

Robin Osterley

1/7/20

CRA statement on race equality

“DISMANTLING RACISM IN CHARITY RETAIL

A statement of commitment

The Charity Retail Association (CRA) is the lead body in the charity sector, with some 80% of the UK's charity shops in membership. As such, we believe we have a moral duty to tackle racism in all its forms within the sector, and to give our members appropriate guidance, training and encouragement to excise racism from their activities.

We recognise that there is a problem of race inequality in society and our sector, and this impacts on our staff, our volunteers and the communities we are here to serve.

Far too many of the senior roles within our sector are held by white people, and there has been a real lack of opportunity for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals to begin, develop and succeed in their careers in the voluntary sector whether as paid staff or volunteers.

Systemic racism and discrimination in the UK directly and indirectly leads to poorer life chances, deeper health inequalities and greater risks being carried within BAME communities, and those challenges are exacerbated when our sector fails to address its own problems of race inequality.

While many of our members have campaigned and fought for race equality and social justice over many years, collectively we have not done enough to create the real changes that are needed to achieve true racial equality in our work.

We know that words alone are nowhere near enough. But we also know that silence amongst leaders, especially white leaders, in our sector causes pain for our colleagues and our communities. We know that BAME people are tired of hearing worthy words and seeing no action, and that fundamental change is required before progress can be made – “tinkering around the edges” is not going to be effective.

We are therefore today publishing our first action plan which we hope will go some way towards redressing the inequalities and lack of opportunities for BAME people which exist within charity retail. We recognise that fulfilling this plan will take determination, planning, energy and resource. It is not the role of a single organisation of course, and we will need to work closely with our members to achieve the desired results, but we are committed to working as quickly and effectively as possible to achieve measurable change.

We commit to being open and accountable as we progress this work. We will report publicly on progress against our plan – with honesty about the things that don't happen as well as those that do.

As a board and as a staff team we commit ourselves to move forward together, to listen and to learn, to take action jointly and individually, to effect change and to be held accountable for delivering change.

We know we have much more to do. For the sake of our sector and our communities, charities and

social change organisations are #NeverMoreNeeded, and we need to get this right.

”

Action Plan

Actions facing internally to CRA

| Action item | Notes | Status/timescale |
|--|--|--|
| 1. We will publish a statement on our attitude to racism | Herewith | Complete |
| 2. We will publish an action plan to guide our activities | This plan | Complete, but subject to review |
| 3. All of our staff will receive formal and paid for equalities training | | By end of September 2020 |
| 4. Directors will receive similar training if they have not already been trained by their own organisations | Board byelaws will be amended to reflect this | By end 2021 for existing Directors, within three months of joining the board for new Directors |
| 5. We will ensure that those that we contract with are also committed to an EDI process that acknowledges the need to tackle racism | | |
| 6. CEO and chair to receive some more specific training on leadership in this context, and if possible to find a mentor | Could use GLA as a source of mentors | By end of September for CEO, end 2020 for chair |
| 7. We will obtain paid for consultancy support to further our objectives and make sure we remain aware of current BAME issues | Consultant will examine this plan, and other aspects of our business, and advise us on additional steps to take, as well as commenting on what we have done so far | By end of 2020 |
| 8. We will ensure that at least two members of the CRA board (currently 14 people) will be from a BAME background | We will seek to explore options for targeted recruitment through BAME agencies, social media, stakeholders, BAME press and recruitment agencies | By next financial year, ie 31/3/21 |
| 9. We will review our board procedures to ensure that BAME board members are able to have their voices heard and make an equal contribution. We will clearly minute contributions by all participants at the Board to ensure that there is recognition of all contributions. | It would be easy to recruit BAME Directors and then carry on as normal. We need to ensure their input is heard effectively | During and after the recruitment process |
| 10. We will examine our recruitment practices and identify how a more values and behaviours-based recruitment can be undertaken, rather than relying on existing skills and experience only | More values-based recruitment avoids the obvious problem of recruiting people who are "like us", and tries to ensure that the vicious | By end August 2020 |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | circle of no experience/no job is broken | |
| 11. We will ensure that all recruitment is “blind” ie names, pictures and any references to ethnic status are redacted from applications until interview stage | | Our last two recruitment activities have already adopted this practice |
| 12. We will review our staff handbook, including complaints handling and personnel policies to ensure no bias is present | Will require assistance of external consultant | By end of 2020 |
| 13. We will measure and monitor the ethnic pay gap within CRA and publish it | There will be templates available for this | By end of 2020 |
| 14. We will write and publish an equality and diversity HR policy | Will require assistance of external consultant | By end of 2020 |
| 15. We will review where to advertise new job positions | Will require some external assistance | By end of August 2020 |
| 16. We will review all of our existing imagery and marketing material to ensure a lack of bias and encourage positive representations | Will require some external assistance | Review to take place by end of August with action plan arising therefrom with separate timings |
| 17. We will run a focus group with members to ask them for their views on what further steps we should take (ensuring an equal representation of BAME and non BAME views) | We recognise that many of our members may be further ahead than us in this agenda and would like to learn from them | By end September |
| 18. We will ensure that the regular soundings we take from members include more BAME voices | This is closely bound up with achieving wider diversity of attendance at our meetings, hence the long timescale | Ongoing, but need an initial improvement by end 2020 |
| 19. We will review the action plan at each board meeting, and within the staff team every two months | Staff: start immediately. Board: start at November meeting | Ongoing |
| 20. We will ensure that our working environment is comfortable for people from different races | le positive imagery, representations, welcome signs etc | Immediately |
| 21. We will adopt a zero tolerance policy to racist comments and any form of harassment, mockery and derogatory behaviour | | Immediately |

Actions facing the membership and the charity retail sector

| Action item | Notes | Status/timescale |
|---|--|--|
| 22. We will specifically ask our members to send more BAME attendees to meetings and ensure that we proactively encourage and welcome BAME attendees and address any barriers to their attendance | We will consider offering a bursary and travel costs to remove barriers to attending | Starting with our autumn meetings then ongoing |
| 23. We will circulate this plan and our regular reports on it to our entire membership | | Once agreed by board at July meeting |
| 24. We will issue a media statement with this plan in it | | Once agreed by board at July meeting |
| 25. We will research and report on the ethnic makeup of the sector staff and volunteers | | By end 2020 |
| 26. We will regularly update this research to monitor progress | | Every year as a minimum |
| 27. We will issue guidance on dealing with racist incidents in shops and help members report hate incidences | Will require some external support. Funding might be available for reporting | By end 2020 |
| 28. We will issue public-facing communications that support a zero tolerance approach to racism in shops | Will require some external support | Timescale to be decided |
| 29. We will run a member event specifically recruitment, retention and progression of BAME people in member charities | Usual kind of CRA event with external speakers and debates | By spring 2021 |
| 30. We will seek input from any of our members who are directly involved in racism awareness and reduction | | By end September 2020 |
| 31. We will run sessions at conference on recruitment, retention and progression of BAME people in member charities | Next conference June 2021 | June 2021 |