

SHAPING JUST FUTURES

2026 SCDTP FINAL YEAR CONFERENCE



SCDTP

Dear colleagues,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the SCDTP Final Year Conference 2026, held under this year's theme, "Shaping Just Futures." This conference celebrates the culmination of years of dedication, discovery, and intellectual curiosity from our final-year researchers across the South Coast Doctoral Training Partnership.

Our theme this year reflects the collective commitment of our research community to shaping a future that is more equitable, sustainable, and inclusive. Across disciplines, our scholars have sought to understand and respond to some of the most pressing challenges of our time — from the complexities of identity, migration, and activism, to the evolving frontiers of climate, health, and human behaviour.

The conference offers a space to connect ideas, bridge disciplines, and celebrate how diverse perspectives can come together to create meaningful impact. The three subthemes — Local Lives, Global Impact; Facing Frontiers, Adapting for Change; and Human Landscapes, Contexts and Dynamics — capture this spirit of collaboration and transformation.

We extend our deepest thanks to all presenters, chairs, and attendees for contributing to this event, and to the organising committee for their hard work in bringing this conference to life. We hope this gathering will not only showcase the breadth of your research but also spark new conversations and collaborations that continue long after today. Wishing you an inspiring and engaging conference.

Warm regards,

The SCDTP Final Year Conference Organising Committee

CONFERENCE

PROGRAMME

10:00 - 10:25	Arrival and Registration
10:25 - 10:30	Welcome address
10:30 - 10:50	Keynote Address by Maisha Islam
10:50 - 11:10	Keynote Address by Pascal Matthias
11:10 - 11:15	Introduction
11:15 - 11:25	Comfort Break
11:25 - 12:30	Breakout Session 1
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 - 14:15	Breakout Session 2
14:15 - 14:25	Comfort Break
14:25 - 15:30	Breakout Session 3
15:30 - 15:40	Comfort Break
15:40 - 15:50	Event Summary & Thanks

Keynote



Dr Maisha Islam AHFEA

Doctoral College Research Culture Lead for EDI

Dr Maisha Islam is the Research Culture Lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Southampton's Doctoral College. Her research areas of interest and expertise centre student engagement, and racial and religious equity in higher education.

She is a co-editor of the recently published book 'Uncovering Islamophobia in Higher Education: Supporting the success of Muslim students and staff', and co-Chair of a Research England/Office for Students Steering Group seeking to improve access and participation of racially minoritised students in postgraduate research.

Keynote



Pascal Matthias

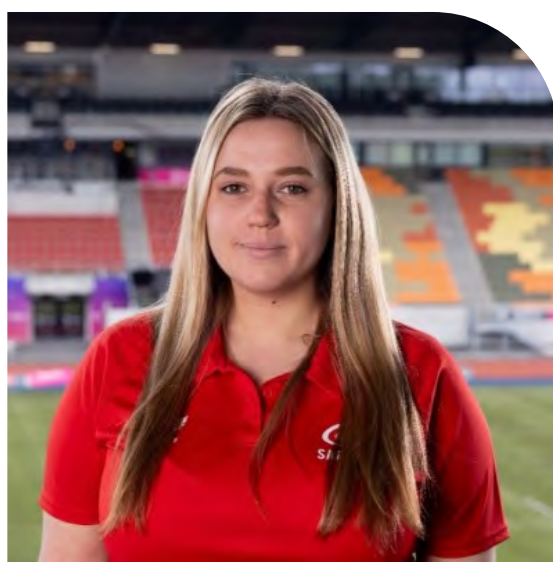
Associate Vice President for EDI & Social Justice

Pascal was appointed Associate Vice President for EDI and Social Justice in February 2023, working with senior leadership to advance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies and practices. He aims to amplify the voices and ambitions of racialised, minoritised and marginalised staff and students. With a background in fashion design and marketing, Pascal continues to teach fashion management at Winchester School of Art. In 2020, he co founded FACE, a network of Black academics challenging education and fashion industries to be more inclusive. He also consults for the NHS, is a TEDx speaker, and has written for major publications.

MEET OUR CHAIRS



Sadie Rockliffe
University of Brighton



Amy Dent
University of Brighton



Shilpy Bhat
University of Southampton



Emma Levy
University of Brighton



Hatice Yimaz
University of Chichester

LOCAL LIVES

GLOBAL IMPACT

Post-COVID challenges; migration; identity; community; activism;
social change

The Elizabeth Room



BREAKOUT

The Elizabeth Room

11:25-12:30

SESSION I

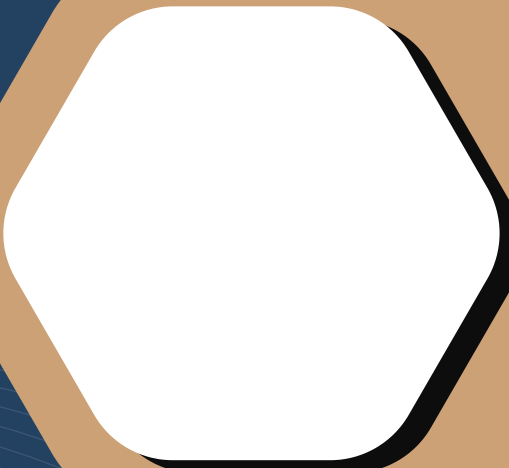
Breakout Session 1 : 11:25 - 12:30



Tulimegamenno Amutenya

Small area population forecasting using geospatial big datasets and national census in low and middle income countries

11:30-11:45



Max Dixon

The other China or an Emerging Taiwan? Democratic Taiwan and British Foreign Policy, 1996-2021

11:45-12:00



Shuting Chen

Interactions between biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation

12:00-12:15

Questions for Presenters : 12:15 - 12:30

Slido Link

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BREAKOUT

The Elizabeth Room

13:30-14:15

SESSION 2

Breakout Session 2 : 13:30 - 14:15



Khaleda Brophy-Harmer

Mass-Observing Whiteness: Understanding performances of race in the Mass Observation Archive, 1990 - 2000

13:35-13:50



Barbara Sherriff

Supporting the Wellbeing and Performance of Young People in a Post-Covid Workforce

13:50-14:05

Questions for Presenters : 14:05 - 14:15

Slido Link

<https://app.sli.do/event/scxnV6soKGJ7kZPahepQaB>



BREAKOUT

The Elizabeth Room

14:25 - 15:30

SESSION 3

Breakout Session 3 : 14:25 - 15:30



Ramon Almeida

Transforming public security policies to tackle hate crime against LGBT groups in Brazil

14:30-14:45



Oki MacPherson

Understanding "missing" people with disabilities in Indonesian statistics

14:45-15:00



Mark Kaye

Living with Brexit: understanding the experiences of people living through the Brexit moment

15:00-15:15

Questions for presenters: 15:15 - 15:30

Slido Link

<https://app.sli.do/event/scxnV6soKGJ7kZPahepQaB>





Tulimegamenno Amutenya

University of Southampton

Exploring approaches and alternative data to improve subnational population projection in Namibia

Accurate and timely population projections are critical for informing local and regional planning and for allocating resources to services such as housing, education, aged care, and health facilities. In countries with underdeveloped national population registers, estimates usually come from decennial census data. These data quickly become outdated, creating significant gaps between censuses and limiting the ability to monitor demographic change or allocate resources efficiently. Conventional national projection methods often fail to capture rapid local population changes, especially in regions with high growth or mobility.

This study addresses these challenges by evaluating alternative data sources and simplified modelling approaches to improve small-area population estimates, with a focus on Namibia. The research contributes to the literature by examining how routinely collected household survey data can update population estimates during the intercensal period. The study also investigates using administrative data on school-enrolled age cohorts to enable annual updates for these groups in projection models. The validity of these approaches is assessed using the most recent 2023 census population counts. The thesis uses methodological assessment, empirical analysis, and case studies to identify key limitations and opportunities for improving subnational population projections.

The findings show that routinely collected administrative and household survey data, when systematically cleaned and harmonised, can improve intercensal population estimates at small geographic scales. The analysis finds that simplified, less resource intensive projection methods can achieve accuracy similar to more complex models, especially for short-term forecasts. A case study of school-age populations confirms that administrative data can improve projection accuracy and support targeted educational planning. Collectively, these results provide statistically robust and practical guidance for national statistical offices and policymakers seeking cost-effective methods for timely demographic updates and efficient resource allocation in Namibia and similar data-constrained contexts. The integration of local demographic evidence and administrative data highlights the potential for improved service delivery and policy adaptation. The research underscores the value of interdisciplinary approaches to population projection in addressing challenges associated with societal change, with implications for both local and broader policy development.



Max Dixon

University of Portsmouth

The other China or an Emerging Taiwan? Democratic Taiwan and British Foreign Policy, 1996-2021

This thesis explores the trajectory of Taiwan in British foreign policy debates and perceptions in twenty-five years following Taiwan's first presidential election in 1996, when Taiwan was a relatively obscure concern in Whitehall, through to 2021 when The Economist labelled Taiwan as 'the most dangerous place on earth' and the United Kingdom outlined its 'Indo-Pacific tilt'. Focusing on framings within parliamentary debates and the perceptions of elite policymakers this thesis outlines how Taiwan has been perceived, constructed and approached in the foreign policy of one of the United States', Taiwan's de-facto security guarantor, closest allies. Through employing an interpretivist, poststructuralist theoretical lens, this thesis challenges realist assumptions that consign Taiwan to the footnotes of great-power competition, instead foregrounding Taiwan as a site of constant discursive negotiation and construction in global politics. An interpretivist approach recognises the importance of narratives in Taiwan on its global position and security, but also the framings imposed upon Taiwan from Beijing, recognising the extent to which interpretations are quintessential to Taiwan's global status, perceived strategic importance and future. Through analysing the dominant discourses afforded to Taiwan, this thesis seeks to outline the narrative foundations that will guide a British response to escalation in the Taiwan strait. A focus on parliament acknowledges the increasing importance of parliamentary support in the construction of British foreign policy whilst also centring the emergence of a distinct Taiwanese identity as a fundamental shift in Taiwan's global importance, recognising the influence of Taiwan's discursive agency in shaping its future and its potency in the context of the 'mother of parliaments'. There exists a distinct knowledge gap in current foreign policy scholarship on Britain's role and approach to East Asia and Taiwan specifically, and as such in concentrating on Taiwan directly, this thesis also seeks to make explicit how perceptions of Taiwan in Britain have changed since its democratisation and the manner in which this shift will shape how Britain will appreciate and approach Taiwan as it faces an increasingly assertive China.



Shuting Chen

University of Southampton

Interactions between biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation

Biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction are globally interlinked and increasingly addressed together to achieve sustainable development. Amid diverse interventions and scarce funding, it is imperative to examine their bidirectional relationship to guide resource allocation. We conduct a global analysis by disaggregating the interaction between 29 kinds of conservation actions and 6 dimensions of poverty (livelihood capitals), using data from 473 cases containing 952 trials across 67 countries. The impact of biodiversity conservation on poverty reduction (conservation-poverty relationship) exhibits a stable pattern of approximately 55% positive, 25% negative, and 20% non-significant outcomes across time, regions, and methods. The scale of intervention and assessment matters for conservation outcomes. By contrast, there is a research gap in the influence of poverty reduction on biodiversity conservation (poverty-conservation relationship). This relationship lacks sufficient evidence to generalize a consistent outcome pattern. We specifically identify conservation interventions that deliver the most pro-poor benefits and risks, noting that no interventions entirely do no harm. We suggest that trade-offs between biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction are inevitable due to their multidimensionality. We propose 15 % trade-offs signify necessary negotiation spaces, not policy defeat, when implementing pro-poor conservation interventions. This synthesis provides an evidence base for more strategic, resource-efficient decision-making under global funding constraints.



Khaleda Brophy-Harmer

University of Southampton

Mass-Observing Whiteness: Understanding performances of race in the Mass Observation Archive, 1990 - 2000

Mass-Observation as a social research project and organisation came into being in 1937. At its centre was the representation and research of the 'ordinary', defining itself as an 'anthropology of 'ourselves'. Although fizzling out in the 1950s, the Mass Observation Project was reimagined as an active social project in 1981, and has sent out 'directives' – sets of open-ended questionnaires – to its national panel of writers every few months, ever since. My doctoral project critiques the lack of scholarly attention paid to MO's persistent 'whiteness' and explores MO writing as elicited racialised (and emotive) identity performances. In this presentation I introduce my original tripartite approach to MOP material, formulated as an answer to three methodological questions: how should we understand performances of racialised identities in MOP material? How can we use these identity performances, and, what can they tell us? Through a historical lens of 1990-2000, I emphasize the reflexive nature of MOP material as a rich untapped resource for the study of white identities and racial discourse, using MO writing to explore: the meanings attributed to racial identity performances; their change overtime and fluidity; and the role of emotion and imagination in the performance and production of white identities in England.



Barbara Sherriff

University of Brighton

Supporting the Wellbeing and Performance of Young People in a Post-Covid Workforce

Mental ill health has been rising globally, particularly for young people, with the sharp increase during the COVID-19 pandemic not returning to pre-pandemic levels (WHO, 2022). The Keep Britain Working review (2025) highlighted the integral role that employers have in providing work which supports young people's mental health, but employers have been struggling to manage this in a post-COVID workforce. A lack of shared intergenerational understanding has resulted in negative Gen Z stereotypes and ineffectual support, with hybrid working complicating these relationships.

There is an ethical imperative for organisations to prioritise employee wellbeing but also a compelling business case, with employee wellbeing linked to reduced organisational costs and increased workplace productivity. Employees' psychosocial resources have a positive association with wellbeing and can be developed through supportive work when a good work:life balance is achieved.

A critical realist philosophical approach underpinned the explanatory sequential research design, aiming to understand the working conditions which promote wellbeing for young people in a post-COVID labour-market. Data from qualitative employer interviews (n=13) and a quantitative South coast student survey (n=398) were triangulated through student focus groups (n=7).

Psychosocial resources can be developed by staff even in repetitive entry level work, but particularly when the employer is perceived to care about wellbeing and where colleagues are supportive. Organisations need to be clear about the range and level of support available, with trained managers given additional time to get to know their staff, so that tailored support can be consistently provided within a culture of trust.

This research identifies workforce changes and outlines how a new psychological contract could help address emerging challenges. It offers a positive perspective through which even mundane repetitive work can be viewed, and offers insights for employers navigating multigenerational workforces.



Ramon Almeida

University of Brighton

Transforming public security policies to tackle hate crimes against LGBT groups in Brazil

Brazil recorded 291 violent deaths of LGBTQ+ people in 2024, an increase of approximately 8.8% compared with the 257 cases reported in 2023 (GGB, 2025). The country also continues to lead the world in the number of murders of trans and travesti people: 122 killings were registered in 2024, according to the National Association of Transvestites and Transsexuals (ANTRA, 2025).

My research examines to what extent the criminalisation of hate acts, such as homophobia and transphobia, criminalised by the Brazilian Supreme Court in 2019, constitutes an effective response to preventing these crimes, and what the limits of criminal law and judicial institutions are in this process. Inspired by Dean Spade's (2011) work, I question whether an exclusive reliance on legal and punitive mechanisms may, in fact, reinforce existing inequalities in access to justice.

To address these questions, I adopted a qualitative approach. I conducted six months of participant observation in two NGOs supporting LGBTQ+ communities in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, and carried out 33 in-depth interviews with victims of hate crimes as well as institutional actors, including judges, police officers, policymakers, and security professionals.

Preliminary findings reveal that, particularly in the case of trans people, institutional revictimisation often occurs when individuals seek justice. Judges lack adequate technical and social preparation to deal with gender and sexuality issues; legal procedures are frequently insensitive to victims' experiences; and access to the courts remains highly unequal. When support is found, it usually comes from community networks rather than from state institutions.

The significance of this research lies in offering a critical perspective on criminalisation as a state tool for addressing LGBTQ+ violence and in proposing the need to rethink access to justice, design more inclusive judicial procedures, and strengthen community-based responses as integral components of protection systems.



Oki MacPherson

University of Southampton

Understanding "missing" people with disabilities in Indonesian statistics

The number of people with disabilities in Indonesia is known to be underestimated, especially when calculated from survey estimates. This leads to incorrect coverage estimates for essential services such as education and healthcare, and is problematic for ensuring progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Measuring disability is challenging as it results from a complex relationship between individual experiences that is both culturally and socially sensitive. This research explores how power, social norms and institutions in Indonesia shape disability data to understand the 'missing' people with disabilities from the statistics.

A reflective thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with people living with various forms of impairment and their family members closely involved in their lives was conducted to explore the challenges and barriers shaping their everyday experiences of disability and to develop a framework reflecting the lived experiences of disabled individuals in this specific context. Then, a survey analysis of harmonised data was used to estimate the proportion of individuals with disability using different measures, and the previously constructed framework was used to critique the measures and identify the 'missing' people with disabilities.

Results showed that people with impairments experience disability at three levels: body structures, performing activities, and participating in social activities. However, the commonly used measures to count disability cases capture only one level of disability, body functions, and are often referred to as functional limitations. This research highlighted the missing voice of disabled people in research and discussion around how disability should be measured. The government institutions simply adopted the Western-centric approach to fulfil the institutions' obligation for disability data collection, leading to missing groups of disabled people whose needs are not being accounted for. Context-sensitive measures should be developed to ensure the lived experiences and needs of disabled people are accurately represented in the statistics.



Mark Kaye

University of Portsmouth

Living with Brexit: understanding the experiences of people living through the Brexit moment

As a consequence of globalisation, distant events often have local consequences, while local actions increasingly hold the potential to have global effects. In undertaking research on the political, social and cultural implications of Brexit, for citizens living in the UK, the realities of this bidirectional relationship between the local and the global were evident. In this presentation, I focus on two key findings arising from my research as they relate to this topic. First, the relationship between global events and Brexit: how the process of globalisation acted as a casual factor motivating people to vote in favour of, or against, withdrawal from the EU. Second, how global events and geopolitical concerns, most notably the ongoing wars in the Ukraine and the Middle East, the election of Donald Trump in the United States and a perceived global migration crisis, continue to frame how citizens feel about the future of UK-EU relations and influence their policy preferences in this regard. In discussing these findings, I further illustrate how, in a globalised world, citizen concerns are often rooted in an increasing sense of injustice, disillusionment, political and economic powerlessness, and a desire to 'take back control' of their own lives.

FACING FRONTIERS

ADAPTING FOR CHANGE

Research in a changing world; neurodiversity; climate change

Libby's Room



BREAKOUT

Libby's Room

11:25-12:30

SESSION I

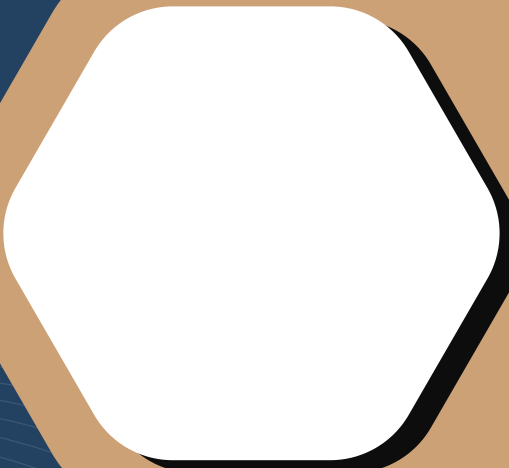
Breakout Session 1 : 11:25 - 12:30



Qianwen Duan

The effect of counter-urbanization on the ecosystems

11:30-11:45



Nasrat Sayed

The impacts of climate change on climate migrants in large southern cities: a case study of Karachi, Pakistan

11:45-12:00



Laura Mitchell [● REC]

Green social prescribing and social justice

12:00-12:15

Questions for Presenters : 12:15 - 12:30

Slido Link

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BREAKOUT

Libby's Room

13:30-14:15

SESSION 2

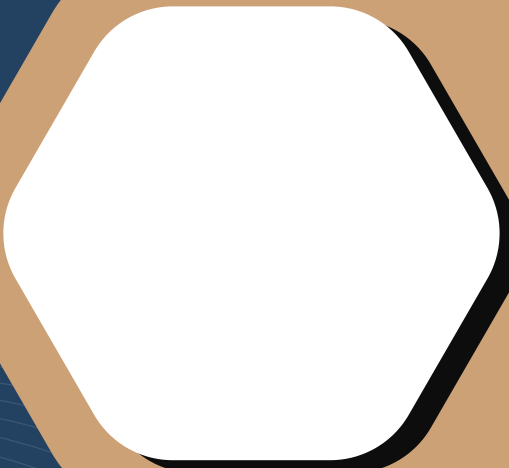
Breakout Session 2 : 13:30 - 14:15



Chloe Eddy [● REC]

Understanding and supporting autistic girls in school: predictors of engagement, disengagement and exclusion

13:35-13:50



Michael Miles [● REC]

The role of trauma in the association between autism and psychosis

13:50-14:05

Questions for Presenters : 14:05 - 14:15

Slido Link
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BREAKOUT

Libby's Room

14:25 - 15:30

SESSION 3

Breakout Session 3 : 14:25 - 15:30



Juan Badariotti

How does exercise cause cognitive improvements? An examination of underlying mechanisms, mediators, and implications for public health communications

14:30-14:45



Elsbeth Clark

Occupational engagement, belonging, and research with students with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities

14:45-15:00



Amy Salkeld

Science and pseudoscience around dissociation and dissociative amnesia: a two-branched experimental approach

15:00-15:15

Questions for Presenters : 15:15 - 15:30

Slido Link

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Qianwen Duan

University of Southampton

The effect of counter-urbanization on the ecosystems

Contemporary urban systems are undergoing a profound transformation. While global urbanisation continues, a parallel trend of counter-urbanisation is reshaping the socio-spatial dynamics between urban, suburban, and rural contexts, particularly in the Global North. Accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and new remote work paradigms, this population redistribution challenges established models of urban development and raises critical questions about sustainability. However, the extent of these trends and their environmental consequences remain poorly understood globally.

This study addresses this gap using novel data from mobile device locations to first detect counter-urbanisation trends and then evaluate their potential ecological risks through the lens of human mobility. We began by analysing population change across 35 countries to identify patterns of urban-to-rural shifts and intra-urban deconcentration, linking them to associated socio-economic characteristics. Following this, we assessed the environmental consequences, analysing how urban and rural residents visit the global Protected Area (PA) network, and the pressures these visits place on biodiversity.

Our analysis reveals that the early phase of the pandemic triggered significant counter-urbanisation trends, though some of these reversed in the later phase. The extent and direction of these patterns varied across countries and were negatively associated with the Human Development Index, suggesting that developed nations experienced greater urban depopulation and spatial deconcentration. Crucially, we find that even without direct land-use change, increased visits from new local populations intensify pressure on protected ecosystems. Projections show that scenarios featuring counter-urbanisation lead to more diffuse pressure on PAs compared to concentrated urban growth.

Ultimately, this research highlights emerging shifts in the urbanisation process. Although these trends may not be dominant yet, they are important signals of a possible future, presenting both threats and opportunities to social and natural environments. Recognizing these emerging trends is essential for fostering resilient cities and sustainable living environments in a rapidly changing world.



Nasrat Sayed

University of Brighton

The impacts of climate change on climate migrants in large southern cities: a case study of Karachi, Pakistan

The nexus between climate change and migration is receiving increasing global attention. Climate change is accelerating internal migration, from 19.2 million in 2015 to 45.8 million in 2024. Pakistan is among the most climate-vulnerable countries globally. The 2022 floods displaced around eight million Pakistanis, driving migration into large cities such as Karachi. Yet a significant gap remains in understanding how climate migrants access social protection in their destination areas, particularly within precarious urban contexts such as Pakistan.

Therefore, this research aims to examine how climate-displaced communities in Karachi's informal settlements access and experience social protection. It explores the challenges displaced households face, the mechanisms (both formal and informal) through which they secure support, and how these can inform more inclusive systems. The study draws on 31 in-depth interviews across five climate-migrant settlements, 10 FGDs, 13 key-person interviews, field observations, and document analysis. Grounded in a relational ontology and constructivist epistemology, it uses Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA).

The initial findings reveal that climate migration is not a one-time event but a recurrent, multi-sited process, which involves cycles of loss, relocation, and adaptation. Access to social protection is mediated through selective and negotiated forms of governance, in which community leaders and local actors act as intermediaries of support. These findings conceptualise social protection as a shared responsibility, shaped by differentiated forms of citizenship. The analysis highlights how recognition, power, and spatial inequality influence vulnerability and access to protection in climate-vulnerable cities. In addition, this study advances decolonial and participatory approaches by producing knowledge with, rather than about, marginalised communities. By revealing how protection and exclusion are reproduced concurrently through informal governance, it contributes to debates on climate justice, recognition, and urban informality.



Laura Mitchell

University of Brighton

Green social prescribing and social justice

This thesis studies racialised discourses within policy on Green Social Prescribing (GSP) in England during the period 2018-2024. The central question that I seek to answer is, how are racialised inequalities represented as ‘problems’ in GSP policy-discourse? Extending from this, I ask, how can a genealogical analysis make visible, and challenge, the silences and assumptions that render GSP legible as a solution to racialised ‘problems’? Finally, what are the effects of racialised discourses in GSP policy? I use feminist poststructural policy analysis to analyse and unsettle the representation, and racialisation, of ‘problems’. Foucauldian in its approach, Bacchian analysis (“What’s the Problem Represented to be?”) offers a framework to explore the political processes of knowledge production (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). I focus on the silences and assumptions embedded in the production of racialised knowledge within GSP policy-discourse, and the effects of such intertextual dynamics. Key findings include the nature of GSP policy as ‘non-performative’, which is a way in which institutional and structural racisms are upheld (Ahmed, 2016, p.116). Key findings outline how exactly this happens within GSP policy: the constitution of a racialised subject position as always and already outside of ‘nature’; the racialisation and objectification of ‘natural environments’; discourses of inclusion, responsabilisation, and culturalist racism; the absent-presence of race/ethnicity and euphemistic language; and performative citations leading to Othering and stereotypes. Through analysis and discussion of the racialised politics of knowledge production I come to highlight ways in which institutionally racist policies are remade and celebrated. I discuss the shortcomings of policymaking processes and knowledge production in fields relevant to GSP. Finally, I consider alternative ways of making knowledge and policies that maintain accountability, and can produce anti-deficit and equitable nature-based health interventions.



Chloe Eddy

University of Southampton

Understanding and supporting autistic girls in school: predictors of engagement, disengagement and exclusion

Autistic girls remain largely invisible in research on school attendance, despite evidence of gendered diagnostic bias, masking, and internalised difficulties that obscure their support needs. Schools lack the knowledge and resources to respond compassionately, leaving many autistic girls facing distressing or even traumatic educational experiences. My PhD responds to this gap by examining school non-attendance amongst autistic girls in England through a mixed-methods design that integrates large-scale administrative data with participatory qualitative inquiry, in order to establish the scope, trajectories and drivers of school non-attendance.

Using national attendance data from all state-funded schools in England (2016–2023), my analyses revealed that autistic girls were consistently more likely to be persistently absent (missing 10+% of school) than peers across both primary and secondary settings. The COVID-19 pandemic further widened these disparities, with attendance difficulties beginning earlier and becoming more severe for autistic girls. These findings offer the first national-level evidence of post-pandemic attendance trends, highlighting an urgent need for earlier, compassionate interventions. The qualitative phase centres autistic girls' and families' voices through in-depth, participatory interviews. Using creative tools participants co-created visual and verbal representations of their stories with attendance. Grounded in principles of epistemic justice, this approach positions autistic girls as experts in their own experiences and ensures their insights directly inform research, policy, and practice. A forthcoming paper merges the National Pupil Database with the Millennium Cohort Study to identify longitudinal predictors of attendance. This will pinpoint key risk and protective factors and determine when intervention could most effectively alter attendance trajectories.

Thus far this PhD has illuminated the voices of a group at risk of being severely statistically invisible. These studies reframe attendance as a relational and systemic issue rather than a behavioural one, calling for policies that prioritise inclusion, wellbeing, and belonging for autistic girls in education.



Michael Miles

University of Southampton

The role of trauma in the association between autism and psychosis

Autistic individuals are at increased risk of being diagnosed with a psychotic disorder and having psychotic experiences. Research has largely sought to quantify the association between these two conditions, with little attempting to understand why it exists. Risk factors of psychosis, such as adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), are largely unexplored within autistic individuals. Research has also relied on using standard psychosis measures, the suitability of which have been questioned for use within autistic populations, for reasons of symptom overlap and misinterpretation. Our research, therefore, aimed to: i) create an amended psychosis screening tool for use within autistic populations, and ii) examine whether trauma moderates the association between autism and psychosis. Study 1 meta-analysed the literature on the autism-psychosis association, finding a consistent relationship between conditions at both a trait and diagnostic level. Notably, associations between autistic and psychosis-spectrum traits were largely driven by non-psychotic overlap (e.g., social difficulties, “odd” behaviours), questioning the accuracy of standard screening tools for use within autistic populations. As such, Study 2 examined how autistic individuals interpreted the Schizotypal Personality Questionnaire–Brief Revised (SPQ-BR), a common psychosis-spectrum screening tool, finding that over half of the items were frequently misinterpreted by both autistic and non-autistic individuals. As such, through co-creation with autistic individuals, an amended SPQ-BR was devised and validated. Using this amended questionnaire, Study 3 examined the role of ACEs on the autism-psychosis association. Compared to the general population, both the autistic and psychosis samples reported higher ACE exposure than the general population. There was no clear evidence, however, of ACEs moderating the autism-psychosis trait association. Collectively, these studies highlight factors that help explain and contextualise the autism-psychosis association. Future research should further examine the appropriateness of common psychometric measures within autistic populations, and more investigation is required into the early-life adversity autistic individuals may face.



Juan Badarionti

University of Portsmouth

How does exercise cause cognitive improvements? An examination of underlying mechanisms, mediators, and implications for public health communications

Sleep deprivation (SD) is known to impair cognitive performance, particularly executive functions such as working memory and inhibition, which are closely linked to short-term declines in occupational performance. Although countermeasures such as caffeine and napping can attenuate these effects, they carry practical and physiological limitations. Acute exercise represents a clean, non-pharmacological alternative that may provide similar or even broader benefits, yet its potential to restore cognition following sleep loss remains largely unexplored.

Current literature on this topic is limited, with most studies employing exercise as an additional stressor rather than as a potential aid. Furthermore, while exercise is known to enhance cognitive performance under rested conditions, the underlying neural mechanisms mediating this effect, and how they interact with SD remain unclear.

This PhD project aimed to test whether acute aerobic exercise can ameliorate the effects of total SD on working-memory performance and to identify potential electrophysiological mechanisms using electroencephalography (EEG). Across three studies, participants completed a 2-back working memory task requiring identification, retention, and updating of numerical stimuli, before and after bouts of cycling exercise. EEG analyses included both event-related potentials and time–frequency approaches to capture temporal and oscillatory dynamics of cortical activity.

Behaviorally, reaction times improved following exercise while accuracy remained stable, whereas total SD negatively affected both measures. Importantly, exercise during SD improved reaction times, suggesting a partial restoration of performance. Event-related EEG analyses revealed significant clusters indicating exercise-related changes of cortical activity, and ongoing time–frequency analyses aim to clarify the spectral mechanisms underlying these effects.

These findings support the hypothesis that acute aerobic exercise can restore working memory performance under SD, reinforcing its potential as a viable, non-pharmacological countermeasure. Further mechanistic examination will aid in establishing exercise as a practical tool for maintaining cognitive function in shift-work and other SD scenarios.



Elspeth Clark

University of Southampton

Occupational engagement, belonging, and research with students with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities

People with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities are among the most marginalised and excluded members of society. Their experiences are frequently overlooked in empirical research, where their perspectives are rarely included either as participants or subjects. My doctoral research aims to challenge this, drawing together a feminist relational perspective and a qualitative evolving case study methodology.

Data were generated through collaborative work with five students with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (aged 12-15 years) in the sociocultural context of their special school. At this age, their transition into adulthood begins to be considered in Education, Health, and Social Care services, and their experiences and perspectives are a priority for further study. Working together over the course of an academic year, we explored how engagement in meaningful activities (occupations) may facilitate the experience and expression of belonging.

Drawing on the theory of co-occupation and employing interdisciplinary methods such as Intensive Interaction, the emphasis during data generation focused on relational, sensory, and embodied approaches. Data were generated through reflexive fieldnotes, ethnographic vignettes, and innovative audio-visual recordings using a GoPro camera. An iterative thematic analysis was conducted, facilitating creative engagement and ongoing reflexivity.

In this presentation, I will focus on vignettes that illuminate the complex factors underlying students' occupational engagement and ultimately their belonging. Findings draw our attention to how aspects of belonging can be fostered through shared being and doing and offer insight into how research can be conducted more inclusively with people who communicate idiosyncratically without words.



Amy Salkeld

University of Portsmouth

Science and pseudoscience around dissociation and dissociative amnesia: a two-branched experimental approach

The research surrounds the possible pseudoscience surrounding dissociative disorders. The first branch focuses on the specific concept of dissociative amnesia and its impact in the legal system. The second branch focuses on the theory underpinning dissociation as a concept and its impact in clinical practice.

In Study 1 (branch 1), we were investigating the impact of specific terminology (repressed memory vs. dissociative amnesia) on legal opinions. Participants watched a video of an 'expert' (confederate) explain what repressed memory or dissociative amnesia was (participants only watched one of the two). We asked participants if they believed the evidence of recovered memory should be admissible in court. We found that members of the general public are more likely to believe that recovered memories should be admissible in court. We also found that almost all of the participants who said the evidence should be admissible also went on to say the defendant should be found guilty without any other evidence present.

Studies 2 and 3 are focused on branch 2 and look exclusively at the Dissociative Experiences Scale (DES). Study 2 looked at the purported internal reliability of the DES. We found that when we altered the measurement scales to be less subjective, the measurements of internal reliability were significantly lower. Study 3 took this further by also looking at participants scores on the DES. In this study, we used the Standard DES and our own modified version designed to be less suggestive. We found that scores on the less suggestive version were significantly lower than the Standard DES, but also that the order in which participants completed questionnaires influenced the scores.

This research is significant because it is demonstrating that the main scale used to measure dissociation is flawed and therefore subsequent legal and clinical practice could be negatively affected.



HUMAN LANDSCAPES

CONTEXTS AND DYNAMICS

Social issues; health; human and animal behaviour

The Windsor Room



BREAKOUT

The Windsor Room 11:25-12:30

SESSION I

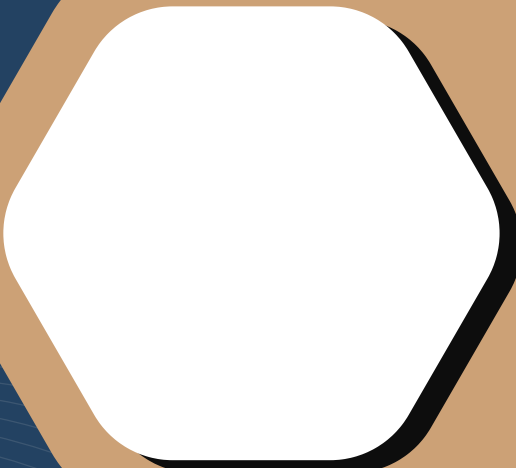
Breakout Session 1 : 11:25 - 12:30



Hannah Bolt

*The profile of a child sexual offender:
understanding those who sexually
offended against children to inform early
interventions*

11:30-11:45



Claire Thomas

*A critical exploration: the impact of
adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
on children and young people cared for
by the state*

11:45-12:00



Claire Cornick

*Examining and enhancing teacher
training for paediatric chronic pain*

12:00-12:15

Questions for Presenters : 12:15 - 12:30

Slido Link
<https://app.sli.do/event/cptHejcBCwqnQAyufHk9fg>



BREAKOUT

The Windsor Room 13:30-14:15

SESSION 2

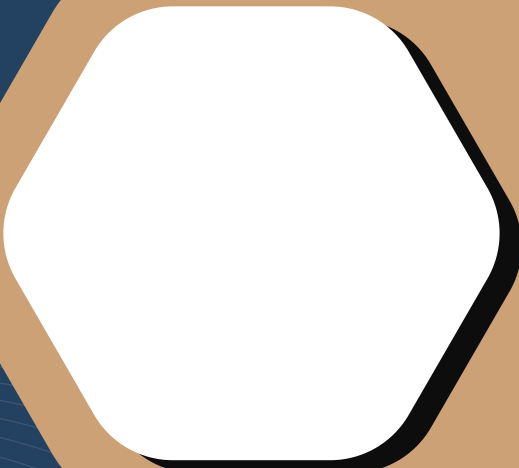
Breakout Session 2 : 13:30 - 14:15



Charlotte Booker

Adult deliberate firesetting: how does fire safety education lead to behaviour change?

13:35-13:50



Paul Moses

Understanding Agile Project Management to raise productivity and efficiency within business

13:50-14:05

Questions for Presenters : 14:05 - 14:15

Slido Link

<https://app.sli.do/event/cptHejcBCwqnQAyufHk9fg>



BREAKOUT

The Windsor Room

14:25 - 15:30

SESSION 3

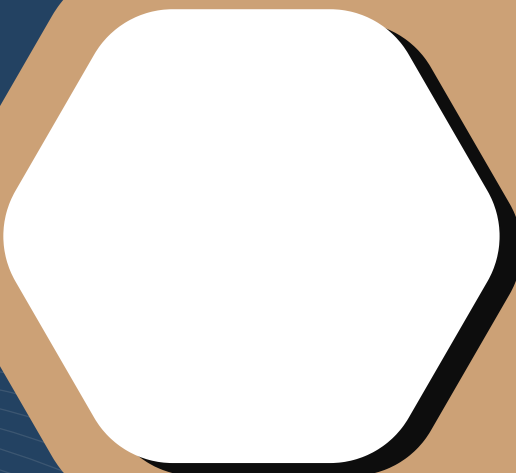
Breakout Session 3 : 14:25 - 15:30



Sasha Donnier

*Testing the social intelligence hypothesis
for the evolution of communicative
complexity in equidae*

14:30-14:45



Tapinder Sidhu [● REC]

*Understanding body posture signals
across contexts in wild African
elephant populations*

14:45-15:00



Sonia Tomescu-Stachie [● REC]

*Improving psychosocial outcomes in
gynaecological cancers: an exploration
of evidence, patient perspectives, and
the feasibility of online Shared Reading
(oSR)*

15:00-15:15

Questions for Presenters : 15:15 - 15:30

Slido Link

<https://app.sli.do/event/cptHejcBCwqnQAyufHk9fg>





Hannah Bolt

University of Portsmouth

The profile of a child sexual offender: understanding those who sexually offended against children to inform early interventions

This doctoral project examines sexual attraction to children within the broader psychological and situational profile of individuals who commit sexual offences against children. Improved understanding of these risk pathways is essential for developing early intervention strategies that prevent harm before it occurs. Preliminary findings from Study 1 will be discussed, exploring differences in offence-supportive beliefs and understanding of consent. The study involved a large-scale survey across four groups: members of the general population, individuals incarcerated for sexual offences, individuals incarcerated for non-sexual offences, and individuals who disclose a sexual attraction towards children but have never offended (Minor Attracted People [MAP]). This design enables comparison of sexual interests and cognitive characteristics, with the aim of identifying factors that distinguish those who progress from attraction to offending behaviour. Although full analysis is ongoing, early observations highlight the complexity of risk and the need to consider how interacting factors influence behaviour. These insights have potential implications for refining assessments of risk and shaping preventative responses beyond criminal justice settings. The presentation will also outline the next steps planned for the coming year, detailing the qualitative approach for Studies 3 and 4. It will further reflect on the methodological and ethical challenges inherent in researching such a sensitive topic, including recruitment barriers, stigma, participant safeguarding, and the wider responsibilities involved in producing knowledge about this high-risk area. Overall, this presentation offers an update on progress to date, highlights the evolving direction of the research, and contributes to efforts to enhance prevention through evidence-informed understanding.



Claire Thomas

University of Southampton

A critical exploration: the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on children and young people cared for by the state

Following conclusions drawn from my master's thesis, reflections of my own lived experience of the care-system, and my years as a practitioner in the field. This study aims to explore the narratives of young people leaving the care system with the goal of bringing to light more dominant issues of contention. The significance of this study lies in its unique approach that draws upon my own lived-experience of transitioning to adulthood upon leaving the care-system at 18 years old, my work as a practitioner with vulnerable children and young people over the years, and my positionality as a researcher with a shared commonality with the research participants.

The research aims to understand current issues affecting those with care experience by adopting Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) as a methodological approach, along with autoethnography. By combining autoethnographic elements with the narratives of young people leaving care, the project seeks to better understand the convergence of 'power', both systemic and through individual agency. How it is enacted, and how, through its combined forces, it can influence social capital, a sense of social identity, and life trajectories of care-experienced young people.

This study also sits within a discursive and knowledge gap that considers possible points of contention and synergy between young people living in the system, and those working for the system who are in positions of power within the field of 'Children's Social Care' (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2007). Few studies are conducted by care-experienced academics that explore the complexities of these experiences from multiple perspectives. Therefore, this gap in understanding, and a care-experienced-led study frames this research project, which shall explore my own experiences of leaving care over three decades ago and the narratives of people discussing their care-leaving journey in more recent years.

To achieve the aims and explore convergent points of power within Children's Social Care in the UK, the following research question has been identified.



Claire Cornick

University of Portsmouth

Chronic pain negatively affects children's outcomes on the English Standardised Assessment Tests (SAT)

Chronic pain, persistent or recurring pain over 3 months, affects approximately 1 in 5 children worldwide. In the UK, this number is as many as 1 in 4 children. That means between 7 and 8 children per average UK school class are living with chronic pain. Significantly, chronic pain is believed to have a substantial impact on children's school outcomes, negatively impacting attendance, attainment, mental health, and friendship quality. However, evidence from the UK is lacking, and educational differences between countries may mean the impact of chronic pain cannot be generalised between countries. Therefore, the current cross-sectional study collected scores for Standardised Assessment Tests (SAT), attendance rates, and mental health data from 148 parents of children with and without chronic pain aged 11-14 years via an online survey. Results show children with chronic pain scored lower on the SATs, had higher absence rates, and poorer mental health than children without chronic pain after controlling for gender, SES and SEND. These findings have implications for the education system in how to support children with chronic pain to achieve their educational potential.



Charlotte Booker

University of Portsmouth

Adult deliberate firesetting: how does fire safety education lead to behaviour change?

Deliberate firesetting is an umbrella term for unsafe fire behaviours that are legally documented (i.e., arson offences) as well as including those that go undetected. Two intervention approaches are often used to reduce firesetting: psychological and educational. While fire safety education (FSE) interventions may be effective in reducing fire reoffending for adults, young people and children with a history of deliberate firesetting (Johnston & Tyler, 2022; Kipoulas et al., 2024), little is known about how and why this is the case (and importantly, when this is not the case). Supported by U.K. national and international stakeholders engaged in practice-based research in the deliberate firesetting field, this realist review aims to dig deeper to understand what works, for whom, in what contexts and how.

A comprehensive literature search, utilising bibliographic databases and material forwarded by stakeholders and colleagues in the field, identified 1514 potential sources. Of these, 35 were synthesised using context-mechanism-outcome configurations.

As a result of the review, we will suggest theories as to why and how FSE interventions work for people with a history of deliberate firesetting. Additionally, we will develop and share recommendations for FSE intervention development and implementation to help support evidence-informed practice.



Paul Moses

University of Southampton

Understanding Agile Project Management to raise productivity and efficiency within businesses

This research examines how Agile Project Management improves productivity and efficiency in contemporary organisations. Using a multi-paper design, it develops a layered understanding of agile at conceptual, human, and procedural levels.

Paper 1 presents a computer literature review of all academic works over the last twenty years that include “agile” and “project” in their abstracts. It identifies a divide between computing and business scholarship. Computing journals emphasise methodological optimisation, while business journals emphasise organisational change and performance. The review suggests that transferring detailed implementation know-how from technical teams to business project managers can unlock efficiency gains in planning, delivery and benefits realisation.

Paper 2 investigates how agile experience shapes individual and organisational performance through interviews of forty engineers who have used agile during their careers. Findings show that agile experience functions within, and might expand, a career capital model. Participants reported that agile work made their contributions more observable to leadership, which helped them get noticed sooner and progress faster. The study also indicates that organisations piloting agile without sustained follow-through risk losing motivated staff, which erodes anticipated efficiency improvements.

Paper 3, in progress, examines Planning Poker as a specific agile estimation practice. A survey assesses whether its collaborative structure improves estimation accuracy, supporting organisational efficiency, and whether the process fosters team open communication and psychological safety, supporting sustained productivity.

Together, the studies show that agile’s value extends beyond faster delivery. It improves estimation discipline, strengthens visibility and engagement, and supports cultures that learn and adapt. The thesis contributes evidence on where and how agile practices translate into durable productivity and efficiency gains, and offers practical guidance for leaders seeking impact beyond the pilot stage.



Sasha Donnier

University of Portsmouth

Testing the social intelligence hypothesis for the evolution of communicative complexity in equidae

Human communication shows remarkable complexity: we combine signals of different types and modalities, such as speech, gestures and facial expressions, across social situations. It is also highly flexible: we adjust communicative complexity through the number and type of signals according to context and interlocutors. This flexibility is central to human communication and offers a useful comparison with other species to understand its evolutionary roots.

Non-human primates also display flexibility in their use of signals across modalities. However, whether a similar flexibility extends beyond primates remains largely unexplored, limiting understanding of its evolutionary origins. To address this, we must examine species with distinct evolutionary trajectories.

Horses offer an ideal model for this comparative approach. They use visual, tactile, olfactory and auditory signals, and their wild counterparts live in socially complex groups. Group living offers advantages but also challenges: individuals must coordinate interactions and convey information about identity, emotional state, and motivation. The social complexity hypothesis (SCH) proposes that species living in socially complex groups evolve more elaborate communication systems to navigate these challenges, and recent work suggests that it also applies to situations of social uncertainty, where high-risk interactions increase the need for communicative precision to reduce the risk of aggression.

Based on the SCH, we predicted greater communicative complexity—measured as the number and modalities of signals—in higher-risk contexts. Video-recorded interactions analysed with generalised linear mixed models provided partial support: signal number increased in higher-risk contexts and during grooming, while multimodal use peaked in affiliative rather than high-risk contexts. Overall, horses flexibly adjusted the number and modalities of signals according to context, indicating that communicative complexity is context-sensitive and shaped by multiple social functions. These findings contribute to understanding how social dynamics can drive the evolution of communicative complexity.



Tapinder Sidhu

University of Portsmouth

Understanding body posture signals across contexts in wild African elephant populations

Human–elephant conflict (HEC) remains a pressing challenge for rural livelihoods and wildlife conservation across Africa and Asia. Each year, elephants kill hundreds of people and injure several thousand more. Beyond the direct loss of life, human–wildlife conflict results in substantial economic and emotional costs to affected communities. Additionally, conflict events often lead to fatal outcomes, displacement, and chronic stress to elephants, with hundreds of animals killed in preventative, immediate, or retaliatory responses – posing significant welfare and conservation concerns. As human populations expand and settlements increasingly overlap with elephant ranges and migration routes, these conflicts are intensifying. While extensive research has focused on HEC mitigation strategies – such as early warning systems, deterrent methods, and compensation schemes – far less is known about elephant behaviour at the precise point of human–elephant contact. Understanding behavioural cues that precede escalation could help prevent injuries and fatalities on both sides. My PhD research addresses this critical gap by investigating the body posture signals of African elephants across aggressive, affiliative, and evasive contexts. Building on this foundation, the current research phase examines how accurately humans can interpret these behaviours. Participants with varying levels of experience (from those with no prior exposure to elephants to individuals who live and work alongside them) are tested to determine how well they can identify signs of neutral or negative state, and particularly stress and potential aggression, in elephants. Similar approaches have been widely applied to domestic species, where our ability to recognise behavioural and emotional states is linked to improved welfare outcomes, yet this remains largely unexplored in wild animals, despite its potential value. The findings from this research will inform on-the-ground resources and conflict-mitigation interventions. By enhancing human understanding of elephant behaviour, this work seeks to promote safer and more compassionate coexistence between people and elephants.



Sonia Tomescu-Stachie

University of Southampton

Improving psychosocial outcomes in gynaecological cancers: an exploration of evidence, patient perspectives, and the feasibility of online Shared Reading (oSR)

Each year, gynaecological cancers impact the lives of over 1.4 million women and gender-diverse people. Yet, while treatment often focuses on the physical disease, the emotional and social impacts are frequently overlooked. This PhD sought to redress this imbalance by exploring how people make sense of, live with, and move beyond diagnosis -and how creative, community-based support can improve psychological distress, wellbeing and quality of life.

Guided by the biopsychosocial (Engel, 1977) and meaning-making models (Park, 2010; 2022), this interdisciplinary project adopted a mixed-methods, pluralistic design with three interlinked studies. Firstly, a systematic review and meta-analysis synthesised global evidence on psychosocial and psychoeducational interventions for gynaecological cancers, identifying their effects on psychological distress, wellbeing and quality of life. Secondly, a qualitative study using reflexive inductive thematic analysis explored the lived experiences of diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship, revealing unmet emotional needs, disrupted identity, and barriers to compassionate care during and after treatment. Thirdly, an ongoing n-of-1 trial tests the acceptability and feasibility of online Shared Reading (oSR) -a peer-support, literature-informed intervention designed as a creative way for those affected to reconnect, reflect, and construct new meaning beyond illness.

Together, these studies contribute to shaping psychosocial equity in cancer care; seeing people not just as ill and in need of treatment, but as whole individuals with stories, identities, and relationships that shape their treatment and recovery. In integrating arts-based methods and digital delivery, this project offers a vision for more compassionate and inclusive care -one that advocates for creative, inclusive, and equitable models of care.

GETTING THERE

Location



The Queens Hotel Portsmouth
www.queenshotelporsmouth.com
Osborne Road & Clarence Parade,
Southsea PO5 3LJ

Drop-off & Parking

There is a large open area directly in front of The Queens Hotel, making drop-off quick and easy.

Parking for conference attendees is **free**.

Please **enter car registration number** into the machine at reception upon arrival. Failure will result in a parking fine.

Interactive Map



<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1L9TuZ3DRGqaZTb1NSl3LiWIJm5Aou6c&usp=sharing>

Public Transport *By Train and Bus to Queens Hotel*

The Queens Hotel is accessible via **Portsmouth Harbour** or **Portsmouth & Southsea** train stations. Walking from either station takes approximately **26–28 minutes**. Below are the bus routes from either of the stations:

From Portsmouth Harbour:

- Walk 2 minutes to **The Hard Interchange** (Stop M).
- Take **Bus 23** for 7 stops and get off at the **Queens Hotel** bus stop.
- The hotel is directly across the road, approximately 2 minutes on foot.

Return trip:

- Board Bus 23 from the bus stop next to the hotel and alight at The Hard Interchange.

The one-way journey takes around **16 minutes**.

From Portsmouth & Southsea:

- Walk 2 minutes to **City Shops South** (Stop C).
- Take **Bus 23** and for 10 stops and get off at the **Queens Hotel** bus stop.
- The hotel is directly across the road, around 2 minutes on foot.

Return trip:

- Board Bus 23 from the bus stop next to the hotel and get off at City Shops South (Stop D).

The one-way journey takes approximately **21 minutes**.

INSIDE VENUE

Below is a simple guide to help you navigate the key rooms and facilities used during the conference. Wayfinders will be available throughout the venue to assist you, and if you need any help or have questions, please feel free to approach a member of staff.

Entrance Level

*(Up the front entrance steps) **

As you enter the hotel, you will go **up a short flight of steps** to reach the main reception level and area used for conference activities.



Elizabeth Room

Main Room (Local Lives, Global Impact)

Continue **straight ahead along the corridor to the right** to find the Elisabeth Room. Signage will direct you to the room, which is also used as the **main conference room and breakout room** for 'Local Lives, Global Impact' theme.



Libby's Room

(Facing Frontiers, Adapting for Change)

Located immediately to the **left** as you reach the top of the steps. This space will be used for the breakout sessions for the 'Facing Frontiers, Adapting for Change' theme.

Toilets on this floor



This level includes **men's** toilets, **ladies'** toilets, and an **accessible** toilet.

Lower floor

(One floor down)

Take the stairs down to the lower level for additional breakout rooms and facilities.



Windsor Room

(Human Landscapes, Contexts and Dynamics)

Located on the left at the bottom of the stairs. This room will host the breakout session for 'Human Landscapes, Contexts and Dynamics' theme.

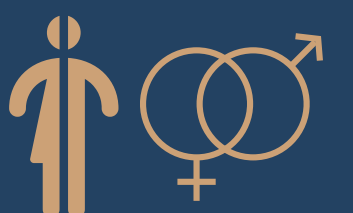
Victoria Room

(Quiet Room)



To the right, next door to the Windsor Room, is the Victoria Room. This space is designated as a quiet room, intended for rest, decompression, and taking time away from the busier areas of the conference. If you need a moment to reset, this dedicated space is available throughout the day, with soft lighting and comfortable seating to help you unwind. Please note that this is a silent room and phone calls are not permitted. Fidget toys are also available to support focus and relaxation—feel free to try them, and kindly return them when you are done.

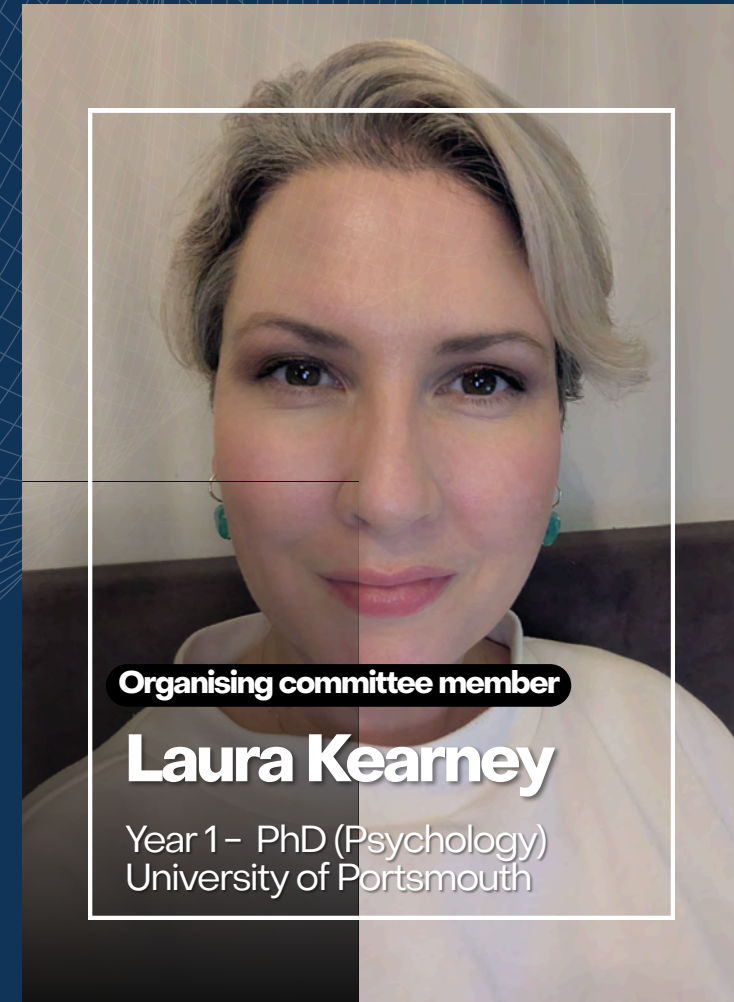
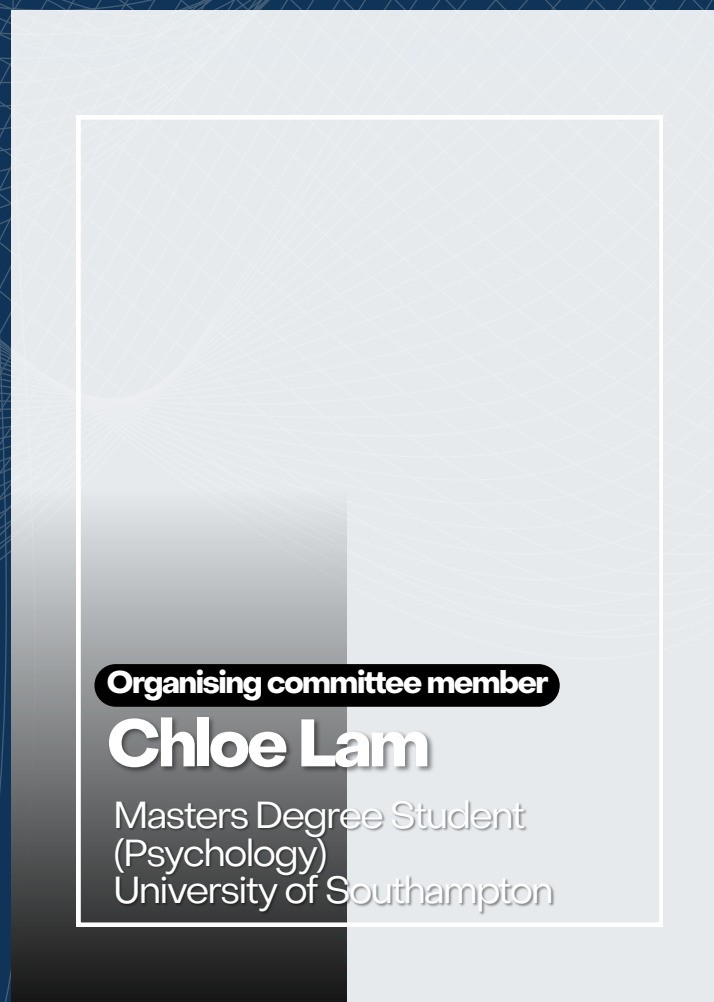
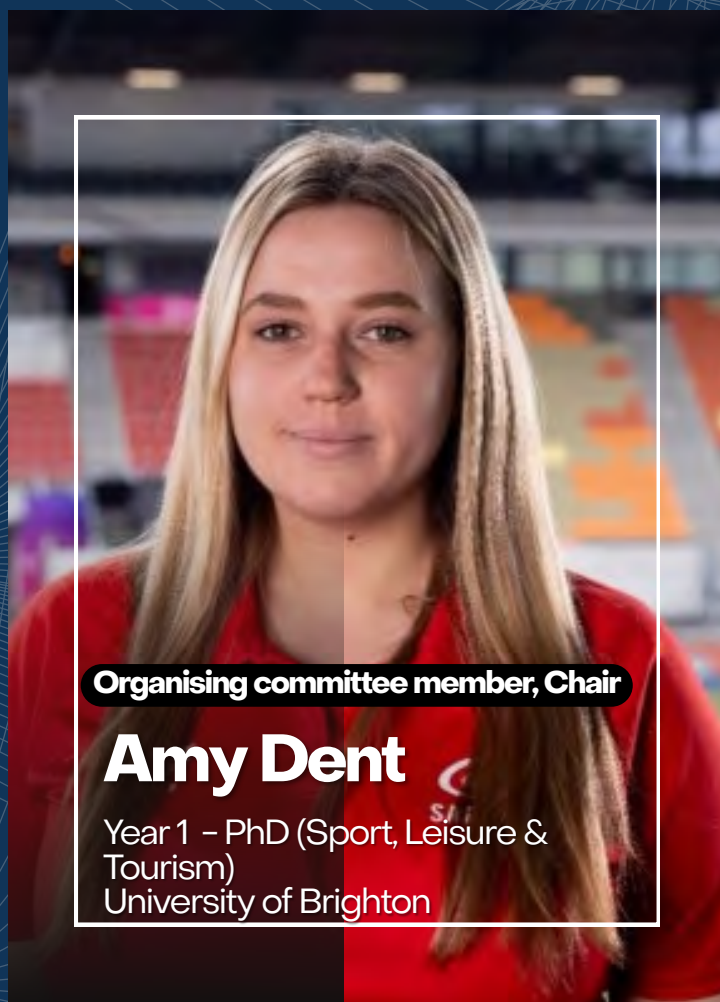
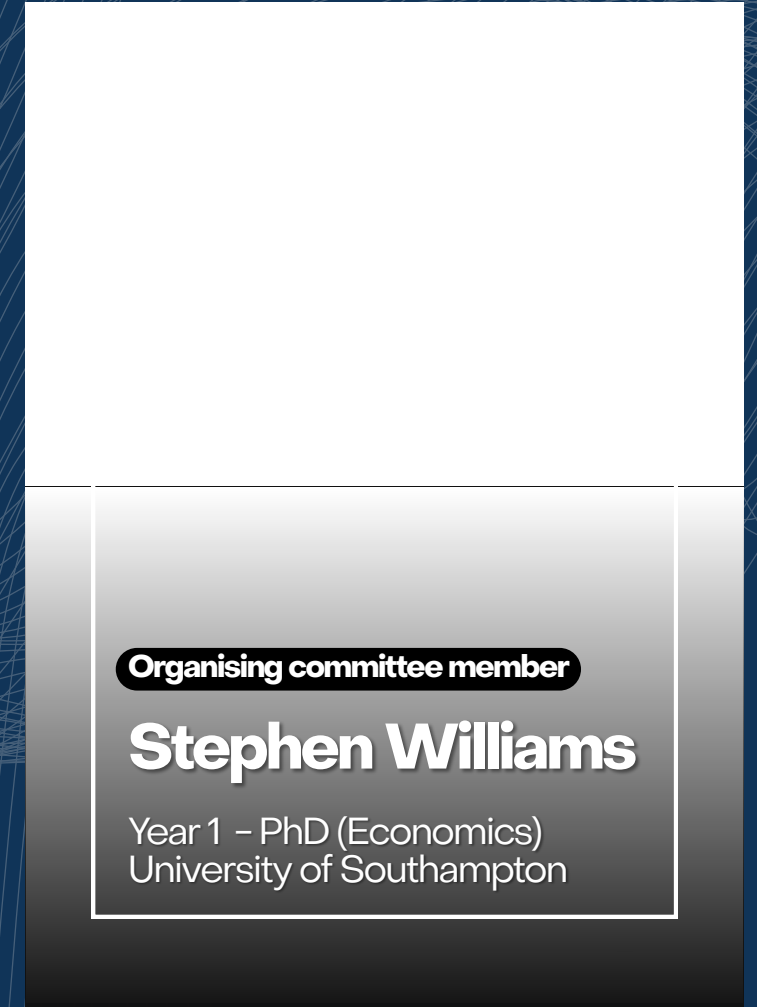
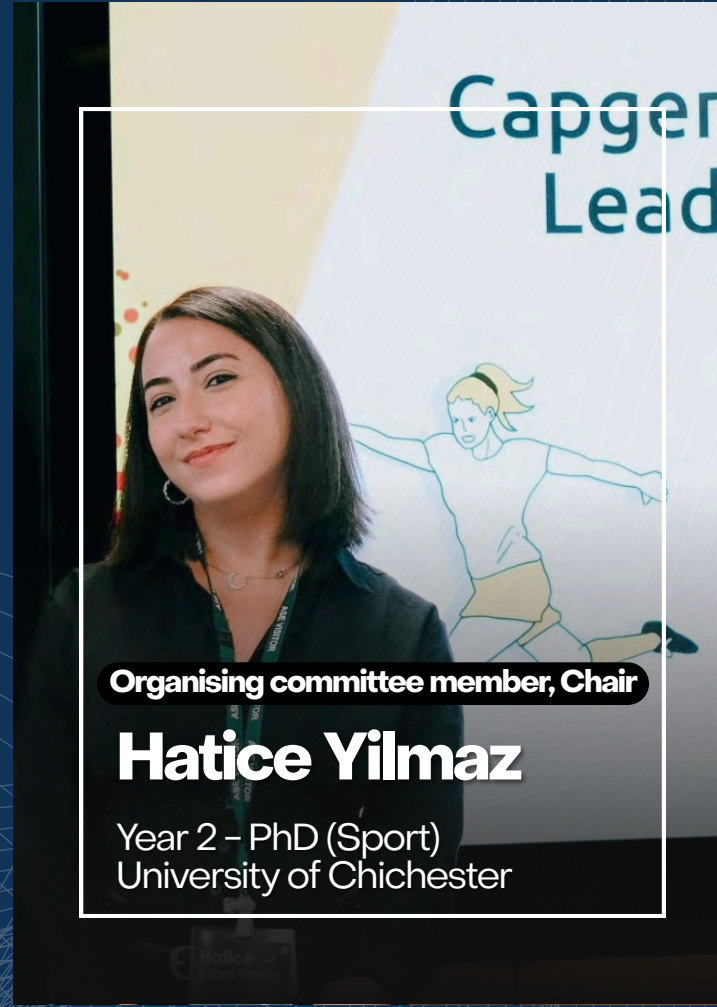
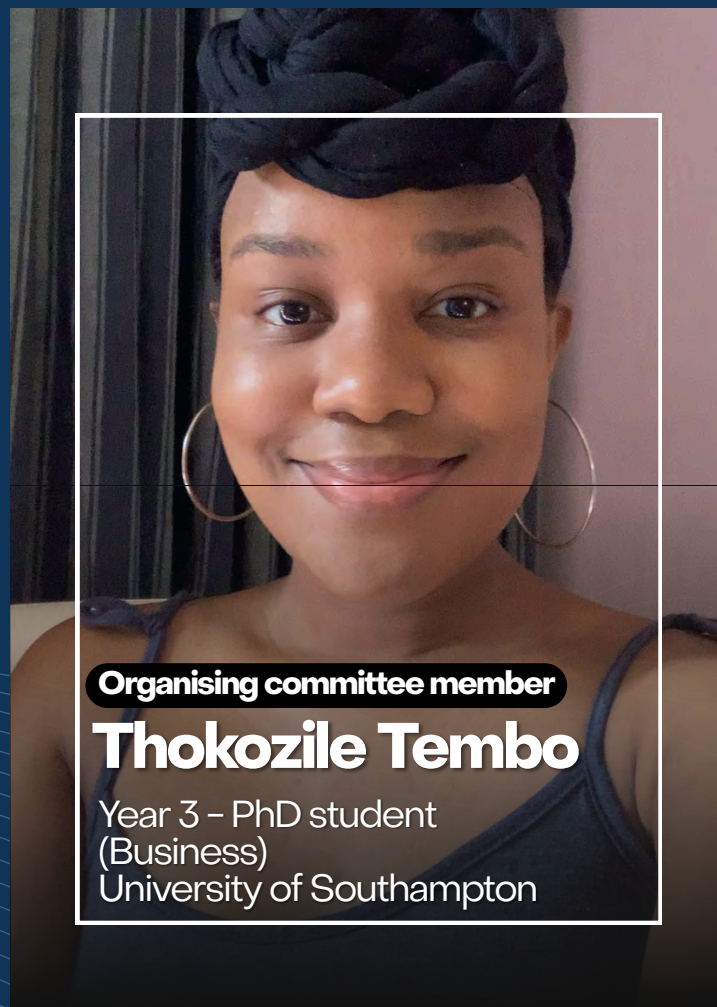
Toilets on This Floor

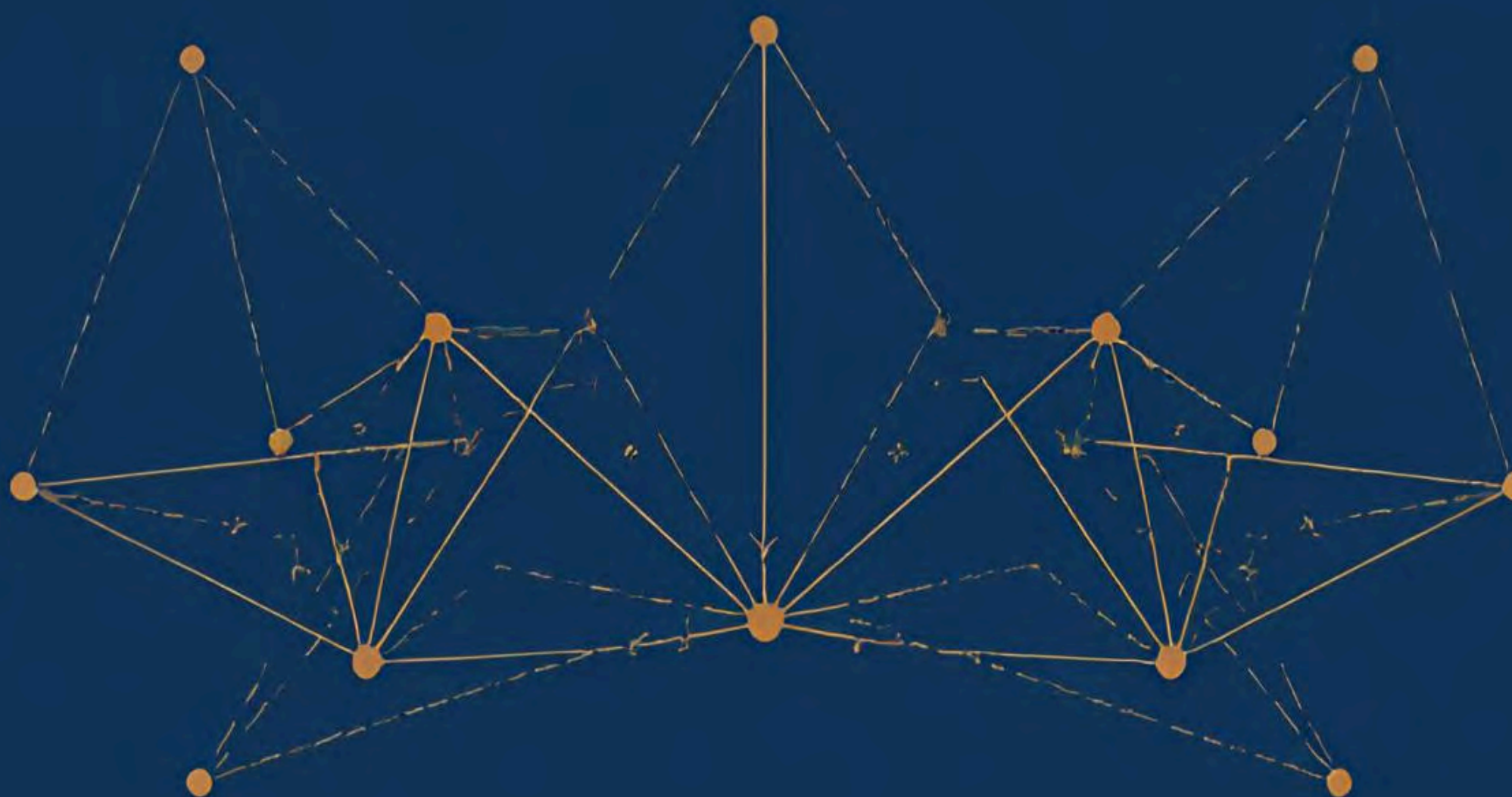


This level offers toilets with urinals and toilets without urinals (gender-neutral), and these will be signposted for your convenience.

* Accessible Entry: For step-free access, please use the Osborne Road side entrance on the left side of the hotel, where a lift is available.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE





THANK YOU

**SCDTP Final Year
Conference 2025/26**
SHAPING JUST FUTURES

SC.DTP. South Coast
Doctoral Training
Partnership



#SCDTPFYC2526
HASHTAG