

Ongoing Anti-Racism Actions

18 June 2020

We believe Black Lives Matter. We know that Black Lives Matter.

We have not previously written that Eastside Projects is an anti-racist space. This needs to be corrected.

- Eastside Projects is an anti-racist space.

We believe all art organisations must be anti-racist and support demands for change made at the Black Lives Matter protests taking place around the world and here in Birmingham.

We recognise that there is much work to do.

We founded Eastside Projects on principles of ‘altering existing structures to survive in a capitalist economy’¹ and acknowledge that in doing so we maintain many cultural norms. Though we attempted to make a new model of an artist run multiverse, altering existing structures is proven to not be enough. We need to replace them. Our own structures should not be systemically unequal.

We have been working towards being an organisation that actively listens and learns and believe this is integral to being part of the dismantling of systemic inequality in this country and beyond.

We make a commitment to continually review our collective and individual working practices. As a next step, we – our staff and our advisory board – will reflect on Eastside Projects by working through Teresa Cisneros’ *Reflective Questions* from [Document 0](#) and the [White Supremacy in Organizations](#) document by Dismantling Racism Works, adapted by The Centre for Community Organizations.

We will:

- ensure artists and members of staff who are Black, Indigenous and/or People of Colour do not carry the labour for white artists and members of staff – the onus is on everyone to learn and respond.
- continue to programme Black artists and artists from other marginalised communities across all of our artistic activity, with a minimum of 30% of our annual programming centring artists of colour. We will ensure that a maximum of 50% of this programming is international. This policy ensures we amplify UK based artists and reflect the evolving diversity of our city and the UK, in relation to ethnicity, and other characteristics including socioeconomic class, age, (dis)ability, and sexuality.
- continue to work with Black artists and artists from other marginalised communities to co-curate at least one exhibition each year in our main gallery.
- pay artists and freelancers fairly and on time, and continue to fight for fair pay for everyone, but particularly artists, across the sector.
- regularly review our recruitment processes to ensure no one feels excluded from employment or other opportunities.

¹ Eastside Projects User’s Manual Draft #1, 2008, https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/eastside_projects_manual_draft_1.pdf

- proactively work with and support with cultural partners in Digbeth, Birmingham and across the UK, to fight racism in all its forms and build a fair cultural sector for the future.
- offer Another Reality and our meeting room (as soon as we are once again able) for free to artists and groups from marginalised communities who need somewhere to meet.
- provide unconscious bias training for all staff and key advisory board members.
- continue to diversify and develop our advisory board membership and staff team.
- work to create a reality where care is on an equal footing with production.
- offer artists who are Black, Indigenous and/or People of Colour free membership of our EOP programme.
- make public responses to criticism of Eastside Projects.

We will make this ongoing process of listening, learning, change and development as public and transparent as we can. We welcome comments, criticisms and challenges – please feel to contact us at info@eastsideprojects.org.

We know that we are seen, and that our actions matter,

Eastside Projects

Thanks to Site Gallery for their open and frank [Black Lives Matter statement](#) which has directly informed this document, the invaluable workbook – [White Supremacy Culture in Organizations](#), by Dismantling Racism Works adapted by The Centre for Community Organizations, 2019 and Teresa Cisneros for encouraging us all to “stop and reflect on the complicities faced by many of us in our role as cultural workers”.