



# Hematopolitics

March 2025



## Welcome back!

Welcome back to our third issue of the Hematopolitics newsletter! So much has happened since we last published our newsletter. We have opened an exhibition, launched a call for papers, and received so much exciting news from our network!

## Our exhibition is open!

We are delighted to share that our exciting new exhibition in collaboration with Thackray Museum of Medicine (Leeds)! 'Blood: Ties and Tensions' is now open! It will run from Saturday 8th February 2025 to Sunday 29 June 2025.

More details about the exhibition can be found [here](#).

At the same time, we're thrilled to share the development of our Digital Exhibition: **"It's in our blood": Identity, Blood Donation, and Transfusion**. Our Digital Engagement Fellow Claire Turner is working hard to represent the many fascinating stories of people who have donated and received blood.



## Hematopolitics Symposium 2

The Hematopolitics team are delighted to share news of their second symposium 'The Politics of Blood Donation and Transfusion: Histories, Controversies, and Futures'. Taking place in a marvellous, historic building in West Yorkshire, the symposium brings together leading interdisciplinary scholars working in the field of blood. Find out more about the symposium below, including how to apply.

# Call for Papers: Hematopolitics Symposium 2

## The Politics of Blood Donation and Transfusion: Histories, Controversies, and Futures

**6 June 2025, Thackray Museum of Medicine (Leeds, UK)**  
**Keynote Speaker: Dr Jenny Bangham (University of Edinburgh)**

From early transfusion experiments and wartime blood banking to contemporary controversies over donor eligibility and the global plasma economy, blood has been a site of both solidarity and division. At the same time, new developments in synthetic blood, xenotransfusion, and bioengineered alternatives challenge existing frameworks of donation and transfusion, raising questions about the future of blood governance, ethics, and access.

This symposium seeks to examine the historical, social, and political dimensions of blood donation and transfusion, focusing on how they have been governed, contested, and reimagined across time and space. We invite contributions from scholars in anthropology, history, sociology, medical humanities, Science and Technology Studies, bioethics, and related fields.

This symposium is held in conjunction with the special exhibition *Blood: Ties and Tensions* at the Thackray Museum of Medicine and will feature a keynote lecture by Dr. Jenny Bangham, author of *Blood Relations: Transfusion and the Making of Human Genetics* (2020, University of Chicago Press). Panellists will also have the opportunity to explore the exhibition, fostering further discussions around its curated themes. A limited number of bursaries will be available to support domestic travel for postgraduate, early career researchers, and independent scholars.

## Some key questions we seek to explore:

- How have the politics of blood donation and transfusion changed over time, and how do these shifts reflect broader transformations in biomedicine, nationalism, and social imaginaries?
- How has the history of blood banking shaped knowledge and discourses on race and ethnicity, class and caste, gender, sex, sexuality, and citizenship?
- How do infrastructures of blood banking and the commercialization of blood products reproduce or mitigate global health inequalities?
- What ethical and political challenges emerge with new blood technologies, such as synthetic blood, xenotransfusion, and stem cell-based alternatives?
- How do patients, donors, and medical professionals experience and navigate the evolving landscape of blood donation and transfusion?
- How do artistic, literary, and activist engagements with blood expose or reimagine the politics of donation and transfusion?

## Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Historical and contemporary shifts in donor eligibility and exclusion
- National blood donation policies and their political and ethical stakes
- Racialised and gendered discourses surrounding blood donation and transfusion
- Ethics and governance of blood banking, plasma economies, and commercialised donation
- Technological futures: synthetic blood, xenotransfusion, and regenerative medicine
- Stigma and discrimination in blood donation and patients receiving transfusion
- Political, aesthetic, and activist engagements with blood donation and transfusion in media, art, and literature

## To apply:

Please submit a 200–300 word abstract and a brief bio (100-150 word) via the **Submission Point** by 25 April.

We hope the symposium will lead to contributions to a special issue or edited volume. For any inquiries, please contact Dr Jieun Kim ([j.e.kim@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:j.e.kim@leeds.ac.uk)) or Dr Claire Turner ([c.o.turner@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.o.turner@leeds.ac.uk)).

This symposium follows the success of the first Hematopolitics Symposium in May 2022, organised as part of the Hematopolitics Project (currently funded by the AHRC). For updates, visit our **website** and follow us on **BlueSky**.

## Exhibition Events

### Thackray Insights: Blood Relations

Saturday 5 April, 10:30am

Join Dr Jieun Kim (Hematopolitics PI; University of Leeds) and Dr Ros Williams (University of Sheffield) for two fascinating talks on blood donation and global communities.

More details about this event can be found [here](#).



### Exhibition Launch

Thursday 27 February

The Hematopolitics team had a fabulous night celebrating the launch of their new exhibition in collaboration with Thackray.

Thanks so much to [Chapter 81](#) for these fantastic photos!



## Members' News

**Jini (Jieun Kim)** will be giving a talk entitled 'Blood and Citizenship in a Fragmented Nation: Logics of Gift, Debt and Inheritance in South Korea' on **Monday 24 March, 3-5pm** at the **University of Manchester** (5.205, University Place).

We are delighted to welcome a new member to the Hematopolitics network: **Amadou Senou** - welcome! Amadou Senou teaches anthropology in the Faculty of History and Geography at the University of Social Sciences and Management in Bamako, Mali. He is also a doctoral student at the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain under the supervision of Dr **Jacob Copeman**. Senou works on blood donation within religious organisations in Mali. In particular, he focuses on the Ançardine association, a religious movement with over 3 million members led by Seid Cherif Ousmane Madani HAIDARA, a highly influential religious figure who encourages his followers to donate blood regularly in order to save lives. Senou's research highlights the role of Mali's current religious movements in blood donation policy in a country shaken by a security crisis.

You can find Amadou's profile and many more via our [Network](#) webpage. To be featured on our website, please email our Digital Engagement Fellow Claire via [hematopolitics@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:hematopolitics@leeds.ac.uk) with a short biography and a link to your institutional webpage.

## Get in Touch!

Do you have an upcoming event, publication, or CFP you'd like to share with our network? We are always looking for new resources, connections, and experiences! Get in touch with us via our email: [hematopolitics@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:hematopolitics@leeds.ac.uk)

You can also keep up with all the latest news about the project via our social media! Follow our BlueSky account [@hematopolitics.bsky.social](#) for opportunities to network, news on events, and updates on our upcoming exhibition.

For a text-only version of any of our newsletters (incl. posters and graphics), please get in touch with our Digital Engagement Fellow, Claire, via our email address.