

Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy



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Contributors	Dr Daniel Baker



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1. Executive Summary

This report captures the work for the QR Strategic Priorities fund which is aimed to support research activity in support of evidence-based policy making. The project aimed to shine a light on marginalised communities and attempted to bring those voices to the forefront and into the university. "Welcoming Culture in Universities- Awareness of Gypsy Roma Traveller's



culture” is new research activity working to bring together Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) and non-GRT academics and artists in partnership with policymakers, particularly to better understand local, regional or national challenges. The project linked policy concerns regarding GRT students in Higher Education and enabled the research team to further existing research that is examining GRT in HE activities - e.g. scaling up the preliminary report, working on developing a network and hosting a symposium and an exhibition on the Coventry University campus. The findings directly feed into a follow up to the GRT in HE report that was drafted with Baroness Whitaker from Westminster in November 2019 and led by Professor Margaret Greenfields from Buckinghamshire New University (BUCKS) who is a professor of Social Policy & Community Engagement and director of the Institute for Diversity Research, Inclusivity, Communities and Society (IDRICS).

The main activities included in the project consisted of a one-day symposium and two art exhibitions which allowed the research team to draw upon its institutional expertise given the networks which already exist, for example working with NGOs, other UK universities and collaboration with local academics and artists. The project provided more evidence in relation to the challenges facing young people before they can begin to access FE or HE and this was fed directly to policy being rolled out with Baroness Whitaker. Initially, only one exhibition was proposed but in the end two exhibitions were delivered. The initial exhibition was *Ex Libris*, a visual collection created by British Gypsy artist Daniel Baker and played with the tension that exists at the university. The second exhibition, *Generations* was curated by Rosa Cisneros and brought together local photographer Antony Weir and the Roma Project charity. The reasoning behind the two exhibitions will be discussed further into this report. The exhibitions include films, images and cultural heritage artefacts from the GRT community members involved in the project and also feed into thinking around how to make universities more culturally welcoming to marginalised communities.

In summary, this report captures details regarding the Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy project and outlines the importance of bringing GRT and non-GRT together and the role arts and culture play in supporting thinking around access to higher education. Also, careful consideration was placed on the visualisations that are associated with the GRT community. Special attention and care went into the two social media campaigns that were linked to the project. The PI produced material that serves as a counternarrative to the erroneous images that often circulate social media and mainstream channels. With this in mind, three films were created, and one aligned with the international Women’s Day Campaign *#Each for Equal*. The films and project were picked up the BBC- Coventry, Coventry Telegraph, WHAT’S ON Warwickshire among other academic and cultural heritage sectors. The project gave life to one traditional academic output that is currently under consideration for the Critical Romani Studies Journal.



2. Introduction:

The Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE) located within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities is one of the University's flagship Research Centres with an international profile for its research. C-DaRE specialises in an inclusive interdisciplinary approach to diverse forms of artistic and scholarly research in dance supported by new approaches to documentation, analysis and dissemination of choreographic creativity. C-DaRE embraces leading edge research developments including digitization and new technologies in dance, reflexive enquiry into embodied practices, collective and political action, cultural value and the expanded choreographic field. In addition, C-DaRE also seeks to investigate and critique the legal frameworks that can be used to support and empower the culture and creative sector in the new digital economy.

C-DaRE is a world leading research centre that conducts research into a wide range of dance activities, many in collaboration with professional dance artists and organisations and much of it in partnership with other disciplines including (for example) cognitive psychologists, anthropologists, law experts, cultural heritage experts and programmers. The Centre's strengths lie in the digital publication and transformation of dance, the analysis of dance, dance pedagogies and research-informed teaching, practice-as-research, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and inclusive dance practices and pedagogies. In addition to COVUNI leading on several EU projects, the Principle Investigator (PI) for this project, Rosa Cisneros, is a female Roma research fellow who has also successfully carried out projects at C-DaRE as well as through the Roma Women's Association Drom Kotar Mestipen (based in Spain). Those European projects have been recognised by the European Commission through different awards such as Gold Award Grundtvig, Success Stories or Good Practice Examples. Rosa is involved in various EU initiatives which aim to make education accessible to vulnerable groups and ethnic minorities and sits on various Boards: Gypsy Roma Traveller Police Association (UK), Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Women's Association (Spain) and the EU's Human Trafficking Platform (Brussels). She is also an independent artist, dancer, curator and teacher who has organised various festivals and exhibitions. Rosa also collaborates closely with the University of Barcelona's Centre for Research on Theories and Practices for Overcoming Inequalities (CREA) and completed her PhD in Sociology. This information serves as a backdrop to frame the strength and expertise that lies within the team. This extensive network underpins the research and also allowed for the project's activities to have reach and engage policy figures, both locally, nationally and at a European level.

Discrimination against Roma has been pointed out by the most relevant organisations and institutions that are working for Roma inclusion (Council of Europe, 2012; European Commission, 2011; FRA European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2009; Vermeersch, 2012). Nowadays, the major part of the estimated 10-12 million Roma who are living in Europe, are facing prejudices and stereotypes, intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion in their daily lives. They are marginalized and live in very poor socio-economic conditions



(European Commission, 2011). Also, harmful stereotypes of Roma persist in our society. Anti-Roma sentiments have increased all across Europe. A 2015 Pew Research Center poll shows that 86% of Italians, 60% of French people, more than a third of the Spanish, British and Germans expressed negative sentiments against the Roma. Prejudice also manifests through discriminatory actions. A 2015 EC Communication underlined 58% in Slovakia, 45% in Hungary, 35% in Greece, 33% in Czech Republic, 29% in Bulgaria and 26% in Romania are segregated in educational settings. Only in the case of Roma women, there is research that has already been shown in depth the intersectionality of different forms of discrimination Roma women face, as Roma, women, socially- economically disadvantaged persons, and frequently as people with low educational levels (Sordé, Serradell, Puigvert, & Munte, 2013, Hancock, 2000; Sordé, 2006). Also, in the case of Roma children and youth, previous studies have pointed out the special exclusion of this vulnerable group, as young people and as Roma (European Parliament, 2015).

A deeper investigation is necessary because meta narratives that exist are misrepresenting the GRT communities. Therefore, art and visuals were important to this project as we aimed to co-create work and outputs that are more accurate of the GRT realities and highlight more embodied narratives that directly link to identity. Dance and art is a way in which particular communities express their identity and sense of belonging, their histories, shared memories and experiences, values and social structures. Through the findings from the symposium and the two exhibitions we were able to communicate directly the wants and needs of each community, and explicitly pinpoint the challenges faced by certain GRT community members when trying to access higher education. The art exhibitions allow for the communities to have a platform where vulnerable groups were coordinated and allowed to connect with other members from their own communities, as well as diverse groups, and to stake a claim to visually and artistically create narratives that informed local and national politicians. Specifically, the objectives were to ensure that policy-makers were engaging with research. Below is a concrete list of objectives.

OBJECTIVES:

- Extend existing related research activity and support HE institutions in addressing particular social issues facing different vulnerable communities at a local and national level;
- Facilitate the use of existing research and the exchange of knowledge between universities, artists and policymakers
- Carryout events and activities aimed at improving the dialogue between universities, artists and policymakers;
- Activity and training to better equip academics, including postgraduate researchers and early career researchers, to communicate effectively with policymakers;
- Partnerships and collaborations aimed at supporting evidence-based policy making;
- The exchange of people best practices;
- Curate an exhibition that reflects the data and display this in an artistic manner within the university environment.



3. Methodology:

Through Critical Communicative Methodology (CCM) and participatory and reflective research methods, *GRT in HE-Influencing Policy* has carefully considered the ethical implications of working with these groups. The project sought and gained ethical clearance in February 2020- please see appendices for the ethics certificate. Each participant was given a project information sheet and consent form, and they were asked to sign the forms before contributing to the research.

The project was designed to encourage participants to reflect within themselves what their culture or cultures are and what parts of these influence their identity and sense of the world. CCM sees all participants as active agents capable of transforming their social, political and personal environments. CCM was ideal for this research as this process of co-creating work was welcomed by the GRT communities as they have often been overlooked or excluded in previous research studies. The PI has significant experience of working with marginalised groups so brings a deep understanding of the ethical implications of working in a participatory co-design way in this context.

4. Symposium:

The one day symposium was co-convened with Professor Margaret Greenfields, Professor of Social Policy & Community Engagement and director of the Institute for Diversity Research, Inclusivity, Communities and Society (IDRICS) at Buckinghamshire New University (BUCKS) and her Roma research assistant Sherrie Smith. The two were invited to be part of the project as Prof. Greenfields held the first Roundtable meeting with the House of Lords in September 2019. Greenfields authored the official "Report of a Roundtable Meeting on Access to Higher Education for members of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma (GTR) communities" with Baroness Whitaker and also Gill Brown, special advisor to the project. The September 2019 roundtable was an opportunity for experts to share their lived experience of the challenges facing Gypsy, Traveller and Roma (GTR) and other travelling communities entering into Higher Education. The report commented on the fact that GRT communities have the worst outcomes of any ethnic grouping in terms of health, housing, and education. These communities also continue to face significant levels of racism and prejudice both in society and from official institutions and agencies. Access to higher education offers a way through these injustices.

For this project, the symposium brought together GRT and non-GRT academics, artists, Roma NGO directors, charities, local organisations, policy makers and disabled members from the GRT community. The group was intimate and the guest speakers shared their experiences of either studying, accessing and/or working in higher education. There were also local charities that spoke of their experiences and the positive or the challenges members from the GRT community face in accessing HE. Below is the programme for the day and the speaker bios are located in the appendices.



Symposium: (Programme)

'Welcoming Culture in Universities- Awareness of Gypsy Roma Traveller's culture'

9.30-10.00: Coffee Reception

10:00-10:20: Welcome from C-DaRE

10:20-11:00: Overview from Prof. Margaret Greenfields, Sherrie Smith and Gill Brown (Baroness Aide)

11:00-12:15: Session 1: Dr Alex Marinov and Terezia Rostas

12:15-14:00: Lunch at ICE

14:00-15:00: Session 2: Dr Daniel Baker and Isaac Blake from Romani Cultural and Arts Company

15:00-16:30: Session 3 Policy and GRT in HE workshop led by Prof. Greenfields and Rosa Cisneros

16:30-17:00: Coffee Break

17:00-17:30: Closing Remarks

4.1 Morning Session- GRT academics and artists take the stage:

For the morning session, there were a series of academics, artists and directors of cultural heritage organisations that explained their personal stories and testimonies, the work they do with the community and at a political level. Gill Brown, Prof Greenfields and Sherrie Smith all had space in the morning dedicated to framing the political component of their previous work and the next steps as a result of the symposium in Coventry.



Figure 01: Isaac Blake, Director of Romani Cultural and Arts Company
Photo credit: Reel Master Productions



Figure 02: GRT and non-GRT academics and artists discussing access to higher education
Photo credit: Reel Master Productions

There were a total of 20 attendees and mixed-methods were used throughout the day. Group activities, 20-minute presentations and, question and answer type set ups allowed the varied participants to interact and engage in egalitarian dialogue. There were 6 questions that were guiding the discussions and those can be found below.

Question set:

- 1) What helped/encouraged/supported on your education journey?
 - a. Both in relation to deciding to enter higher education and whilst studying



- 2) *What (if anything) acted as a barrier/put you off the idea of higher education?*
 - a. *During school, while studying in higher education, or in community settings*
- 3) *Were there any role models, staff members with awareness (or who were totally lacking in awareness?) or visibility of community members or positive image in the institution etc that support your academic journey?*
 - a. *What did these people or institutions do?*
- 4) *How universities be more inclusive of your/the GTR community?*
- 5) *Does art play a role in making a university more inclusive? If yes, how so?*
- 6) *What three questions/comments or recommendations would you like us to take back to universities who wanted to make higher education more inclusive of GTR communities?*

These questions have gone on to be re-used by the BUCKS research team for their national survey in circulation at the time that this report is being written. That survey will directly feed into conversations with the House of Lords that is considering the tone, structure and shape of a “GRT Pledge” and HE Network. More of what those initiatives will look like can not be discussed at this point.

4.2 Lunch- Sharing a meal:

Lunch was an important aspect of the day and a lot of thought and care was put into organising this part of the project. Networking and ensuring that everyone attending felt comfortable and “at home” was crucial and also was in the spirit of workshop, how to welcome GRT culture to the university. The PI hired a local Roma family to cater the event to provide some traditional Roma food and also invited her, the family and extended family to attend the event. They were involved in the project in a number of ways- via the symposium as well as the photographic exhibitions. One comment from a participant said “home cooked traditional Roma Romanian lunch and the amenities and catering were very hospitable” (participant, 2020). And another woman said “it was very family/culturally themed” (participant, 2020).

4.3 International Women’s Day campaign video- #EachforEqual #IWD2020:

Over lunch, the participants were invited to be part of a film the PI was creating for the 8th of March, International Women’s Day and invited all delegates to contribute to the campaign



video. That video was part of the International campaign #EachforEqual #IWD2020 work that invited people to make the same gesture and then share what gender equality means to them. Both GRT and non-GRT contributed and male and females also contributed. The final film was shared on social media channels as well as part of another EU Erasmus+ project the PI is coordinating. Below are examples of the images that were included in the film. It is important to note that this campaign film also included individuals from Greece, Spain, Hungary and the UK. The age of the participants ranged from 12- 78 years of age and was widely disseminated across the UK and Europe. At the time of writing the analytics for the film say that the film was viewed 144 times by individuals in 6 different countries.



Figure 03: Terezia Rostas, director of CYFP & MA student at Hallam University (Sheffield, UK)

Photo credit: Reel Master Productions



Figure 04: Dr Aleksander Marinov from St. Andrews University (Dundee, Scotland)

Photo credit: Reel Master Productions



Figure 05: Scarlett Smith, GRT youth preparing GCSE (London)
Photo credit: Reel Master Productions



Figure 06: Screenshot of film for the International Women's Day Campaign film
Photo credit: Reel Master Productions

4.4 Afternoon Session- The Pledge:

The afternoon workshop led by Prof Greenfields and Sherrie Smith from BUCKS University prompted a round table discussion. This led to very specific task that was crucial to feeding into the political components of the research activity. Participants were asked specific



Given this major change, it was important to the PI that the university and the wider Coventry community see the local GRT and engage local and national policy makers, as was outlined in the original brief. With this in mind, the PI decided to resurrect an exhibition she curated in 2015 for Romani Week and quickly organised and curated a new photographic exhibition, entitled *Generations*. The next section of this report will describe the two exhibitions that were curated.

5. Exhibitions:

The two exhibitions that were curated by the PI engaged several key stakeholders and ensured that the art exhibitions were another way to engage policy-makers with the research taking place at Coventry University's C-DaRE. The first exhibition *Ex Libris* was created by Dr Daniel Baker, a Romani Gypsy artist, researcher, and curator. Originally from Kent, now based in London. His work is exhibited internationally and can be found in collections across the globe. Baker earned a PhD in 2011 from the Royal College of Art, with his dissertation, "Gypsy Visuality: Gell's Art Nexus and its Potential for Artists," after previously earning a MA in Sociology/Gender and Ethnic Studies from Greenwich University, and a BA (Hons) in Fine Art from Ravensbourne College of Art and Design.

The second exhibition *Generations* included Antony Weir, a local photographer with a varied portfolio encompassing landscape, gig and portrait photography. He curates the 'Weir archive', the collection of his grandfather John's life's work in photos, many of which focus upon Coventry's post-war transformations. Sixty years later, Antony shares the same impetus to document the city and its people. *Generations* collaborated with the local charity Roma Project¹ and the local Romanian Roma families living and working in Coventry. The charity has worked with the PI on several other projects and they have a close relationship. Due to this existing relationship, the several parties were able to very quickly organise a photo exhibition and mobilise the families to get involved. The photo exhibition was scheduled to open April 9th, 2020 at the Belgrade Theatre² but due to the pandemic, this was rescheduled. Further into the writing I will expand on each of the exhibitions and artists involved.

The two exhibitions engaged a variety of participants and each played a role in pushing the discourse around the way Gypsy Roma and Travellers access higher education. *Ex Libris* was work by a Romani Gypsy who explored the tensions the project is looking to unpick. The work, even though it was not shown at BUCKS the fact that the show was planned encouraged several employees and visual art students to self-identify as members of the GRT community. Once they learned that Daniel Baker's work and about the project, they approached the

¹ Roma Project Charity: <http://www.theromaproject.org/>

² Belgrade Theatre: <https://belgrade.co.uk/>



BUCKS research team to share that they were GRT and felt uncomfortable to share that side of their identity.

5.1 *Ex Libris* Exhibition by Dr Daniel Baker:

Daniel Baker has contributed to numerous exhibitions, held various residencies, and curated several commissions. He previously worked as an exhibitor and consultant for the first and second Roma events at the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia – “Paradise Lost” and “Call the Witness,” which took place during the 52nd and 54th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, respectively. In 2018, after hosting an open call for curators, an international jury consisting of Professor Dr. Ethel Brooks, Tony Gatlif, Miguel Ángel Vargas, and ERIAC management selected him to curate the Roma Collateral Event. Baker’s work examines the role of art in the enactment of social agency through an eclectic practice that interrogates contemporary art discourse and its social implications via the reconfiguration of elements of the Roma aesthetic.

For this project, the PI asked Baker to discuss his work and to contribute to this final report. The following sections were provided by Baker.

Artworks: The *Ex Libris* exhibition is presented in support of the GRT in HE project and features a collection of works titled *Mirrored Library*. The exhibition is comprised of fifty hand-painted and gilded panels of varying book-shaped sizes plus twelve printed images which narrate the process of conceptualisation and making. The show also includes a wall-based text work which focuses on the written content of the books in question. A selection of dried heather flowers will also be displayed. Each book is made from Perspex and bears the title of one of fifty books from my collection on the subject of Gypsies. Each title is painted in black enamel in the reverse glass painting technique and gilded with silver leaf to produce a mirrored reflective picture surface.



Figure 08: *Mirrored Books* various dimensions, enamel and silver leaf on clear acrylic



Concept: The gilded books that comprise the Mirrored Library explore the mechanisms of access to knowledge and the barriers that discourage engagement in knowledge production. The project takes as its starting point the experience of being the mute subject of discourse rather than the generator of knowledge—of being a subject trapped inside a book. Self-reflection is used as a literal as well a metaphorical device within the artworks to encourage the viewer to inhabit the artworks/books—to see themselves within the context of discourse; as part of the narrative of our time and times to come. In so doing the work aims to highlight questions of Gypsy visibility within the wider societal landscape and thereby foster a sense of the possibilities of belonging. The Mirrored Library is intended to create an immersive / experiential shift from subjection to agency; the kind of agency that might be accessed by engaging with the opportunities available through Higher Education.

Background: The Mirrored Library series began with a chance encounter with a book. In particular an early eye-catching edition of *Billy Budd* by the American author Herman Melville written in 1888 and published in 1924 in England. Once acquired the book lay on my bookshelf unread for many years. In the home where I grew up books were rarities. Not because their ownership was discouraged but because my parents standards of literacy meant that books never really figured in our domestic landscape. What use is a book if you can't read it? This was the question that underpinned the project.

When invited to take part in an artist residency at the Centre for Drawing at the University of Arts London my thoughts turned to the unread book and I set about reading it. The main character's illiteracy and his consequent inability to read his own story as presented within the pages of the book brought me back to the question of what other uses we might find for a book if we cannot read it? I settled upon flower pressing. Heather flowers to be precise which I placed at random between the pages of fifty books from my own collection— all books on the subject of Gypsies.

Through the process of making the work I became aware that the physical act of pressing the flowers within the pages acted as an eloquent metaphor for the ways in which the contents of those same books impress themselves upon the lives of my Romani community. They shape our sense of self and identity often with little input from us—the subject matter of these books.



Figure 09 & 10: Mirrored Book enamel and silver leaf on clear acrylic and Mirrored Library reference books

Resonance with GRT in HE project: The Mirrored Library is intended to explore the mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion within the processes of knowledge production and prompt dialogue regarding access to education on a broad scale including that of Higher Education. Exploring such ideas through art can enable us to address sensitive/divisive issues in ways which more directly academic or political vehicles may not. This way of presenting ideas/arguments has the potential to more readily convey meaning through the conceptual and the experiential therefore perhaps bypassing blocks to understanding.

My experience of Higher Education helped me realise that I could have a say in how my life was documented and therefore how my community and our experiences were perceived and ultimately understood—that my voice could join the many that had gone before to temper received knowledge with the voice of experience. Higher Education gave me a vehicle and vocabulary through which to challenge the status quo and to add my own account from my own perspective. Others can teach us a great deal about who we are but reflection upon our own experience is where our true strength lies.

By subverting and reformulating the symbols and preoccupations of Romani visual culture as identified through my Doctoral research into Roma aesthetics, my work inquires into the often discriminatory relationship between marginal artistic practices and those that form the elite centre ground. This in turn acts as a way of examining relationships between marginalised peoples and mainstream society.



The aim of my art practice is to interrupt expectation to push toward new insight. By emphasising the universality of the Roma experience my work seeks to highlight the widespread excision of Roma histories from local, national and international narratives and in doing so enact the potential for a these narratives to be interrupted and reset.

5.2 Generations by Dr Antony Weir:

Antony Weir is a Coventry gem that was born and raised in the city of Coventry. Weir and the PI have collaborated on several projects that involve local Roma families. The *Generations* photographic exhibition was scheduled to open April 9th, 2020 the day after International Romani Day, but was postponed until later in the year given the COVID-19 pandemic. The PI has a closer relationship with the Belgrade Theatre and so it was decided that there would be an opening event on the 9th which would invite Romanian ambassadors, local and national MPs as well as individuals from the House of Lords. The PI was confident she could pull these politicians together as they have attended her events and art exhibitions in the past, and her research is of interest to the political community.

The exhibition, called *Generations* was to be the second iteration of *Family Matters / Chestiuni de familie* a collaboration with local photographer Antony Weir, Rosa Cisneros from C-DaRE and the Roma Project. The first exhibition, *Family Matters* was first held in Coventry as part of the university's Romani Week celebrations in 2015. That exhibition was co-created with the families and was part of a wider initiative to bring the families to the university and to help them feel that they belong. Weir's exhibition went on to appear at the Drom Kotar Mestipen's³ Roma Women's Congress in Barcelona in 2018, and was also part of the one-day symposium/workshop on GRT people in Higher Education which took place at Coventry University's ICE Building on Thursday 27 February, 2020. Below is an excerpt of the thirty-five photos from the exhibition. What these three panels highlight are the diversity and the mix of the types of photos. The exhibition allowed for the families to get behind the camera and take some photos.

³ Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Women's Association (Barcelona, Spain):
<https://dromkotar.org/>



Figure 11: Panels from the (2015) *Family Matters / Chestiuni de familie* photo exhibition

By Antony Weir

The PI relied on her networks and consulted the Belgrade Theatre located in Coventry to support this project and to host the second iteration of the *Family Matters / Chestiuni de familie* (2015) photo exhibition, which was retitled to *Generations* (2020). The Belgrade Theatre agreed to host a second iteration of the photographic exhibition which would have thirty-five photos and also feature the GRT in HE film⁴ from the Feb 27th, 2020 workshop. The *Generations* photo exhibition brought together local families, some from the first iteration and some new faces, to come together to co-create the exhibition. The team was thrilled to work with the Belgrade Theatre, as this is the first time a major cultural heritage organisation like the Belgrade Theatre has opened its doors to the Roma community in Coventry. Below are some photos from the exhibition. The forty photos will be released when the exhibition officially opens.

⁴ GRT in HE Film- Highlights film from the Feb 27th workshop held at Coventry University: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvpTuA151WU&t=9s>



Figure 12-14: Photos from the *Generations* (2020) photo exhibition By Antony Weir

It should be noted that dissemination of this project and its various strands were extremely important and an integral component of getting key stakeholders to engage with the material. The next section discusses dissemination, and the several films and campaigns that formed part of the project and encouraged its impact.

6. Dissemination:

Dissemination of the work was important and the following subsections will offer insight into the materials generated and the analytics of how people engaged with the materials. Particularly, there was a GRT in HE film⁵ that reflects the Feb 27th workshop. The #EachforEqual⁶ March 8th, International Women's Day campaign is also included in this

⁵ GRT in HE Symposium film link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvpTuA151WU&t=6s>

⁶ #EachforEqual campaign film link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pegMEihVMRc>



section. Lastly, the *Generations* film⁷, which shows the Romanian Roma families in Coventry engaging with the research will also be included. Reel Master Productions was hired to film and produce the three films that are part of this project: #EachforEqual M8 Campaign video, GRT in HE Workshop film and the *Generations* photo exhibition film.

6.1 The Films:

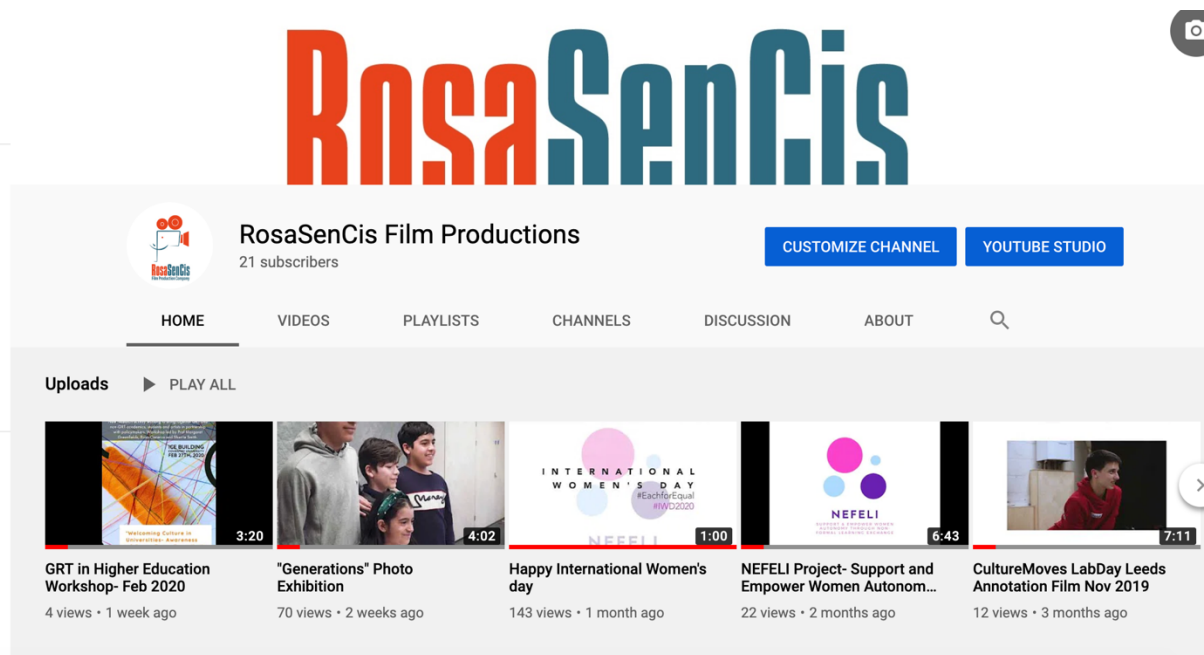


Figure 15: Screenshot of the RosaSenCis productions channel that houses the films referenced in this report.

⁷ *Generations* film link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBaSUWGTOx0&t=2s>



Figure 16: Screenshot of the opening shot of the film that capture the GRT in HE Workshop

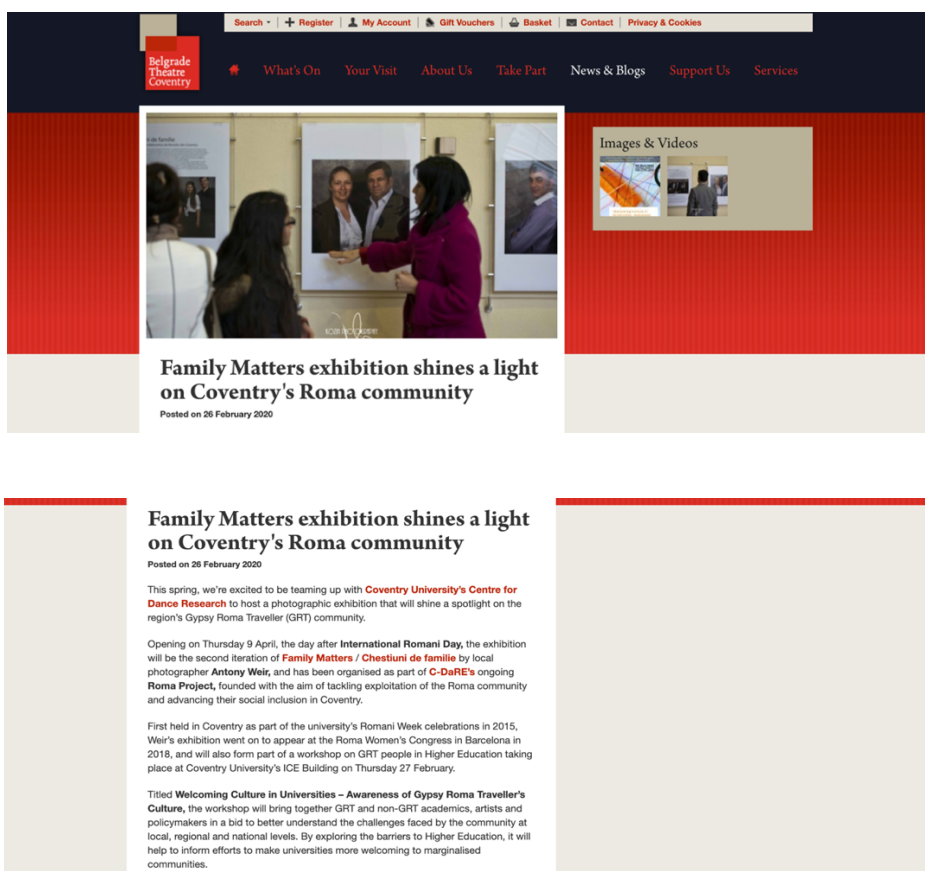


Figure 17: Screenshot of the opening shot of the Generations Photo Exhibition film



Figure 18: Screenshot of the opening shot of the #EachforEqual International Women's March 8th Campaign video which included GRT from 4 different countries

The Belgrade Theatre agreed to partner with the PI and Roma Project charity. For the project they wrote and distributed a press release to their network which includes mainstream media, policy makers, cultural heritage institutions among other major places. The website published the collaboration and also referenced the GRT in HE workshop held on February 27th, 2020 at Coventry University.



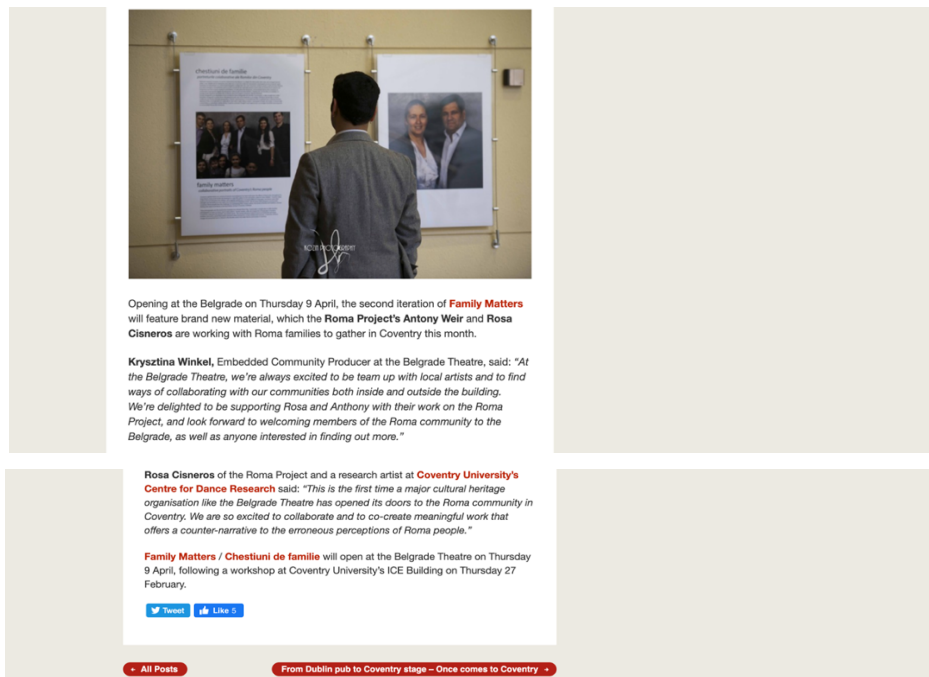
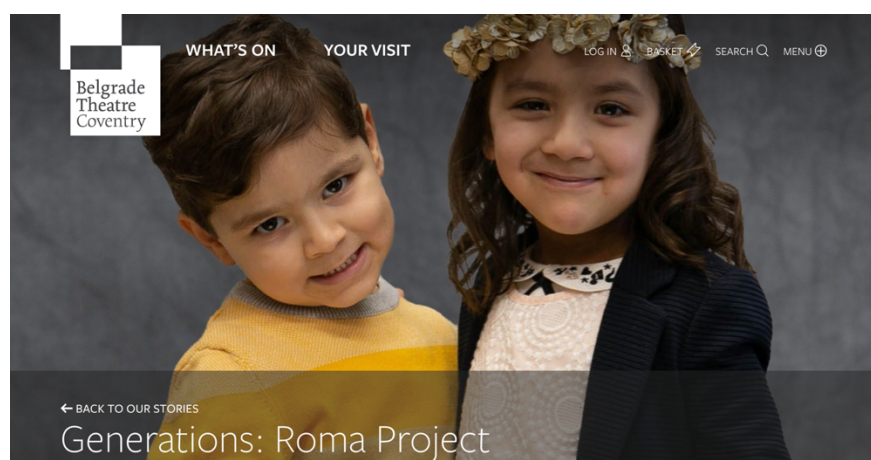


Figure 19: Screenshot of the Belgrade Theatre Press Release and website post (2020)


From this news item, the PI was contacted by the Coventry Telegraph, the BBC Coventry TV, and the BBC Coventry Radio for interviews and to cover the project. The interviews and meetings were postponed until post COVID-19. However, BBC-Sheffield heard about the project via Twitter and contacted the PI for an interview. A radio interview was recorded but not yet released.

On April 8th, 2020 the Belgrade Theatre and the PI curated an online taster gallery to honour International Roma Day and to entice people to learn more about the research activity. Ten images were selected to be previewed and the Generations film was also embedded into the press release and the website online gallery.





Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy



Explore an online preview of our postponed exhibition, organised in partnership with Coventry University and the Roma Project.

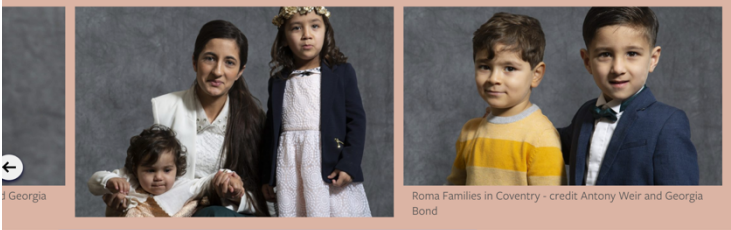
ON Tue 7 Apr

Following the announcement of our partnership with the **Roma Project** and **Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research** earlier this year, we're delighted to share an online preview of an exhibition originally scheduled to take place at the theatre this month.

Titled **Generations**, the exhibition shines a spotlight on Coventry's **Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT)** community, and launches online to coincide with **International Romani Day** on Wednesday 8 April. Featuring images of Roma families captured by photographers **Antony Weir** and **Georgia Bond** it is the follow up to a previous exhibition titled **Family Matters / Cheștiuni de familie**. The online preview includes a selection of Weir's images, with the full exhibition at the Belgrade now postponed until a later date.

The project has been organised in partnership with **Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research** as part of the ongoing **Roma Project**, an initiative founded to tackle the exploitation of the Roma community and to advance their social inclusion in Coventry.

First held in Coventry as part of the university's Romani Week celebrations in 2015, Weir's **Family Matters** exhibition went on to appear at Drom Kotar Mestipen's Roma Women's Congress in Barcelona in 2018, and also formed part of a workshop on GRT people in Higher Education which took place at Coventry University's ICE Building on Thursday 27 February.



Georgia

Roma Families in Coventry - credit Antony Weir and Georgia Bond

Rosa Cisneros of the **Roma Project** and a research artist at **C-DaRE** said: *"This is the first time a major cultural heritage organisation like the Belgrade Theatre has opened its doors to the Roma community in Coventry. We are so excited to collaborate and to co-create meaningful work that offers a counter-narrative to common misconceptions."*

Check out our picture gallery to see the photos or hit play below for an insight into the making of the exhibition.

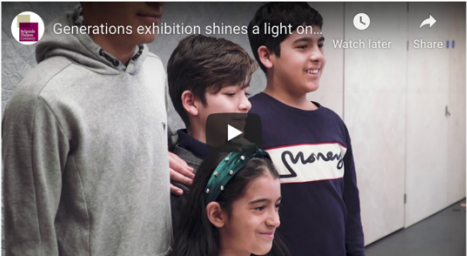


Figure 20: Screenshots from the Belgrade Theatre Online Gallery



6.2 Twitter Campaign- #GRT #PrideInArt

For the International Roma Day, on April 8th, the PI held an international #GRT #PrideInArt Campaign using social media, with Twitter serving as its platform. The PI has 1,262 followers on her twitter account and chose to use this platform to encourage, collate, curate, share and retweet images and videos shared. The PI asked her twitter followers to send art work to her via Twitter that used the three colours of the Roma flag (red, blue and green) which would be shared on April 8th, 2020 to celebrate International Roma Day. The tweet was picked up by several leading NGOs and charities, both nationally and internationally and was retweeted and the appeal was shared on their social media platforms, including facebook and Instagram. That tweet generated a lot of interest in the project and the PI received 5,484 impressions. The material received was too coincide with the Belgrade Theatre's release of the online gallery exhibition of *Generations*. What follows are screengrabs of the analytics of the tweets released and the way people engaged with the materials. A summary of the campaign includes 15 tweets, with 18 photos and 3 videos released. The tweets together had over 10,000 views and various types of engagement. There were photos and images from GRT and non-GRT families and children and from across the UK, Spain, Hungary, Romania and Greece.



Figure 21: Screengrab of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign

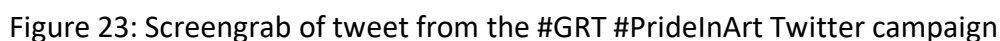
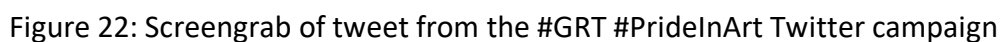




Figure 24: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Figure 25: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy

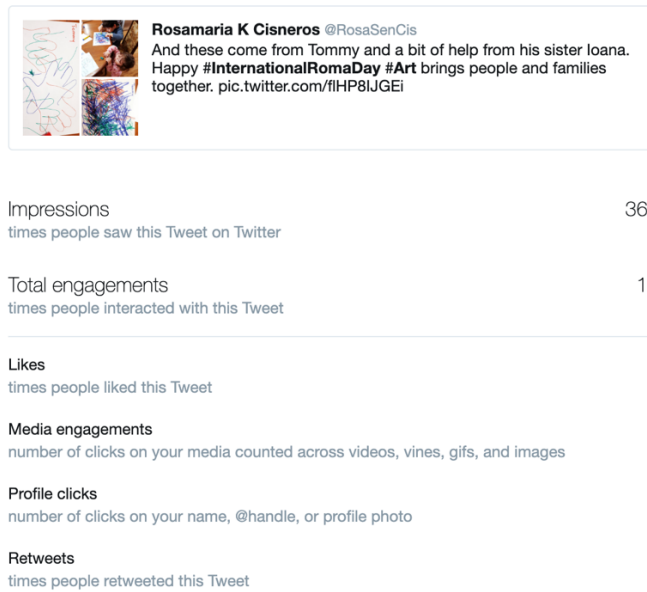


Figure 26: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign

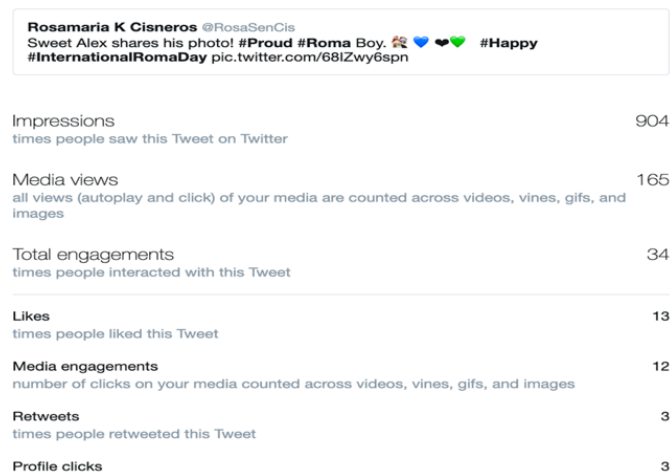




Figure 27: Screengrab of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Figure 28: Screengrab of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Impressions	321
times people saw this Tweet on Twitter	
Total engagements	19
times people interacted with this Tweet	
Media engagements	11
number of clicks on your media counted across videos, vines, gifs, and images	
Likes	5
times people liked this Tweet	
Detail expands	2
times people viewed the details about this Tweet	
Profile clicks	1
number of clicks on your name, @handle, or profile photo	

Figure 29: Screengrab of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy



Figure 30: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Figure 31: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy

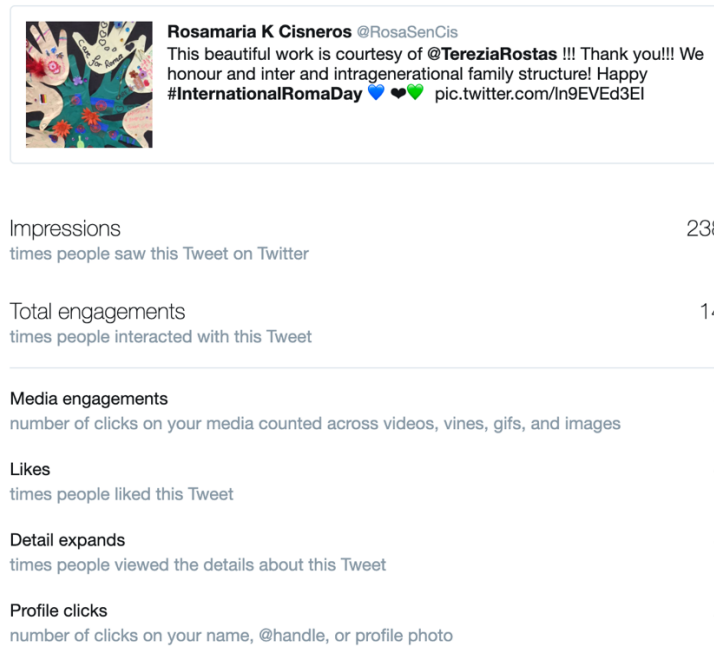


Figure 32: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign

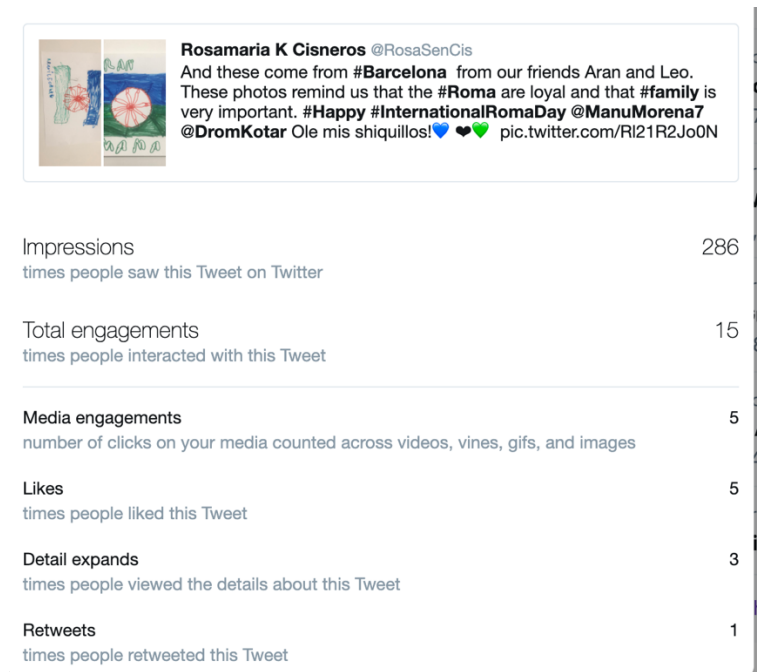


Figure 33: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy

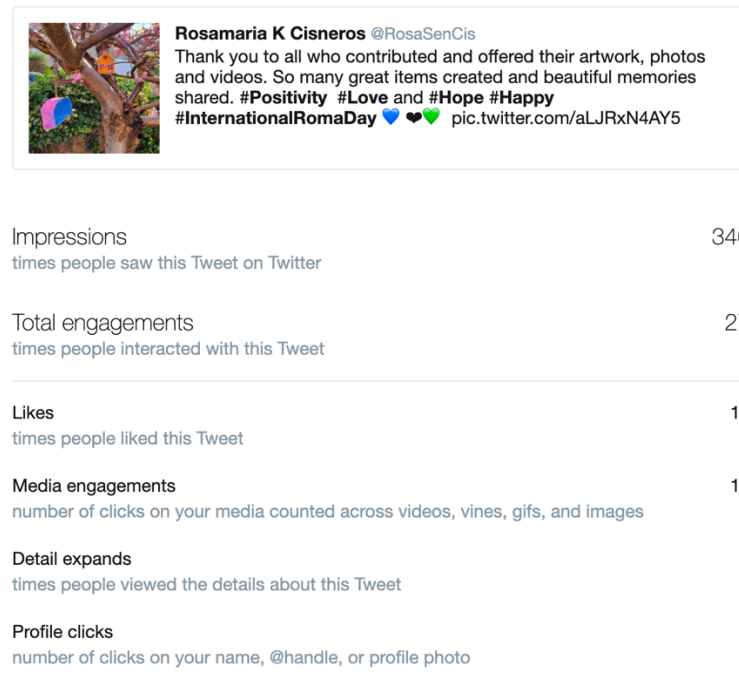


Figure 34: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign

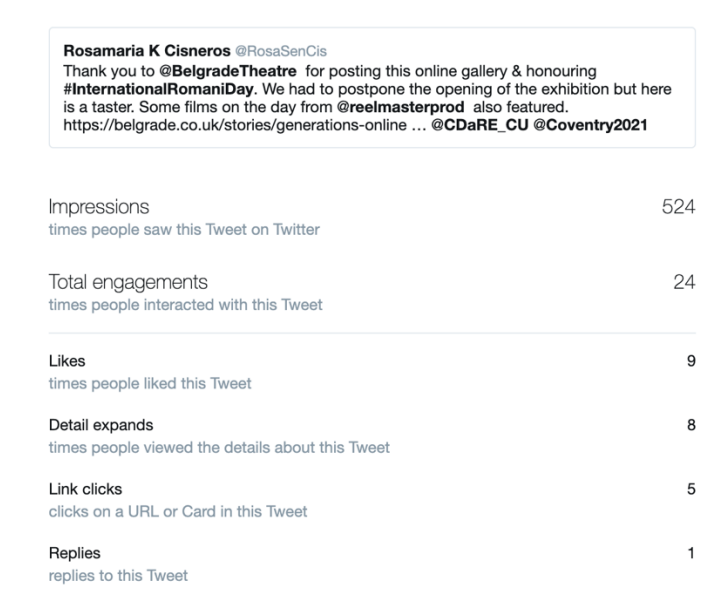


Figure 35: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign



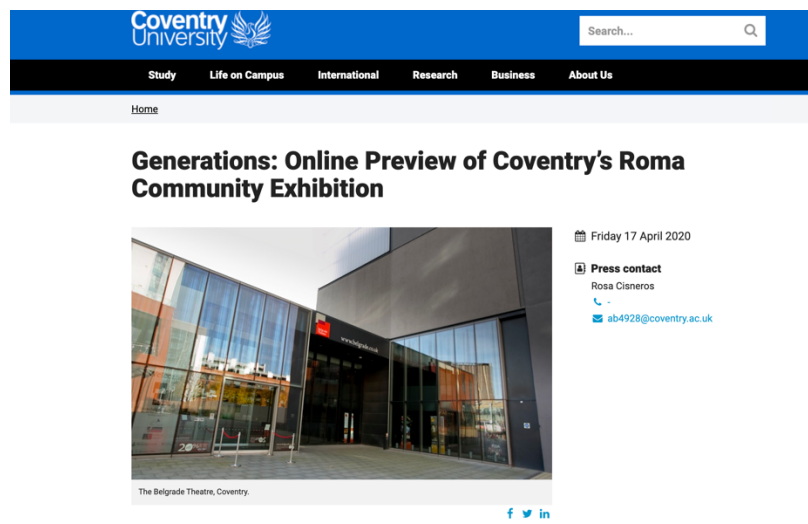
Rosamaria K Cisneros @RosaSenCis Thank you to @BelgradeTheatre for posting this online gallery & honouring #InternationalRomaniDay. We had to postpone the opening of the exhibition but here is a taster. Some films on the day from @reelmasterprod also featured. https://belgrade.co.uk/stories/generations-online ... @CDaRE_CU @Coventry2021	
Impressions times people saw this Tweet on Twitter	522
Total engagements times people interacted with this Tweet	23
Likes times people liked this Tweet	9
Detail expands times people viewed the details about this Tweet	8
Link clicks clicks on a URL or Card in this Tweet	4
Replies replies to this Tweet	1
Hashtag clicks	1

Figure 36: Screenshot of tweet from the #GRT #PrideInArt Twitter campaign

6.3 Published articles:

There were a number of articles that were published on the project. The PI worked to ensure that several university platforms covered the project, as well as other partner organisations like the Belgrade Theatre and the Roma Project charity.

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities website team wrote a news item on the project and mentioned the Feb 27th workshop and the *Generations* filming session. In addition to the films the CURB Blog also posted an article that was published by a young GRT youth who attended and participated in the workshop. These articles were also tweeted about and received over 1,000 impressions.





Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy

Coventry University's [Centre for Dance Research \(C-DaRE\)](#) has teamed up with the Belgrade Theatre to host a taster of an exhibition spotlighting Coventry's Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) community.

The exhibition, entitled 'Generations', was scheduled to be held at the Belgrade following International Romani Day, but was recently postponed until later this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The online taster provides a glimpse at some of the images of Coventry's Roma families, taken by photographers Antony Weir and Georgia Bond.

The photographers have worked with the team on ongoing initiatives which form part of the [RomArchive project](#); 'Generations' is part of an extensive programme of events organised by C-DaRE to tackle barriers faced by Roma people both internationally and locally.

Included in the programme was an event organised by C-DaRE Research Fellow and Lead on the RomArchive project [Rosa Cisneros](#) entitled 'Welcoming Culture in Universities – Awareness of Gypsy Roma Traveller's Culture.' The workshop saw GRT academics, artists and policymakers come together to explore future avenues for opening access to Higher Education for GRT communities.

Attendees presented their national advocacy work for GRT communities and shared insights into their personal experiences of stereotyping and barred access.

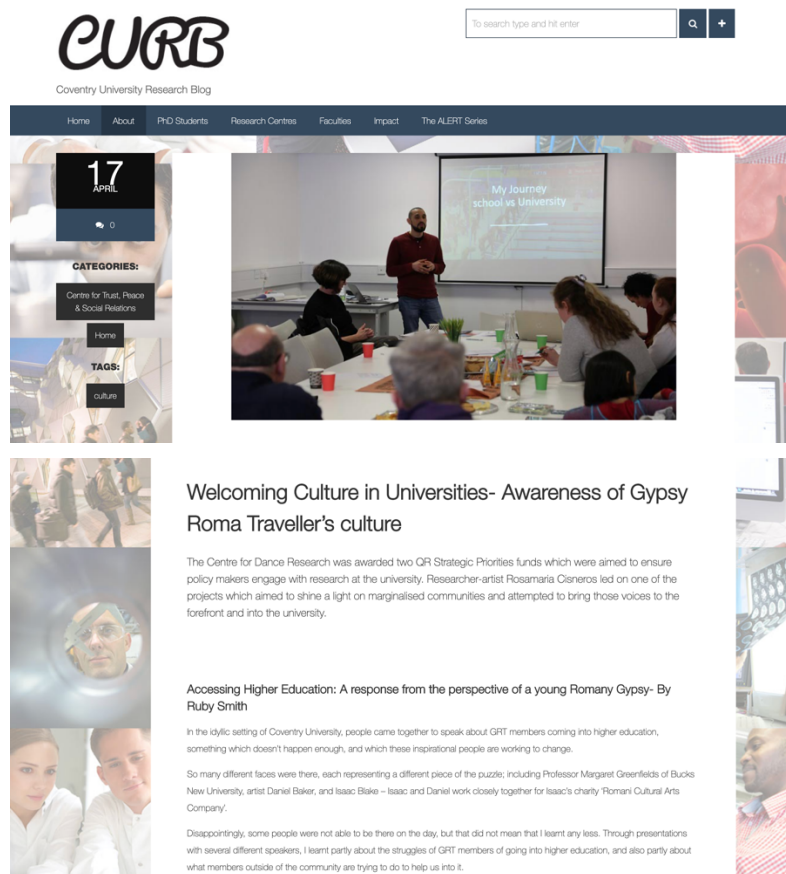
A blog, written by attendee Ruby-Leigh Smith, is now available on the Coventry University Research Blog ([CURB](#)).

The programme continues to open up dialogues around the experiences of Roma people in the local community.

View the online exhibition taster on the [Belgrade Theatre website](#).

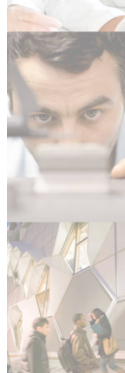
Learn more about the [RomArchive Project](#).

Figure 37: Screenshot from the Coventry University News item published by Victoria Williams





Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy



Higher education, for me, was something that was never out of my reach. My family never told me I couldn't go; actually, it was expected of me. There were never barriers put in front of me, and I think that that is what needs to happen for everybody, GRT or not. And it was interesting to see how many people in the room that day had the same opinion as me, or similar, or even completely different.

I was particularly inspired by Isaac Blake's talk, explaining how his charity is working with various others around the world, and also with the Welsh Assembly. Whilst his wasn't specifically about higher education, it was clear that he and the Romani Cultural Arts Company were doing so much for the members of the community. It was so positive to see.

All of the speakers were inspiring, though. Without a doubt, I can assure you of that. It was so inspiring to be a young person, sitting there, listening to all of these people who care about education as much as I do, and want to make a change for me, and for others of my community. Everybody does so much, and such different things, and its events like this one that bring everything together and make things seem clear. The future is now for us, and higher education is only now becoming possible.

These people; Margaret Greenfields, Rosa Cisneros, Teresa Rostas, Sherrie Smith, and so many others, are the reason why we have a tomorrow.

Ruby-Leigh Smith is a Romany Gypsy who attends school full time. She is currently studying for her A-levels in economics, politics and history. She has a real love of reading and writing, and hopes to study journalism at university, starting September 2021. She regularly updates her blog with interviews and features about music, and wants to become a music journalist after university. Moreover, she also writes for The Travellers Times magazine, and contributes regularly. When a classmate called her a p***y, that was when she knew that things had to change – for her and for the community. Racism isn't okay in any form, and should never be tolerated, she says, and she wants to make things better for all.

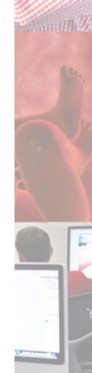


Figure 38: Screenshot from the CURB Blog

6.4 What's On- Warwickshire

What's ON Warwickshire picked up the news story on twitter and published the opening of the *Generations* exhibition on their website.

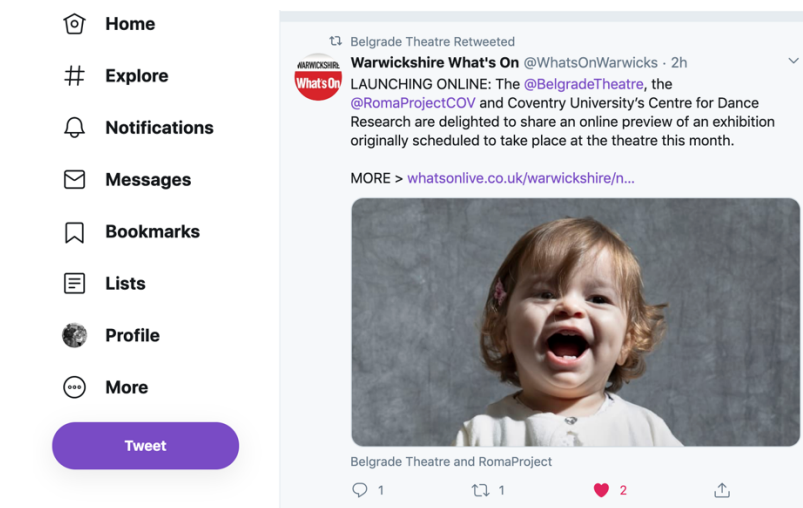


Figure 39: Screenshot of tweet by WHAT'S ON Warwickshire



Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy

The screenshot shows the Warwickshire What's On website. The header includes the 'What's On' logo, social media links, and a search bar. A navigation menu lists categories like HOME, NEWS, THEATRE, DANCE, MUSIC, etc. Below the header, there are promotional banners for 'Build your business with Shopify' and 'go grooiple'. The main content area features a news item titled 'Belgrade Theatre & Coventry University celebrate International Romani Day with an online exhibition'. The article includes a 'Share' button with social media icons and a 'Details' section.

WARWICKSHIRE What's On

FOLLOW US [Twitter] [Facebook] [Warwickshire]

WARWICKSHIRE'S ESSENTIAL ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

HOME | NEWS | THEATRE | DANCE | MUSIC | CLASSICAL | COMEDY | DAYS OUT | VISUAL ARTS | FESTIVALS | COMPETITIONS | INTERVIEWS

SEARCH [magnifying glass icon]

Build your business with Shopify. [Get Started]

Get the latest updates, offers and competitions from What's On...

Enter your email [input field] [ENTER]

Belgrade Theatre & Coventry University celebrate International Romani Day with an online exhibition

Share [Twitter] [Facebook] [Email] [plus icon]

go grooiple FEEL GOOD DEALS

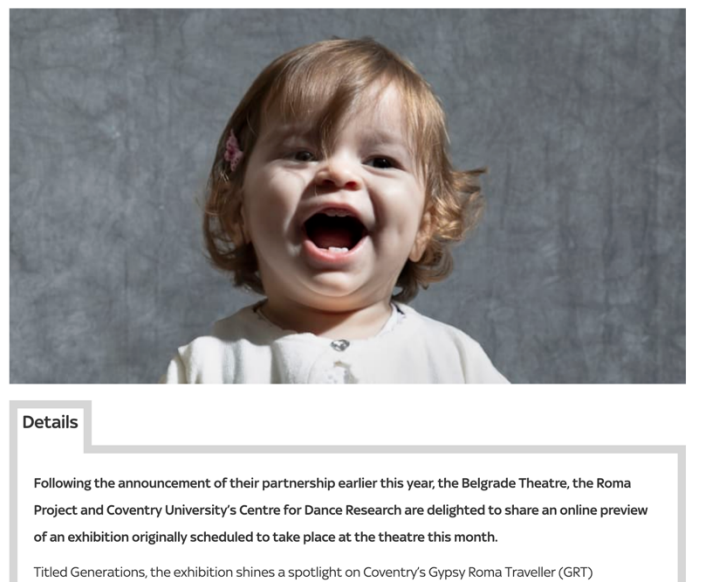
£19.99

Details

Following the announcement of their partnership earlier this year, the Belgrade Theatre, the Roma Project and Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research are delighted to share an online preview of an exhibition originally scheduled to take place at the theatre this month.

Titled Generations, the exhibition shines a spotlight on Coventry's Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT)

Figure 40: Screenshot of News item published by WHAT'S ON Warwickshire





Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy

The online preview will include a selection of Weir's images, with the full exhibition at the Belgrade now postponed until a later date.

The project has been organised in partnership with Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE) as part of the ongoing Roma Project, an initiative founded to tackle the exploitation of the Roma community and to advance their social inclusion in Coventry.

First held in Coventry as part of the university's Romani Week celebrations in 2015, Weir's Family Matters exhibition went on to appear at Drom Kotar Mestipen's Roma Women's Congress in Barcelona in 2018, and also formed part of a workshop on GRT people in Higher Education which took place at Coventry University's ICE Building on Thursday 27 February.

Antony Weir is a local photographer with a varied portfolio encompassing landscape, gig and portrait photography. He curates the 'Weir archive', the collection of his grandfather John's life's work in photos, many of which focus upon Coventry's post-war transformations. Sixty years later, Antony shares the same impetus to document the city and its people.

Georgia Bond works primarily on collaborative, socially engaged projects, exploring how photography can be used as a tool to represent and give voice to people and enabling those she works with to be part of her creative process. Through her work, she explores the positive impact that art can have on communities, and particularly on young people.

Krysztina Winkel, Embedded Community Producer at the Belgrade Theatre, said: *'At the Belgrade Theatre, we're always excited to be team up with local artists and to find ways of collaborating with our communities both inside and outside the building. We're delighted to be supporting Rosa and Anthony*

Rosa Cisneros of the Roma Project and a research artist at Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research said: *"This is the first time a major cultural heritage organisation like the Belgrade Theatre has opened its doors to the Roma community in Coventry. We are so excited to collaborate and to co-create meaningful work that offers a counter-narrative to common misconceptions."*

Generations will be previewed online from Wednesday 8 April, with the full exhibition postponed until a later date. To view the exhibition online, please visit belgrade.co.uk/stories/generations-online.



Figure 41: Screengrab of News item published by WHAT'S ON Warwickshire

7. Academic Outputs:

The PI has seized the opportunity and the results from the project, and submitted a traditional output to the Central European University academic Journal. *Critical Romani Studies* is an international, interdisciplinary, double blind peer-reviewed journal providing a forum for activist-scholars to critically examine racial oppressions, different forms of exclusion, inequalities, and human rights abuses of Roma. Without compromising academic standards of evidence collection and analysis, the Journal seeks to create a platform to critically engage with academic knowledge production, and generate critical academic and policy knowledge targeting—amongst others—scholars, activists, and policy-makers.

Scholarly expertise is a tool, rather than the end, for critical analysis of social phenomena affecting Roma, contributing to the fight for social justice. The Journal especially welcomes the cross-fertilization of Romani studies with the fields of critical race studies, gender and



sexuality studies, critical policy studies, diaspora studies, colonial studies, postcolonial studies, and studies of decolonization.

The Journal actively solicits papers from critically-minded young Romani scholars who have historically experienced significant barriers in engaging with academic knowledge production. The Journal has grown out of the informal Roma Research and Empowerment Network, and it is founded by the Romani Studies Program of Central European University and the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture. The PI has an academic paper on that is currently under consideration. The paper titled: *University as a Place of Exclusionary Knowledge: Breaking down those barriers* and will use as a case study the positive activities that emerged from the “GRT in HE- Influencing Policy” project.

8. Conclusion:

In summary, the project was led by PI Rosa Cisneros from C-DaRE and included a one-day symposium, two art exhibitions, and three films. The PI worked closely with a variety of key stakeholders on a local and national level, which included Professor of the Institute for Diversity Research, Inclusivity, Communities and Society (IDRICS) at Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) Margaret Greenfields and her research team, Sherrie Smith. It also saw the team of Baroness Whitaker from the House of Lords and her aide Gill Brown. The PI included local artists, Antony Weir, Maria Polodeanu from Reel Master Productions, the Belgrade Theatre and the local charity the Roma Project. On a national level there were academics from the University of St. Andrews (Scotland), Romani Cultural Arts Company (Wales), Dr Daniel Baker, Director Terezia Rostas from the Centre for Alternative Provision for Roma People, GRT community members, Dr Phil Martin (University of Salford), disabled GRT community members and Coventry University staff.

The project allowed the research team to draw upon its institutional expertise of working with NGOs, other UK universities and collaboration with local academics and artists. This work provided more evidence in relation to the challenges facing young people before they can begin to access HE and *whiteness* at the university emerged from the discussions. This report highlights the number of outputs that emerged from the project and highlights the success story of how GRT and non-GRT collaborated to think about a pledge for GRT community members considering HE. Careful considerations of the visualisations that are associated with the GRT community were explored and concepts of who belongs at the university were questioned. The whiteness paradigm was challenged via the project and policy makers from the UK and abroad engaged with the research and are keen to develop things further. Given the COVID-19 pandemic the PI has had to shift one of its events but the final event where policy makers and all the key stakeholders will engage for a final time will take place once the lockdown period is over.



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Gypsy Roma Traveller in Higher Education- Influencing Policy



Annex I - [Name]

Ethics Certificate:



Certificate of Ethical Approval

Applicant:

Rosemary Cisneros

Project Title:

'Welcoming Culture in Universities- Awareness of Gypsy Roma Traveller's culture'

This is to certify that the above named applicant has completed the Coventry University Ethical Approval process and their project has been confirmed and approved as Medium Risk

Date of approval:

11 February 2020

Project Reference Number:

P94205



Biographies:

Dr Daniel Baker is a Romani Gypsy born in Kent, United Kingdom in 1961. An artist, curator and theorist, he holds a PhD on the subject of Gypsy aesthetics from the Royal College of Art, London. Baker curated *FUTUROMA* at the 58th International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 2019. He acted as exhibitor and advisor to the first and second Roma Pavilions: *Paradise Lost* and *Call the Witness* at the 52nd and 54th Venice Biennales. Baker's work examines the role of art in the enactment of social agency through an eclectic practice that interrogates contemporary art discourse and its social implications via the reconfiguration of elements of the Roma aesthetic. Publications include *We Roma: A Critical Reader in Contemporary Art* (2013) and *Ex Libris* (2009). Baker's work is exhibited internationally and can be found in collections worldwide. Former Chair of the Gypsy Council (2006–2009). He lives and works in London.

Isaac Blake is a proud Gay Romany Gypsy and has worked as a professional dancer and choreographer. He is currently Executive Director of the Romani Cultural & Arts Company in Cardiff, UK, which is funded by a variety of major funders and government departments. As Executive Director of the Romani Cultural & Arts Company (RCAC), Isaac has developed arts and performance programmes on Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites with young children and adults, worked in schools and colleges, and promoted arts as a medium for empowerment and advocacy throughout Wales with Gypsy, Roma and Travellers. He has engaged widely with non- Gypsy communities to promote dialogue and improve social cohesion. His leadership and management of the RCAC has seen the organisation grow from a small voluntary group to a major third sector (NGO) agency that leads the Romani and Traveller field in Wales and is one of the major players in Romani and Traveller advocacy and empowerment in the UK. RCAC Celebrating community strength since 2009.

Isaac has also been a Dance Curator, leading a team of academics and researchers in collating appropriate items and artefacts for the RomArchive. The RomArchive was devised as an international digital archive for art of the Roma, and remains a constantly growing collection of art of all types, complemented by historical documents and scholarly texts. Isaac has been instrumental in supporting LGBTQI rights in UK, Europe and beyond, particularly with respect to the Gypsy, Roma & Traveller communities. Isaac has supported LGBTQI Gypsy, Roma & Travellers to attend events internationally and Isaac has personally attended such events to be an advocate and representative of his community and to positively promote LGBTQI.

Dr Aleksandar G. Marinov is a post-doctorate, research fellow at the School of History, at the University of St Andrews, Scotland. His research focuses on the theme of Roma civic emancipation in the period between the two World Wars.



Before Aleksandar found himself as a researcher in the School of History, in Scotland, he studied in Chicago, where he received his BA degree, with Honours, in Political Science and Spanish, in London, where he got his MA degree in International Relations, and in Wales, where he received his PhD in Human Geography. He has worked in Sofia as a researcher in a political think-tank, in Barcelona doing research for the University of Barcelona and in the UK where he taught at primary school and at university levels; he has been involved in grass-root, NGO and community organising charitable work.

Born and raised in a Roma family in Sofia, Bulgaria, the theme of Roma has always informed Aleskandar's research and work. He has published his first book entitled "Inward Looking. The Impact of Migration on Romanipe from the Romani Perspective" which was published in October 2019. The book deals with the contemporary mobilities of Bulgarian Roma and the impact these processes bring to their identities, perceptions and culture. He is also passionate about endurance sports, ultra-marathons and triathlons, and loves his family and children.

Prof Dr Margaret Greenfields

Before becoming an academic Margaret Greenfields trained as a lawyer, with a particular interest in homelessness and family law. She worked initially in a community law centre before becoming a legal policy officer, working for a number of NGOs in London before undertaking a PhD in Social Policy with a focus on Travellers' experiences of the legal system in relation to family law/social work interventions. Some years after becoming an academic, Margaret was appointed Founder Director of the Institute for Diversity Research, Inclusivity, Communities and Society (IDRICS) at Buckinghamshire New University (BNU). She was promoted to the role of Professor of Social Policy and Community Engagement in August 2012.

As an academic Margaret has worked extensively in the field of social inclusion (with particular reference to accommodation issues and health), ethnicity, equalities and social justice with a specific emphasis on undertaking collaborative research with communities at risk of marginalisation, racism and 'othering'. She has worked closely with Gypsy, Traveller and more recently migrant Roma (GTR) communities for over 25 years and in recent years has undertaken participatory action research programmes with vulnerable migrants; live-aboard Boaters; LGBT+ members of faith communities and homeless people experiencing poor health as well as refugee and asylum seeking women.

Margaret has an emerging focus on engaging with barriers to widening participation and access, and the experiences of GTR people in higher education. To this end she co-convened with Baroness Whitaker an event in the House of Lords in September 2019 on this subject, and is working with NEON and a range of institutional colleagues to move GTR educational experiences further up the policy agenda. She also acts as lead academic within her university



to support institutional measures to develop best practice in engaging and supporting members of the GTR communities in their educational journey.

She has authored/co-authored and edited a number of books and journal articles, and numerous reports for local authorities, Central Government agencies (including the UK Department of Health; Housing, Communities and Local Government and the EHRC); the European Fundamental Rights Agency, and diverse charities. Margaret has been a member of advisory panels for various Government departments and associated agencies such as the ECHR; Department of Health; Department of Housing Communities and Local Government; and professional bodies working to enhance best practice to support Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities. She regularly lectures and delivers training for NGOs and in academic contexts in the UK and Europe and is currently supervising a number of PhD students in various fields relating to health and social care exclusion and marginal/'at risk' citizenship.

Sherrie Smith was born and raised in a traditional Romany Gypsy family, living in North London and Hertfordshire. Having left school early, and having had both a successful career as a business woman and a community activist, Sherrie returned to education as a mature student; gaining her BA in Social Science, Community Development and Youth Work from Goldsmiths, University of London, in 2019.

Sherrie's professional interests include challenging prejudice, racism and bias (both conscious and unconscious) directed at Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, which can act as a barrier to accessing services, as well as widening participation and access to Higher Education for her community. She has been also involved in campaigning and activism, working in grass-root community organisations, NGOs and community organisation of charitable activities. She has led projects and training on Hate crime, palliative care and suicide awareness for Gypsies and Travellers. Sherrie is currently working with Buckinghamshire New University as a research assistant and also with Goldsmiths, Wider Participation department to increase representation of Gypsy, Roma and Travellers in Higher Education. Sherrie is also a founder member of the NGO Gypsies and Travellers Essex; and Report Racism GRT.