Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - Action Plan

We are committed to social justice, and to tackling injustice and inequality. Racial justice is a critical element in this, in the UK and across the world, and we are committed to addressing structural and systemic racism in the UK both as an organisation and through the work we support.

We believe that understanding and making progress towards diversity, equity, and inclusion will be critical for delivering our mission. To do this, we are working with the whole team to explore   
and agree our shared organisational values, and we are implementing a Diversity, Equity  
 and Inclusion Action Plan – involving both Trustees and staff.

We want our progress towards diversity, equity and inclusion to be measured by our actions, and are keen to encourage feedback, challenge, and new ideas from everyone we work alongside.

Our Commitments

As an organisation, we believe that a greater diversity of views, skills, and lived experience will help generate better ideas, and lead to better decision making.

We commit to:

1. living up to our value of “equity” in our culture, systems and practices;
2. working in an inclusive way as a staff and Trustee team to ensure we make progress against our action plan; and
3. tracking, improving and sharing our progress.

Through our work, we have funded some significant organisations seeking to tackle injustice, including racial injustice, for many years. But we know that we need to do much more.

We commit to:

1. striving for fair opportunities and outcomes for the people we work with;
2. making an effort to understand and respond to people’s context, culture, and characteristics;
3. funding more organisations led by and for people from racialised communities\*
4. giving more long-term funding and support to organisations already in our portfolio that are working to advance racial justice;
5. working with partners to identify, fund, and nurture smaller organisations led by racialised people that are working towards our impact goals; and
6. using our power as a funder to influence recruitment and governance practice to be more inclusive in sectors (e.g. environment) where the majority of organisations are not ethnically diverse.

\*We are using the terms “racialised communities” and “racialised community-led” organisations to acknowledge that Black and Asian people, and people from other minority ethnic communities (often termed “BAME”) are categorised by race like this, only because of the white-led systems they exist within.  “Racialised” doesn’t define people’s community or identity, but the phenomenon that is happening to them.

About this plan

Our action plan uses the recommendations of the 2019 Association of Charitable Foundation’s report [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: The Pillars of Stronger Foundation Practice](https://www.acf.org.uk/downloads/ACF_DEI_Thepillarsofstrongerfoundationpractice_final.pdf) as central principles for putting our ambitions for diversity, equity and inclusion into practice.

Pillar 1: Invests time and resources in understanding and defining diversity, equity and inclusion

1. Board and the Senior Management Team have DEI planned work that is delivered and reviewed.
   1. We will develop an action plan and values statement
2. Develop organisational definitions of DEI.
   1. Invest in continued training for staff and trustees in relation to understanding DEI
   2. Run initial DEI training for all staff
   3. Unconscious bias training for Trustees (invited) and for all staff
   4. Ensure DEI training and support is part of the Esmee people strategy to support new plan
3. DEI is central to our core values.
   1. Develop a set of organisational values with DEI at the core, thought staff workshops and bring to Board
   2. Develop a set of DEI Definitions
   3. Publish values on website
4. Baseline our activity so that targets or commitments can be set in relevant areas as appropriate
   1. DEI Trustee/Staff monitoring exercise (repeated annually)
   2. Data analysis of current funding portfolio and regular review
5. On a regular basis look at how external/ independent review can help hold us to account for our progress.
   1. We will publish our approach to DEI, our values statement and our performance.
   2. The DEI staff group may invite external input.
   3. Publish on website

Pillar 2: Produces and reviews strategies that will implement DEI practices

1. Embed DEI in our new strategy. Bring recommendations to the Board on the issues that fit the new strategy to illustrate what this means in practice.
2. Communicate our commitment to DEI clearly, practically and with integrity.
   1. Strategic Plan updated to strengthen DEI commitments.
   2. Impact areas analysis for Our Natural World, Creative Confident Communities and A Fairer Future to review opportunities to recognise and incorporate DEI in their focus.
3. Look at what bringing a DEI lens means across our operations e.g. recruitment, funding, the endowment, supply chains.
   1. Each Senior Management Team member will consider and develop an approach for their area of responsibility and outline/discuss with staff DEI group.
   2. To be incorporated into purchasing and other relationships

Pillar 3: Collects, tracks and publishes DEI data on its own practices and performance

1. Collect DEI data and incorporate capture into systems going forward.
2. Report to the Board and publish DEI data on who we fund and, on our operations.
   1. Publish DEI Data on our Own Practices and Performance
   2. Obtain baseline data for Trustees, Staff and Senior Management Team and report on it
   3. Actively aim to increase the diversity of Board and Staff - to be monitored and reported on, in annual monitoring survey
   4. Obtain baseline data for DEI for our funding portfolio
   5. Produce DEI Data Report for our funding portfolio
   6. Agree reporting and progress monitoring channels for our funding portfolio
   7. Share Baseline Data Results and Targets publicly (our funding portfolio)
   8. Funders for Race Equality Alliance Audit complete and share/agree action
   9. Hold conversation with Investment Adviser about how we can actively engage in DEI in relation to our investments
   10. Identify and develop opportunities for DEI to be implemented in social investment, including SI DEI Charter

Pillar 4: Has a diverse trustee board and staff team, both in terms of demographics and experience

1. Look for opportunities to increase the diversity and equity of the staff team using programmes such as 2027.
   1. We will actively look at programmes targeting improving the diversity of the workforce (e.g. 2027, Drive Forward). At any one time (at least) one staff member will be from such a programme
   2. Incorporate into recruitment plan - both as vacancies arise, and in reviewing work-based access programmes, and new roles
2. When commissioning recruitment for roles - speak with the consultant and ensure that both monitoring data is collected and reported on and there is a strategy in place to encourage and support a wide range of applications. Ensure recruiters are aware of any specific under-represented groups and make this clear in our documentation.
   1. We will increase the diversity of our Trustee Board and Staff team and review and report on this through our annual DEI monitoring survey.
3. Prioritise improving the racial diversity and lived experience of our board.
   1. Recruitment of two Trustees in 2020/21
4. Include a DEI update in Trustee induction processes and will offer appropriate support and training to new trustees.
   1. Trustee induction programme to incorporate this

Pillar 5: Reflects and implements DEI practices in its funding activities

1. Ensure our new priorities address DEI (i.e. Racialised community leadership, encouraging diversity in Our Natural World).
   1. In all our impact areas we will state how they relate to DEI and what we will do to address this issue.
   2. DEI standing item on quarterly Portfolio Review Meeting agenda
   3. Work alongside ONW Director to identify and implement DEI actions for ONW
   4. Work alongside CCC/FF Director to identify and implement actions for CCC/FF
   5. We will identify the Racialised community-led organisations in our current portfolio with a view to increasing their funding and their capacity to exert more influence in the issues they focus on.
   6. We will prioritise for support organisations serving the Racialised community-led sector within the budget allocation we have earmarked for infrastructure bodies.
   7. By the end of Q1 2021 we will have committed over £1m to funds targeting Racialised community-led organisation to address the particular issues arising out of the Covid 19 pandemic.
2. DEI analysis of our current funding portfolio to find out which organisations we are excluding at which stage of the funding process.
   1. We will track our own processes to identify if there are unintended hurdles and address these through pro-active and systems changes.
   2. Commission independent assessment of processes
3. Address how we can shift power and fund a broader and more diverse range of organisations
   1. At the end of year one of the strategy, to have real examples of where this has been achieved. Look at formalising the Young people's panel into our model.
   2. Adapt existing processes to facilitate inclusivity
   3. Trial new and, potentially, more inclusive application processes (e.g. video, applications).
   4. Trial Participatory Grantmaking with Young Advisors
   5. Use our networks and other channels to identify Racialised community-led organisations not currently in our portfolio but that can contribute to our impact goals and invite funding applications.

Pillar 6: Expresses its DEI commitment, policies and practices publicly

1. We will produce a DEI plan and bring this to the Board.
   1. DEI Action Plan to Board and reported on our website.
   2. Update paper on actions taken and plan to come
   3. Develop values statement
2. We will express a public commitment to DEI.
   1. DEI incorporated into our Strategic Plan.
   2. DEI page on our website, regularly updated with progress.
   3. Active engagement with partners on this issue.
   4. Share action plan on DEI on website
   5. Agree an approach to board reporting
   6. Agree an approach to external reporting

Pillar 7: Makes itself accountable to those it serves and supports

1. We will express a public commitment on DEI, sharing our action plan and progress on our website.
   1. Explain how DEI is addressed by our strategy
   2. Share our demographic data on funding and applications
2. We will report on progress and share learning.
   1. DEI page on our website, regularly updated with progress.
   2. Active engagement with partners on this issue.
   3. Agree an approach to external reporting & what to share

Pillar 8: Uses its own power to advocate for and advance DEI practices

1. We will be open about the journey we are taking on DEI and will share practice and learning with peer foundations and the wider sector.
   1. Information on planned actions and progress on our website, regularly updated.
   2. Engagement with other foundations and groups
2. We will do more to champion grantees who are leading the way on DEI.
   1. All our communications will feature and highlight a fully diverse range of organisations.
   2. Look at how funding plus and other areas of our toolkit can support those leading the way on DEI.
   3. Look across our activities for opportunities - supported by Staff DEI Group
3. We will be a better ally to our funding partners who are tackling racism and injustice on the frontline.
   1. Listen harder to them and help support organisations to promote and share best practice on DEI.
   2. Share good practice and effective ways of working with peers and the wider sector.

Pillar 9: Collaborates with others to promote and implement DEI practices

1. Review the networks that will support our aspirations (e.g. DEI Coalition of foundations) and join networks where they support our wider aspirations on DEI
   1. Continue to be a member of the Funders for Race Equality Alliance
   2. Work together with relevant grantees
   3. Meet Fozia Irfan with a view to joining DEI Coalition
   4. Learn from the experience of funders delivering ring-fenced Racialised community funds and identify practice Esmee can implement
2. Implement Values / DEI Staff Action Group
   1. The Group will meet regularly and work with Senior Management Team and external partners to ensure the Foundation is delivering its Values/DEI commitments and looking for areas of improvement.
   2. Terms of reference approved by Senior Management Team. First meeting January 2021.
3. DEI Data standard – implementation of DEI data taxonomy.
   1. We will play a lead role in the development of the DEI data standard, encourage others to use it, and implement it ourselves