

Faculty of Divinity Statement

It has been three years since the Faculty released a statement on Race, Theology and Religion, in which we encouraged staff and students to think more deeply about race and to learn from those who have been marginalized (<https://www.divinity.cam.ac.uk/news/race-theology-religion>). We continue to affirm that commitment as we reflect on the wider challenges of ensuring greater diversity and inclusion in the life of our Faculty. As a place of study, employment and research we share with the wider University a commitment to equality of opportunity and take an approach that supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, values diversity, and the free exchange of ideas.

As a Faculty dedicated to the multi-disciplinary study of religions, we recognize our particular responsibility to promote dialogue, understanding and critical reflection upon the many manifestations of religious faith both past and present. The extent to which religious forces have been significant in processes of colonialization and decolonization, in the oppression of minorities, in the reinforcement of gender inequality, and also at times in challenging and seeking to overcome these forces, demands critical study in conjunction with other disciplines.

Recent developments and events have included the following:

- new papers on the theme of slavery in early Christianity (D2a), on post-colonialism (D2e) and contemporary theologies (D1c);
- establishment of a new lectureship in Buddhism in 23/24 to broaden the geographic scope and religious landscape of our curriculum;
- an initiative to raise funds for teaching and research in theology, gender and sexuality;
- public lectures, seminars and symposia organized by the Cambridge Interfaith Programme;
- a conference to explore the work of James Cone, pioneer of black theology in December 2022;
- establishment from 23/24 of a dedicated scholarship for a visiting academic from the global south;
- extending the range of topics and speakers in our endowed Hulsean and Stanton lecture series;
- improvement of internal and external faculty communications.

Recognizing that this is an ongoing process, not a single event, we are continuing to explore ways in which values of diversity, inclusion and belonging can be further advanced within our Faculty. Our EDI Committee regularly monitors developments and reports to the Faculty Board.

We plan further work in this area including:

- the monitoring of recruitment processes both on the level of student admissions and staff employment, ensuring we adhere to best practices in advertising and seeking the widest possible pool.
- the appointment of an Inclusion Officer, whose role is to be a personal point of contact for anyone with concerns, and to ensure adequate training and opportunities are made available to staff and students;
- the continuing development of the curriculum by subject committees to include diverse voices;
- purchase of materials for the Faculty library to support curriculum development;
- further allocation of Faculty funds specifically for work on themes of equality, race, and diversity within the study of theology and religion;
- updating of the Faculty website through appointment of a Communications Officer in order to increase awareness and access to support in this area.

Our Equality and Diversity Committee will provide an annual progress report to the Faculty Board.

For further information on University policy see:

[Equal Opportunities Policy | Equality, Diversity & Inclusion \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Professor David Fergusson (Chair of the Faculty of Divinity)

Professor Esra Özyürek (Convener of the Faculty Equality and Diversity Committee)