

TACKLING RACIAL INEQUALITY

Good Practice Case Studies

London Councils
Corporate Race Equality Strategy

In 2020 London Councils ambitiously set out to make all staff race equality champions, to make the organisation reflect the city it represents, and to make the workplace somewhere where all staff feel an active part of the organisation. Using an all- staff survey and meeting, consultations, a Race Equality Working Group and discussions, London Councils staff produced a Corporate Race Equality Strategy, with a vision to make London Councils an anti-racist organisation.



Background:

This work started in summer 2020 when colleagues at London Councils shared a clear appetite to establish how the organisation could be more proactive on race equality. A Race Equality Lead role was created to lead the development of a strategy, supported by a Race Equality Working Group (REWG) with staff volunteering from different levels and different parts of the organisation.

The London Councils Corporate Race Equality Strategy, published in May 2022, was shaped by staff voice including input from our first all staff meeting on race in August 2020, an all-staff survey, consultations, focus groups and team discussions.

The vision of the Strategy is for London Councils to become an anti-racist organisation (which means we understand racial injustice and are tackling root causes with confidence and proactivity), that is reflective of London's vibrancy and communities at all levels.

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Desired outcomes/ delivered outcomes:

The strategy has seven desired outcomes, listed below.

- Every member of staff considers themselves a leader and champion of race equality - in their work, interacting with customers and in our partnerships.
- Staff from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic backgrounds feel an active part of the organisation and have fair access to development opportunities.
- We are proactive in celebrating the diversity, racial or otherwise, of our staff and of London.
- Our behaviours on race equality are central to all we do - in our work, how we engage with each other and in our partnerships (the behaviours: being open, proactive curiosity, demonstrating respect & understanding, being fair, focusing on action).
- Striving for continuous improvement that is informed by data and insights.
- Having robust, culturally competent, and fair recruitment processes and practices.
- Collecting and sharing data to celebrate and challenge our activity on race equality.

We have an annual all staff Race and Inclusivity Survey. The findings are analysed, and a report is shared with staff. The responses shape the priorities of the REWG

The solution or actions:

- Race Equality Working Group & Corporate Management Team

Members of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) sponsor each of the seven outcomes, which are set out below. The REWG oversees and monitors the delivery of the Race Equality Strategy working closely with CMT.

- All Staff Race and Inclusivity Survey

We have an annual all staff Race and Inclusivity Survey. The findings are analysed, and a report is shared with staff. The responses shape the priorities of the REWG. The second survey, run in September/October 2022, explores the views of colleagues around several themes relating to race equality, including our general approach towards race and inclusion, our race equality learning and development package, and staff experiences relating to race. The results are being analysed but early findings show that staff from Black and Asian backgrounds are more positive than they were last year about London Councils'

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approach to race equality and diversity with 85% and 82% positive responses (respectively) compared to 55% and 51% positive responses last year.

- Race Equality Learning and Development package

We commissioned the Staff College to deliver a bespoke 3-year learning and development package on race equality to help us along our journey to becoming an anti-racist organisation. The four elements are summarised below.

- **Let's Talk About Race and Culture:** This training will help staff to understand the structures that underly systems and how inequity has become deeply embedded, and move colleagues beyond talking to taking collective action to implement our Race Equality Strategy. It is mandatory for all staff.
- **Cultural Competence Workshop:** This training will empower our staff to understand how we can work together across different cultures in a respectful and understanding way. These workshops are tailored towards frontline-facing staff and managers.
- **Development Offer for Black, Asian and Global Majority Staff:** This 2-day course is co-developed with London Councils staff and focuses on empowerment in the face of institutional racism. The sessions will provide strategies to help participants overcome barriers and enhance their skills to be able to thrive as Global Majority leaders.
- **Senior leadership coaching:** In these confidential group coaching sessions, senior leaders can reflect on learning in the training sessions and bring real situations that they are working through into the group for discussion and problem-solving.

- Getting everyone involved

We are developing team workshops to help teams reflect on how their work relates to race equality, where additional London Councils activity could add value, and how staff can bring their learning to the day job. We will also be reviewing how to embed our ambitions for race equality within our appraisals process, objectives and personal development planning.

Early findings show that staff from Black and Asian backgrounds are more positive than they were last year about London Councils' approach to race equality and diversity with 85% and 82% positive responses compared to 55% and 51% positive responses last year

Learning/evaluation:

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Outcomes haven't been evaluated yet. We are developing our approach to monitoring the overall impact.

There are a couple of key learning points relating to how we bring everyone along with us on this journey:

- It's important to remember that each member of staff has a different relationship with racism, different experiences and levels of understanding, so organisation-wide work has to speak to all of those experiences. To make all staff at London Councils confident race equality champions, we need to help everyone along their journey no matter their starting point. Seeking feedback from all staff, formally and informally can help to identify when we need to adjust messaging / priorities for related activities.
- The shift from having a group of people working on the strategy to making it everyone's business is significant. Buy-in from senior leadership is essential. The REWG relies on CMT to show commitment to implementing the strategy, to make sure this work is connected to other organisation-wide programmes, and to give all staff "permission" to spend time engaging with an activity relating to the corporate race equality strategy as part of their day job.

To make all staff at London Councils confident race equality champions, we need to help everyone along their journey no matter their starting point.