



## **Black empowerment, affirmative action and the racist economy: Have we failed, and if so, why?**

**Date: Thursday, 29 October 2020**

**Time: 16:00 - 18:00 pm CAT**

**India | USA | Malaysia | South Africa**

South Africa has been a democracy with equality before the law for more than two decades, but its economy is marked by racialised inequality, to an extreme degree, in patterns of employment, labour market outcomes and the ownership of productive assets. Policy to transform the racial composition of the private ownership, corporate structures and managerial hierarchies have advanced under the banner of “Black economic empowerment”. Most agree that progress has been glacial. Systemic racism remains entrenched.

The emergence of the “black lives matter movement” in the US has put wind in the sails of efforts to overcome systemic racism. It has also underscored the centrality of action to address race-based economic exclusion to the transformation of society. South Africa, Malaysia, India and the United States have approached the struggle for racial and caste equity in different ways. There are lessons from their achievements and their setbacks that all can learn from. The webinar will explore these comparative experiences.

This event forms part of a SCIS review of black economic policy in South Africa undertaken with support of the Open Society Foundation (OSF).

### **Guest Speakers**

- **Ashwini Deshpande** is Professor of Economics and Founding Director of the Centre for Economic Data and Analysis (CEDA) at Ashoka University, India.
- **Darrick Hamilton** is joint Professor of Economics and Urban Policy and Director of the doctoral program in public and urban policy, at The Milano School of International Affairs and The New School for Social Research at The New School in New York.
- **Hwok-Aun Lee** (PhD) is a Senior Fellow at the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore.
- **Vuyo Jack** Ca(SA) is the executive chairman of the South African BEE rating agency, Empowerdex.

### **Facilitator**

Dr Nomfundo Xenia Ngwenya, Visiting Research Fellow: Wits School of Governance | Southern Centre for Inequality Studies

**Register now**

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**Zoom meeting details to be provided on RSVP**

## GUEST SPEAKER PROFILES



**Professor Ashwini Deshpande**

Ashwini Deshpande is Professor of Economics and the Founding Director of Centre for Economic Data and Analysis (CEDA) at Ashoka University, India. Her Ph.D. and early publications have been on the international debt crisis of the 1980s. Subsequently, she has been working on the economics of discrimination and affirmative action, with a focus on caste and gender in India. She has published extensively in leading scholarly journals. She is the author of "Grammar of Caste: economic discrimination in contemporary India", Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2011 (Hardcover) and 2017 (Paperback); and "Affirmative Action in India", Oxford University Press, New Delhi, Oxford India Short Introductions (OISI) series, 2013 and the editor of a number of volumes. She received the EXIM Bank award for outstanding dissertation (now called the IERA Award) in 1994, and the 2007 VKRV Rao Award for Indian economists under 45.



**Professor Darrick Hamilton**

Darrick Hamilton is the director of the doctoral program in public and urban policy, and jointly appointed as the Henry Cohen Professor of Economics and Urban Policy at The Milano School of International Affairs, Management and Urban Policy and the Department of Economics, The New School for Social Research at The New School in New York. He is a faculty research fellow at the Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis at The New School, the immediate past president of the National Economic Association (NEA), an associate director of the Diversity Initiative for Tenure in Economics Program, an associate director of the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity at Duke University, and co-principal investigator of the National Asset Scorecard in Communities of Color Project (NASCC). Professor Hamilton is a stratification economist, whose work focuses on the causes, consequences and remedies of racial and ethnic inequality in economic and health outcomes, which includes an examination of the intersection of identity, racism, colorism, and socioeconomic outcomes. He has authored numerous scholarly articles on socioeconomic stratification in education, marriage, wealth, homeownership, health (including mental health), and labor market outcomes.



**Dr Hwok-Aun Lee**

Hwok-Aun Lee (PhD) is Senior Fellow at the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. He has researched and published works on affirmative action, discrimination, inequality, social protection, labour and education, with a focus on Malaysia, as well as comparative study vis-à-vis South Africa and Southeast Asia. He is the author of *Affirmative Action in Malaysia and South Africa: Preference for Parity* (Routledge, 2021), and various articles in the *ISEAS Perspective* and *ISEAS Trends in Southeast Asia* series, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, and *Journal of Southeast Asian Economies*.



**Vuyo Jack CA(SA)**

Vuyo Jack is an entrepreneur associated with Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) and co-founded South Africa's first BEE ratings agency Empowerdex in June 2001. He holds a BCom for the University of the Witwatersrand, is a chartered accountant by training and completed his articles with PwC. He has grown the Empowerdex brand to service more than 6000 clients. Vuyo has served on numerous boards such as the Public Investment Corporation where he chaired the Audit and Risk Committee and the Fund Investment Panel on Africa and Private Equity. He also served on the Automobile Association and Pareto boards amongst others. In the government sector he has chaired the National Treasury Audit Committee, chaired the Accounting Standards Board and he was selected to be a member of the Davis Tax Committee which was tasked with overhauling the South African tax system. Vuyo also spent 17 months at the Department of Arts and Culture first as a special advisor to Minister Nathi Mthethwa and subsequently as an Acting Director-General until Nov 2015.