

Roundtable with Laila El-Metoui presented by the Culture & Ethnic Diversity Network



On Thursday 21st March 2024 the Culture & Ethnic Diversity Network hosted a roundtable event with external guest speaker Leila El-Metoui in honour of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The call covered topics such as race & ethnicity intersectionality, cultural taxation and the wheel of power and privilege.

What is Intersectionality?

Intersectionality examines how multiple aspects of our social identities interact to create unique patterns of oppression.

Everyday approaches to building equality tend to focus on one type of discrimination and then work to address only that specific concern. However, many forms of discrimination such as racism, sexism and ageism might be present and active at the same time in a person's life.

For example, the career of a young, white, and able-bodied woman might improve with gender equality protections whilst an older, black, disabled lesbian may continue to be hampered by racism, ageism, ableism, and homophobia in the workplace.

Intersectionality is about understanding and addressing all potential roadblocks to an individual or group's well-being. But it's not as simple as just adding up oppressions and addressing each one individually. Racism, sexism, and ableism exist on their own but when combined, they compound and transform the experience of oppression. Intersectionality acknowledges that unique oppressions exist but is also dedicated to understanding how they change.

Intersectionality means listening to others, examining our own privileges, and asking questions about who may be excluded or adversely affected by our work. As important, it means taking measurable action to invite, include and centre the voices and work of marginalised individuals.

What is Cultural Taxation?

Cultural Taxation is a concept that describes the additional burdens and expectations placed on individuals from marginalised or minority cultural backgrounds to educate others about their culture, often without compensation or recognition.

For example, being the only Arab in your office and being relied upon to provide insights and explanations about your culture.

This can cause added stress, emotional labour and time demands, which can impact on job satisfaction and well-being.



Intersectionality Video

<https://youtu.be/O1isIM0ytkE?si=CNLNpauAqkie6BKN>

What is Privilege?


The word privilege refers to unearned advantages people may experience simply because they are – or are perceived as being – part of a particular group.

For example, when hiring managers make assumptions about a candidate based on the name or location of the school they attended, it can lead to privilege based on socioeconomic background.

Remember privilege isn't bad. To recognise that you may have experienced privilege doesn't mean that you did something wrong – it simply means that another person's bias led to you being advantaged in some way. However, failing to recognise that privilege exists is a problem. We cannot overcome the biases that leads to privilege – and the inequity that results from this – until it is recognised for what it is.

Where do you sit on the wheel of Power & Privilege?

It is important to reflect on your own privilege as this will help you to recognise your own biases and enable you to be more open to listening to others about their view of the world. This will contribute to the creation of a more inclusive work environment.

 **Privilege Walk Video**
<https://youtu.be/hD5f8GuNuGQ?si=sWg4lueHL-9bwPVG>

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE

