

Baroness Lola Young

Baroness Young is a former actor, an author, campaigner and peer. Her writing includes a book and numerous essays on culture, heritage, museums and representation.

After a career in academia, after she became Professor of Cultural Studies at Middlesex University in 1997, she was seconded to the Black Cultural Archives, where with her academic background and practice-based experience in culture, she worked on supporting the organisation prior to its move to Windrush Square. In 2000, Lola was awarded an OBE for services to Black British History. Other awards include the Legacy Awards 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award for championing human rights, culture and politics, and the Drapers Sustainable Fashion Award for Sustainable Fashion Champion, 2023.

Lola moved from academia to the GLA, where she served as Head of Culture, after which she established her own consultancy, writing a series of reports and policy papers for Arts Council England, and other national cultural bodies.

She became an independent Crossbench member of the House of Lords in 2004 where she works on legislation to eliminate modern slavery and is the founding co-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Groups on Ethics and Sustainability in Fashion and Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights. Lola is currently campaigning for a new law to make human rights and environmental sustainability due diligence reporting mandatory for commercial corporations and public bodies, which is sponsored by the Corporate Justice Coalition.

In addition, she has also championed the rights of access to care records for care-experienced people of all ages.

Invitations to chair the Caine Prize for African literature, the Orange Prize for Women's fiction and the Man Booker Prize for Fiction have consolidated Lola's love for books and reading. Lola is currently a Non-Executive Director (NED) of Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

Lola has served on the boards of several national cultural organisations, including The National Archives, the Southbank Centre, the National Theatre, English Heritage/Historic England; she chaired the *Young Review* and *Agenda*, addressing racial disproportionality and the vulnerability of traumatised women in the justice system, and currently Co-Chairs the Foundation for Future London: she is also a NED on the Board of environmental sustainability change innovator, Futerra.

She has challenged the role of public bodies, such as local authorities, NHS and government departments to produce statements on modern slavery in the same way as commercial companies, to explain the steps they are taking to rid their supply chains of forced and exploitative labour. Lola has strong and active links with the University of Nottingham, having accepted an Honorary Professorship with the Rights Lab and the School of Politics and International Relations in 2018 and a Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa* in 2019. The Rights Lab is a University Beacon of Excellence and she acts as adviser on research projects with policy impact and leads public engagement activities.

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