

## Becoming an actively anti-racist organisation

**Oxford Students' Union has the ambition to be an actively anti-racist organisation and we have been developing an action plan to achieve this ambition which is in its final stages of approval.**

Structural and institutional racism exists within our society and without challenge, will continue to thrive within all spaces. Our ability to challenge and question ourselves, our policies, processes and our culture to ensure we are inclusive, and constantly working towards being an actively anti-racist organisation is key to slowly changing the narrative, and these built structures.

Inclusion is a core value of our organisation and we must see it as a muscle that we continually need to strengthen through challenge and accountability in order to us to be a truly inclusive actively anti-racist organisation.

In August 2020, an external consultant was brought into Oxford Students' Union to conduct a race equality audit. The scope was to create a picture of racial equality at Oxford Students' Union. The audit focussed on the Students' Union staff team with some focus on the Sabbatical Officers. The audit split the organisation into four main areas; Representation, Culture, Progression and Policies and accountability asking key questions within each.

In addition to the secondary research, the external consultant alongside the CEO held individual conversations with every staff member and Sabbatical Officer within the organisation to understand the experiences of the team and their overall understanding of equality, diversity and inclusivity and what it means to be actively anti-racist.

Learnings from the audit and the individual conversations were used within three equality, diversity and inclusivity development days held for the entire organisation and facilitated by an external facilitator. These days were to review the outcomes of the audit, understand more about the issues and challenges of race equality and come up with an action plan of how we would achieve our ambition.

It was important that all areas of the organisation engaged in the development of our plan including our Trustee Board. Within a Trustee Away Day we held a session presenting the findings of the audit and based on the findings, the Trustees developed actions for the Board and organisation. These actions were combined and allocated to the relevant area of the organisation, with a 24-point plan put in place.

We believe that holding ourselves to account through our governance structure is key, therefore this plan will be overseen by our People and Culture Subcommittee with regular reporting to the Trustee Board. The plan spans the whole organisation and every staff member, Trustee and Sabbatical has a role to play, holding each other to account will also be imperative.

The plan once approved, is for a year only, and then we will look to audit ourselves once more to see how we have progressed. We understand that becoming an actively anti-racist organisation will not happen overnight and a continual annual cycle of action planning and auditing will move us step by step to achieve our ambition.