In astronomy and other (especially physical) sciences we are trained to be “minimisers”. This comes from a good soul, and positive motives, where we say “everyone can do science”, but ends with “science and mathematics are above human differences, and thus your background is irrelevant”. Unfortunately, it turns out that the science is, in fact, done by humans. These people turn out to be, no matter where we started, diverse individuals. I will talk about how minimisation impacts and build beliefs for us all, especially from the point of view of a “White Guy in Astronomy” – I know what we learn, and what we do! Then I will also focus on the more hidden factors of Sexuality and Mental Health -- that are yet another invisible factor in STEM fields, how I come to “admit” this too, and in how we communicate participation in these fields to future STEMmers.

Bio

Jake Noel-Storr is a global learner and teacher. They did their Undergraduate study at the University of Birmingham in the UK (their home country), and then they went to New York City in the USA to do their PhD at Columbia University – before then working in Astronomy (and STEM) education at the University of Arizona, Rochester Institute of Technology, and forming the non-profit InsightSTEM. Jake is now a Lecturer for Astronomy Practicals at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands (as a newly-minted “Brefugee”). Jake is a co-chair of the European Astronomical Society Working Group on Diversity and Inclusion; as well as a member of the Netherlands Astronomy Equality and Inclusion Committee, a member of the Organizing Committee of the IAU working group co-chaired by Amelia (also in this panel), and the web-host/creator of accessastronomy.eu.