

Joint letter from Civic Power Fund, Funders for Race Equality Alliance, Justice Together Initiative and Migration Exchange



15 August 2024

Our partners and networks have been raising the alarm about systemic racism, injustice and violence for many years. Around the country, people and communities are already organising and working to support Global majority people, Muslims, migrants, refugees and those seeking asylum, and to tackle hate crime and structural racism. Many also provide vital services, practical advice, and support dealing with harm created by the hostile environment.

Our combined research shows that it is well known that [funding for justice work is too limited and unsustainable](#), and that [‘by and for’ organisations are underfunded](#) and [face structural barriers](#) (see also [here](#)).

Systems change work needs deep, long-term investment and care in the most affected communities. Recent riots and an emboldened far right events galvanise increased action and resources for anti-racist work, racial and migration justice, and tackling the far right, islamophobia and anti-semitism. Impacted people and leaders with lived experience, grassroots organisations, global majority working in philanthropy must be at the centre of this conversation and the power dynamics in funding have to change for good.

We do not want to address this urgency with short-term response and commitment.

As the situation develops, we will adapt our work and build on learning from previous efforts to mobilise resources and centre anti-racism. We are committed to working in partnership to support organisations and to coordinating our efforts to support equitable and transformative long-term funding responses.

We are working as a collective to bring our combined networks, infrastructure and skills to focus on four key priorities:

- 1. Emergency support for organisations on the front line to stay safe, particularly ‘by and for’ organisations**

Civic Power Fund has made available their regrant capacity, so that resources can be swiftly distributed through an Emergency Action Fund. Justice Together Initiative, Funders Race Equality Alliance and Migration Exchange are supporting through their coordination, insight, networks and convening power.

We are seeking immediate top up of this Fund, which is for financial support for people who are afraid to leave their homes, for travel, food cost, resourcing community support spaces and costs associated with salaries, office and security measures.

[You can find more information here.](#) So far Civic Power Fund has distributed c. £40,000 to 40 frontline groups. Support needs range from investing in urgent organising and safety training; paying to keep safe spaces open longer than usual; costs to cover urgent convening; and reinforcing organisational and individual safety.

2. Support for people from racialised communities to connect with peers, access well-being support, and centre anti-racism in the wider sector response

We have a number of existing initiatives that have been co-designed with partners which focus on the wellbeing of global majority people working in the race, migration and philanthropic sector that still need funding. These include:

[Taking Care of You Programme](#): A wellbeing programme run by the Black Wellbeing Collective for racialised people who work in the Migration Sector. (£50k) Core costs to run the Black Wellbeing Collective (£115k)

Employee Assistance Programme run by the [Black Wellbeing Collective](#) for people who work in the migration sector including therapeutic sessions and a platform for toolkits, community meet ups and useful support info. (£115k)

[The Exhale Retreat](#): Created as a result of Black Lives Matter and Covid-19, this retreat is a 'by and for' space aimed at Black women who work in philanthropy and/or third sector to build a community, experience joy, share experiences and just 'be' (110k)

[Reimagining Horizon](#): Created as a 'by and for' wellbeing programme in response to the number of people who continue to experience harmful racialised experiences of working in philanthropy. This programme is also working on creating an resource for funders who seek to create anti-racist and anti-oppressive work culture and environment (150k)

[Future Foundations UK](#): Future Foundations UK was born out of the common experiences and insights of People of Colour working in philanthropy in the UK. It is a supportive network for those working in the UK philanthropic sector to connect, create and lead change within the space. (110k)

[Shaping the Future Leadership Initiative](#): Created by MEX to bolster the leadership capacity and capability of organisations and networks in the refugee and migration sector. It aims for a holistic approach to leadership development, emphasising anti-oppressive practices, wellbeing, and sustainability while leveraging the inherent strengths found in field practice. (£150K)

[Racial Justice Programme](#): Created by [Justice Together Initiative](#). This program aims to improve the migration sector's understanding of how immigration policies intersect with racism and to empower them with the tools to implement anti-racist practices within their organisations. It also seeks to support and strengthen existing organisations focused on racial justice. (£100k)

3. Disseminate information on funding needs and collaboration opportunities and convene funders to avoid duplication and strengthen longer term efforts

MEX already has an online event on **9th September** focused on migration under the new government. The funder-only session will be extended to an hour and there will be an opportunity to shape wider funder collaboration efforts for the longer term work. Please register for that session [here](#).

4. Solidifying funder commitment by monitoring your funding and ensuring it funds the most vulnerable by completing the [racial justice audit](#)

FREA have created an audit tool which helps funders:

- Identify the trends, patterns and how much funding addresses racial justice work
- Produce a snapshot of current portfolios and create a baseline to track funding on a yearly basis
- Implement targets and strategies to ensure funders are advancing racial justice work
- Allow greater transparency of current foundation expenditure.

Commit to completing the audit once a year and use the results to build a case to increase sustainable and flexible funding for 'by and for' organisations. If you want to know more, please email FREA on frealliance@equallyours.org.uk.

If you wish to support or get involved with any of the key asks above, please get in touch with the Funders for Race Equality Alliance on frealliance@equallyours.org.uk and we'll put you in touch with the relevant team.

Alongside this, we urge you to fund the groups and organisations that are on the frontlines in the fight against hate and the far right. We all work with amazing groups in this space and can happily make introductions and referrals.

With best wishes

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