



University
of Glasgow

James McCune Smith
Annual Conference
2026



Welcome from the JMS Scholars

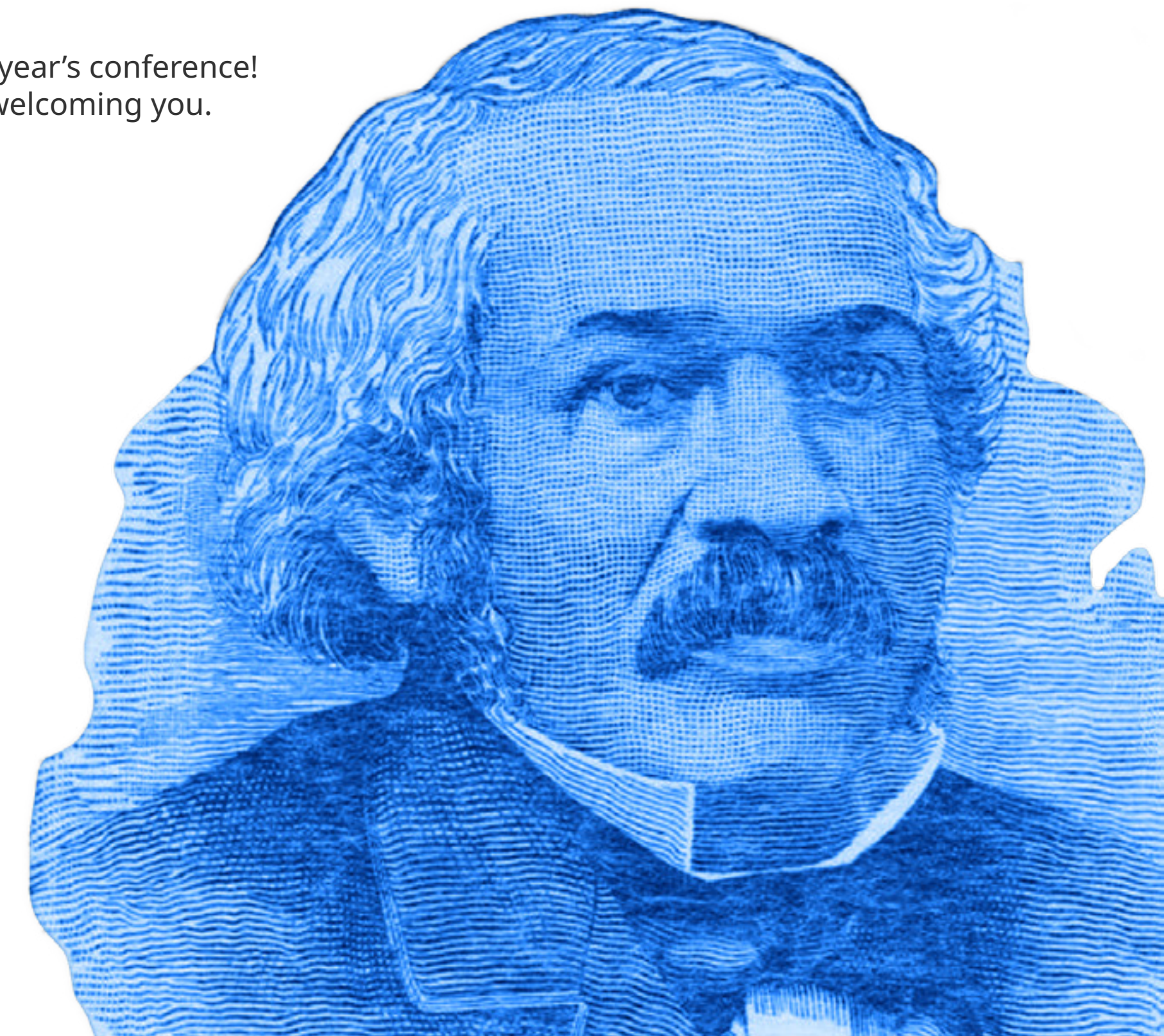
On behalf of the organising team,
we are delighted to welcome you to the
fourth James McCune Smith Annual Conference.

In previous years, our speakers collectively emphasised the support of friendship and community, and brought to light a range of marginalised traditions of Black speculative thought. The theme this year is **Every Story I Create, Creates Me: Learning, Leadership and Legacy**. Octavia Butler's words sing beautifully and speak truth as storytelling is bound up with the pursuit of knowledge and shapes the way we see ourselves and the world.

In this year's conference, we will explore the power and responsibility of Black scholars, artists and other truth-seekers to challenge and remake accepted knowledge through new discoveries, new perspectives and new narratives. Our purpose is to move the conversation forward on Black leadership in the sciences, humanities and arts. By the end of the conference, attendees should have gained some insight into Black leadership's impact on expanding the contours of knowledge and creative expression, and their influence on forging a legacy for the leaders of tomorrow.

Please consider joining our mailing list if you would like to hear more about JMS PhD Scholarship activities. You can do so by contacting JMSPHD@glasgow.ac.uk

Thank you for joining us at this year's conference!
We very much look forward to welcoming you.



Guest Contributor Biographies



Dr Dayne Beccano-Kelly

Dr Dayne Beccano-Kelly is a neuroscientist and Group Leader at the UK Dementia Research Institute at Cardiff University. His research focuses on how synaptic dysfunction contributes to the earliest stages of neurodegeneration, particularly in Parkinson’s disease. As an electrophysiologist and molecular biologist, his laboratory uses stem cell-derived neuronal models, molecular biology and functional synaptic analysis to identify early disease mechanisms and therapeutic opportunities that could prevent or delay disease progression.

Dr Beccano-Kelly trained at the University of Leeds, completing a BSc in Biochemistry with Industry in 2006, including an industrial placement at the Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, under Dr Dennis Dickson. He completed a PhD in Synaptic Neuroscience at Leeds in 2010 under Dr Hugh Pearson, before undertaking postdoctoral roles at the University of Dundee and the University of British Columbia. In 2015, he was awarded a Parkinson’s UK Career Development Fellowship at the University of Oxford, where he incorporated stem cell technologies into his neurodegeneration research.

In 2021, Dr Beccano-Kelly received a prestigious UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship and joined the UK Dementia Research Institute at Cardiff University as a Group Leader. His scientific outputs include influential work on synaptic biology, neuronal signalling, stem cell models and mechanisms underlying Parkinson’s disease and related neurodegenerative disorders. His work seeks to define early “prodromal” stages of disease and generate evidence that can support the development of preventative therapeutics.

Alongside his research, Dr Beccano-Kelly has made significant contributions to scientific leadership, funding strategy and research culture. He is a Trustee and Director of the British Neuroscience Association and has served as a Council Member and Joint Meetings Secretary. He has also contributed to major research infrastructure and funding decision-making through the MRC Council Infrastructure and Capital Strategic Advisory Group, the MRC Capital/Mid-range Equipment Funding Panel, and reviewing roles for the French National Research Agency, Telethon Science and the Royal Society.

Dr Beccano-Kelly is also a leading advocate for equity, diversity and representation in STEM. As Co-Chair of the MRC Black in Biomedical Research Advisory Group, he has helped shape policy and strategy within a major UK research council to improve access, visibility and support for Black biomedical researchers. Through his Royal Society panel work, he has contributed to funding pathways that support three years of development for early-career Black research scientists progressing towards independence. His advocacy, including work with Black in Neuro, Black British Academics and initiatives supporting aspiring Black scientists, reflects his commitment to building a more inclusive research ecosystem where excellence is recognised, nurtured and sustained across all communities.



Professor Lisa-Dionne Morris

Professor Lisa-Dionne Morris (LDM) is Professor of Public and Industry Understanding of Capability-Driven Design, Director of Internationalisation, and a member of the Institute of Design, Robotics and Optimisation within the School of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Leeds, UK. She is also Founder and CEO of Black Female Academics' Network (BFAN), a Community Interest Company dedicated to empowering Black female academics and professional services staff.

An internationally recognised Strategic Design Engineer and Systems Design Executive Consultant, Professor Morris holds seven visiting professorial appointments worldwide. Her award-winning work has been recognised through honours including the Sir John Sorrell Design Engineering Award, the Ruth Drew Award for Women Industrial Design Engineers, the 2024 PRECIOUS Award for Outstanding Woman in STEM, and the UK Community Leadership & Empowerment – Strategic Excellence Award.

Her research focuses on capability-driven systems design, frugal innovation, organisational and business security, health systems, and Explainable AI. She developed the Capability Plus model, which promotes inclusive, non-deficit approaches to innovation, capability development, and equitable system design for underserved communities globally.



Dr Josie Gill

Dr Josie Gill is an Associate Professor at the University of Bristol in the Department of English. Her research to date has focused on the intersections between contemporary literature, science, and ideas of race, and her first book, *Biofictions: Race, Genetics and the Contemporary Novel*, won the British Society for Literature and Science Book Prize for 2020. In 2022, she was awarded a Philip Leverhulme Prize to work on her new book about race and higher education, *Black Lecturer*.

Professor Hakim Adi

Prof. Hakim Adi is currently a Visiting Senior Fellow at the Department of International History at the London School of Economics and Professorial Research Associate at the Centre of Pan-African Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Hakim was the first historian of African heritage to become a professor of history in Britain. In August 2024 he was the recipient of the ‘Outstanding African Studies Award’ by the African Studies Association (UK) in recognition of his ‘exceptional contribution to the field of African Studies, for expanding and disseminating knowledge on Africa.’ In April 2025 he was awarded the Amilcar Cabral Centenary Medallion by the Fundação Amilcar Cabral (Cape Verde) for his work honouring the memory of Amilcar Cabral.

He has appeared in many documentary films, on TV and on radio and has written widely on the history of Africa and the African Diaspora, including three history books for children. His publications include: *West Africans in Britain 1900-60: Nationalism, Pan-Africanism and Communism* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1998); (with M. Sherwood) *The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress Revisited* (New Beacon, 1995) and *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787* (Routledge, 2003).

His most recent books are *Pan-Africanism and Communism: The Communist International, Africa and the Diaspora, 1919-1939* (Africa World Press, 2013), *Pan-Africanism: A History* (1804 Books, 2023), and, as editor *Black British History: New Perspectives* (Zed, 2019), *Black Voices on Britain* (Macmillan, 2022) and *Many Struggles: New Histories of African and Caribbean People in Britain* (Pluto, 2023). His most recent publication, *Africa and Caribbean People in Britain: A History* (Allen Lane, 2023) was shortlisted for the prestigious Wolfson History Prize in Britain in September 2023.

www.hakimadi.org



Briana Pegado

Briana Pegado FRSA is an award-winning social entrepreneur, writer and cultural changemaker. Named one of Scotland’s 30 under 30 Inspiring Young Women in 2017, she has led work at the intersection of creativity, equity, and social impact over the last eight years. She is the founder of the Edinburgh Student Arts Festival (ESAF) and has held leadership roles across Scotland’s creative and cultural sectors, including the National Theatre of Scotland, Custom Lane and Creative Lives. A graduate of the University of Edinburgh with an MA (Hons) in Sustainable Development, Briana later studied for an MBA at Central Saint Martins.

From 2019, she served as Chief Executive of Creative Edinburgh and Co-Director of Creative Informatics, an AHRC-funded initiative supporting data-driven innovation in the creative industries. She now serves as Data-Driven Innovation Ambassador for the Edinburgh Futures Institute. Briana has held key governance and leadership roles, including Chair and Interim Director of YWCA Scotland, Co-Director of We Are Here Scotland, and Creative Director of Fringe of Colour Film Festival. She currently leads Good Trouble Co., where she works as a governance and anti-racism consultant for organisations such as Glasgow Museums, SPRE, UPEN, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Glasgow Life.



She is former the Chair of the Scottish Government Culture Fair Work Task Force and is a sought-after speaker on equity in the arts. In April 2024, she published her first book, *Make Good Trouble: A Practical Guide to the Energetics of Disruption*. She is co-founder of the Black Filmmakers Community Network (BFCN), career clinic advisor for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland’s Creative Enterprise Development Office, and critical friend of NEUK Collective’s Neurodivergent Creative Leadership Programme – Spectra.

Gracie Bradley and Season Butler

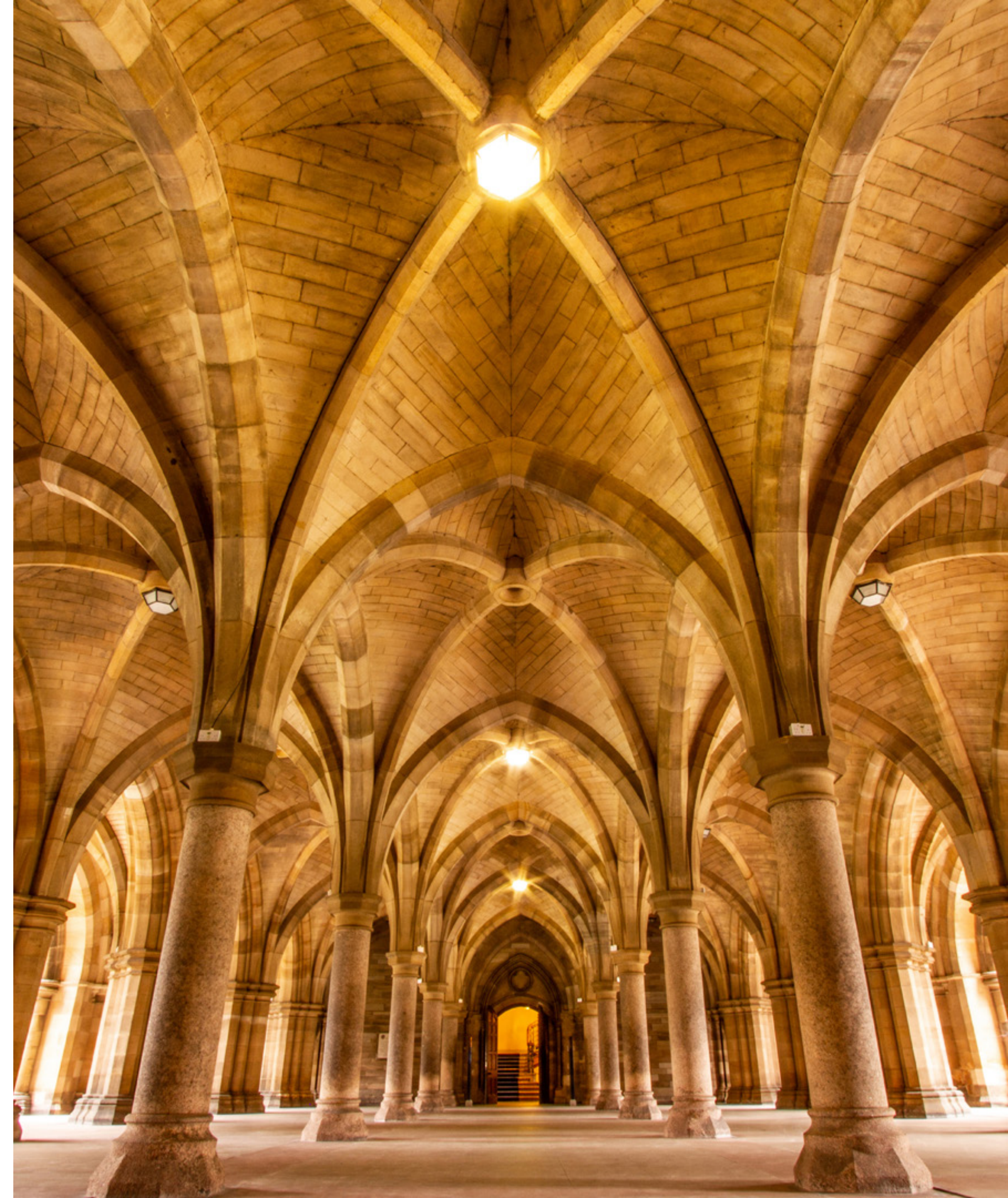
Gracie Mae Bradley is a thinker and writer interested in what it means for people to live flourishing lives.

She is co-author of *Against Borders: The Case for Abolition* (Verso, 2022), and her short-form work includes *Peacetime* (Salvage Magazine, 2022), *Locating Legacies* (Stuart Hall Foundation, 2023), *Conjugating Surveillance* (forthcoming, System of Systems), and *Marsomnium* (forthcoming, Valiz).

She is former Director of Liberty and Grenfell Testimony Week, and a James McCune Smith Scholar in the DFA Creative Writing Programme at the University of Glasgow. She holds an MSc in Human Rights from the LSE and a BA (Oxon) in Philosophy & French from Trinity College, Oxford.

Season Butler is a writer, artist, dramaturg and group facilitator working across fiction, performance and research. Her debut novel, *Cygnets*, won the 2020 Writers' Guild Award for Best First Novel.

She holds a PhD in Creative Writing and has taught performance studies and creative writing at institutions including the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and Syracuse University. Her work explores questions of age, solitude, community and crisis across literary and live contexts.



Adam Heron, Cristina Dimitrova
and Katy Bell



An Irish composer and pianist of Nigerian-Filipino ancestry, **Adam Heron** won the Harriet Cohen Bach Award in 2020. Born in Hong Kong, Adam achieved widespread recognition following his 2018 television debut as a BBC Young Musician category finalist. Through his cosmopolitan heritage, coupled with a flair for storytelling, he is a leading ambassador for young classical musicians.

Adam commands a thrilling schedule of international concerts, collaborations, and outreach engagements, having performed at distinguished venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Wigmore Hall, Usher Hall, and Sinfonia Smith Square. He has also undertaken recent partnerships with major broadcasters including BBC Radio 3 (UK), Bartók Radio (Hungary), and Radio One (India), having worked alongside eminent presenters including Katie Derham and Sean Rafferty.

A devoted ensemble pianist, he has collaborated with fellow musicians including saxophonist Amy Dickson, violinist Antal Zalai, and cellist Laura van der Heijden, as well as conductors David Curtis, Pete Harrison, and Timothy Carey.

A laureate of the Stefano Marizza and HRH Princess Lalla Meryem international piano competitions, Adam studied with Christopher Elton at the Royal Academy of Music in London before achieving a postgraduate degree from the University of Cambridge. He is generously supported by Irish Heritage, The Hattori Foundation, The Keyboard Charitable Trust, The Talent Unlimited Foundation, and Live Music Now Scotland.

Cristina Dimitrova is a Portuguese-Bulgarian violinist currently based in the Netherlands. She holds a Master of Music degree from the Conservatorium van Amsterdam and a Bachelor of Music (First Class Honours) from the Royal College of Music in London, graduating with distinction in both degrees. She received her early musical training at Wells Cathedral School as a full scholarship holder and at the Lisbon National Conservatoire. Cristina has appeared as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral performer at leading venues including the Royal Albert Hall, the Concertgebouw, the Muziekgebouw, and Wigmore Hall. She has also participated in international festivals such as the Vladimir Spivakov Festival for Strings.

Her competition achievements include First Prize at the International “*Violines por la Paz*” Violin Competition in Málaga and reaching the semi-finals of the *Dr. Luis Sigall International Violin Competition in Viña del Mar*, Chile.

In addition to her solo and chamber activities, Cristina regularly performs with leading orchestras in the Netherlands and Belgium, including the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra and Residentie Orkest.

Katy Bell grew up in Glasgow before studying cello in London and then in Cincinnati, Ohio. She then lived and worked in The Netherlands and in Inverness before moving back to her hometown of Glasgow in 2020 and joining Live Music Now Scotland in 2024.

Katy loves playing the Bach Cello Suites and performed all six at a drawing room venue in the Hague. To celebrate this, she commissioned two composers to write works for solo cello inspired by Bach and these pieces now feature in her repertoire alongside Bach. New music is a passion, and a highlight was meeting composer Steve Reich and performing his Music for 18 Musicians to him.

Katy loves teaching and community music and has worked with Sistema Scotland for many years. She is an advisor to The Agar Trust which supports young musicians living in rural areas. Being part of the Live Music Now family is a wonderful new chapter and Katy looks forward to sharing new experiences with audiences far and wide.

JMS Scholars 2025

Research Descriptions

Christopher D. Reid

The Racial Genealogies of Finance Capitalism in the Early Modern British Atlantic, 1660s-1820s

The aim of my thesis is to reconfigure current understanding of the development of British financial institutions by making race integral to the historiography of lending, credit, and insurance in the Atlantic colonies.

My work will demonstrate that British planter elites constructed a colonial racial state to protect their business interests against the strivings of enslaved and free Black people; and that merchant-financiers in Britain had a stake in the effort to sustain white rule in these imperial spaces. The analysis and exposition of this centuries' long political conflict will lead to a more comprehensive view of the emergence of the modern financial industry.

Martin Kalemba

African Kingdoms as Resourceful Corporations

This doctoral study investigates the political economy of the Royal Bafokeng Nation's unique Community Wealth Building (CWB) model as a strategic vehicle for achieving sustainable regional development. Initially inspired by the South African Kingdom's prominent corporate investment profile on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, this research explores how traditional governance institutions in post-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa can successfully function as powerful local anchor institutions. By analysing this indigenous framework, the project seeks to theoretically de-centre contemporary CWB models from dominant Western narratives, effectively redefining them within an authentic African context. Ultimately, this vital academic research contributes to the discourse on progressive economic policy, offering viable, structurally sound African solutions to long-standing development challenges across the modern continent.

Michelle Amoah

The role of Circular RNAs in Adrenal Steroid Secretion

Hypertension affects over 30% of adults worldwide and is a major contributor to cardiovascular disease. Primary Aldosteronism (PA) is caused by excessive aldosterone production and accounts for approximately 5–10% of hypertension cases, resulting in increased cardiovascular risk. Although PA is treatable, diagnosis is challenging due to limitations of the current screening processes.

MicroRNAs have been shown to regulate aldosterone synthesis. Circular RNAs (circRNAs) are now emerging as important regulators of microRNA function, but their impact on aldosterone is currently unknown. This study aims to investigate the role of circRNAs in aldosterone regulation using human adrenocortical cell culture models. Initial work presented here focuses on developing protocols for circRNAs detection and measurement in cultured cells.

Emmanuel Leo

β -radiation Monitoring: Investigating the application of Digital Twin Methodologies for Characterisation and Monitoring in Nuclear Power Plant Contexts

Nuclear power plant decommissioning is a multi-decadal engineering challenge requiring robust radiological characterisation and monitoring in environments where human access is constrained by safety risk. These environments are technologically hostile, with radiation-induced equipment degradation, unreliable wireless communication caused by shielding and structural obstruction, and continually evolving spatial and radiological conditions. Beta (β) radiation presents detection challenges due to its limited penetration depth, sensitivity to shielding, and dependence on local and surrounding conditions. This research integrates radiation sensing, autonomous platforms, data-driven modelling, and human-machine collaboration within a multidisciplinary digital twin framework. By coupling physical measurements with virtual representations of the operating environment, the work aims to improve situational awareness, support safer decision-making, and reduce human exposure during complex nuclear decommissioning tasks.

Françoise Uwase

From Education to Employment: Understanding Unequal Labour-Market Trajectories among Black and Asian Ethnic Minority Groups in the UK

Educational attainment among Black and Asian ethnic minority groups in the UK has improved substantially over recent decades, with several groups now matching or exceeding the educational outcomes of their White British peers. Yet these educational gains have not translated into equal labour-market outcomes. My study examines why educational attainment does not translate into equal labour-market returns for Black and Asian groups in the UK since 2010. Drawing on Human Capital Theory, Critical Race Theory, Intersectionality and Feminist Political Economy, I use a life-course perspective to investigate inequalities in labour-market entry, retention and progression. My research aims to generate evidence that can inform policies to reduce ethnic and gender inequalities in labour-market outcomes.





Ifunanya Nduka

Intersecting Inequalities and Cancer Screening Participation among Marginalised Women: A Mixed-Methods Study

The NHS offers free screening tests to all eligible people in the United Kingdom (UK), including cervical and breast cancer screening (NHS, 2024). However, not everyone who is invited attends the screening tests. My study will use a large database called the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD) to examine whether women who are marginalised due to their ethnicity, mental health conditions, disability, childhood trauma or where they live are less likely to attend screening than other women.

Differences in who attends screening indicate inequalities in access to the healthcare system, even though it is free and available to everyone. This is important because missing screening tests means that breast and cervical cancers may not be picked up earlier. These delays would mean the cancers become harder to treat, and people are more likely to die from them. My study will measure the size of these differences and identify which groups of women are most affected. In addition, my study will examine whether being disadvantaged in more than one way makes things significantly worse and will conduct qualitative interviews with women who may be absent from the dataset.

Isra Abdi

Investigating the role of ARF GTPases in cancer cell death and progression

Cancer treatments work best when they can selectively eliminate cancer cells while leaving healthy tissue unharmed. Some forms of cancer cell death can also stimulate the immune system to recognise and attack tumours, a process known as immunogenic cell death. Understanding how to trigger this response could improve the effectiveness of cancer therapies. In my project, I investigate a family of proteins called ARF GTPases, which regulate both protein secretion and possibly mitochondrial function within cells. Using genetically engineered cancer models, I explore how ARF proteins influence cell survival, cell death, and immune signalling. By uncovering how these pathways interact, I aim to identify new strategies for enhancing anti-cancer immune responses and improving the effectiveness of cancer treatments.

Justin Espoir Machongo

Social and Environmental Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the African Great Lakes (Tanganyika), Burundi

Climate change is increasingly recognised as one of the biggest contributors to environmental and livelihood insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa, where most communities rely directly on climate-sensitive resources, including agriculture and fisheries (IPCC, 2019). In Burundi, these challenges are particularly evident in communities surrounding Lake Tanganyika (Aboyitungiye & Suryanto, 2025). Although numerous strategies of adaptation have been employed little evidence exists regarding their effectiveness in the long run to reduce vulnerability (Nkurunzinja et al., 2023). This highlights a knowledge gap about the impacts of adaptation interventions on the long-term in highly climate sensitive areas.

The objective of this thesis is to investigate how effective climate adaptation measures are in minimizing long-term socio-environmental vulnerability within the Lake Tanganyika Basin. This research specifically concentrates on Lake Tanganyika, Burundi, because of its ecological and socio-economic significance. The lake is socio-economically critical, providing fisheries, water supply and livelihoods, where communities are highly vulnerable with high resource dependence and low adaptive capacity.

Nkechi First

When Women Direct: Female Authorship, African Feminist Visuality and Knowledge Production in Nollywood

Nollywood has become one of the world's most influential film industries, generating significant scholarship on gender representation, spectatorship, and cultural identity. However, much of this research has focused on how women are portrayed on screen, with comparatively limited attention paid to the role of female directors as creators of cinematic meaning. This paper addresses that gap by examining directing as a site of knowledge production within Nollywood.

Drawing on feminist film theory, African feminist thought, and emerging scholarship on female authorship, the research argues that women directors should be understood not only as producers of representation but also as theorists whose creative decisions actively shape the frameworks through which gendered experiences are constructed and understood. The project challenges approaches that privilege representation and spectatorship as the primary objects of analysis and instead foregrounds authorship, creative labour, and filmmaking practice.

Situated within a practice-based PhD, the research combines critical film analysis with documentary filmmaking and interviews with female directors. It explores how directing functions as a form of African feminist praxis, informed by relationality, negotiation, and context-specific modes of meaning-making. Particular attention is given to Nollywood's distinctive production environment, characterised by informal economies, collaborative working practices, and entrepreneurial modes of filmmaking.

By positioning female directors as producers of visual and theoretical knowledge, this research contributes to feminist film studies, African feminist scholarship, and Nollywood studies. It proposes the concept of an African feminist visuality that emerges through directing practices and creative decision-making, offering a new framework for understanding the relationship between gender, authorship, and cinematic knowledge within production within African cinema.

Augustina O. Ugwu

Investigation of health inequalities in Breast cancer diagnosis and management among Black female Africans

Breast cancer stands out as one of the main causes of female cancer death worldwide, with growing evidence suggesting disparities in age at diagnosis, tumour biology, and clinical outcomes across different ethnic group. In the UK healthcare system, breast cancer screening programmes are largely based on age screening thresholds of 50 to 71 years. However, a common theme emerging from literature is that Black female Africans are diagnosed with breast cancer at a younger age.

Therefore, this research aims to investigate the existence of health inequalities in breast cancer diagnosis and management, with focus on triple negative breast cancer among Black female Africans. Analysing health data – Genomics England breast cancer cohort, NHS Genomics Medicine and Services, and African cohorts with computational tools, this study will examine whether current NHS age-based screening thresholds sufficiently identify

clinically important breast cancer cases among Black female Africans. It will further explore the potential need for more risk-stratified screening approaches to improve early detection and for better outcomes.

The findings could highlight the importance of understanding population-specific patterns of breast cancer diagnosis and may inform future research into more equitable and risk-informed screening strategies.

Paul Gordon

Mapping Theology and Music Across Black British Urban Geographies

Paul's research is a multi-sited ethnographic study exploring Black British gospel, reggae, and dancehall cultures. It combines fieldwork with Practice as Research (PaR), in which musical creation serves as both method and output. The study integrates dialogical "reasoning" across four key sites: the United Kingdom (Birmingham and London), Jamaica (Kingston), and the United States (New York). The research examines intergenerational Black British identity, faith (Christian and Rastafari), and musical expression within churches, sound systems, and dancehall spaces.

As part of the fieldwork research, a hybrid reflexive approach, combining thematic coding with creative interpretation, will result in the production of a musical composition recorded album consisting of nine songs (three from each genre), where he will compose lyrics and music to operate as analytical processes, translating field insights into artistic outputs. This will constitute primary research, producing knowledge alongside the written thesis.

Overall, this research positions music as a rigorous epistemological tool, generating insight into Black diasporic identity, theology, resistance, revolution and redemption across interconnected global spaces.





Owolona Ogbe
**Externalities of Digitalisation in
Healthcare: People and Planet**

Owolona Ogbe is a PhD researcher in Health Economics at the University of Glasgow, specialising in the intersection of digital health, sustainability, and public policy. Her research examines how environmental impacts and broader societal outcomes can be integrated into health economic evaluations and health technology assessments, informing more sustainable healthcare decision-making and resource allocation.

Drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives from health economics, digital innovation, sustainability, and systems thinking, Owolona explores how emerging healthcare technologies can contribute to both improved population health and environmental stewardship. Her work focuses on the often-overlooked environmental consequences of digitalisation, including resource consumption, carbon impacts, electronic waste, and issues of environmental justice.

Alongside her academic research, Owolona is passionate about innovation for social good and the use of technology to address complex societal challenges. Through research, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative initiatives, she contributes to the development of more equitable, resilient, and sustainable health and social systems that deliver value for both people and the planet.

Marwa Osman
**Designing Smart Molecules to
Destroy Cancer-Causing Proteins**

Cancer remains one of the world’s biggest health challenges, often driven by faulty or mutated proteins that promote tumour growth. Traditional treatments try to block these harmful proteins, but they frequently fail. This research focuses on a revolutionary approach called Targeted Protein Degradation. Instead of just blocking the cancer-causing protein (specifically a common mutant called p53), we designed and synthesized “smart molecules” PROTAC that act like a cellular recycling system. These molecules identify the harmful protein and trick the body’s own machinery into completely destroying it. This work creates a promising new pathway for developing more effective, targeted cancer therapies.

Tyler England

Exploring the diagnosis and disclosure experiences of autistic people of Black heritage, and how autism diagnosticians understand race in their practice

The project is in its early stages, but I plan to explore the following questions:

1. How do autistic people of Black heritage experience the autism diagnostic process?
2. How do they navigate the decision to disclose, or not disclose, their diagnosis in different areas of their lives?
3. How do autism diagnosticians understand and engage with the concept of 'race' within their professional practice?

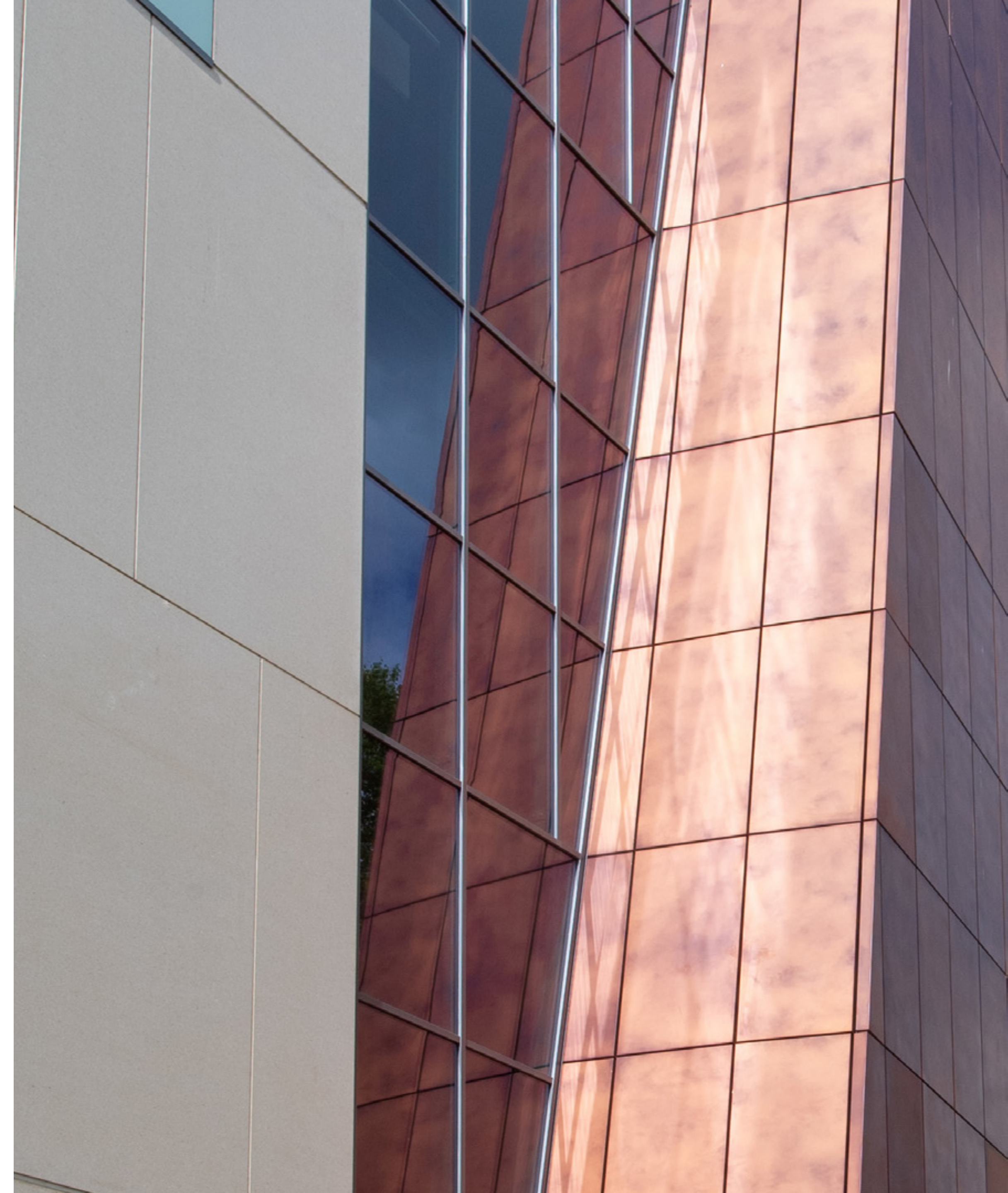
I intend to address the lack of research exploring these questions. I want to build upon foundations of intersectionality and critical autism studies, positioning the autism diagnostic process as potentially racialised and impacted by systemic racism.

Methodologically, I am planning to use Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) with autistic participants, and qualitative semi-structured interviews with diagnosticians to explore how "race" is constructed and mobilised in the diagnostic process. IPA is well suited to exploring nuanced and intersectional contexts, such as the

role of race in diagnosis and disclosure, as analysis is participant centred.

As an autistic researcher of Black heritage, I want to ensure my approach makes participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences. Conducting research "with", not "on" autistic individuals opposes interpretations of autism based on the medical model of disability, which positions autism as a defect to be cured. Furthermore, autistic autism researchers are well-positioned to help autistic participants feel comfortable sharing their lived experiences, due to many similar challenges and struggles.

The aim of this work is to contribute to more inclusive and equitable diagnostic procedures and support services. The study would address the truly missing voices in autism research, by enabling Black autistic people to speak on their own terms. This means this research would directly correct an epistemological and ethical injustice, one of the biggest impacts of all.



Valerio Lhamine

Impact of chytrid on amphibian movement and mitigations

My research focuses on understanding Chytrid on amphibian behaviour and will explore possible mitigations. Chytrid is an infectious fungal disease impacting amphibians worldwide and is currently responsible for the decline of at least 501 species. In the presentation, I will provide some background on the value of amphibians and the impact which Chytrid has had so far. I will also present some early work from my first chapter where we worked on tracking the movement of Dyeing poison dart frogs (*Dendrobates tinctorius*) to understand how their behaviour is impacted by Chytrid. Lastly, I will cover the remainder of my PhD where we will investigate thermal ecology, methods for predicting Chytrid prevalence and its drivers in south America and will explore mitigation methods.



Acknowledgements

Thank you to the James McCune Smith Scholars for their incredible hard work on delivering the conference. This is a hugely ambitious programme and we are privileged to work with such a fantastic group of students.

We would also like to thank GSK for their continued support, and all the mentors and companies who contribute to our programme. If you would like to sign up to the JMS Network to receive invitations to our events, [please follow the link here](#).

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