



IAS Octagon Small Grants Fund

APPLICATION FORM 2022-23

Personal details removed.

Event Proposal

Title: Critical pedagogies in higher education – a participatory learning and action project with PGRs and ECRs who teach.

Date(s) of activity: December 2022 – July 2023

Proposed activity (e.g. overview of event, intended participants and audience):

The development of this project grew from discussions between PGRs and ECRs at a previous IAS Octagon funded event. During the Feminist Epistemologies // Rethinking Gender workshop, hosted at IAS in May 2022, PGRs expressed a desire for more opportunities to learn about feminist and other critical/ liberatory pedagogical theory, and support to implement this in their own teaching. This project has thus been designed to respond directly to the needs of UCL PGRs and ECRs.

We will host a series of interactive workshops which aim to give PGRs and ECRs the opportunity to learn from experts, and to develop a community of peer support for the implementation of what they learn.

The proposed project comprises the first cycle of a participatory learning and action (PLA) cycle. The stages of the PLA cycle are *identify*, *plan*, *implement*, and *assess*.

Identify knowledge gaps: We will use focus group discussions (FGDs) with PGRs and ECRs to establish participants' baseline knowledge of critical/ liberatory pedagogies, what they would like to learn, their experiences of applying critical/ liberatory pedagogies in their own teaching practice, challenges they faced and success they have had.

FGD facilitation and data analysis will be led by the PGR leads (Ros, Frankie and Mie), and we will also recruit PGT students who want to gain experience in collecting and analysing qualitative data to help with the FGDs. The data will be analysed, and the findings will be used to shape the content of the workshops and discussion materials (e.g., anonymised vignettes, cross-cutting themes) to ensure that they are representative of a range of experience and meaningful to the intended attendees.

Plan strategy to address knowledge gaps: Based on the findings of the FGDs, we will develop the workshop content to respond to the needs of PGRs and ECRs. The FGD findings will inform how we:

- Identify and invite expert guests.
- Select pre-readings that are appropriate for the existing knowledge and experience.
- Develop prompts, questions and provocations for the “in conversation” part of the workshops.
- Develop vignettes for the “peer to peer discussion” part of the workshops.

Implement the activity: We will host a series of five three-hour workshops featuring two invited experts, attended by UCL PGRs and ECRs. The main focus of these workshops will be for the experts to respond to the questions, knowledge gaps and concerns of PGRs and ECRs. The workshops have been designed



to sequentially step up the level of attendee participation over the course of the session. They have also been designed to ensure there is time for participants to network and get to know each other, in order to start building a PGR and ECR community around the workshop themes that lasts beyond the workshop series.

Workshop Series (Jan – June 2023)

1. Introduction to critical pedagogies in higher education – opportunities and challenges
2. Feminist pedagogy
3. Anti-racist pedagogy
4. Queer pedagogy
5. Universal design learning/ access-led pedagogy

Event structure

Pre-workshop:

- Each workshop will have 1-2 suggested pre-readings (selected to respond to the level of existing knowledge and experience of UCL PGRs and ECRs).

Workshop structure*:

- Welcome and introductions: the PGR facilitators will open the event, talk through the agenda, and invite participants to give a short introduction of their name, background and current position at UCL.
- The two invited experts give a brief explanation of their research and teaching background and their relationship to the topic under discussion.
- The two invited experts respond “in conversation” to pre-selected prompts, questions and provocations from PGRs and ECRs (gathered from focus group discussions).
- Attendees are invited to participate in an open Q&A with the experts.
- Coffee break: time for attendees to network over tea and coffee.
- Attendees will break into small groups for peer-to-peer discussion of a vignette (also developed from FGDs) related to the implementation of critical/ liberatory pedagogies. Experts will circulate between groups to contribute their expertise to discussions.
- Plenary session: experts will give short responses to the vignette, and groups will feed back key points from their discussion.

Post-workshop:

- Attendees will be asked to complete a short workshop evaluation questionnaire.

*The workshop structure will be refined based on the findings of the FGDs – e.g. if baseline knowledge and experience is found to be limited, more time will be given to expert presentations, and experts may be asked to give their brief responses to the vignettes *before* the small group discussions.

Expert guests

UK-based academics who have expertise in the theory and application of critical pedagogies will be identified through their online profiles and professional connections, and invited to attend. We aim to have two invited guests from different disciplines per workshop, one internal (UCL-based) and one external. As attendees will represent a range of disciplinary backgrounds, we want our invited experts to also reflect that diversity. By having the guests respond to prompts in conversation, we will also see the diversity and nuance in how they address the topic under discussion, and benefit from a broad range of examples and case studies drawn from their own experiences. We hope that this will maximise the applicability of the lessons learned for the attendees.

PGR Facilitators

Ros, Frankie and Mie will conduct and analyse the FGDs with assistance from PGT students. We will develop the prompts for the “in conversation” part of the workshops, and provide these to the invited experts in advance so that they can prepare their responses. We will develop the vignettes that will be used for the peer-to-peer discussion. Between us we will also select a lead and second facilitator for each of the workshops.



Intended workshop participants

FGD participants will be invited to attend, and the invite will be shared more widely with PGRs and ECRs across UCL who teach or plan to teach, and have an interest in one or more of the critical pedagogies that will be addressed in the workshops. The invite will be shared via departmental mailing lists in order to reach a broad range of UCL PGRs and ECRs (e.g., Institute of Education, Health Humanities, SELCS-CMII, Institute for Global Health, Institute for Womens Health, Anthropology, Geography, History, among others).

IAS Gender and Feminism Research Network

The GFRN will support the project and its organisers throughout its duration, as a cross-faculty 'host' for the workshops, a platform for the dissemination of related materials, a source of advice and administrative support in terms of event organisation, and mentorship of PGR organisers by the co-directors, Alex Hyde and Emma Jones (including engagement with frameworks such as UCL Arena). The series will also support the development of the GFRN by return, being a major opportunity to engage and serve PGR and ECR members. The focus of this workshop series is particularly innovative in finding new and innovative ways to support research-led postgraduate-level teaching experience at UCL.

Assess impact: The PGR leads will reflect on implementation and analyse evaluations.

This will feed into a subsequent PLA cycle (beyond the remit of this proposal):

Identify what peer support PGRs/ ECRs need to implement what they learned.

Plan peer support activities for term 1 and 2 of 2023/24 (e.g. monthly discussion sessions).

Implement peer support activities

Assess impact of peer support and think about possible next steps.

How is the activity interdisciplinary/ cross-departmental?

This activity will foster conversations between experts and attendees from a diverse range of departments and disciplines, focusing on cross-cutting issues that relate to multiple fields of enquiry. We expect a diverse group of participants to attend each workshop according to their own interests, which will be advertised via the GFRN members and through platforms like the IAS and other departmental groups and networks (e.g., Population Health Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Social and Historical Sciences). Invited experts will be from a range of UCL departments an external institutions, and attendees will be from across UCL.

How does the activity involve graduate students?

This project actively involves graduate students at every stage. It is being developed by PGRs in response to PGR needs (expressed in the Feminist Epistemologies workshop). PGRs will be invited to participate in FGDs that will be used to shape the design and delivery of workshops. PGR feedback will be used to feed in to a second PLA cycle focused on implementing peer support to facilitate application and reflection on the lessons learned in these workshops. For the core team of PGR organisers, this project represents a major opportunity to gain professional experience and consolidate transferrable skills in workshop design and facilitation, as well as training in critical pedagogies and the potential to develop their own networks and opportunities for written outputs.

How does the activity showcase A&H/SHS/SSEES research?

Invited experts will include UCL academics from across A&H, SHS and SSEES. They will be able to share their expertise with PGRs and ECRs and actively contribute to evidence based teaching practice buy supporting attendees to think about how they can put the findings in to practice in their own teaching. The aim of the event is to promote the engagement and ownership of PGR students in research-led teaching at UCL, providing training in how to mobilise their own research and critical methodologies to

How does the activity engage with staff and students at other institutions?

Invited experts will also include academics from other UK universities. We believe that the experts responding to prompts "in conversation" will be particularly valuable for showing the difference in approach taken by different institutions. We aim to highlight innovative practice from other institutions,





and encourage attendees to explore these further and consider implementing aspects of the same innovations in their own practice.

Budget

- **Up to £1500 is available per application.**
- **Applications may either fully fund an event or be linked to other applications for outside funding.**

Expected no. of attendees 100 total	Expected total cost of event: £2,350	Amount requested from Octagon Small Grants Fund (up to £1,500): £1,500
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Breakdown of likely costs (e.g., refreshments, room bookings, travel expenses):

Item	Cost	Quantity	Frequency	Total	Notes
Event catering	£156	1	5	£780	Based on 30 attendees at each of the 5 workshops - UCL hospitality offer 'Fairtrade tea and speciality filter coffee, still or sparkling water with mini tray bakes' at £5.20 per head.
External speaker transport	£150	1	5	£750	Same-day return train tickets for external experts.
Speaker lunch	£15	2	5	£150	Voucher for speakers to get lunch near campus - to thank them for their time and minimise the cost of participating.
FGD participant tokens	£10	22	1	£220	Requested from Changemakers - Voucher to thank participants for their time - love2shop or supermarkets
Doctoral student stipends	£100	3	1	£300	Requested from Changemakers - Stipend to facilitate staff-student partnership by offering recognition for the time and effort put in by the 3 PGR team members.
MSc/ MA RA tokens	£30	5	1	£150	Requested from Changemakers - tokens of appreciation for PGT students who will be recruited to help facilitate, transcribe and analyse FGDs.
TOTAL:				£2,350	

Alternative sources of funding applied for/secured (including amounts):

We are seeking £850 from Changemakers specifically to facilitate staff-student partnership activities in the realisation of this project. The application deadline for that scheme is 28/10/22.

