

# elevate

First of its kind cross-institutional leadership development programme  
for individuals who identify as female from Black, Asian & Minority  
Ethnic backgrounds, January-July 2021



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**



University of  
**BRISTOL**



UNIVERSITY OF  
**EXETER**

# Programme approach

“We came to theory (seeing life through non-white lens) because ‘we’ were hurting ..... ‘We’ came to theory desperate, wanting to understand, to grasp what was happening around and within ‘us’. Most importantly, ‘we’ want to make the hurt go away. ‘We’ see in theory then a location for healing.”

B. Guy-Sheftall (1995), Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought: The new Press

“The potential that has been unleashed from providing a supporting environment has been astounding”

(Participant feedback, July 2021)



eleVate



## Elevate aims to create a place to start shifting paradigms

“...any effort to transform institutions so that they reflect a multi-cultural standpoint must take into consideration the fears others have when asked to shift paradigms. .... there must be a setting for folks to voice fears, to talk about what they are doing, how they are doing it, and why”.

Hooks, B. (1994), Teaching to Transgress – Education as the Practice of Freedom: Routledge

“I found it very empowering, moving, and memorable. From the first day, where I looked around the 'room' and realised I'd never been in a space like this before with a group of ambitious, striving and successful women of colour.” (Participant feedback, July 2021)



# Journey of discovery

“Elevate created a supportive and, in many instances, a transformative learning space for female professional and academic staff.

**Their growth and development during the programme was evidenced through the sharing of professional and life experiences; their inquiry and curiosity and practical projects** completed alongside demanding work/life schedules.

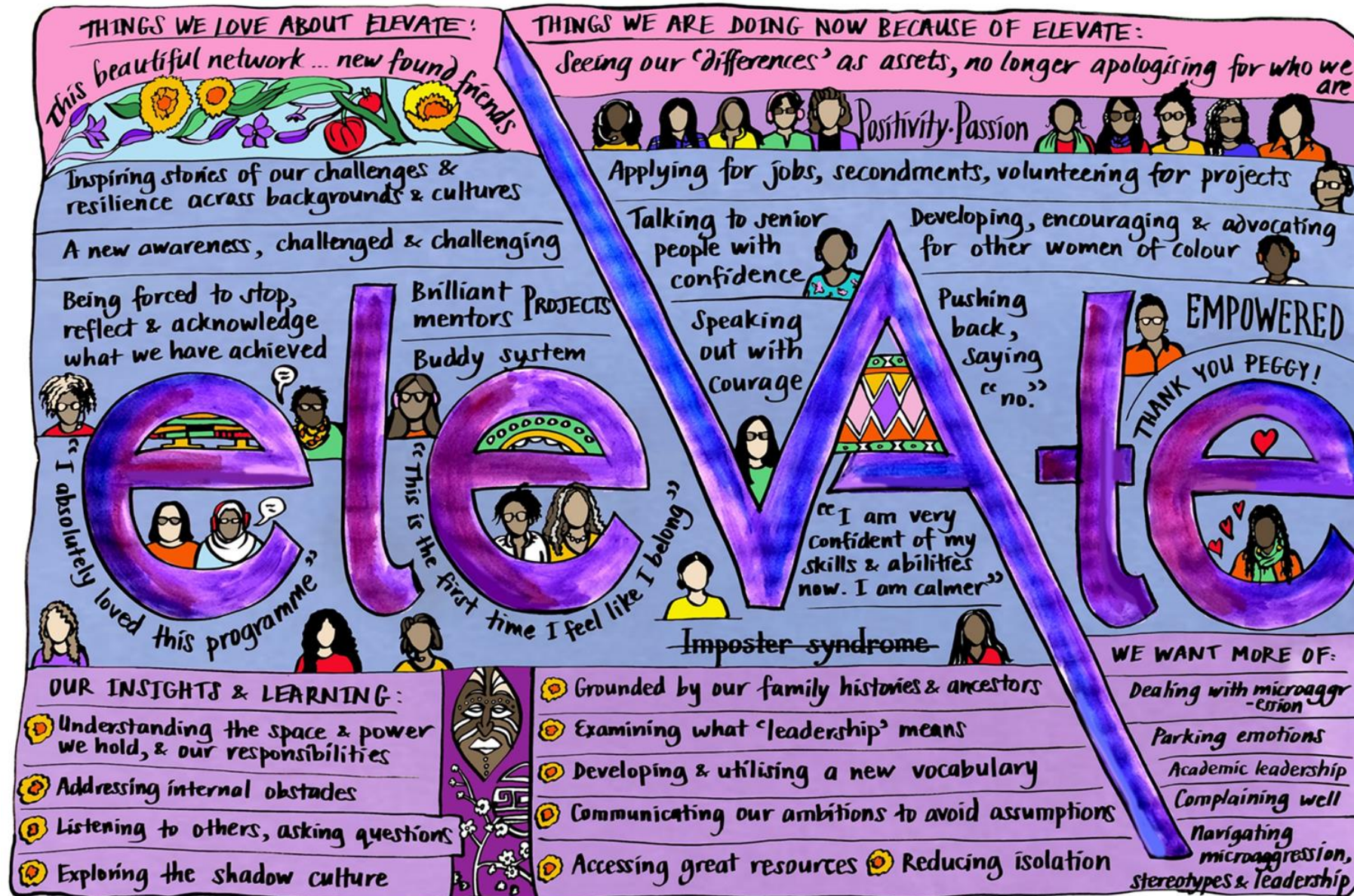
We celebrate the Elevate participants and feel privileged to have journeyed with them.”

Yvonne Field, Lead facilitator, Founder & CEO of Ubele Initiative (28 October 2021)

The logo for Elevate, featuring the word "elevate" in a sans-serif font. The letter "A" is stylized, with a purple diagonal line passing through it from the top-left to the bottom-right.



# Mid-programme evaluation





elevate

Key aim: To proactively pursue their leadership aspiration, acknowledge their growth and actively move forward

**Participants' feedback (July 2021):**

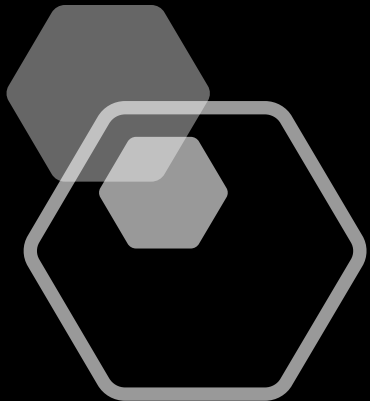
- *"I'm definitely a lot more confident and assertive, through the project I've also picked up useful leadership skills...I got a new job as a result of completing project 1, I wouldn't have applied otherwise."*
- *"It has given me the confidence to go for jobs I previously wouldn't have had the confidence and self-belief to go for."*



# Online group gathering for presentations and celebration for over 60 people

- Participants showcased their knowledge, skills and ideas through individual presentations
- Senior University reps. joined to listen and engage in dialogue around institutional barriers, challenges and ways forward
- Gave an opportunity for participants to demonstrate individual and team Authority, Presence and Impact
- A place to highlight and celebrate successes
- Cross-institutional mentors joined to share and celebrate





# Impact to date (summative evaluation data, 60% response)

Raised self-esteem and confidence

Developed networks

Examples of qualitative feedback:

“Confidence in my own authority and feeling connected. More comfortable in speaking in a group”

“Professionally I’m learning to not live under the pressure of overperforming or having to prove myself that I am more than capable”

“Helped me to see my goals and vision more clearly. I know where I want to be in a few years time....”

“Opened up doors for me that I wouldn’t have ever expected”



# Elevate impact as at July 2021

- 6 people in new roles (one headhunted as a result of raising her profile)
- 4 people applied for new roles; unsuccessful but using the opportunity as learning
- 1 person updated CV in preparation for seeking new role
- 3 people more strategic in their interventions and working with senior leads
- 3 people introduced new projects to their institutions

The logo for 'elevate' is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font. The word 'elevate' is written in black, with the letter 'v' replaced by a thick, purple diagonal line that extends from the top right to the bottom left, crossing through the letter 'A'.

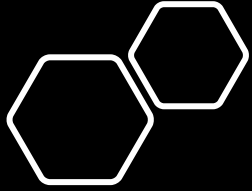
# Longer-term impact (summative data, 60% response rate)

“It has given me the confidence to go for jobs I previously wouldn't have had the confidence and self-belief to go for”

“Confidence to have a voice in the work environment, and personally.”

“Hope to build on the knowledge, skills, experiences and connections I have gained as part of this programme. I am involved in some interesting projects which I hope will achieve some real results.”

“The programme is enlightening. To be in a room of people who have the same shared experiences and can provide such support has been such an empowering experience”



# Institutional follow up actions

**Cardiff:** Three colleagues have moved to new roles. The cohort have produced guidance for the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on what they would like the University to do next, followed up 041121 with meeting between the alumnae and the DVC.

**Bristol:** Active and visible participation in internal opportunities and networks, for example Reciprocal mentoring pilot, BAME staff network and policies to build inclusivity. Support on the programme led to an alumnus gaining a significant research grant. Alumnae have applied for new roles.

**Bath:** Minimum of three Elevate alumnae made positive career moves. One alumna become chair of the People of Colour staff group and invited to the University's Race Equality Taskforce. Alumnae working with the learning and organisational development team to design and deliver training for managers in appreciating their diverse teams.

**Exeter:** Feedback from alumnae incorporated into the Race Equality Action plan, to ensure support for cultural change efforts. Agreed actions include: ensuring "post-programme support" availability for participants, engagement activity to ensure involvement in future programmes, and activities to raise awareness and workshop solutions about the specific challenges faced by BAME women.

"Elevate has raised the profile of career development for women of colour, and managers are prioritising talented team members for the programme. We will continue to support the Elevate community as a network to share learning and inspiration." S. Inger, Learning and OD Manager, 281021

# Future

- New programme will start in November 2021 with 5 institutions
- Alumnae will be involved in Action Learning and mentoring activities for next cohort
- Active contact with alumnae at each University
- Creation of an alumnae network
- Cross-institutional Action Learning group for applicants who didn't get onto 2021-22 programme
- Long-term track of alumnae
- Continuous improvement and review of programme design

