

21

22

TEN YEARS' TIME

Executive Summary

Racial Justice and Social Transformation: How funders can act





This is just the beginning...

We want to do everything we can to help those in the philanthropic sector who wish to align their work to advance racial justice in the UK and beyond. If we can support you on that journey by sharing what we have learned, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we will make sure to share anything we can.

If there is anything you think we have missed in this report, please send us your suggestions and we will continue updating the digital copy over time.

If you have any questions or would like to find out more, please contact:

info@tenyearstime.com

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank The Clothworkers' Foundation and the Lankelly Chase Foundation for supporting this work, the many partners who have contributed content and challenged early drafts, and those that have been working on these issues long before we began.

Lead authors: Eli Manderson Evans, Cobi-Jane Akinrele, Haneen Hammou, Aditi Shah, Shamsa Derrick

Design and graphics: Olamide Florence Adeoye

Legal disclaimer

Ten Years' Time is not a registered investment advisor and we cannot give legal, tax, or financial advice. This document has been produced for information purposes only and as such the views contained herein are not to be taken as advice or recommendation to buy or sell any investment or product or interest thereto. You should carry out your own independent research before making any investment decision.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Racial Justice and Social Transformation: How Funders Can Act is a report which we are proud to share with all those interested in advancing racial justice in the UK. It is a report which seeks to inject ambition into the British funding landscape and create a clear roadmap for action.

The report represents a place where we hope to clarify some of the best practices needed to make racial justice a reality and racial injustice a thing of the past. We turn our heads to the past, present and future, seeing that, for many of the conversations we are having today, the past is extremely important in making visible the racist and disempowering notions and foundations of practices and understanding still used today. We review how both sides of the coin need to be addressed and understood to engage in racial justice work to the best of our ability. Such a multifaceted approach requires, in our eyes, a focus on the grantmaking endeavours of trusts and foundations in the UK, their investment strategies and the internal operations and governance of charitable funding organisations. Without applying a racial justice lens to all of these deeply important areas we believe we will not be able to achieve wholesale transformational change and instead will be committing to action, which plays within the confines of the current structurally racist system.

We centre joy and innovation in this report to inspire change. A change that is only possible through the ceding of power to communities of colour and changemakers of colour doing the work. We seek to uplift and platform many of those very voices in the report through a mixture of inserts, profiles and quotes.

By championing the values of love, empathy and honesty, all the while committing to ongoing learning, we believe we will be in a much better place as a sector to lead other sectors of our economy to take racial justice action seriously and to act with urgency. It will not be easy but it is possible, but first we have to take personal responsibility and educate ourselves on the reality of systemic racism and from that point we will be much better positioned to shift power. We must empower those who are able to lead the way, supporting them whilst removing ourselves from further giving energy to systems, people and organisations that are invested in a racially unjust world or the subjugation and continued harming of communities of colour.

The UK funding sector is opportunistically placed to lead the way in advancing racial justice through its independent and extensive capital but also through its proximity to innovation in the third sector. We hope this report inspires conversation, self-reflection, the ceding of power and perhaps most importantly a renewed commitment to act to advance racial justice.

In this executive summary we share recommendations from the main report which are broken down into three sections; grantmaking, racial justice and investments, and operations and governance. We hope that these recommendations inspire you to act, challenge and ultimately renew your commitment to racial justice.



GRANTMAKING: RECOMMENDATIONS

Five short-term things you can do:

1. Educate yourself on the origins of philanthropy in the UK and how it was fundamentally crafted by white supremacist thought and geared towards sustaining a social hierarchy that is, and always was, outdated.
2. Fund learning exchanges between organisations working on racial justice and provide funding for roles where people can focus on building collaborative learning and sharing practices.
3. Position frontline workers as experts and bring them closer to grantmaking processes and decisions.
4. Collect data and publish it publicly in terms of how much money you give in grants to POC-led organisations, and how many POC-led organisations were rejected in the process.
5. Cede power to communities of colour and if you recognise you are not best placed to direct money to POC then hand over money to the funds that are best placed (see list of some funds and organisations that inspire us above).

Five longer term recommendations:

1. Audit your grant-giving practices through a racial justice lens, informed by the experiences of staff members of colour. Hire an external expert of colour to lead this work.
2. Reframe how you measure and centre impact in your grantmaking and adopt a more human-centred approach. Assess your work by building trusting relationships and actually creating space to speak with those impacted by the projects you fund.
3. Change the way you recruit staff members. Reimagine the skills needed to be a grantmaker in your job descriptions and actively build a team that reflects the issues and communities you are funding on. Publishing houses hire sensitivity readers to assess the language of books they deem potentially controversial. Here, funders would be best served to hire POCs in similar roles, particularly in their use of language in recruitment.
4. Create spaces and opportunities for people of colour to heal from racial trauma and connect over joy.
5. Develop processes to fund unconstituted organisations, through funders looking into how they can fund individuals and unregistered organisations.

The sky's the limit...

1. Dream big, get ambitious and dedicate real time to reimagining society and the world, then reflect on how you can make grants to make these dreams a reality.
2. We would urge someone to make a racial justice quality assurance index of funders to view what work they have ACTUALLY done in comparison to their statements and verbal commitments. You could rank funders in terms of their commitment to racial justice and allow grassroots organisations to share their insights of working with a funder, for example.
3. Spend down your endowment! The current funds in circulation to advance racial justice are not enough. Mobilise your endowments to save lives now rather than waiting.
4. Pick up the phone, email, WhatsApp, text the organisations you fund and get to know the people that are leading the work to a more racially just world. Change is all about relationships. Invest in the relationships of those that you fund and create space to reorient the relationship between "funder and funded" to one that is rooted in equal value and appreciation.
5. Physically move your funding organisation into communities of colour and embed your grantmaking in the community through participatory grantmaking, accountability structures at all levels of your operations that include the communities you serve and convert your office building into a community asset.

INVESTMENTS AND RACIAL INJUSTICE: RECOMMENDATIONS

Five short-term things you can do:

1. **Reflection and honesty:** the first step is understanding to what extent the way you spend your money is keeping existing systems, rules, protocols that fuel racial and economic inequality, in place and re-design for equity and equality.
2. **Share decision making power:** creating working groups of racialised people and people of colour to be advisors on funding decisions including pensions, investments and endowments and support the creation of more POC-led funding vehicles.
3. **Allocating resources and time:** there needs to be commitment to individual work and serious accountability underpinning that. This entails continual dialogue with communities, creating intentional space and time, and allocating resource for continuing individual transformational journeys, from the top to the bottom of your organisation.
4. **Radical transparency:** funders need to talk more about the intricacies of financial systems, their connection to it, and the complicity with it.
5. **Increase participation:** your strategy should be more representative of those that you are trying to help, but it tends to be the case that strategies are designed behind closed doors. We need more participatory design so that the strategy is being fed into by people that are experiencing the issues

Five longer term recommendations:

1. **Redistribute power:** start the process of people in senior leadership positions giving up power and sharing equity with those from racialised backgrounds, trial co-CEOships as a way of succession planning.
2. **Create space and accept failure:** provide more funding for Horizon 2 work, and more specifically incentivise or invest in more POC-led infrastructure to support a just-racial transition from Horizon 2 to 3. Share what didn't work, and create space for people to fail and learn from each other.
3. **Educate:** invest in improving the understanding around financial systems and investments for non-finance professionals to address the information inequality, removing barriers to access, and diversifying the landscape. Train and recruit majority members from non-finance backgrounds.
4. **Invest in the real world:** invest locally, invest in real things and real people and if that means hiring an in-house team or clubbing together with other foundations then go for it.
5. **Work long-term and with patience:** refuse quarterly financial performance reporting, it is this sort of short-term mindset that is harming society and planet alike.

The sky's the limit...

1. **Reparations:** don't shy away from that word. Instead, look to spend down your endowment and grant all of it to POC-led organisations as a form of reparations. After all, these endowment funds were accumulated from the historical destruction of racialised communities.
2. **Independent governance:** lobby for an independent body or a new model of the ACF that is not compromised by the government or its business model, and can serve the function of a critical friend for the sector or lobby the Charity Commission to change their structure and governance laws, i.e. the rules on how long charities are allowed to accumulate wealth for.
3. **Sell everything and start again:** we need to break cycles of exploitative investment which has to start with stopping. So long as we feel a divine right to make money by virtue of having it in the first place, we will be stuck in this addictive profit loop.
4. **Don't take shortcuts:** It's a long, hard, challenging journey. Don't try and skip the hard and uncomfortable parts, it's part of the parcel, and it'll pay off in the long run

OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REIMAGINING

1. *Build creativity into your everyday communication within your organisation.*
2. *Establish or support existing peer support networks. Recognise that it can be difficult to become comfortable in spaces where you are the odd one out, even if you are aware of how important your role is in the organisation.*
3. *Provide support for your staff to access professional mental health support.*
4. *Set clear rules and guidelines against oppression in the workplace and hold staff and trustees accountable when they repeatedly disregard these boundaries.*
5. *Embed yourselves in the communities you work in. Get to know them, not for their expertise on how best you should fund a given project but to start to remove the barrier between funders and beneficiaries.*
6. *Ask the communities you work in or organisations you fund to review your current practices.*
7. *Interrogate your current recruitment and staff retention practices. Establish why they exist in their current form and whether they are producing results that best align with your values.*
8. *Create opportunities for all staff to express their concerns with regards to your organisation's current practices and any ideas they may have to improve them.*
9. *Examine whether your board of trustees best reflects the communities you serve or organisations you fund.*
10. *Identify your organisation's strategy towards racial justice and social transformation. Ensure this strategy can be operationalised at all levels of your organisation.*

Conclusion

We hope that by providing a bold roadmap for transformational change in which racial justice is centred and positioned as a prerequisite for any social change we will help support the funding sector to face some hard truths.

We know this work is not easy, but it is urgently necessary. For too long those closest to power have skirted from their responsibility to address a system which works for few and deeply hurts many. Racism, racial inequity, and injustice are not a Black and Brown issue. These evils represent a society and culture in the UK in which the majority has lost its connection and commitment to love, compassion and honesty; and has a fatal inability to recognise and treat the global majority as humans with the respect and dignity we all require to live full lives. We call on all funding organisations to sit with any discomfort that arises from reading this report and then act with love. Change is coming and with your help we will get there much sooner than without it. What side of history would you like to stand on?

We hope you, like us, are inspired by the incredible innovation hailing from communities of colour across the country and beyond, despite such limited resources deployed to our aid. Imagine the possibilities when racial justice is funded appropriately, with urgency and with intention, with those that have lived experience and deep understandings of racial oppression leading the way.

We invite you to pause and take some time to reimagine the world you want to live in. What does that world look like? What will it feel like? How will that world be experienced by your children and future generations? And ultimately how likely is the reality of that world if we do not disrupt the status quo?

By applying a racial justice lens to your investment strategy, grant-giving practices and internal organisational culture we know that racial justice is achievable. For too long the sector has sought to pick and choose when it comes to commitments of racial justice, a DEI initiative here and a few Black and Brown board members recruited there, or taking an extremely siloed approach to this work. It is clear this approach is ineffective, performative, and often wrong. It simply hasn't worked. Racial injustice is a result and founding principle of our economy, our society and the very sector we call home. To address this reality, we need people to be bold, brave and ambitious in taking on the whole system rather than attempting to break it down into small, digestible and comfortable chunks.

Ten Years' Time commits to working with funders who share our ambition for a world that is kind, regenerative and sustainable but in order to advance racial justice we need people to give up power to communities of colour, trust our visions and support us.

With love,

Ten Years' Time

