

# CONTINUING THE ANTI-RACISM JOURNEY SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

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Presented at the IASW Launch of the Anti-racism strategy  
2024-2027

# Video clip- hidden figures

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayplHx2iGQs>



Dr Prospera Tedam Friday 23rd February 2024

# On the occasion of the launch

IASW Anti-Racism Strategy  
2024-2027

'Continuing the Journey: The next phase of anti-racism initiatives in Irish social work' .



- Building upon the initial strategy launched 3+ years ago.
- 4 strategic goals- *Education and CDP*
- Reflections on where you are now?
- Is everyone onboard or a self selecting few?

# Revisiting my presentation in 2021

As we remember George Floyd - 4 years on....what have we achieved and what are our hopes for the next 4 years ( or the lifetime of the strategy)



# The role of education

*'Education has a central role in creating new values and attitudes and provides us with important tools for addressing deep-rooted discrimination and the legacy of historical injustices'*

*(Ruteere, 2013)*

*“We do not see what we have not  
learned to see”*

*(Kaschak 2011, p.8).*

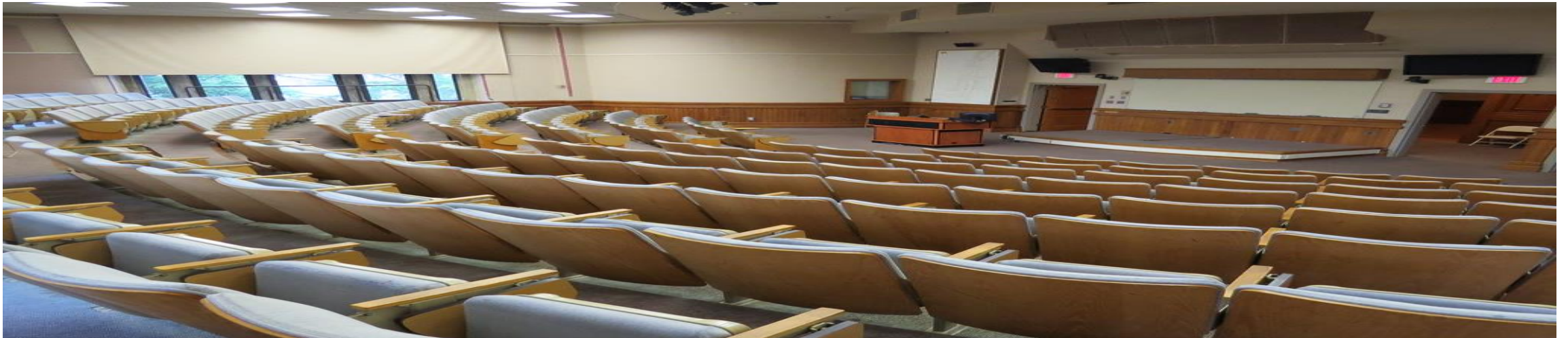
# Education can enhance...Racial Literacy

- Racial literacy is an anti-racist strategy and is about **learning** rather than *knowing* (Gunier, 2004)
- It is the ability to recognize, respond to, and counter the role of racism in society. Racially literate people understand the reality of how race impacts relationships, education, wealth, social status, cultural development, and personal identity.
- Racial literacy requires work in unpacking topics, engaging in difficult conversations, and examining policies.
- Racial literacy allows us to recognise racist policy or attitudes, respond to them, and eradicate them from our communities even when we are not the group being discriminated against.

(Twine, 2004)

# In the SW classroom

- 1) 'Take down the signs'- visible and invisible which serve as barriers to learning about race and racism in the SW classrooms.
- 2) What and how we teach (curriculum reform)
- 3) Inclusive classroom spaces- ensure all voices are heard and all students have the opportunity to participate.





# In the SW classroom

- Culturally responsive pedagogy
- Use the classroom to discuss and debate *'misinformation and disinformation messages which are on social media'*.
- Experts by experience as visiting lecturers to University courses (be sensitive to the emotional trauma experienced from recounting experiences of racism)

*See Tedam & Cane (2022) for additional strategies*

<https://bristoluniversitypressdigital.com/view/journals/crsw/10/2/article-p260.xml>

# Practice Curriculum

- ✓ Practice teachers, supervisors and everyone involved in supporting the training of social work students (eg Organisations) must be invested in the anti-racism strategy.
- ✓ Practice teachers/ practice supervisors- how do you support and enable students to *identify, challenge, and disrupt* behaviours, values and structures that perpetuate racism.

# Research from England

*'I would have liked to hear [on the pre-qualifying course] more about how to challenge racism as a practitioner. Because you're the professional and if you go to somebody's home for an assessment and they're being racially abusive to you, how do you deal with that because you have to be professional at the same time' (Cane & Tedam, 2023)*

'George Floyd has obviously brought things to the fore and made us talk about this more. It is so sad and disappointing that, even in social work, that this wasn't done before. It's not like it's just happened. We're social workers, we're meant to be addressing inequality in society and promoting best outcomes for people. (Tedam & Cane, 2022)

# Continuous Professional Development

- What CPD have you undertaken in the last 12 months or since qualifying on anti-racist practice?
  - Self Directed or Agency requirement?
  - Are these attendance only or assessed?
  - Are these discussed in supervision? Why or why not?
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- SW Agencies and Organisations can create repositories on their L&D webpages of various tools, literature and information about anti racism.- self paced and self directed learning.



- We need to take individual /personal initiative and accountability.
- The importance of allies.
- Without our action, this strategy is just a piece of paper.

# To conclude....

'This new Strategic Plan challenges all of us to **do more** and to **do better**, if we are to progress the goal we set in 2021:

(Vivian Gieran, IASW Chairperson)

What will **YOU** do more of? What will **YOU** do better?

Anti-racism is not a one off activity- it is active, deliberate and requires persistence and continuity.

# My personal pledge...

The saying goes ' you need a seat at the table to influence decisions that affect you'.

**HOWEVER.....**

What if I don't like the table or the room? What if I don't want to be squashed around a table that had not made allowances for me? I wont bring my own chair to be squashed in....What if.... What if....

I will create an entirely new room, with my own table.... designed to my taste... And invite like minded people to join me at MY table.....

# References

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