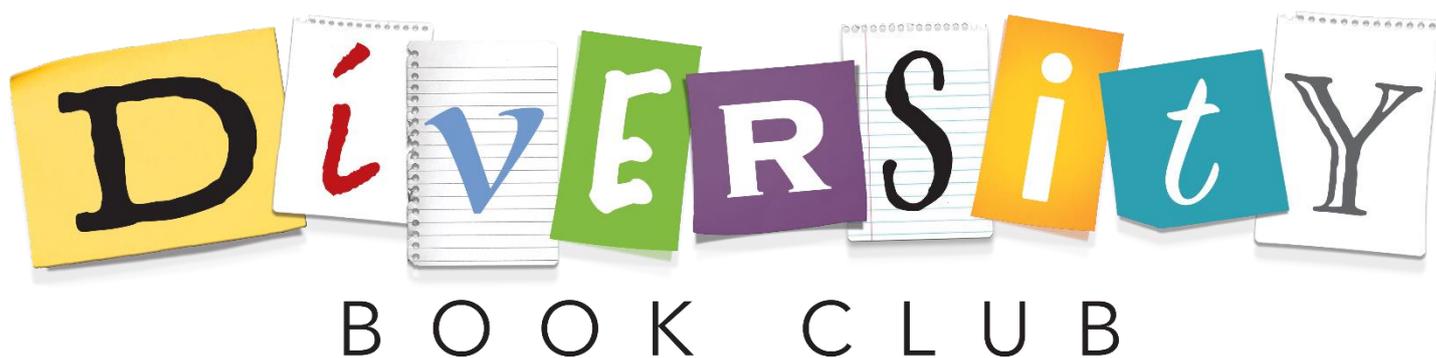


DEVELOPED BY



# WARWICK CHEMISTRY



## **RUNNING A DIVERSITY BOOK CLUB - A PRACTICAL GUIDE**

# Acknowledgments

We thank the Royal Society of Chemistry for funding this work, through the Diversity and Inclusion Fund.

We also want to acknowledge the contributions from members of Warwick Chemistry, including representatives from the Warwick Chemistry STEM and Diversity Group, Warwick Postdoctoral Society of Chemistry and Warwick ChemSoc, who made this project happen.

We are grateful to Warwick Chemistry for enabling us to pilot this initiative.

The project is led by Zoë Ayres and Bo Kelestyn, and booklet lead Alex Baker, with support and guidance from Adam Alcock, Louis Ammon, Leanne Loveitt, Ally McLoughlin, Maria Kariuki, Kathryn Murray, Tania Read and Michael Staniforth.

All Diversity Book Club materials are brought to you as open access to enable you start your own club, through the hard work of the above individuals. We ask if you use these materials to keep the Acknowledgement Section in the Booklets you use and credit the Chemistry Department of the University of Warwick.



# Introduction to the Diversity Book Club

This “Diversity Book Club Starter Pack” is specifically designed to provide guidance and resources for other Departments around the globe to enable them to create their own Diversity Book Club. Whilst this book club was specifically targeted at chemists, the materials developed are suitable for use throughout the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) communities, and beyond.

The work was funded by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) Inclusion and Diversity Team and was carried out by academics based at the University of Warwick, and external collaborators, at a range of different career stages. We are proud to have brought together undergraduates, postgraduates and staff members to work on the project. Further, several societies were involved in the creation of this Starter Pack and the running of the Diversity Book Club, including Warwick Chemistry Society (ChemSoC), Warwick Postdoctoral Society of Chemistry (PSoC) and the Diversity in STEM committee.

In order to promote inclusivity in the widest sense this Starter Pack is Open Access. We acknowledge that access to books may be a barrier to running the Book Club and therefore ask that if this is the case, please get in touch with the RSC Inclusion and Diversity Team and/or your institution Diversity and Inclusion Team to enquire about funding.

As the project was run during the global COVID-19 pandemic, in our pilot study it was run all online. This was highly effective, but we think it could also be run in-person to great effect.

This practical starter pack to running a Diversity Book Club is a **guide**. You may change anything throughout to make running the Diversity Book Club easier for you to manage - these are just suggestions.

## Project Motivation

In order to take action and improve diversity in the chemical sciences it is first essential for chemists to be aware of the diversity issues that prevail within our community. This project involved the creation of *Warwick Chemistry Diversity Book Club*, which provided opportunity for members of our chemistry department to connect, communicate and reflect on current diversity issues prevalent within the chemical sciences today. We found this to be an incredibly effective way to bring together a range of people in our department from all career stages to talk about complex diversity topics, have difficult but needed conversations, and also drive for

change within our own department. For the full outcomes of the project, please read our "Warwick Chemistry Diversity Book Club 2020-2021 Report".

## Project Summary

The Diversity Book club focuses on four specific themes: race, gender, sexual orientation and unconscious bias, with books selected focusing on each one of these key areas. These areas have been selected specifically to complement the recent diversity reports led by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) Inclusion and Diversity team.

<b>Diversity Theme</b>	<b>Corresponding Book</b>	<b>Corresponding RSC Report</b>
Race	"Superior" by Angela Saini	Diversity Landscape of the Chemical Sciences
Gender	"Invisible Women" by Caroline Criado Perez	Breaking the Barriers
Sexual Orientation	"Straight Jacket: How to be gay and happy" by Matthew Todd	Exploring the Workplace for LGBT+ Physical Scientists
Unconscious Bias	"Sway" by Dr Pragya Agarwal	Is publishing in the chemical sciences gender biased

## Target audience

The Diversity Book Club is suitable for all members of the university community; undergraduates; postgraduates; postdoctoral researchers; academic staff; technical staff and admin staff to encourage the sharing of ideas and highlight that improving diversity is essential throughout the whole department.

## How it works

The Diversity Book Club covers the four books throughout the year, covering each individual book over a period of three months. Participants of the Diversity Book Club you are invited to a 1-hour Discussion Session per month, which takes part the last week of every month. **Prior** to each session participants are asked to read a specific portion of the book, and answer questions in the Question Booklet (provided separately) **before** attending the session. These questions form the basis of the facilitated Discussion Session. The sessions are ran by Facilitators (who are volunteers) at a prescribed date and time.

## Running the Diversity Book Club

How you run your Diversity Book Club is up to you. We have however put together a range of resources to help you run your own, and have learned along the way. Running a Book Club for a year is a big task for just one person, so we recommend that you have a team of you running the Book Club throughout the year. We divided our team into the following roles:

**Project Manager:** Tasked with emailing participants with update information, including the Participant Guide, and relevant Discussion Booklets at the appropriate times.

**Facilitator Lead:** Delivers initial facilitator training. Discusses the Discussion Booklet content with facilitators ahead of time (as the content can be heavy). Ensures that facilitators have all scheduled their monthly meetings and are comfortable with the content.

**Facilitators:** Volunteers to host the Diversity Book Club sessions monthly to drive conversation and keep everyone on topic. The number of volunteers is critical to the number of sessions you can run.

**Comms Officer:** Organising the printing and distribution of advertisement posters, and general promotion of the Diversity Book Club.

# Supporting Resources

In order to enable you to run your own Diversity Book Club within your department we have made a range of resources to make it as easy as possible. All of these files are provided in a editable format so you can modify them to make them relevant to your own university/department. We ask that the RSC logo remains. They are provided to download alongside this guide. For all documents any wording that requires modifying to cater for your own institution is *highlighted in yellow*.

## **For the organiser(s) of the Diversity Book Club:**

- (1) Advertisement Posters** - Editable posters to advertise the Diversity Book Club around your own department.
- (2) Proposed timeline** - A plan of the session timings throughout the year, including when to host each session.
- (3) Introduction to each book Presentation:** A presentation with information about the author and key statistics from the RSC booklets to start each new book off.
- (4) Self-Reflective Questions:** To ask participants for feedback at the end of each book.
- (5) Email Template Examples:** To streamline your communication and provide an already outlined template for you to adapt as needed.

## **For Facilitators:**

- (6) Facilitator Guide Booklet** - Designed to provide support and guidance to the volunteers who will be hosting their specific book club session. This includes how to facilitate, how to manage conflict, and how to report an incident if a complication arises.
- (7) Facilitator Training Presentation** - A presentation version of the Facilitator Guide Booklet, to work through with the facilitators to ensure everyone is confident in their role.
- (8) Facilitator Crib Sheet** - Booklet questions for each Diversity Book Club session, with possible answers to questions to act as a guide to assist facilitation.

## **For Participants:**

- (9) Participant Guide Booklet** - A breakdown of how the Diversity Book Club runs for participants, including reporting routes in the event of conflict/a dispute, or a breach of dignity and respect during book club discussions.
- (10) Discussion Booklets** - Used to start the conversation during book club sessions with each Book Club group and for participants to answer the questions as they read the book.

# Before you start the Book Club

There are several items to consider before starting your Diversity Book Club:

- Surveying your staff and students to learn their availability to organise the Diversity Book Club Sessions where they can all attend a session (we recommend the group sizes are 4-8 people). Note: This must be organised around facilitator availability to ensure you have someone to host each session.
- GDPR compliance needs to be considered.
- If asking self-reflective questions to monitor impact, it may be prudent to consider anonymisation and/or ethical approval.
- Advertise the book club with posters (1) and email promotion (5).
- Obtaining books needs to be done ahead of time. If the volume of books needed cannot be afforded, we recommend buying all four books and having different groups read different books and rotating through the books throughout the year between groups (this enables less books to be required for purchase). You may also want to consider other forms of media such as e-books and audiobooks.
- Consider whether you will host your book club online or in-person.
- Distribute Facilitator Training Booklet (6) and run Facilitator Training Session (7).
- Consider what you would like your “Positive Action Session” at the end of the book to look like. What would you like to achieve? (Note: Our focus was improvements that could be made to our department based on the diversity theme we covered)
- Think about book distribution - will the books be collected at a central point or posted to participants?

# During your Diversity Book Club

There are several items to consider during your Diversity Book Club:

- Check in with your facilitators and ask for feedback on how the sessions are going
- Remind participants of support services and what is available (some of the topics covered are tough)

- Remember that conflict may happen, and that this needs to be dealt with formally where necessary.

## Creating your Diversity Book Club Schedule

Below is an example of the structure we used to run our Diversity Book Club. We found this format worked well to keep everyone engaged. The documents required to run the Diversity Book Club are available to download alongside this document.

<b>Month 1</b>		
Week number	Organiser Activities	Participant Reading Assignment
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction to Book 1 presentation to participants (3)</b></li> <li>• Distribution of Question Booklets to participants (10)</li> <li>• Send email to facilitators to remind them to schedule end of month Discussion Booklet meetings</li> </ul>	Participants Reading First Section of Book 1
Week 2		
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of Facilitator Crib Sheet (8)</li> <li>• Pre-meeting to go through Crib Sheet answers with facilitators (optional informal chat)</li> <li>• Send reminder to all participants about Discussion Booklet Meeting next week</li> </ul>	

Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Booklet Meeting for First Section of Book (meeting to discuss book so far, hosted by facilitators)</li> </ul>	
<b>Month 2</b>		
Week number	Organiser Activities	
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of Question Booklets to participants (10)</li> <li>• Send email to facilitators to remind them to schedule end of month Discussion Booklet meetings</li> </ul>	Participants Reading Second Section of Book 2
Week 6		
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of Facilitator Crib Sheet (8)</li> <li>• Pre-meeting to go through Crib Sheet answers with facilitators (optional informal chat)</li> <li>• Send reminder to all participants about Discussion Booklet Meeting next week</li> </ul>	
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Booklet Meeting for Second Section of Book (meeting to discuss book so far, hosted by facilitators)</li> </ul>	
<b>Month 3</b>		
Week number	Organiser Activities	

Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of Question Booklets to participants (10)</li> <li>• Send email to facilitators to remind them to schedule end of month Discussion Booklet meetings</li> </ul>	Participants Reading Third Section of Book 1
Week 10		
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of Facilitator Crib Sheet (8)</li> <li>• Pre-meeting to go through Crib Sheet answers with facilitators (optional informal chat)</li> <li>• Send reminder to all participants about Discussion Booklet Meeting next week</li> </ul>	
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Booklet Meeting for Third Section of Book (meeting to discuss book so far, hosted by facilitators)</li> <li>• Distribute self-reflective questions to participants (4).</li> <li>• <b>Positive Action Session organised to discuss learnings from book and what could be improved in the department with all participants</b></li> </ul>	

This three month plan can then be repeated for the other books accordingly.  
Please note this structure is just a guide and can be modified to suit your needs.

## Remember:

- The main aim of the Diversity Book Club is to start off conversations about diversity that are not often happening within the university setting.
- Conflict may arise due to difficult conversations - please refer to your university policy on handling this.
- Planning a project on this scale means that timings may go wrong at some point. This is normal.
- Sessions can be rearranged for increased participation if needed (sometimes work gets in the way of people attending).
- You are making a difference by running your Diversity Book Club!
- You do not have to do a full year's worth of the Diversity Book Club - you could chose to focus on one of the books.

*On behalf of all team members that were involved in the development of the Warwick Diversity Book Club material, we wish you all the best with your own book club. For any queries, please email Dr Zoë Ayres at [zjayres@gmail.com](mailto:zjayres@gmail.com).*