

Call for participants – Black Health and the Humanities Network

The Black Health and the Humanities project is an interdisciplinary training network and collaborative research initiative consisting of scholars, writers, artists, healthcare professionals and activists. Based at the Centre for Black Humanities at the University of Bristol, UK, we explore the crucial role the arts and humanities play in understanding and improving the health of Black people in twenty-first century Britain.

We seek to understand how Black scholarship and creativity shapes and responds to medical and social understandings of illness; how Black health and wellbeing has been imagined and conceptualised in ways which challenge and change the normative. We ask what role the arts and humanities have played in Black health and explore the crucial place of activism and care in confronting the racialised landscape of medicine.

[For more information visit our website.](#)

We invite applications from PhD students and early career researchers in the arts and humanities who are based in the UK to participate in our Black Health and the Humanities training programme (2021-2022).

Consisting of a series of five workshops beginning online in March 2021, the programme will cover topics including the history of Black health in the UK, hostile medical environments, chronic illness, care and ageing, Black health activism and the health price of activism, healing and Black health futures.

We seek to build a community of thinkers within and beyond academic institutions whose research concerns how Black writers, intellectuals, artists, activists and theorists have creatively and critically addressed the health of Black people across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Our workshops will be led by academics, writers and artists from a range of disciplines and institutions. Participants will develop their critical and practical research skills by engaging with scholarly, creative and archival material on Black health and wellbeing.

Guided by our workshop leaders, participants will explore new approaches to the medical humanities that emerge through engagements with Black scholarship. Our decolonial methodology will involve activities that make use of creative mediums produced by Black artists, writers and filmmakers to respond to aspects of Black health that the medical context marginalises, and will explore connections between theory, practice and personal experience.



Image: Tsoku Maela, 'Sertiti', 2015

Description: a black and white image of a man, hands in a reverse prayer position, with black smoke in place of his head

Workshops will involve talks, lectures and discussion, alongside more practical activities that encourage, in feminist philosopher Minna Salami's words, a multi-sensory approach to knowledge 'that synthesizes the imaginative and the rational, the quantifiable and immeasurable, the intellectual and the emotional' (*Sensuous Knowledge*, 2020). We will introduce participants to boundary and discipline-crossing ways of 'doing' research to foster the development of a critical Black medical humanities.

These workshops will form a central part of a broader collegial network to provide a supportive environment for PhD students and ECRs to develop and share their research. In addition to workshop participation, network members will have opportunities to regularly contribute to our website, which could involve writing blogs, creating video reflections or podcasts and other creative activities.

Support we offer

We are offering 20 fully funded places on the network. While the workshops will initially take place online, we hope to offer in-person workshops in the future (subject to pandemic-related restrictions) for which travel and accommodation costs will be covered.

Participating scholars will have access to professional development and networking opportunities and will receive resource packs in advance of the workshops, which will include books and other relevant materials.

How to apply

We welcome applications from UK based PhD students and early career researchers in the arts and humanities working on topics or in fields related to the theme of the network. Applications from those without a current institutional affiliation are welcome.

To apply to become a member of our network and to participate in our workshops and activities, [please complete the application form](#) and send it, together with your CV, to blackhealthhumanities@gmail.com by **22nd January, 2021**.

Participants will be selected based on the relevance of their current and previous research and to ensure a broad range of disciplines and expertise. Please note that we anticipate the first workshops will be virtual. The first will take place on the 10th and 11th of March 2021, and the second on the 9th and 10th of June 2021.

The network is supported by the [Wellcome Trust](#).

