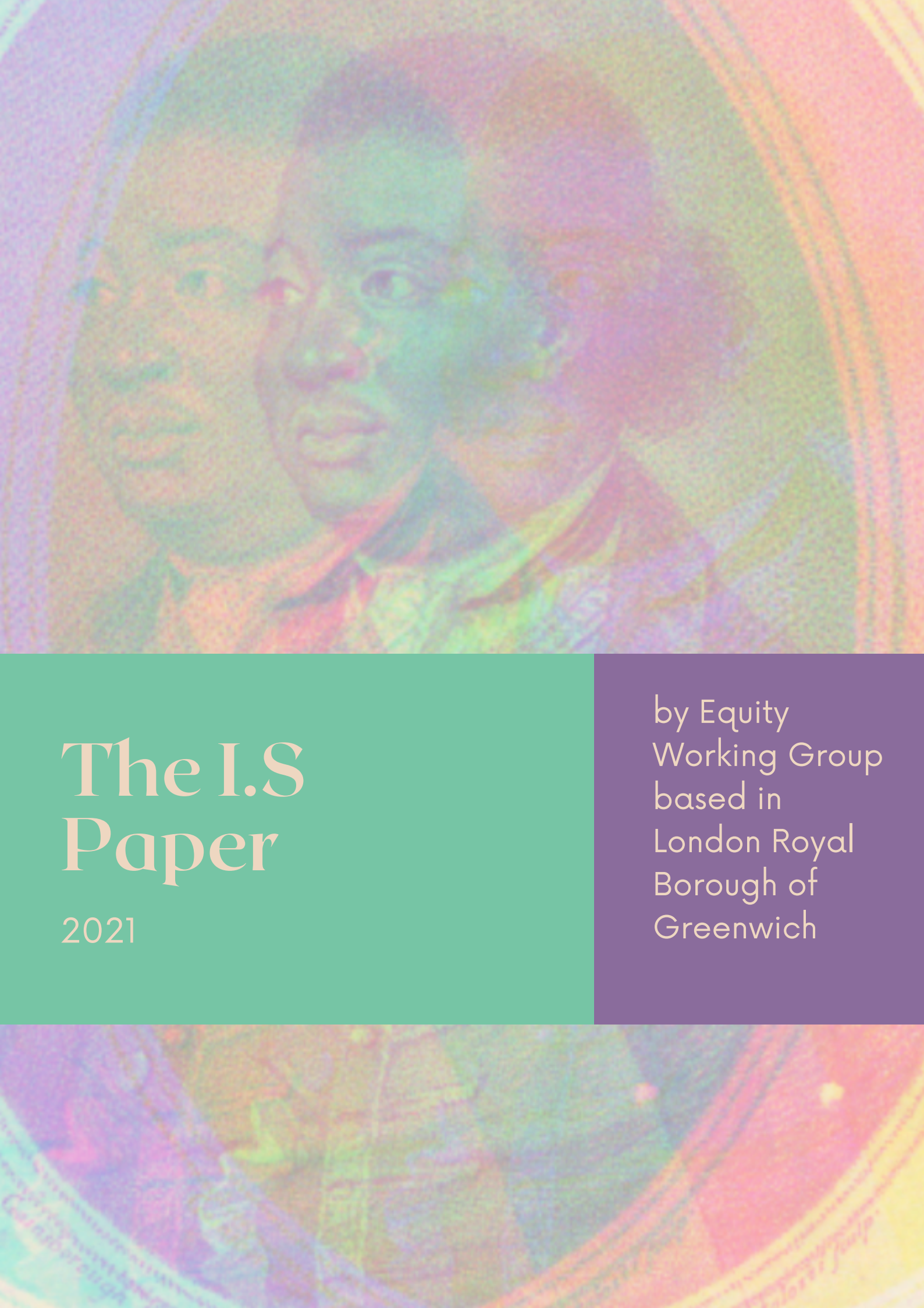


The I.S Paper

2021

by Equity Working Group based in London Royal Borough of Greenwich

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Welcome

Welcome to 'The I.S Paper' a pilot project exploring the experiences of Black and minoritised cultural & creative groups and practitioners in the Royal Borough of Greenwich within the GCF. Focused on the three R's, Roles, Responsibilities and Recognition. We've titled the project The IS paper,in honor of Ignatius Sancho, a Writer, composer, shopkeeper and abolitionist, Ignatius Sancho was celebrated in the late 18th-century as a man of letters, a social reformer and an acute observer of English life. He was an enslaved African who lived in Greenwich from 1731 to 1749. He was the first black man to vote in a British election.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to enable Black-led and Minoritized groups who work within Culture and the Arts to enter meaningful dialog around their experiences in the Royal Borough of Greenwich as members of the Greenwich Cultural Forum (GCF) and as Cultural and Artistic practitioners.

The report is written by the Equity working group, a working group of the Greenwich Cultural Forum (GCF). The working group was formed in Spring 2020 following the BLM protests, with the objective of increasing participation of Global Majority peoples within the Greenwich Cultural Forum (GCF). This research project was co-created with the Equity working group and has been tabled and accepted by the main Greenwich Cultural Forum.

The GCF formed in 2017 as an unincorporated network of cultural organisations in the borough. The GCF was designed to create a networking opportunity for Creative and Cultural practitioners in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The GCF has over 100 members, although, to the best of our knowledge, no research has been done to understand 'who' takes part in the GCF and in 'what ways.' As such, this pilot report, the first of its kind with GCF, begins to form part of this data.

Within this report we explore the roles that Black and Minoritised Arts and Cultural practitioners have within arts and cultural work activity. To do this we explore their constitution, their networked relationships and the scale of what they do at work. We look at the responsibilities of Black and Minortised practitioners within work, their autonomy within their work activity and the level in which they operate. This moves us to presenting how the contribution of Black and Minoritsised practitioners are recognised within their work, drawing together the observations on participant roles and responsibilities, allowing us to report on what agency and relationships currently look like.

The aim is to not only start a dialogue, but to have a foundation and clear recommendations that can support Culture and Creativity in Greenwich as this will help better understand the needs for Creative and Cultural practitioners from Black and Minoritised arts and cultural practitioners.

In this report we use the terms Black and Minoritised Groups instead of BAME, a phrasing adopted by social enterprise the Ubele Initiative which was appointed by the Greater London Authority (GLA) as the main regional BAME infrastructure organisation for London. (See page 5 of the Booska Paper) Where the report cites from wider literature, the terms BAME and BME may be used, citing their terminology

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58f9e59244024341205131 4a/t/607fd62e93a15e19ad1175ad/1618990674726/Booska+Paper+2021.pdf

Meet the researchers

The following members are part of the Equity working group, a working group of the Greenwich Cultural Forum (GCF) which formed in response to the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter Movement in 2020.

Viveca Cameron,

LLB Bar Retired, Founder and Chair of CraftA (Community Responsive Artists, Felters and Textile Associates) a non-profit for utilising participatory textile arts for the therapeutic well-being and alleviation of isolation and loneliness. She is an advocate for textile arts.

She is a member of the academic group Stitching Together which fosters critical dialogue around textile arts in research and practice.

She was former Training and Development Officer of the Executive Committee of the National Black Crown Prosecution Association.

Through CraftA she is a member of the Baobab Foundation, a progressive black philanthropist group. She has sat on several funding committees.

She is an active supporter of Funding fairness as advocated by organisations such as #bameonline, Charity So White, Acevo and Runnymede.

Viv is an amateur textile artist focusing on inclusive storytelling and political satire.

Tracy Durrant

Tracy Durrant is a musician, music teacher, creative curator and Author. She is passionate about how creativity can be used for wellbeing as well as a vehicle for upliftment of the community. She founded Everyone's A Singer CIC. An organisation focused on building community through creating music for wellbeing experiences.

David Hockham

David is the Theatre Manager for the University of Greenwich's (UoG) Bathway Theatre, co-vice chair for the UoG's LGBT staff network and co-director of Research Group 'Co-Creating Liveness in Embodied Immersion.' Alongside this work David is a producer for internationally touring Dead Rabbits Theatre Company.

David's interdisciplinary research looks at pedagogy, learning and knowledge exchange within Higher Education with a specific focus on vocational practices and the performing arts

David is a collaborations champion of the National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange (NCACE) and has published on equitable knowledge exchange practices between universities and wider community organisations.

Eleanor Thoe Chooi Wah Lisney

Eleanor Lisney is a campaigner, founder member, public speaker and director of Sisters of Frida. She is an access advisor, an aspiring creative practitioner and co-founder of Culture Access CIC, which is about supporting access, bringing an inclusive edge of intersectionality.

She is a Trustee at Disability Arts Online

Lison Sabrina Musset

Lison Sabrina Musset is a French Brazilian self-taught visual artist. She has been living in Greenwich Borough since 2007. She is passionate about the community hence why she co- founded 'Wired Art' and 'The Collective Makers'. Both organisations have a socially engaged scope; using art,mentorship and networking as a tool to break barriers within communities.

Dr Pamela Zigomo

Dr Pamela Zigomo is a Programme Leader and Senior Lecturer in Event Management at the University of Greenwich. Her research interests are in Cultural and Third Sector events and Critical Event Studies. Prior to working in academia, Pam worked as an arts and events manager for cultural organisations in London and the West Midlands. Pam still works with arts charities and public sector organisations to assist them in developing event strategies and live events.

Background and Context

About Greenwich

This report investigates the experiences of Black and minoritised cultural and artistic practitioners in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. This section presents data from the Greenwich "Runnymede Scorecard" on the demographic breakdown of the Borough of Greenwich which gives a snapshot of the boroughs demographics. It demonstrates that the borough has a high proportion of Black and minoritised individuals and is diverse in nature. The scorecard was commissioned by the Royal Borough of Greenwich who is 'committed to tackling these inequalities, working with local people, including race equality organisations.' and is a part of an 'ongoing process that includes dialogue with the BME third sector and communities.'

"The borough of Greenwich is located in the south-east of London. It shares borders with six other London boroughs: Lewisham, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, and Bromley. In the 2011 National Census the population of Greenwich was estimated at 254,557, although it is likely to have grown to about 280,100 according to more recent population estimates (Greater London Authority, 2017).

People of working age make up around 70% of Greenwich's population, while 20% of the population is under 16 years old and around 10% is over 65 years old (Divajeva et al., 2016). This is a younger age profile than for the UK as a whole, though similar to the overall London average.

Over a third of the borough population are from BME backgrounds. This is significantly higher than the overall UK figure of 14%, but lower than the London average of 40%. The lower proportion of Asian groups is especially marked: they make up about one in five Londoners (18.5%) but only one in ten Greenwich residents (11.7%). On the other hand, there are proportionally more people of black backgrounds in Greenwich (19.1% – or one in five) than in London as a whole (13.3%)." - Page 3 Greenwich Race Equality Scorecard

https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/Greenwich%20Scorecard.pdf

One of the challenges with the scorecard is that it does not directly speak to arts and culture. This report begins to address these areas.

Black Lives Matter

in the context of Arts and Culture

This section provides recent contextual information, charting the reasons for resurgence of the Black Lives Matter Movement and what this might mean for us as cultural and artistic practitioners in Greenwich.

May 25th 2020, George Floyd an African-American man in America was murdered by a police officer who knelt on Floyd's neck for 9 minutes and 29 seconds. This was captured on a camera phone and viewed around the world, sparking global protests and murals painted from Minneapolis, where he was murdered to Manchester UK. In response to his murder the UK Prime Minister said ' "racist violence has no place in our society", and that he was "appalled and sickened" by the footage. He also urged people to "protest peacefully and in accordance with the rules on social distancing" - Johnson, Boris (June 3, 2020). "Boris Johnson on George Floyd killing: 'Racist violence has no place in society' – video". The Guardian. ISSN 0261-3077. Archived from the original on June 4, 2020. Retrieved June 4, 2020.

May 25th 2020 got the whole world talking about racism and had organisations questioning how diverse, equitable and inclusive their companies were.

A few notable moments since May 25th 2020 includes Black Out Tuesday – The Music Industry's response to racism on Tuesday June 2nd. On June 7th 2020 we saw the toppling of the statue of Bristol's Slave Trader Edward Colston, the statue ended up in Bristol Harbour. The British government published the report of 'Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' March 31st 2021, where in the forward Tony Sewell, an education consultant and ex-charity boss, said: "We no longer see a Britain where the system is deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities.'' Within 48 hours the PM was sent an open letter with 20,000 signatures calling for the report to be withdrawn. During this time, we've seen many reports of how BAME communities have experienced a disproportionate deaths rate from COVID-19 many pointing to racism as a deciding factor and most recently we woke up on July 12th to racist abuse of 3 Black English football players, after missing penalties during the Eurocup, this included Marcus Rashford's Mural in Withington being defaced with racist comments.

Greenwich has the historical backdrop of slavery and colonialism, displayed across the borough. In more recent history we saw The Macpherson Report, published February 24th 1999 stating that there was institutional racism and a failure of leadership during the investigation into the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence (22nd April 1993) in Eltham, Greenwich.

It would be naïve to think that racism is not impacting the lives of Cultural and Creative practitioners in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The GCF Equity Working group was formed to start the conversation within the GCF and to support Black and Minoritised practitioners and to ask questions around the networking opportunities for BME organisations and practitioners in the GCF. This research goes some way in outlining what we have learnt over the past six months of working together. However it is only a pilot, and as such, further work needs to take place to understand the experiences of Black and Minorotised practitioners within the Borough, with scope to consider both London wide and national initiatives.

#StopAsianHate
The London Metropolitan Police data from 2020 saw an overall increase of 74% in reported hate incidents from January-December compared with the previous year. Police figures reported from other UK regions (such as Essex and the Midlands), though less comprehensive, indicate that similar increases in anti-ESEA hate crime were observed nationwide in 2020.

https://shado-mag.com/all/why-the-uk-needs-its-own-racial-discourse-on-east-and-south-east-asians/

Our recommendations include an emphasis on eradicating prejudice and discrimination without exception. However this is a Pilot study and more research is required to support all Black and Minoritised groups to have a safe environment to engage in culture and to thrive in the Arts.

The Research Design

This pilot project explores the experiences of Black, Asian and minoritised cultural & creative groups and practitioners in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
The aim of the project was:
To explore both the positive and negative experiences of Black and minoritised (CULTURAL & artistic) practitioners in the borough around: a) Roles, b) Responsibility c) Recognition

What we did (methods)
Working with researchers at the University of Greenwich, as part of the working group, the group spent around 3 months designing a targeted approach to understand the experiences of Black and Minoritised Cultural and Artistic practitioners in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
As the research was being designed,the working group updated the wider membership of the GCF on our progress.
The research then went through University of Greenwich Ethics approval to ensure our approach was ethically robust.

A Call for participation was posted across the GCF's mailing list and also shared at 2 GCF meetings. This call took the form of an online 'Microsoft Forms' questionnaire which allowed us to gather some provisional data. All data was held securely for the life of the project and destroyed on publication of this report.

22 people responded to the questionnaire representing a mix of demographics, company size and type of activity. 50% identified as being from Black and Minoritised groups, of whom we arranged to interview 10 people using semi structured interviews
Interviews were not recorded or transcribed. Instead, the interviewer used a 'speak back' technique, speaking back specific participant sentences which capture the narrative of the conversation. These sentences are then written down verbatim. At the end of the interview, the transcript was spoken back to the participant and agreed. Data was anonymised.
The work used a thematic analysis approach to pick up key themes across data.

Who we spoke to:

Pseudonyms have been given to participants to protect their identity.

Claire is a 36-year-old artist from Greenwich. Her services include creating art pieces for public spaces, cultural events, venues and for marketing projects. She's a Sole trader, has two members of staff including herself – both from a Black and Minoritised group. Claire's annual income is unknown however her business is funded through selling products or self-funded.

Safia runs a cultural organisation which supports arts and other cultural organisations. Safia is 60, she runs a CIC and generates up to £24,000 per year, no significant difference between her 2019 and 2020 income. She gets funding from Grants, Trusts and Foundations. There are 2 board members and there are 10 people within her organisation who describe themselves as disabled.

Karl is a 28-year-old artist who runs a CIC. Services include creating art for museums and heritage sites. He gets funding from Grants, Trusts and Foundations. He's unsure of his annual income.

Samantha is a 25-year-old Artist who runs a CIC. Her work supports other artists and cultural organisations. Her CIC brings in up to £25,000 per year (2019 and 2020). Her work is Self-funded and funded by fundraising and donations. Her team of two are both from Black and Minoritised groups.

Selina is a 34-year-old Artist who runs a CIC. Her organisation brings in over 100K per year (2019 and 2020) Her organisation supports artists, art education and other cultural organisations. Her company is funded by Council grants, commercial activities and the sale of products and services. There are 2 board members, 7 staff members and 1 black or minoritised member of staff.

Sonia is a 50-year-old artist/independent practitioner. Her work includes performing arts, youth programmes, festivals and community events. She runs a CLG (Company Limited by Guarantee) in both 2019 and 2020 her company had an annual turnover of up to £24,000. Her organisation is funded by Grants from Trusts and Foundations and Council Grants. There are 3 board members, 2 staff members, 2 Black or Minoritised members of staff and 1 person who identifies as Disabled.

Hannah is 29 and is an independent practitioner who runs a CIC. Both in 2019 and 2020 her company raised up to £24,000. Activities are Self-funded and funded by the sale of products and services. There is 1 member of staff.

Carol is a 48-year-old woman who runs a voluntary organisation. Services include art experiences in public space. Her organisation is funded by Fundraising, donations and Volunteers. There are 5 board members. Her staff has 1 member of staff who identify as disabled.

Rita is a 45-year-old independent practitioner. She's a Sole Trader, providing art for public spaces. Her company had an annual turnover of up to £24,000 in 2019 and 2020. Her organisation is funded by grants from trusts, council grants and Foundations. There are 3 board members, 2 staff members and 1 identified as disabled.

Tanya is a 37-year-old artist. She is a Sole Trader who turns over up to £24,000 per year. She is self-funded and works independently.

Recommendations

This report makes 15 recommendations. These are grouped into 4 broad themes:

- Develop a Safe Space
- Eradicate Prejudice and Discrimination
- Promote Fairness in Funding and Investment
- Build Trust through robust Policy

These themes cover the aspect of change needed to provide a space for Black and Minoritised individuals and organisations who work in Culture and Creative industries to thrive, within the Royal borough of Greenwich inside or outside of the GCF (Greenwich Cultural Forum).

This is followed by three sections presenting the RAW interview data around the concepts of roles, responsibilities and recognition. We then provide summaries which outline the implications of what we have found.

Develop a Safe Space

1. Addressing the disproportionate weight that Black-led and minoritised practitioners and organizations carry, through an accountable pledge for all organisations to create a safe, trustworthy environment for all in the borough.
2. Safety charter for venues, identifying the venues that create a safe environment for Black and minoritized practitioners and organisations.
3. Wellbeing support for Black-led and Minoritised practitioners and organisations.
4. A Networking space where people feel safe.
5. Raise awareness of Black-led and minoritised cultural and creative organisations and practitioners.
6. Actively promoting organisations from identified groups, celebrating the work done on a consistent basis.

Eradicate Prejudice and Discrimination

1. Public pledge made to support long-term sustainable investment into Black-led and minoritised practitioners and organisations and to addressing racism within the borough.
2. A long-term investment in addressing racism within the borough.
3. Transparency of lead creative and cultural organisations with a commitment to EDI.

Promote Fairness in Funding and Investment

1. A commitment to long-term sustainable investment in supporting micro and small Black-led and minoritised practitioners and organisations so they can avoid being excluded by default.
2. Access to funding opportunities that take into consideration startup businesses.
3. Ring-fenced funding for Black-led and minoritised organisations which takes into consideration intersectionality and it's commitment to have funds that address the disparities.
4. Funding opportunities clearly signposted in a public space.

Build Trust through robust Policy

1. A commitment that organisations funded, supported or attended by RBG adopt appropriate policy commitments to EDI
2. A commitment to logging data on (Funding, Staff,) to assist with transparency.

Key Insights

ROLES

In this section, we are looking at the cultural activities and roles of the participants of the survey. Below are key insights from interviewed participants followed by a summary.

On roles and activities

'We support emerging artists helping them build confidence to share their work as well as developing a platform to support BAME organisations.'

We are intergenerational – we work with people out of college, young people and those in their twenties right up to those at retirement age. '

'We work with community small groups and large groups, reaching a local and international audience.'

'Help and support accessibility of culture for all including those who identify as disabled. Our work is national. '

'We teach Black history and Disability history.'

'Our work is Intergenerational'

"We provide Poetry workshops and support small creative businesses with venue facilities, this includes marginalised communities – older adults, primarily women as well as under 5's'

On accessing funding:

'I Feel overwhelmed when applying for funding or have had bad experiences with it so I self-finance, rely on pay from workshops or self-fund projects.'
'Some money generated from the work, but I self-finance using my own money and side jobs.'

'Some commissions but it is often self-funded or donations.'
"We get funding from local organisations and Foundations that support our marginalised group"

"Educational institutions, charities and a one-off funded project"

"We apply for funding and we use our own money to fund activities."

"A local funding project for a grant of only £4,000 had an extensive process, not taking into account our type of organisation or the admin costs associated with the process. In contrast, funding from other organisations was much easier, providing support, facilitating the relationship and asking 'how can we support you' to ensure the admin work was not too intensive."

"I struggle with complex funding processes and will stay away from them, I prefer to have regular contact with the funder so that if I have a problem with the application, I can ring them up and ask them"

"The local organisation is amazing, they send through business and community fund opportunities, I also hear of funding opportunities through WhatsApp groups, forums, social media. People also ring up and call to collaborate."

"I had a quick process with a housing association where there was no uncertainty unlike with other funders"

"When seeking funding, we were talked down to and automatically expected to be a subcontractor as a Black organisation."

On experiences when approaching funders, venues, other organisations within the borough of Greenwich?

"In some venues, you know that we are not what they are looking for in their premises, but others are very welcoming. it's a body language thing, it's an energy thing. I can feel if they are excited, I will go for that venue,"

"I get some payments from commissions; this can start from £10. I use social media to publicise my work and I'm unaware of other funding.'

'Disability is very white – a lot of existing resources to support access are aimed at white communities but they don't tell you about ethnic restaurants for example.'
'Our work is intersectional – there are a lot of LGBTQ+ spaces for disabled people and these are usually upstairs, therefore not accessible."

"The initial contact has always been a good one, but there's never been a follow up especially pre–BLM Uprisings"

'Generally, I felt unwelcome by funding opportunities and in comparison, with neighbouring boroughs, I felt a lack of transparency as to what funding opportunities were available here in Greenwich.'

ROLES - Summary

Practitioners we interviewed worked across the community, with often hard to reach demographics. The three summary points below culminate in some participants feeling that they are not being supported or welcomed

1. The Black and minoritised individuals interviewed often provided specific services for similar demographics and recognised that when engaging in non Black and minoritised led activities their needs were not considered. This appears to be around how thinking in spaces are 'centred.' Assumptions are made around the needs of the community and the ways in which activities take place.
2. When people are entering into spaces, sometimes they felt unwelcomed by body Language, accessibility or by being ignored.
3. Some participants felt it wasn't clear where to find and access funding opportunities. Some participants mentioned making use of WhatsApp groups, networks and the GCF for funding information. Some would appreciate a central public space for this information as they felt like they were not able to approach or get access to these wider networks. When they did access these networks, where they had negative experiences, they did not try again.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In this section, we are looking at the governance and leadership including how communities are set up. Below are key insights from interviewed participants followed by a summary.

Governance reflecting the demographic of participants

"When we do workshops with young people, I would say 75% Caucasian, 25% BAME"

"The steering group mostly reflects the demographic of our participants; they are 99% disabled and most non-white"

'Both directors are white. Both are over 60, but the participants are diverse.'
'The board is 50% BAME'

'The management committee is made up of 1 BAME person and 2 white people one of whom is not born in the U.K. and who has herself spoken of discrimination against her as a European'

Positive experiences

"A community center in Greenwich has been supportive since our 1st workshop. Gave the venue for free. They were amazing. Great space, surrounded by nature. I already had a relationship with the management therefore trust was built"

"We partnered with a local Library who provided their venue and funded the project, they were very supportive and also provided £100 for the project as well as free staff time to support our event. They also supported for the BHM videos and supported with £100

'For Black History Month a local Theatre provided their venue for free, we had to pay for the staff time. Unfortunately, the venue wasn't? entirely accessible because you had to ring and get the accessible door opened."

"They did not charge me for the space, I was invited into it."

"Working with a local Theatre was positive. We built a positive relationship which continued to the next project. The venue has a community focus, they are patient and supportive in getting things off the ground. We could pull from each other if there was an issue."

Negative experiences

"When looking for community space. Lots of interest. We went to one of the organizations. They were keen at first. They visited the premises and then she changed the fee. 1st it was a big discount, and by the end – actually it will be 3k a week. And then she said there was free space. but then shut us down. "

"There was mentioned support for/ with start-ups within the library which did not materialise."

"Nothing specific but an example is some of the feedback we get – for example a local centre is working on a Greenwich accessible venue/café and we approached them to ensure they include all the necessary features to ensure it is also a multi-ethnic center. The initial response was receptive and cooperative as the key people liked the idea but then we were faced with questions about the budget for the proposed requirements – we would get feedback that disabled people are expensive."

"We have contacted numerous venues to set up projects stemming from the BLM activities last year – some have been accommodating and others have been skeptical on what we are trying to do."

"Where they have been skeptical – we would outline our project ideas and they would respond by saying the project or event would not be suitable for the venue. I suspect that some of this was because we were a new organisation and did not have a track record, they were also worried it might bring trouble to their venue.

They did not fully understand what we wanted to do. They would ask questions like 'who is the artist?' 'Why do you want to have a talk?' they would have concerns about who would be visiting the space to attend the event – they were worried the audiences our events would attract would not fit with the venue."

"Other venue challenges were with the fees they would quote – when we contacted one of the venues, they initially said the venue would be free. Initially it seemed they understood us but then they started to talk about fees and the fees were way above budget, eventually they just said no."

"In general, the negative experiences are to do with – buildings – with the physical venue. For example, a wheelchair user who came without warning and complained, and there was flooding in the building."

"Sometimes with an access issue, for wheelchair users. With staff changes, it can be difficult to have to explain adjustments for access. It can be difficult to make space"

"I have also used a community center, they were initially strange but once we established a working relationship, they were keen to maintain it and offer opportunities for continuing, like letting people know about us - they have been accommodating."

"A local community cultural organisation gave me a discounted price for a limited time, but no support at all. I didn't feel safe at their venue"

"We can't afford to use more formal cultural spaces – there is little appreciation for the type of cultural activity our organisation engages in, the preference is more for music and dance and outdoor festivals in the borough, to the exclusion of other artforms regarded more as 'womens' art"

"We have observed different prices quoted to different people – for example a public venue quoted us £3000 and two weeks later another organisation seeking to hire the same space was charged reduced rates – they didn't believe my company was not a commercial organisation."

RESPONSIBILITIES - Summary

“Positive experiences look like:

Where organisations supported the work, (support in kind such as space staffing, or advice or financial support), created a safe environment, where relationships were developed and where the community or end user was at the centre.

Negative experiences look like:

Where organisations had a lack of knowledge about community needs (culture and access), an unsafe environment where views cannot be shared, ,did not appreciate art forms or ways of working and where goal posts were changed during the process, such as where fees were changed part way through or where projects were micro managed.

RECOGNITION

In this section, we are looking at the role of minoritized communities in decision making and how their work is recognised. Below are key insights from interviewed participants followed by a summary.

On examples of projects that went well, that didn't and what was learned.

"Every project we have accomplished has been successful, even if there are bumps on the road although it can get very political'

'Ever since BLM became popular– lots of people reach out, and then they don't keep their promises. They want to get involved more than they should. Even with funding applications, even with venues. It is emotional. last minute they make changes. They want to control what you are doing, equally or more than has been initially agreed, "

"We have a different understanding of what black means, and a different understanding of what the word culture and inclusiveness means. It's hard to make someone feel what you feel if they have never been in your shoes. Its political "

"With problematic projects - an example is one project where we initially tried to get interest and funding for an online disabled guide for getting around Greenwich with funders and they did not respond."

"We recently have had a conversation with Advisory services? they said they had not heard about our idea."

"The project partner was aware we were 6 months old but they were willing to trust us despite not having a track record. They believed in us and what we can bring to the table."

"Success: - recent poetry workshop in Thamesmead. I did not own the project but they wanted me to be the workshop facilitator. That was online. It worked well in terms of people who did participate they were able to follow the workshop, it was interactive and their contributions were amazing"

"What did not work so well was the icebreaker activities. This was challenging to do online as you get a natural cue from people in front of you. People can understand more when you are in the room. Gathering info afterwards, asking for the work to be emailed in, that was not as good as in person."

"Once, she was asked to produce some work but it got cancelled at short notice."
"Working with a local Festival... They let me get on with my work and allowed me to perform and be the person I can be then I can perform and entertain the community"

"It hasn't been great working on local entertainment events in the past year with the pandemic. After last year I don't think I want to renew that relationship if it is the same way of working and team. The people in charge that were involved did not make it conducive to be yourself. They didn't quite know what they wanted to do during the pandemic. There was some power tripping.

We discovered we were excluded from some forums and communications about the project. There were condescending phone calls. The project left a bitter taste. This is not how I thought it would be run. I stepped away; it was getting too traumatic. We would give suggestions to improve things which were rejected. There was talking behind your back.
If the project goes back to the previous set-up before the pandemic, I wouldn't mind going back again but not as it's set up now. Last year the dynamics and committee members had changed, there were some new people."

"In a Greenwich cultural community centerI felt there was a lack of vision, lack of investment, lack of resources, lack of moving with the times, lack of passion for the community. The focus isn't on the community, they are running it as a business. They take part in more events & festivals that are happening outside the community"

"We worked on a project with a charity - they were people focused and very supportive. They shared their venue and didn't overcharge as they understood the nature of our organisation. The team was easy to engage and interested in what we did – we didn't feel like we were being used. They weren't preoccupied with social perceptions either.

"We have also recently been informed of venues using performative free space but not advertised and given to selected BME who comply with the white institutionalised property elite. For example, I have been given anecdotal evidence of venue and working space being given to organisations compliant with the local Political Party but not advertised publicly. Space provision is based on cronyism and who you know."

On why they thought these projects were successful or problematic?

"The example of charity based in Greenwich and Bromley.– they were interested in us and wanted to understand us as an organisation."

"When community spaces are more supportive as they are not profit focused."
"With problematic projects – things like emails not being answered by the local authority and local NGO's of the council are frustrating. Money being allowed to vacate the borough or go to preferred organisations mostly white."

On Talking us through examples of how your project was recognised in the Borough of Greenwich / or beyond? (Publicity, councilors, media)

"In Hackney in Dalston , A community organisation– welcomed us as if we were local. We are not from the borough, , they said they would help us with funding. We could rent free space. There is a creative community. "
"Only publicity she was aware of was through the library."

"Our Black History Month project – We were mentioned in some of the media stories but there was little focus on our organisation which wasn't mentioned"

"For Disabled and Proud Project there was little media interest and no interest from local authorities; there was more recognition from the local library."

"I entered a poetry competition in Thamesmead – Not sure about publicity, they were meant to put it in the organisers newsletter. Not sure if they got around to doing that. Not sure how they announced the winners to be fair. Not really had much. Just the workshop, a housing association emailed it around. "

'Not really. There was one councilor/mayor who dropped by. But no response from an email seeking advice."

"I think the GCF is more for big and established organisations – they have more resources. Nothing much help from GCF."

"I had a profile and bio on the marketing materials."

"The only time I got reached out to was a local radio but it fell through."

"We have had nothing we have done recognised by Greenwich indeed recently we engaged in a protracted issue to secure funding, which because we were giving misleading and inaccurate information was pointless. Work we have done has always had to be in the shadow of other organisations who are part of the usual suspects"

"A charitable project acknowledged us and our involvement in the project on the print and media."

On co-producing with Black and Minoritised people or organisations?

"We work with Black and Minoritised people to deliver all our workshops and events and they are mainly from within our organisations networks, the venues will not necessarily be from these communities, we also did a project on domestic violence"

"Once a year"

"I don't; often co-produce"

I co-produce twice a year. "

"We have just started. Working with a local artist – her workshop is diverse and increasing diversity. No disabled organisations at the moment, at least I am not aware of them. Venue is not accessible."

"Often I usually work in partnership with other organisations or venues "
We often co-produce but with other community organisations such as community centres, but not with GCF or local authorities
"Often – we will work with Minoritised people as mentioned earlier when discussing our target audience and we also support Higher education institutions seeking to promote and engage their Black students."

On how those partnerships come about?

"From our networking as directors and my other advocacy work on the different disability networks. We also approach specific individuals"

"The GCF is good where people can connect but there is a need to have another space – a lot of important conversations are had by breaking bread; they support organisations to grow and develop. Every organisation gets help to diversify by being exposed to other networks working outside their bubbles it's important to look for projects to create outside of those bubbles"
'Mostly through Black History Month. '

"Community work and for festivals."

"Networking forums and meetings where community projects are discussed. Sometimes we are introduced by other project partners or venues."

"These will come from conversations on social media forums and networking events where we are introduced to each other. We broadly publicise and are branded to show we want inclusive partnerships with black and minoritised people. We actively look for partnerships with black and minoritised people. We have worked with black artists and community groups and communities in this capacity"

On the definition of project partnerships and subcontracting

"Partner is 50:50"

"Sub-contractor – someone who hires you to fill a vacancy – like a commission. "
"Project partners have more say in what the project is about and their input is valued.
Subcontractors are not invited to offer their opinions in the set-up of the project – they might provide feedback at the end."

"A project partner - the relationship is about what each party can contribute, what you bring to the table"

"A subcontractor – you are paying someone to do something; they do not have a say in the overall running of the project."

"Project partner – someone who has equal say and involvement in a project, in a collaboration
Sub-contractor – someone you assign tasks and responsibilities to. You would be the main decision maker"

"With a project partner there is a lot more planning together, more closeness. More room to tweak and maneuver how we are going to make this the best project we can there is more scope to develop"

"A subcontractor, you come to do what the brief was, you just do what you have been asked to do."

"Project partner is 2 organisations sharing the same goal and responsibilities. Subcontracting is working for someone else's goals and they hold the responsibility."

"A project partner is someone who is working with you. You know in advance what your stake is and it is the same as the other partner. There is mutual respect and regard'

"A subcontractor gets paid to do something, usually the payment is marginal – there is no co-production, it is a business arrangement. or in the worst-case scenario we have been offered unpaid, volunteer or low paid work by white organisations seeking to capitalise on our skill. This happened with an organisation and was also reported back to us by another artist. Additionally, an organisation advertised for volunteer photographers with CV and portfolio to work for them. We are less than the GIG economy, "

"Many of the large organisations of the GCF are linked in other organisations of which we have never been invited. They have outside meetings and the ear of the council. They do not declare these affiliations."

RECOGNITION- Summary

Post 2020 BLM uprisings, many reach out and don't follow through. Some felt that the support came with micro-managing and controlling the projects direction, funding options and content, leaving practitioners feeling disempowered when making decisions.

One felt that project partners who lack knowledge of black culture, terminology and history were using their position of power to dictate creative and business decisions.

As a response to BLM uprisings, some practitioners felt some organisations were more willing to work together.

Across interviewees there was very little visual PR/Press recognition.

The majority of organisations/individuals interviewed work with other Black and minoritised groups in the borough.

Participants have found networking inside the GCF useful whilst some felt it would be helpful to have a separate space to 'break bread'.

Many felt that they were invited to be sub-contractors as opposed to project partners. Most were clear on what the difference was between subcontracting vs a project partner. One person felt they had been exploited by organisations who have used them for sub-contracting work, quoting low pay and less than gig economy workers.

Project Summary

"During this pilot project, we have gone on a journey to begin looking into the types of Roles, Responsibilities of Black and Minoritised Artistic and Cultural practitioners and organisations hold and how their work is recognised.

Whilst this is a pilot project, there are some questions raised that we feel should be investigated:

Why was there a majority of CIC's that responded to this survey and is it more common in certain communities to set up CIC's. If this is the case, why? And how are they being supported with starting, running and growing a CIC within their sector.

Why is there a majority of organisations interviewed generating an annual income of less than £24,000. How are they being supported in growing their business? And what support is needed to grow?
How could these organisations be supported in growing their teams, growing or creating boards and networks so they can further support themselves and the communities they serve?
How can Greenwich become a 'safe space' for Black and Minoritised groups to create and engage in Artistic and Cultural activities, develop and be part of networking opportunities that support generational growth?

Given the data on female participation in this research further work is needed on whether black females are more disadvantaged by the issues raised. But also why do fewer black males engage or participate in the GCF?
How can organisations be inclusive of uplifting and celebrating diverse voices?

Is there space for the above to exist within the GCF?
It has been suggested that if GCF members require Equity policies that 'maybe another networking framework should be formed.' Based on this suggestion, we recommend the development of a model/organisation similar to LEAN in Lewisham, constituted with sufficient EDI policies and training in place. Creating a safer space for Black and Minoritised individuals and organisations to thrive.
Further research is required.

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Thank you to all the members of the 'Equity Working Group' who have invested time, energy and resource into developing this pilot with the aim of adding to the conversation around what creates a safer space for Black and Minoritised individuals and organisations to thrive.



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by Equity Working Group based in London Royal Borough of Greenwich

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