

# TRANSFORM

## TRANSFORM – ANTI-RACISM PRACTICE & ASPIRATIONS – A HANDBOOK

The following document is designed to underpin Transform’s anti-racist practice. It acts as a handbook for our team and collaborators on our journey to develop Transform as an inclusive and accountable organisation. The following sets out how we define and understand our anti-racist practice. Whilst we consider this work to be an ongoing process and to underpin our work in a perpetual way, we also set out key aspirations for the period 2021-2024, as this is the period the organisation is currently planning and thinking about most actively. We consider this document to be living, evolving and active.

### WHAT WE BELIEVE IN

In-line with our Equality and Inclusion policy, Transform seeks to embrace and promote equity and inclusion as fundamental to its core ethos and activities. Our aim is to present bold, brave, vivid and socially-conscious performance reflecting the world we live in today. The company takes an equity-centred and inclusive approach in the way we engage with, support and collaborate with artists, creative people and team members.

Following the renewed impetus of Black Lives Matter, Transform has been consolidating the company’s commitment and approach to anti-racism. Transform commits to being an anti-racist organisation, working to disrupt white normative approaches and entrenched racism within theatre, the wider arts sector and society more broadly. We commit to this as a practise, taking the approach of **Accomplices**; working to create change, treating this work as focused and ongoing, finding ways to relinquish power.

We aim to shape an organisation where artists and creative people who are ethnically and culturally diverse and who experience racism, can feel supported and able to realise their creative potential. We will contribute to creating a fairer cultural sector that is more reflective of our intersectional communities and (inter)national context. We acknowledge this work is an ongoing process and will never be ‘complete’.

### OUR ASPIRATIONS

Below you will find a detailed description of our aims along with aligning actions that are intended to move forward our anti-racist practice over the next three years (Autumn 2021- Autumn 2024). We see anti-racism as an ongoing practise and commitment, but this timeframe is to be focused on in terms of the period of time the organisation is actively thinking about and planning currently. The actions listed below are live, active and evolving and will be reviewed and updated by Transform’s **Accountability Practise Group\*** when needed.

Our current work and actions focus around **Research, Programming, Creative Process, Organisation, Decentralisation, Listening & Accountability**:

#### Research:

We will take an ongoing and iterative approach to anti-racist organisational practise. We will listen, reflect and scrutinise our past work and consider where changes to our working model are needed. We will cultivate an environment where team members and trustees are encouraged and expected to make space for self-learning and personal work as part of their roles. We will make time for ongoing research and learning from think tanks such as [Runny Mede](#) in order to understand how racism is changing and how anti-racist practice needs to adapt. We will scrutinise our work and the wider structural issues within the sector as a whole, and be influenced by recommendations (e.g. [A Statement for the UK](#) – Inc Arts) and external expertise where required (e.g. [Racial Justice Network](#)) as part of an embedded and ongoing approach to evolving our practices.

#### How we will action this:

- Team members and trustees who are white to participate in Racial Justice Network’s ‘Unlearning Racism’ course and participate in unconscious bias training – ongoing

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- Transform to make available an evolving list of educational resources to all team members and trustees and to establish a monthly reading group – ongoing
- Team and Trustees to dedicate their own time to research and Accountability Practise Group to share and reflect quarterly - ongoing
- Accountability Practise Group to scrutinise and review practises and policies, utilising paid expertise (eg Racial Justice Network, creative associates) where appropriate – ongoing

## **Programming:**

We aim to develop and present a programme that feels reflective of the world today in its representation and robust social agenda. We will work to analyse our programme through an anti-racist lens, fostering a robust dialogue around the politics and ethics of representation and critiquing our position as a western based international festival. We will explore ways to deepen our programme through co-creation and a wider range of curatorial voices and co-creation. We will dissect how trauma and racism is represented in our programmes, by whom, and in what form. We will ensure that our approach to audience engagement and care is informed by our wider anti-racist practice.

## **How we will action this:**

- Ensure artistic policy, curatorial and selection processes clearly communicated on our website– 2022
- Identify strategic focuses in terms of programme representation. Undertake research and partnerships to back this up – 2022
- Explore ways to expand upon the voices and influences around the programme through co-creation or wider curatorial input– 2022
- Move towards more effective, accessible use of ‘trigger warnings’ and develop audience engagement and audience care tactics informed by wider anti-racist approaches - 2022

## **Creative Process:**

We will ensure that artists who are ethnically diverse and who experience racism can create the work they want to create with Transform, free from imposed western, colonial or normative pressures of what ‘theatre’ should look like or how it should be created. We will develop visible pathways for a newer generation of artists to be commissioned or present work with Transform. We will aim to work strategically with partners across the North to co-support and co-amplify artists and producers who are ethnically diverse and experience racism.

## **How we will action this:**

- Seek out partnerships across the North in respect of co-supporting and co-amplifying artists and producers who are ethnically diverse and experience racism – ongoing
- Scrutinise recruitment tactics and engagement data to ensure inclusive recruitment tactics for co-created projects and initiatives align with our anti-racist approach – ongoing
- Engage in open and transparent conversations with artists and creative associates around care and well-being approaches to ensure they are fit for purpose – ongoing

## **Organisation:**

As our company evolves, we will seek to redress any imbalances around representation by centring intersectionality, scrutinising data, and taking inclusive approaches to recruitment and succession planning. We will work to foster an organisational ethos that is care-led and where team members and trustees feel fully supported in their work and this practice. We will ensure that anti-racism is at the centre of our approaches to environmental sustainability and that we scrutinise our company policies and procedures through an anti-racist lens.

## **How we will action this:**

- Scrutinise organisational data in order to identify imbalances around representation and respond - ongoing

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- Consider developing objectives in regards to representation, for recruitment of new team members and trustees and to aid succession planning - 2022
- Critique recruitment and interview practises through an anti-racist lens to ensure they are fit for purpose - 2022
- Scrutinise company policies and practises through an anti-racist lens, supported by paid, external support where appropriate – ongoing
- Develop ethical framework around data capture, scrutinise the data of collaborators and audiences to inform shifts and changes to approaches and practise – 2023 & ongoing

## **Decentralisation:**

We aim to contribute to a wider anti-racist approach across the sector, collaborating with partners and our networks to develop the understanding and tools required for a more equitable and representative cultural sector. We aim to amplify and support the work of artists and companies who are ethnically diverse and experience racism, particularly in the North of England.

## **How we will action this:**

- Exchange experience and ideas with current partners and networks to sharpen our understanding and develop tools required to enhance anti-racist approaches across the sector – ongoing
- Ensure an allocation of the team's time to support and amplify artists and companies who are ethnically diverse to develop their own initiatives – ongoing
- Identify ways to share our own experience and learning - ongoing

## **Listening & Accountability\*:**

We will ensure we are available to listen and have conversations, and be accountable to ourselves and our community. We will operate a Listening Model, where anybody accessing Transform's work can come to us to offer feedback, make a suggestion, raise an issue, question or provocation. An Accountability Practise Group comprised of team members and trustees will meet regularly to reflect upon and scrutinise the company's practise in relation to strategic focuses including anti-racism alongside trans rights, disability justice and environmentally sustainable practises. This will ensure that anti-racist practice is connected to our wider organisational considerations, and that listening and conversational approaches inform our work.

## **How we will action this:**

- Ensure Listening Model and role of Accountability Practise Group is clearly communicated to all artists, creatives and partners we work with and made available and visible on the Transform website – 2022 & ongoing
- Review the Listening Model and Accountability Practise Group approach quarterly to assess learning and any changes to be made to model – ongoing

Changes and additions to this handbook to be made at any time by the Accountability Practise Group.

**Due for full review: October 2022**