



Rethinking Higher Education: Challenging the Values of Market and Performance Criteria

28 June 2019

NCVO, Society Building, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL

Roundtable 2: Discussants and Biographies

❖ Res Sisters (Nicola Ingram and Tori Cann)

'The Res-Sisters are a collective of nine early(ish)-career, UK-based feminist academics that came about as a way of surviving and resisting different aspects of the academy that we found troubling, exhausting and unjust. Our name emphasises our shared occupational and political identities: as feminist academics engaged in and committed to research, resistance and sisterhood. In this session we will discuss and reflect critically upon our attempts to enact our feminist Manifesta as a means of resistance to and survival in the academy:

- Embrace collectivity and nurture allies
- Little acts of solidarity make a big difference
- Speak out
- Recognise your power and privilege
- Self-care is a must

We discuss the importance of turning our sociological imagination onto ourselves, our institutions and the wider structures of higher education in order to recognise and push back against the structures in which we are implicated.

❖ Aura Lounasmaa

UK universities are governed currently by policies of bordering and neoliberalism. Students are valued for their contributions to national identity and monetary contributions to both the university itself and the economy after. Refugee and asylum seeker students have no place in this system; education as human right and universities as places of knowledge production are set aside. Looking at the issues from the point of view of refugee students, we can begin to deconstruct the harmful structures which currently maintain class structures and racism and threaten academic freedom in our universities.

Aura is the director of Open Learning Initiative at the University of East London, which provides access courses for refugees and asylum seekers to university. She also worked on the award-winning Life Stories course in the Jungle refugee camp in 2016. She is a lecturer in social sciences and a research fellow at the Centre for Narrative Research.