

# Sphere Conference: EDI Change in Action

'Learn, connect and be inspired'

## Conference Programme

- 9.30-9:40 **Welcome and Introduction: Professor Katherine Linehan (she/her)**  
[Read more about Professor Katherine Linehan](#)
- 9:40-9:55 **Overview of the Sphere Programme: Professor Raheela Khan (she/her)**  
[Read more about Professor Raheela Khan](#)
- 9:55-10:40 **Sphere Funded Projects**  
**'Why work with us?' - Promotional material to support Registry & Academic Affairs recruitment initiatives**  
**Presenter:** Mary Graham.  
We were fortunate to secure funds from the sphere project to procure expert design services to produce compelling marketing materials, aiming to communicate our EDI commitments to prospective staff. Following consultation with our EDI Working Group, it was agreed to focus on the communication of our EDI commitments so that prospective staff from all walks of life feel they would find a place in our community. This is part of wider and on-going actions to review and improve our recruitment practices.  
[Read more about Mary Graham](#)

### **Sixty (More) Symbols**

**Presenter:** Prof. Clare Burrage, (she/her)  
The Sixty Symbols YouTube channel is a collaboration between the School of Physics and Astronomy and filmmaker Brady Haran. In 2018, with support from the HERMES engagement fund, we developed Sixty Ideas (<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/physics/sixtyideas/index.aspx>) to add value by making the videos easier to use for educational purposes. It features a curated set of videos matched to the A-level physics curriculum. When UK schools pivoted to remote learning in March 2020, Sixty Ideas was ready to provide a valuable resource to support A-level teachers and students. Feedback from teachers confirms how useful they have found these pre-existing digital resources. Our Sphere funded project has updated the Sixty Ideas database with information on videos made since 2018. We have identified priority topics for future videos to fill gaps in our coverage of the A-level curriculum.  
[Read more about Professor Clare Burrage](#)

### **"What does Neurodiversity look like in person?"**

**Presenters:** Project Co-Investigators Dr Pat Brundell (he/him), Dr Armaghan Moemeni (she/her), Dr Jocelyn Spence (she/her)  
Together, we will present the aims and results of our project, "What does Neurodiversity look like in person?". This one-day conference was led by members of the university's Computer Science department who identify as neurodiverse in

order to help demystify and destigmatise conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The primary aim was to use the event to showcase how simple, thoughtful choices can make daily life at university easier, happier, and more fulfilling for everyone, no matter how their mental processes are categorised.

This inclusive approach could be seen in the content, which prioritised a range of first-person experiences while including external perspectives, and which was organised by 'symptom' or experience rather than title of diagnosis. This immediately made some of the most common experiences visible to everyone and invited all attendees to find common ground at the same time as they were exposed to new insights. Our focus on inclusivity also led us to use our bespoke hybrid digital/physical platform, Bubbles, a Future Festivals research project developed within CS's Mixed Reality Lab. Presenters and attendees could visit and interact with each other in person or online, however they felt most comfortable, with no artificial boundaries created for neurodiverse individuals, many of whom find such events strenuous even without lingering concerns around Covid.

[Read more about Dr Pat Brundell](#), [Dr Armaghan Moemeni](#) and [Dr Jocelyn Spence](#)

10:40-11:00

### Sphere Challenges

#### Faculty of Social Sciences: Decolonising the Curriculum

**Presenter:** Gemma Bancroft (she/her)

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences decided to focus on Decolonising the Curriculum as one of its Sphere challenges in 2020-21. This presentation will talk through the process that the Faculty Sphere Challenge group went through to develop a Guide for Critical Reflection and Action. The Guide is designed to provoke individual and group reflection on current ways of being, knowing and doing in order to discover how these can be reconfigured towards a more just, equitable, diverse and inclusive institution. I will also share the Guide itself and how it can be used in an academic context.

[Read more about Gemma Bancroft](#)

#### Faculty of Social Sciences: Supporting Women during Covid

**Presenter:** Dr Isobel O'Neil (she/her).

We have had a great opportunity through the Sphere challenge to gather important, contextualised insights about FoSS women's working lives during the pandemic. Over the last year, the members of the working group have worked tirelessly to evaluate a range of data and to reflect on the pandemic's impacts and subsequent experiences of women colleagues in the FoSS. In this presentation, we will share these insights and offer some tentative suggestions about how our findings can feed into broader effort to drive positive change for all faculty colleagues.

[Read more about Dr Isobel O'Neil](#)

11:00-11:10

Break

- 11:10-11:40 **Diversity and Inclusion Research Hub**  
**STEMM Change: Addressing Exclusion, Bias and Discrimination in STEM and Beyond**  
**Presenter:** Prof Louise Mullany
- This presentation will showcase the wide range of projects that were conducted as part of the 'STEMM Change' research award, funded by the EPSRC's 'Inclusion Matters' portfolio. STEMM Change is an interdisciplinary consortium grant (2018-2021), headed up by the University of Nottingham, with a number of higher education and industry partners. The STEMM Change team is Sam Kingman (PI), Co-Is Clare Burrage, Stacy Johnson, Lucy Jones, Louise Mullany and Kelly Vere, Lucy Williams as Project Manager and Jacqueline Cordell and Paul Holmes as Postdoctoral Research Fellows. This presentation will showcase the findings of the different research strands of the project, including a range of short-term, high impact studies from colleagues across the University. It will give concise overviews of projects including those focusing on delivering practical action on disability and racism in the workplace, as well as uncovering hidden bias that result in gender inequalities. Whilst the core focus is on STEMM disciplines, the findings are applicable beyond Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine and are applicable across university communities at a range of different job family levels.  
[Read more about Prof Louise Mullany](#)
- 11:40-12:25 **Keynote Speaker- 'Make Change, Eat Cake'**  
**Presenter:** Dr Emma Chapman, she/her  
**Make Change, Eat Cake**
- There are many obstacles in the way of navigating the academic world successfully. This is true for anyone, but even more so for those facing harassment, bullying, and discrimination. Both individually and as a member of 'The 1752 Group' \*, I have campaigned for everyone to have fair and safe access to academia, free from the dangers and repercussions of sexual misconduct. I will discuss my experiences making policy, lobbying government and supporting students, focusing on the techniques and solutions that have been useful to make change.
- \* a campaign group highlighting sexual misconduct in higher education
- [Read more about Dr Emma Chapman](#)
- 12:25-12:30 Sphere Conference closure by Professor Raheela Khan.

[Read more about our presenters below.](#)

### Professor Katherine Linehan



My name is Katherine Linehan, and I have recently been appointed as Pro-Vice Chancellor for Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and People here at Nottingham. Prior to this, I worked at the University of Sheffield for 18 years, where I held the roles of Professor of Anatomical Education, Faculty Director for EDI and Deputy institutional lead for EDI. In my EDI roles I was responsible for driving progress for both staff and students against the University's strategic delivery plans. I led the gender equality work across the institution, securing a Silver Athena Swan award in 2018 and the successful introduction of sector leading training and support for those experiencing the menopause. I also played a key role in the development of wellbeing support across the institution which became critically required as the Covid pandemic unfolded. I feel very strongly that creating safe spaces for individuals to talk freely about their lived experiences is the key to driving forward the EDI agenda and is critical to ensuring that we all uphold the values of the University of Nottingham: inclusivity, ambition, openness, fairness and respect.

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### Professor Raheela Khan



Raheela Khan is Professor of Cellular Physiology in the School of Medicine. I believe in the core principles of EDI being embedded and practiced across our staff and student communities and in our processes at the university. My external roles relating to EDI include working with grant funders and I am a trustee of the Physiological Society, one of the oldest learned societies in the UK, where I lead its diversity and Inclusion task force. As Chair of the Sphere programme, we have funded new initiatives that are leading to positive cultural change at the university.

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### Mary Graham



I am the Business Operations Senior Manager in Registry and Academic Affairs. I joined the university in 2017 following 10 years in NHS management roles. My current role includes anything relating to the operational running of the department, such as the management of office space, risk, assurance, strategy, finance and recruitment. I am a member of the RAA EDI working group, which gives a grounded perspective on matters of EDI strategy and action planning. I am passionate about EDI and the opportunity to learn more about how we could change department practices for the improvement of EDI.

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### Professor Clare Burrage



Clare Burrage is a Professor in the School of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Nottingham. Her research focuses on understanding dark energy, dark matter and the theory of gravity. Before coming to Nottingham she held research positions at the University of Geneva and at DESY (German Electron Synchrotron). She was awarded her PhD in 2008 from the University of Cambridge. In 2015 she was awarded the Maxwell Medal by the Institute of Physics for outstanding contributions to Theoretical Physics, and her group is currently funded by a Research Leadership Award from the Leverhulme Trust.

She has been working for better representation of women and other underrepresented groups in STEM since she was her undergraduate college Women's Officer, and she has been chair of the EDI committee in the School of Physics and Astronomy since 2017. In her spare time she reads detective novels and climbs mountains.

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### Dr Pat Brundell



Dr Pat Brundell is a Research Fellow at the Mixed Reality Lab. His Computer Science research spans kinaesthetics in interaction design, user experience research, psychology, museum studies. His recent work uses participatory design to investigate mental health, user experience, and mixed reality.

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### Dr Armaghan Moemeni



Dr Armaghan Moemeni is an Assistant Professor of Computer Science, and the school's director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). Her research concerns applying computer vision and machine learning techniques in multidisciplinary research subjects including medical applications, gamification, intelligent sensing to develop new methods for recognising abnormal data patterns and behaviours, as well as supporting human computer/machine interaction. She has also a great interest in designing innovative pedagogical methodologies in teaching and learning, and a senior fellow of HEA - SFHEA.

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### Dr Jocelyn Spence



Dr Jocelyn Spence is a Research Fellow at the Mixed Reality Lab. Her Computer Science research focuses on the intersection of theatrical performance and interaction design to explore personally meaningful, aesthetic, and/or emotional experiences mediated by digital technologies. Her recent work explores hybrid gifting and mixed-reality cultural heritage experiences.

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### Gemma Bancroft



I am the Faculty of Social Sciences Education and Student Experience Manager. My role is to lead on ESE initiative across the Faculty working closely with the Faculty Head of ESE and Faculty APVC for ESE. I have been the chair of the Faculty Sphere Challenge Group since July 2021 leading the group in the final development and publication of the Guidelines to Critical Reflection and Action. I joined the University in 2018 after working in Education initially as a secondary school Science Teacher, and then working in educational development in public and third sector organisations for 14 years.

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### Dr Isobel O'Neil



Dr Isobel O'Neil, Associate Professor in Entrepreneurship, University of Nottingham, is based within the Haydn Green Institute in the Business School, Isobel's research focuses on early-stage entrepreneurial actors to explore processes relating to identity evolution and those relating to gaining legitimacy. More recently, Isobel has been involved in EDI research, especially in the context of low-income self-employed women. Isobel is devoted to achieving impact outside of the University and pursues this through supporting local women from Nottingham and beyond as they explore self-employment, entrepreneurship and/or their career next steps. This work led Isobel to co-found a small social enterprise – The My Way Project CIC. For the 2021-22 period Isobel took on the role of Chair for the FoSS Sphere Challenge “Supporting Women\* during Covid and its aftermath”.

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### Prof Louise Mullany



Louise Mullany is Professor of Sociolinguistics at the University of Nottingham, UK and is the Director of the University's Diversity and Inclusion Research Hub. She specialises in investigations of language and equality in professional settings, including businesses, politics, healthcare and the mass media. She has published books, numerous articles and book chapters in these areas.

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### Dr Emma Chapman



Dr Emma Chapman is a Royal Society research fellow based at the University of Nottingham. She is among the world's leading researchers in search of the first stars to light up our Universe, and published her first popular science book, 'First Light', in 2020. Emma is a respected media commentator on astrophysical matters, but is also vocal about gender equality issues in the sciences. She has been the recipient of multiple commendations and prizes, including the Royal Society Athena Medal for driving nationally impactful policy changes concerning sexual harassment issues in higher education.

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