

SURREY BLACK SCHOLARS LEGACY PACK

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SBS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Programme Title: Surrey Black Scholars (SBS) Programme

Lead Institution: University of Surrey (UoS)

Period: 2021 - 2026

Funding Body: Research England &
Office for Students (OfS)

Subject: Black Postgraduate
Researchers (PGRs)

Purpose and Overview

This legacy pack provides a concise, accessible summary of the SBS programme, distilling key findings from the overall evaluation into digestible one-page briefs on programme delivery, stakeholder engagement, knowledge management, lessons learned, and dissemination. This pack is designed to communicate impact, outcomes, and future opportunities clearly to target audiences. The SBS programme formed the University of Surrey's contribution to a national racial equity initiative delivered across 13 higher education institutions.

Programme Objectives:

- Increase the number and proportion of UK-domiciled Black students entering postgraduate research (PGR) through outreach.
- Create a more equitable PGR experience through inclusive support and enhanced peer and academic mentoring.
- Expand career opportunities in academia and industry through tailored advice and strategic networking.
- Improve overall access to and experience of PGR for all racially-minoritised students, with targeted action for the most under-represented groups.

Target Audience:

- Prospective Racially-minoritised Postgraduate Researchers
- Academic Researchers & Institutional Leaders
- Policy Makers & National Funding Agencies

Key Documents:

▶ Programme Outcomes

1. Milestone Outcomes
2. SBS Interventions Descriptions

▶ Stakeholder Engagement

3. SBS PGR Network Map
4. Stakeholder Communication Chart

▶ Evaluation Reporting

5. Legacy & Knowledge Management
6. Overall Lessons Learned
7. Theory of Change Model

▶ Visibility & Dissemination

8. Target Audiences
9. Dissemination Channels

Programme Timeline:

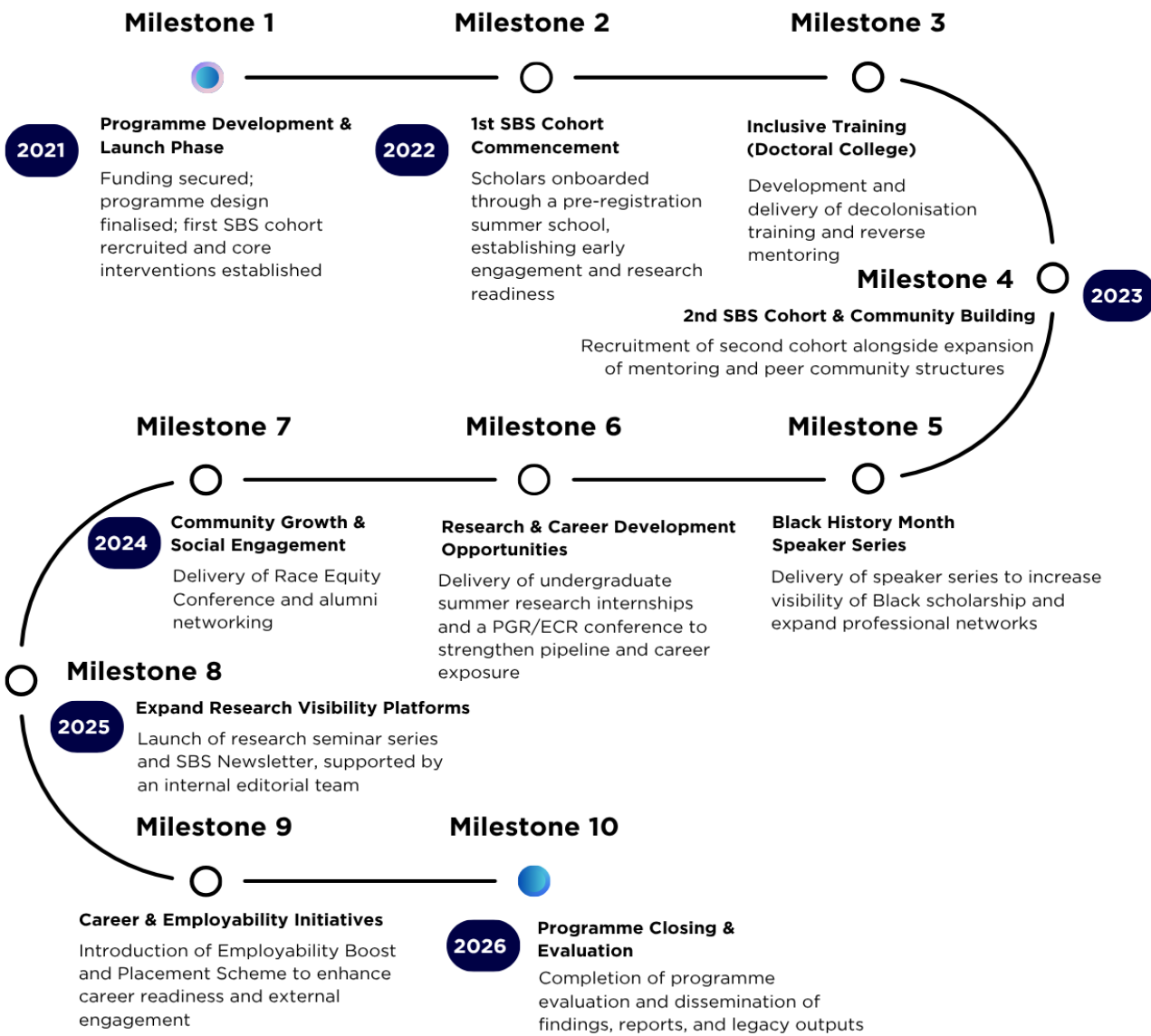
Stage	Timeline:	Key Deliverables:
Stage 0: Initiation & Planning	2021-2022	Development of initiatives within the university
Stage 1: Building a pipeline	2022-2025	Undergraduate summer internship scheme
Stage 2: Enhancing Experience	2022-2026	Mentoring, conferences, & PG certification
Stage 3: Career Boost	2024-2026	Black industry networking & Employability Boost
Stage 4: External Impact	2025-2026	Evaluation, dissemination, and reporting



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SBS MILESTONE OUTCOMES



Each milestone contributed to building a strong scholar community, expanding platforms for visibility, and enhancing access to academic and career development opportunities.



SBS INTERVENTIONS

Ring-fenced fully funded PhD studentships

Aimed to remove structural and financial barriers that disproportionately limited Black applicants' access to doctoral study

Fully funded undergraduate research internships

Created for third-year Black undergraduate and taught postgraduate students to increase awareness of postgraduate research and career pathways through early, structured exposure to academic research

Pre-registration summer school bursaries

Supported incoming Surrey Black Scholars' transition into doctoral study to strengthen research readiness and confidence

Employability Boost bursaries

Offered fully funded three-month bursaries at standard UK stipend rates to enable participants to undertake career-enhancing activities while balancing doctoral work

FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION

SOCIAL INTERVENTION

The SBS programme was designed to span the full doctoral lifecycle. Therefore, each initiative addressed financial, academic, and social dimensions of doctoral participation, as well as incorporating mechanisms for institutional learning, including mentoring, inclusive supervision practices, staff development and the processes involved in this programme evaluation



SBS INTERVENTIONS

Inclusive and decolonised researcher development programme

Aimed to address epistemic bias and exclusion embedded within doctoral training at Surrey. This was executed as a systematic review involving paid contributions from Black PGRs to evaluate existing provisions

Culturally competent supervision training

Embedded within staff development structures and focused on racialised power dynamics in supervisory relationships to improve doctoral experience.

Teacher qualification support

Guaranteed funded access to the Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and formalised experience and pedagogical training

FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

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SBS INTERVENTIONS

Reverse and reciprocal mentoring

Mentoring between Black PGRs and senior institutional leaders was supported by external training to strengthen belonging, self-efficacy, and institutional voice while facilitating organisational learning

External industry placement scheme (salaried)

Intended to broaden career horizons, build professional networks, and reduce ethnic disparities in graduate employment outcomes

Black in Academia speaker series, Black in Industry networking event, SBS seminar series & conferences

Invited student presentations and structured networking opportunities to counter networking exclusion, enhance access to non-academic career pathways, provide visible role models, strengthen scholarly identity, and expand academic networks

Surrey Black Scholars Newsletter

Delivered a bi-monthly digital newsletter to support community-building, visibility and knowledge exchange within the SBS programme

FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION

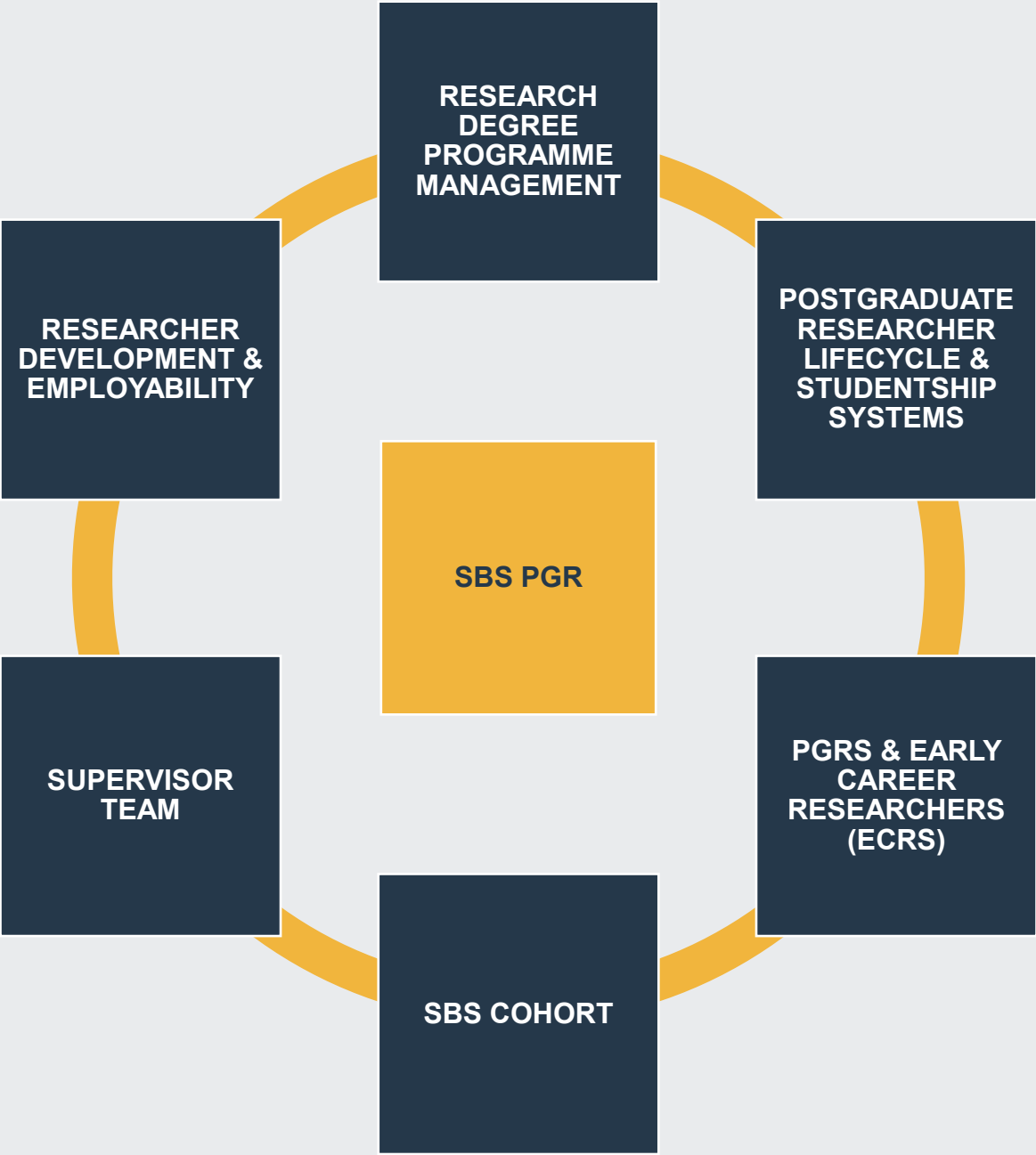
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SBS POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHER NETWORK

DOCTORAL COLLEGE



SURREY COMMUNITY



SBS STAKEHOLDER CHART

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	COMMUNICATION METHOD	FREQUENCY	OBJECTIVE
SBS Scholars (Funded PGR Cohorts)	Social events, Teams information sessions, newsletters, emails	Monthly	Maintain engagement, communicate opportunities & events, gather participant feedback
Prospective Racially Minoritised PGR Applicants	External speaker events, university conferences, internships	Annual, Cohort cycle dependent	Increase awareness and entry into postgraduate research pathways
SBS Project Delivery Team	Internal project meetings	Weekly	Monitor delivery progress and coordinate programme activities
University Leadership	Evaluation report	Once	Provide assurance of impact and evaluation of project's institutional value
Academic Supervisors	Training session and guidance documents	Cohort cycle, as required	Embed culturally/racially competent supervision practices. Offer stipend access guidance
Evaluation Team	Evaluation meetings and data review sessions	Weekly in final 4 months of project	Monitor implementation, analyse findings, and inform improvement planning
Research England & Office for Students (Funders)	Monitor returns and evaluation report	Bi-annual/ Milestone-based	Demonstrate accountability, impact, and compliance with funding requirements
Wider Academic & Professional Networks	Conferences, seminars, dissemination texts	Quarterly in final year of project	Share learning and extend inclusive research culture. Disseminate sector learning and influence national practice
Wider Academic & Professional Networks	Speaker series and partnership engagement	Annual	Strengthen representation and professional networks
Alumni & Early Career Researchers	Email and informal engagement	Annual	Sustain long-term programme legacy and inform project learning



SBS LEGACY & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Objectives

- Preserve key programme outputs and learning for **long-term institutional use**
- Enable **reuse and replication** across departments and institutions
- Support **evidence-based decision-making** for senior leaders and policymakers
- Strengthen **future funding cases** through accessible and credible outputs

Highlights

- **24** fully funded doctoral studentships provided
- **13+** **programme outputs** produced (initiatives, events)
- Over **135 visitors** engaged with February 2026 SBS Newsletter in 2 weeks of publishing
- **6 knowledge assets** created for ongoing institutional and sector use

Asset Overview:

Asset	Type	Long-Term Value
SBS Website	Digital/ Public-facing	Central, accessible repository showcasing programme impact, resources, and ongoing visibility to external stakeholders
SBS Newsletter	Communication/ Engagement	Sustains stakeholder engagement and disseminates updates, insights, and opportunities beyond programme lifecycle
Inclusive and Decolonised Researcher Development Programme	Educational/ Operational	Reusable and scalable model for embedding inclusive doctoral support across the institution and beyond; contributes to development of race-equity indicators
Research Paper	Academic/ Evidence	Contributes to evidence base on racial equity in PGR; supports future research, policy, and funding bids
SBS Legacy Pack Report	Strategic/ Institutional	Consolidates impact, learning, and recommendations; supports internal decision-making and external reporting
Academic Blog Articles	Thought Leadership	Translates research and insights into accessible formats; supports sector influence and wider dissemination

Key Insights

- Targeted, well-documented interventions create **reusable models for equity-focused programme design**
- Combining **academic outputs with accessible formats** (blogs, newsletters) increases reach and influence
- Institutional impact is strengthened when assets are **centralised, visible, and actively maintained**
- Legacy value is maximised when assets support both **internal practice and external engagement**

Recommendations

- Integrate assets into **teaching, researcher development, and institutional training**
- Use outputs to inform **Access & Participation Plans and EDI strategies**
- Leverage evidence and materials in **future funding applications and bids**
- Maintain and update digital assets (e.g. website) to ensure **continued visibility and relevance**
- Share assets across sector networks to support **wider adoption and impact**



SBS LESSONS LEARNED

OPERATIONAL

INSTITUTIONAL

PROGRAMMING

ENGAGEMENT

Operational: Delivering the programme highlighted both the value and complexity of coordinating multi-component interventions within existing institutional structures.

Central coordination in the Doctoral College (DC) helped ensure funding, mentoring and development activities were delivered coherently

Locating the programme within doctoral support infrastructure improved accessibility and administrative credibility

Some operational processes evolved during the programme to highlight the importance of clearer and more defined responsibilities within the initiative from the outset

Earlier planning around precise timelines, communication methods, timings, and programme milestones would strengthen delivery in future iterations

OBJECTIVE OVERVIEW

The programme piloted targeted support for Black postgraduate researchers through mentoring, financial support, and researcher development activities. Alongside supporting SBS scholars directly, it generated institutional learning about equitable approaches to doctoral development and support.



SBS LESSONS LEARNED

OPERATIONAL
INSTITUTIONAL

PROGRAMMING
ENGAGEMENT

Programming: The programme provided insight into how race-targeted interventions can support doctoral researchers' progression and academic confidence.

Combining financial support with development opportunities resulted in early participation and cohort-based sharing

Greater, early consultation with participants could ensure activities better reflect evolving needs

Clearer thematic structures across activities could strengthen coherence between programme elements

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SBS LESSONS LEARNED

OPERATIONAL

PROGRAMMING

INSTITUTIONAL

ENGAGEMENT

Institutional: The intervention generated institutional learning about structural inequalities within doctoral education.

The programme encouraged institutional reflection on barriers affecting racially minoritised postgraduate researchers and helped situate the initiative within wider discussions on researcher development and equity

Embedding insights, from what is essentially a pilot programme, into mainstream institutional practice is a key challenge

Future initiatives would benefit from clearer mechanisms to translate evaluation findings into policy and practice. This requires a more scheduled and formalised method of communication between senior leaders and programme staff

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SBS LESSONS LEARNED

OPERATIONAL
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PROGRAMMING
ENGAGEMENT

Engagement: Engagement activities demonstrated the importance of creating supportive academic spaces where participants can build networks and exchange experiences.

Cohort-based activities helped strengthen peer relationships and informal support networks

Opportunities to share research and experiences supported confidence and academic belonging

Participation varied considerably across activities and time periods, suggesting clearer expectations and scheduling could improve engagement

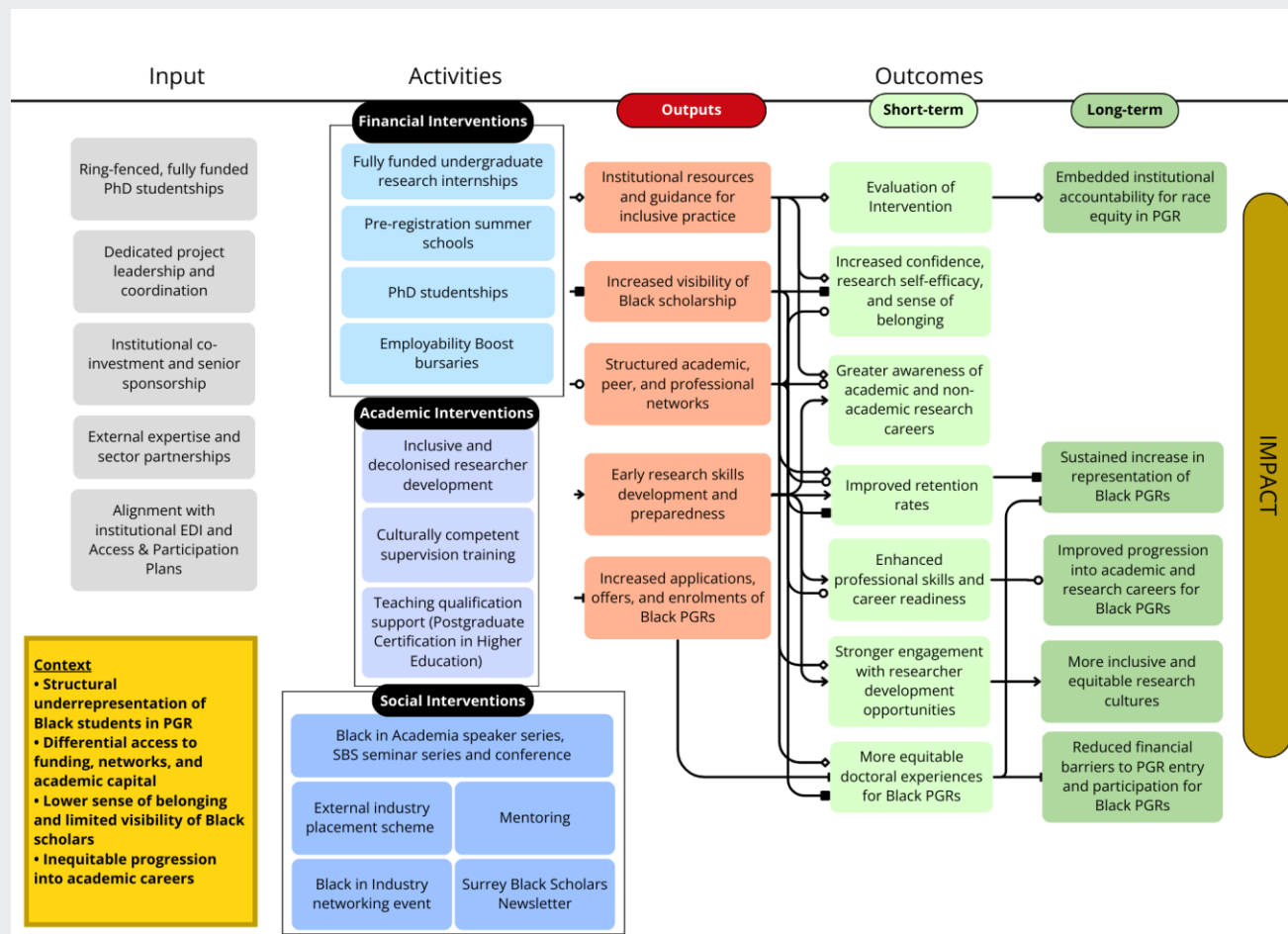
Sustaining networks beyond the programme requires deliberate planning and continued institutional support

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SBS THEORY OF CHANGE MODEL



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A theory of change is a purposeful model of how an initiative—such as a policy, a strategy, a program, or a project—contributes through a chain of early and intermediate outcomes to the intended result. Theories of change help navigate the complexity of social change. ”

SERRAT, 2013



SBS DISSEMINATION CHANNELS

01	Digital Platform (Website & Legacy Articles) Central, public-facing hub hosting programme outputs, legacy materials, and impact summaries (https://surreyblackscholars.surrey.ac.uk/) . Enables broad accessibility, transparency, and ongoing visibility to prospective students, institutions, and external stakeholders.
02	Strategic Communications (Newsletter & Targeted Updates) Regular communications to internal and external stakeholders to sustain engagement, share insights, and highlight opportunities. Supports continued visibility and relationship-building beyond programme delivery.
03	Academic Outputs (Research Papers & Blog Articles) Formal and informal publications translating programme insights into both rigorous evidence and accessible thought leadership. Strengthens sector influence, credibility, and knowledge exchange.
04	Sector Engagement (Conferences, Events & Speaker Series) Presentation of programme findings and practices at academic and sector events, including dedicated conferences (e.g. Black in Academia). Enables peer learning, replication, and national-level visibility.
05	Institutional Practice & Training (Doctoral College) Embedding programme learning into structured training, including inclusive and decolonised research development and culturally competent supervision training. Drives sustained institutional change and improved PGR experience.
06	Partnerships & Academic Networks (Industry Engagement) Engagement with sector partners, employers, and networks to extend reach of programme outcomes and relevance. Supports knowledge exchange, career pathways, and cross-institutional learning.
07	Reporting & Policy Influence (Evaluation Report & Legacy Pack) Targeted outputs designed for senior leaders and funders. Positions the programme to inform decision-making, influence policy, and support future funding and scale-up.



SBS VISIBILITY & DISSEMINATION: TARGET AUDIENCES

PROSPECTIVE RACIALLY MINORITISED PGRs

Provides accessible insights into pathways, support structures, and lived experiences within PGR, helping to increase awareness, confidence, and sense of belonging.

The legacy pack highlights opportunities, programme design, and participant outcomes to inform decision-making.

Relevant Pages: SBS Milestone Outcomes, SBS Interventions, SBS PGR Network Map

ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS & INSTITUTIONAL LEADERS

Supports the adoption of evidence-informed, inclusive doctoral practices by showcasing effective programme models, governance, and delivery approaches.

The legacy pack enables institutions to replicate, adapt, and embed equity-focused interventions.

Relevant Pages: SBS Milestone Outcomes, SBS Stakeholder Chart, SBS Interventions, SBS Lessons Learned, SBS Dissemination Channels

POLICY MAKERS & NATIONAL FUNDING AGENCIES

Demonstrates impact, accountability, and scalability of targeted interventions addressing racial inequities in PGR.

The legacy pack provides evidence, insights, and tested models to inform policy development, funding decisions, and sector-wide initiatives.

Relevant Pages: Legacy & Knowledge Management, Lessons Learned



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