



NEON Symposium 2020

“Let’s work together – how can students shape the future of widening access”

Wednesday 21st October and
Thursday 22nd October



Day 1: Wednesday 21st October



Opening Session

Welcome: **Dr Graeme Atherton, Director, NEON**



Dr Graeme Atherton studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Trinity College Oxford and has been working in the field of education research and management since 1995. After 6 years leading Aimhigher work in London, he founded and now leads both AccessHE and NEON in the UK. Graeme holds Visiting Professorships at Amity University, London and Sunway University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He is a member of the board of the National Union of Students (NUS) and has produced over 200 conference papers, and publications.

Keynote speaker – **Dr Leanne Armitage**



Leanne's ultimate mission in life is to inspire people to be the best version of themselves and believes that the healthcare profession should reflect the society it serves. She endeavours to do this through sharing her story of the obstacles she overcome. Leanne is currently a recently qualified doctor with interests in Emergency Medicine. Whilst at medical school she realised there was a massive lack of diversity and in 2018 she co-founded a charity - [The Armitage Foundation](#) - which exists to increase diversity across UK medical schools. As a result of the work Leanne has done through The Armitage Foundation she was awarded the 2018 Queen's Young Leaders award by Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace. In addition to this, she was also awarded a NEON

Student of Year commendation in 2019.

10:35 Keynote speaker: **Hillary Gyebi-Ababio, Vice President (Higher Education), NUS**



Hillary Gyebi-Ababio is the Vice President (Higher Education) at the National Union of Students (NUS), and the former Undergraduate Education Officer at Bristol Students' Union. She's passionate about fighting for a transformative change to education with students at the centre and treated as partners in shaping what the future of education looks like. Hillary is part of a team representing 7 million students across the UK working on campaigns including decolonisation, creating a new vision for education and wider campaigns to improve the lives of students.

Day 1: Wednesday 21st October Morning Sessions



Session A - Paper: 1

Disability Inclusion at The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC)

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) is a UK government scholarship that recruits international students to undertake postgraduate studies in the UK. This paper looks at how the CSC worked with its disabled scholars to evaluate its success so far on this issue and to listen to how it could improve its work in the future.

Susie Burpee, Policy Officer, Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and **Will Bramwell**, Evaluation Officer

Session B - Paper: 2

CARE TO GO HIGHER CPD: Equipping Key Influencers of Care Experienced Young People

Go Higher West Yorkshire will report on an innovative training programme for key influencers of care experienced young people; designed to improve outcomes for this under-represented group by equipping influencers to support informed decision-making. We will reflect on the programme's strategy, design, impact and implications for policy and practice.

Natalie Aldridge, Collaborative Outreach Officer, Go Higher West Yorkshire

Session C - Paper: 3

Did the Theory of Change Translate into Practice? Ten years on, Urban Scholars Alumni present their perceptions of the programme impact.

This session will demonstrate how the theory of change written (pre-programme) for the Urban Scholars intervention, led to testable hypotheses, trajectories of change and the nature of the impacts. Scholars' alumni, now in employment or Higher Education, will co-present their perceptions of programme impact with reference to the theory.

Catherina Emery, Urban Scholars Programme Co-Director, Brunel University, **Antoine Rogers**, Urban Scholars Programme Co-Director and **Carole Portman-Smith**, Urban Scholars Programme Consultant

Session D - Paper: 4

How to enhance the outcomes of commuter & mature students

Join us at the NEON conference to find out about the innovative approach UCL is taking to target and improve the student experience for our commuter and mature student populations. By partnering with student's representative of these key groups we are pioneering programs to improve their academic and social experience through a series of interventions. Join us to find out more!

Beth Craigie, Senior Policy Officer, University College London

Session E - Paper: 5

Moving to online outreach

This paper will focus on considerations of what types of outreach events will add value to the learners we work with, focusing on the mental health and wellbeing impact as well as the academic impact the pandemic has on our most at-risk learners.

Nathan Robertson, Senior Widening Access Officer, University of Derby

Day 1: Wednesday 21st October Morning Sessions



Session A - Paper: 6

Widening Access to Higher Education: Good practice in working with Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater communities: (Staff knowledge requirements and the Institutional 'Good Practice pledge')

This paper which complements other presentations to the Summit focuses on staff requirements for enhancing knowledge of Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Boater and Showmen (GTRSB) culture and support needs, and the collaboratively co-developed, evidence based 'good practice' pledge for HEIs wishing to proactively engage with students and potential students from these populations.

Margaret Greenfields, Professor of Social Policy and Community Engagement, Buckinghamshire New University and **Sherrie Smith** (MA student and Research Assistant, Gypsy, Traveller and Roma Engagement Buckinghamshire New University/GATEEssex).

Session B - Paper: 7

What I wish I would have known: learning from those with lived experience

GM Higher have recently undertaken a consultation exercise with students with lived experience to inform the development of our outreach work with care-experienced young people and learners with disabilities. This session will focus on our approach, what we found and how this has shaped our programme.

Jamie Bytheway, Operations Manager, GM Higher and **Hannah Wilson**, Outreach Team Leader, University of Salford

Session C - Paper: 8

Getting creative with evaluation: finding better ways to enable students to shape the future of widening participation work.

To realise the conference theme of enabling students to shape the future of widening access work, we need to ensure that these students are active participants within evaluations of widening participation work. In this workshop we will explore the use of creative methods to more actively involve students.

Jon Rainford, Digital Learning Development Officer, University of Bedfordshire and **Samantha Child**, Evaluation Manager, Oxford Brookes University

Session D - Paper: 9

'If they can do it, so can I', inspiring others through shared experience: mature student Learning Champions at the Lifelong Learning Centre, University of Leeds

This best practice paper focuses on the Lifelong Learning Centre's (LLC) Learning Champion scheme. These mature students volunteer to inspire others from similar backgrounds to make informed decisions about higher education. Learning Champions participate in all aspects of the LLC's outreach work with low income and low socioeconomic status adults and are key to facilitating progression of under-represented groups to higher education.

Fiona Chapel, Development Officer, Lifelong Learning Centre, University of Leeds and **Olivia Garvey**

Session E - Paper: 10

Activity Packs: Tackling the Digital Divide

The shift towards online engagement over lockdown further isolated already-disadvantaged students. To tackle this, we created self-contained activity packs for schools in our local community. We will walk you through the process of creating and distributing over 2000 packs and the challenges we faced along the way.

Holly Smeeton, Schools Engagement Intern, University of Southampton and **Josette Crispin**, Online Resources Intern

Day 1: Wednesday 21st October Morning Sessions



Session E - Paper: 11

GROWing the future of WP careers provision at Lancaster University

Launched in Oct 2019, Lancaster University's 'GROW Your Future' project is an opt-in programme of careers and employability activity for students who meet widening participation criteria. Designed through consultation with students, participants join an online peer support community and choose how they want to 'GROW' their programme.

Sue Edwards, Careers Widening Participation Manager, Lancaster University

Day 1: Wednesday 21st October Afternoon Sessions



Session A - Paper: 12

Widening Access to Higher Education: Good practice in working with Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities (Community Co-production and lived experience)

Drawing on the lived experiences of the authors this presentation will explore common barriers to HE and highlight examples of partnership working and key solutions for institutions seeking to promote equity in higher education for GRT individuals. We will highlight key findings from the emerging national GRTSB HE access and participation initiative currently in development by a small number of HE providers, community organisations and the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON).

Sherrie Smith, Research Assistant, Gypsy, Traveller and Roma Engagement, Buckinghamshire New University and **Lisa Smith**, Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and Other Travellers

Session B - Paper: 13

Themes and Reflections from the White-Water Writers Collaborative Novel-Writing Project

White Water Writers is a project which gives groups of young people the opportunity to collaboratively write and publish a novel in a single week. Analysis of three of their books and interviews with the writers suggested young people use fiction as a safe space to explore identity and ideas.

Richard Seymour, Project Officer, Higher Horizons

Session C - Paper: 14

Collaboration is key

Strong partnerships have been created between Sheffield Universities and 46 regional schools and colleges, to target young people most at risk of missing out on higher education. Forge collaborations outside of your immediate workplaces and reflect on the benefits of partnerships between school, FE and HE careers and outreach provision.

Rachel Crowder and **Caroline Hanson**, Higher Education Progression Adviser, HeppSY

Session D - Paper: 15

We are all heroes in our own narratives: Making students agents rather than subjects of widening participation

The University of Southampton are developing our new strategy for WP, and are embedding a principle of 2 way dialogue, in which to reframe WP from "how we will fix you" to "how can you help us fix the system together". This is an attempt to move away from traditional approaches to WP, which could be seen as rooted in noblesse oblige, to a more honest appraisal. The University of Southampton want to create a way of thinking about and doing WP that is authentic and honest and gives our audience true power in its development. This presentation will discuss the context behind this approach, and some of the measures they propose to put in place to make our philosophy real.

Gino Graziano, Director of Widening Participation and Social Mobility, University of Southampton

Session E - Paper: 16

A lifecycle approach to students as partners

The three NTU case studies describe projects that span the student lifecycle, and demonstrate partnership working at three levels of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) framework (2014): Consultancy, Co-creation and co-production. The projects all improve outcomes for students from under-represented groups.

Natasha Neale, Outreach Coordinator, Nottingham Trent University, **Luke Parmenter**, Widening Access and Outreach Manager, **Dr Amy Manktelow**, Project Support Officer and PA to the Director and **Peter Cassidy**, Outreach Officer

Day 1: Wednesday 21st October Afternoon Sessions



Session A - Paper: 17

Widening Access to Higher Education: Good practice in working with Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater communities (raising the profile of community voices through research)

Drawing on the stories shared by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) higher education students in a qualitative research project funded by Northumbria University, this presentation outlines practical recommendations and key challenges for those seeking to promote equity in higher education for GRT members of our communities.

Natalie Forster, Research Fellow, Northumbria University and **Martin Gallagher**, Research Assistant and PhD Candidate, Northumbria University

Session B - Paper: 18

Designing with Students – The Demonstrable Successes & the Challenges that Remain

Using Aimhigher London's 2019 "Your Future, Your Choice" programme as a case study and catalyst for discussion, this workshop will foster debate and discussion regarding best practices for organisations who work closely with students: how to manage pitfalls and what may constitute good general principles to ensure programme success.

Justine Marcham, Your Future Your Choice Project Manager, Aimhigher London and **Dr Katherine Fender**

Session C - Paper: 19

Future Flyers; Developing a sustainable partnership with primary schools

This paper will focus on how Hepp are working in partnership with primary schools to develop and co-deliver a sustainable and inclusive WP programme. We will share with delegates our innovative 'book-ended' approach, with Hepp face to face delivery of workshops complemented by school led delivery in between.

Alex Bairstow, Operations Manager, HEPP and Sam Clayton

Session D - Paper: 20

A whole institution approach to widening access and participation across the student lifecycle in a non-traditional provider

This paper will explore the development of a whole institution approach to widening access and participation across the student lifecycle. It will look at this through the lens of a provider new to regulated widening participation that was able to put in a place a clear approach without the challenges of legacy issues.

Morag Duffin, Head of Access and Participation, The University of Law

Session E - Paper: 21

European Connect - A different approach to Widening Participation

A student led research programme, designed to develop research skills and knowledge of Higher Education whilst connecting students at a time of isolation and uncertainty.

Rob Thatcher, Senior Widening Participation & Outreach Officer, University of Surrey and **Maisie Mullis**, Widening Participation & Outreach Officer

Day 1: Wednesday 21st October Afternoon Sessions



Session A - Paper: 22

A new student-led transition programme

The Access Project supports students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access top universities, through a unique combination of tuition and in-school mentoring. We work with them to make good applications, get the grades and transition to university. We are now working alongside our alumni to develop the skills students' need to succeed at university.

Alice Dee, Senior Impact Manager, The Access Project

Session B - Paper: 23

A Capability Approach to Access, Participation and Progression using the NERUPI Framework

This presentation will explain how Capability Theory relates to the NERUPI Framework and will:

- Outline the concept of Capability Theory and how relates to inequalities in HE
- Describe how Capability Theory informed the NERUPI Framework
- Explain how it avoids constructing deficit models

Annette Hayton, Senior Research Fellow, NERUPI Convenor, University of Bath

Session C - Paper: 24

Disaggregating the BAME awarding gap - understanding the Asian student experience

This paper will provide evidence and recommendations identified from an internal qualitative research project into the UK Asian student experience at a predominantly white institution.

Sarah-Louise Collins, Director of Widening Participation, University of Winchester and **Maisha Islam**, Student Engagement Research & Projects Officer

Session D - Paper: 25

Embedding Learner-Led Research and Engaging Learner Voice: A Call to Action

How might we develop sustainable models of delivery and evaluation that embed learner-led research and engage learner-voice? This paper looks back at Learner Voice Live, a TV show made by the Young Researchers and other GHWY Uni Connect students, and forward, to work that engages underrepresented groups through this approach.

Anna Woodhouse, GHWY Research & Evaluation Manager (Project), Go Higher West Yorkshire and **Janet Brown**, GHWY Research & Evaluation Officer

Session E - Paper: 26

An Engineering Transitional Summer School - Smoothing the path from further education College to University

Our engineering summer school supporting further education College to University transition and enhancing progression, achievement and retention. Co- designed with current articulation pathway students this approach has enhanced current and prospective student skills, produced measurable success and increased confidence in both student and staff partners around articulation.

Alison Jenkinson, Dean for Widening Access, Articulation and Outreach, University of Aberdeen, **Dr Sally Middleton**, Access and Articulation Manager, University of Aberdeen (First Author) and authors on Abstract, Prof **Alfred Akisanya** (School of Engineering), **Dr Euan Bain** (School of Engineering)

Day 1: Wednesday 21st October Afternoon Sessions



Session A - Paper: 27

Co-creation and Schools: Linking careers and education opportunities to the curriculum

Brightside will present learnings around co-creating bespoke mentoring projects with schools from their Schools Network pilot. The presentation will look at working with schools to understand their priorities and pupil aspirations to create tailored mentoring projects to support progress against Gatsby benchmarks, Ofsted targets and to have impact at scale.

Chris Mattinson, Partnerships Manager (Schools), Brightside

Session B - Paper: 28

Update on contextual admissions: using data to make a difference

This session will include findings from our recent work in contextual admissions, the progression gaps that exist and the development of data services to support UCAS customers.

Charlie Brown, Lead Data Scientist, UCAS and **Lauren Gaines**, Lead Data Scientist, UCAS

Session C - Paper: 29

The untold story: Impact of Covid-19 on BAME students

UCL as an institution is fully aware that there are existing systemic and systematic barriers that are directly linked to the experiences of BAME students. This session will present case studies on how the university is consistently working towards race equality and structural cultural change including both staff and students.

Madiha Sajid, Teaching & Learning Officer / Athena SWAN Forum Chair, University College London

Session D - Paper: 30

Utilising student voice to support the delivery of a widening participation knowledge curriculum.

This presentation will discuss how Aspire to HE has developed and delivered their knowledge curriculum, using student voice as a means of providing tailored content and empowering students from underrepresented backgrounds. We will explore the benefits and challenges of drawing upon student voice to shape the future of widening access.

Harriet Benwell, Aspire Engagement Officer, Aspire to HE - University of Wolverhampton and **Jo Goodman**

Session E - Paper: 31

Empowering Students to find their future by embedding Widening Participation within a school setting.

Kings College, Guildford and the University of Surrey have formally partnered to fully embed WP and future thinking within the school. We will discuss how both partners have worked to create a truly collaborative approach that puts the voice and feedback of the community at the heart of the programme.

Hannah Trott, Kings Aspirations Lead (WP Coordinator), University of Surrey and Kings College, Guildford

End of Day 1

Day 2: Thursday 22nd October
Opening Session



Time Speaker

10:00 Welcome: [Dr Graeme Atherton, Director, NEON](#)



Dr Graeme Atherton studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Trinity College Oxford and has been working in the field of education research and management since 1995. After 6 years leading Aimhigher work in London, he founded and now leads both AccessHE and NEON in the UK. Graeme holds Visiting Professorships at Amity University, London and Sunway University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He is a member of the board of the National Union of Students (NUS) and has produced over 200 conference papers, and publications.

10:05 [Eliza Kozman, Deputy Director \(Research\), TASO](#)



Eliza is Deputy Director, Research at the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO). Prior to that, she was a Senior Advisor at the Behavioural Insights Team where she conducted research with a focus on reducing inequality in education. Eliza is also undertaking a PhD at University College London where her work focuses on how role models can help tackle identity-based barriers to education. Previously, Eliza worked in higher education policy with a focus on issues relating to admissions and widening participation.

Day 2: Thursday 22nd October Morning Sessions



Session A - Paper: 32

How student shaped outreach can transform skills development

The Hallam Skills Series is a student shaped, progressive, three-year programme created to support the development of critical thinking, confidence, resilience, citizenship and self-management. In this presentation we will discuss how the student voice has shaped our approach to skills-based outreach and the ongoing impact of the programme.

Jen Lawton-Hunt, Senior Pre-16 Engagement Officer, Sheffield Hallam University & **Jayne Taylor**, Head of Student Recruitment and Widening Participation

Session B - Paper: 33

upReach launch new Assessed Virtual Internships to tackle social mobility crisis during Covid-19

upReach launched the Assessed Virtual Internships Programme in response to students from less-underrepresented backgrounds having internships, part-time work and professional work experiences being cancelled due to Covid-19. Join us to hear how we responded to the student voice to provide professional networking opportunities, and intensive training across various industries.

Liberty O'Hagan, University Partnerships Lead, upReach and **Stephanie Lieber**, Head of Programmes and Impact

Session C - Paper:34

Developing a participant informed and evidence-based outreach curriculum designed by current university students; a collaborative project.

The presentation will focus on the aims, project set-up and outcomes, with recommendations for successful and collaborative student-led outreach. The presentation will support practitioners in developing a progressive outreach curriculum, focusing on evidence and evaluation whilst putting both current and prospective students at the heart of access initiatives.

Poppy Hudghton, Student Recruitment and Widening Participation Manager, Queen Mary University of London and **Richard Boffey**, Deputy Head, AccessHE

Session D - Paper: 35

How was it for you? Evaluating outreach post-entry

This paper will outline and share early learning from a two-stage collaborative research project that has been developed by the University of Derby (UoD) and EMWPREP. In 'its early stages the project evaluates UoDs outreach programme, post-entry, once participants have transitioned into HE. It will then move on to roll out the methodology across the partnership to be applied by institutions operating in differing contexts and offering very different outreach programmes to UoD. The aim being to identify 'what works' within particular contexts and with particular groups of students.

Jo Astley, Evaluation and Evidence Manager, University of Derby and **Emma Church**, EMWPREP

Session E - Paper: 36

Delivering Rigorous Evaluation in Widening Participation: the opportunities and challenges of being a Pracademic in this context

Building on the discussion about the role of the 'Pracademic' in Higher Education, the presenters argue that the APP does demand both an academic and a practical approach to evaluation to enable maximum impact in the sector.

Jemma Basham, Strategic Lead - Access and Participation, University of Cumbria and **Dr Heather Piggott**

Day 2: Thursday 22nd October Morning Sessions



Session A - Paper: 37

Stipend Student Ambassadors: Working Together for Longer

Looking into the impact of student ambassador schemes on the university students themselves, this presentation will highlight University of Kent's unique Stipend Student Ambassador programme and what we have learnt so far to inspire others for working with partner school and college students in a more long-term and sustainable way.

Shauna-Aine O'Brien, Student Support and Development Officer, University of Kent and **Marta Almeida** (Research and Evaluation Manager)

Session B - Paper: 38

Case Study from The University of Law's BAME Advocates Scheme: The Employability Project

The BAME Advocate scheme brings student representatives from BAME backgrounds and university staff together to tackle issues faced by BAME students. The Employability Project, led by the advocates, resulted in the delivery of more inclusive careers sessions that presented practical steps and advice to BAME students aspiring to be lawyers.

The University of Law and BAME Advocates

Session C - Paper: 39

Growing skills, promoting partnership: a reflective framework for supporting the development of Widening Participation Outreach Associates

This paper reports on the creation of a framework to support the development of a team of WP Outreach Associates. It draws on the work of Kolb to explore how such a framework contributes to their participation as partners in the development and delivery of access and outreach work.

Michael Hall, Evaluation and Research Officer / Lecturer in Education, University of Winchester and **Lauren Smith-Birch**, Access and Outreach Coordinator

Session D - Paper: 40

Bringing the Learner Voice into Evaluation Methods

Brightside will present the findings of a research project undertaken with the Outreach Evaluation Hub. The project involved focus groups with young people to understand how they engage with and understand evaluation of outreach activities. The paper will also include information and guidance on cognitive testing for evaluation surveys.

Louise Jones, Learning & Development Manager, Brightside

Session E - Paper: 41

Visualising Student Survey Data: Making the Student Voice Accessible

In this presentation, we introduce our annual learner survey, its findings and how we are using Tableau to ensure this rich source of student voice data is made more accessible to practitioners across the partnership. We reflect on how this approach supports programme development.

Greg Brown, Evaluation and Data Manager, HeppSY and **Daniel Fletcher**, Evaluation and Data Officer, HeppSY



Day 2: Thursday 22nd October Morning Sessions

Session A - Paper: 42

Speaking Up for Yourself and SHE Can

Students can only share voice when they feel confident and have the skills to do so. This session is a practice best example of how to give students that voice.

Sharon Woodward-Baker, Programme Manager, HeppSY and **Joanne Slater**, School and Colleges Programme Manager and SHE Can Lead, HeppSY

Session B - Paper: 43

The New Starter Transition Programme: championing the expertise of students

New Starter Programme is an innovative partnership between University of Sheffield staff and students. The diverse team provides valuable support to students from widening participation backgrounds in their transition to University. We will share our findings, and provide guidance on how to authentically collaborate on successful WP activity.

Emma Parr, Outreach Activities Officer (Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health), The University of Sheffield

Session C - Paper: 44

Centralising the student experience in curriculum review

Overview of the process, outcomes and lessons learned from centralising the student's experiential expertise in a programme curriculum review.

Dana Maki, Senior Lecturer in Physiotherapy, Brunel University London

Session D - Paper: 45

Project-based mentoring programmes and how learner voice and rapport-building with recent graduates can influence operational delivery.

Hello Future will explore their Year 10 project-based mentoring programme and how their Graduate Intern team build rapport and learner voice into the operational delivery of the programme, allowing learners to choose their own research projects and interests such as 'How does social media influence behaviour?'

Jessica Adams, Area Officer (Carlisle & Eden), Hello Future and **Laura McAllister**

Session E - Paper: 46

Year 10 Student Engagement with the HeppSY Programme: Contact Hours and Expectation of Applying to HE

This presentation overviews longitudinal analysis conducted to investigate the association between the number of contact hours Year 10 students participated in as part of the HeppSY Uni Connect programme, and Year 11 self-reported expectation of progressing to higher education, after controlling for prior expectations and other theoretically important predictors.

Daniel Fletcher, Evaluation and Data Officer, HeppSY and **Greg Brown**, Evaluation and Data Manager, HeppSY

Day 2: Thursday 22nd October Morning Sessions



[Session A - Paper: 47](#)

[Moving beyond feedback and committees: Embracing a new digital paradigm for student created, student driven higher education](#)

Delivered by members of the VoxStudents team, including founding students and Vox Ambassadors. The presentation is accompanied by a slide deck. It explores challenges surrounding student engagement, particularly in the context of access and participation. It gives a summary of a new initiative, VoxStudents, which applies a digital co-creation and ideation management approach to empowering students to inform the future of higher education.

Emma Thomas, Managing Director, Applied Inspiration and **Harry Bishop**, Collaboration Officer, VoxStudents

[Session B - Paper: 48](#)

[From FE to HE: Creating confidence through increased student belonging](#)

In the session, we tell the story of a successful collaboration between King Edward VI College in Nuneaton and Coventry University that has encouraged students to progress to HE. This has been done through innovative teaching and support, close links between the organisations and a localised HNC provision based around the needs of the students.

Leanne de Main, Associate Dean Academic, De Montfort University and **Peter Wolstencroft**, Programme Leader for Postgraduates, Liverpool John Moores University

[Session C - Paper: 49](#)

[The WP Student Network - Embedding the Student Voice](#)

This session will aim to highlight how the student voice can be used to empower WP students at University, to influence academic engagement and gain better understanding of the challenges faced by WP Students, through the successful creation of a WP Student Network.

Amanda Bishop, WP Faculty Coordinator (SEM), University of Warwick, **Claire Edden** and **Damien Homer**, Students from our WP Student Network

[Session D - Paper: 50](#)

[It is more than just listening: the important role of student voice in the strategic mission of the University of West London](#)

This paper discusses the importance of student partnership in the design, delivery and evaluation of widening access and participation at the strategic and operational level. It examines the priority placed on involving students from underrepresented backgrounds in capturing the student voice in a meaningful way, as a measure of success; as well as in increasing widening participation at different stages of the student lifecycle.

Eirini Tatsi, Policy Officer, University of West London

[Session E - Paper: 51](#)

[How being pushed out of your comfort zone, in a non-traditional educational setting can break down the barriers to leaving home.](#)

Hello Future will explore how the Year 10 Outdoor Summer Residential, and learning in a non-educational setting, can provide a pivotal stepping stone in continued work with partners' Summer Schools, National Citizen Service and ultimately leaving their community to pursue their Higher Educational dreams.

Jack Todd, Furness Area Officer, Hello Future

With thanks to the NEON Executive Committee for chairing the sessions.



Sam Durnett, Head of Widening Participation,
University of

Mark Walmsley, Lecturer in the Humanities and Widening Participation Officer,
University of East Anglia

Jon Rainford, Digital Learning and Development Officer, University of Bedfordshire

Emma Church, Partnership Manager, EMWPREP

Mike Garnock-Jones, Director, HEPP

Dr. Hannah Merry, Higher Horizons+ Operations Manager

Sir Les Ebdon, Chair of NEON