Call for expression of Interest: Community-building workshop

Building a Refugee and Migration Research Community: Caring Epistemologies, Methodologies, Vocabularies, Imaginaries and Passions

(On behalf of Refugee and Migration Research Network - RAMnet)

Critical Management Studies beyond the Academy? 30th June – 2nd July 2027, Lancaster University

Convenors

Dr Elif Nur Duman-Cogen, Lecturer in Management, Newcastle University.
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How do we build caring, critical, and decolonial epistemologies in migration and refugee research? What vocabularies enable us to understand refugee and migrant worlds from *within*?

Today, over 300 million people live outside their country of origin, with more than 130 million forcibly displaced by war, conflict, and persecution (UNHCR, 2026). Yet mainstream media (Alhayek, 2014) and academic narratives (Espiritu and Duong, 2018) often reduce these individuals to passive victims or economic commodities- expected to 'adapt' or 'integrate' rather than being recognised as human beings with their own honour, dignity, and forms of life. Structural, integration-focused research perpetuates this misrecognition, foreclosing the very vocabularies, relationships, and moral worlds within which their sense of self is constituted. At a time of intensifying anti-migration and anti-refugee policies and discourses, the importance of caring and critical knowledge production could not be overstated. This workshop asks how we might develop dignifying epistemologies and methodologies that understand refugee and migrant life within its own 'grammar of language' (Mahmood, 2005) — one attentive to the embodied, relational, and ethical worlds through which their agency and dignity must be understood.

In this critical development session, we draw on critical refugee and migrant epistemologies, in which joy, refusal, liveability, dignity, honour, and ingratitude are understood as "deliberate and wilful moves to imagine and enact new subjectivities, new ways of being, and new freedoms that lie just outside the humanitarian refugee regime" (Espiritu et al., 2022: 96). This requires us to foreground the experiences of those whose lived realities are too often overlooked and to attune ourselves, as researchers, to the diverse vocabularies within which their voices, silences, feelings, and forms of life are situated.

This workshop brings together scholars across refugee and migration studies to collectively imagine what critical and dignifying migration epistemologies in management thought might look like. Our network, RAMnet, is a new initiative dedicated to establishing refugee and migrant studies as a recognised field: one that refuses to flatten displaced lives into policy problems or integration metrics, and insists on foregrounding the agency, resistance, dignity, silences, voices, and emotions of people who move, or are compelled to move. At a time when the humanity of refugees, migrants, and displaced communities is routinely diminished in politics and the media, building a scholarship that honours mobile populations is both urgent and necessary. This is a space to build community, share the challenges and possibilities of critical refugee and migration research, and advance an intellectual project grounded in care, community and collectivity.

Workshop Structure

The 90-minute workshop opens with an introduction to RAMnet and a short provocation from the convenors: what does it mean to produce knowledge with, rather than about, refugees, migrants, and other mobile communities, and what does that demand of us as researchers?

This is followed by brief presentations from RAMnet members sharing work in progress, including reflections on methodology, positionality, and the ethical challenges of refugee and migration research in management thought.

The remainder of the session is structured around two rounds of small-group discussion:

Round One — Critical Refugee and Migrant Epistemologies: How do we build epistemologies that honour the grammar, dignity, agency, and aspirations of refugees, migrants, and displaced communities? How might we collectively imagine and create caring epistemologies?

Round Two — Caring Methodologies: What methodologies allow us to access the silences, emotions, and everyday worlds of refugees and migrants? How can we develop creative, critical, and decolonial methodologies to study with displaced populations?

The session closes with a collective reflection and an open invitation to join and shape RAMnet as a growing intellectual home for critical refugee and migration studies in management thought.

The session offers a supportive, voluntary space for reflection, sharing lived experiences, personal stories, coping strategies, and collective visions for moving forward. The aim is to cultivate a community of care and curiosity in which migration and displacement are understood not only as crises "out there", but as questions that demand our collective scholarly attention, ethical responsibility, and commitment to shaping the field with care.

10 mins	Drop in and get grounded	A welcoming entry into the refugee and migration studies space
15 mins	Introduction to RAMnet	Introducing RAMnet and its vision for building a refugee and migration research community
15 mins	Short sharing / introductions	Participants briefly introduce themselves and their connection to refugee and migration studies or to the community.
20 mins	Round table discussion	Critical Refugee and Migrant Epistemologies — participants share short reflections, stories, and questions about the epistemologies they use or would like to explore.
20 mins	Round table discussion	Caring Methodologies — participants share short reflections, stories, and questions about the methodologies they use or would like to explore.
10 mins	Reflection and way forward	Expanding RAMnet and building a refugee and migration research community

Call for Participants

CMS cannot regenerate without understanding the specific vocabularies, histories and aspirations of marginalised, refugee, migrant and displaced populations. This creative session

calls for participants interested in critical refugee and migration studies. The workshop creates a reflective space for sharing on the prompts below:

What forms of epistemology can be created to sense, feel, understand, and attune to refugee and migrant worlds?

What methodologies can we develop to understand the vocabularies of refugees, migrants and displaced populations?

To express your interest, please complete this MS form:

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=yRJQnBa2wkSpF2aBT74-h_v7fvX1isVLlEFC1bOcvNxUM0JCTFhOUU9OWVZOMzVCWVFRN0tXSkdSWS4u

with your name, contact information, and responses to the prompts above.

Please do not feel obliged to offer extensive detail; only initial reflections are needed to help the convenors understand your reasons for attending, what you wish to contribute, and any accommodations you may require. Criteria for inclusion will focus on relevance and engagement with the aims of the session, the safety of the space, and diversity of perspectives. Responses will be seen only by the convenors and will remain confidential. They will contact all interested parties by 1 December 2026 to advise whether they are invited to participate and to provide further joining instructions.

About the Convenors

Dr Elif Nur Duman-Cogen, Newcastle University Business School (https://www.elifnurduman-cogen.com/)

Dr Elif Nur Duman-Cogen is a Lecturer in Management at Newcastle University Business School. She is an interdisciplinary scholar who brings together management, anthropology, and political science to understand the lives of refugees. Her research focuses on agency, subject formation, embodiment, and life-making practices of refugees particularly within contexts shaped by war, forced migration, and precarity in the Global South. As co-founder of

the Refugee and Migration Research Network (RAMnet), Elif seeks to build a community of scholars who are passionate about understanding refugee lifeworlds, the feelings, senses, voices, silences, and values of those who re-establish their lives in post-war circumstances.

Dr Nosheen Khan, Newcastle University Business
School (https://www.ncl.ac.uk/business/people/profile/nosheenkhan.html)

Dr Nosheen Khan is a Lecturer in Human Resource Management at Newcastle University Business School. Her research and teaching explore work, intersectionality, equality, diversity and inclusion, and the lived experiences of marginalised employees in academia. A migrant woman academic, Nosheen is committed to creating spaces where research, lived experience, care and collective reflection can come together. Through RAMnet, she seeks to build a community that centres refugee and migrant voices and reimagines migration and displacement as urgent questions for organisation and management studies.

References

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Mahmood, S. (2005) Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

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