

**Track 3 proposal for the 2025 TCR Conference, American University, Washington DC –
June 12-15, 2025**

Track Theme: Rebuilding the Middle Ground for Reconnected Societies via Diversity and Inclusion Engaged Marketing (DIEM)

Proposed co-chairs: Dr. Lizette Vorster (Aarhus University, Denmark); Dr. Verónica Martín Ruiz (University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA); Professor Eva Kipnis (University of Bradford, UK)

Proposed track members:

Academic Members

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| Professor Samantha Cross (Babson College, USA) | Dr. Cristina Galalae (Open University, UK) |
| Dr. Carlo Mari (University of Molise, Italy) | Dr. Shauna Kearney (Birmingham City University, UK) |
| Dr. Tana Licsandru (Queen Mary University of London, UK) | Dr. Irem Yoruk (California State University, Los Angeles, USA) |
| Dr. Jenny Lin (California State University, Monterey Bay, USA) | Professor Charles Chi Cui (University of Westminster, UK) |
| Emma Johnson (The University of Sheffield, UK) | |

Non-Academic Partners

- Michelllea Millis Rucker (Transforming Our Practice, LLC., USA) A representative of National Diversity Council, USA (to be confirmed)

Track Aim and Objectives

The proposed track aims to consolidate our previous relational engagement work with non-academic stakeholders in a collaborative development of intervention tools for advancing diversity and inclusion engaged marketing (DIEM) competences of marketers.

Societal fabrics of the majority of contemporary marketplaces are multicultural, yet increasingly culturally divided (Galalae et al. 2023). The World Economic Forum identifies polarization among the top three global risks to the wellbeing of societies (World Economic Forum 2024). Indeed, in many societies, the middle ground – where parties with differing cultural backgrounds and opinions can have difficult, yet mutually listening, conversations – is crumbling. Our previous work, enabled by our Track 2 at the 2019, 2021 and 2023 TCR conferences, demonstrated diversity and inclusion engaged marketing (DIEM) to have the potential for serving as a key multicultural marketplace well-being lever so long as it goes beyond mere advocacy of diversity and inclusion, towards fostering multicultural engagement – “a condition where individuals and groups not only co-exist, but also are able and willing to [...] build a ‘living together context’” (Demangeot et al. 2019 p.339). However, DIEM advancement is lacking in scope and reach and faces several barriers, with the most significant barriers including a lack of knowledge exchange and sharing between research, education and practice (Kipnis et al. 2021, 2013). Against this background, in TCR 2025, we look to leverage the alliance established with one of our key non-academic industry partners, National Diversity Council (NDC), to co-create a DIEM learning tool. We will also further bolster this work via engagement of another non-academic partner, Transforming Our Practice (TOP), with who we will explore applications of innovative methods (e.g., Lego Serious Play) for facilitating sensitive conversations about ‘being and living together in multicultural marketplaces’, as part of DIEM learning.

Track objectives are as follows: 1) To co-create, with non-academic partners, a DIEM learning tool to be implemented as part of [NDC learning solutions](#) suite and certification program; 2) to develop a Lego Serious Play based methodology for incorporating ‘being and living together in multicultural marketplace’ discussions in DIEM learning; 3) to continue growing our network through collaborations with established and new academic and non-academic partners; and 4) to hold a relational engagement session with our established network of non-academic partners, for sharing insights and receiving their input on our work in progress and new directions of relevance.

Intended social impact outcomes: DIEM learning tool and Lego Serious Play method testing; learning tool tracking and evaluation measures; case study and/or white paper; Lego Serious Play magazine article.

Schedule Overview (appendix provides a detailed plan of work and schedule):

Pre-conference	All track members; partners as available	Monthly meetings (virtual, ongoing); focus on planning the realization of track objectives. At Babson College (right before conference): relational engagement event (objective #4); final preparations for conference.
At conference	All track members and partners	Day 0: Arrival to conference venue. Day 1 – Morning: Track objective #1; Afternoon: Track objective #2 Day 2: Split working time between Track objective #1 and #2 Day 3: Debrief and finalize schedule of outputs
Post-conference	All track members; partners as available	Monthly meetings; virtual – until outcomes have been delivered. Quarterly check-in follow-ups with NDC on DIEM learning tool usage, performance, and impact tracking.

References

- Demangeot, C., Kipnis, E., Pullig, C., Cross, S.N.N., Emontspool, J., Galalae, C. Grier, S.A., Rosenbaum, M.S., and Best, S.F. (2019). Constructing a Bridge to Multicultural Marketplace Well-Being: A Consumer-centered Framework for Marketer Action, *Journal of Business Research*, 100, 339-53.
- Galalae, C., Kipnis, E., Cue, C. C. Johnson, E., Licsandru, T. C., Vorster, L., Demangeot, C., Kearney, S., Mari, C., Martín Ruiz, V., Pullig, C., and Lindsey-Warren, T. M. (2023). A multi-contextual lens towards a global research agenda on racism and discrimination in the multicultural marketplace, *Journal of the Association of Consumer Research*, 8 (1), pp. 96-106.
- Kipnis, E., Broderick, A.J., Demangeot, C., Adkins, N.R., Ferguson, N.F., Henderson, G.R., Johnson, G., Mandiberg, J.M., Mueller, R.D., Pullig, C., Roy, A., Zúñiga, M. (2013). Branding Beyond Prejudice: Cultural Branding and Consumer Well-being in Multicultural Marketplaces, *Journal of Business Research*, 66, 1186-1194.
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- World Economic Forum (2024) The Global Risks Report 2024. Available online: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Global_Risks_Report_2024.pdf (Last accessed 16 July 2024)

Appendix: Detailed Work and Outputs Plan for the track at TCR2025

Explanatory notes:

- 1) Proposed track for TCR 2025 is part of an ongoing collaboration by members of our group. The group continues to evolve, with each TCR conference incorporating new members.
- 2) Our proposed arrangement assumes two and a half days of work, much of it with practitioners.
- 3) Our group holds monthly virtual meetings to monitor progress on different on-going projects. Subgroups also meet regularly to work on tasks related to these projects.

Task	Action from	Timeline/Location
Pre-conference		
If our track proposal is accepted, from October 2024 onward we will allocate time in meetings for conference preparations and will schedule an entire meeting focused on conference for May 2025	All group members	Monthly, ongoing <i>Online</i>
Annual general in-person meeting of our group, to discuss our direction and foci	All group members	½ day (Wednesday June 11, afternoon) / <i>Babson College</i>
Relational engagement event with established practitioners' network to solicit their views on completed and in-progress projects and input on future plans and directions.	All group members and invited practitioners to take part and contribute	1-day (Thursday June 12) / <i>Babson College</i>
Conference		
Working session toward objective #1: To co-create, with non-academic partners, a DIEM learning tool to be implemented as part of NDC learning solutions suite and certification program)	Track chairs and NDC non-academic track member facilitate All group members contribute	Day 1 (Friday, June 13) – morning <i>Conference venue</i>
Working session toward objective #2: to develop a Lego Serious Play based methodology for incorporating 'being and living together in multicultural marketplace' discussions in DIEM learning	Track chairs and TOP non-academic track member facilitate All group members contribute	Day 1 (Friday, June 13) – afternoon <i>Conference venue</i>
Split working time between objective #1 and #2	Track chairs and project lead facilitate All group members contribute	Day 2 (Saturday, June 14) – morning <i>Conference venue</i>
Debrief from working sessions and finalize the schedule of outputs	Track chairs and project lead facilitate All group members contribute	Day 3 (Sunday, June 15) – morning <i>Conference venue</i>
Post-conference		
Finalize evaluation of Lego Serious Play based methodology for incorporating 'being and living together in multicultural marketplace' discussions in DIEM learning – by October 2025	Track chairs and project lead facilitate All group members contribute	Monthly (or more frequently as needed); <i>online</i>
Complete DIEM learning tool and have it implemented in NDC learning solutions suite and certification program – by January 2026.	Track chairs and project lead facilitate All group members contribute	Monthly (or more frequently as needed); <i>online</i>
Lego Serious Play magazine article – by March 2026	Track chairs and project lead facilitate All group members contribute	Monthly (or more frequently as needed); <i>online</i>
Finalize Case study and/or white paper – by July 2026	Track chairs and project lead facilitate All group members contribute	Monthly (or more frequently as needed); <i>online</i>