



Declaration

TO END ANTI-BLACK RACISM IN THE CANADIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



CIMA
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT
MUSIC ASSOCIATION

ADVANCE
CANADA'S BLACK MUSIC BUSINESS COLLECTIVE

To build an inclusive Canadian music and entertainment industry, it is critical to address the anti-Black racism that exists in the systems and working environments within which Black music professionals and creatives operate.

The eradication of anti-Black racism requires a commitment to anti-racism - an active, conscious and ongoing effort to work against racism: to acknowledge; to atone; to create mechanisms that dismantle systems which perpetuate racism, and to create actionable solutions with measurable outcomes.

Efforts will look different for solo entrepreneurs, small businesses, organizations, corporations and government institutions. Thus, it is important to understand that an inability to execute all commitments listed herein, does not constitute failure. Rather, starting points for signatories will differ, with efforts progressing over time: **start where you are and work towards the goal.**

Anti-racism begins with awareness and education and moves toward more formal practices such as policies and procedures.

Begin by committing to smaller, more manageable goals such as:

- Acknowledgement: have uncomfortable conversations about race and identify personal conscious/unconscious biases
- Educating yourself and those around you on anti-Black racism: reading articles and news stories; purchasing books on anti-racism, white privilege, white fragility; watching videos & documentaries; listening to podcasts
- Advocating: Speaking up when you hear racist statements; using your voice and platform, no matter the size, to show your support; following and resharing the content of advocates on your social media to amplify Black voices and knowledge
- Expanding professional social networks
- Donating or volunteering at organizations doing anti-Black racism work
- Creating space through mentorship or paid co-op/internship opportunities within your space
- Anti-Black racism training: registering and attending free/low-cost workshops online

BDRB (Breaking Down Racial Barriers) with partners **CIMA (The Canadian Independent Music Association)** and **ADVANCE, Canada's Black Music Business Collective**, hereby call upon the individuals, organizations, small businesses, corporations and government institutions of the music industry to play a role in eradicating anti-Black racism in the Canadian music industry.

TO THESE ENDS, WE HEREBY DECLARE A COMMITMENT TO:

1. THE CREATION OF ANTI-BLACK RACISM POLICIES AND TRAINING

Dismantling anti-Black racism in the Canadian music industry will require the re-envisioning of all foundational policies, procedures and practices through a lens of anti-Black racism.

To this end, we declare our commitment to:

- Engaging in ongoing anti-Black racism, anti-oppression and inclusion training at *all* organizational levels
- Instituting policies outlining varying levels of remedy for acts of anti-Black racism - from education to dismissal
- Creating a plan of action for the elimination of anti-Black racism, including, where possible:
- Creation of a code of conduct and resource guide on anti-Black racism, equity, diversity & inclusion
- The development of an equity, diversity, and inclusion task force or committee
- Curated training with Black professional consultants specializing in anti-racist systems change

2. COLLECTION, TRACKING AND PUBLIC REPORTING OF RACE BASED DATA AND KEY METRICS

The lack of race-based data perpetuates systemic racism. To work towards diminishing, and ultimately eliminating systemic and anti-Black racism in the Canadian music industry and reducing racial disparities, **we hereby commit to:**

The collection of available data on workplace diversity and key metrics including the racial breakdown of staff and employees at all levels including:

Data on self-identifying Black staff at all levels of the organization, corporation or governmental institution, including, but not limited to, the collection of key metrics pertaining to:

- Percentage of Black employees
- Percentage of Black employees in management at all levels, including senior management
- Percentage and number of Black board members

And a commitment to actively and voluntarily participating in market studies and research initiatives supported or led by Black community organizations, and:

- Conducting surveys of staff which audit & examine workforce demographics and company culture
- Development of strategies and recommendations which respond to issues raised by the survey
- Development of plans to implement recommendations
- Voluntary annual public disclosure of the workplace diversity data including diversity of staff, pay ranges et.al. (via annual reports, corporate shareholder statements, websites)

3. REPRESENTATION THROUGHOUT THE MUSIC INDUSTRY ECOSYSTEM

For decades, the music industry and its sectors have profited off of the intellectual property of Black creatives and professionals. Increasing representation and diversity throughout the entire industry is key to creating equity in the Canadian music industry.

To this end, we commit to:

The creation of practices which expand the talent pool through the hiring, succession and retention of Black employees in all industry positions – from administrative and technical to executive and board roles through:

HIRING

- Including an open invitation, and statement of commitment on all employment postings, to the hiring of Black applicants, which particularly encourages and welcomes submissions of interest from potential Black employees.
- Adopting practices such as:
 - Open hiring: Consideration of those who may be excluded from traditional hiring processes by considering, for instance, work experience in lieu of formal education
 - Cluster hiring: the process of hiring new employees in groups rather than individually. This concept has become a common practice in organizations and institutions looking to boost equity and diversity in their hiring practices.
- Voluntary submission of music industry-related positions in your organization to ADVANCE Music employment board
- Updating screening processes, diversifying hiring panels and conducting standardized interviews to reduce implicit bias (with a focus on competencies)
- Revisiting recruiting approaches/techniques (including 3rd party agencies) to drive greater Black representation
- Creating diversity and inclusion objectives

RETENTION

- Tracking sources of Black employee “drop-off” by utilizing exit surveys for all staff departures
- Developing a work culture which supports professional mentorship and career development opportunities
- Offering formal mentoring for Black employees
- Being intentional about providing access to information & key relationships that will lead to success

SUCCESSION

- Creating clear career paths & setting milestones with measurable and accountable outcomes
- Specific solution targeting for Black women, including access to mentorship, management & leadership training
- Prioritizing internal promotion vs. external hires

BOARDS & EXECUTIVE ROLES

- Implementation/modification of models such as the NFL's "Rooney Rule" which mandate interviewing quotas, where at least one Black candidate is interviewed for available leadership positions
- Review and revision of bylaws and governance models
- Tying leadership performance evaluations and bonuses to progress on diversity and inclusion objectives
- Allocating budgetary resources to better support Black executive and professional representation in music departments other than just "Black music" or "urban"

4. PAY EQUITY, FAIR TREATMENT AND SUPPORT

Despite a lack of empirical data to substantiate the disparity in the wages of Canadian Black music professionals versus their peers (especially Black women), studies have shown that closing pay gaps within industries results in increased productivity and profit.

To this end, we commit to:

- Conducting ongoing wage equity audits, and making necessary adjustments to achieve wage parity and equitable pay
- Ensuring equal access to education and career development for all intersections of Black identity including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language preference and other socio-demographics
- Access to paid parental sick leave, Black centred mental and primary health care, where feasible
- Expanding efforts to provide anti-racism, implicit/unconscious bias training for all staff, volunteers, executives and board members
- Developing and implementing anonymous methods for communicating and rectifying issues of racism to HR departments, management or leadership
- Publicly acknowledge support of Black community organizations and causes

5. SHARING OF BEST PRACTICES

The BDRB Declaration signifies our collective commitment to the eradication of anti-Black racism in the Canadian music industry. We commit to sharing best practices and initiatives which promote anti-racism & inclusion throughout the industry.

We commit to:

- Sharing best practices and initiatives which promote anti-racism, equity & inclusion throughout the industry
- Discontinuance of the use of the outdated euphemism "Urban" as a catchall for Black music genres such hip-hop, R&B, Soul, Reggae, Soca and other diasporic music forms
- Corporate accountability: encouraging and inspiring industry peers by sharing and promoting social justice and anti-racist initiatives to support a change in the culture of the industry

6. PARTNERSHIPS & INVESTMENT

We recognize that eradicating racism will take a collective effort. The creation of partnerships and investments in/with the Black community is a first and critical step in this process.

To this end, we commit to:

- The creation of supplier diversity programs: the adding of Black businesses to supply chains and the delegating of a set percentage of annual expenditures accordingly (eg. X%)
- Investing in Black community organizations and businesses
- Ending relationships with associates, partners, suppliers and board members that do not share a commitment to dismantling racism
- Viewing investment and donation through the lens of racial justice
- Investing in core-funding to grassroots Black-led, Black-run organizations, charities and community organizations
- Revising RFP (Request for Proposal) processes to ensure fair, bias-free and equitable access to opportunities
- Investment in Black talent – beyond artists and professionals throughout the entertainment industry pipeline
- Considering the creation of partnerships and 50/50 deals with Black-owned record labels, publishing, live entertainment, media, festival companies and other businesses throughout the industry ecosystem
- Dedicated grant funding and resources for Black music professionals and entrepreneurs

7. MOVING BEYOND PERFORMANCE

This declaration should not be seen as a box checking exercise. Eradicating anti-Black racism in the Canadian music industry will require more than performative action.

WATCH: the 10-part CIMA ‘Breaking Down Racial Barriers’ roundtable discussion series (August-October 2020) to gain understanding of issues faced by Black music professionals nationally.

SHARE AND INFLUENCE: Spread the word about the BDRB Declaration and your commitment to change on social media.

READ: the forthcoming detailed BDRB (Breaking Down Racial Barriers) Report on anti-Black racism in the Canadian music & entertainment industry.

I commit to the eradication of anti-Black racism throughout my organization and the Canadian music industry and I vow to achieve as many of the goals as possible set out in this Declaration.



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Signatory:

Representative of:

This _____ day of _____, 20____

Signed: _____



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www.BDRB.ca

www.CIMAmusic.ca | www.ADVANCEmusic.ca

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