopped being a student ambassador and asked our Admissions team to take my contact details down.

**Increasingly, I cannot recommend LSHTM as a place to study and work.** I have personally faced insensitive LSHTM counsellors and labyrinthine bureaucracy and costs to maintain my access to medical care and my visa (as an American) when pausing my studies due to a long-term health condition. I have seen and heard too many instances of RD and staff colleagues being un(der)paid, overworked, and disrespected when trying to get support. I recently spoke with a white British colleague at the Health Foundation, who was so discouraged by her experience working at the School on a clinical trial that she had written off ever studying an MPH, though I have tried to convince her otherwise now. Her LSHTM employment had soured her on the entire sectors of global health and international development.

A huge trigger for me to stop being an ambassador was the experience of a black British RD student who I mentored. I enthusiastically encouraged her to apply in 2017 as a student ambassador, knowing that we simply don't have enough people with her excellent background at LSHTM, and the institution would have benefited enormously from all the diversity she represents: not just personally, but professionally. She reached out to me as she was also coming from the private sector: her former employer believed enough in her demonstrated talent, skills, and vision to fund her PhD. Like most RD students, she found the work difficult and isolating, but unfortunately, this student's research supervisor disliked her work and essentially bullied her out. That staff member is still at LSHTM. Despite occasional calls and coffees, there was nothing I could do to help this student while School simply failed to support her and her vital research. If I met another potential rising star like this former student, I could not in good faith tell them to come to LSHTM. **Our 'support structures' fail too often. They set us up to fail.**



Today must be the  
**START** of the work,  
not the **END** of it.

A recommitment to values can start to address these problems. An example of something specific and actionable is [this message from the Wellcome Trust's Executive Leadership Team](#), signed by Sir Jeremy Farrar. It was originally published internally, but has now been public for several weeks, while Wellcome updates their organisational strategy.

“Being committed to anti-racism requires us to describe what we are committed to doing as individuals and as an organisation, and also to **listen with humility to black colleagues** and other people of colour about what more it takes to truly stand against racism. **Our BAME Network has already shown leadership** on these issues at Wellcome.

**As a funder, an employer and a museum and library we have perpetuated racism.** As an employer we know from our staff surveys that **black staff are least likely to agree that Wellcome is an inclusive organisation...**

Our museum and library collections reflect a history of health and medicine that has its **roots in imperial and colonial power structures** in which black people, indigenous peoples, and people of colour have been marginalised and exploited. **We will accept responsibility for what we have done, and for not acting sooner...**

As members of an all-white Executive Leadership Team (ELT), **we recognise that we are not representative of everyone who works at Wellcome**, or those we work with and support externally. It is our aim to achieve BAME representation at every level of Wellcome, including ELT. The anti-racist principles described above will apply to **all** our recruitment and appointment processes. **There are additional steps we can take to support... black and other BAME candidates for senior roles and to ensure our hiring panels are more representative.**

We have made progress as an organisation in promoting [Diversity & Inclusion](#) (D&I), but today we are making **specific and lasting commitments to tackling racism...**

**This commitment is not a finite one.** It will sit within our wider shared commitment to diversity and inclusion but recognise the specific challenge of racism and its impact on people of colour, and especially black people. We won't achieve change overnight, nor will we get everything right, but our commitment as individuals and as an organisation is to change, by taking action, learning from it and continuing to make it better.”

We're asking Council and SLT to demonstrate the same leadership today. LSHTM can be just as bold and brave as Wellcome - perhaps it can do even better. We propose some solutions.

## Our solutions: actions speak louder than words

### Reclaim diversity & inclusion

- Independent **Global Diversity Council**
- **Elevation of the EDI role** (grade 9 minimum) to **Chief Diversity Officer**
- **Ownership and accountability** (KPIs) for change by every member of SLT and throughout mgmt/PDRs

### Reimagine our institution

- **Externally-led review** in next 6-12 months
- BLM, DGH, unions signing off a co-drafted, **inclusive ToR** with **dedicated funding**
- **Public release** of all findings

### Decolonise LSHTM

- **Lead by example** in a public apology and restatement of values
- **Serious resources** for implementation by **all staff**, supported by independent **antiracist experts**

- **We want to reclaim Diversity & Inclusion.** LSHTM needs to demonstrate **serious commitment** to these as a strategic pillar – with a Diversity Council and Chief Diversity Officer - and owned, accountable management targets.
- **We need to reimagine our institution.** We need the advice of **independent experts** in antiracism and decolonising who actually have the track record and knowledge to help us on this journey, with **external review** to task, finish, and publicly report in the coming academic year. This requires dedicated funding, and BLM, DGH, and unions should co-own the Terms of Reference.
- **We must decolonise LSHTM.** We have all suffered the culture of bullying and silence. Every single one of us loses out on collaboration and creativity in our work that could be possible if we had the courage to realise it.
  - Whether anyone admits or not what they have known about the problems and pain highlighted today, like Wellcome we need an **apology and honest acknowledgement** – internally and externally
- **All staff** at LSHTM must get **serious resources** to engage in antiracism to decolonise their day-to-day work and build the inclusive future we want. **To truly transform, every one of us must implement change.**