



# REN

Race Equality Network

**FEBRUARY 2023**

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# FOREWORD



Yusuf Karolia  
REN Chair

Race Equality Network has been challenging institutional racism and inequalities over the last 20 years and our focus is on rooting out racism at all levels of society and across all organisations. At REN, we really value our partnerships and we continue to actively work with our grassroots members and a range of organisations including Bradford Metropolitan Council, Bradford Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust, West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership and VCS, to improve their services and become more inclusive for ethnically diverse communities. As the Chair of Race Equality Network, I feel that we have achieved so much but there is still much work to do before our city and institutions are free from racial inequalities; therefore if we continue to work together, we can achieve equitable outcomes for those living and working in Bradford which is a young, vibrant and diverse district.



Humma Nizami  
Executive Director

The existence of institutional and structural racism is evident in many aspects of UK society which has resulted in multiple inequalities faced by ethnically diverse communities that live and work in Bradford district and beyond. These inequalities can no longer be ignored if we are to create a fairer, more equal society where everyone can realise their full potential and thrive in their endeavours. At Race Equality Network (REN), the fight for inclusion and racial equity is at the core of what we do, and I believe that we are playing a small but important part in a much larger movement towards racial justice and liberation.

REN is the strategic lead for the ethnically diverse Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Bradford district. We collaborate with key stakeholders from across all sectors to eliminate racism, inequalities and barriers faced by individuals and communities when attempting to access services, leading to equitable outcomes for everyone. My hope for the future is for people to live joyously side-by-side and provide mutual aid, cooperation and care for each other in a culturally diverse district where difference is accepted and celebrated. I am proud of all we have achieved in the last two years and I hope that our work develops further to create a national network of allies, individuals, communities and organisations who are passionate about racial justice, equity and inclusion.

# WHO ARE WE?

Race Equality Network (REN) is a registered charity and infrastructure organisation that provides support to grassroots Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations and groups that work primarily with diverse communities across Bradford district. REN amplifies the voices of ethnically diverse communities through partnerships, collaboration, campaigning and decision-making at a local, regional and national level.

## OUR MISSION

*“To build a strong network of organisations and individuals that work together to diversify and strengthen the voluntary sector and work towards achieving equitable outcomes for all communities”*

## OUR OBJECTIVES

- To promote equality and inclusion
- To unify communities
- To celebrate diversity
- To foster and promote good community relations

REN champions race equality at a grassroots and strategic level to ensure that services such as education, employment, health and social care, housing, training and volunteering are inclusive and accessible to everyone in Bradford District. We promote equality and inclusion through providing a range of services including advice and support, training, co-delivering projects, networking, developing partnerships and so much more.

## OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

We would like to thank the REN Chair and Board of Trustees for their strategic direction and ongoing commitment to ensuring that our members and ethnically diverse communities are supported equitably.



**Yusuf Karolia**  
*Chair*



**Peter Tate**  
*Vice Chair*



**Dr Mohammed Salam**  
*Secretary*



**Ann-Marie Smith**



**Charles Dacres**



**Abdul Ismail**



**Sofia Mahmood**  
*MBE*



**Humayun Islam**  
*BEM*



**Mohammed Hamayun Arshad**



**Ashok Nair**



**Manjit Kaur**



**Denise Sterling**



**Shadim Hussain**  
*MBE*



**Sajad Hussain**



**Nadera Amini**



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Through working collaboratively with our member organisations on the Covid Prevention, Covid Community Champions and Mental Health Champions projects, we have touched the lives of so many people across the district. During these projects we have achieved the following:



**SUPPORTED  
67,161  
INDIVIDUALS**

**RECRUITED  
306  
COMMUNITY  
CHAMPIONS WE CAN  
ACCESS ANY TIME**



**VISITED  
3,153  
HOUSEHOLDS**

**DEVELOPED THE  
REN HELPLINE  
COVERING  
13  
LANGUAGES.**



**REN's community engagement and partnership working was highlighted as a case study in the UK Government's Vaccine Uptake Plan, February 2021 which we are immensely proud of.**



**REN**  
Race Equality Network

**Women Leading The Way Network**

- Professional Development
- Leadership
- Mentoring
- Inclusion
- Networking





# OUR WORK

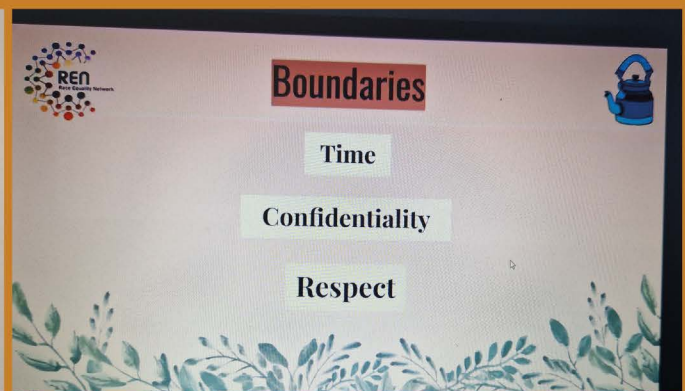
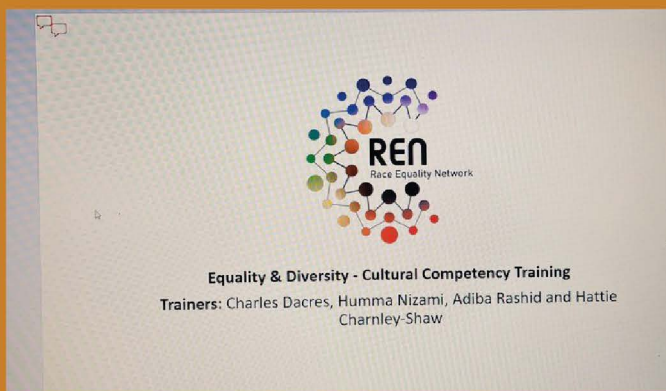
We deliver a range of training programmes around equality, diversity and inclusion to the VCS and Public sector organisations. The training delves into the topics of:

## Making Organisations More Inclusive

To upskill organisations with knowledge and understanding of racial inequality, why it exists and how it affects ethnically diverse communities. This training provides attendees with increased confidence to have discussions around racism and inequalities. It equips attendees with tools to support colleagues or volunteers who may experience everyday racism or unconscious bias within their workplace.

## Cultural Competency Training

To equip staff with the essential skills they need to connect with people from ethnically diverse backgrounds and ensure organisations and services are inclusive for people from all backgrounds and cultures. The training provides staff with the ability to view the world through the lens of other people – in all of their diversity.



## Race and Language Training

Language has a role in producing racial differences and the construction of race has a role in producing differences in languages. The race and language training focuses on what is and isn't acceptable, terminology, misconceptions, intersectionality and microaggressions. It also provides guidance on how to be an ally to people from diverse communities.

## Anti-Racism Training

REN work with schools to enable pupils of all ages to understand and explore race and racism in an open and safe environment. We engage children in a range of activities and discussions around traits that make us who we are, what we have in common with others, celebrating similarities and differences and how to tackle racism.

# ROOT OUT RACISM

We were at the forefront of co-designing the Root Out Racism campaign which was developed by West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership following their review of tackling health inequalities. We worked closely with key stakeholders including Bradford Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust, Bradford Council, VCSE organisations and other partners to launch the campaign in August 2021.



We were joined by hundreds of individuals from across Bradford district and since the launch of the campaign, over 500 organisations have made a pledge to tackle racism. From the success of the campaign, a working group was formed which REN are a part of for Bradford district and we continue to champion and support the campaign in every aspect of our service delivery.



# WOMEN LEADING THE WAY NETWORK

During Inclusion Week 2021, we held an in person event, Women Leading The Way. The event was aimed at engaging women of colour in key conversations around the inequalities that exist for these women in securing paid employment, pay scales and barriers for career progression.



We invited 13 female leaders from the VCSE and Statutory sector who shared their experiences of racism and sexism which hindered them in achieving their professional career goals. We were privileged to be joined by Dr Halima Begum, Chief Executive Officer at Runnymede Trust as our keynote speaker.



Following the success of this event and demand from attendees for a safe platform for women to come together and share such experiences, REN launched Women Leading The Way Network on International Women's Day 2022. The network aims to provide mentoring and support to women from all backgrounds and ethnicities to empower them in developing resilience and overcoming challenges which can create barriers to gaining employment, enabling them to pursue their career goals and provide routes to career progression at a leadership level.



# COLLABORATION

REN have successfully worked in collaboration with a range of partners and stakeholders to deliver the following projects:

Race Equality and Migrants Rights Summit

Community Dialogues With The BAOBAB Foundation

West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, Carers Webinars

RESTART For VCS Organisations

Infrastructure Support Programme

Covid Community Champions Project

Women Leading The Way

Community Mental Health Project

Message in a Bottle Campaign

Root Out Racism

VCSE Voices Panel

Covid Prevention Project

REN Helpline

Peoples Powerhouse

Inclusion Week

Black History Month

Race Equality Week

Islamophobia Awareness Month



# RUNNYMEDE TRUST

REN have worked in partnership with a range of national organisations championing race equality. Our partnership with Runnymede Trust started in March 2021 when we were approached by them to co-host a round table event in order to gather evidence from ethnically diverse VCSE sector leaders on the situation of race and racism in England. The online roundtable event was attended by over 60 leaders from across the North West and was delivered in partnership with Lancashire BME Network and Manchester BME Network. The findings from these key discussions contributed to a report submitted by Runnymede Trust to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD).



In September 2021, we co-hosted another round table discussion for Runnymede Trust and The Fawcett Society: Pay and Progression of Women of Colour. This online roundtable discussion provided an opportunity for women of colour living in the North West to share their personal experiences of the unfair treatment, racism and inequalities they faced in their career, and allowing them to take part in honest and meaningful conversations in a safe space, on what should be done to prevent and eliminate these inequalities for future generations.

The findings from this webinar contributed to the ground breaking report Broken Ladders: The Myth of Meritocracy for Women of Colour in the Workplace. Our Executive Director, Humma Nizami was invited to attend the launch event which was held at the Houses of Parliament, where she met the wonderful team that led to the success of this report. The full report can be accessed via the REN website.



Most recently we supported Runnymede Trust to plan and deliver their first ever Race Equality and Migrants Rights: We Move Summit which was attended by over 500 people from across the UK. The REN team led an interactive workshop, Power and Belonging which was one of the most popular events of the summit with over 100 attendees taking part in intersectional discussions. We continue to collaborate with Runnymede Trust for future events and projects so watch the space!

# BAOBAB FOUNDATION

REN is a member of the BAOBAB Foundation which is a network of Black and Global Majority community organisations working across the country to address racism, poverty and disadvantage. It was a pleasure for us to support Jermain Jackman from the BAOBAB Foundation in delivering the Community Dialogue workshop for our grassroots member organisations. The workshop was an opportunity for our member organisations affected by racism and discriminatory practices to talk about their needs and priorities, to ensure that the new £3 million BAOBAB Collective Fund is designed in a way that truly values and addresses the funding needs of ethnic minority-led organisations and sharing their ideas and visions for the future.



## Q&A SESSIONS

As part of the Covid Community Champions project, REN were instrumental in the development of the Q&A sessions. These sessions were part of our engagement into the community, to allow the public to speak directly to clinicians and ask questions about the Covid-19 vaccines. The sessions were such a success that the format was rolled out nationally and recognised as a successful method of communication for ethnically diverse communities.



## CARERS WEEK AND MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE CAMPAIGN

During Carers Week 2022, REN worked with West Yorkshire Health & Care Partnership to deliver and host a series of online webinars to identify the support needs required for ethnically diverse unpaid carers from their employers and other support services. REN created videos in 7 community languages and in British Sign Language to demonstrate the importance of the campaign. The feedback from these webinars and the 'Message in a Bottle' social media campaign, have contributed towards creating better systems and processes to support unpaid carers across the whole of West Yorkshire.

### Message in a Bottle

Are you looking after someone who couldn't manage without your support?



Message in a Bottle is a simple but effective way for carers to keep personal and medical information of the person you care for in a safe place.



# THANKYOU

We would also like to thank our staff, volunteers, members, partners, allies and funders for all the support they have provided to REN over the last two years. We look forward to strengthening our partnerships further by continuous collaboration with you all to reduce racial inequalities and achieve equitable outcomes for all communities across Bradford district, regionally and nationally.

## STAY IN TOUCH AND JOIN THE NETWORK!

REN is a membership organisation, made up of both individuals and organisations. If you're not already a member and want to change that – send us an email or visit the website. We're pretty talkative... stay in touch via our social media, 'News' section on the website and our monthly newsletter.

-  @raceequalitynetwork
-  @raceequalitynetwork
-  @network\_race
-  raceequalitynetwork
-  info@raceequalitynetwork.org.uk
-  07899 932798

[WWW.RACEEQUALITYNETWORK.ORG.UK](http://WWW.RACEEQUALITYNETWORK.ORG.UK)



Race Equality Network is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee.  
Charity number: 1124251  
Company number: 05298722  
Address: Grange Interlink Community Centre, Summerville Road, Bradford, BD7 1PX