

Culture Against Racism Action Plan 2021-22

On 4 June 2020, the cultural sector of the North East of England initiated a statement denouncing racism and seeking to bring about a collective change in thinking and action as organisations and individuals.

This is the statement, which ARC was proud to support:

WE STAND TO DENOUNCE RACISM IN ALL ITS FORMS

We, the undersigned from the cultural sector of the North East, declare that silence is not ok and silence is seen as complicity. Racism has no place in a just and humane society.

Whilst we cannot undo pain and neglect, we are calling on all of us in the arts, cultural, heritage sectors; professional and voluntary to work together to address racism and its deep roots. We must listen, have conversations and most importantly act, we know we need to do better.

Everyone is part of the solution – artists, staff, trustees, partners, promoters, audiences and communities.

We want to tackle this together in sharing better understanding and practices. We stand united to bring about change in our thinking and actions as a collective of organisations and individuals.

In the weeks and months to come we will collectively act to build on this statement with concrete steps and actions to demonstrate our commitment to bringing about real change. We ask you to stand with us.

We now need to demonstrate our support through action and allow ourselves to be held accountable by our colleagues and peers across the North East by making our commitments public.

The following actions have been identified through discussions and conversations with Board members and staff over the past few months:

We recognise that we need to educate ourselves:

- We will create a resource list and ask all staff and Board members to choose one of them to read, watch or listen to, and to share a short reflection with other staff, either verbally or in writing.
- We will pay artists of colour to advise on policies and procedures, including selection and recruitment processes for staff roles and artist initiatives.
- We will develop an internal resource to support everyone to feel confident around the use of language.
- We will arrange anti-racism training for all staff and Board members.

We recognise that our workforce is not representative:

- We will review our recruitment practices to identify new ways of recruiting that result in a more representative workforce, developing a new written recruitment procedure.
- We will appoint a person of colour with programming or marketing skills to work in a role within our team, to ensure their lived experience is represented in this area of work.
- We will increase our pool of creative learning practitioners to include more artists of colour.

We recognise that our artistic programme must address many years of under-representation:

- We will ensure that at least 20% of our supported artists are artists of colour.
- Through our Artist of Change initiative, we will identify new ways of ensuring that artists of colour are able to influence our programme.
- Through delivery of our cinema development programme, we will increase the number of films led by people of colour screened in our cinema.
- As individuals, we will seek to deepen the relationships we already have with people of colour from our communities, through active conversations and listening.

We will hold ourselves accountable:

- We will publish data on the diversity of our workforce and supported artists annually on our website.
- We will review progress against this plan at the end of March 2022, and agree new actions for the following year.

In addition, the following teams/departments will identify a departmental action for 2021-22:

- Board
- Programming
- Marketing
- Finance
- Box Office
- Technical
- No 60
- Front of House

We recognise intersectionality and will continue our work to ensure that people of colour who are also disabled and/or LGBTQIA and/or working class are included in our workforce, programme and audiences.

All of the agreed actions will be implemented and completed by 31 March 2022.