

Liverpool Arts and Culture Race Equality Manifesto

Liverpool's arts and culture organisations, large and small, have been working collectively to provide a set of principles and a plan for actively promoting greater race equality across the city's arts and culture sector. Galvanized by the **Black Lives Matter** movement and catalysed by the murder of George Floyd, the two consortia of **Creative Organisations of Liverpool (COoL)** and **Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium (LARC)** have developed a Race Equality Manifesto that will anchor a campaign for change in their organisations' workforces and governance, the work they do with artists, and the audiences they engage with.

Signatories of the manifesto to date include:

- ***Bazuka International (Katumba Drumming and Movement)***
- ***BlackFest LTD***
- ***Bluecoat Display Centre***
- ***Collective Encounters***
- ***DaDaFest***
- ***FACT Liverpool***
- ***First Take Video Limited***
- ***Liverpool Arab Arts Festival***
- ***Liverpool Biennial***
- ***Liverpool Everyman Playhouse***
- ***Liverpool Irish Festival***
- ***Liverpool's Royal Court***
- ***Movema***
- ***National Museums Liverpool***
- ***Open Culture CIC***
- ***Open Eye Gallery***
- ***Open Culture CIC***
- ***Pagoda Arts***
- ***Paperwork Theatre***
- ***Squash Liverpool***
- ***Tate Liverpool***
- ***The Bluecoat***
- ***The Windows Project***
- ***Tmesis Theatre***
- ***Unity Theatre Ltd***
- ***Writing on the Wall***

Statement

As arts and culture organisations in Liverpool City Region, we stand against racism and racial injustice. Hate and discrimination have no home in the arts or anywhere else.

We are committed to redressing the imbalances that exist in our sector, by creating opportunities for, increasing the positive visibility of, and promoting the inclusion of those who experience racism.¹

We jointly commit to the seven pledges of this Manifesto, in a dynamic campaign that tailors and scales our organisations' activities to drive change. Collectively, we will support each other to uphold these pledges.

We will annually: review progress and any barriers; share new understanding; apply and review actions and targets set for each pledge; and actively challenge our organisations to stand against racism and racial injustice.

Introduction and background to the Manifesto

The Manifesto is a campaign to drive inclusion and equality in arts and culture, diversify the sector, and speak out against racism. It has been produced collectively by **Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium (LARC)** and **Creative Organisations of Liverpool (COoL)** to provide a set of principles and a plan for actively promoting greater race equality and diversity through the work we do. This has been developed through a process of internal consultation, inviting external perspectives, and drawing on race equality best practice in the arts. As an evolving document, we welcome further input from others.

The Manifesto consolidates work undertaken since 2020 when we recognised that the police killing of George Floyd was a watershed moment for change. Responding to **Black Lives Matter's** calls for action, both consortia acknowledged that racism operates at different levels: individual, structural and institutional; and that change, for us, had to start within. We began therefore to prioritise areas where policy change, new resources, and institutional commitment from trustees, together with buy in from all staff, could be transformative within our organisations.

The Manifesto reflects four priority areas: our workforces and governance; support for artists; developing audiences; and advocacy. Seven pledges are set out in the action plan below. These are baseline pledges that signatories agree to, which are accompanied by more detailed actions and targets that each organisation tailors to meet their specific needs. Each action has an indication of how they will be delivered and a schedule to complete. As a living document, these actions will evolve and be updated, with progress made public. Organisations are encouraged to make use of additional models of race equality best practice, to help implement change and further progress their anti-racist commitments.

Initially for **LARC** and **COoL**, the broader ambition is for the Manifesto to provide a blueprint for the wider arts and cultural sector within Liverpool City Region and beyond. Synergies will be sought outside of the sector, for example with community and non-arts organisations committed to racial justice, inclusion and equality.

¹ We appreciate that terms relating to difference and self-identification are constantly evolving and, in the words of Stuart Hall, identity is an 'unfinished conversation'. In this continuing discourse, we have found this particularly useful: [#BAMEOver - A Statement for the UK \(google.com\)](#).

Action Plan

Pledge 1: To create a more racially diverse workforce across all levels of our organisations, including boards, leadership and contracted workers

Action: Organisations aspire to achieve a minimum 15% diverse workforce, working towards this by setting percentage targets each year

Timescale: Ongoing.

Pledge 2: To be a bold advocate for race equality, sharing best practice and learning around it in the arts and culture sector

Action: Fully embrace and embed race equality and anti-racism action plans within our organisations, monitor and update them regularly, and share externally

Timescale: Within first year.

Pledge 3: To celebrate, support and invest in the talent of individual creatives in the City Region who experience racism

Action: Aspire to achieve a minimum 20% of work in our programmes to be produced or created by those creatives who experience racism, setting targets for percentage improvement each year

Timescale: Within two years.

Pledge 4: To diversify our audiences

Action: Ensure anti-racism training across each organisation, and that audience-facing staff have training in inclusive behaviour towards audiences

Timescale: Within first year.

Pledge 5: To invest in resources for increasing race equality across our work

Action: Allocate an annual percentage of budget to work that invests in and promotes race equity, this to be increased incrementally as progress is reviewed annually

Timescale: Within first year.

Pledge 6: To monitor and evaluate these pledges

Action: Manifesto signatories to share progress made against each pledge annually, and publish a collective review

Timescale: Annually.

Pledge 7: To build alliances within and beyond the arts and culture sector

Action: Create partnerships with organisations across our business and production needs who are committed to race equality, and embed cross-pollination of practice and ideas

Timescale: Ongoing.