

## EGOS Colloquium 2026

Belfast Local Hub: Queen's Business School, Queen's University Belfast

Pre-colloquium Paper Development Workshops (PDWs) on Wednesday 8 July 2026

### **Rethinking Talent Management: Power, Inequality, and Inclusion in More-than-Human Organizations**

#### **Convenors**

- Gráinne Kelly, Queen's Business School, Queen's University Belfast
- Janine Swail, Queen's Business School, Queen's University Belfast

#### **Workshop Description**

While talent management is often defined as a set of HR practices focused on attracting, identifying, developing, and deploying individuals who enhance organizational performance (Kaliannan et al., 2023), such definitions frequently assume objectivity, meritocracy, and neutrality. This workshop will challenge these assumptions by exploring how “talent” is discursively constructed, socio-materially produced, and experienced differently across organizational contexts, drawing on critical talent management scholarship (Bonneton et al., 2020; Makarem et al., 2019; Kwon and Jang, 2022).

Building on feminist theory, the workshop will discuss organizations as gendered social structures where power relations are embedded in everyday practices, evaluative criteria, and institutional logics. Drawing on Acker's theorization of gendered organizations and inequality regimes, participants will examine how talent management is not a neutral function but a set of practices that produce and reproduce hierarchical social relations. Butler's work on performativity will be used to highlight how gendered subjectivities are constituted and stabilized through organizational evaluation and recognition, while McNay's work on agency will support analysis of how structural inequalities shape individuals' capacities for participation.

The workshop will further adopt an intersectional lens, drawing on Crenshaw, to examine how multiple axes of difference, especially gender and age, are mutually constituted and embedded in organizational processes. Grosz's insights on embodiment and becoming will allow participants to explore how organizational practices shape embodied subjectivities and developmental trajectories. Extending this perspective, the workshop will also consider the more-than-human dimensions of talent management, including sociomaterial and technological arrangements such as algorithmic evaluation in selection processes. Participants will critically analyze how these systems participate in constructing, regulating, and reproducing organizational subjectivities.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to question common assumptions about what counts as “talent”, understand how workplace practices affect people differently based on gender and other social factors, and consider how technology and organizational systems influence who is recognized and valued.

#### **Workshop Format**

The 90-minute workshop will begin with a brief opening, followed by presentations of up to three accepted papers. Each paper will be presented for 15 minutes using PowerPoint, with time allocated for feedback and discussion after each presentation.

## Workshop Goals

- Support participants in developing theoretically rigorous and reflective research that highlights gender, embodiment, agency, and intersectionality, while critically examining the assumptions behind mainstream talent management studies.
- Encourage research that analyzes organizations as sites of power and inequality, exploring how talent management practices create inclusion, exclusion, and stratification across intersecting social categories.
- Foster scholarship that investigates opportunities for organizational change, identifying ways talent management practices can challenge, reshape, or reproduce existing inequalities.

## Application, acceptance and notification process

Please submit an extended abstract of 1,500 words **by April 15th, 2026**, via email to: [grainne.kelly@qub.ac.uk](mailto:grainne.kelly@qub.ac.uk). Participants will be notified via email by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026, about paper acceptance.

Your extended abstract should cover the following: the research context and focus; a clear research question; theoretical positioning; and methodological approach or empirical setting.

Please also include the following information in your document:

- Your full name
- Affiliation(s)
- Contact email
- Any specific type of feedback sought

For questions, please contact: [grainne.kelly@qub.ac.uk](mailto:grainne.kelly@qub.ac.uk)

## Suggested Readings

- Acker, J. (2006). Inequality regimes: Gender, class, and race in organizations. *Gender & Society*, 20(4), pp. 441–464.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299.
- Bonneton, D., Festing, M. and Muratbekova-Touron, M. (2020). Exclusive talent management: Unveiling the mechanisms of the construction of an elite community. *European Management Review*, 17(4), 993–1013.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble*. London. Routledge.
- Grosz, E. (1994). *Volatile bodies: Toward a corporeal feminism*. Indiana University Press.
- Kaliannan, M., Darmalingam, D., Dorasamy, M. and Abraham, M., (2023). Inclusive talent development as a key talent management approach: A systematic literature review. *Human Resource Management Review*, 33(1), p.100926.
- Kwon, K. and Jang, S. (2022). There is no good war for talent: A critical review of the literature on talent management. *Employee Relations: The International Journal*, 44(1), pp. 94–120.
- Makarem, Y., Metcalfe, B. and Afiouni, F. (2019). A feminist poststructuralist critique of talent management: Toward a more gender sensitive body of knowledge. *Business Research Quarterly*, 22(3), 181–193.
- McNay, L. (2013). *Gender and agency: Reconfiguring the subject in feminist and social theory*. John Wiley & Sons.