



GENERATION DELTA

Access to the Academy
Training Resources



Laying the foundations for a long-term increase in the number
of racially minoritised women in England's professoriate.



FOREWORD



On behalf of Generation Delta, I am delighted to present these training resources which have emerged directly from the Workshops organised by this project and held around the country between 2022 and 2025 to understand and enhance the experience of racially minoritised women students at the post-graduate research level. They are designed with the needs of these women in mind, but we hope they will help all those wishing to pursue a research career in higher education.

The contents of the following pages can be used by individuals or in groups, in academic and non-academic settings. The materials can be used separately or as a whole package, at any pace and as often as necessary - the videos can be watched and the activities completed in multiple settings - in a classroom or individually at home. By curating the materials in this way, we hope to make the valuable information that they contain as accessible as possible to encourage women wherever they are to consider a future in academia, as per our goal to nurture the next generation of racially minoritised professors.

It just remains to say that we hope that you enjoy engaging with and benefit from the use of these materials. We are grateful to our institutional support groups, the Generation Delta Advisory Group, Generation Delta Champions and all who participated in our workshops, roundtables and conferences over the past four years. None of this would have been possible without your support.

Sincerely,

Leyiola Solanke

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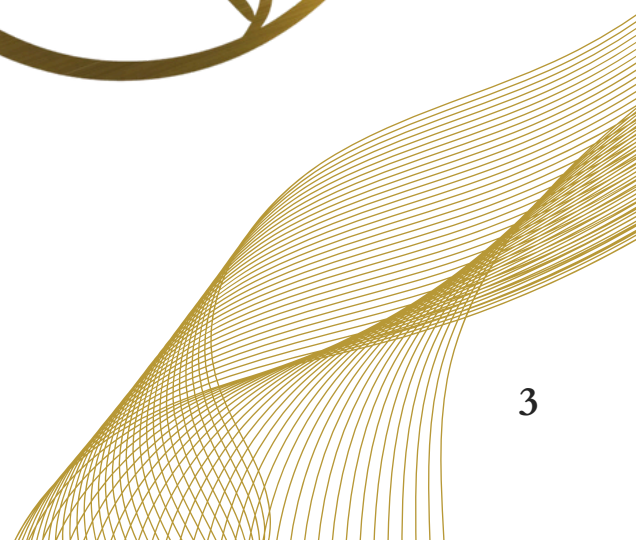


Dr Queenie Eng
Former Project Manager



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OVERVIEW OF TRAINING RESOURCES

The Aim

Generation Delta is an action research project with the aim of improving the experiences and outcomes of racially minoritised women in postgraduate research studies (PGR) in England through targeted interventions at three key phases of the PGR life cycle: Access to Academy (A2A), Retention and Progression (RaP) and Training for Careers (T4C).

During the funding period of 2022-2026, we facilitated student workshops and cross-institutional staff roundtables aligned with these three key phases to make change at both individual and institutional levels. Phase I (2022-2023) formed an exploratory period to define what students wanted from tailored training sessions aimed at women from racially minoritised backgrounds. Phase II (2024-2025) implemented student-informed topics into training sessions.

Generation Delta prioritises learning from lived experiences alongside making the process of entering the academy clear and accessible. The Access to the Academy (A2A) workshop incorporated opportunities to hear directly from current PGR students as well as essential guidance on key steps towards entry to PGR studies. Discussions around accessing the academy were often complex, capturing barriers faced by racialised women such as financial challenges, work-life balance, sense of belonging, and caring responsibilities. These training resources address A2A for racially minoritised women interested in pursuing PGR studies. These training resources bring together lessons from the workshops and are organised into two sections 'Video Hub' and 'Supporting Activities'. Pairing both Generation Delta videos and participatory activities provide intersectional insights into access to the academy, calling on institutions to rethink how they recruit, support, and create pathways to PGR entry.



[Watch: Introduction to Generation Delta
by Professor Iyiola Solanke](#)



Who These Resources Are For

These training resources have been designed by Generation Delta based on the knowledge and experience generated over a four-year period, during which the six Generation Delta project partners held collaborative workshops and roundtables with racially minoritised women postgraduate research students (from universities across England) and staff (from the institutions of the project partners), respectively. They are intended for use by anybody whose responsibilities include the training and development of racially minoritised women undertaking postgraduate research programmes.

Trainers and all who use these resources should be committed to Generation Delta's fundamental principles of racial and gender equity, diversity (recognising the value of individual differences) and inclusion (creating environments where all participants feel safe, valued, listened to and heard).

Using These Training Resources

These resources are organised into two sections: 'Video Hub' and 'Supporting Activities', designed to inform, reflect, and support action to improve the outcomes and experiences of racially minoritised women in PGR studies.



Using the Video Hub

This section presents selected recordings from Generation Delta's A2A workshops. The videos highlight the lived experiences of women in PGR studies from racially minoritised backgrounds as well as essential, multifaceted guidance on how to become a PGR student. Divided into two subthemes 'reflections from current PGR students' and 'keys to the academy', these resources provide both practical and critical insights to support equitable entry into academia.

Using the Supporting Activities

This section offers a curated selection of participatory activities from Generation Delta's A2A workshops. Designed to complement the video recordings, these activities encourage critical engagement, discussion, and collective reflection. They prioritise well-being and self-determination, while also providing practical tools and skills to support prospective PGR students who are women from racially minoritised backgrounds.



Video Hub:

Reflections from current PGR Students

These reflections offer candid insights from racially minoritised women currently navigating postgraduate research. Their stories speak to the challenges and possibilities of entering the academy, highlighting how to secure financial support through scholarships, learning from rejected applications and connecting to the research topic.



Finding a PGR Scholarship

In a panel discussion facilitated by Dr Smita Tripathi, PGR students from the University of Plymouth, Guoste Pivoraite, Olasumbo Olaniyi and Aira Ong, share their experiences of applying for PGR scholarships, highlighting the challenges, strategies, and support that shaped their journey into postgraduate research.

VIDEO DURATION: 13:47



Preparing for PGR Study

In discussion with Professor Farzana Shain, PGR students, Angela Loum, Clementine Bedos, Rambisayi Marufu and Paraas Abbas, share their varied paths to securing a scholarship, emphasising the value of persistence, refining ideas, and learning from rejection to successfully reapply.

VIDEO DURATION: 30:28



The Second Time Around

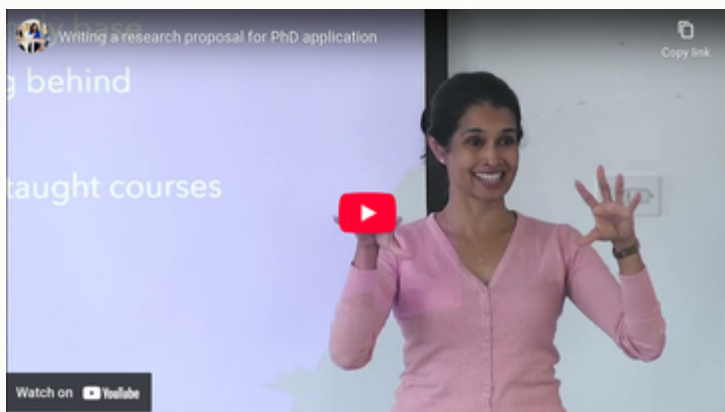
PGR student, Natasha Smith shares the challenges and triumphs of applying for doctoral funding, unpacking the lessons of what can make a successful application.

VIDEO DURATION: 17:15

Video Hub:

Keys to the Academy

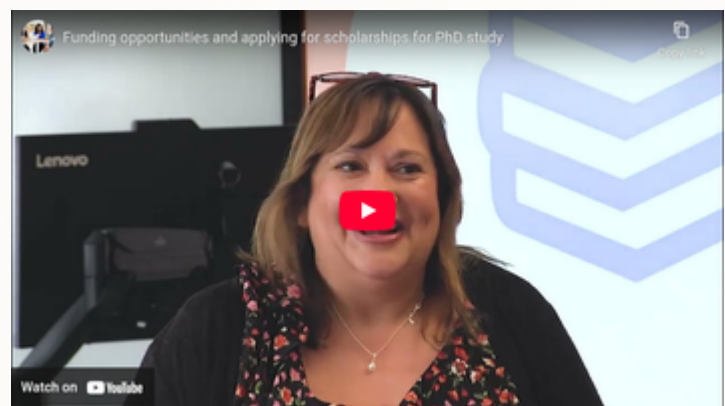
This subtheme focuses on tips from established academics on writing strong proposals, securing scholarships, and finding a supervisor to guide prospective PGR students.



Writing a Proposal

Dr Dulekha Kasturiratne adopts storytelling to convey how she came to apply for her PhD programme, offering tips, advice and encouragement to other women interested in pursuing PGR studies.

VIDEO DURATION: 44: 14



Finances for PGR studies

Professor Sheela Agarwal outlines the costs of PGR studies including tuition, living expenses and other associated costs. Offering the pros and cons between self- and scholarship-funded options, Professor Agarwal discusses considerations for financing PGR studies including tips on how to apply to some of the largest academic funders.

VIDEO DURATION: 19:41



Finding a PhD Supervisor

Drawing from slides created by Najah Mijer and led by Professor Amaka Offiah, the Generation Delta team facilitate a conversation around the constellation of holistic support required by PGR students, particularly women from racially minoritised backgrounds.

VIDEO DURATION: 31:23

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Creating an Interactive and Participant-Centred Workshop

Generation Delta workshops are designed to be interactive and to encourage reflection, skill-building, and collective learning. A central feature of the workshops is to create “safe and brave spaces” — structured, respectful environments that encourage open, honest and courageous dialogues about personal and academic challenges.

Below are selected participatory activities utilised in Generation Delta workshops. These activities are designed to centre students’ voices and lived experiences, offering alternative ways of learning that validate emotion, encourage critical thinking, and promote self-determination.

PGR Proposal and CV Surgery

- A practical session focused on strengthening a PGR proposal and academic CVs, with an emphasis on recognising unique contributions.
- Resource requirements: examples of successful PGR proposals and senior academic CVs from different subject areas and disciplines as well as participants own proposals and CVs.

Zine-Making Exercise

- This is a hands-on zine-making session designed to creatively explore personal experiences and aspirations to pursue PGR studies. Key questions to inspire reflection:
 - What motivates you to pursue a PhD, and how do you envision it shaping your future?
 - What kind of academic environment would help you feel a true sense of belonging?
 - What impact do you hope to make in academia, and how would you like to see it evolve for racially and ethnically minoritised women?
- Resource requirements: A4 white and/or coloured paper, scissors, pens, pencils, markers, glue sticks, magazines, newspapers, stickers, wasabi tape.





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Guest speakers featured in the Access to the Academy Training Resource:

Aira Ong (University of Plymouth), Angela Loum (Goldsmiths, University of London)
Clementine Bedos (Goldsmiths, University of London), Dulekha Kasturiratne (University of Plymouth),
Guoste Pivoraite (University of Plymouth), Najah Mijer (University of Sheffield)
Natasha Smith (City St George's University of London), Olasumbo Olaniyi (University of Plymouth),
Paraas Abbas (Goldsmiths, University of London), Rambisayi Marufu (Goldsmiths, University of London),
Sheela Agarwal (University of Plymouth), Smita Tripathi (University of Plymouth)

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