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Introducing the GTRSB into HE Pledge

(Core Principles and Reasons to Participate)

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#GTRSBintoHE

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Presentation Format

- Setting the Scene
- Project Timeline
- Principles of 'The Pledge'
 - What is Required of signatories to the 'GRTSB into Higher Education Pledge'
 - Joining the Network
- Where Next?

Setting the Scene

- Enhancing access to education as a social justice imperative + good practice focus on Widening Participation and Access.
- Increasing policy emphasis and recognition of the educational exclusion of **Romany Gypsy, Traveller and Roma** (ethnic communities) - but less acknowledgement/recognition of the challenges facing **Showmen and Boaters**
 - See further Women and Equalities Committee Report (2019) and work by NGOs have re-emphasised the educational exclusion of GTR communities and challenges within compulsory school context – linked to employment exclusion ([refs on GRTSBintoHE website](#))
- Major problems disaggregating data to explore situation of Roma when compared to Romany Gypsy communities
- No data sets enumerate Showman and Boater young people but NGOs/organisations such as Showman's Guild will have varying degrees of information

School to HE pipeline

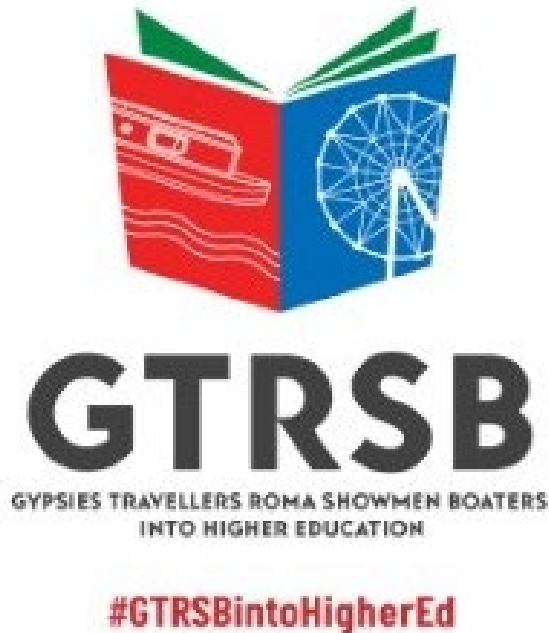
- GTR people have the lowest levels of educational attainment of any ethnic group in school, achieving poorer outcomes in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 and at GCSE, (KS4) (2019 5 A*-C GCSEs: Gypsy Roma 13%, Irish Travellers 19%) v. 64% of 'mainstream' pupils.
- GTR children are also more likely to be absent from formal education, to have ceased attendance by the age of 16 and to be excluded from school (Traveller Movement, 2019; WEC, 2019; DfE, 2020; Tidman, 2020).
- Only 3-4 per cent of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population aged 18-30 years accessed higher education compared with 43 per cent of 18-30 year-olds in the general population (Mulcahy et al. 2017; Greenfields, 2019)

Project Timeline 2019-2021

- Roundtable event – BNU/APPG GRT affairs **September 2019** – report – December 2019
<https://bucks.repository.guildhe.ac.uk/17932/>
- **December 2019** – launch of ‘network survey’ as follow up to GRTSB into HE roundtable event [email/tweet/contact via website to participate/ join network]
- **January 2020** – recruitment of Sherrie Smith - Romany Gypsy research assistant to support outreach/engagement activities and project development.
- **February 2020** – collaborative/joint research development event/seminar with Coventry University – CDare – Dr. Rosa Cisneros – exploring GTR experiences in higher education and motivations (SPF - financed by UK Research & Innovation fund)

Project Timeline (2)

- **March 2020** – steering group – GRTSB into HE project convened – NGOs, NEON, OfS representation; Universities
 - Working on enhancing good practice
 - Development of resources
 - Pledge related activities/dissemination
 - Network development
 - Sharing of good practice via Jiscmail
- **Summer 2020 – ongoing** activities as above + individual projects/activities of network members/advisors e.g. KCL/TM – mentors for GTR school-pupils during Covid lock-down; reports by NEON (Atherton, 2020); Forster & Gallagher (2020); collaborative work with Uni-Connect network in West Yorkshire on GRTSB and WP (ACERT/NEON/ Unis of Northumbria/BNU) + lectures, events, workshops
- **Shortlisted for Times Higher WP Award** (Autumn 2020)
- **Pledge ‘goes live’ – October 2020 – Launch - January 2021**



- **FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE:** co-production /collaboration between communities/NGOs, Universities and Colleges tailored and adapted to local circumstances and populations.
- We are collectively focused on enhancing and developing 'networks of practice' between GTRSB students & graduates; communities/NGOs and universities/colleges to develop good practice which supports GTRSB people into and within Higher Education.

Core Elements of the 'Pledge'

- Requires commitment at highest level – e.g. VC/Principal etc to ensure institutional support
- Light touch 'monitoring' – complete a survey each year to say what has done and where an institution might require more support
- No cost to 'take the pledge'/join the **Network**
- Membership of the network encourages dissemination of activities/support from peers/community members/ sharing of good practice etc.
- Potential to collaborate with network members on designing materials, shaping/providing input to training programmes, developing local/regional partnerships etc.

Core requirements + additional good practice suggestions available (1)

- **DATA GATHERING**
- Monitoring the number of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller students and staff currently at the university (nb: stretch target to include Showmen and Boaters per OfS briefing)
- Evaluating year on year trends in these numbers

- **INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE**
- Designating a key named contact for working with GTRSB students to oversee workstreams/ attend regular training/EDI meetings
- Encouraging the formation of GRT student and staff societies, possibly in local or regional groups of HEIs

Core requirements + additional good practice suggestions available (2)

- **OUTREACH**
- Having a distinct stream of work which focuses on GRTSB students within widening participation activities
- Strengthening links to schools/FE colleges or NGOs working with local GTRSB communities
- Developing/expanding mentoring opportunities for GTRSB graduates/students to work with community members who are considering entering HE

- **INCLUSION, CELEBRATION & COMMEMORATION**
- Foreground GRT inclusion and culture within the university (e.g. events such as GRT History Month, Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day, visibility in posters, curricula inclusion, etc.)

Where Next?

- **Five full signatory 'pathfinder' HEIs at this launch (January 2021) and at least six more are in the process of seeking approval**
- Continue to enhance awareness of the 'Pledge' amongst universities and higher education colleges committed to equalities and social justice
- **Target of 20 HEI signatories by academic year 2021-22**
- Monitoring progress of 'the pledge' to see how institutions engage and develop good practice in supporting GRTSB students (see role of Network)
- Ambition of wider take-up of 'Stretch Targets' e.g. encourage HESA/UCAS to expand categories of student self-identification
- Measurable increase in GTRSB students self-identifying and enrolling in HE/FE (*and acting as role models if they feel comfortable to do so*)

- Enhanced and developing local/regional and national ‘networks of practice’ between GRTSB students, communities, graduates; NGOs and HE/FE providers
- Shared development of a ‘good practice bank’ which can disseminate/evidence successful models (e.g. videos, training resources, etc.)
- Outcomes for GRTSB people in HE comparable to/mappable against other communities
- Grow engagement with professional associations (e.g. GRTSWA; BASW; GRTPA; Health Professional bodies etc), to encourage universities to ‘take the pledge’
- Encourage/Support professionals from GTRSB communities to connect with local HEIs and enhance community visibility through providing input to curricula, guest lectures, etc.



GTRSB

GYPSIES TRAVELLERS ROMA SHOWMEN BOATERS
INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

#GTRSBintoHigherEd

- <https://bucks.ac.uk/about-us/gtrsb-into-higher-education-pledge>

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