

BSA Activism in Sociology Forum Report Spring 2018

In the last year the BSA Activism in Sociology Forum (ASF) has focused significantly on local events, supporting the following with targeted financial contributions and involvement from ASF convenors in organising and speaking:

- On 19th June 2017, the forum has organised a half-day activist-academic fringe event to celebrate the Refugee Week 2017. The event titled, Education Beyond Borders: Resisting Immobilities and Intellectual Impossibility in Universities in Post-Brexit-Vote Britain and Beyond, was hosted by the University of East London, London. The workshop was part-funded by the University of East London's civic engagement fund, and was co-organised by the Activism in Sociology Forum, the Refugee Research Archive at University of East London (UEL) and the Oral History Society Migration Special Interest Group. About 27 participants from students in refugee studies, community activists, practitioners and established academics had discussed access to education, obstacles for refugees in higher education and ways to resist educational immobilities in and beyond British universities. The feedback on the event was very positive – participants of the meeting requested the organisers to organise more such meetings.
- On 29th June 2017, the forum has co-organised a one-day symposium (with primary funding from the BSA Early Career Forum and co-funding from Nottingham Trent University). The Activism in Sociology Forum funded two bursaries for local community activists to attend. The event, Public Sociology as Pedagogy, Research and Practice was hosted by the Department of Sociology at Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham. More than 40 people attended this full day event, including community activists, practitioners, early career researchers, postgraduates, undergraduates, and established academics.
- On 1st July 2017, the forum has made a contribution to the award and certificate ceremony to asylum seekers and refugees in Higher Education programme, namely Open Learning Initiative (OLive) at the University of East London. We have donated £100 towards the costs of lunch and refreshments for 48 refugee students and 15 volunteers, guest scholars and teaching staff.
- In addition, the forum convenors and members have been actively engaging with public including taking part in advocacy work and expressing solidarities with communities in direct actions on issues such as climate change, job cuts and NHS, defending Pensions of university workers, anti-detention and anti-racist policies in post-Brexit vote Britain.
- There are plans for a forthcoming fringe event to be organised at the BSA Annual Conference 2018 to be held in University of Newcastle in April. The event will be co-hosted by the Migration and Asylum Justice Forum and the BSA-Activism in Sociology Forum. The topic and dates are yet to be announced.
- During the BSA annual conference 2018, we are also considering a street event to be co-organised with the Migration and Asylum Justice Forum at Newcastle. We are currently in the early stage of planning.

- In June 2018, during Refugee Week, we will be co-hosting a follow up activist-academic event with a focus on access to education of migrants and refugees. The event will be held in London in collaboration with the University of East London's Centre for Research on Refugees, Migration and Belonging, and the Refugee Research Archive.

The ASF has also continued to develop its online presence, with 212 people subscribed to the main ASF jiscmail list, 775 followers on Facebook and 424 followers on Twitter.