

Summary of Bluecoat's Race Equality Action Plan

	Action	Progress to date, 20 Aug 2021	Next steps
1	Internal change		
1.1	Set up an action-focused mechanism to drive change	<p>We established a Bluecoat Race Equality Task Force (RETF) during summer 2020. We drew up terms of reference and created an action plan. It meets fortnightly to develop and review the action plan and ensure implementation, updating staff and reporting to the Board.</p> <p>In July, two new members of Bluecoat staff joined the RETF.</p>	<p>Membership of our Race Equality Task Force will be regularly reviewed to ensure its effectiveness. It will continue to communicate with staff throughout the organisation to deliver the action plan.</p>
1.2	Diversify Bluecoat staff including freelancers and contractors	<p>A targeted recruitment programme took place October 2020-May 2021 aimed at reaching a more inclusive field of candidates for several new project-funded posts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advertising in local Black/diverse community publications and spaces • targeted marketing campaign using social media and other networks • more accessible and inclusive application packs • anonymising applications • more diverse selection and interview panels <p>We have recently launched a group to support our workforce (staff and volunteers) who have experienced racism, feel racialised or may have been</p>	<p>We will use the learnings from this recruitment programme to inform our strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing data from recruitment drives • creating and maintaining effective networks to share job opportunities • developing an inclusive induction programme for new positions <p>We will reflect diversity throughout our new website, and within its opportunities section.</p> <p>We will allocate funds for recruitment campaigns, informed by research into appropriate channels, to attract diverse applicants, and monitor their effectiveness.</p>

		<p>marginalised due to their race or ethnicity. The group's main purpose is to be a safe space to discuss issues that they might be facing and to provide valuable peer support.</p>	
1.3	Implement staff training programme	<p>We developed a plan and content for open conversations with staff about race equality, racism and speaking out, and piloted it.</p> <p>We conducted a survey of staff that participated in the conversation in order to refine and inform the roll out of our approach.</p>	<p>We are rolling out this pilot with more staff groups and developing a training plan based on these conversations. We will analyse the plan, as well as research anti-racism training.</p>
1.4	Diversify the Bluecoat Board	<p>Makeup of the Board is monitored against targets set in our Equality and Diversity Action Plan and reported to Arts Council England, as part of National Portfolio Organisation monitoring.</p> <p>The Board is actively engaged in ensuring we strive to become a more inclusive and anti-racist organisation, and race equality is a standing item at all of its meetings.</p>	<p>We will continue to monitor and report on the makeup of the Board and actively recruit to make it more reflective of protected characteristics we have prioritised, including race.</p>
1.5	Organisational partnerships review and development	<p>We are currently reviewing the partnerships we have with a view to further develop these.</p>	<p>We plan to communicate race equality values to our existing partners and develop a Memorandum of Understanding and/or shared statement with them.</p> <p>We will forge relationships with more diverse cultural organisations and groups, providing and receiving mentoring where appropriate.</p>

1.6	Review policy gaps	<p>Our Equality and Diversity Action Plan is being updated as part of our forward planning and we will submit this to Arts Council England, in autumn 2021.</p> <p>We have reviewed our current whistleblowing policy and are exploring mechanisms for creating a robust whistleblowing system specifically in light of race equality.</p>	<p>We will undertake a more in-depth review of our Equality and Diversity Action Plan to align this with our Race Equality Action Plan. In addition, as part of an annual review, we are reviewing all of our policies to ensure that race equality underpins everything we do at Bluecoat.</p>
1.7	Creative community	<p>We are reviewing how our values around inclusion and race equality can be integrated into the tenancy agreements of our on-site creative community.</p>	<p>We will develop a Memorandum of Understanding with our creative community around our values.</p>
2	Supporting artists		
2.1	Profile Black Artists and Artists of Colour in the programme	<p>Creating a rich and varied programme, with different voices and perspectives, continues to be a priority. Our forthcoming gallery and events programme, together with residencies, commissions and other support for artists, is summarised here.</p> <p>We remain committed to providing opportunities for dedicated solo exhibitions or substantial presentations of work, continuing Bluecoat’s profiling of Black artists that began in the mid-1980s. This exhibitions and performance history, much of it archived and available on the library section of our website, is generating increased interest from artists, students and academics.</p>	<p>We are continuing to explore further opportunities to commission new work by Black Artists and Artists of Colour in this and other new contexts, as well as supporting public discourse around their work.</p> <p>We will continue to monitor the diversity of the artists we work with.</p> <p>We will develop ways to disseminate and make more accessible our diverse arts history over the next two years.</p>

2.2	Create opportunities for new curators/producers/gate keepers	<p>We created a new post (starting June 2021) of Project Curator (Cultural Legacies) to interrogate Bluecoat's history working with diverse artists. Project funded by John Ellerman Foundation.</p> <p>We created a new post (starting May 2021) of Project Facilitator (Colonial Legacies) to work with young people at Greenhouse Project in Toxteth to interrogate Bluecoat's history and archive and produce a public programme in response. See 3.4 below.</p>	<p>Our Project Curator (Cultural Legacies) is researching and developing an exhibition focused on Bluecoat's history and bringing this into dialogue with new artists, to be staged Autumn 2022-Spring 2023.</p> <p>Our Cultural Legacies Project Facilitator has made great progress with the Colonial Legacies project and creating connections within different communities in Liverpool.</p> <p>We will ensure we're working with a broad range of voices and perspectives through curators and cultural producers, both with staff and freelance contracts.</p>
2.3	Diversify Bluecoat's celebration calendar	As part of our ongoing planning cycle, we are identifying key cultural dates throughout the year for potential collaborations, in order to embed and mainstream more diverse cultural programme activities beyond Black History Month and Slavery Remembrance Day.	<p>We aim to raise awareness of different cultural celebrations across the year through our communications channels.</p> <p>We have developed a detailed blog about the Bluecoat building's links to the transatlantic slave trade for Slavery Remembrance Day.</p>
3	Speaking Out		
3.1	Participate in city-wide discussions	Bluecoat's Director of Cultural Legacies is the cultural sector representative on Liverpool's Race Equality Task Force, commissioned by Liverpool City Council in 2020.	Liverpool's Race Equality Task Force continues until the Autumn and its report on education has been submitted to Liverpool City Council. We will continue to engage with this work and bring learning from the process back to Bluecoat.

3.2	Take part in sector-wide discussions	<p>In October 2020, Bluecoat prompted Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium (LARC)'s discussion of Black Lives Matter in relation to the arts and culture sector, and from this a collective response and strategy has been developed. We drafted terms of reference for a new LARC Race Equality Action Group.</p> <p>We have participated in debates around decolonisation, with particular reference to our building's colonial legacies and the arts centre's history of working with diverse artists. Contributions made include to Rita Keegan Archive Project (2020) and Association for Art History conference (2021).</p>	<p>We will continue to actively participate in LARC's race equality work and to chair its Race Equality Action Group's fortnightly meetings.</p> <p>We will continue to be active and vocal in local and national networks and debates around race equality and decolonisation in the arts and culture sector, and will look for further opportunities to discuss Bluecoat's colonial legacies in public forums.</p>
3.3	Build external alliances	<p>We have an ambition to be an actively anti-racist organisation, but we know we can't do this alone and we will need to work with other organisations to realise this.</p>	<p>We will research and be open to anti-racist and race equality alliances, as well as using our organisational voice to openly support anti-racist and related campaigns. We will consider if there is any in-kind support we can give to campaigns and organisations.</p>
3.4	Interrogate the colonial history of the Bluecoat building	<p>We developed a 'Colonial Legacies' strand in our <i>Echoes & Origins</i> heritage participation project, funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund over two years, working with young people from Greenhouse Project, Toxteth to explore Bluecoat's origins in relation to their own cultural backgrounds. Staff appointed May 2021 and workshop sessions started with the Greenhouse Project. An Instagram feed has been established to chart the work of the</p>	<p>The Colonial Legacies strand of <i>Echoes and Origins</i>, continues with a series of open days at the end of August.</p> <p>New research on our building's links to transatlantic slavery and other colonial legacies will be added to the Bluecoat's new website.</p>

		<p>programme and can be found at bluecoat.colonial.legacies.</p> <p>We continued to research the transatlantic slavery links of founder of the former charity school that occupied the Bluecoat building, Bryan Blundell and his family, and other donors. Local Black Lives Matter discussions and supervising a PhD student interrogating this history have helped inform this.</p> <p>We advised Liverpool Blue Coat School in relation to its response to Black Lives Matter petitions to decolonise its history (connections to transatlantic slavery). We provided material and gave a presentation to students there about our work with artists interrogating this history.</p>	<p>We will mark Slavery Remembrance Day (23 August) through a detailed blog about the building's heritage and links to the transatlantic slave trade.</p> <p>We will continue our dialogue with Blue Coat School about our shared history, and work towards collaborative creative projects that interrogate it.</p>
3.5	<p>Diversify and respond to new, representative audiences</p>	<p>We are actively diversifying our audiences for family activities, investing in a summer campaign aimed at city centre families and those in Liverpool 8.</p> <p>We have aimed our family campaign at the Liverpool 8 community, including leaflet door drops and poster campaign in this specific area.</p> <p>We have established a new visitor experience team who provide a warm welcome to visitors, with a specific focus on inclusion and understanding of cultural differences.</p>	<p>We will undertake a series of campaigns to test different strategies for attracting a more diverse audience to Bluecoat.</p> <p>Using intelligence from the visitor experience, we will develop a new communication policy for audiences, our creative community and staff.</p>

		<p>We have recruited a Community Engagement Coordinator, who is building networks with community groups and organisations and actively encourages groups to visit Bluecoat. The coordinator has developed communication tools to invite community groups in for tours and for our summer family programme. They are also undertaking research activity to find out more about how Bluecoat can support specific community groups.</p>	
3.6	<p>Log and respond to feedback and criticism effectively</p>	<p>We have created a feedback log to keep track of all comments coming to us with regard to our race equality activity. We are using feedback to inform how we communicate our work here.</p>	<p>We will continue to monitor and respond to feedback to improve communications with regard to race equality activity.</p>