

COUNCIL RESPONSE TO HRG REPORT: OPEN LETTER TO THE CHAIR OF THE HISTORIC SOURCES OF FUNDING REVIEW GROUP

Dear Hunada

Council response to the report of the Historic Sources of Funding Review Group

I am writing to you to respond formally, as Chair of Council, to the report of the Historic Sources of Funding Review Group; and to thank you for all the time that you personally, and all members of the Review Group, have devoted to considering the issues so thoroughly and presenting such a clear report to Council.

I am also very grateful to you and to Natasha Mutch-Vidal for your presentation of the work of the Review Group to Council on 9th October as part of a wider discussion of work to improve Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at City. As you know, Council took this as the first substantive item for discussion on that occasion; and very warmly welcomed your report.

Council in October endorsed all the work of the HRG and said that what was needed now was action to address both the specific recommendations in the report and also the Tackling Racial Inequality agenda more widely at City.

Council also in October asked the Executive Board to continue to prioritise this work, noting that work would continue to be led by the VP (S&P) but that all members of the Executive would need to play an important role in leading the cultural change that is required.

We have since been heartened to note the early actions taken as a symbol of intent to tackle racial inequality: the establishing of Black British PhD studentships; the early action in the Business School to improve ethnic diversity in the formal leadership roles in the School; and the creation of a new role of Assistant Vice-President for Race Equality by the Executive Board and the appointment of Dr Jessica Jones Nielsen to this role.

It has clearly not been possible to push forward across the board with all the recommendations of the HRG as yet, given the restrictions we have been living under over the past year as a result of the pandemic. We are encouraging the Executive to make progress across the board, however, and we are very much looking forward to the arrival of Professor Anthony Finkelstein as our new President in June, to give new impetus to this work.

In the meantime, we have taken stock at our March meeting on some of the actions required to achieve long-term and lasting change on this change – including work by the Executive to address the attainment gap, to address inequality in the processes of recruitment and promotion at City, and to drive forward culture change at City on this issue.

We will of course be discussing again the naming of the Business School at an additional meeting of Council on 16th April which will be dedicated to making this decision.

Additionally, Council will continue to look to further diversify its own membership through the recruitment process for new members. Two new members from BAME backgrounds, Ebele Okobi and Anant Prakash, were appointed to take up post from February of this year; and we will be looking to increase the diversity of Council further in future recruitments.

Further, Council's Corporate Governance Committee has agreed that it will now ask City's to identify candidates for the award of Honorary Degrees at City from BAME backgrounds – who can provide role models of success for our students at our Degree Ceremonies, when

these resume in the Barbican - which hopefully can take start to take place again in person later this year.

In conclusion, let me thank you once again for the work that you have led on the Report on the Historic Sources of Funding for City. This has been a really worthwhile investment of time on the part of all the Group members and has served as a very valuable focus for debate on issues which are of the highest priority to us on City's Council; and will require our sustained attention to take forward further, on the arrival of our new President.

Best wishes

Julia

Julia Palca
Chair of Council
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