

## Working with First Generation Students

### Speaker Biographies

#### **Dr Jessie Abrahams, University of Bristol**

Dr Jessie Abrahams is a Lecturer in Education and Social Justice in the School of Education at the University of Bristol. Dr Abrahams is a Sociologist who has published extensively on the reproduction of social class inequalities in compulsory schooling and higher education in England. She has recently published a book with Policy Press entitled *Schooling Inequality: Aspirations, Opportunities and the Reproduction of Social Class*. The book was awarded the Society for Educational Studies Debut Book Award for 2022-2024.

#### **Dr James Watts, University of Bristol**

Dr James Watts is a historian at the University of Bristol. He is also one of the convenors of the First-Generation Scholars Network in the School of Humanities. This was set up in 2020 and we run events for staff and students to discuss the challenges around being the first in their family to go to university as well as events focusing on careers.

#### **Dr Andrea Lambell, Durham University**

Dr Andrea Lambell came to Durham University following careers as a journalist and a hospice massage therapist, during which time she completed an interdisciplinary Open University BSc (Hons) degree. At Durham, she earned an MA in Research Methods (Anthropology) in 2019 and, in 2024, a PhD in Medical Anthropology. She was co-chair of the Anthropology First Generation Scholars Group between 2021-24. In 2022 the group secured university funding to investigate the role of social class and UK home region in students' experiences of inclusion at Durham University. Andrea was a member of the research team led by undergraduate student Abigail Lewis.

#### **Abigail Lewis, Durham Students' Union**

Abigail Lewis is the Access and Participation Coordinator at Durham SU. Abigail came to Durham University in 2020 as a First Generation, mature, and care experienced student to study Anthropology BA (Hons). In her role, Abigail has fought to include the student voice in all aspects of Durham University access and Participation policy and initiatives. Abigail has also co-published on the subject of decolonising anthropology.

#### **Dr Jummy Okoya, University of East London**

Dr Jummy Okoya is an Associate Professor of Leadership and Inclusive Practices and Dean of office for institutional equity at the University of East London. As an Associate Fellow at Oxford, Said Business School she has worked with more than 50 organisations across several sectors on embedding inclusive culture and organisational equity. She is an EDI advisor at Cambridge Judge Business School and London Business School. Jummy is a national leading figure in advocating for more Black professors. She was listed among top 10 Diversity Allies for the education sector in the UK in 2022 and top 50 inspirational Black woman in 2019 and nominated for excellence in diversity in higher education in 2017.

#### **Regina Everitt, University of East London**

Regina Everitt is Assistant Chief Operating Officer (ACOO) & Director of Library, Archives and Learning Services at the University of East London. She co-project managed SCOUNL (Society of College, National, and University Libraries) research to document the experiences of Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) staff in libraries and is working with the sector to implement the recommendations from the report to develop more diverse talent in the profession. She is a member of the SCOUNL Board, the British Library Advisory Council, the Adult Literacy Trust, and a CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) trailblazer group that developed a standard for a Level 7 apprenticeship for library, information, and knowledge professionals. She co-edited *Narrative Expansions: Interpreting Decolonisation in Academic Libraries* which considers how academic libraries are navigating this contentious topic and *Privileged Spaces: Academic Libraries in University Estates Strategy*.