

**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH
2025**



STANDING FIRM IN POWER AND PRIDE

MANIFESTO FOR ACTION FIVE YEARS ON



Kizzy



An Introduction from Kizzy and Akeisha, our EDI Team

Akeisha



"We are proud to introduce to you this publication for Black History Month 2025, and also a special reflection on our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion across our organisation. Our aim remains to create environments where everyone feels seen, valued and heard, and where equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of what we do. As the EDI team, we take pride in creating space for people to be their authentic selves and feel fully accepted, regardless of their race, culture or heritage. We invite you to read, reflect and most importantly enjoy all the wonderful insights we have to share and we hope you continue to be part of this journey."

- Kizzy Green, EDI Engagement Lead and Akeisha Brown, EDI Development Lead

A message from Anna Lunts, CEO

"I am always delighted to see the creativity, joy and talent of staff and people we support in coming together to celebrate Black History Month. As we approach our sixth year since creating our Manifesto for Action, I am proud of the work we've achieved and feel strongly about its continued importance. Championing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has never just been an initiative to us and remains a core part of our values and what we stand for at Creative Support. This year's Black History Month theme 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride' stands a good reminder that celebrating Black history and Black identity is a year-round responsibility. Thank you to all those who've participated in bringing this year's celebrations to fruition, with particular recognition for those who have shared such insightful and passionate contributions to a fantastic documentary film."

Anna





Standing Firm in Power and Pride

The theme for this year's Black History Month is 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride.' It represents the strength and resilience of Black people past and present and encourages us to take pride in our heritage and embrace our cultures with courage and pride. At Creative Support, we've taken this theme as an opportunity to celebrate the rich diversity of cultures, values, and traditions within our community. Working closely with staff at Salford Intensive and Personalised Services, we developed the idea for a 'Power and Pride' documentary as a celebration of identity through food, traditions, inspiring Black figures, and reflections on what Black History Month means today.

We spoke to staff and people we support across several services in Salford and Manchester to capture their voices and stories, leading to an informative and heartfelt film that showcases the similarities and diversity of Black people across our organisation.

Our Black History Month film premieres on YouTube Wednesday 29th October 2025

Kate Hamza

Team Leader, Manchester

"This year's Black History Month theme makes me think about how I stand out as a Black person, stand tall, and be recognised. Say 'I'm not invisible', get out there. You know what, as a Black person, nobody should trample upon your soul."

Ntkozo Mbatha

Lives in one of our supported accommodation services

"Black History Month represents being proud of our identity, who we are as people."

Olawunmi Awakan

Senior Support Worker

"This Black History Month, my message to everyone is, love is good. It's about love. Don't stop loving. It will do more good than harm."



Scan the QR code to subscribe to our YouTube channel and be the first to see the film when it's released.



Our Manifesto five years on...

At Creative Support, we are proud of our commitment to celebrating Black history and identity, not just in October but as a constant part of our values. As this year also marks five years into our anti-racism journey, we wanted to reflect on all of the positive work so far and the impact it has had, as well as re-affirm our commitments for the future based on all that we have learned and achieved.

Five years ago...

In 2020 we made a powerful promise to listen, to learn, and to lead in the journey to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation. Our Manifesto for Action was published, setting out our commitment and steps we would take against racism and specifically anti-Blackness. We've taken active and bold steps to amplify the voices of people of colour, honour history and identity, increase awareness and understanding, and build a culture where everyone feels like they genuinely belong.

Here is a look back over some of the highlights from the last 5 years:

● 2020 – Our Commitment

- We established the EDI network and focused on the importance of regular network meetings as a safe space for staff to come together and shape the work happening.
- The autumn **Creative Life Magazine** was dedicated to Black History Month, officially launching the Manifesto for Action, sharing awareness articles and centring interviews with Black staff on their experiences, life stories, identities and reflections.
- We launched mandatory **Anti-racism training** for all staff.
- Anna, our CEO, felt strongly about the controversy surrounding removal of slave trader statues in the UK at the time, so we released a blog to speak about it. This was an important moment where we felt the necessity to **highlight the current social injustice in relation to how this may affect our Black staff and people we support**.
- We promoted **awareness of microaggressions and allyship** and created a religious festivals calendar to recognise all communities.



● 2021 – Proud to Be Me

- Focusing on representation, we funded and enrolled our first cohort onto the **Skills for Care 'Moving Up Programme' aimed at Black and Asian staff** (which we've funded every year since). This opened doors for our Black and Asian staff, encouraging confidence and pride in their leadership and opportunities to progress at work.
- We published our **'Proud to Be' Black History Month Newsletter**, which showcased stories and achievements of Black Icons around the world.
- We hosted an interview with one of our Project Managers to talk about the importance of active inclusion through our Manifesto.
- We marked 30 years of Creative Support with a feature on what it means to be 'Proud to Be', where staff shared what identity and culture meant to them.

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Chu-Chu
Project Manager, North East

“When the Creative Support Black Lives Matter Manifesto for Action was published it felt good, it really did. I already felt comfortable with Creative Support before this because of my manager – I had never felt any discrimination from them and always felt I could be myself with my long hair, or my afro, or my braids, or up in a wrap around my head.

‘There are some things I’m keen to see manifest from the manifesto, like having the dedicated resource or person alongside the EDI network.’

● 2022 – Connection and Heritage

- We leaned into heritage, identity and belonging, formally **adopting the Halo Code** as policy. By doing this we embraced afro hairstyles and cultural headwear within the organisation.
- We supported publications with staff members, including **Kizzy's personal story about 'Finding Family,'** where they explored identity and belonging, and encouraged other staff of colour to look into the history of their family tree.
- We sponsored staff and people we support to **attend the Caribbean and African Health Network's Black History Month Gala.**

● 2023 – Hair, Identity and Black Excellence

This was the year of bold expression where we introduced the EDI Lead role, appointing a person of colour to bring lived experience to the forefront and provide meaningful advocacy for our staff of colour. We then took a deep dive into Black hair and culture.

- We launched the **EDI Newsletter**, which focuses on promoting EDI through sharing updates, celebrating different cultures and highlighting initiatives that support a more inclusive workplace.
- We released a series of powerful articles on Black hair and its significance. Highlighted some of the challenges of hair discrimination, and staff shared their own practices of hair care
- We launched a series of **Black Excellence showcases** to celebrate the achievements of our Black staff and the people we support. Staff had space to share an insight into the rich tapestry of their Black history, sharing stories from arriving in England and expressing their identity through art and poetry.
- We launched our **Lota campaign**, ensuring these were available in all staff toilets.
- We collaborated with the LGBTQ+ Network for LGBTQ+ history month, shining a spotlight on some Black LGBTQ+ Icons who have shaped Black history through activism, politics and art.
- Building from the network, we set up a group of '**EDI Champions**' across the country in order to promote and embed anti-racism and inclusion work happening within their service.

Kola

Support Worker, Leeds

Attended 2023 Manchester Pride and said: *"I really enjoyed the day and had a great time with Creative Support staff and service users! I feel there is still a sense of confusion around Black people being at Pride, but the best thing about Pride was meeting people who share the same ideology as me and being able to be open and free to do things that I can't do on my own."*



Emeka Ufodu

Support Worker, Manchester

"For me personally, ever since I joined this organisation, one of the most meaningful developments I have witnessed which has been quite impactful has been the introduction of EDI Champions across our various services. I believe their presence has helped embed equality, diversity, and inclusion into the everyday culture of our various teams and have further created a safer space for open conversations around race, identity, and inclusion helping to ensure that these discussions are not just one off but rather ongoing"

2024 – Reclaiming Narratives

This year we expanded the EDI team, appointing a second role to increase capacity to focus on our action plan and taking forward key developments.

This was the year we embedded storytelling as a form of empowerment. We hosted Lunch and Learns and invited Black and Brown staff to lead the conversations and share their stories.

- We introduced the **‘Your Voice Your Story’** podcast episodes as part of the ‘Reclaiming Narratives’ theme for Black History Month.
- We planned out a series of **‘Lunch and Learns’** every Friday throughout Black History Month in October, to bring head office staff together and share significant topics such as psychosis, intersectionality, race, music and science and more.
- We began delivery of a more in-depth, classroom-based **Anti-racism training session**.
- We enabled our lived experience **Anti-racism Co-trainers to undertake an accredited qualification** and become training facilitators.
- We released the **‘Race, Culture and Understanding Each Other’** guide for people we support.
- We undertook **100 interviews with Black staff** which shaped out EDI Action plan.

Labeeba Mia

Business Support Administrator, Head Office

“The Lunch and Learn sessions are a highlight, creating a safe and secure space for connection and growth. I find it deeply validating to connect with likeminded peers and equally inspiring to gain perspective from colleagues with different life experiences. My experience on the podcast during South Asian Heritage Month was very important to me; it made me feel genuinely heard. I was especially happy to have the chance to share my heritage and culture with the organisation.”

2025 – Power and Pride

This year marks five years since our Anti-Racism Manifesto.

- Our **Black History Month ‘Power and Pride’ event** will be a celebration of culture, identify and Black joy.
- The **Moving Up Programme** continues to support staff of colour in leadership.
- We published specific **guidance on supporting people and staff during Ramadan**.
- A **new Anti-racism policy** will replace the original Manifesto for Action, making this fit for purpose as a long-term commitment, bringing forward the learning and developments of the last five years and enshrining Anti-racist action into organisational policy.

Errol Williams

Maintenance Officer, Head Office

“I’m in Wellington House for the majority of my time working, and just walking around the office you see and hear the diversity. I like Black History Month as there is always something to do or see or go to. Of course, it would be great to have a year of celebrations at work of different pioneers, famous people sprinkled throughout the year.”

Chika Ejeh

Team Leader, Manchester

“I took part in the Moving Up Programme because I changed my roles. First and foremost, the course exposed the participants to clearly reflect on who we are as people of colour, our heritage, our experiences which are diverse, and our cultures. We will be the role models for the younger generation of people of colour to strive for leadership positions.”

Manifesto 'We said, We did'

We Said	We Did
Implement mandatory diversity and inclusion training for all, including bespoke training for senior leads	Mandatory anti-racism training for all staff, additional training for managers, plus bespoke training available for staff teams and people supported.
Celebrate the achievements of our Black and minority ethnic staff and people we support	Consistent celebrations and showcases, including direct voices of Black staff and people supported in articles and podcast series. People of colour are represented in all staff engagement activities, not just dedicated EDI work.
Make our values and commitment to anti-racism clear through developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan	EDI Action Plan developed based on the feedback and experiences of Black staff members gathered through interviews, network meetings and individual work.
Create a designated EDI post in our HR team to support our Black staff	Recruited and filled two EDI posts to focus on engagement with staff across the organisation, and the development of anti-racist practice. The team offer dedicated guidance, coaching and wellbeing support to staff and managers experiencing any challenges.
Improve our staff ethnicity data and publish race pay gap reporting from 2021	Recording process updated and achieved 100% staff ethnicity data recorded. Race Pay Gap data published for last three years.
Set up an EDI reference group to audit and challenge our social media, publications and promotional activity, to ensure positive images and messaging	The EDI, Marketing and Communication teams work in close collaboration to ensure that all platforms share an inclusive and diverse content.
Enable and support all our Black staff and those from under-represented groups working as senior support workers or more senior roles to complete accredited professional and management qualifications	We fund two 'Moving Up' cohorts per year as a development opportunity for staff members of colour. Lived experience Co-trainers are able to complete accredited facilitator qualifications.
Seek out dialogue and partnerships with those who challenge injustice in our society	We actively engage with other organisations through service design and delivery, promote their work and voices through our publications and participate in research projects.
Listen carefully to the experiences of Black people and minority ethnic communities	Conducted over 100 interviews with Black staff which shaped our EDI Action plan. Regular network meetings, individual feedback, and purposefully co-produce all publications, celebrations and awareness work.

What's Next?

As we move towards the end of 2025 we are already underway with our plans shaped from the interview feedback and looking forward to how we continue taking positive steps, with key commitments including:

- Embedding Anti-Racism as the organisation standard, supported by our new Anti-Racism policy.
- Creating guidance for staff and managers on how to respond to racism.
- Promoting and continuing to develop meaningful wellbeing support for staff of colour with the EDI team, managers and HR.
- Developing further resources, training and support for managers.
- Refreshing information and encouraging access to the EDI network, events and resources for all staff.
- Development of accessible resources and training for people we support.
- Strengthening our work to advocate and amplify the voices of people of colour we support and those who experience multiple areas of disadvantage.

We are really proud of the work we have achieved so far, and our Anti-racism policy now reaffirms our commitment to the work still to do. We remain passionate about uplifting Black voices, challenging racism, and creating empowering and inclusive spaces across all of our services.

Get Involved!

If you want to get involved or find out more about our anti-racist action then we would love to hear from you. Whether you want to share feedback, ask for advice, contribute to a newsletter, be a part of future podcasts or join the network there is a space for you!

- ✓ Contact the EDI Team at EDI@creativesupport.co.uk
- ✓ Visit our website and find the EDI page on the staff area
- ✓ Join the EDI/Anti-racism network
- ✓ Become an EDI Champion

