

# Youth Endowment Fund

## Race Equity Progress Report 2023

December 2023





## Foreword

At the Youth Endowment Fund, our aim is to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. And, if we're working to reduce violence, then we also need to be serious about race.

Our research shows that Black children are more likely to be victims of violent crime than White children: 21% of Black 13 to 17-year-olds were victims, compared to 16% of White 13 to 17-year-olds. They are also significantly overrepresented at all stages of the criminal justice system: while Black children aged 10 to 17-year-olds make up just 6% of the population, in 2021/22 they represented 28% of the average monthly youth custody population.

Conversations about young people becoming involved in violence are therefore inextricably bound up with issues of race. We cannot solve problems unless we hear loudly and clearly from the people most affected by it.

But – with race as with so many things – good intentions are not enough. Saying the right words is easy, acting on them is much harder.

Too often, funding does not reach children from all ethnic backgrounds, research does not include all voices and decisions do not take everyone into account. Too often, Black and minority ethnic children are overlooked and unheard. So, what are we doing to ensure that our good intentions are translated into action?

We believe that we need to demonstrate serious commitment to race equity across five separate areas: our funding, our understanding and work to make change, our partnerships, our leadership and our team.

This meant committing to a series of goals. These were developed in consultation and discussion with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders of charities, along with Black, Asian and minority ethnic children and with my own colleagues at the Youth Endowment Fund.

But, again, good intentions are not enough. So, we intend to be as transparent as possible about our progress towards meeting these goals. This is why, every year, we will publish a report examining how well we're doing as we work towards meeting our race equity goals. This is the first of these reports.

I'm encouraged with how we're doing so far. I am pleased to see that a Black or ethnic minority-led organisation applying for funding from the YEF is just as likely (in fact, marginally more likely) to receive funding from us compared to a White-led charity. I am pleased to see that a child who is Black or from another ethnic minority is more likely to be supported by our funding. But there is still much to do, it is easy to slip back and I am determined that this organisation avoids complacency. Too many organisations' race equity commitments languish forgotten and overlooked for there to be any room for complacency.

I am therefore also pleased that our report highlights areas where we can focus and improve. We need to get much better at collecting demographic data on the children our funded projects are reaching. In pushing for improvement among our partners, it is only just that we scrutinise the diversity of our own leadership teams and the effectiveness of our own practices. And so, we will continue to work towards our goals, and we will continue to report our progress as we do so.

We're not doing this because being racially equitable is an end in and of itself – though it would be a valuable one. We're doing it because it is indivisible from our core mission – we will not succeed in our work against violence unless we succeed for all children of all backgrounds.

**Jon Yates, Executive Director, Youth Endowment Fund**



## Executive summary

In October 2022, we published our race equity goals and objectives. These provide us with clear and actionable targets to work towards and mean that we can be held accountable for our actions, internally and externally.

This report outlines our progress towards these published goals over the past year. It describes what we've done, shows where we've taken significant steps forward and highlights the areas where there's still work to do.

The data and findings in this report were compiled using self-reported ethnicity data from YEF funding applications and YEF staff, staff survey results, commentary from and information provided by departmental directors and heads. The report has been reviewed internally by the YEF's Race Equity Accountability Group<sup>1</sup>.

The table below provides a summary of the YEF's race equity goals and our progress against them.

### Our funding

OBJECTIVE	GOAL	STATUS
<b>We'll make sure that our themed grant-round funding reaches organisations with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders.</b>	We'll publish data on the proportion of organisations we fund through our themed grant rounds that are led by people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
	We'll make sure that, in every grant round, we fund organisations in England and Wales that are led by people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
	We'll ringfence a £10 million fund specifically for grassroots organisations led by people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds who are working to prevent children from becoming involved in youth violence.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
<b>We'll provide funding that reaches children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.</b>	We'll make sure at least 30 % of the children who benefit from our funding are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
	We'll gather and publish accurate data that we're confident in, so that we have a solid understanding of the proportion of children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds that our funding reaches.	<b>COMMITMENT LARGELY MET</b>

1. Our Race Equity Accountability Group (REAG) is made up of seven leadership team members who have direct responsibility for the delivery of many of our race equity goals. For further information, please see Our leadership.



## Our understanding and work to make change

OBJECTIVE	GOAL	STATUS
<b>We'll invest in improving the cultural competency of the researchers we work with</b>	We'll build a pool of consultants that we can pair with our evaluators, researchers and project-delivery organisations to advise on the race equity implications of their research designs. We'll cover these costs.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
<b>We'll commission specific research about racial disproportionality and racism.</b>	We'll make sure that, in every grant round, we fund organisations in England and Wales that are led by people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.	<b>SOME PROGRESS</b>
	We'll ringfence a £10 million fund specifically for grassroots organisations led by people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds who are working to prevent children from becoming involved in youth violence.	<b>SOME PROGRESS</b>
<b>We'll make sure that all of our work is clear on racism and disproportionality.</b>	We'll commit to making sure that every one of our future reports includes a section on race. This means, for example, tracking differences in the change that our programmes make for White children who participate, as well as those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, or including specific details in our guidance on research related to cultural competency.	<b>COMMITMENT LARGELY MET</b>
	We'll make sure that the findings from our research into racism and disproportionality directly inform our change and influencing work. This means that we'll have clear activities in our change and influencing plans that aim to address racism.	<b>SOME PROGRESS</b>

## Our partners

OBJECTIVE	GOAL	STATUS
<b>When working with other people and organisations, we'll live up to the YEF values of being questioning, brave and empathetic. This means that when we believe that approaches or plans have not considered people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, we'll use our position to understand, question and challenge.</b>	We'll make sure that we only fund organisations that have considered race equity when developing their plans and enforce our Code of Conduct if things go wrong.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
	We'll use our evidence to make change.	<b>SOME PROGRESS</b>

## Our leadership

OBJECTIVE	GOAL	STATUS
<p><b>We'll monitor and hold ourselves accountable for our performance against our race equity goals.</b></p>	<p>We'll make sure that our goals on race equity feature in all of our planning processes, at organisational, team and individual levels.</p>	<p><b>COMMITMENT MET</b></p>
	<p>We'll publish an annual review of our progress against each of the goals we've set out here. We'll be honest about what went well, what's been challenging and where we've fallen short. By doing so, we'll encourage other funders to do the same.</p>	<p><b>SOME PROGRESS</b></p>
<p><b>We'll develop new internal structures, to help us stay on track with our goals.</b></p>	<p>We'll hold regular meetings of senior staff, who will be assigned specific responsibility for progressing race equity within their team.</p>	<p><b>COMMITMENT MET</b></p>
	<p>We'll bring in external consultants and advisors to check and challenge our race equity work.</p>	<p><b>COMMITMENT MET</b></p>

## Our team

OBJECTIVE	GOAL	STATUS
<p><b>We'll change the way we recruit and retain staff and our governance bodies</b></p>	<p>We'll only use recruitment practices and services that help us to build pools of applicants from diverse backgrounds (for example, using recruitment agencies with a strong track record in equality, diversity and inclusion). We want at least 40 % of our shortlisted applicants to come from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. If we fall short, we'll ask ourselves why, review what's gone wrong and make changes.</p>	<p><b>COMMITMENT MET</b></p>
	<p>We'll develop a new retention strategy, which creates new recommendations for making sure that our Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff members are well supported.</p>	<p><b>SOME PROGRESS</b></p>
	<p>We commit to making sure that at least 20 % of members of our Grants and Evaluation Committee are from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background, making sure that all the advisory bodies we develop and consult with reflect the diversity of the communities they are meant to serve.</p>	<p><b>COMMITMENT LARGELY MET</b></p>

<b>We'll improve the way we monitor staff data.</b>	We'll create new systems to securely and confidentially collect and analyse the diversity of our team across all levels and pay grades.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
	We will start to report on the proportion of people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds in staff and among our applicants.	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>
<b>We'll train our staff to be confident to sensitively talk about race and racism and how it impacts on our work.</b>	We'll develop and execute an internal staff training plan focused on race equity	<b>COMMITMENT MET</b>





## Our funding

### Our goals:

We'll make sure that our funding is accessible to organisations led by – and working for – people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. Crucially, we'll also work to make sure the grants we make reach children and young people who are affected by racism.

### We'll do this by:

1. Making sure that our themed grant round funding reaches organisations with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders.
2. Providing funding that reaches children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) was established to prevent children becoming involved in violence. If we truly are going to make a difference, we need to make sure that our funding is used in a way that reaches and represents all the children we are here to serve. But also, that it's equitable and accessible to a diverse range of organisations and leaders.

Often, Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations are smaller than White-led organisations. This can put these organisations at a disadvantage when applying for and securing YEF funding. For example, there might be challenges in reaching and supporting a large enough group of children and young people needed for an evaluation. And with fewer staff, there might be capacity constraints, impacting everything from submitting a funding application through to planning and delivery.

Of course, without accurate data about our application processes and funded projects, we will never be able to accurately measure who our funding is reaching.

In order to address these challenges, here's what we set out to do, what we've done and what more we need to do.



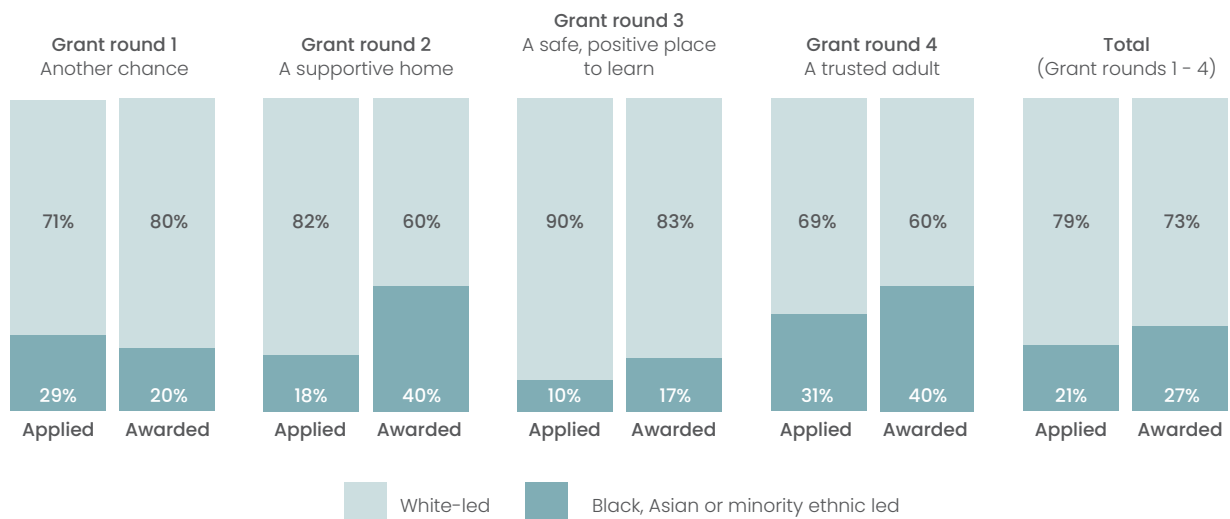
# 1. Making sure that our themed grant round funding reaches organisations with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders

## How we've done

Collectively, over our last four themed grant rounds, you were slightly more likely to be successful in your application for funding if you are a Black, Asian or ethnic minority led charity than if you are a White led charity.

In every grant round, we have met our commitment to fund at least one organisation with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders.

**Figure 1. Proportion of non statutory organisations applying and being awarded YEF funding – by ethnicity of their leadership**




A total of £51 million has been committed to 50 delivery organisations across our five themed grant rounds. Of these, 26% have leaders from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, accounting for 15% of the total funding (£7.4 million). The smaller proportion of funding awarded reflects that these organisations are typically smaller in size. Nevertheless, we must look at how we can achieve a more equitable distribution of our funding. For example, looking at the size of the budget proposals we receive and working with organisations to make sure they are reasonable and sufficient for the needs of an evaluation.

To ensure our funding reaches organisations with Black, Asian or minority ethnic leaders, and all our projects and evaluations are implemented in a racially equitable way, we've continued to develop our work in several key areas.

When an organisation seeking YEF funding shows potential but would need to expand its operations to meet the target number of children and young people for our evaluations, we pair them with our governing charity, Impetus. Specialising in helping organisations to grow and become more sustainable, Impetus offers capacity-building support in crucial areas such as business planning, organisational structure, finance and leadership. To date, we have facilitated this support for **four Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations**.

To help us reach and engage more Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations, we've expanded our use of **multi-site trials (MSTs)**. This innovative evaluation approach involves assessing a practice - such as mentoring or sports programmes - across multiple locations and aggregating the results. One significant advantage of this evaluation method is the reduction in the number of children organisations need to reach and support. This enables smaller-scale organisations, which may not have the capacity for a randomised control trial, to access our funding and undergo evaluation on a more manageable scale. Not only does this help us to address evidence gaps around what works for young people from minority ethnic groups, but it also builds the evaluation knowledge and experience of the participating organisations.





Whilst we have seen strong progress towards ensuring funding reaches organisations with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders, there are two areas for future development. First, we need to continue to use and refine the use of multi-site trials. Right now, we have one project completed and one nearing completion. We must ensure that the three projects in the design phase live up to their commitment to evaluate the projects of Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations. But we must also continue to identify other areas of the YEF's work where multi-site trials could help organisations with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders take part in robust impact evaluations. Second, we need to work harder to ensure that our funding opportunities are accessible to the widest possible pool of potential applicants, increasing the number of applications from organisations with Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders.

### **Next steps:**

- ◆ Continue to use and refine multi-site trials, so we can continue to fund evaluations with smaller, grassroots charities.
- ◆ Ensure YEF funding calls reach the widest possible pool of diverse prospective applicants.

## 2. Providing funding that reaches children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds

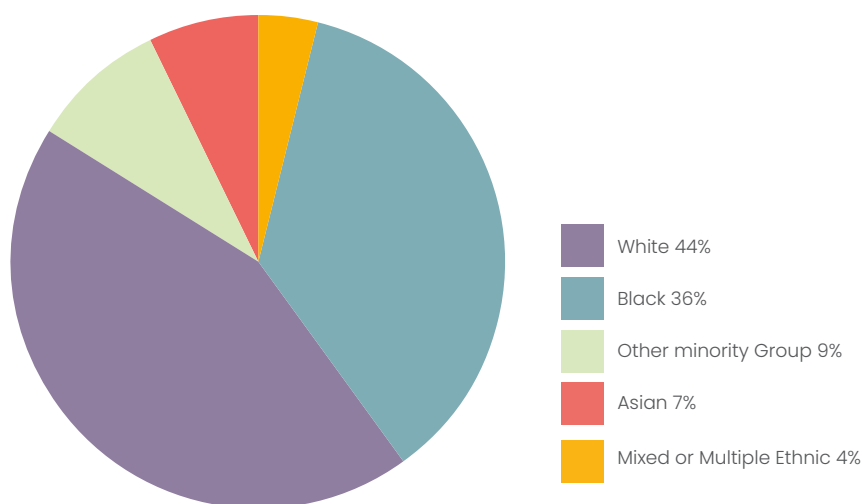
### How we've done

Projects funded by the YEF are successfully reaching children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. Our commitment is to ensure that at least 30% of young people benefitting from our funding identify as coming from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.

Based on available data from 1,447 children, we have surpassed this target, with 56% (809) of young people identifying as being from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.

However, it's important to interpret the data cautiously. Across our first three themed grant rounds ('Another chance', 'A supportive home' and 'A safe, positive place to learn') and mentoring multi-site trial, we've reached a total of 3,097 children. Demographic data is only available for just under half of this cohort (1,447).

**Figure 2. Proportion of children reached through YEF themed grant rounds – by ethnicity (based on the available demographic data)**



Although, we are heading in the right direction towards having robust demographic data from the children and young people in our evaluations, we clearly have much more work to do to improve the quality of the demographic data we collect. We should not be satisfied until we have reliable data from most children and young people participating in YEF projects. Without better data, we cannot fully hold ourselves to account in ensuring we are a racially equitable funder and What Works Centre. We know that in many policy areas, people from minoritised background are underrepresented in high-quality research like randomised control trials (RCTs)<sup>3,4</sup>, therefore it is critical that we have robust data to ensure the trials we commission reach all the children and young people we have been set up to serve.

3. Hoel, A. W., Kayssi, A., Brahmanandam, S., Belkin, M., Conte, M. S., & Nguyen, L. L. (2009). Under-representation of women and ethnic minorities in vascular surgery randomized controlled trials. *Journal of Vascular Surgery*, 50(2), 349-354.

4. Murali, M., Gumber, L., Jethwa, H., Ganesh, D., Hartmann-Boyce, J., Sood, H., ... & Khunti, K. (2023). Ethnic minority representation in UK COVID-19 trials: systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC medicine*, 21(1), 1-18.



We have taken a number of steps to improve the quality of the data. A key challenge that prevented the collection and reporting of this data was a lack of understanding among all of our evaluators as to how to consistently monitor and record this information. One of the steps we have taken to rectify this is the introduction of a new [Policy on collection of demographic data](#), developed in consultation with YEF's Evaluation Technical Advisory Group. This means that we now have clear definitions and extensive guidance – for both our grantees and evaluators – on the collection and reporting of data that describes the young people who benefit from our funding.

We've also embedded a review of this data into our funded projects' quarterly monitoring. This will help to improve the reporting of demographic data going forward and in all future evaluations and analyses. We will continue to make these processes as simple as possible to improve the collection and quality of data and will review our onboarding processes for both new grantees and evaluators.

### Next steps:

- ♦ Work with our grantees and evaluators to further embed our demographic data policy.
- ♦ Review how race overlaps with other factors that can marginalise people – such as gender, disability and socio-economic background – and how this shapes the lives of the young people we aim to reach (commonly referred to as 'intersectionality').



## Ringfenced funding

The scale, scope and speed at which our impact evaluations operate can cause challenges for Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations, which are often smaller in size. Above, we described the ways in which we're trying to mitigate against these issues by using multi-site trials and by providing capacity-building support. These approaches have worked very well. However, we did want to be certain that they would work. Therefore, to ensure fairness we also ringfenced **£10 million in funding for smaller Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations**, where robust impact trials are not a requirement for funding.

In March 2023, we partnered with [The Phoenix Way](#) to distribute this ringfenced funding. The Phoenix Way is a national collaborative partnership which was set up to address the structural inequalities which Black and minority-led organisations face in accessing grant funding in the UK. The partnership's grant-making decisions are driven by panels of individuals who are rooted in the communities they serve. [Global Fund for Children](#) manages and administers the funding on behalf of the partnership.

The first YEF co-funded round launched in March 2023 through The Phoenix Way's £1 million **Children and Youth Emergency** grant round (the YEF contributed £800,000, the remaining £200,000 was provided by the Chanel Foundation). One-off grants of up to £20,000 were awarded to 50 Black and minority-led organisations in England to support them through the cost-of-living crisis.

A second grant round opened in October 2023, with grants of up to £50,000 available for non-profit organisations that are led by representatives of Black and minority ethnic communities and work within Black and minority ethnic communities in England and Wales.

Whilst we have made good progress to ensure this work reaches smaller Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations, further work is needed to embed the learning from this programme of work into all YEF's funding systems. Two steps will support this: working with the Phoenix Way's learning partner to understand how our processes and practices can be more equitable and accessible, and commissioning a learning partner to build knowledge and understanding across YEF's focus areas.

### Next steps:

- ◆ Continue to distribute our funding and expand our support into Wales via The Phoenix Way.
- ◆ Apply the learning from this programme of work to make our funding systems, processes and practices more equitable and accessible.

"Designing our grant rounds with race equity at their centre – that's what I'm most proud of. What are the race equity considerations that we need to embed and that we expect grantees to address? And how do we hold everyone accountable to that? We've started to be able to do that well.

"Now, we need to hone that process – really leverage the expertise of our Race Equity Associates. Are we advertising our grant rounds to the right places to reach the organisations we should be reaching? How do we share our learning with our grantees, other funders, among ourselves and across different departments? How can we effect change more widely?"

**Sarah Fullick, Head of Programmes**



## Our understanding and work to make change

### Our goals:

We have a duty to make sure that we fund projects that build evidence on how we can reduce racial disproportionality across public services. We also need to make sure that our evaluations improve our understanding of what works for children from Black, Asian and other minority backgrounds.

### We'll do this by:

1. Investing to improve the cultural competency of the researchers we work with.
2. Commissioning specific research about racial disproportionality and racism.
3. Making sure all of our work is clear on racism and disproportionality.

The YEF is a [What Works Centre](#) - as a leading research organisation we have a duty to make sure that the projects we fund build evidence on how racial disproportionality can be reduced across public services. We also need to make sure that our evaluations improve our understanding of what works for children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

When considering our research in this context, it's important to recognise that in England and Wales the existing set of evaluators and researchers standardly involved in the type of projects the YEF might commission disproportionately lack colleagues who are Black or from other minority ethnic backgrounds<sup>5</sup>. This means that there's a lack of lived experience of racism, which affects the design of evaluations and other kinds of research. We have to operate to mitigate this.

In order to address these challenges, here's what we set out to do, what we've done and what more we need to do.

5. [Far To Go: Diversity and inclusion in UK social research](#)

## 1. Investing to improve the cultural competency of the researchers we work with

### How we've done

We recruited a pool of consultants who have practical experience informing and driving race equity within evaluations and research. These **Race Equity Associates** work with the YEF and are paired with our evaluators, researchers and grantees to advise on the race equity implications of their research designs. They are involved in several areas of our research, including:

- ◆ **Supporting** evaluation teams to understand and report on how structural factors may impact families and children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds taking part in the services and the evaluation.
- ◆ **Reviewing** evaluation protocols and providing feedback on how race equity could be strengthened.
- ◆ **Advising** evaluators on how the voices of young people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds can be incorporated into the design and delivery of evaluation projects.
- ◆ **Providing** advice and guidance on the key messages in our [Children, violence and vulnerability report](#).

The Race Equity Associates are making a fantastic contribution to the YEF's research and evaluation work. To date, their expertise has mostly been focused on our evaluations. We commit to expand on the variety of research projects where we seek external advice and challenge – for example, when conducting systematic research reviews or when analysing existing data sets. Along with committing to work with all our associates within their first year, we will also continue to improve the diversity of our evaluation teams. We'll do this by identifying organisations with a strong track record of research with children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led organisations. This year we will focus on developing a comprehensive race equity checklist to use as a framework to assess research projects.

### Next steps:

- ◆ Ensure that we work with each Race Equity Associate within one year.
- ◆ Extend our Race Equity Associates' work across all our research and evaluation work.
- ◆ Develop a comprehensive race equity checklist.



## 2. Commissioning specific research about racial disproportionality and racism

### How we've done

We commissioned a research team to conduct a review of research on **racial disproportionality in the youth justice system**. The review aims to summarise what's known about racial disproportionality for young people of Black and mixed heritage in the youth justice system, with a particular focus on youth violence. It also seeks to extend current work, by scoping and assessing what's known about effective practices, policies and interventions for reducing racial disproportionality.

As this flagship review nears completion, we will look at how we can use its findings and insights to shape our funding, guidance and change work (please see [Our partnerships](#)). We are committed to identifying interventions from the review that would benefit from further evaluation.

### Next steps:

- ◆ Ensure the research review informs our funding, guidance and change work.

## 3. Making sure all of our work is clear on racism and disproportionality

### How we've done

We've committed to ensuring that every one of our reports includes a section on race. This includes:

- ◆ **Our evaluation reports**

We will ensure that all evaluators are collecting and reporting data on the ethnicity of participants. Across all 27 reports that we have published to date, 18 (two-thirds) report data on the ethnicity of participants.

As previously explained in [Our funding](#), a key challenge that prevented the collection and reporting of this data was a lack of understanding among all of our evaluators as to how to consistently monitor and record this information. We've addressed this with the introduction of a new policy on the collection of demographic data.

- ◆ **Our System Guidance and Delivery Guidance Reports**

We are planning to publish Guidance Reports for each of our eight focus areas. These Guidance Reports will be based on the existing research, as well as on conversations with experts, and will set out the changes we'd like to see in practices and policies in each area. All of our Guidance Reports will make recommendations for tackling racial disproportionality. For information about the first of our Guidance Reports - on pre-court diversion - please see [Our partnerships](#).

- ◆ **Our Children, violence and vulnerability report**

Every year, we survey thousands of children about their experiences of violence, in person and online. The findings are published in our [Children, violence and vulnerability report](#). This year we expanded our survey sample to 7,500 teenage children, which enabled us to undertake a more detailed analysis of how experiences of violence were impacted by ethnicity. The report was published in November 2023.

Despite this, further progress is needed to ensure all our work is clear on racism and disproportionality. Currently, there is still variation in how evaluators talk about race or racism in their reports. We will issue further guidance to ensure consistency in terminology. While we've made progress towards ensuring that ethnicity data of all samples is included in reports, we need to update the reporting template to make sure that authors are justifying their sampling and reflecting on limitations in their reports. We will update our reporting templates to ensure this. We are committed to ensuring that all our guidance reports consider racial disparity. Currently, we have prioritised our Guidance Report on pre-court diversion (please see [Our partnerships](#) for further details). Future work will ensure that all our guidance reports, including the next planned ones on police presence in schools and focused deterrence, all firmly embed consideration of racial disparities.

### **Next steps:**

- ◆ Move towards a consistent language for talking about race and racism.
- ◆ Detail the racial demographics of samples in all reports - justify this and include limitations.
- ◆ Ensure that all Guidance Reports consider racial disparity.

"Bringing in Race Equity Associates has been a really interesting, useful development. Not only are they experts in race equity, but they also have expertise in other areas, such as policing or schools - making them really exciting people to work with.

"We've developed really good processes for thinking about racial equity. I think we can now apply those processes to children with experience of the care system or children living in poverty, who are also disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system."

**Peter Henderson, Head of Toolkit**



## Our partnerships

### Our goals:

When working with other people and organisations, we'll live up to the YEF values of being questioning, brave and empathetic. This means that when we believe that approaches or plans have not considered people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, we'll use our position to understand, question and challenge.

### We'll do this by:

1. Making sure that we only fund organisations that have considered race equity when developing their plans, and enforcing our Code of Conduct if things go wrong.
2. Using our evidence to make change.

We can use our funding and research to challenge racism and racial disproportionality on two fronts. We can make sure that race equity is central to the plans of all the organisations we fund and partner with. And we can use the findings from our research to push for changes in policies, practices and systems which impact how, when and why children are supported.

We'll always be transparent about any approach that we know is likely to worsen disproportionality, and won't be afraid to offer well-evidenced, clear and public advice.

Here's what we set out to do, what we've done and where we'll be focusing our efforts in the future.

## 1. Making sure that we only fund organisations that have considered race equity when developing their plans, and enforcing our Code of Conduct if things go wrong

### How we've done

This year, we've strengthened how we incorporate race equity requirements into our funding application process and ongoing monitoring of delivery with grantees. In our application workshops and application guidance, we set clear expectations about seeking out organisations that are working in an equitable way.

We delve deeper into this during the interview stage of our application process. We ask applicants about the strategies they will use to ensure their projects are accessible, culturally sensitive and racially equitable. This includes how they will sensitively work through our data-sharing requirements.

These improved processes have helped us to identify grantees who would benefit from additional race equity expertise to tackle barriers or challenges in their local community or context. The support we provide ranges from funding for training to ongoing support from our Race Equity Associates and other experts. Our enhanced due diligence approach has also helped us to identify organisations that could benefit from additional capacity or support to run a robust evaluation.

We've also introduced new race equity practices with our evaluators. When we're selecting evaluators, we specifically ask how their research design considers diversity and inclusion. As we do with grant applicants, we delve deeper into this during the interview process. We assess how their research practices are equitable, including the recruitment, engagement, experience and outcomes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. We also ask about the diversity in their own teams. This has led us to mandate the pairing of evaluators with our Race Equity Associates if their teams would benefit from external support on issues of race equity.

Whilst we have made solid progress in ensuring all YEF grantees have considered race equity when developing their plans, we will benefit from developing a more detailed accountability framework. This framework will enable us to better hold our grantees to account throughout the duration of their funding commitments. We also need to make more progress on collecting demographic data from evaluators. Without a more comprehensive understanding of the composition of our evaluation teams, we cannot determine the necessary actions to ensure that all our projects actively promote race equity.

### Next steps:

- ◆ Introduce more detailed accountability framework to determine if organisations have sufficiently considered race equity.
- ◆ Collect demographic data for all evaluation teams.



## 2. Using our evidence to make change

### How we've done

This year, we've actively sought out opportunities to fill gaps in evidence about approaches being used at scale that have the potential to worsen racial disproportionality. We've done this through funding research, conducting systematic reviews and commissioning new, large-scale evaluations.

Since we published our race equity commitments in October 2022, we have:

- ◆ **Commissioned an evidence review** on racial disproportionality and violence impacting young people, to help us better understand the extent and nature of racial disproportionality in different parts of the youth justice system, as well as the range of interventions that aim to reduce it. (Please see the previous Our understanding and work to make change chapter for further details).
- ◆ **Commissioned an independent evaluation** of the Police in Classrooms and Police in Corridors programmes, in partnership with the PSHE Association and the National Police Chief Council. Research for the YEF Toolkit notes that having police officers in schools with higher levels of pupils from disadvantaged areas may exacerbate racial or class-based disparities in the criminal justice system. Our new evaluation seeks to address the lack of evidence on the different approaches to police in schools. This will help us to support schools and police to deliver the most effective programmes to keep children safe from violence and offending.
- ◆ **Commissioned a systematic review** of stop and search, alongside supplementary implementation and process evaluations and a high-level review of relevant consultations with children, young people and minority communities. This is due to be published in early 2024.

We know that to help reduce racial disproportionality in the youth justice system, we need to do more than commission and publish research. We need to work with others to put what we learn into action.

In December 2023, we published our first [Systems Guidance report](#) which sets out seven recommendations to improve support for children who are arrested. Among these recommendations, we'll be working with the government, the police, youth justice services and other relevant agencies to push for the following changes...

#### 1. That the Crime Outcomes Framework is updated, so that Outcome 22 is recorded as a positive outcome when applied to children

Outcome 22 is a code that the police can use when an arrested child has completed diversionary, educational or intervention activity and it is not in the public interest to take any further action. Outcome 22 enables the police to divert children who have committed offences towards positive support, which could protect them against future involvement in crime.

An important feature of this outcome is that admission of guilt or acceptance of responsibility is not required. There is some evidence that requiring an admission of guilt to access diversion options is contributing to racial disproportionality in the youth justice system. Giving the police an option to divert children without this requirement may help to address racial disproportionality.

#### 2. All youth justice services to have access to the most effective interventions, including therapy.

Young people from Black, Asian or minority ethnic communities are less likely to receive support from Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). UK-based qualitative studies have also identified a range of barriers perceived by young Black men when they are attempting to access

mental health services. We want to ensure that arrested children from all backgrounds have reliable access to clinical therapy.

Whilst we have made progress in ensuring that Race Equity Associates lend their expertise to the development of our Guidance Reports, we can better integrate their expertise in future projects. For our first report, we engaged a race equity expert midway through the process. We are clear that Race Equity Associates will add value at every stage of the process, from scoping and setting the research agenda, to drafting our recommendations for change.

The review of the extent and nature of racial disproportionality in different parts of the youth justice system will help to identify the practices, policies and approaches that need to change to improve support for children and families from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. We must continue to work to identify funding, evaluation and change opportunities that will support this goal.

### **Next steps:**

- ◆ Involve our Race Equity Associates in the development of Guidance Reports from the beginning.
- ◆ Continue to build evidence on approaches that may reduce racial disproportionality.

“We’ve developed really robust processes to make sure grantees have deeply considered race in the set up and design of their projects, and are now building on this to make sure we have the structures in place to ensure these commitments are delivered throughout our funding.

“The last year we’ve been working to understand where we could have the most impact. Now comes the important and hard work to deliver on these changes.”

**Emma Jenkins, Director of Change**



## Our leadership

### Our goals:

To make sure that every single person within YEF is working to advance race equity. Our leaders will make sure that it's a core part of our strategies and activities.

#### We'll do this by:

1. Monitoring and holding ourselves accountable for our performance against our race equity goals.
2. Developing new internal structures, to help us stay on track with our goals.

When we published our race equity goals in October 2022, we reported that 50% of our directors' team<sup>6</sup> were from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds. At the end of September 2023, this proportion remains the same. The Committee that oversees the Directors team has a membership where 50% come from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds.

This diversity is a strength. A leadership team comprising individuals with diverse ethnic and professional backgrounds means we are better placed when making decisions that affect the lives of all young people. This diversity helps us to challenge our own assumptions, as well as each other's. It pushes us to think beyond our own lived experiences and consider a broader range of perspectives. And it fosters a culture of inclusivity and openness across the whole organisation.

Despite the diversity of our directors' team, there is more we can do. Only 28% of our leadership team (any staff member who is a Head of Department or a department lead) are from Black, Asian or

6. At time of writing, we have eight members of our directors' team: executive director, COO, director of evidence and understanding, director of change, head of people and race equity, assistant director of evaluation, public affairs and comms lead and interim director of evidence.

minority ethnic backgrounds. A significant amount of decision-making and implementation happens at this level. Also, our director's team needs to continuously reflect on how they can best represent and serve the children and young people we are here to serve. Ethnicity is one critical part of that representation, but so too are factors such as lived experience of violence and an understanding of the context within which children's services are implemented. These are important things for our directors' team to reflect on as we consider our recruitment and promotion priorities for the year ahead.

In order that we continue to improve our race equity work, here's what we set out to do, what we've done and what more we need to do.

## 1. Monitoring and holding ourselves accountable for our performance against our race equity goals

### How we've done

In April 2022, we launched our first race equity audit, led by external consultants from [Justice Studio](#). This took a mixed-method approach, comprising surveys and interviews, site visits and workshops, and an analysis of our leadership, culture, communications, policies and procedures.

From this audit, we developed our race equity goals, which we published in October 2022.

Our race equity goals are incorporated into our organisational planning process, feeding into both department and individual objectives and plans for the year – 98% of our staff members now have individual race equity goals.

Progress against them is monitored on a quarterly basis by our Race Equity Accountability Group ([please see the next section for further details](#)) as part of the YEF's overall performance management process, led by the directors' team. Individual race equity goals are monitored and managed through regular performance reviews and our annual staff appraisals. All our race equity goals – for the organisation and individuals – will be reviewed and, if needed, iterated for the year ahead.

Each year we will publish a report outlining our progress against each of our race equity goals. This is the first of these reports.

### Next steps:

- ◆ Review how our race equity goals are incorporated into our planning processes and goal-setting.
- ◆ Review and iterate race equity goals for the year ahead.

## 2. Developing new internal structures, to help us stay on track with our goals

### How we've done

#### (a) Our Race Equity Accountability Group

We have **established a new Race Equity Accountability Group (REAG)** for the organisation. This is made up of seven leadership team members, who have direct responsibility for delivery of many of our race equity goals. The group meets every six weeks to review progress toward these goals and to suggest areas where we may need to coordinate action.

The group's function is accountability and action – it is not an expert group to advise or make decisions on issues of race equity for the organisation. We want to ensure that advice is given, and decision-making is carried out, informed by experts in race equity. It is ultimately the responsibility of the directors' team to ensure that we are making decisions and leading in a way that puts race equity at the heart of our work. However, an accountability group is critical to this, as it ensures that we maintain a healthy pace in our work.

In addition to REAG, we have our **Race Equity Diversity and Inclusion (REDI)** group. The remit of this group is the well-being of our Black, Asian and minority ethnic team members. Previously, it served a consultative role in the organisation, offering advice on race equity across all aspects of our work. However, our audit highlighted a potential risk of this leading to team members from minority ethnic backgrounds taking on the full responsibility for the race equity commitments of the organisation. In response, we adjusted the group's focus. While all REDI members are welcome and encouraged to attend REAG meetings, attendance is optional and there is no expectation for their participation.

The Race Equity Accountability Group has been successful in strengthening accountability on race equity at the YEF. As the organisation continues to grow and teams evolve, we need to ensure that all relevant teams and functions are represented. To date, the group has concentrated on advancing our race equity goals. Next year we will specify areas of focus, whilst ensuring the work of REAG stays firmly centred on accountability and action, rather than advice or decision-making.

### Next steps:

- ◆ Refresh the membership of Race Equity Accountability Group.
- ◆ Define more clearly areas of focus for the group.

#### (b) Our Race Equity Associates

By moving the advisory and consultative function away from our Race Equity Diversity and Inclusion group, we created a risk that we would no longer be able to draw on the expertise of those with lived experience of racism for the decisions we were making and research we were commissioning. To mitigate this, we recruited experienced race equity consultants to check and challenge our work (throughout this report we refer to them as Race Equity Associates).



Our aim was to **appoint one Race Equity Associate for each of the YEF's eight focus areas**, and at least one operations/internal associate to ensure that we're being thoughtful about our processes, policies and culture. These are in addition to the associates we appointed to focus on our research and evaluation work (for more details, please see [Our understanding and work to make change](#)).

These Race Equity Associates collaborate with us, grantees and funding applicants. They've played a pivotal role in shaping and guiding the scope of our grant rounds. They've helped to identify barriers and challenges encountered by young people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in accessing and participating in projects and evaluations. And they've collaborated with applicants to address race equity considerations in their funding proposals and delivery plans. Onboarding these associates has been a highlight of our work over the last year. This is reflected consistently in staff survey comments and in improvements to outputs related to our funding rounds (for example, our application guidance and [tutorial videos](#)).

To date, our Race Equity Associates have:

- ♦ supported the development and review of scopes for focus areas and funding rounds;
- ♦ reviewed and provided feedback on individual projects;
- ♦ assisted in designing our internal race equity survey;
- ♦ reviewed recruitment practices;
- ♦ and, delivered race equity training for staff members.

While the Race Equity Associates have been a pivotal success this year, two developments will help them to better support our work. Although we have good coverage across most of our designated focus areas, there are some gaps in expertise, notably of the criminal justice system. Second, it's important that involving associates does not come at the cost of developing in-house expertise. So we must continue to use race equity associates strategically across the YEF's work.

### **Next steps:**

- ♦ Recruit associates with knowledge of the focus areas where our current associates lack expertise.
- ♦ Ensure that we engage associates in the most useful ways through our work.

"We had to ask ourselves: how do we – as a leadership team – lead on race equity, when we're not the experts? It was good to acknowledge where we lacked expertise – which led us to bring in our Race Equity Associates. We led by stepping back – creating the space for others to inform and influence our work on race equity where it was needed.

"We remain committed to the race equity plan that we set and the reasons we set it up. But it's really easy for these things to slip – every leadership team has lots of competing priorities, and those priorities are all mission-led. We need to take an active and daily effort to make sure that race equity remains a top priority."

**Andrea Ramsay, Chief Operating Officer**



## Our team

### Our goals:

Our aim is to reflect the diversity of the communities we intend to serve at all levels of our organisation, including our governance and advisory bodies. We'll make sure that everybody, regardless of their background or characteristics, is equally able to flourish at the YEF.

#### We'll do this by:

1. Changing the way we recruit and retain staff and our governance bodies.
2. Improving the way we monitor staff data.
3. Training our staff to be confident to talk sensitively about race and racism and how it impacts on our work.

As an organisation whose research is focused on protecting children from crime and violence, we must understand and challenge the racial inequalities in our society. We can do this through our funding and research, but we also need to reflect on our role and responsibilities as an employer in helping to drive the changes we want to see.

Being a racially equitable organisation means our entire team feels equally welcome and able to flourish. It means our team have the knowledge, understanding and confidence to address issues related to race equity in our work and the work of our partners. Rather than merely acknowledging the diversity of our staff, we actively celebrate it, recognising the unique strengths and perspectives everyone brings to our collective success.

Our aim is to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve at all levels of our organisation, including our governance and advisory groups. Here are the steps we've taken over the last year to work towards making this happen.

# 1. Changing the way we recruit and retain staff and our governance bodies

## How we've done

### (a) Recruitment of staff

To ensure that our team is diverse, **we focus on the full employment life cycle, starting with recruitment.** For every role that we advertise, our aim is that 40% of candidates shortlisted for interview are from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds. By having a strong pool of diverse candidates at interview, we have a higher chance of recruiting a diverse team.

From October 2022 to September 2023, there were 23 roles advertised. On average, 43% of shortlisted candidates were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, meeting our overall shortlisting aim.

**We trialled working with different recruitment agencies, with a focus on ensuring that our candidate pool was diverse.** One of these agencies – [Diversifying](#) – was selected because of its track record and commitment to race equity.

**We reviewed and updated our recruitment materials.** This included reviewing our job descriptions to ensure that they were as simple and as accessible as possible. We also trialled new recruitment methods, such as video descriptions of the role from members of our staff.

**To ensure that our roles were being viewed by the widest possible audience, we looked at and expanded where we were advertising.** New advertising venues included Changemarkers.com and the UK Evaluation Society. We also joined the Funders for Race Equality Alliance – a diverse network of funders – and advertised vacancies through their newsletter.

**We maintained a commitment to a diverse YEF interview panel across ethnicity and sex.** The primary reason we do this is to ensure that every candidate, no matter who they are, feels as comfortable as possible during their interview with us. This commitment also gives us the opportunity to make sure that a range of staff members are involved in the candidate selection process.

Overall, we have made strong progress in changing the way we recruit staff. Three developments will ensure we continue to maintain a razor-sharp focus on the diversity of our shortlists. First, whilst we have met our 40% aim, there were individual roles where this was not met. In future, when we don't hit a shortlisting aim for a role, we'll pause and continue to ask ourselves why. We'll default to delaying interviews where necessary, to give ourselves extra time to increase the pool of applicants.

Second, having tried a variety of approaches to reaching diverse candidates, we will prioritise direct outreach to potential candidates ourselves, through LinkedIn or other channels. We have found that the more we do direct outreach to potential candidates, the stronger and more diverse our pool of applicants.

Third, we intend to make the YEF an attractive employer for any candidate interested in working somewhere that prioritises diversity and equity. This means considering where and how we pitch our roles, and how we talk more regularly about our organisation's commitment to race equity.

## Next steps:

- ◆ Continue to prioritise our existing commitments to diverse shortlists and diverse interview panels.
- ◆ Prioritise direct outreach to potential candidates ourselves.
- ◆ Make ourselves a more attractive employer for any candidate interested in working somewhere that prioritises diversity and equity.

### (b) Retention of staff

While an updated version of the retention strategy has been planned, we wanted this work to be done with input from a Race Equity Associate. The relevant associate was appointed at the end of July 2023 and started working with us in August. The retention strategy is part of their work plan but is not yet complete. Our goal is to ensure all our team members have a sense of belonging in an environment that fosters their professional ambitions.

## Next steps:

- ◆ Develop new strategies to support employee success, development and satisfaction at work as part of our strategy to retain our excellent team.

### (c) Recruitment of governance and advisory bodies

Governance and advisory bodies have key roles to play in supporting and contributing to YEF decision making. Therefore, it's critical that these bodies reflect, as much as possible, the society we have been set up to serve. That means first and foremost, having bodies with membership drawn from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Our strategy, work and operations are governed by the [YEF Committee](#). Presently, 50% of its members are from Black, Asian or other minority ethnic backgrounds. It includes two representatives from our Youth Advisory Board to ensure the perspectives of young people are represented in our governance decisions.

Our **Grants and Evaluation Committee** is responsible for approving which projects are awarded YEF funding. We committed to ensuring that at least 20% of this Committee were from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds. This commitment has been met with the recruitment of five new members in the last year.

We have since extended this 20% commitment to all 11 of our advisory groups – these are made up of experts in their field, who advise and inform the YEF's work. We currently hold full data for three of these advisory groups, all of which have exceeded the target.

Whilst we celebrate the progress in ensuring our two key decision-making bodies have diverse memberships, we recognise it is not good enough that we have eight advisory groups where we have incomplete information. Without understanding the make-up of these groups, we cannot take appropriate action to rectify any lack of representation within them.

We will communicate further with the eight outstanding advisory groups, to encourage them to return the full set of demographic data. We will also work to ensure that all advisory group members understand why we need this information and how it can help us achieve our overall goals. Furthermore, as we build new advisory groups over the next year, we will ensure that diversity of recruitment is a central feature of the set-up process and that prospective applicants understand the importance of completing the Race Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form for YEF's mission.

### **Next steps:**

- ◆ Collaborate with all existing advisory groups to maximise completion rates of ethnicity data.
- ◆ Ensure diversity of recruitment is a key part of the set up of all new advisory groups.





## 2. Improving the way we monitor staff data

### How we've done

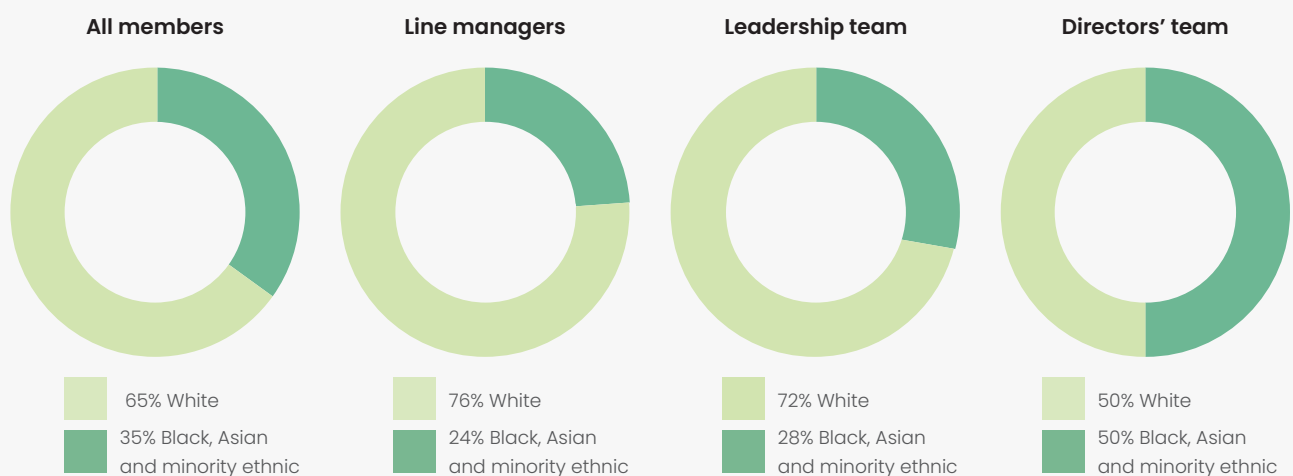
Before our race equity audit, there was no robust system for collecting staff data on ethnicity. We therefore did not have any data on staff demographics to share with the race equity auditors in July 2022. Our HR system has since been upgraded and demographic data is collected securely and monitored by the HR team.

As of September 2023, data has been collected for 92% of our team: 49 of a total of 53 staff members. 65% of those who shared their data identify as White and 35% identify as Black, Asian or minority ethnic.

We then looked more closely at how diversity varied at the three different levels within the organisation.

The charts below refers to the 49 team members who completed the YEF equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring form.

**Figure 3. Ethnicity of YEF staff**



It's important that we collect diversity data at all levels of the organisation, and that we reflect on what that data is telling us. When we published our race equity goals in 2022, 25% of our staff were from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds. That compares with 35% in 2023. The graphs suggest that the increase in diversity is largely being driven by roles without line management responsibility. Conversely, we can see that line manager positions are the least diverse, with the leadership team marginally better. We discuss these trends in greater detail in the Our leadership section, but we fully recognise that we need to continue focusing on ensuring that our diversity aims are prioritised within recruitment of line manager and leadership roles and that we are doing everything we can to support all staff to grow, develop and progress.

### Next steps:

- ◆ Continue to communicate regularly with staff about the importance of collecting diversity data.

### 3. Training our staff to be confident to sensitively talk about race and racism and how it impacts on our work

#### How we've done

We launched a new training plan, creating different opportunities for learning, with a focus on the impact on our race equity work. Over the past year we held six different training sessions, which fell into three main categories:

#### 1. Sessions led by Race Equity Associates

These sessions examined the role that racism and disproportionality play in the YEF's focus areas. Topics covered included: race equity considerations in a multi-agency setting; assessing consortium bids; and whether access to psychological therapies and mental health support for young people is racially equitable.

#### 2. Group discussions

We invited individuals from our networks, who have expertise in issues of race equity or lived experience of its impact, to speak to YEF staff members. For example, one session examined how racial disproportionality affects young people, particularly those at risk of involvement in violence.

#### 3. Internally led sessions

We asked YEF staff members to share best practice or lessons learned from assessing a project or a funding round for race equity. The aim was that other team members could learn from their experience. For example, one session focused on the lessons learned by the evaluation team from their work assessing race equity considerations during the design of specific evaluations.

This training has been well received across the organisation. We will look to build on this success by creating further training opportunities over the coming year. Whilst we think it was right to focus this first training plan solely on race equity, we recognise the need to consider other equity and inclusion topics and the relationship between them. We will consult with staff and leadership to identify the areas that would be most beneficial to our team and mission.

#### Next steps:

- ◆ Develop and deliver a new race equity training agenda, building on topics covered this year.
- ◆ Widen our training agenda to cover other equity and inclusion topics.

"Recruitment has introduced a more diverse range of voices and perspectives to the organisation. Our efforts to generate a more diverse pool of candidates for roles has also meant that we've had much stronger applicants to choose from.

"Now the team is more diverse, we want to make sure that all team members feel a sense of belonging – that they're happy while they're here. We want to make sure their experience here is the best it can be."

**LaToya Charles, Head of People and Race Equity**



[youthendowmentfund.org.uk](https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk)



[hello@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:hello@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)



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