



BBB24 CONFERENCE REPORT

The First Black and Brown in Bioethics 2024,
'Engaging Diversity in Bioethics Theory and
Practice', Conference Report

ABSTRACT

Black and Brown in Bioethics (BBB) aims to create spaces to discuss issues affecting ethnic minorities in the UK, nurture underrepresented communities through knowledge exchange and academic interactions, and drive change in bioethics. Our first conference, BBB24 focused on the theme "Engaging Diversity in Bioethics Theory and Practice". The theme was chosen to counter the lack of active recognition and consideration given to meaningful engagement of diverse voices and experiences in the bioethics field. BBB24 was an international meeting, with organisers based in a number of UK regions and attendees participating from a range of disciplines and countries across Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The conference was informative and engaging with renowned keynote speakers, well-organised plenary sessions, networking opportunities, various topics and perspectives, and interactive activities for delegates online and in person.

Black and Brown in Bioethics 2024 Conference

BBB co-founders Kumeri Bandara, Matimba Swana and Harleen Kaur Johal

Black and Brown in Bioethics 2024 Conference Report

Introduction

The first ever Black and Brown in Bioethics Conference (BBB24), titled 'Engaging Diversity in Bioethics Theory and Practice', was held on the 9th of April 2024, at the University of Bristol. The Black and Brown in Bioethics (BBB) organisation, founded in 2022, aims to create spaces to discuss issues affecting ethnic minorities in the UK, nurture underrepresented communities through knowledge exchange and academic interactions, and drive change in bioethics. As such, BBB chose the conference theme to counter the lack of active recognition and consideration given to meaningful engagement of diverse voices and experiences in the bioethics field. Matimba Swana, as a co-founder of BBB led the organisation of BBB24, and the event was funded by the Society of Applied Philosophy, Institute of Medical Ethics, Fabulous Minds, and Inclusive Research Collective.

BBB24 was an important event that marked the convergence, consolidation, and further development of networks, research projects, collaborations, and training events organised by Black and Brown in Bioethics since 2022. early-career (ECRs), mid-career (MCR), and senior researchers committed to battling inequity in health and social care from across the broad field of bioethics came together to share their research, experiences, advice, solidarity, and activism with

colleagues, and forge new friendships. The conference explored a hybrid model, which allowed speakers and delegates from around the world to participate online and in person. Delegates were from a range of disciplines and countries across Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

Funders

Society of Applied Philosophy aim to promote philosophical work that has a direct bearing on areas of practical concern. Please visit www.appliedphil.org for further information.

Institute of Medical Ethics promote and support the impartial study and understanding of medical ethics and its integration into clinical practice. Please visit ime-uk.org for further information.

Fabulous Minds is a youth empowerment platform that utilises inter-generational mentorship to build confident and resilient minds please visit <https://www.instagram.com/fabulousmindsco/> for more information.

Inclusive Research Collective aim to promote inclusive and diverse academic environments. Please visit inclusiverc.com/ for further information.

Attendance

The conference was a hybrid event with in-person and online attendance, to ensure accessibility for both local and international audiences. The conference saw 39 in-person attendees and 74 online delegates/speakers, representing both local and international academic institutions. The free registration and catering enabled researchers in different career stages and

varying degrees of financial support working in bioethics from different backgrounds to attend, present their work, and connect with peers and colleagues.

“Congratulations for giving speech to such an underrepresented community.” PhD Student

For some ECR delegates, this was their first academic conference in bioethics. Travel bursaries were provided to all invited speakers, chairs and volunteers to ensure a high-quality programme and fair expense compensation for people’s time. Prizes were given out for the best oral and poster presentations.

“Thank you so much for your hard work - I really hope this becomes an annual event!” Assistant Professor in Medical Ethics and Law

Plenary sessions, which were predominantly held in person, were streamed online so that speakers and attendees could join virtually. Delegates were encouraged to talk about the event on social media using #BBB24.

“Prior to this I didn't know how relevant my research interest was as there was no platform for me to connect with other like minded researchers.” Medical Student

Throughout the conference, printed posters were displayed in a dedicated room at the venue, with an extended coffee/poster viewing session in the afternoon with a presentation and Q&A component with in-person poster presenters. All posters (from both in-person and online poster presenters) were displayed on the online platform, fourwaves thus making them accessible to all attendees.

“I really enjoyed the conference, it was a breath of fresh air!” Researcher in Medical Ethics

Plenary and oral sessions

The theme of engaging diversity in bioethics theory and practice was reflected in the plenary talks, panel discussions, fireside chats, and oral presentations. The opening plenary talk by Prof Sridhar Venkatpuram (King’s College London) and chaired by Dr Agonomi Ganguli-Mitra was a much needed thoughtful and critical exploration of barriers to progress in the field of Bioethics. The interaction with the audience generated the following work cloud:



The concluding plenary talk by Prof Rita D’Alton-Harrison (Royal Holloway, University of London) beautifully captured pathways to embedding Inclusive Bioethics in policy and practice. Questions from the audience explored practical solutions, ways to move from theory to practice, and the political nature of bioethics and academia. The fireside chat between Dr Anna Dowrick (University of Oxford) and Dr Tanvi Rai (University of Oxford), and chaired by Ms Princess Banda (University of Oxford) highlighted personal reflections, career journeys, roles, and possibilities in academia. Questions from the audience explored social justice as a person of colour in academic spaces, mentorship and how to use the lessons learned of others in personal career journeys. The panel on *Shaping the Future of Bioethics: taboos, uncertainty and hope* saw speakers Dr Alya Khan (London Metropolitan University), Dr Agomoni Ganguli-Mitra (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Mavis Machirori (Ada Lovelace Institute) discuss and reimagine academic futures with chair Prof Rachael Goberman-Hill (University of Bristol). Questions from the audience explored how to bring about change, foster community, and empower people of colour working in academia. Oral presentations given by in-person and online delegates and chaired by Dr Jordan Parsons (University of Bristol) and Ms Kumeri Bandara (University of Oxford) covered themes across several fields integrating

healthcare, law, anthropology, policing, philosophy, dentistry, data science and ethics. Talks were followed by engaging Q&A sessions with both in-person and online audiences. Prizes for best oral and poster presentations were presented by Ms Eve Kamau.

BBB24 prize winners

Oral Abstract presentation winners

- Patricia Neville (University of Bristol, UK) & Eleanor Fleming (University of Maryland, USA) – *A Critical Retelling of Dental Ethics Told through “George Washington’s Complete Denture”*
- Whitney Cabey (Temple University, USA) – *Abolition in Medicine or Abolition of Medicine?: Exploring Carcerality in Biomedical Contexts*

Poster Abstract elevator pitch winners

- Nishita Nair (King’s College London, UK) *Social Research Ethics Codes and Institutional Ethics Processes: Perspectives of Researchers Working with Ethnic Minority Communities in the UK*
- Manisha Pahwa (McGill University, Canada) *Precision Breast Cancer Screening and Breast Cancer Disparities in South Asian People in Canada*

Poster Abstract digital poster gallery winner

- Deborah Francis (Queen’s University, Canada) *A Qualitative Study of the Needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour Students in Higher Education*

After the event, recordings were distributed to attendees, added to the BBB website, and shared with the BBB network (approx. 400 members)

BBB24 conference materials and links

- The recording is available on the BBB website and BBB YouTube channel <https://blackbrownbioethics.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/2024/04/20/conference-engaging-diversity-in-bioethics-theory-and-practice/>
- Slides are available at <https://bpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.bristol.ac.uk/dist/4/945/files/2024/04/BBB24-slides-2dd09c4bc7631ba8.pdf>
- The e-Poster gallery is available at <https://event.fourwaves.com/bbb2024/abstracts> (until July 2024)
- The conference booklet including all accepted abstracts and the conference programme is available at <https://blackbrownbioethics.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/files/2024/04/BBB-2024-Conference-booklet-e27caae79ad84d99.pdf>

Networking opportunities

The conference was structured to include informal spaces for networking and career development for in-person attendees. Short breaks and free refreshments between sessions facilitated the flow of discussion and networking between these delegates. Networking continued during other socialising events such as lunch and a 'pizza + standup' social event at the end of the conference.

Costs of organising this event

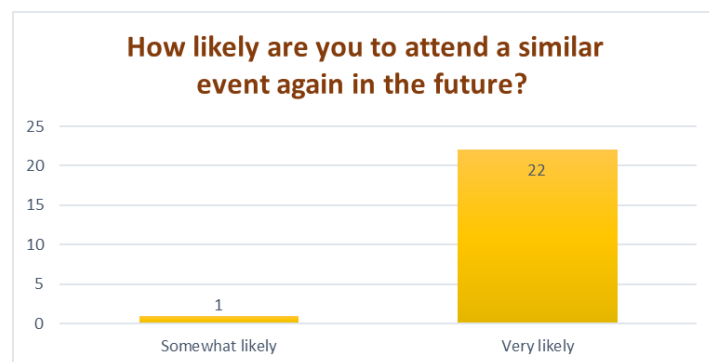
Funding for the event was sourced from four generous sponsors. The Society for Applied Philosophy (SAP) covered the costs of catering (£1,000), Fabulous Minds covered the costs of the evening social event which

included a professional comedian and prizes (£1,000), the Institute of Medical Ethics (IME) covered the costs of travel bursaries (£500), and the Inclusive research collective covered the costs of travel bursaries (£450).

Feedback from attendees

Prior to the event, the guidelines provided for the peer review process and transparency of scoring was praised by the reviewers and authors of abstracts, so we decided to make these resources available for others to use. The [inclusive peer review](#) process used can be found on the BBB website.

During the conference, feedback was shared with the BBB team by in-person delegates about how they were excited to be part of this event and discuss issues that affect ethnic minorities in healthcare and bioethics.



Results of survey demonstrating all respondents would attend a similar event in future with the majority of respondents being highly likely to attend.

Following the conference, delegates were sent a link to a Microsoft Form to provide feedback. The results of the survey are reflected in the Appendix . Based on the

survey, what most people found to be most enjoyable were the social interactions, networking, diversity of the attendees and the range of topics covered in presentations throughout the conference.

Suggestions for themes to be explored in future conferences included: environmental ethics, disability ethics, incorporating inclusive bioethics into teaching, ethics of community

engagement, research ethics, non-western approaches to bioethics, and racial justice in bioethics. Some overall suggestions for improvement included grants for global south participants to attend in-person, shorter talks, more questions, longer breaks, an alternative location to Bristol, and sharing success stories. Most people said they were extremely likely to attend a similar event again in the future.

Appendix

Snapshot of answers from respondents around three questions: what they enjoyed, what they felt are the most important things they have learned, and what they would change for future events.

ID	What did you find most enjoyable about the event?	What are the most important things you have learned?	What would you recommend we change for future events?
1	All of the speakers The hybrid format	Various perspectives of black and brown researchers internationally	A two day conference
2	The presentation and the fire side conversation	First is the planning and the structure given to this conference. It is a thumbs up for me and have learned the skill from the event organizers Second, the interesting areas of research presented beared great insights which I will benefit me in my research endeavors . An intriguing one was the racial redress that focused on the materials used for dentures etc.	In the future, I think we can look at providing in-person spots for attendance for people in the global south. This will improve on global inclusivity.
3	the diversity of topics	the reflection of a topic from different perspectives and the possibility of new ones	the whole organization was good
4	Diversity	Concern related to women health	Love that there is online option for posters
5	discussion on activism and advocacy in bioethics	overcoming inequalities and creating positive change in the world. Opportunity to learn from each other's perspectives and experiences.	Non
6	sessions	value of ethics	make it in weekend
7
8	Q & A	it highlighted the importance of amplifying voices from underrepresented groups in bioethics discussions to ensure that ethical frameworks and policies are inclusive and equitable.	nothing
9	I really enjoyed the talks given by the keynote speakers as well as the discussion with academics from the Black and Brown community.	That Bioethics of today does not really represent and deal with problems that the non western world or the nonwestern minorities in the western world face. That the most useful skills of a 'successful' scholar of today/tomorrow is resilience, self-manifest, collective work and interest in how we will move forward all together!	It would be great if you could ensure that there would be more present in-person speakers!
10	Presentations	Social science ethics	NA
11	Need to educate and engage minority group in the invading AI world	Communication and sharing of knowledge	The connection was not reliable. This may be a difficult change

12	the community, the variation of talks	Although I do not hold expertise as a bioethicist, attending this conference offered me an excellent opportunity to learn more about the critical issues and regulations that pertain to bioethics. During the conference, I was able to interact with various experts in the field who shared their insights and experiences. The conference provided me with deeper insights into the ethical challenges that arise in various aspects of the biomedical field, such as clinical research, genetic testing, organ transplantation, and end-of-life care. Overall, the conference was an excellent learning opportunity for me.	diversity in participation; talks and audience.
13	I like the diversity in the topics, the organization of the conference and the positive and empowering atmosphere that the organizing committee brought to the room.	Ethics should be the spoken language that unites people around the world.	I can't think of any at the moment.
14	A chance to meet others who recognise the importance of the issues with which BBB is concerned and hear about the interesting research they are undertaking. It was particularly enjoyable to hear from those who attended from outside of the UK as I think an international perspective always adds something.	A greater appreciation of how race issues arise across a range of topics that I had not previously considered. This was a particular benefit of the short talk session.	I'd suggest allowing longer for the short talk session as it was very rushed and would have run over significantly if one of the speakers hadn't been a no show.
15	I could attend only a few sessions live, but the recordings give me the opportunity to catch up with the missed sessions and I appreciate this. The speakers in the sessions I did attend were superb and the conversations were honest and open.	The issues that remain within Bioethics and the underlying power imbalances, inappropriate behaviour and ignorance that exists. This conference is an important step in tackling these. It has given me a lot to think about and learn.	N/A
16	I enjoyed the presentations which were original and interesting.	I learned various small things about a lot of subjects, especially about teeth! Thank you for promoting an inclusive approach, both those inside and outside of black and brown bioethics communities, but which are advocates/supporters.	While the informal format of the first keynote was appreciated, I think you can find more insightful speakers that can add something more pertinent to the discussion...I found the talk arrogant and not very useful or well conceptualized... Otherwise, more time for questions for the speakers?
17	Variety of academics, range of opinions and approaches to diversifying bioethics.	The weight and rising validity of abolitionism in bioethics	More breaks; I found it was very autism-friendly due to long periods of sitting and listening and short breaks.
18	Connecting with other like-minded folks, hearing from knowledgeable, inspiring speakers (special shout out to the George Washington's Teeth crew)	That abolishing medicine is something worth considering if we want to make a real difference to inequity.	make it bigger!
19	The first keynote speaker really showed how confident we should be when addressing disparities	Health has no boundaries, it can be any one, black or not	Success stories speak more to the audience
20	It was a fantastic event overall and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was wonderful to meet engaged scholars and researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds and at different career stages & to have the opportunity to think together about how to achieve a more racially equitable & socially just bioethics. Huge thanks to the organising team for your amazing work putting it all together! I'm certain BBB Network will go from strength to strength.	That it is extremely valuable to have this community of scholars working in bioethics who care about achieving race equity in the field. Solidarity and collectivity.	Maybe longer breaks between papers or fewer papers, if possible - though not at a loss of hearing everyone's work. It's tricky - perhaps a 2-day conference?

21	Range of talks on offer	The breadth and international strength of bioethics research	N/A
22	the talks were so insightful, and I found it interesting to hear about research projects around the world	how pertinent intersectionality and decolonisation is on a global level	Perhaps hosting in a town that's more accessible, I wasn't able to come to bristol as it was too far from surrey
23	So many things: the content, the attendees, the atmosphere, the food!	I particularly liked the presentation on Washington's teeth for the methodology they used to engage with objects with difficult histories	Nothing :)