The need for a forum on race equality emerged through the Race Equality Consultation Project and assists the University in meeting its duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA).

A series of planning meetings was held, chaired by Dr Carol-Ann Hooper, Chair of the Equal Opportunities Committee. The meetings were attended by a mix of administrative and research staff. Draft aims and objectives for the Forum were agreed (appendix 1) and approved by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act Implementation Group (RRAAIG). It is envisaged that the aims and objectives will be reviewed and refined regularly by Forum members. It is hoped that the Forum will provide a valuable opportunity for personal development. External and internal speakers will be invited to give presentations.

A university wide publicity campaign was launched to raise awareness of the Staff Race Equality Forum (appendix 2). A launch event with buffet and live music took place on 25th June 2007 and included a welcoming address from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Brian Cantor, and a speech from Rita Sanderson, Director, York Racial Equality Network (YREN).
University members who featured in the ‘Unique’ publicity campaign were invited and thanked for their participation in the University’s equality work. Despite extremely adverse weather conditions which prevented the arrival of the Equality Challenge Unit’s Chief Executive, Nicola Dandridge, the event was well attended and resulted in many staff expressing interest in becoming forum members.
Aims and Membership

1. To provide opportunities for peer networking, support and development amongst Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff.

2. To develop and maintain a University-wide network of staff interested in promoting progress and good practice in relation to equality and diversity.

3. To work towards a significant and lasting change in the culture of the University in which all members of the University community are able to participate and fulfil their potential.

4. To inform and influence the University's approach to race equality by contributing experience, expertise and ideas to the work of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act Implementation Group and Equal Opportunities Committee.

5. To contribute to the University's implementation of the General Duty and its Race Equality Policy and Action Plan and other relevant Equality policies.

6. To advise and assist in monitoring the effectiveness of equality policies and procedures.

7. To identify discrimination and recommend positive action or other initiatives to counter any potential sources of inequality.

8. To celebrate and promote the successes of a diverse range of staff and students.

Membership

Membership is open to all with an interest in race equality and diversity matters. It is proposed that the forum will meet once a term and that the first part of each meeting is for BME staff only, with the second part (possibly involving invited speakers) open to all members. It is envisaged that an email list will be established to facilitate discussion between meetings.

Linda Whiting, Secretary to the RRAAIG

12 Term to be agreed
13 Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; promote equality of opportunity; promote good race relations between people of different groups.
The University of York is setting up a Staff Race Equality Forum which will:

- inform and influence the University’s approach to race equality by contributing experience, expertise and ideas
- offer an opportunity for peer networking, support and development amongst Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Staff
- provide an important way for the University to seek the views of its diverse staff community.

The Forum will aim to meet once a term and will include occasional guest speakers who will be invited to talk about a variety of relevant topics.

The Forum is open to all staff who are committed to race equality.

For further information contact the Equal Opportunities Office Co-ordinator – equalopportunities@york.ac.uk
Telephone: 01904 434680
Web site: http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/eo/race.htm

For an invitation to our launch event click here