



Aditi Leadership Programme



The Aditi Leadership programme

The Aditi programme is a leadership development programme for black, asian and minority ethnic (BAME) academic-related staff in the University.

It aims to help talented staff identify their unique leadership qualities and where and how these can be utilised as they progress their careers.

The principles of the programme are to help individuals identify and address any barriers they may encounter and discover ways to bridge the gap between their current skills and abilities and those required to progress into more senior roles.

Viewpoints from Emma Higginson-Smith (March 2020)

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Attached is the Aditi programme plan, which explains the format and approach of the programme.

It was first set up in 2016 to help BAME staff progress to more senior leadership positions in the University. We are currently running our fourth cohort, though taught sessions have been suspended due to the coronavirus.

There have been some real positives from this programme. The BAME network was created directly from the membership of the first cohort. It is different from most programmes in that on the first 2 days, the participants co-create the design of their own programme so that it meets their specific needs.

Anecdotally, we are able to say that people on the programme have gone on to more senior positions. I cannot comment on evaluations for the first two sessions, but evaluations from the previous cohort were very good and the feedback from the current cohort is that they feel that they are getting a lot out of the programme.

This year we have introduced a 2 hour training course for the managers of the participants and this has had a real impact on those managers who attended. They now appear to be much more aware of the problems facing their BAME staff and better equipped to support them.

Recently, the Aditi group met with our Chancellor and they were able to exert a positive influence on him in raising the profile of the EDI agenda.

Of course, there have been challenges. In our department there are no suitable trainers from an ethnic minority group so all course leaders, so far, have been white. This is not ideal and

has been raised by the BAME network. With the current cohort we bought in the services of a black trainer to support on the first two days and this really added value to the programme. Our budget has not stretched to having the trainer there for every day and it has been a challenge for the white course leader to be able to address some of the real and deep seated emotional issues that have been raised as participants talk openly about the barriers they face due to their race.

Also, we can build the confidence and improve the leadership skills of our participants, but that does not mean that they will necessarily be able to overcome all of the institutional barriers that exist. For this reason, it is important to work closely with your EDI manager in devising and delivering the programme. Our EDI manager has been an excellent support.

It can be challenging and time-consuming for the course leader to deliver a programme which is co-created. This often requires writing and delivering new materials or bringing in someone who can meet a specific need. This may lead to greater variety and creativity, but it can be an expensive approach.

There are still considerable bottle-necks for BAME staff in our talent pipeline and we are not yet seeing the impact we would like. Embarking on a programme like this, you are in for the long-haul.

Attachments include

1/ [Aditi programme plan](#)

2/ [LFHE Small Development Project report](#): The Aditi Leadership Programme: Developing the potential of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Leaders, Yvonne Yelken, University of Birmingham, (31 July 2018)