

Afua Hirsch

**Former barrister, award-winning journalist,
diversity and identity expert**

- Available For:
- Keynote Speaking
 - Motivational Speaking
 - Hosting & Presenting

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About

A former barrister, Afua Hirsch is an award-winning journalist, broadcaster and human rights activist. She regularly writes for the Guardian and Observer newspapers, hosts corporate awards ceremonies and conferences, and delivers keynote speeches on diversity and inclusion, social justice, identity, unconscious bias and the media.

She was raised in Wimbledon, a testing ground for her observations about the divisions in modern Britain; London is one of the most diverse cities in the world, yet the privileged, hillside enclave, where Afua grew up was almost exclusively white.

From a young age, she had to make sense of the ways in which people racialised her — a mixed-race, black girl with an African name and a middle class upbringing — while at the same time claiming that they “did not see race”. Afua had to work out for herself the history of where those ideas originated, and why that history has shaped our world in so many profound ways, addressing it rarely and in the most selective ways.

Afua Hirsch left school in 1999 and studied philosophy, politics and economics at St Peter’s College, University of Oxford. There she focused on African politics and wrote a thesis on how the traditional role of women in Ghanaian society had shaped postcolonial contemporary national politics.

After graduating in 2002 with a degree in politics and a law degree, Afua qualified as a barrister in 2006 at the Bar of England and Wales, and trained at Doughty Street Chambers. A chamber which has pioneered advocacy and jurisprudence on human rights in England and Wales, and around the world.

There, she practiced human rights law in criminal defence, public and international law before realising that, ultimately, what she really wanted, was to communicate the importance of these struggles to a wider audience. And so she turned her focus to journalism.

In 2008, Afua Hirsch became the legal affairs correspondent for the Guardian Newspaper. Then in 2011, she moved to Ghana as the Guardian’s West Africa correspondent, covering a large part of West and Central Africa for the newspaper.

Having moved back to the UK several years later, Afua began making TV in earnest in 2014 when she joined Sky News as the Social Affairs editor, a position she held until 2017. She reported on stories ranging from the return of slums in the UK’s deteriorating private rental sector, to the girl born into and trapped in a cult until her 30’s.

She is currently a regular contributor to Sky News debate show The Pledge, and participates in other current affairs programmes including C4 News, BBC2 Newsnight, BBC1 Question Time, and CNN. Afua also writes feature length articles for publications ranging from Time Magazine, Vogue, the Sunday Times and the Observer.

Afua Hirsch is a Booker Prize judge, the world’s leading literary prize for works of fiction in the English language. She is also one half of the fashion brand Sika, which creates ethically-made, African inspired men’s and women’s wear clothing, made in Ghana, sold globally.

Her first published book, released in 2018, Brit(ish): On Race, Identity And Belonging was awarded a Royal Society

Video



Testimonials

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Afua Hirsch delivered a dynamic keynote speech as part of our Black History Month celebrations this year. Her expert command of communications allowed for a topic as complex as Unconscious Bias to be transmitted smoothly to a varied audience. Afua provided our audience members with useful takeaways and practical ways of overcoming issues related to Unconscious Bias. Afua has paved the way for a worthwhile discussion to be had, which has already led to much dialogue on the topic throughout the firm and has even given decision-makers the impetus to approach their work in unique ways. We cannot recommend Afua Hirsch enough, as she is an excellent speaker who provided an engaging, interesting, humorous and thought-provoking talk.

Jacqueline Courtenay - London Stock Exchange.

Books and DVD's



TAGS FOR AFUA HIRSCH

Legal Issues

News Presenter

Journalist

Inspirational

Academia

Diversity & Inclusion

Unconscious Bias

Human Rights

Immigration

BAME

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