

31 October 2023

Organising and increasing the presence of black women in PCS

Our black members' seminar in Birmingham looked at how to increase the number of black women in PCS structures.

PCS members met in Birmingham at the weekend for our black members' seminar, the third of four equality seminars this autumn.

The second workshop, 'Increase representation of Black women in trade union structures', was led by PCS national black members' committee (NBMC) vice-chair Tracey Hylton and NBMC representative Paulette Smith.

It heard calls from members for increased efforts to find and develop hidden talent, to build support networks for black women members, and to remove barriers to involvement, including a lack of time and low confidence.

Organising workshop

On the second day of the seminar, there was a well-received workshop called 'Let's talk about organising', chaired by NBMC representatives Tracy Abrahams and Levoy Getton.

There was also a panel discussion on the theme of 'Celebrating Black women in the trade union movement', which featured PCS speakers alongside Elizabeth Cameron (chair of the [GMCA Race Equality Panel](#)), Donna Guthrie ([BARAC UK](#)), and Maxine Looby (UCU president-elect).

The seminar closed with some reflections on the weekend as well as a tribute by NBMC chair Mohammed Shafiq and other NBMC members to Zita Holbourne, a former National Vice President of PCS and long-time anti-racist activist who recently retired.

The PCS equality seminars conclude with the [LGBT+ seminar](#) on 25 and 26 November.

Read more about the black members' seminar on our [X \(formerly Twitter\) account](#) and [Facebook page](#).