

Manchester Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence  
Proposal: Creating Communities of Solidarity  
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**Title: Creating Communities of Solidarity**

**Lead Applicant Information:**

Dr Sabrina Villenave  
Lecturer in International Politics  
Program Pathway Director of International Relations (MSC),  
Department of Politics | University of Manchester  
[sabrina.villenave@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:sabrina.villenave@manchester.ac.uk)  
+441612754338

**Proponent Short Bio:**

Sabrina Villenave is a lecturer in Global Politics at the University of Manchester. Her research focuses on contemporary cases of disappearances in Brazil. She also studies Critical Security Studies and its late critique of race and racialisation. She is interested in postcolonial and decolonial critiques of International Relations.

**Proposal:**

The organisation of an exhibition and workshop with young adults to raise awareness of the disappearance of migrant children. The event aims to raise awareness of how migrant children and adults are vulnerable and create effective solidarity communities.

**Justification:**

Since July 2021, 4,600 separated children seeking refuge in the UK have been housed in government-run hotels. There have been 440 incidents of children going missing. Two hundred children have disappeared and have never been found. In January 2023, a minister admitted that two hundred asylum-seeking children who were placed in hotels run by the Home Office have gone missing. There are six Home Office hotels for unaccompanied asylum-seeker children, including one in Brighton. This project aims to create awareness of the disappearance of unaccompanied migrant children in the UK and to create a net of solidarity.

**Proposal's Delivery/Programme:**

A 15-minute talk on migration and disappearance and the project "Conflict Textiles".  
A 10-minute guided meditation on kindness  
A 1:30-minute art-craft activity, decorating figurines as migrant subjects.

**Partners:**

Conflict Textiles is home to an extensive collection of international textiles, exhibitions, and associated events, all focusing on elements of conflict and human rights abuses. It is an 'Associated Site' of CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) at Ulster University, Northern

Ireland. "Conflict Textiles" will lend a textile for the exhibition's duration and offer a workshop with kids for one afternoon.

<https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/conflicttextiles/>

**Pinc** is a Specialist College for creative education in the UK, focusing on creative study programme pathways for 16–25-year-olds. Art, digital art and complementary studies for neurodivergent young people. Their campuses operate from within and in partnership with Arts and Cultural organisations for an alternative approach with enhanced careers and progression opportunities. They support additional/high-needs routes to well-being, attainment, sustained engagement and employment.

<https://pinccollege.co.uk>

**Report:** On the 5th of July 2024, I organised a workshop on Migration and Politics of Care with students from Pinc College at the Manchester Museum. A group of 8 youths attended the workshop that involved the exhibition of the Arpillera: North Belfast Friendship Club in 2019, Maker: Asylum Seekers facilitated by Roberta Bacic. I firstly, introduced them to the work of the "Conflict Textiles", and explained about how the arpillera they were seeing was created, by whom, and in which context. I then introduced the issue of migration and disappearances of (child) migrants and migration in general. I gave them space to ask questions. After that, we did together a love and kindness meditation for about 12 minutes. Everybody liked the guided meditation and the tutors from Pinc College reported after that it was a good way to bring the group to the task at hand, giving them some time to reflect on what we would do, and to calm their minds to start the crafting activity. We moved to the activity of crafting the figurines as representatives of migrants. The activity brought us to discuss who we do believe migrants are, what types of skills do they have, why do they leave their countries and how they can contribute to our society. There was also space and a meaningful discussion on what we know about migrants and how we can show up to them with care; many students are part of a diverse migrant background and were happy to share their personal stories and experiences as migrants.





