

Participatory action research: theories, methods and challenges

An online course for doctoral students and members of community organisations

Mon 7, Tues 8 and Wed 9 June, 2021, 14.00-16.30 BST



Following six very successful courses in previous years, in 2021 we are pleased to offer an online course designed to develop understanding and skills in the theory and practice of participatory action research (PAR). PAR is increasingly popular, involving people affected by/interested in a research topic taking an active part in designing, carrying out and putting research into practice. The aim of PAR is to bring about change – for example, in people’s living conditions, service provision or public policy. Doctoral students taking a PAR approach face many challenges, including negotiating how to work with partner organisations, handling co-ownership of research findings in relation to the thesis, and responsibilities for working for social change.

The course will cover key values, ethical/political issues, theorising and critiquing PAR, working with partner organisations to influence change, and participatory approaches to research design, process, analysis, dissemination and implementation. The course will be participatory, using small break out groups to focus on specific questions and evaluate learning. Community partners and academics will act as tutors. Ten places will be reserved for members of community organisations, enabling a process of mutual learning for doctoral students and community partners.

The objectives of the course are to:

1. Enable participants to develop critical understandings of the uses, advantages and limitations of PAR, and an ability to draw on a range of theoretical and practical insights.
2. Develop participants' awareness of ethical and political challenges in PAR, particularly in community-university partnership working, and strategies for handling these.
3. Facilitate the development of participants' confidence in working with the complexities of PAR within different disciplines and settings.
4. Offer participants the experience of learning and understanding through active participation during the course.
5. Develop participants' understanding of the impacts that PAR may have, and processes for creating and capturing these.

Facilitators: The course will be facilitated by a team of academic and community-based practitioners of PAR, with a variety of areas of expertise and experience, including: Professor Sarah Banks, Co-director, Centre for Social Justice and Community Action, Durham University; Professor Mary Brydon-Miller, University of Louisville, USA; Dr Tina Cook, Liverpool Hope University; Yvonne Hall, community researcher; and Professor Kristin Kalsem, University of Cincinnati, USA.

Who should come: The course will be of interest to doctoral students and members of community organisations who do, or are interested in doing, research that is participatory. In selecting participants from community organisations, priority will be given to those based in North East England or Northern Ireland. **PLEASE NOTE: *This course is only available to doctoral students and members of community organisations.***

Timing: the course will take place on Zoom on three afternoons on 7th, 8th, 9th June from 14.00-16.30 BST. Participants must commit to attending all three sessions.

How to apply: Places are limited to 50, so early booking is advisable. If you are a member of a community organisation interested in attending [please complete the online application form for community organisations](#). If you are a doctoral student, [please complete the online application form for doctoral students](#).

The closing date is Monday 12th April, 2021 (17.00 BST). Early booking is advisable as the course is likely to fill up quickly.

Costs:

- The course is **free** for PhD students from **NINEDTP Universities:** Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Queens Belfast, Teesside and Ulster, and for **members of community organisations**.
- The course is **free** for PhD students of other UK institutions.

An indicative programme (may be subject to change) is given overleaf.

Further information: Please email contact.nine@durham.ac.uk for issues about bookings. If you require any further information about the course content, please email Sarah Banks s.j.banks@durham.ac.uk

Indicative programme

Day 1. Introduction to PAR

Introduction and warm up exercises

A) What is PAR? (Sarah Banks)

- Presentation
- Break outs in pairs/threes – how might I use PAR in my research?

B) Methods and approaches (Mary Brydon-Miller)

- Presentation
- Break outs in pairs/threes – what methods might I use in my research?

Day 2. Ethical and practical issues

Introduction and warm up exercises

A) Ethical issues in PAR (Sarah Banks & Mary Brydon-Miller)

- Presentation
- Break outs in groups of 6 – discussion of ethics case examples

B) Three case examples from practice (Kristin Kalsem, Yvonne Hall, Andrew Russell/Sui Ting Kong)

- Brief presentations
- Break outs in 3 groups facilitated by the presenters to discuss learning from the examples

Day 3. Participatory data analysis, dissemination and impact

Introduction and warm up exercises

A) Participatory data analysis (Tina Cook and Sarah Banks)

- Presentation
- Break outs to undertake a group exercise and discuss data analysis

B) Planning dissemination and the impact journey (Tina Cook and Sarah Banks)

- Presentation
- Break outs to undertake a group exercise and discuss impact and dissemination

Closing and evaluation