

Our commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression

Leading with Hope starts from a clear understanding: philanthropy does not sit outside wider societal disparities. The resources we steward and the decisions we make have been historically shaped by – and can continue to reflect – racial, economic, and other structural inequities; unless we actively work to address them. This document sets out Blaggrave’s core commitments to anti-racism and anti-oppression as we move into this new strategy, grounded in humility, accountability, and ongoing learning. This is a live document that will continue to be shaped as we learn and work collaboratively in place.

Acknowledging our history and power

Like much of UK philanthropy, Blaggrave’s capital originated through wider historical inequalities. We recognise that philanthropic capital has often benefited some communities while contributing to misalignment and exclusion for others, particularly Black and racially minoritised groups, working-class communities and people facing intersecting forms of oppression.

We are committed to being honest about our role within these wider systems. This includes acknowledging that our funding hasn’t always reached those facing the greatest disparities; and that we hold institutional influence – an influence that shapes agendas, impacts whose knowledge is seen as credible, and affects who gets access to resources.

We are also beginning to openly reckon with the historical origins of the capital that underpins Blaggrave. Early research shows this capital was accumulated over centuries through land and property ownership, industrialisation, and involvement in Britain’s imperial and colonial systems, including enslavement and the East India Company. Our findings indicate that these historical practices generated capital through exploitation and racialised violence, the legacies of which continue to shape inequality today. We will share a fuller public account of this work towards the end of 2026 as part of our commitment to transparency.

Our journey towards racial justice

Our commitment to anti-racism has been shaped through practice, challenge, learning and reflection over time. Since 2020 – particularly following the launch of our youth-led change programme Challenge and Change and the resurgence of Black Lives Matter – we have deepened our understanding of how racism and oppression operate within society and philanthropy.

This journey has included moving towards lived-experience-led and participatory grant-making; investing in sustained learning for staff and trustees; auditing our grant-making and being honest about where its impact fell short of our intention; launching targeted funds for racially minoritised-led groups; embedding anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice into safeguarding and wellbeing; and joining sector initiatives such as Ten Years' Time Community of Practice and FREA (Funders for Race Equality Alliance) to strengthen our accountability.

This work has required us to reflect deeply on our institutional role, to upskill, and to remain open to feedback. It is ongoing.

What anti-oppression means for Blaggrave

For us, anti-racism sits within a broader commitment to anti-oppression. We understand disparities as structural and intersecting – shaped by race, class, disability, gender, sexuality, migration status, and other identities. Young people experience oppression differently, and our work must be contextual, nuanced, and responsive to this diversity.

An anti-oppressive approach means centring lived experience in decision-making; critically examining how our funding, language, and structures can cause misalignment; taking responsibility and seeking repair when misalignment occurs; and actively choosing to address inequity rather than look away.

How this shows up in our work

Under Leading with Hope, these commitments shape our role as a philanthropic organisation:

- **Grant-making and investment:** We use participatory decision-making, interrogate who benefits and who is missing, and see racial, class, disability, and other forms of justice as core to our mission. Challenge and

Change, co-designed and delivered with lived experience changemakers, remains a key expression of this approach.

- **Safeguarding and care:** We take a progressive, context-informed approach to our safeguarding culture, grounded in anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice. We recognise that misalignment can be caused in the name of safeguarding, and we actively work to address this. Our approach centres lived experience and prioritises wellbeing and care through responses that are thoughtful, tailored and relational.
- **Organisation and accountability:** We invest in ongoing learning; hold leadership and trustees accountable through clear responsibility structures; and commit to transparency about progress and tensions.
- **Collaboration and influence:** We work with other funders and sector partners to shift practice, amplify the voices of young people and communities, and support infrastructure where it is under-resourced.
- **Communication and language:** We communicate with care, clarity, and accountability, recognising that language, tone, and accessibility shape agency and belonging. We commit to transparent, inclusive, and accessible communication, without an over-reliance on the written word.

Place, context, and learning

As we deepen into long-term place-based work in Birmingham, London, and Portsmouth, our anti-oppression commitments will be shaped by local histories, relationships, and realities. We'll work alongside communities to support them in defining what equity, safety, and justice mean for them, adapting our role as decision-making is shared and transferred.

Looking ahead

This is an evolving commitment. Anti-racism and anti-oppression are not destinations but practices we must continue to strengthen as we learn. Leading with Hope means believing that philanthropy can change – and taking responsibility for making that change real by ensuring the right people are at the table, with real authority and agency to shape decisions.

Glossary:

Anti-oppression	Anti-oppression is the active and ongoing practice of identifying and dismantling the four I's of oppression: ideological (harmful beliefs), interpersonal (individual actions), institutional (policies and practices), and internalised (absorbed attitudes and self-perceptions), in order to challenge systemic inequality, redistribute power, centre marginalised voices, and create more just and equitable conditions for all.
Anti-racism	Anti-racism is the practice of identifying and ending racism by changing the values, structures and behaviours that enable it.
Black and racially minoritised people	A term used to describe different ethnic groups that experience racism. It includes people of African, Caribbean, East and South Asian backgrounds, as well as groups who may be perceived as white but still face racism, such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and Jewish people.