

Building a national anti-racism accountability organisation

A report for the future Anti-racism Observatory for Scotland.

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We thank all involved for trusting the process, despite the inordinate and inappropriate time challenges placed on this work.

Lastly, we thank ourselves for creating and sustaining the ambition for this work and are ready to support the future organisation as it develops.

The global need for anti-racism has intensified since this work began - our future as a nation requires us to publicly and collectively work to address systemic racism.

Introduction: The Purpose of a Future Anti-racism Observatory for Scotland

The future Anti-racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS) will be one part of a national-level oversight infrastructure for tackling systemic racism in Scotland. It will become the mechanism through which the Scottish Government and other public bodies are supported, scrutinised and held accountable, to deliver genuine and irreversible systemic change.

The model for AROS has arisen from work undertaken by the [Anti-Racism Interim Governance Group](#) (AIGG) who, after thorough research, consultations, and activities, determined that a new community-led organisation is needed to address systemic racism in Scotland. It was agreed that this organisation should be co-produced with individuals and community groups who are most adversely impacted by racism. AROS will hold to account Scottish policy ambitions across all areas of government and of key stakeholders, through an intersectional, anti-racism lens.

The following report is written to the future AROS from the Design Advisory Group (DAG), a short-term group established by appointment of a Scottish Government Minister and the Design Lead. The Design Lead role was commissioned to support the development of an intersectional anti-racism approach and to uphold the ambitions and implementation of collaborative work agreed by the DAG, as it navigated the interim phase with the Scottish Government.

As specified in the [terms of reference](#) for the future AROS:

“The [Design Advisory] group will develop its own workplan and will not be delivering as a Scottish Government working group. For example, its purpose is not to advise Ministers or the Scottish Government, instead it has a specific project focus to collaborate, advise and co-produce with the design team to support the launch of the AROS.”

In this report, we also provide specific recommendations for the Scottish Government. This rather unique interim design phase has provided deep insight into the government’s processes. In order to deliver its commitment to address systemic racism within its own governance over the next two years, there is an immediate requirement for the government to rethink and ultimately restructure how this work is viewed and protected.

As highlighted in the terms of reference, the group anticipated risks of and resistance to this work, and acknowledged that designing anti-racism infrastructure on a national level would be challenging. However, the responses to this work, the deliberate disruptions through weaponised complaints, and the systemic racism experienced was beyond our expectation.

“The Terms of Reference (ToR) acknowledges the risks of systemic racism within public institutions, and as such recognises the need for protection of the design advisory group and the design team lead from undue influence, dilution or pressure.

The ToR seeks to pursue a relationship with the Scottish Government which is based on collaboration and providing independent expert advice on the design of AROS to ensure successful delivery of its strategic objectives”

Despite the challenges, we are proud of what we were able to achieve in a very short timeframe, although we are dismayed by how much effort and racism mitigation has been necessary. Engaging in this work has indisputably put enormous demands on personal and professional relationships and reputations. The work of building a new anti-racism accountability organisation now exists within a more challenging political and economic climate than when it started. For these exact reasons it must progress.

Chapter 1: The Work of the DAG

1.1. Overview

The DAG was created through invitation to the outgoing AIGG, to support the Scottish Government to sustain and build from the work developed by the AIGG during an interim period.

The interim occurred because of the timescales created by public procurement of an independent host organisation for 2 years, for the purpose of building a future AROS. Over 18 months, the AIGG had anticipated and prepared for the establishment of a future AROS as a company limited by guarantee, similar to “The Promise”. An organisation built to create systemic transformation of the experience of children in the “care systems” of Scotland. However, the Minister at that time did not accept this recommendation by the AIGG and asked for the new organisation to be hosted for 2 years, with the intention of becoming fully independent at that time. This was reluctantly accepted by the AIGG. Thus, this roughly year-long interim occurred because of the timescales created by public procurement of an independent host organisation for the future AROS.

The overarching ambition within the interim public procurement of a host has been to begin to flesh-out, establish and implement some of the processes determined by the AIGG¹.

Membership of the DAG consisted of individuals with knowledge and expertise of anti-racism, community development, employment processes, governance, organisational development and policy-influencing. DAG members included those with experiences of intersecting marginalisation(s) and with expertise pertaining to the realities of systemic racism².

The creation of an anti-racism community engagement fund (Chapter 3) was viewed as a key mechanism for both updating and engaging with the community. Through this fund, community groups and organisations were invited to hold their own events and engage in decision-making processes, giving their insights on how they would like future AROS to operate, to be governed, and to engage with communities.

We argue that involving and updating the community is key to holding the Scottish Government to account, including interrogating the commitment it has made to the people of Scotland to meaningfully address systemic racism in its own policy systems and processes. The DAG accepted the Scottish Government’s invitation to undertake this work, aiming to do so within a framework of co-production. However,

¹ Developing National Anti-Racism Infrastructure: Interim Governance Group: [find link here](#).

² Information on DAG members can be found on the webpage Future Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland: Design Advisory Group: [find link here](#).

the relational dynamics between the DAG as it became established and the Scottish Government was complex from the start.

Building anti-racism work is compounded by what is generally considered an unprecedented financial crisis in the funding sector. In recent times, many important projects, initiatives, third sector and grassroots organisations, and public services across sectors have found their funding slashed or completely removed. The context of the financial climate should be taken into account when using this report.

We also note political upheaval and significant changes to Scottish Government staff that took place during the activities detailed in this report, including the appointment of new First Ministers and new Ministers working across areas of government. Different leads have been appointed within the Equalities sector and several periods of staff shortfall were noted within the relatively newly-formed Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights Directorate. Structural changes were compounded by rising demands across the Equalities sector as a result of “austerity” and the impact of COVID-19, and inequality has been evidenced right across directorates. This is a difficult area for all to work within.

The DAG and Design Lead’s response to this difficult landscape was to acknowledge the reality of this challenging work, yet maintain a determined focus on delivering the recommendations from the AIGG – modelling the inception of the future AROS³ to support its launch.

Our work plan is based on the following future AROS principles, as set out by AIGG in the [AROS Vision and Mission document](#):

- We work with communities for communities.
- We commit to an **intersectional anti-racism** approach.
- Intentional focus is on the historic and present-day systems of racism, white privilege, whiteness, oppression, and discrimination that are embedded in society. These systems are linked to classism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, antisemitism, islamophobia and xenophobia. **Our approach takes into account how these systems overlap to create compounding inequity.**
- We aim to be **accessible and flexible** in the ways in which we use language and design our activities.

³ We recommend reading the document ‘The Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland: Revised structure and model, after a review by Ministers’ - [find link here](#).

1.2. Background

The majority of this report details the process and recommendations from this programme of work, which builds from the foundations agreed by the AIGG for the future AROS. The ambition is for future AROS “to hit the ground running” with tested processes and modelling developed with and for communities impacted by systemic racism, through the anti-racism community engagement fund.

The original programme of work was intended from around March to November 2024. However, a fiscal host was not commissioned until July 2024. Due to delays created by processes of the Scottish Government, a Design Lead was not recruited until August 2024. This meant that the intended programme of work had to be amended.

An already ambitious 9 month implementation plan became condensed into 4 months’ work.

The agreed focus was twofold:

1. Find and commission an appropriate “fiscal host” organisation that could administrate, in this short timescale, an anti-racism community fund and also enable the recruitment of a range of short-term freelance staff to undertake inception work supporting the future AROS.
2. To create and support rolling out a national anti-racism community engagement fund, built with anti-racism principles and practices, in order to engage with people across Scotland who experience racism.

The overall intention was to provide a supportive role for the Scottish Government, who had hoped to provide reassurance to the public that it was upholding commitments to address systemic racism. At this point, there had been significant delays and no formal public communication from the Scottish Government directly, for example through public stakeholder events, since the AIGG stopped operating in November 2023. By announcing that it would be creating a new, community-led oversight body, the Scottish Government wanted to demonstrate to people across Scotland that it would be creating space for members of the public to hold it accountable.

From August 2024, the ambition for the implementation team consisting of a Design Lead and two internal Scottish Government staff, guided by the DAG, worked to support the key areas and implement its aims.

Two Short Life Working Groups (SLWG’s) made up of antiracism experts have undertaken much of the work to support the processes of procurement, finding a fiscal host and building a process of recruitment of freelance staff. They have also worked to create a platform for community engagement which includes the

publicising, evaluating, and supporting of communities and organisations engaging with the anti-racism fund.

The DAG developed and implemented a properly resourced model of anti-racism community engagement, which future AROS can confidently utilise:

- A model for resourced community engagement which recognises the lived and learned expertise of people across Scotland who are adversely impacted by systemic racism.
- A model that recognises that the ways in which people are brought together to talk about systemic racism also needs to mitigate and address systemic racism.
- A model that respects the enormity of the task, acknowledging the individual and community distress that often arise within these crucial conversations, in order to begin to develop and hold to account the systems that create and uphold systemic racism.

Building anti-racism infrastructure on any scale is difficult; building national-level work to address systemic racism can be dangerous and unnerving. The individual, organisational and systemic racism that followed this work and affected the people doing it has been unprecedented. Transparency throughout future AROS development will need to be provided and sustained, when communicating this work to individuals and organisations. The “race” equalities landscape in Scotland is marked with frustration, misinformation, anxiety, harmful power dynamics and years of failed efforts to produce positive sustainable change in people’s lives. These strains must not land on those seeking to build a different model.

The DAG will hand over an anti-racism safeguarding approach to future AROS. This will be built from what the group has learnt during their operational period, in order for the future host and future AROS to protect the work, and to support those who seek to continue the struggle of addressing systemic racialised inequality in Scotland and beyond.

We have tried to make our language clear and easy to understand. However, we may still have used some words or phrases that readers have not seen before or do not understand. There is a word bank which may support reading – [see Appendix](#).

1.3. Focus Areas for Future AROS

The following were identified as the five priority areas for implementation during the anticipated year-long design phase of future AROS:

1. **Procurement:** which includes developing the specifications, assessment and evaluation of tenders

2. **Community Engagement:** which includes anti-racism models and approaches, and determining and implementing allocation of anti-racism embedded funding
3. **Tech:** which includes interactive digital library development
4. **Future AROS systems:** which includes best practice in policy, models and research
5. **Communications:** which includes future AROS identity, website and public narrative

This programme of work has been successfully undertaken. A further two areas were identified, which would be led by colleagues within the Scottish Government and supported by critical thinking with the DAG:

- Internal Scottish Government anti-racism systems learning, to build officials competence and understanding about what is systemic racism and anti-racism practice.
- Build public stakeholder engagement, especially for those who experience racialised inequality about the next phase after the [Race Equalities Action Plan](#), the [Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity](#) recommendations, and the end of [Immediate Priorities Plan](#), and ultimately the process of supporting the Scottish Government to develop its own plans within the context of the [Race Equalities Framework](#) for the period of 2016 – 2030.

Building a new, national anti-racism accountability organisation is a bold and inspirational commitment, borne out of the clear evidence that what has come before has not worked.

Over the last 20 years, there have been **39 policies** related to “race” equality in Scotland, with **817 commitments and actions** (CRER 2021). Despite this, minimal progress has been made due to little understanding of how racism functions in policy processes and a lack of accountability in implementation because the systems have not incorporated a fit for purpose understanding of how racism functions in these processes themselves.

Racialised inequality has worsened. A national organisation for accountability in anti-racism is unprecedented in Scotland and bringing it into being must be recognised as an exquisitely complex and challenging task.

Chapter 2: A Safeguarding Approach to Support Future AROS

As a rule, any plans to tackle systemic racism must also involve the implementation of safeguarding. In this section, we provide reporting from the DAG on what should be put in place to make this work safe for people contributing to it. We also discuss the importance of managing the interpersonal, institutional and systemic racism that individuals and organisations are subjected to when trying to do anti-racism work. Lastly, we provide key learning and recommendations for how to safely progress this work.

2.1. Introduction

It is perhaps helpful to view the DAG experience as a high-intensity “case study” or pilot for future AROS. From this case study, there are clear recommendations about how to protect the work going forward. Most importantly, careful critical thinking is provided below regarding relationships: with each other as we undertake anti-racism work; with people in communities across Scotland adversely impacted by racism; with stakeholders; and with the Scottish Government.

Broadly, the proposal for a new anti-racism organisation is hugely welcomed. However, resistance to future AROS is also present and must always be anticipated.

Future AROS, like the DAG, has to learn how to function within the very same racist structures it aims to scrutinise, support, disrupt, and dismantle. Future AROS will have a better chance of navigating this context than DAG, thanks to the learning and process developed from the previous working group.

As practitioners undertaking this work, we understand the danger and risks associated with it. However, the potential for harm is often dismissed or minimised. Denial of the risks in anti-racism work is present and pernicious in Scotland and is, in itself, a reflection of systemic racism in operation. There are also significant economic challenges associated with this work, intensified by a local, national, and global narrative of white supremacy. These two factors of denial and resource scarcity are linked, and present risks to adversely racialised people and any future organisation that seeks to dismantle systemic racism. How this work and the resourcing to sustain it gets framed and publicly understood is critical.

2.2. Safeguarding

Our recommendations are based on the fundamental principle that the well-being of the communities and those who face the most acute racism are prioritised alongside those who are doing the anti-racism work. Thus, we believe that any new

organisation must build from the lived and learned expertise and experiences of those who are most impacted by systemic racism. Nearly all evidence indicates that those most impacted by systemic racism are people from “communities of colour”⁴.

A strong and clearly defined relationship to therapeutic support for people doing this work must also be built into the models within any anti-racism organisation. We know from our elders such as [Professor Angela Davis](#) or [Professor Christina Sharpe](#) and many others that the creative energy to maintain emotional salience and the ability to continue and sustain anti-racism work occurs through appropriate budgeting, resourcing, and time for care which must be built in from the outset.

Any new organisation, in order to raise its head and for all those within it to raise their heads above the parapet and challenge racism, must have clear legal frameworks, practical and emotional safeguarding practices, and protection from its inception.

There has never been a national level anti-racism accountability organisation – build it with care.

2.3. Key Learning and Recommendations

Issue

- Building knowledge about what anti-racism looks like in an organisation

Recommendation

- Build internally with the team you are working with and pay attention to how you are recruiting and how team members are behaving together
- Identify how to detect and reflect anti-racism principles when building the organisation
- The organisational culture must be actively anti-racist
- Do the internal groundwork before beginning to reach out to communities
- Approach communities from that place of learning, otherwise there is a real risk of unsafe practices and behaviours

Issue

- Breaking the cycle of usual practice in organisational structures

Further context

Recommendation

- Do the internal groundwork before beginning to reach out to communities
- The focus should be on how to engage with communities, and how to involve them safely
- Strongly resist delivery demands which are often placed on a new organisation for the first six months to 1 year

Issue

- Preventing extractive behaviours
- Including proper time and resources into the terms of reference for any of the future AROS-led working groups

Further context

A series of different groups are required to make AROS function:

- Advisory group
- Accountability group
- Data approving panels

Recommendation

- Time and expertise must be properly resourced, to reflect accessibility and intersectional anti-racism principles

Issue

- Seeing the end of 2 years from the start and keeping that focus of becoming an independent organisation

Recommendation

- Start planning from where AROS wants to be in two years' time and work backwards from there

Issue

- Acknowledging that that marginalised and excluded people often require additional time to process and work on difficult subjects

Recommendation

- Ensure that there are plenty of people in any proposed working group, so that the group can still operate effectively even if some members are not able to contribute

Chapter 3 - Working with Communities for Future AROS

3.1. Overview

In the following chapter, we discuss the approaches specified by the AIGG, for working effectively and responsibly with communities for future AROS.

We provide an analysis of discussions undertaken with community organisations regarding how they want future AROS to work with and for them, and we detail models of best practice, for instance within deliberative democracy work, and other accountability and panel processes.

In this chapter, we will also provide details on the Anti-racism Community Engagement Fund and the ways in which Community Outreach Consultants worked with individuals and community organisations who wished to apply for the fund.

The reporting from the fund is key information for future AROS. It needs to be trailblazing and visionary, because previous models simply have not worked. It must also argue and advocate for collective, practical ways to reach an understanding of how racism exists in all sectors of society. It should focus on the cultural narrative, right through into housing, health, education, transport, into racism in food inequality, in period poverty, and more. Racism operates in all sectors of society, and so future AROS must operate in a way that publicly reflects this context, as well as core knowledge of systemic racism.

The future AROS first has to *do* the anti-racism work, in order to build how the group will function internally. From that work, the group will understand how best to approach community engagement, and then where the priorities lie. These are two separate but interrelated actions.

3.2. Recommendations

- The future AROS should work directly with people in communities, not through stakeholder partnership organisations as [expressed in AIGG](#).
- The physical space for the new organisation as it becomes independent needs careful consideration. We ask: is there a way to build in anti-racism to the actual building? The future AROS should consider the type of design that could be created in an anti-racism way, for the space to be established as a place of welcome and safety. It should give great consideration to how this space could be used for people who need shelter and support.

- The future AROS must commission and have several different approaches to building community in the first two years, using different pilots to approach this goal.
- Flexibility in working practices is extremely important, especially for small and grassroots organisations, whose resources are likely to be limited and who might rely on volunteer work, for example.
- Models for formal engagement with AROS may include community membership approaches [explored by the AIGG](#)
- Seek out those developing participatory democracy models using “Town Hall” discussions. This work is time-consuming and resource-intensive, but has been proven to be valuable in similar community-oriented work in Ireland and throughout the European Union.
 - *Oyedepo: Centre for Health Policy blog post [here](#).*
 - *Deliberative and Participatory Democracy*
 - *Ireland’s Deliberative Mini-Public*
 - *Democracy in Ireland: Theory and Practice*
- There is considerable potential for thinking imaginatively about engagement: for instance, hosting community meals as well as casual conversations, organising film screenings, cultural and artistic events, or working with existing events to organise complementary discussions.
- Simply announcing publicly about the planned work of AROS, to identify interested participants, gather ideas, and raise awareness.

3.3. Community Engagement through Outreach

The Community Engagement and Outreach strand of work was started during the end phase of the DAG’s activity. It had been intended to be 6-9 months work, but the delays through the year meant it became inappropriately condensed. Despite the risks and challenges these timescales created, the DAG decided that it was important to progress, since input from community groups would be essential for deciding on the work of future AROS and its priorities.

Two Community Outreach Consultants were employed for 14 weeks to support community groups and organisations to access the Anti-racism Community Engagement Fund.

The consultants were responsible for building community relationships, developing and expanding community networks, and embedding mechanisms to ensure that the lived expertise of adversely racialised communities is what will lead AROS and its work. They worked to form relationships with communities that were built on trust

and respect, continuing the work of the AIGG in embedding practices rooted in anti-oppressive, anti-racism values. The consultants also created safe environments for communities to envision, discuss and provide feedback on how AROS can work for them.

This document outlines the five phases of the outreach and engagement work and highlights key issues and learnings.

3.4. Phase 1: Opening the Fund

The Anti-racism Community Engagement Fund (ARCEF) opened for applications on Tuesday 3 September 2024 and remained open for just under 6 weeks, until Friday 11 October. The fund information was available on the Impact Funding Partners [\(IFP\) website](#).

An outreach email was sent to a database of approximately 500 contacts of people and organisations involved during the AIGG phase. The fund was also shared by IFP through their existing networks. The aim was to engage existing and new contacts in order to maintain and grow engagement for future AROS.

Three online information sessions took place with the Community Outreach Consultants, led by the Design Lead. Members of the IFP team also present. To preserve the safety of those attending the session, attendees were able to sign up in advance on the IFP website and then received a meeting link directly. Attendees were introduced to the fund and were able to ask questions. These sessions were well-attended and the majority of those present went on to apply for the fund.

As the assessment process began and the consultants reviewed applications, they identified a number of areas where applicants needed further support to meet the fund's aims. In response, the consultants developed an additional resource: an [FAQs document](#) providing further information around these aspects of the fund. This resource was available on the IFP website, alongside the fund information. IFP have longstanding expertise in community fund management. A full report of the process from IFP's perspective and their key recommendations is in [Appendix 10](#).

3.5. Phase 2: Application Assessment

In order to release funds to groups at the earliest possible opportunity, applications were assessed on a rolling basis for a period of 4 weeks.

The assessment process was led by IFP with support from the Community Outreach Consultants, Project Lead, and the Design Advisory Group who provided expertise on systemic racism and methods for working with adversely racialised people and groups. A process was agreed that drew on the various specialisms within the team, ensured due diligence, and met the time constraints. Two briefing documents

exploring aspects from this work. The thinking behind the redesign of the application process is explored in more detail in [Appendix 11](#) and the costing structure that it built has more detail is provided in [Appendix 9](#).

Anti-racism in the assessment process

The process aimed to make the fund accessible to a diversity of groups and to embed anti-racism principles. The decision-making process involved professionals and advisory group members with lived expertise of racism. This provided a necessary insight into the information given on applications, particularly around language, power dynamics, and perceptions of what constitutes “expertise” in this area.

The fund criteria were not shared with the Community Outreach Consultants due the organisations’ concerns around intellectual property. This created challenging working relationships, as the consultants could only offer advice to applicants based on their own understanding of the fund, but not the background thinking. It was difficult to build a shared understanding of the fund with colleagues. This created an additional risk to an already pressured process.

Impact of a rolling deadline

The rolling deadline had a significant impact on who was able to apply and the quality of the applications. Different to those with already established funding we found that both unfunded- and project to project based funded applicants often rushed to submit applications that would have benefited from additional time and thought. As such, these applicants needed slightly more support later on, compared to applicants with access to more sustainable funding sources. These applicants were able to invest more time into costing and planning their activities before submitting an application.

In general, the different ways in which groups accessed and experienced funding opportunities had a significant influence on how they engaged with this process. The support offered during the application process therefore needed to be adaptable to organisations with different funding structures.

All applications were awarded funding. The consultant team considered this a success of the initiative, as it meant groups were not in direct competition with each other for funds.

Trends in applications

The proposed events reflected the conditions under which this phase of AROS development took place. We noted that adversely racialised people will speak about

racism and its impacts on their life, without proper acknowledgement of this as labour.

A number of applicants proposed activities focused on diversity and cultural exchange, aiming to connect and educate participants – namely staff or racially privileged people within the organisation. While the value of these types of activities was recognised, this did not meet the aims of the fund. A distinction was drawn between activities relating to diversity and cultural exchange, and those aimed at facilitating rich conversation between adversely racialised individuals around the lived complexities of systemic racism and the development of AROS. This highlighted that there is a need for a greater understanding of systemic racism and its impacts across the sector, both in terms of practice and process.

Some applicants, particularly those led by adversely racialised people, assumed that the fund (or any fund) would not support a focus on systemic racism and did not want to highlight their group as “troublemaking”.

Many applications proposed large scale events with 30-100 participants. Unless a specific reason was explained and evidenced, applicants were asked to reduce their numbers to make in-depth discussions more feasible, in line with the aims of the fund. The Community Outreach Consultants understood from applicants that the tendency to propose large-scale events was primarily due to three factors. Firstly, some applicants had assumed an ability to engage a greater number of participants would strengthen their application. Secondly, some applicants wanted to use the fund as an opportunity to gather their network together in person and de-prioritise participant reimbursement, in order to cover other costs of gathering a large group. Lastly, some applicants represented a group of an already-existing size, where including some and not others would cause lasting relational issues. Where applicants felt they could not reduce their participant numbers because of existing group dynamics, the consultants supported them to create an event format that made in-depth small group discussion and reflection possible.

Some applicants wanted to involve councillors, MPs, the police and/or social workers in their events, as a way of feeding back to public institutions directly. These groups expressed that they’d had meaningful experiences working with these institutions in the past and wanted to continue to build positive relationships with them. They saw this involvement as a mechanism to encourage their group members to learn about their civic rights.

Other groups stressed that their event should be attended by community members of certain identities only, that it should not include representatives of public institutions, and that findings should remain confidential and anonymous. These groups understood their information as a site of power and wanted it to contribute to the wider AROS strategy, but not to be used by other bodies for other purposes outside of their knowledge or influence.

Some applicants did not submit applications that reflected the option to reimburse participants, despite the fund guidance stating cash reimbursement was possible within this fund. The Community Outreach Consultants became aware that some applicants did not feel confident in choosing to reimburse participants, or did not feel that this was important. Through discussion with applicants, it became apparent to the consultants that this was, in large part, due to previous funding experiences where the labour and insight of participants discussing systemic racism has not been perceived as expertise or of value. Adversely racialised participants are often positioned as beneficiaries or service users, rather than drivers of this difficult and potentially re-traumatising work. Somewhat in tension with this, it has been assumed that adversely racialised people will and should drive anti-racism work.

Some applicants opted to reproduce existing practices, rather than properly reimbursing participants, and tended to offer "perks" like free food, expense-covering, and low value vouchers rather than actual payment.

Of the groups that did choose to reimburse participants, applicants expressed enthusiasm and relief that they were able to financially recognise their contribution as expertise. These applicants framed their engagement as co-production with immediate value, rather than an extractive expectation of emotional labour towards an uncertain goal and future point that may or may not directly benefit them.

"Paying ... to participate contributed significantly to their sense of value and ownership over the conversation."

"The addition of payment ... means that we align with our values of proper compensation for emotional labour. We also were able to acknowledge that their voices and expertise are valuable in a sphere that is wider than our organisation alone."

3.6. Phase 3: 'In Principle' Support

Different types of engagement and different needs

At times, an assessed application was awarded 'in principle' status. When this happened, the steps were as followed:

1. IFP would email the organisation directly, advising them of the outcome.
2. Community Outreach Consultants would email the applicant directly and offer support over the phone or by email. They would identify any information that had been missed previously and provide clarifications of the fund guidance.
3. Applicants would then send their revisions or addendums directly to IFP.

Providing additional support with the application process was a necessary acknowledgment of systemic access limitations, including the barriers associated with not speaking English as a first language.

Time constraints

The majority of the groups with 'in principle' status welcomed the opportunity to revise their application, and were able to do so within the required timeframe despite constraints. A small number of applicants withdrew because they were unable to submit revisions in time, or did not want to continue on account of the time pressures.

Differing capacity and resources

Some groups preferred to receive guidance over email alone, however the majority preferred to do so with phone or video calls. This was particularly important when a language barrier was present.

Despite limited capacity, many unfunded- and project-funded applicants were very responsive and demonstrated a strong personal commitment to the work, meeting with the Community Outreach Consultants during early mornings, evenings, and weekends, or even taking time out of their working day. The consultants had to maintain flexibility to be responsive to this emerging need. For applicants with paid staff, especially those who worked full time, it was possible to arrange meetings during standard office hours, because they would be included in the lead applicant's working day.

Applicants with more experience of grant funding processes and greater staff capacity were more able to integrate guidance and rapidly make revisions where necessary.

Understanding the aims of the fund

Providing support to 'in principle' applicants gave the consultants an opportunity to better understand some proposals – namely, the factors that had contributed to a focus on diversity and cultural exchange. In some instances, applicants did not fully recognise the distinction between adversely racialised people exploring and understanding systemic racism, and adversely racialised people educating others about racism and different cultures. This was expressed by project leads who both did and did not have a lived experience of systemic racism, and speaks to an environment that expects adversely racialised people to willingly educate others on racism.

Where misunderstandings arose due to language barriers, the consultants made sure to speak with these applicants directly to make necessary clarifications.

Once applicants had a stronger understanding of the fund, some decided to change the strand they had applied for – Strand 1 being a single event and Strand 2 being multiple events or a longer programme of activity.

Relationship building

The conversations between the applicants and consultants were incredibly important for building relationships. Through establishing open dialogue, the consultants were able to establish trust with applicants, building a deeper understanding of the context in which the applicants were working and the key issues that were impacting them. These are relationships that future AROS can continue to nurture and work from.

Embedding anti-racism principles

Anti-racism principles were continuously embedded during this phase of the process. This included the work of the Community Outreach Consultants, who were flexible, transparent, and receptive with the applicants they engaged with. Allowing for an ‘in principle’ decision stage acknowledged the systemic lack of access some organisations have regarding fundraising and project management skills, and allowed for a number of applicants to supply revisions and addendums in order to meet criteria.

Without this stage, funding applications run the risk of perpetuating the same inaccessibility they aim to address, since grassroots organisations often require time and assistance to navigate applying for funding. Creating a more spacious assessment made important steps towards addressing the epistemic injustice that often goes unchecked and unnoticed by power holders in these types of decision-making positions.

Worryingly, we received reports from the consultants that they experienced racist microaggressions from some lead applicants during the primary application stage. This in itself was concerning, but it also raised questions about the future safety and emotional well-being of the individuals who would be engaging in the events run by these lead applicants. The consultants and the DAG had already highlighted these projects at the assessment stage as showing a lack of experience for holding conversations with adversely racialised people, and a lack of knowledge – lived or otherwise – of systemic racism. There was no mechanism for addressing these issues within the assessment process.

3.7. Phase 4: Event Support

Applicants welcomed different levels of engagement to their event preparation and delivery.

One-to-one support for the proposed projects and events was provided by the Community Outreach Consultants, tailored based on need and welcomed by applicants. In general, the consultants supported groups to build a stronger understanding of AROS and to develop event formats that were engaging, interactive, group-appropriate, and met the needs of the fund and future AROS. The consultants also acted as an approachable sounding board for all queries.

Some awardees required very little support as they already had a good working knowledge of AROS and the skills and infrastructure needed to hold rich and meaningful discussions around systemic racism. Some applicants felt a level of mistrust or scepticism around how AROS will be different from previous initiatives, or lacked hope that AROS would be able to make a meaningful difference. These applicants appeared to want to maintain an 'arms length' relationship with the project, actively engaged but at a distance. For both of these types of applicants the consultants ensured that they understood where to access support and information if needed, and checked in at key milestones throughout the process.

Embedding a co-production approach

The consultants recognised how resourcing applicants to hold their own conversations around AROS enabled a diversity of viewpoints to emerge. The response of the applicants reinforced the value of this approach and provided an insight into what co-production within future AROS could look like.

By resourcing applicants to hold independent listening events, participants were able to set the terms of the conversation as well as participate within it, exploring themes related to systemic racism, and ideas for future AROS, as well as deciding what these discussion themes should be. This approach allowed groups to draw on the suggested themes and questions as much as they felt was helpful, while leaving room to reflect their group's specific priorities, be that youth participation, migration and asylum, maternal health, mental health, access to services or rural experience, among others. Resourcing applicants to act independently also enabled participants to gather in ways that were fitting for their needs and for the type of conversation they planned to have. This was mentioned by a number of applicants as being an essential aspect of co-production, especially when working across intersections of different aspects of marginalisation.

Building in a level of divergence to the process might be viewed as adding a layer of complexity, as it demands greater synthesis and consensus later on. Crucially, however, the context in which this work takes place gives rise to the need for systems that prioritise building trust, respect, and relationships. As mentioned previously, a number of applicants expressed understandable issues of mistrust. Many of the awardees echoed the AIGG research, stating that public bodies have only tokenised them in the past and have excluded them from decision-making.

“Participants reflected that there was some scepticism about the idea of co-production. From past experience, people felt that the weight of views from professionals was seen to outweigh the views of the community, as such there was a comment that this intention to co-produce is not something that will be done in reality. There was a hope to be positive though and an appreciation to feed into AROS at this early stage.” - Quote taken from awardee report

If co-production is to be embedded, a number of awardees expressed the need for methods and processes that would ensure future AROS will be properly resourced, that it will avoid extractive, tokenising practices, and that it will operate with transparency and accountability.

During this phase, the freedom to set the agenda – alongside directly resourcing and reimbursing participants – allowed trust to form. This process lays the foundation upon which future AROS will be built, taking small yet meaningful steps away from consultation and towards genuine co-production.

Communicating about AROS

There was a need to provide clear and engaging information about AROS that groups could use independently. The consultants adapted the existing community briefing to create an accessible two-page summary and a presentation that could be used and adapted, where required, by awardees. The consultants also signposted awardees to useful resources on systemic racism and how to run engaging listening events.

Resourcing awardees to work independently helped to highlight the type of information that future AROS needs to communicate, and how that communication should be done. This will ensure that external groups and organisations have a strong working knowledge of what AROS aims to do, in order to support effective participation, co-production and collaboration. During this process, we noted a lack of resources for helping to explain key ideas related to systemic racism specific to the Scottish context.

Capacity-building

The funding cycle acted as a good opportunity to build the capacity of organisations in relation to their specific needs. The support offered to applicants was applied to their needs and context. Some groups recognised how this support will also shape their work beyond the life of the fund.

It also presented an opportunity for organisations to examine how systemic racism functions within their organisation, and for staff and volunteers to examine their own internalised racism. When amidst a culture that is proactive in assuming the presence of racism in the absence of active anti-racism the consultants were able to offer support around navigating this.

Some awardees faced challenges accessing facilitators with expertise of systemic racism, particularly adversely racialised practitioners, highlighting a lack of the human infrastructure needed in Scotland to do this type of work. Best practice examples of what this type of facilitation looks like was also lacking. On the other hand, this moment of concentrated activity also highlighted the limited but existing skills present within the sector and the need for networking, skills development, and capacity-building, in order for the sector to benefit from this more widely.

Attending events

The consultants, Project Lead and DAG members attended various events in varying capacities, including co-facilitating, presenting on AROS, listening and asking questions, and acting as representatives of future AROS. This helped to build trust and relationships, working towards a shared understanding of AROS and of how systemic racism and anti-racism functions in Scotland.

Time constraints

The short timeframe had a direct impact on how the events were run. Although all groups were enthusiastic about the opportunity to bring their participants together and invest time in having conversations that are sometimes overlooked, there were difficulties in realising these aims. Namely, having very limited time to make practical arrangements and recruit participants added additional pressure to the experience for the consultants and the lead applicants.

3.8. Phase 5: Reporting

Applicants had two weeks from their final event to submit their project report. They were permitted to choose their reporting methods, which in turn will inform us on what methods organisations would find most useful when reporting to future AROS.

The Community Outreach Consultants created a [Reporting Guidance](#) document with suggested methods, which was shared with applicants to provide clarity on how they may like to approach this task. Applicants were invited to report in a way that worked for them. They could also integrate reporting into the format of their event, if they felt it was appropriate. Applicants tended to provide written reports using a standard format, drawing on the Reporting Guidance.

Due to AROS not yet being an established organisation, applicants raised concerns to the consultants regarding how this information would be held, on data protection, confidentiality, and on photo consent. As such, most applicants opted for a written report, avoiding methods such as video recordings. This highlights an interesting area for further work: supporting mixed method reporting whilst safeguarding participants.

The level of analysis differed between reports, with some applicants providing primary data in the form of audio recordings, transcripts and quotations, whereas others provided a summary or analysis of discussions that took place.

3.9. Key Learnings and Future Thinking

Time constraints: Key Learnings

A pre awareness of time constraints does not mitigate the impact. Time constraints put a strain on the entirety of the process, and meant the Community Outreach Consultants and applicants were working under a lot of pressure.

Future Thinking

- A funding cycle for activities such as this should be 6-9 months with more time available at every stage to relieve pressure on the consultants and applicants.
- A rolling application deadline should be avoided.
- A tight timeframe reproduces systemic racism and exacerbates the potential for harm.

Harm: Key Learnings

Without proper care, harm takes place in the context of this work, to AROS staff, partner organisations and participants offering lived expertise.

Future Thinking

- Applicants must either demonstrate a track record of holding in-depth conversations on systemic racism and show that their practice is trauma-informed, or demonstrate how they will ensure that this expertise will be brought in as part of the delivery of the project.
- Assessment mechanisms must centre the knowledge and insight of adversely racialised people and involve them in decision-making.
- Event facilitators or hosts must have expertise in holding trauma-informed conversations on systemic racism.
- A database of experienced practitioners should be provided, listing workers who can facilitate conversations regarding systemic racism.
- The funding application process should include mental health support as a legitimate access need, with groups able to access funds to cover supervision and therapeutic support for staff and participants.
- All adversely racialised staff should be provided with therapeutic support for the duration of their contract (and afterwards if needed).

Funding preconceptions: Key Learnings

Applicants make assumptions about what funders are looking for even when the information says otherwise.

Future Thinking

- Guidance should be clear, free from jargon and should not rely on prior knowledge.
- A diverse range of community groups with no prior knowledge of the fund could read the guidance and provide feedback, before implementation.
- Any uncommon funding practices, for example providing cash reimbursements in place of expenses, should be explained.
- Communications about the fund should be transparent and direct – for example, on how and when decisions will be made.

Lead applicants: Key Learnings

Not all applicants were equipped to lead sessions.

Future Thinking

- Future AROS has a responsibility to ensure applicants are supported to do the work they are being funded to do. This includes providing training, tailored support, and resources around the work of AROS, as well as teaching facilitation skills, information on accessibility, and event organisation.
- Conversations about AROS should encompass close, long-term collaboration with organisations.
- There is a lack of resources explaining and exploring systemic racism in the Scottish context. If groups are to work independently to host conversations around systemic racism, resources should be created and made readily available.

Consultancy: Key Learnings

Experience of being tokenised impacts how people are willing to engage.

Future Thinking

- The team of Community Outreach Consultants were effective at building trust with applicants and maintaining a good practice of welcoming and responding to critique. However, this process should not rely on individuals, and must be built into the ethos of future AROS who, in turn, must model this for other public bodies.

Chapter 4: The Interactive Digital Library for AROS - User Researcher Report

4.1. Introduction

The following chapter presents the findings from research conducted for the development of an Interactive Digital Library, which will be provided by the future AROS.

The first phase of this project focused on scoping, engagement, and assessment through qualitative research methods. These were designed to capture the diverse voices and experiences of individuals, community-led organisations, third sector, public bodies, and private sector stakeholders.

This user research report is structured to provide a comprehensive overview of the work undertaken and insights gained during this foundational phase. It begins by detailing the purpose and scope of the project and the structure of the report, which outlines the phased approach taken to ensure inclusivity and representation in the research process.

The time constraints imposed on building this work were discussed at inception. These constraints are understood as a mechanism of systemic racism, undermining the ability to fully engage with the complexity of the issues at hand. Despite these challenges, this report reflects the significant efforts and insights achieved within the limited timeframe.

“As someone with extensive professional experience in the field, coupled with lived expertise, I strongly urge that future AROS initiatives consistently argue for and create anti-racism principled timelines. This is not just a personal observation but a concern shared by many community-led organisations and stakeholders I engaged with, who emphasised the critical need for adequate time to ensure their meaningful contributions and the success of such projects.”

The subsequent sections provide details on:

Phase 1: Scoping and Research Design

Development of a user research framework that prioritises inclusivity, transparency, and an anti-racist intersectional lens.

Phase 2: Engagement

Summary of thematic highlights and insights derived from 25 stakeholder interviews. These interviews, conducted using purposive and snowball sampling, brought together voices from community-led organisations, public bodies, educational

institutions, creative industries, and healthcare providers to examine anti-racism practices, barriers, and opportunities for progress.

Phase 3: Evaluation and Feedback

Reflections on the preliminary findings and input for the design of the AROS Interactive Digital Library, a key tool envisioned to amplify anti-racism efforts.

The final sections of the report synthesise key learnings and offer recommendations for future phases of AROS. These include actionable strategies for enhancing inclusivity, accessibility, and long-term sustainability within the proposed Interactive Digital Library.

4.2. Phase 1: Scope and Purpose of the Report

The primary aim of this project was to engage stakeholders and gather evidence-based insights in order to inform the design and implementation of the future AROS Interactive Digital Library. The library will serve as a centralised hub of resources, case studies, and best practices to support anti-racism initiatives and their public accountability across Scotland.

By employing purposive and snowball sampling methods, the user experience research team ensured the inclusion of a wide range of perspectives. This phase also facilitated dialogue on the systemic barriers faced by people and the opportunities for progress within various sectors, including public policy, education, creative industries, and healthcare.

Phase 1 of the research project emphasised creating a community-led, inclusive, and intersectional framework. This phase centred on gathering diverse perspectives from community-led organisations and other groups to support the research design.

Key Elements of the Research Design

1. Co-production

A co-production model intended for people who are adversely impacted by racism to lead the research process, shaping methodologies and outcomes.

2. Inclusivity and Representation

Special attention is given to marginalised groups, such as youth organisations, rural communities, and those working with intersectional identities (e.g., marginalised genders and sexuality, disability, and “race”) whilst also engaging organisations across sectors, including third-sector groups, public bodies and higher education institutions.

3. Transparent Selection Process

Organisations are selected based on clear, transparent criteria aligned with the

Anti-Racism Interim Governance Group's (AIGG) vision and mission, ensuring accountability and fairness in the inclusion process.

4. Widening Outreach

The research aims to reach underrepresented voices – including, for example, grassroots organisations and people in rural locations – to capture a comprehensive range of experiences.

5. Research Methods

The research employs methods with inclusive framing of questions, provisions for language support, and disability accommodations, to ensure accessibility for all participants.

6. Intersectional Lens

An intersectional approach guides data collection and analysis, addressing the interconnected nature of “race”, gender, sexuality, and disability.

7. Analysis and Reporting

Data analysis will aim to reflect a diverse range of perspectives without favouring any particular narrative.

The proposal also sought to map public bodies engaged in anti-racism and equalities work, particularly in relation to systemic change through public policy. Engagement with initiatives like the Scottish Government's Race Equality Network brought in interesting perspectives of institutional reform efforts.

[Appendix 5](#) provides a detailed outline of the research design framework described above. It includes the methodologies, selection criteria, and outreach strategies that underpin the scoping phase. By seeking to explore community and institutional perspectives, this appendix also highlights tools and processes for engaging stakeholders, fostering inclusivity, and maintaining transparency for future work.

4.3. Phase 2: Summary of interactions and thematic highlights

Summary of Engagement Findings

The engagement process featured in-depth interviews and discussions that revealed key themes critical to understanding and addressing the challenges within anti-racism work.

Barriers to Implementation

Discussions highlighted persistent obstacles such as structural racism, insufficient funding, and a lack of collaboration across sectors. These challenges were noted as significant impediments to achieving systemic change.

Opportunities for progress

Participants emphasised the importance of leveraging community voices, adopting innovative technologies, and forging partnerships to amplify the impact of anti-racism initiatives. These strategies were seen as pivotal in creating sustainable progress and addressing systemic oppression.

Stakeholder Insights

Contributions from a range of stakeholders – including, activists, creative producers, educators, policymakers – offered varied and valuable perspectives. This diversity of input enriched the dialogue and underscored the multifaceted nature of the work required to drive meaningful change.

This synthesis of insights informed the development of actionable recommendations.

Sectors of Engagement

The engagement process prioritised representation, seeking out those with expertise who could provide meaningful insights into systemic challenges and opportunities for change. Among these contributors were members of the Design Advisory Group; a collective of experts in their respective fields, who played a pivotal role in shaping the findings and recommendations.

- **Community-led Organisations:** Grassroots groups and advocacy organisations shared critical perspectives through lived expertise.
- **Education:** People within educational institutions provided insights into their efforts to address systemic racism within their systems.
- **Creative Industries:** Professionals from creative sectors shared their innovative approaches to raising awareness, amplifying the voices of those who have lived expertise on how racism operates to drive cultural change through storytelling and other mediums.
- **Healthcare (NHS):** Representatives from the National Health Service brought attention to the well-evidenced barriers to systemic change within primary, secondary, and community care settings.
- **Scottish Government:** Engagement with various internal equalities groups and Scottish Government channels took place, to understand the current approach for capturing data as insights for the digital library. This included focusing on those working on Scottish Government policy approaches, aimed at advancing anti-racism initiatives at a systemic level.
- **Welsh Government:** Insights were provided into the anti-racism work of the Welsh Government, offering a comparative governmental perspective and highlighting areas where Scotland can learn from, regarding their efforts to embed systems level anti-racism policies and practices.

- This engagement approach aimed to demonstrate the importance of bringing together a range of perspectives to critically think about systemic racism in action and how to build infrastructure to address it.

4.4. Phase 3: Evaluation and Feedback for Library Design

Phase 3 focused on exploring how a Digital Interactive Library for the future AROS can be effectively aligned with the feedback of key stakeholders, while also meeting the broader objectives of the initiative. Under the time constraints of one month, 25 interviews were conducted with users from various engagement groups, with small focus groups, and with representatives of stakeholder organisations.

While all the interviews were valuable and have contributed to collective knowledge-building, it is important to note that there was not sufficient time for a more in-depth analysis. However, the insights gathered were valuable for informing the next steps for the library's development.

Key Activities:

1. User-Centred Research Design

A questionnaire was developed to help explore key thematic areas and guide discussions about the Interactive Digital Library. This process was further enriched by the efforts of the user experience researcher, who visited several community groups holding focused conversations about the future AROS. These visits provided a unique opportunity to understand the relevance of AROS to the work people are already doing to advance anti-racism. The researcher also conducted interviews with the leaders of some community organisations, gathering valuable insights into their needs, challenges, and expectations.

The questionnaire was informed by stakeholder consultations and designed to explore areas critical to anti-racism work, such as accessibility, data use, and resource management. Attention was also paid to topics such as workplace practices, educational equity, and systemic barriers, which had been identified during earlier discussions.

The questionnaire emphasised specific domains, including:

- **User Experience with Interactive Libraries:** Insights on past experiences, design challenges, and preferences for navigation and functionality.
- **Resource Discovery and Data Sources:** Exploration of where users currently seek information on structural discrimination, and the reliability and relevance of this data.
- **Data Management and Updates:** Understanding how organisations store, manage, and stay current with reports and resources.

- **Technical Needs of Various User Groups:** Questions addressing ease of use, accessibility, and privacy concerns, including preferences for navigation, search filters, and access control.
- **Mobile and Accessibility Requirements:** Ensuring inclusivity by identifying features like text-to-speech, high-contrast modes, and mobile-friendly designs.

This structured approach allowed us to engage stakeholders systematically, gathering nuanced insights to inform the future design and functionality of the digital library. These findings aim to streamline the library's structure, making it intuitive and highly relevant to users.

2. Qualitative Data Collection and Initial Analysis:

- A combination of interviews, focus groups, and surveys provided qualitative data that captured a wide range of perspectives on the challenges of undertaking anti-racism work, and potential solutions.
- The data was assessed, and key patterns and recurring themes were identified.
- The findings from these discussions helped to highlight unique experiences and nuanced insights, contributing to the development of tailored recommendations for future policy and practices to be incorporated into the library.

3. Preliminary Reporting and Future Design Considerations:

- Early findings were compiled into a preliminary report that served as the foundation for refining the structure and content of the library.
- These reports provided actionable insights that can guide the next steps of the project, including the integration of ongoing community feedback and the prioritisation of resources that are expected to have the greatest impact.

In conclusion, while the evaluation process was limited by time, Phase 3 laid a solid foundation for the continued development of an Interactive Digital Library that is responsive to its stated ambition.

4.5. Future Directions

The future AROS Digital Interactive Library represents a transformative initiative in Scotland's ongoing efforts to address systemic racism. By centring the experiences and expertise of individuals and communities who face systemic oppression, the library aims to serve as a catalyst for informed inclusive mechanisms to develop accountability, share knowledge, and evidence outcomes from efforts to address inequality and inequity.

The Future AROS Digital Interactive Library aspires to:

- **Act as a central resource:** In serving community members, public sector organisations, and the wider public, it will facilitate interaction, accountability, understanding, and access to knowledge regarding the real impacts of inequality.
- **Inform policy and service development:** The library aims to help policymakers and public health professionals craft services and policies that are grounded in the realities of people adversely impacted by racism.
- **Recognise and celebrate past efforts:** It will build upon the last 15 to 20 years of grassroots initiatives that have addressed challenges such as family well-being and mental health, ensuring these contributions inform future progress.

This interactive platform will also focus on solutions-driven research, collaborating with academic partners while upholding principles of data trust, ethics and safeguarding. Designed to balance public accessibility and institutional use, the library will provide a comprehensive repository of historical and current anti-racism strategies and policies, beginning with the Scottish Government and extending to other public bodies.

In addition to its repository function, the library could guide capacity-building programmes for public institutions to integrate anti-racism into policy, design, and decision-making. Through skill-building and advocacy, AROS will elevate grassroots insights, champion accountability, and promote competence in anti-racism across Scotland's public sectors, in order to address the systemic racism it creates and upholds.

Through a focus on accessibility, engagement, and transformative co-production partnerships, this library represents a bold step forward in creating a Scotland where community voices are at the heart of systemic reform.

4.6. Key Learnings and Recommendations

In order to create a robust and effective intersectional anti-racism initiative, several key strategies must be implemented to drive lasting impacts and foster systemic change.

A critical element is intersectionality, which requires recognising and addressing the overlapping issues of gender, disability, and other identities. This approach ensures that anti-racism work is inclusive and takes into account the diverse experiences of individuals, particularly those at the intersections of multiple forms of discrimination.

Sustained engagement is also fundamental for maintaining the momentum of anti-racism efforts. This involves ensuring ongoing dialogue with people in community groups and organisations, with stakeholders and with policymakers, to create a continuous feedback loop. Regular communication is required to keep efforts on track, to adapt to evolving challenges, and for reinforcing the collective public commitment to address systemic racism.

It is the strategies of enhanced co-production, intersectional approaches, sustained engagement, and capacity building for the system to understand that it is its processes that create systemic racism, that will form the foundation for developing impactful and long lasting anti-racism initiatives.

Key Considerations

1. Community-Led Design

- Prioritise co-production with organisations led by adversely racialised marginalised communities, to ensure lived experiences and expertise are appreciated and utilised.
- Embed features that encourage community interaction, such as comments or discussion spaces, when sharing resources and outcomes.

2. Accessibility and Usability

- Ensure an intuitive interface with robust search functionality to simplify resource discovery.
- Proactively notify users of new resources through alerts and subscriptions.

3. Thematic Organisation

- Resources must be categorised by relevant themes, such as key policy areas (e.g., equal opportunities, workplace inclusion, anti-discrimination measures) and their application at various organisational levels (e.g., senior leadership, management, team operations).
- Incorporate tagging for intersectional experiences (e.g., racialised minorities, gender, disability, immigrant status) to track policies as they aim address diverse needs.

4. Data and Evidence Integration

- Combine quantitative data (e.g., census statistics) and qualitative research (e.g., testimonials and stakeholder reports).
- Address existing data gaps, such as differences in labour market experiences across diverse racial and ethnic groups.

5. Practical and Policy-Oriented Utility

- Provide actionable resources to support decision-making in public sector organisations.
- Include evidence reviews, case studies, and best practices to influence funding and policy initiatives.

6. Sustainability and Updates

- Ensure the library is resourced adequately to remain dynamic and that it is updated with information on community insights, new research, and policies.
- Integrate with existing tools such as the [Knowledge Exchange](#) to enhance resource curation.
- Set up notification systems for users to stay informed about new reports, research, and resources.
- Address data gaps by commissioning or curating targeted research to fill existing voids.

Insights and Findings

1. Community-Led Engagement

- A strong emphasis on incorporating community-driven narratives to build trust and relevance.
- Organisations led by adversely racialised people offer valuable, often underused yet vital perspectives.

2. Need for Intersectional Representation

- Current datasets often overlook nuanced experiences with those adversely racialised and the intersections with other identities such as, disability or gender.
- Stakeholder engagement highlights the importance of grounding resources in lived experiences and expertise rather than solely academic or institutional perspectives.

3. Importance of Evidence-Based Resources

- Public sector organisations require a robust evidence base to advocate for anti-racism policies and funding.
- Literature reviews and qualitative studies are critical for providing actionable insights.

4. Data Gaps and Limitations

- Lack of granular data, such as regional and sectoral breakdowns by ethnicity, hampers effective analysis.
- Small sample sizes in some datasets limit their applicability for decision-making.

5. Challenges with Existing Platforms

- Many existing resources are difficult to navigate and lack thematic organisation.
- Users often rely on manual searches, leading to inefficiencies in finding relevant information.

Recommendations

1. Develop a User-Centric Interface

- Create an intuitive platform with thematic categorisation and advanced search capabilities.
- Introduce tagging and filtering systems for intersectional attributes to enhance accessibility.

2. Integrate Community Features

- Enable user interaction through comment sections or forums for sharing insights and practical applications.
- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning by showcasing successful initiatives and their outcomes.

3. Leverage Diverse Data Sources

- Aggregate resources from community-led organisations, from academia, and from governmental platforms.
- Use census data and other quantitative tools to complement qualitative insights.

4. Embed a Policy and Practice Focus

Include actionable evidence reviews, policy recommendations, and real-world examples to support public sector decision-making.

- Highlight success stories to demonstrate the impact of anti-racism initiatives and inspire further action.

Policy and Strategic Alignment

To help ensure that this initiative aligns with public sector priorities and drives impactful change within them, we suggest the following elaborations:

- Consider developing tools for monitoring and reporting progress on anti-racism with measures determined by those who experience the impact of systemic racism.
- Highlight the potential of the Interactive Digital Library to reduce duplication of efforts across communities and organisations.
- Consider developing tailored resources to public sector organisations, including guidance on embedding anti-racism practices within, for example, recruitment, policy development, and service delivery.
- Aligning the library's themes with Scotland's Race Equality Framework and Equality Act obligations, providing a practical tool for accountability within these commitments.
- Articulating how the library can act as a knowledge hub, enabling policymakers to understand and address the systemic processes which create racialised disparities.

The proposed AROS digital interactive library is positioned as a pioneering initiative in Scotland's fight against systemic racism and the racialised inequality and inequity it creates. It offers a transformative approach by integrating **accessibility**, **community engaged co-production**, and **evidence-based resources**.

4.8. Designing for Long-Term Impact: Recommendations for the AROS Interactive Digital Library

To help ensure the future AROS Interactive Digital Library achieves its goals of advancing anti-racism work and fostering sustainable change, several core principles and priorities have emerged from this research:

3. Inclusivity and Representation

The IDL must build from the expertise and experiences of those most impacted by systemic racism. Prioritising the voices that are often marginalised in traditional knowledge systems is how we begin to build intersectional anti-racism infrastructure.

4. Accessibility

The library should be designed with universal access in mind. This includes user-friendly navigation, compatibility with assistive technologies, and inclusive formats such as plain language summaries, captioned media, and multilingual options. Accessibility as a foundational principle ensures the resource is useful to individuals with varying abilities, literacy levels, and language proficiencies.

5. Sustainability

A key focus for the library should be in creating a dynamic and enduring resource. This will involve establishing a governance model for continuous updates, that fosters co-production from inception. Long-term funding must also be secured to maintain the platform.

6. Resource Curation

The library's content must be both practical and evidence-based. Resources should include case studies, toolkits, policy briefs, educational materials, and research findings that support anti-racism initiatives across various sectors.

4.9. Conclusion

The future AROS project represents a transformative step in addressing systemic racism across Scotland. The AROS Interactive Digital Library emerges as a cornerstone of this vision. By prioritising inclusivity, accessibility, sustainability, and resource curation, the library is poised to serve as a living repository of knowledge for collective work that seeks to build towards racial equity and justice through dismantling systemic racism.

[Appendix 7](#): Building a Digital Interactive Library for the Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland: Nine Case Studies outlines in more detail key considerations.

Future Phases and Next Steps

The findings from this report lay a strong foundation for the subsequent phases of AROS, which will involve:

- Co-creating the Interactive Digital Library with community input
- Refining and expanding stakeholder engagement
- Evaluating and iterating on tools and approaches to ensure lasting impact

By anchoring its approach in inclusivity, transparency, and intersectionality, future AROS can create a sustainable framework that bridges community-led insights with systemic reforms.

The [Appendices](#) provide additional context and resources, including the full research design proposal, case studies, and documentation used during the interview process. These materials offer a deeper understanding of the methodologies and approaches taken during this phase, ensuring that AROS remains rooted in evidence and community collaboration as it moves forward.

Chapter 5: The Interactive Digital Library – Scoping and Recommendations

5.1. Executive Summary

This section of the report presents a proposal for the practical creation and implementation of an Interactive Digital Library under the future Anti-racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS). The aim is to develop a dynamic, sustainable, accessible, and community-centred platform that will collect, curate, and disseminate a wide spectrum of anti-racism materials – ranging from grassroots-led studies, oral histories, creative media, and community testimonies, formal research, government policies, and statistical reports.

Rather than replicating traditional digital library models, which often face challenges in inclusivity and genuine community engagement, this design process will be guided directly by the lived experiences, priorities, and insights of the communities it intends to serve. In doing so, the approach breaks from conventional templates, ensuring that the resulting resource is informed by, and accountable to, those most affected by systemic racism. This community-led methodology seeks to build a model centred around the people and communities who generate anti-racism knowledge, not simply to mimic existing structures.

Situated broadly within the timelines of the [Race Equality Framework for Scotland \(2016–2030\)](#), the Interactive Digital Library will align with and support the Scottish Government’s long-term commitments to advance race equality and systemic anti-racism accountability. Over the next five years and beyond, the library aims to strengthen institutional memory, prevent duplication of efforts, and leverage the collective power of data, research, and community knowledge. By centring community expertise and ensuring accessible design principles from the outset, this initiative will reinforce the Scottish Government’s ability to meet its “race” equality objectives and contribute to enduring, meaningful change across Scotland’s social and policy landscapes.

Consolidation of Best Practices

The Creative Technologist, alongside the Outreach team, engaged in external consultations with other interactive digital library initiatives, user experience experts, and accessibility advocates. These external benchmarks and knowledge exchanges validated the importance of gradual feature rollouts, readily available support materials, transparent feedback mechanisms, and community-driven decision-making. Such external insights also reinforced the understanding that a digital library’s success hinges on meaningful communication, user empowerment, and structured guidance through the platform’s capabilities.

It has been clearly demonstrated that nurturing a truly inclusive and effective digital library requires more than just technical skill. It demands sustained, empathetic dialogue with communities, a deep commitment to accessibility and user-friendliness, and the ongoing incorporation of lessons learned – both from within the community and from broader best-practice models. These reflections and key findings now stand as a blueprint, guiding future enhancements and ensuring that the future Interactive Digital Library remains a people-centred, adaptable, and impactful resource in the fight against systemic racism.

This report details the role of communities, a clear approval process involving anti-racism experts, technical architecture, accessibility measures, cost projections over two and five years, and recommendations for sustaining and expanding the library's capabilities.

A full-time Web Developer/Tech Specialist will be involved from day one, guaranteeing a stable technical foundation, addressing technical challenges, and providing a strong trajectory for technological enhancements as the library matures.

5.2. Key Objectives

Centre communities

Large institutional repositories have traditionally overshadowed community contributions. The Interactive Digital Library will prioritise community expertise and community-led work as integral sources of knowledge.

Enhance accountability and transparency

By mapping the full landscape of past and present initiatives, the library will allow people in communities, community activists, educators, researchers, and policymakers to learn from each other, ensuring that efforts build upon previous work, rather than restarting from scratch.

Long-term utility

The library will be designed to grow and adapt as it develops, ensuring relevance and impact throughout the Race Equality Framework's timeframe of up to 2030 and beyond.

Equitable knowledge production

We aim to develop this resource with anti-racism principles, breaking away from traditional repositories focused primarily on academic and institutional works. The Interactive Digital Library will elevate community-driven content to equal prominence, ensuring marginalised voices shape the discourse on anti-racism.

Scalable, Sustainable Growth

In the first year, the library will expand gradually – improving infrastructure, enriching user experiences, integrating advanced technologies, and scaling staff capacities over multiple years. This phased approach ensures strategic investment, agility, and long-term impact.

5.3. Expanding Engagement Through Creativity and Interactive Media

The Interactive Digital Library envisions going beyond the traditional static repository model to become a dynamic cultural and educational hub, one that resonates with diverse audiences and encourages ongoing interaction. While its core will remain rooted in the curation and preservation of anti-racism materials, the platform can also serve as a space where creativity, cultural exchange, and community-driven storytelling converge. As we will discuss, this approach aims to captivate younger audiences, inspire curiosity, and facilitate deeper engagement.

Multimedia storytelling and interactive features

To appeal to users with varied interests, especially younger people accustomed to rich digital media, the library can incorporate blogs, podcasts, and short video narratives. For example, a series of blog posts could highlight personal journeys, interviews with community activists, or reflections on historical events, while podcasts might feature discussions with cultural leaders, artist roundtables, or dialogues between younger community members and researchers. These stories, whether told through spoken word, digital art, or simple audio narratives, can illuminate the human dimensions of policy reports and research findings.

Creative arm and cultural exchange projects

The library could also serve as a launchpad for creative initiatives that draw on anti-racism themes, such as mini-grants for community-led art projects, showcases of locally produced films or spoken-word performances, or photography exhibitions capturing shifting cultural narratives. Such a creative arm would not only enrich the content, but also strengthen partnerships with artists, cultural practitioners, and youth groups. Collaborations with schools, local arts councils, or cultural festivals can spark interest and pride in seeing one's community and culture represented digitally, promoting a sense of ownership and involvement.

Linking to existing and future initiatives

Rather than existing in isolation, the Interactive Digital Library can function as a connective hub, linking out to other innovative and relevant projects such as [art lending projects](#), digital archives, museum exhibits, educational platforms and

community lending libraries. By spotlighting initiatives related to anti-racism – such as oral history collections, migrant heritage archives, or creative writing workshops – the platform can guide visitors toward a broader ecosystem of learning and activism. Highlighted partnerships might include loaning materials (books, zines, art prints) through affiliated community libraries, or directing users to local cultural centres offering in-person events and mentorship opportunities.

Why users will want to visit

A variety of formats, accessible media, and engaging presentations will encourage users to return, explore, and share content. Young people, for instance, might be drawn in by short, visually appealing explainers or interactive timelines that contextualize historical struggles for racial equity. Educators may find ready-to-use teaching materials or thought-provoking podcasts to spark classroom discussions. Community organizers might use the platform's resources to inform campaigns, while policymakers, funders, and researchers can discover grassroots insights to shape their decisions.

By weaving together research reports, creative expressions, interactive media, and links to external cultural initiatives, the Interactive Digital Library will become more than a static archive. It will be a living, evolving space where knowledge is not just stored but is actively interpreted, shared, and reimagined. This holistic engagement strategy will foster a vibrant community of learners and creators, inspire sustained interest, and ensure that anti-racism work resonates with everyone – across ages, backgrounds, and experiences. [Appendix 7: Building a Digital Interactive Library](#)

5.4. Reflections and Key Findings from the Creative Technologist

Requirements for building an Interactive Digital Library

Over the course of the project, the Creative Technologist – acting as the full-time Web Developer/Tech Specialist – worked closely with the community outreach consultants and the user research led sessions with various communities, and conducted external meetings with experts and practitioners in the field of digital libraries. This extensive, hands-on engagement allowed the Creative Technologist to accumulate a wealth of insights into how communities and other stakeholders used digital repositories, what drove accessibility and usability, and which user-friendly components effectively enhanced the online experience.

Community usage patterns

During early user research, community members expressed clear preferences for intuitive filtering mechanisms – such as searching by region, theme, or document type – and for navigational structures that were straightforward and easy to follow.

More intricate functionalities, such as advanced queries or interactive data visualisations, were not initially embraced without careful explanation and iterative refinement. This process helped communities feel confident about sophisticated technical features, rather than overwhelmed.

Accessibility as a foundational requirement

Through engagement with user groups, outreach sessions, and direct community feedback, it became clear that accessibility was not merely a desirable feature but a fundamental requirement shaping the library's design from the outset. The conversations underscored that a truly inclusive platform must anticipate and address the needs of users with diverse abilities, backgrounds, and access constraints. Beyond traditional accessibility measures, the feedback also pointed toward the importance of supporting neurodiverse users, ensuring that navigation structures, content presentation, and interaction patterns accommodate a range of cognitive processing styles.

Several best practices guided these efforts. Structured headings and clear content hierarchies, drawn from established digital accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG 2.1), will allow users to quickly parse information regardless of their device or reading approach. Keyboard-friendly interfaces ensured that individuals who rely on assistive technologies or who prefer not to use a mouse could still navigate the platform smoothly. Adjustable font sizes, high-contrast text, and descriptive metadata allowed for better readability and comprehension, benefiting everyone from users with visual impairments to those accessing the library via low-bandwidth connections or older devices.

Addressing neurodiverse needs requires thoughtful consideration of visual clutter, predictable navigation flows, and flexible customisation options. By offering features such as adjustable line spacing, simplified layouts, optional icons or visual cues, and the ability to toggle certain interface elements on or off, the platform can support varying cognitive and sensory processing preferences. These enhancements help users with attention differences, sensory sensitivities, or dyslexia find content more comfortably and productively.

Even seemingly minor interface adjustments can have a big impact – such as increasing the size of clickable targets, reducing unnecessary animations or busy backgrounds, and providing easily understandable error messages. Such refinements not only align with universal design principles but also ensures that the Interactive Digital Library's audience could engage meaningfully without fatigue, frustration, or confusion. These comprehensive accessibility measures promote a sense of empowerment and independence, allowing users to interact with the Interactive Digital Library on their own terms.

By embedding these principles into the architecture and design philosophy, the future AROS Interactive Digital Library would not treat accessibility as an add-on, but rather as an integral element of its identity.

Multilingual access and translation considerations

Ensuring that the Interactive Digital Library resonates across Scotland's linguistically diverse communities will involve providing content in multiple languages. While this is a vital step towards inclusivity, the approach to delivering accurate, culturally sensitive, and contextually appropriate translations is challenging. The complexity of source materials, the resources available for translation, and the need for ongoing maintenance all influence the scope and strategy for multilingual content.

Best practices in multilingual strategy

Rather than relying exclusively on automated tools, such as Google Translate or generic machine learning models which can produce literal, context-insensitive, and culturally tone-deaf results, effective multilingual strategies often combine professional translation services with community input. Professional translators experienced in anti-racism discourse and cultural challenges can ensure that key concepts and sensitive topics are conveyed meaningfully. Additionally, community members fluent in target languages can provide feedback, helping to refine terminology and confirm that translations genuinely reflect the lived experiences and realities of the people the library aims to serve.

Challenges of automated translation tools

Automated solutions may serve as a starting point or a stopgap measure but come with the risk of inaccuracies and misrepresentations. Without careful review, machine-generated translations might introduce incorrect or even offensive terminology. Over time, specialised approaches – such as training custom models or integrating more sophisticated natural language processing tools – could improve machine translation accuracy, but these require sustained investment, testing, and community validation to build trust and ensure fidelity to the original materials.

Scoped and prioritised translations

Experience from organisations like the Scottish Refugee Council has shown that focusing on key content, such as essential guides or foundational documents, can deliver immediate multilingual benefits without overwhelming translation teams. Similarly, the Scottish Government has approached multilingual challenges by translating critical public-facing documents while leaving others in English. This selective approach ensures that the most impactful and high-demand resources are prioritised, maintaining quality and cultural relevance over volume.

The NHS, for instance, provides key information and patient-facing materials in multiple languages, often focusing on crucial topics such as medical guidance, public health advisories, and service directories. Instead of translating all content, the NHS prioritises core information and sometimes offers telephone interpretation services or user requests for translations. This pragmatic approach ensures that essential health information reaches those who need it most, while balancing the costs and complexities associated with comprehensive multilingual coverage. The overall recommendation is that, whilst resource allocation is a sensible thing, full translations should be the goal.

A phased, community-informed approach

For the Interactive Digital Library, a similar phased strategy could be employed. Initially translating top-level navigation, summaries, and frequently referenced documents into a limited number of languages identified through community outreach would make the platform immediately more accessible. With additional funding, and as user feedback is gathered, the library could expand into more languages, introduce community-driven translation requests, or offer a library-curated glossary to improve consistency and authenticity over time.

By blending best practices – selective translation priorities, professional translation services, community validation, and cautious, incremental use of automated tools – the Interactive Digital Library can create a multilingual environment that feels both accessible and culturally resonant. In doing so, it ensures that a broader range of users can engage with anti-racism materials in ways that respect linguistic diversity and preserve the integrity of the original sources.

Friendly components and digital add-ons

Throughout the research and outreach process, user feedback indicated that communities valued clear visual cues, concise explanatory tooltips, and consistent categorisation strategies far more than elaborate interfaces overloaded with complex features. Users were drawn to simple, intuitive enhancements – such as quick preview functionalities for documents, integrated reading tools that reduced the need for external downloads, and straightforward navigation menus – as these elements minimised friction and encouraged exploration.

Several organisations have excelled in this arena, providing useful models and inspiration. [The Digital Public Library of America \(DPLA\)](#), for instance, has demonstrated success through intuitive interfaces and easily discoverable tools that allow users to quickly access a variety of materials. [Europeana](#) has employed streamlined browsing options and clear metadata presentation, ensuring that even first-time visitors can efficiently locate relevant cultural resources. Trove ([National Library of Australia](#)) incorporates user-friendly tagging and community-generated lists, enabling audiences to engage with and contextualise vast collections more

easily. Additionally, open-source platforms like the [Internet Archive](#)'s Open Library offer integrated reading tools and simple interfaces that lower barriers to access and comprehension.

These best practices, gleaned not only from continuous community feedback but also from engagement with digital inclusion specialists, government representatives, and other library projects, demonstrate the value of incremental complexity. By starting with a baseline of familiarity and only gradually introducing more advanced features, the Interactive Digital Library will foster trust, empowerment, and genuine user engagement. Such an approach ensures that as the Interactive Digital Library evolves, it remains anchored in user needs, continually refining its user experience to resonate with communities and support meaningful interactions with anti-racism materials.

5.4. The Role and Relationship of Communities

Traditionally, many digital repositories undervalue grassroots knowledge. The Interactive Digital Library aims to transform this dynamic, using the following principles.

Community as co-creators

Communities do not just consume information; they produce and shape it. The Interactive Digital Library's taxonomy, language, and key thematic areas evolve through continuous dialogue with community representatives and advisory panels.

Ethical and inclusive content curation

Sensitive materials – such as personal testimonies of discrimination or cultural knowledge shared under certain conditions – should be handled with care. Contributors should have control over how their data is used, with options for anonymisation, restricted access, and context-setting disclaimers.

Continuous feedback loops

Regular surveys, listening sessions, focus groups, and digital feedback forms allow communities to suggest new features, highlight emerging trends, and call attention to issues or content gaps. This iterative model ensures that, as the Interactive Digital Library grows, it remains firmly anchored to community priorities.

5.5. Approval Process and Content Governance

A multi-layered governance framework is required to ensure that the materials hosted by the Interactive Digital Library uphold ethical standards, respect confidentiality, and remain aligned with anti-racism goals. This approach will ensure

that the platform maintains a high level of integrity, cultural sensitivity, and accountability, ultimately fostering trust among users, contributors, and affected communities.

Initial submission

Any authorised contributor – community organisations, advocacy groups, research institutions, or government agencies – submits documents, media, or data sets through a secure contributor portal. In the library's early stages, staff may provide direct support to contributors, helping them navigate upload protocols and meet basic submission criteria. Over time, user-friendly submission tools, clear guidelines, and standardised templates will streamline this process, making it simpler for contributors to prepare content that aligns with the library's technical and thematic standards.

Preliminary review (Coordinator + Developer)

The Digital Library Coordinator and the Web Developer/Tech Specialist will conduct an initial assessment of each submission. The Coordinator evaluates the content's relevance and scope, ensuring it broadly reflects anti-racism principles and objectives. Simultaneously, the Developer verifies technical compatibility, digital preservation considerations, and data security requirements. This combined curatorial and technical check ensures that content is both contextually appropriate and technically feasible before proceeding to more in-depth evaluation.

Anti-racism expert panel review

A dedicated Anti-Racism Expert Panel, comprised of community leaders, activists, academics, policy analysts, and others with relevant expertise, will convene monthly to review submissions that have passed the preliminary stage. Holding these meetings on a regular schedule will ensure a predictable workflow, allowing contributors and staff to anticipate review timelines and plan accordingly. The panel's mandate includes assessing each submission for ethical integrity, cultural relevance, and alignment with the library's anti-racism remit. They may pose questions such as: Is the content free from harmful biases? Does it advance understanding, accountability, or community empowerment? How might it be responsibly contextualised for users?

To reinforce good practice, the library can draw upon models from organisations that have implemented robust community-driven and ethically guided review processes. For instance, the governance frameworks employed by initiatives like Europeana – which integrates expert advisory groups to maintain cultural sensitivity – and certain community-led archives or human rights documentation centres (e.g., the [International Coalition of Sites of Conscience](#)) offer insights into maintaining transparency and inclusivity. These references underline the importance of having a

diverse, well-informed panel that can bring multiple perspectives to complex ethical considerations.

Community advisory input for sensitive material

When materials require cultural context or carry potential risks of re-traumatisation, the Community Advisory Panel steps in to provide targeted guidance. By drawing from the experiences of community-led review boards in other cultural heritage and memory initiatives, the advisory body will ensure content is presented respectfully. They may recommend adding content warnings, supplying explanatory notes, or restricting access to certain materials to protect vulnerable individuals. The monthly expert panel can incorporate these community inputs, ensuring that both expert and grassroots voices shape the library's ethical stance.

Approval and publication

Once reviewed and approved, content will be integrated into the library's taxonomy, assigned appropriate categories and tags, and made publicly accessible. Contributors are informed of the outcome, receiving constructive feedback when changes are requested. This two-way communication should foster transparency and trust, mirroring best-practice models from open-access scholarly publishing frameworks, such as those used by the [OpenAIRE initiative](#), which emphasise clear editorial guidelines and responsive feedback loops.

Iterative evolution and streamlining

As the library matures, the approval process can evolve, potentially incorporating automated metadata generation, enhanced search filters, and more specialised content tagging informed by community feedback. Regular evaluations – possibly conducted annually or biannually – can identify areas for improvement. Insights from well-established digital inclusion projects, such as those championed by the [Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations \(SCVO\)](#), can guide improvements, ensuring the process remains transparent and accessible. Maintaining a monthly schedule for panel reviews will encourage consistency, continuous learning, and timely responses to emerging trends or content challenges.

In sum, this approval and governance framework blends curatorial oversight, technical competence, ethical scrutiny, and community-led input. By following a monthly review cycle, referencing best practices from culturally responsive digital archives, and adapting approaches as the platform evolves, the Interactive Digital Library can uphold high ethical and qualitative standards. This ensures that the resource genuinely serves and uplifts the communities at its core, reinforcing its credibility, relevance, and long-term impact.

5.6. Strategic Alignment with the Race Equality Framework (2016- 2030)

The Race Equality Framework for Scotland sets a long-term agenda to eliminate racial inequalities. The Interactive Digital Library directly supports this vision by:

Supporting Informed Policy-Making and Practice: Centralising diverse anti-racism resources gives governments, funders, and other stakeholders a unified point of reference. Insights from community data, policy analyses, and academic literature feed into evidence-based decision-making.

Maintaining Institutional and Community Memory: By preserving historical data, previous projects, and ongoing initiatives, the Interactive Digital Library ensures that Scotland's journey toward racial equality is informed by past lessons. Each new strategy builds on what is already known, accelerating progress.

Reinforcing Intersectional Narratives: The Interactive Digital Library ensures that the experiences of marginalised groups – intersecting “race” with gender, disability, migration status, sexual orientation, and other identities – are documented and accessible. This holistic perspective supports more nuanced, targeted, and effective strategies.

5.7. Technical Architecture, Hosting, and Integrations

From the start, having a full-time Web Developer/Tech Specialist ensures that the Interactive Digital Library's technological foundation is stable, secure, and adaptable. This individual will set up a Content Management System (CMS) – for instance, WordPress – integrated with a document management plugin, ensuring that materials can be easily uploaded, tagged, and retrieved.

The developer will also maintain a Virtual Private Server (VPS) hosting solution, implement Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption for secure web traffic (HTTPS), configure firewalls, and perform regular backups. Over time, as user feedback and community input guide enhancements, the developer can introduce more complex features like a Content Delivery Network (CDN) for improved performance, Continuous Integration/Continuous Deployment (CI/CD) pipelines for smoother updates, and even Machine Learning (ML)-driven tools to recommend resources or identify gaps.

From the outset, the developer and the Digital Library Coordinator will ensure adherence to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 standards, incorporating features like alt-text descriptions for images, keyboard-friendly navigation, adjustable font sizes, and high-contrast options. Over subsequent years, more advanced accessibility audits, multilingual support, and robust analytics

dashboards can be introduced as the library's capacity, partnerships, and funding grow.

Community input remains central to all technical decisions. As the platform expands, the developer will integrate feedback gleaned from Outreach & Engagement Officer-led focus groups and panel discussions, ensuring that new integrations – such as connecting with external academic databases, government open data portals, or cultural heritage archives – align with user needs and anti-racism objectives. Regular reviews with the Anti-Racism Expert Panel and Community Advisory Panels will ensure that technical enhancements always serve communities rather than adding unnecessary complexity.

5.8. Staffing, Roles, and Ongoing Review Processes

A stable, all full-time team is critical for ensuring consistent progress, responsiveness to feedback, and the smooth scaling of the Interactive Digital Library. The roles described below form a core unit responsible for content governance, community engagement, technical maintenance, user experience improvements, and strategic development.

Key Roles from Year 1 Onwards

- **Full-Time Web Developer/Tech Specialist:** Manages all technical aspects – hosting, security, integrations, and system enhancements – continuously refining features based on community and panel feedback.
- **Full-Time Digital Library Coordinator:** Oversees day-to-day content workflows, initial metadata creation, and user support. This role liaises directly with contributors, ensures submissions are properly processed, and coordinates regularly with the developer on technical adjustments.
- **Full-Time Outreach & Engagement Officer:** Focused on building and maintaining relationships with communities, this person organises workshops, training sessions, and user testing. They bring community insights back to the team, shaping content priorities, tagging strategies, and user interface refinements.

Additional Roles Introduced as the Interactive Digital Library Grows:

- **Year 2: Full-Time UX/UI Designer:** Specialised in user interface and experience, this designer refines navigation, implements more advanced accessibility features, and develops clear visual cues and explanatory tooltips.
- **Year 3: Full-Time Content Specialist:** Curates complex metadata standards, integrates intersectional tagging (e.g., combining issues like race, gender, and disability), and helps organise thematic collections. This ensures the growing repository remains navigable, meaningful, and culturally responsive.

Reviews and Community Feedback

- **Monthly Anti-Racism Expert Panel Meetings:** A diverse panel of community leaders, activists, academics, and other stakeholders meets monthly to review new submissions, assess ethical and cultural considerations, and guide content strategies.
- **Community Advisory Input for Sensitive Material:** When materials require special handling due to potential distress or cultural significance, the Community Advisory Panels provide targeted guidance on how to present them respectfully (e.g., adding content warnings or additional context).
- **Regular Contributor Feedback Loops:** Contributors can receive constructive input on submissions and follow up on requested revisions. Over time, user-friendly tools, tutorials, and templates simplify contributor tasks, ensuring clarity and transparency in the process.
- **Annual Evaluations and Roadmap Updates:** Once a year, the team conducts a comprehensive review of achievements, challenges, and emerging trends. This informs strategic updates, funding applications, and potential partnerships, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with anti-racism goals.

5.9. Staffing and Costing Table (Indicative Annual Costs)

Note: Costs are approximate and for illustrative purposes. Actual figures depend on salaries, provider rates, and operational needs. Each year requires resourcing of people in communities to support all IT development. Building from the DAG engagement costs a budget of £55k per year is proposed for panels and accessibility.

Year	Roles (All Full-Time)	Technical Work & Maintenance	Estimated Annual Cost*
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Web Developer/Tech Specialist – Digital Library Coordinator – Outreach & Engagement Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Basic VPS hosting – SSL certificates – Daily backups – WordPress CMS & document plugin – Basic accessibility & metadata setup 	£115k
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Add UX/UI Designer (now 4 FT staff: Dev, Coord, Outreach, UX/UI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Introduce CDN (Content Delivery Network) – Improved search filters – Initial analytics & performance tuning 	£155k
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Add Content Specialist (5 FT staff total) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advanced taxonomy & intersectional tagging – Integrate external data sources (via APIs) 	£190k

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accessibility audits 	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 5 FT staff (Dev, Coord, Outreach, UX/UI, Content) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advanced search (e.g., Elasticsearch) – Multilingual support – Continuous integration – Deployment pipelines 	£190k
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 6 FT staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Machine Learning-driven recommendations – Complex analytics dashboards – Cloud hosting with autoscaling 	£230k

**Costs represent approximate ranges covering staffing, hosting, and incremental technical enhancements. Exact allocations depend on negotiated salaries, provider contracts, and evolving requirements.*

By consolidating roles into a single, cohesive team from the outset and scaling up as the platform matures, the Interactive Digital Library ensures that all key functions – technical development, content curation, outreach and engagement, user experience, and strategic growth – are handled by dedicated full-time professionals.

Regular reviews by the Anti-Racism Expert Panel, ongoing community input, and the introduction of user testing cycles guarantee that every technical and editorial decision remains user-centred, culturally sensitive, and aligned with the platform’s anti-racism mission. This holistic approach fosters sustainable development, continuous improvement, and a meaningful, trusted resource for Scotland’s diverse communities.

5.10. Sustainability and Continuity

Sustainability involves maintaining relevance, securing funding, and ensuring ethical, community-oriented stewardship:

Persistent Governance and Oversight: Annual or biannual evaluations measure usage, content quality, community satisfaction, and alignment with anti-racist goals. The Interactive Digital Library Manager (in later years) synthesises these findings into actionable roadmaps.

Community Engagement: Continuous input from communities ensures that the platform evolves in response to shifting priorities. As new issues emerge – climate justice intersections, digital discrimination, or policy changes – the Interactive Digital

Library adapts its taxonomies, featured collections, and search capabilities accordingly.

Funding Diversification and Partnerships: While initial funding may come from government or philanthropic sources, long-term sustainability can involve academic partnerships, research grants, or modest contributions from allied organisations. This financial resilience secures ongoing improvements and ensures the Interactive Digital Library remains stable even as political or economic climates change.

Scalability and Adaptability: By starting small and scaling steadily, the Interactive Digital Library avoids technical debt and rushed decision-making. Instead, it invests thoughtfully in infrastructure, integrating new technologies only when they genuinely meet user needs. A full-time Developer ensures that scaling up never outpaces the system's capacity to deliver a seamless user experience.

5.11. Conclusion

This proposed vision for the Interactive Digital Library sets forth a clear, achievable trajectory, guiding it from an initially modest scope toward a mature, impactful resource that will support Scotland's anti-racism landscape. By committing to a full-time Web Developer/Tech Specialist from the start, the Interactive Digital Library will establish a stable technical foundation. This will allow for consistent, iterative improvements in accessibility, metadata management, security, and overall performance, ensuring that each technical decision, structural enhancement, and user experience upgrade is implemented thoughtfully. Ongoing community input, along with insights from anti-racism experts and advisory panels, will inform these choices, ensuring the library remains aligned with its inclusive mission.

As staffing, resources, and community engagement increase over time, the Interactive Digital Library will integrate more sophisticated features – ranging from advanced search capabilities and multilingual support to data visualisation tools and richer accessibility options. These enhancements will be introduced gradually and always in response to genuine user needs and feedback. Rather than risking feature overload or straying from its principles. The library will evolve at a pace determined by the communities it serves. Its content governance will grow more nuanced, enabling it to thoughtfully manage sensitive materials, maintain cultural integrity, and respect user consent. Regular consultation with community members and thematic panels will ensure that every addition and refinement aligns with shared values of equity, respect, and accountability.

At the core of this future platform lies a commitment to community-driven evolution. Instead of imposing rigid top-down structures or closed-off metadata models, the Interactive Digital Library's developers, curators, and advisors will respond directly to how communities access, interpret, and use the information provided. Over time, its taxonomy, browsing options, and filtering tools will become more intuitive and

culturally resonant, allowing diverse user groups – regardless of technical literacy, device constraints, or accessibility needs – to find content that speaks directly to their contexts and experiences.

Accessibility will remain a fundamental priority, treated not as an optional extra but as an integral criterion shaping the library's design and development choices. Ensuring keyboard-friendly navigation, high-contrast text, adjustable font sizes, descriptive metadata, and multilingual capabilities will enable broad and meaningful participation. By embedding these standards from the earliest phases and consistently refining them through user testing and feedback, the Interactive Digital Library will welcome all users and reflect a principle of equitable access to knowledge.

As the Interactive Digital Library matures across successive iterations, it will remain a living resource – responsive, evolving, and shaped by those who rely on it. Community members, educators, policymakers, funders, and researchers will stimulate further enhancements, thematic expansions, and data-driven insights simply by engaging with the collection. Guided by user research and outreach findings, the development team will introduce new features responsibly, offering clear instructions and supportive materials to help users embrace unfamiliar tools at their own pace. This steady, participatory approach will allow even the most complex functionalities – such as integrated external repositories or advanced analytical interfaces – to be understood, appreciated, and meaningfully employed.

Ultimately, if realised as proposed, the Interactive Digital Library will not only serve as a repository for anti-racism work but will also emerge as a public strategic instrument fostering accountability, learning, innovation, and systemic change. It will empower communities by affirming their knowledge contributions, guide policymakers through evidence-based insights, inform funders of impactful projects, and inspire educators and researchers with a diverse array of culturally refined sources. By consistently centring transparency, equity, and ongoing adaptation, the Interactive Digital Library will transcend the role of a static database. It is poised to become a catalyst for accountability and positive transformation – an enduring beacon in Scotland's future journey toward racial equality, illuminating both the paths ahead and the roads yet to be forged.

5.12. References (Examples of Interactive Digital Libraries)

African Storybook (Africa): An initiative providing access to openly licensed picture storybooks for children's literacy development. Its simple, accessible interface, community contributions, and localized translations reflect how community input shapes digital resource design. <https://africanstorybook.org>

Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) (USA): Aggregates millions of materials from libraries, archives, and museums across the United States, providing robust search, browsing by subject, and community engagement initiatives. <https://dp.la>

Europeana (Europe): A digital platform that brings together digitized cultural heritage materials from European museums, archives, and libraries. Offers advanced search, user-friendly filtering, and accessibility features. <https://www.europeana.eu>

Mukurtu (Global, Indigenous Communities): A CMS designed for Indigenous communities, prioritizing cultural protocols, community-defined access, and ethical data stewardship. Emphasizes community-driven taxonomy and metadata standards. <https://mukurtu.org>

The NHS Scotland Knowledge Network is a comprehensive resource hub dedicated to supporting healthcare professionals in delivering exceptional care. It provides access to a wealth of evidence-based information, including journals, e-books, clinical guidelines, and educational materials. Designed to enhance knowledge sharing and professional development, the platform fosters collaboration across the healthcare community while advancing research, learning, and best practices in healthcare delivery. <https://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/>

Trove (National Library of Australia): Integrates content from multiple Australian cultural and research institutions, featuring user-friendly interfaces, tagging, personalization tools, and advanced search functionalities. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/>

These examples demonstrate that successful interactive digital libraries balance technological sophistication with user-centred design, cultural sensitivity, and adaptability. Each offers lessons on how to manage metadata, incorporate community feedback, embrace accessibility standards, and deploy add-ons that genuinely enhance user engagement and understanding.

Chapter 6 - Communication Strategy for Future AROS

6.1. Overview

This report documents the development of future AROS's communications strategy. This 12-week commission sought to support the concluding phase of the Design Advisory Group (DAG) and their work. This report encompasses digital accessibility research, stakeholder consultations, and best practice analysis for launching in 2025.

A comprehensive communications strategy document titled "Website Information and Best Practices for Future AROS" has been developed and [is in the appendix](#).

Key learnings from this project include:

1. Building trust with communities requires sustained commitment and adequate time— quick timelines can undermine meaningful engagement and exclude communities who may need longer to feel safe participating
2. Crisis management planning is essential— clear protocols need to be established for addressing both external challenges and internal conflicts, with particular attention to protecting community members who engage with AROS

Role evolution and scope

While the original job description outlined a broad range of responsibilities including community engagement, event attendance, and varied communications tasks, the interim phase work naturally focused on two critical areas that laid the groundwork for AROS's future success:

1. In-depth consultations with communications professionals across, community-led organisations, anti-racism advocacy groups, and government institutions. These discussions provided crucial insights into effective communication strategies for anti-racism work in Scotland.
2. Comprehensive desk-based research to develop strategic communications frameworks that align with anti-racism principles and approaches. This research focused on understanding best practices, identifying potential challenges, and developing robust safeguarding measures for community protection.

This focused approach enabled the development of a thorough, evidence-based communications strategy that will serve as a foundation for AROS's launch in 2025.

6.2. Research and Consultation Process

For the purpose of stakeholder engagement, the DAG conducted interviews with stakeholders across community organisations and people with extensive experience in anti-racism work.

Key insights from DAG members

Building trust and community engagement:

1. Emphasised that true engagement requires building trust through listening and creating safe spaces for adversely racialised communities to speak freely.
2. Stakeholders emphasised that many community members may not be ready or able to directly discuss experiences of racism due to trauma or fear of repercussions. Building trust requires creating safe spaces through indirect engagement first. Cultural celebrations and creative approaches were highlighted as effective ways to begin relationships— from community meals that make information accessible without pressure, to film screenings that can facilitate natural conversations, to collaborative events that centre community interests rather than institutional agendas. These spaces allow communities to engage on their own terms while building the trust needed for deeper conversations about systemic racism. The emphasis was on making multiple, sustained invitations through different channels, being patient with the trust-building process, and ensuring engagement happens at a pace that works for communities.
3. Stressed that community engagement cannot be rushed or done superficially— it requires sustained effort and genuine relationship building
4. Noted that engagement must go beyond "tick-box exercises" to meaningful, long-term relationships

Structural challenges

3. Identified a pattern of organisations acknowledging systemic issues but becoming defensive when actual changes are required
4. Pointed out how Scotland's self-perception as being "more welcoming" can actually hinder progress on addressing systemic racism
5. Highlighted how organisations often become more sophisticated in using anti-racism language while actually resisting substantial change
6. Noted that reports critical of systemic issues often get buried or go unpublished, creating a cycle where similar research gets repeatedly commissioned without leading to change

Resource and support requirements:

1. Emphasised the need for proper funding that accounts for all aspects of community participation (transport, childcare, interpretation)
2. Called for fair compensation at minimum living wage rates, avoiding payment through vouchers
3. Stressed the importance of having mental health and trauma support services embedded within AROS rather than relying on external providers
4. Highlighted the need for legal protection mechanisms and clear safeguarding protocols

Operational recommendations:

1. Suggested regular gatherings that prioritise relationship building through informal, culturally-appropriate spaces— from community meals to collaborative film screenings to cultural events. Stakeholders emphasised these should not be standardised consultation meetings but rather opportunities for genuine connection without immediate expectations.
2. Recommended having clear protocols based on community-defined boundaries and non-negotiables. This includes rigorous structures for addressing harm, recognising both individual and collective impacts, and having clear red lines about what behaviours will not be tolerated.
3. Emphasised the importance of having multiple engagement pathways that acknowledge different needs and capacities— from quick mobile access for those with limited data, to in-person gatherings, to anonymous feedback options. Engagement should never rely on a single approach.
4. Called for flexible funding approaches that recognise and support grassroots work happening outside formal structures. This includes looking beyond established organisations to identify and resource informal groups doing vital community work, such as those receiving micro-grants or operating without official status.
5. Stressed the importance of allowing adequate time for trust-building rather than rushing to meet institutional timelines. This includes making open-ended, sustained invitations that recognise some communities may need months before feeling ready to engage.

Each case study demonstrates different aspects of inclusive communications practice, from institutional strategy to grassroots engagement. Together, they highlight the complexity of building effective communications that serve diverse communities while working toward systemic change. During the focused two-month interim phase, these strategic consultations with key communications professionals provided deep, actionable insights for AROS's communications framework.

Case Study 1: Building trust through community-centred communications

Working at a national health observatory focused on “race” equity*, this communications professional provided crucial insights into building institutional credibility while maintaining community trust. Their approach centred on several key strategies:

- Making complex health inequality data accessible while preserving academic integrity
- Using diverse engagement channels including press releases, community meetings, social media, and targeted outreach
- Developing case studies to illustrate systemic issues through human stories
- Building relationships with community media outlets and specialised publications
- Creating tailored communications for different audiences (community groups, policymakers, healthcare institutions)

A significant insight was their emphasis on trauma-informed communications: "We have to make sure we're not retraumatising communities through our communications." They highlighted how institutional communications about racial disparities must balance highlighting issues while avoiding narrativising community pain. They stressed the importance of having spokes people from impacted communities tell their own stories rather than having experiences filtered through institutional voices.

***Race equity** - An approach that goes beyond documenting disparities to actively examining and addressing the systemic and structural barriers that create inequalities. This involves looking at how institutions operate, what changes are needed at a fundamental level, and creating clear accountability mechanisms to ensure genuine transformation rather than surface-level diversity initiatives.

Case Study 2: “Not standing over people”

This case study has been built from working with a professional with extensive experience in facilitating discussions about racism and systemic inequalities. This professional brought valuable insights about creating safe spaces for meaningful dialogue. Their methodology included:

- Careful attention to power dynamics in room setup and facilitation style
- Using multiple engagement methods including gallery walks, group discussions, and anonymous feedback options
- Ensuring participants could engage in ways comfortable for them (verbal, written, individual, group)
- Building ground rules collaboratively with participants

- Using community terminology rather than academic language
- Providing practical support (food, transport) to enable participation

They emphasised the importance of "not standing over people" and instead being part of the group. Their approach recognised that understanding and articulating experiences of racism can be complex— sometimes people may not recognise racist incidents as they happen, or may need time and safe spaces to process their experiences. This led to creating environments where people could explore and articulate their experiences without pressure.

Case Study 3: Inclusive communications across cultural boundaries

Leading communications for an organisation serving migrant communities, this professional shared critical insights about inclusive communications across cultural and linguistic barriers. Their key learnings included:

- Avoiding assumptions about community identities and needs
- Recognising internal diversity within ethnic groups
- Working with community ambassadors who understand local contexts
- Using multiple communication channels (digital, print, in-person)
- Building organic relationships with community organisations
- Providing information in multiple languages with cultural context
- Creating sustainable communication networks through community spaces

It was emphasised how effective communications must recognise that "communities are not homogeneous". Their organisation built trust through "being humble" and recognising that "sometimes what happens is people won't engage because we're asking them to do something in a way that doesn't work for them". They stressed the importance of long-term relationship building over quick outreach campaigns.

- Documented community engagement strategies, priorities, and expectations
- The development of community engagement strategies emerged from a comprehensive series of conversations with diverse stakeholders. These discussions brought together voices from community-led organisations, advocacy groups, grassroots initiatives, and individuals with extensive experience in challenging systemic racism. Participants represented a wide spectrum of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives, providing a rich, nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in genuine community engagement.

The collective insights revealed a profound critique of traditional engagement approaches, highlighting the need for more meaningful, respectful, and transformative methods of community interaction. Stakeholders consistently emphasised that effective engagement is not a transactional process, but a deeply

relational, time-intensive journey of building trust, understanding, and collective power.

Community engagement strategies:

- Recognise that anti-racism work requires significant time investment— quick fixes and short timelines often set initiatives up for failure. As stakeholders emphasised, the complexity of addressing systemic racism cannot be resolved through rushed interventions. The harm of racism runs deep, affecting generations through psychological trauma, economic exclusion, and persistent structural barriers. Stakeholders noted that communities carry intergenerational experiences that cannot be quickly unpacked or healed. Short timelines not only risk retraumatising communities but also create a sense of performative engagement, where organisations appear to take action without meaningful, sustained commitment to substantial change.
- Use celebratory and cultural exchange events as entry points for deeper engagement
- Consider providing transport, childcare, and other practical support to enable participation
- Design engagement around community schedules and spaces (e.g., after church/mosque events)
- Build connections through trusted community spaces like places of worship, cultural associations, food shops, and hairdressers
- Focus on relationship building before diving into formal work
- Create multiple entry points for engagement— some may prefer digital, others print, others in-person
- Avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to engagement

Community priorities and expectations:

- Clear documentation of what happens to community evidence and research to prevent repetitive consultations
- Protection mechanisms for those who speak up about racism (Detailed discussion in Safeguarding Framework Development)
- Recognition that some communities may not identify with their nationality groups due to colonial histories
- Support beyond just engagement— communities often need wider practical assistance
- Spaces to share experiences without pressure to educate others
- Clear paths to see how their input influences change

- Regular updates and ongoing dialogue, not just one-off consultations
- Mechanisms to verify if organisations genuinely intend to make changes

2. Safeguarding framework development

a. Community protection

Robust vetting processes for platform access

Issue: Organisations can adopt anti-racism language while actively resisting change. Some organisations acknowledge systemic issues but become defensive when actual changes are required.

Solution: Vetting must examine actions, not just stated commitments. The vetting process needs to identify this pattern through careful examination of an organisation's history of engagement with anti-racism work.

Clear protocols for removing harmful actors

Issue: Organisations often become more sophisticated in using anti-racism language while actually resisting substantial change, particularly in equality and diversity spaces.

Solution: Develop protocols that recognise nuanced forms of resistance and have clear criteria for identifying when organisations are using anti-racism frameworks to maintain rather than challenge existing power structures.

Community-informed verification systems

Issue: Existing verification processes often make assumptions about uniform community identities and fail to recognise internal diversity.

Solution: Design verification processes by those with lived experience, learning to recognise the internal diversity within ethnic communities and adjusting approaches accordingly.

Track record assessment methodology

Issue: Research exposing systemic racism is often effectively buried when it challenges institutional practices.

Solution: Develop an assessment methodology that examines both public commitments and what happens when anti-racism statements are tested through challenging findings. Ensure organisations are held accountable beyond their initial statements.

Strong boundaries against hostile actors

Issue: Resistance often comes from unexpected places, including within organisations claiming to champion equality.

Solution: Create boundaries that account for internal resistance while protecting community members who speak up, particularly when facing pushback from teams that should be supporting anti-racism efforts.

b. Trauma-informed approach

The development of a trauma-informed approach emerged from extensive consultations that revealed the profound and complex impacts of systemic racism on communities. Participants emphasised that anti-racism work cannot be conducted without a deep understanding of the psychological, emotional, and historical wounds inflicted by centuries of oppression. During discussions, it became clear that traditional organisational approaches often fail to recognise the nuanced ways trauma manifests within marginalised communities. Experiences shared highlighted how even well-intentioned initiatives can inadvertently perpetuate harm through insensitive engagement methods, repeated requests to relive traumatic experiences and a lack of meaningful support. The emotional landscape of anti-racism work requires extraordinary care, sensitivity, and a commitment to healing. Stakeholders stressed that true support goes beyond surface-level interventions, necessitating a holistic approach that acknowledges the interconnected nature of individual and collective trauma.

- **Recognition of historical trauma**— Stakeholders stressed how current experiences of racism cannot be separated from 500+ years of embedded racism. One stakeholder described how communities often carry intergenerational trauma that manifests in different ways. They shared examples of how this historical context needs to be understood when designing support systems. It's not just about current incidents but about understanding the deep historical roots of systemic racism.
- **Prioritisation of well-being for people who experienced systemic racism**— Stakeholders emphasised that trauma-informed approaches cannot be an afterthought. It was shared how even well-intentioned organisations can retraumatise communities by repeatedly asking them to share experiences without providing adequate support or showing evidence of change. Stakeholders stressed the importance of having support systems embedded within AROS itself, rather than relying on external referrals that may not understand community contexts.
- **Integration of therapeutic support from adversely racialised practitioners**— Consultations revealed how standard therapeutic approaches often fail to recognise different cultural understandings of wellbeing and healing. One stakeholder shared experiences of community members feeling alienated by Western therapeutic models that didn't account for collective and

intergenerational experiences of racism. Several stakeholders emphasised the importance of practitioners who understand both the cultural context and the specific impacts of racism on mental health.

- **Creative methods for emotional resilience**— Multiple examples emerged from the consultations about the power of cultural celebration and community strengths. Stakeholders shared how cultural events created safe spaces for people to connect and build trust before addressing more challenging topics. Another described using storytelling and arts-based approaches to help communities process experiences without retraumatising them. These methods helped build collective resilience while honouring cultural ways of healing.
- **Preventive frameworks for anticipated challenges**— Experience showed how organisations often wait for crisis before implementing support. Stakeholders shared examples of how this reactive approach leaves communities vulnerable. Several stakeholders emphasised the need for proactive support systems that anticipate challenges based on past patterns. As one stakeholder noted, "We know what's likely to happen— we need to be prepared rather than waiting for people to be harmed before acting."

c. Support systems

- **Legal protection mechanisms**— Stakeholders emphasised that legal support must protect both individuals and organisations doing anti-racism work. Several interviewees shared experiences of being effectively blacklisted from funding after producing critical reports, highlighting the need for protections against professional retaliation. Stakeholders noted how smaller organisations often lack resources to defend themselves when challenged by larger institutions.
- **Psychological support structures**— The consultations revealed how organisations often acknowledge racism exists but provide no support for those experiencing it. Multiple stakeholders emphasised that psychological support needs to be readily available and culturally informed. One interviewee shared how their organisation learned to provide support that recognised both individual and collective experiences of racism, emphasising that Western individualistic models often don't serve communities effectively.
- **Financial safeguarding**— Strong feedback emerged about the exploitation of community expertise without proper compensation. Stakeholders shared experiences of being expected to contribute time and knowledge for free or with vouchers rather than proper payment. Several emphasised that AROS must model fair compensation practices, including paying at minimum living wage rates and covering practical costs like transport and childcare.
- **Physical safety considerations**— Interviewees shared experiences of facing both direct and indirect threats when doing anti-racism work. Several stakeholders emphasised the need for comprehensive safety planning that goes beyond just

event security to consider ongoing protection needs. One described how community spaces often become targets, highlighting the need to protect both individuals and collective spaces.

d) Risk management

- **Protection for those "raising their head above the parapet"** — Consultations revealed consistent patterns of backlash against those who speak up about racism. Multiple stakeholders shared experiences of professional and personal repercussions. One described how fear of consequences often silences communities, emphasising the need for robust protection mechanisms that address both immediate and long-term risks.
- **Systems to counter online hostility**— Interviewees shared experiences of coordinated online attacks, particularly when challenging systemic racism. Stakeholders emphasised how online harassment often targets specific individuals rather than organisations. Lack of digital security measures left community members vulnerable to doxxing and targeted harassment.
- **Safeguards for community contributors**— Strong themes emerged about protecting those who share their experiences and knowledge. Stakeholders emphasised how communities often face risks for participating in anti-racism work. Several shared experiences of community members facing repercussions in their workplaces or communities after speaking up, highlights the need for comprehensive safeguarding.
- **Crisis response protocols**— Stakeholders emphasised the need for rapid response capabilities when incidents occur. One shared experiences of community members being left unsupported during crisis situations because organisations lacked clear protocols. Several emphasised that response plans need to address both immediate safety needs and longer-term support requirements.
- **Emotional safety frameworks**— Consultations revealed how doing anti-racism work takes a significant emotional toll. Stakeholders shared experiences of burnout and trauma from constantly challenging systemic racism. Several emphasised the need for collective care practices that recognise both individual and community wellbeing needs. One described how emotional safety needs to be built into every aspect of AROS's work, not treated as an add-on.
- **Accessibility and inclusive risk mitigation**— Recognising the compounded vulnerabilities of multiple marginalised communities, this framework specifically addresses risks faced by deaf, blind, neurodivergent, and disabled anti-racism activists. The approach centres the experiences of those most likely to face intersectional barriers, ensuring protection mechanisms are designed to support individuals with diverse accessibility needs, communication styles, and lived experiences of systemic oppression. This includes tailored support strategies that

acknowledge the unique challenges faced by deaf activists navigating communication barriers, blind community leaders confronting additional layers of discrimination, neurodivergent researchers managing sensory and social challenges, and disabled advocates fighting for comprehensive social change.

3. Digital accessibility research

- Investigated website accessibility requirements— Research focused on international web accessibility standards, screen reader compatibility, and navigation requirements to ensure the platform serves users of all abilities. This included analysis of form design, interactive elements, and emergency access protocols to create an accessible digital environment.
- [Researched multilingual content delivery systems](#)— Comprehensive analysis of multiple language support requirements including right-to-left script support, translation quality assurance, and culturally appropriate content adaptation. Research emphasised the importance of seamless language switching and maintaining cultural context across translations.
- [Analysed cultural sensitivity frameworks](#)— In-depth study of respectful representation, culturally appropriate design, and community consultation methods. Research concentrated on developing robust content warning systems and trauma-informed approaches to protect community wellbeing while ensuring effective information sharing.
- [Explored best practices for inclusive digital platforms](#)— Investigation of universal design principles, mobile accessibility, and alternative format delivery systems. Research emphasised the need for comprehensive user support mechanisms and systematic feedback collection to ensure continuous platform improvement.

4. Communications infrastructure development

- [Website planning and accessibility guidelines](#)— Development of comprehensive design standards incorporating multiple language support, content management workflows, and accessibility testing protocols. Planning emphasised creating an intuitive user experience while maintaining rigorous accessibility standards.
- [Social media strategy development](#)— Creation of detailed engagement strategies across platforms, with specific focus on content themes, crisis communication protocols, and community safeguarding mechanisms. Strategy emphasised building meaningful community engagement while protecting participant wellbeing.
- [Content management systems research](#)— Analysis focused on multilingual CMS requirements, accessibility plugins, and robust document management systems. Research prioritised systems that could handle complex workflows while maintaining accessibility standards.

- **Multiple format accessibility requirements**— Development of comprehensive standards for alternative format delivery, including multimedia accessibility, document guidelines, and mobile optimisation. Planning ensured content would be accessible across various platforms and devices while maintaining information integrity.

6.3. Key Findings and Recommendations

Digital platform requirements

- **Multilingual resource base development**— Research established need for content in multiple community languages with culturally-appropriate translations, ensuring terminology and context are preserved across languages.
- **Interactive features planning**— Focus on creating safe, accessible ways for communities to engage through consultations, feedback mechanisms, and content sharing while maintaining robust safeguarding.
- **Cultural sensitivity frameworks**— Development of comprehensive guidelines for respectful representation, appropriate terminology usage, and trauma-informed approaches to content sharing.
- **Accessibility compliance standards**— Standards ensuring platform usability for people with different abilities, incorporating multiple formats and assistive technology support.

Community-centred communication

- **Regional community consultation findings**— Analysis revealed need for varied engagement approaches across Scotland, recognising unique community contexts and existing support networks.
- **Co-production initiatives planning**— Framework for meaningful community involvement in content creation, platform development, and decision-making processes.
- **Engagement strategy recommendations**— Evidence-based approaches for building trust and maintaining long-term community relationships while protecting participant wellbeing.

Best practices integration

- **Content creation guidelines**— Development of clear standards for creating accessible, culturally appropriate content that serves diverse community needs.
- **Cultural sensitivity protocols**— Comprehensive frameworks for ensuring respectful representation and protecting community wellbeing across all communications.
- **Accessibility standards**— Integration of inclusive design principles ensuring content is accessible across different abilities and technologies.

- **Multi-format communication approaches**— Standards for delivering information in various formats to meet diverse community needs and preferences.

Future strategy recommendations

- **Resource requirements**— Detailed analysis of technical, human, and financial resources needed for sustainable platform development.
- **Community engagement frameworks**— Long-term strategies for maintaining meaningful community involvement and co-production.
- **Digital platform development phases**— Structured approach to platform development ensuring community needs remain central.

Key learnings

- **Time constraints**— Research highlighted how short timelines often undermine meaningful engagement and can be perceived as tokenistic. Stakeholders emphasised that authentic community engagement cannot be rushed, particularly when addressing systemic issues. The interim phase demonstrated that quick turnarounds can inadvertently exclude communities and limit participation. Meaningful anti-racism work requires sustained commitment and adequate time for building trust and relationships.
- **Community engagement insights**— Consultations revealed the complexity of community engagement in Scotland's context. Key insights included the importance of recognising internal diversity within ethnic groups, avoiding assumptions about community identities, and understanding that communities often face risks for participating in anti-racism work. Organisations need multiple engagement channels and any process must recognise that some communities may not want to publicly identify their experiences of racism.
- **Technical accessibility requirements**— Research established that digital platforms must balance security with accessibility. Technical requirements need to account for varying levels of digital literacy, different language needs, and diverse accessibility requirements. Platforms must protect community members while remaining accessible, with particular attention to safeguarding sensitive information and protecting those who contribute content.
- **Resource allocation needs**— Consultations highlighted the importance of adequate resourcing for anti-racism work. This includes fair compensation for community contributions, practical support like transport and childcare for events, and sufficient staffing for platform maintenance. The work revealed how limited resources often force organisations to make compromises that impact effectiveness, particularly around translation services, technical development, and community support.

6.4. Implementation timeline (2025-2026)

Phase 1: Inception (first 6 months)

- **Establishment of ongoing communication channels**— Creating diverse pathways for engagement including digital platforms, in-person meetings, and print materials. Focus on building accessible channels that meet different community needs while ensuring clear safeguarding protocols. Development of two-way communication systems that enable communities to shape engagement approaches.
- **Initial platform launch**— Development of core website and digital platforms with fundamental accessibility features. Focus on basic language support in key community languages, essential safeguarding mechanisms, and user-friendly navigation. Ensuring platform meets basic accessibility standards while allowing for future enhancement.
- **Core community engagement initiation**— Beginning strategic relationship building with key community partners through targeted outreach. Focus on establishing trust through transparent communication about AROS's role and limitations. Development of initial co-production approaches while managing expectations about pace of change.
- **Foundation of safeguarding protocols**— Implementing fundamental protection systems including content warnings, reporting mechanisms, and clear guidelines for participation. Development of basic crisis response protocols and support systems for community participants. Establishment of initial vetting processes.
- **Essential digital infrastructure setup**— Creating core technical systems including basic content management, security protocols, and accessibility features. Focus on building flexible infrastructure that can be expanded based on community needs and feedback. Ensuring fundamental data protection and privacy measures.

Phase 2: Consolidation (next 6 months)

- **Strengthening community networks**— Deepening existing relationships while strategically expanding partnerships. Focus on building sustainable connections and support systems between communities. Development of peer networks and shared learning opportunities.
- **Enhancement of digital platforms**— Adding sophisticated features based on thorough analysis of community feedback and needs. Implementation of advanced language support, improved accessibility features, and enhanced safeguarding mechanisms. Expansion of interactive capabilities.
- **Expansion of engagement mechanisms**— Creating additional participation pathways based on community preferences and feedback. Development of

diverse engagement options including digital, in-person, and hybrid approaches. Focus on reducing barriers to participation.

- **Refinement of processes based on learning**— Systematic review and adjustment of approaches based on implementation experience. Focus on incorporating community feedback and addressing identified gaps. Enhancement of systems based on practical learning.
- **Full implementation of safeguarding frameworks**— Completing comprehensive protection systems including advanced vetting, crisis response, and support mechanisms. Development of nuanced approaches to different types of risk. Implementation of complete safety protocols.

Phase 3: Transference to a fully independent body (final 12 months)

- **Complete handover protocols**— Ensuring thorough documentation and smooth transition of platform management. Focus on maintaining consistent service through change. Clear communication with all stakeholders about the transition process.
- **Integration with permanent AROS structure**— Carefully aligning platform operations with overall organisational framework while preserving community relationships. Focus on maintaining integrity of community-centred approaches through integration.
- **Transition of community relationships**— Preserving trust and continuity in community partnerships through organisational change. Clear communication about the transition process and commitment to maintaining established relationships. Focus on stability during change.
- **Transfer of digital assets and platforms**— Ensuring technical systems and content transfer smoothly to permanent structure. Focus on maintaining accessibility and functionality through transition. Clear protocols for managing technical handover.
- **Establishment of long-term operational frameworks**— Creating robust systems for ongoing platform management and development. Focus on building sustainable approaches that can evolve with community needs. Development of clear processes for future growth.

Chapter 7: Systems and Processes

The whole DAG project was essentially a systems and processes focused piece of work. Building from DAG expertise, from others locally, nationally and internationally.

We explore how to undertake public recruitment for the future advisory board and public recruitment of all roles. We will also set out the “how” of the future roles, for instance in panels relating to the AIGG proposed accountability work, and in decision-making panels for the future AROS strategic planning.

How people are brought into the new organisation is recommended as a key priority for future AROS; the integrity of it depends on it. Determining the priorities for future AROS has to come from the community, rather than from the organisation itself.

As mentioned in the introduction although the majority of the report is written directly to future AROS there are key recommendations for Scottish Government.

Systemic racism as an enabler: lack of agency, misrecognition and unprofessional behaviour.

In order to support wider understanding, the following is an attempt to explain how systemic racism operates in anti-racism spaces, according to international scholarly evidence and practice and we recommend future AROS take stock and build from. Systemic racism is an enabler for unprofessional behaviour. A feature of systemic racism is that people in the system can become enabled to behave in erratic, threatening, unprofessional ways that impact on those they are working with.

Other common patterns of behaviours in this kind of context is removal of agency for those responsible for leading on the work - particularly in relation to setting own timelines for the work; a misrecognition and a risk of blind spots about the nature of the actual work; and a lack of professional integrity. In these kinds of situations systemic racism is the enabler.

When we talk about systems we need to keep in mind that systemic racism enables degrees of unprofessionalism unprecedented and not experienced in any other context. During external meetings DAG members, experienced on occasion, bewildering unprofessional and abusive behaviour, which would normally be unacceptable in any work place. Also, if, for example, people engage with this reflection in a way to ask to prove it happened, that is not an appropriate ask. It is not appropriate to explain this in more detail. In fact, the ask to do so is the enacting of misrecognition which is also a feature within systemic racism, i.e. what is experienced and understood by those who experience it, still having to work to prove something that they know, is misrecognition itself.

If it is a struggle to understand what is being expressed, people must ask themselves what else could have prompted this level of unprofessional behaviour in a meeting.

Systemic racism enables this kind of reality on this work and the people undertaking it.

There is often a disconnect within systems about what anti-racism work actually is. This disconnect can cause loss of agency. This lack of agency can result in appropriate decisions getting lost, and despite those with power having limited anti-racism knowledge, even seriously argued against collective expertise. Decisions such as publicly displaying what anti-racism experts view as relevant, fundamental and validating anti-racism expertise about themselves becoming withheld; or sustained argument required to have lived expertise as resourced time to speak with friends, family and colleagues about racism to be viewed as a fundamental anti-racism practice; that seeking and developing an ethics of care and safeguarding for everyone involved is not a luxury, it is baseline; that long asked for public events are not undertaken timeously creating increased risks of miscommunication, public anxiety and an information vacuum undermining personal safety and social cohesion.

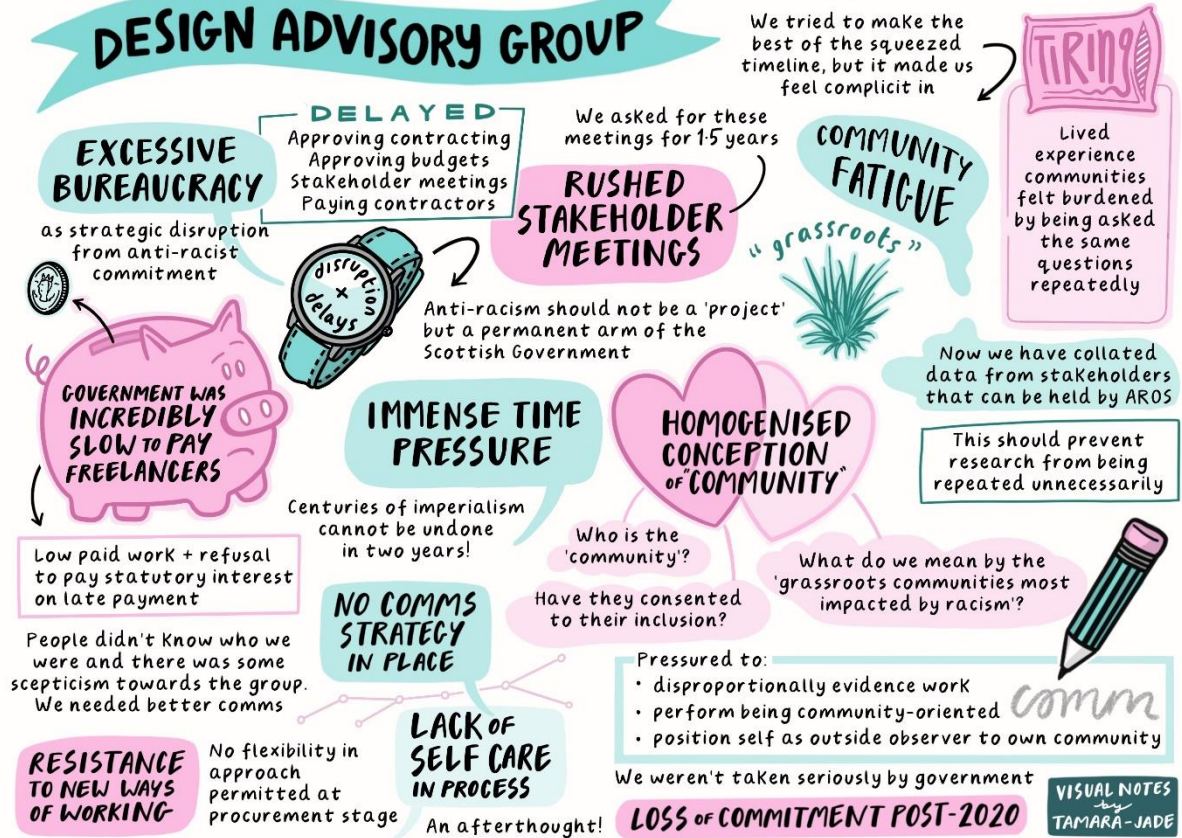
When systemic racism is enabled there is often a loss of integrity to the “usual” processes themselves – the basic norms of industry conduct can be violated on a range of issues - all with potentially reasonable explanations. For example, a 10-month delay for recruitment of key personnel or delays to payment for months and months at a time; a condensed project time which puts pressures on vulnerable people, with no possibility of extension for this aspect when other aspects are given space and grace to extend and so on.

The reason for this effort to articulate this here, as it reaches the end of the report, is to map out the narrative that DAG want people to understand about what systemic racism is as it enacts on anti-racism practice. DAG has attempted to understand, articulate and navigate systemic racism for future AROS. Ultimately this effort is on behalf of the people who SG seeks to address the systemic inequality for.

LEARNINGS FROM THE DAG

DESIGN ADVISORY GROUP

BARRIERS WE FACED



7.1. An urgent recommendation by Design Advisory Group (DAG) for a critical rethink of the internal Scottish Government infrastructure to support the inception of a new anti-racism accountability body.

The following provides context for the urgent recommendation from the Design Advisory Group (DAG) for a critical rethink of the internal Scottish Government infrastructure. The intention is to reduce risk and ensure the effective launch and safe implementation during the first 2- 3 years of the future Anti-racism Observatory for Scotland.

To recap: The vision is for Scotland to strategically address systemic racism. In 2020, the Scottish Government accepted the recommendations from the [Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity](#). The accepted model is a soon to be launched Anti-racism Observatory for Scotland. This is a community led model of accountability to support Scottish Government build competence to create transformative and lasting generational systemic change.

Context to the current structure:

- **Circa 2006-2020** | The SG work to support “race” equality had historically been undertaken within the Race Equality Policy Team, in the Equality Unit.
- **Circa 2021** | Scottish Government accepted the recommendation for Equalities to have its own Directorate of equal standing with other Directorates in SG. The new Directorate became named as the Equalities Inclusion and Human Rights Directorate (EIHR). Work continued within the Race Equality Policy Team but within the new EIHR directorate.
- **Circa Jan 2021-2022** | Work was undertaken within Race Equality
- **Circa November 2023** | Work sat within Strategic Anti-Racism & Disability Equality Teams
- **Circa January 2024** | The Team became renamed as the Strategic Team for Anti-racism (STAR) within the EIHR directorate. “We are now named as Strategic (Team for) Anti-Racism. This name change better reflects the nature of the work we undertake, and our collective commitment to advancing the development of anti-racism infrastructure.”

It is assumed that the ambitions for STAR were for a team with understanding of anti-racism to support the building of a new organisation, which essentially will create challenge to “the system” for “the system”. The operational aspirations for this structure have proved deeply unsuccessful.

It is for that reason that DAG unequivocally ask for this structure to be disconnected from future AROS with near immediate effect.

The skills and knowledge to support internal SG decision making about anti-racism are high level and precise and should be engaged with at Director General and Director level.

There is an evidenced risk that a team without adequate anti-racism expertise will perceive the systemic challenge of anti-racism practice as threat.

There is a risk that the enormity and complexity of the anti-racism societal need and ask of SG is underestimated

There is a risk that lack of understanding about systemic racism and how it creates inequality remains held as an individual or local level conflict rather than joining, through community engagement, on the national and international stage where this ambition for Scotland's future belongs.

There is a demonstrable risk that projection, by those who do not understand systemic racism and anti-racism, of the social, professional and personal discomfort, anxiety and concerns this work creates “work in the wrong direction” and land the challenge they experience on those who are working to create change.

There is a need for deep understanding of power and decision making in relation to Government to help elevate and maintain internal and/or external challenge as both welcome and appropriate and not misunderstood as a low level local racialised “fight” for resourcing and power.

Addressing how systemic racism operates requires the highest level of skills. Scotland has deep systemic global influence and history in the creation of racism through its pivotal role in the transatlantic slave trade that infiltrates every part of our society. To begin the serious work of anti-racism and to build a new foundational organisation requires focused anti-racism expertise at the most senior level.

There is a risk that even a formal recommendation to rethink the structuring of this work is positioned as a response to individual level disagreements and challenge that occurred. This is disrespectful to those involved and must be avoided.

- The lack of knowledge about racism and anti-racism is a political risk because of the systemic inability to understand the local, national and international complexity within the “race” equality landscape.
- In many ways the systemic SG historical lack of knowledge about racism was “protected” by the lack of a centralised focus. The commitment to a future AROS means that is no longer a sustainable approach and high level expertise is required to support SG especially at inception.

7.2. Four key recommendations to protect people adversely impacted by systemic racism, the work, SG and the wider social fabric of Scotland.

1. An Anti-racism Chief Advisor role similar to Professor Linda Bauld's Chief Social Policy Advisor is created to support the senior level decision-making that is required in order to safely implement, support and protect AROS's ambition during the first 2-3 years and transition from that point into an independent organisation.

This addresses the fact that the high level of antiracism expertise required to support SG is not available within the system. It also further highlights the serious intent of SG to look inward at policy and process.

2. There should be a strategic move to a different directorate: such as Corporate which is responsible for organisational improvements, or Strategy and External affairs.

The relationship of the future AROS to strategic cross Government anti-racism work is not well served when held within the Equalities Directorate. It sounds counter intuitive but there is significant scholarship which supports this stance about the risks of positioning within Equalities. Furthermore, this move would provide public demonstration to stakeholders and partnership organisations of the fact that the future AROS is not "in competition" to the ongoing work and organisations in Race Equalities- especially in relation to [REF](#) 2016- 2030. The role of future AROS is to help people in communities and stakeholder organisations hold SG to account for their commitment to address systemic racism and racialised inequity.

3. The Minister should be supported to have this portfolio integrated and supported much stronger at Cabinet Secretary level. This to ensure that these issues as they relate to future AROS and Scotland's relationship to societal systemic level anti-racism can be discussed and addressed by the Cabinet and resolved at the highest level.

With a future AROS moved to a more strategically appropriate position with SG, its first role along with Chief Advisor is to support SG re think evaluation of what skills are required internally to undertake anti- racism and "race" equality work. The relationship of AROS to the EIHR directorate is critical. One of the first functions will be for it to support the directorate through evaluation and assessment of skills required to do this work.

4. A strategic aim for the future should be to actively work with community to find skilled people to fill “race” equality and anti-racism roles. And to establish with SG, for internal or external recruitment what are the evaluative measures to determine anti-racism competence.

Although this proposal could feel like a significant challenge, thoughtful reflection indicates that the intention is to strengthen social community trust in SG and avoid the risk of further undermining of public faith in the Government.

The fundamental rethinking of what anti-racism work is, what systemic racism is and how the organisation creates and sustains racism through its daily processes of policy research and implementation sits right across SG.

The system has to be both humble and determined at this point. This requires very careful consideration of this proposal. This is a thoughtful reflection of the organisational complexity and ways of working which hamper progress, borne out of the reality that the current approach is ineffective and structure not fit-for-purpose.

It would not be unexpected but fair to ascertain that currently the biggest risk to anti-racism infrastructure work are the systems and processes within Scottish Government. The above recommendations seek to safeguard against risk to achieve better outcomes for all of Scotland.

Job roles and profiles – a portfolio for future AROS to build from

A portfolio of job roles and adverts which DAG developed is shared in the handover process to a future AROS to support their future recruitment approach. Developing role profiles were undertaken for two distinct processes. One to support the procurement process and the other to recruit six short term freelance roles to build the knowledge for inception of future AROS during the DAG project.

The CEO/ Co CEO is included in this document in [the appendix](#) because it holds particular significance, not only to the future organisation but also to reflect how to embed intersectional antiracism approaches into recruitment.

Recruitment: What DAG have learnt for future AROS systems

Issue

- Job security and the temporality of the two years requires to be managed

Further context

- The reality of the 2 year interim phase of a host organisation may have significant impact on who may consider applying for roles

Recommendation

- Consider what sort of safety mechanisms can be put in place for anyone who goes for those jobs

Issue

- Attention to job descriptions and advertising

Further context

- Who are they attracting?
- What are the parameters of the role and how are they communicated?

Recommendation

- Consider mitigating steps to encourage those usually excluded from these processes.
- Link to the good practices building within the arts sector of Scotland, nationally and internationally

Issue

- Flexibility in employment from what the role starts off from and what the role actually becomes

Recommendation

- That a three month rolling review of the role itself should be implemented

Issue

- What are the best practice processes of recruitment

Recommendation

- Consider mechanisms to protect against “disruptors” of anti-racism work

Issue

- Rethink vetting of people allowed into the space

Further context

- There is no fool proof way but need to be careful as this is dangerous environment to work within.

Recommendation

- Explore progressive legal frameworks for protection

Issue

- In relation to the CEO or Co CEOs take time to consider is it going to be traditional top down structure

Further context

- Can future AROS think of something more imaginative – some important considerations are provided in the detailed CEO role profile and advert in the [appendix](#)

Recommendation

- Consider remaining flexible and open to progressive imaginative approaches to leadership

Advisory Board and future panels' selection and processes for future AROS

As specified in the [AIGG inception modelling](#) document and used between AIGG and DAG transition 50 % of members are recommended to be included in the future AROS advisory group for the first 2 years. This has worked successfully in DAG and strongly recommended in order to maintain institutional memory and expertise.

As discussed in chapter 3, individual people and communities' exhaustion and wariness is compounded through recent and historically asks to speak about racism as though it's not a harm that needs an ethics of care. The current and historical lack of care is understood as systemic racism in operation. The following represents safeguarding recommendations for the advisory group/ steering group and any panels future AROS requires as it becomes established.

Issue

- Supporting existing organisations to re think how people are asked to engage with the racism they experience

Further context

- Historically people have been conditioned to express the harms with little thought to care and after care.

Recommendation

- Support needs to be centred sustained and consistent. It needs to be normalised in future processes that this is something that needs addressed

Issue

- Preparing for racism and relationship breakdown as work develops within internal and external AROS led groups

Further context

- We know mediation processes to address racism are not fit for purpose

Recommendation

- Seek other conflict resolution systems that work.
- Build confidence in the processes to support relationship breakdown and view it simply as good practice to prepare

Legal advice

Data and Information sharing and future FOI considerations

Future AROS should pay attention, especially in relation to safety of communities sharing information and building trust. Clarity was asked of SG in relation to what extent might a recent “landmark case” indicate legal change. It may become usual practice that if any organisation receives funding from SG, the relationship to future FOI may change. Essentially, funded “intermediary organisations” may no longer be recused. By the time of reporting clarification of any potential anticipated impact has not been shared.

This may have considerable implications for HOW people are asked to engage and their safety within that ask. To build trust and ensure safety, this will need clarified and clearly expressed by future AROS to anyone and everyone who engages.

Intellectual Property (IP)

The relationship between a host organisation, future AROS and the people who work within it and community needs careful attention. It should be carefully considered and clarified the ethical boundaries within IP rights. Work should be undertaken by future AROS to ensure that the most vulnerable and those with least power in relation to usual IP processes and not exploited. Care and legal advice is required to ensure those whose expertise the whole organisation builds from are not those with least rights to their own intellectual property.

Equality impact assessment (EQIA) processes

The EQIA is a process to support the [public sector equality duty](#). It aims to ensure that organisations consider how their functions will affect people with different protected characteristics.

The EQIA evidence template, and the framing of the question of what the focus of the EQIA for a future AROS appeared as inaccurate. DAG considered that the evidence template was not reflective of the approach to building the new organisation as outlined by the AIGG.

The discussion and work to progress the EQIA became a site where several of the behaviours enabled by systemic racism discussed above became located; misrecognition, blind spot, lack of agency and unprofessional behaviour.

AIGG proposed that any infrastructure to address systemic racism must build from the experience of those most negatively impacted by systemic racism. This approach means that any organisation that is created will foundationally build with and from the experiences and expertise of those most negatively impacted by the systemic racism it seeks to help address. It will address those processes which create the inequity and inequality of outcomes for those *most* negatively impacted and build from their expertise by experience and learning.

DAG are keen for and anticipate a robust EQIA process. By time of reporting, the EQIA had not been shared.

Key systems learning and recommendations for future AROS

Issue

- Data systems and management of internal AROS information.

Further context

- How to protect individuals and communities internal and external to future AROS

Recommendation

- Pay attention to group-based harms such as discrimination, which the current legislations and practice in data often neglects, in addition to individual-based harms- the intention should be to start small
- To start with community and build it in from the off.
- Have continual conversations with communities to jointly make decisions about data storage, access, and safe removal for ethical concerns
- Build confidence in the processes to support relationship breakdown and view it simply as good practice to prepare

Issue

- How to protect resourcing

Further context

- How will future AROS actually give time and resourcing to implement accessibility and disability requirements (eg for neuro divergent, deaf people etc)

Recommendation

- Be clear and determined to resource this element from the off- it is not an add on it is integral to anti-racism practice

Issue

- Time and resourcing will need constant attention

Further context

- Time pressures risk perpetuating harmful approaches

Recommendation

- Consider building additional time into processes from the off in order to ensure future AROS has not already undermined its ability to undertake anti-racism practice

Issue

- Over reliance on the Academy and how to mitigate against that

Further context

- Systems generally accepts Academic knowledge. What structures can support future AROS re balance

Recommendation

- Consider what could be put in place to try and mitigate over reliance on the Academy, particularly within the ideas of co-production

Succession planning: creating the right opportunities for hand over to future host.

The original schedule for the DAG project work factored in several months of handover time between the DAG, the lead and a future host organisation subsequent to the outcome from the procurement process.

Delays in SG processes have meant that the DAG has completed and closed whilst the evaluation process for the successful tender is still ongoing. This creates risks, not least a loss of momentum and institutional memory and expertise.

This was discussed with DAG, the lead and senior government officials and the following is an overview of those discussions. On the assumption the future host will welcome engagement:

- A series of approximately 4 formal meetings and/or workshops and 1 informal meeting with senior officials agreed to support handover
- Resourcing by SG agreed for an anticipated 3 DAG members per meeting (the expertise to be determined by the locus of the meetings)
- Meetings may call on the SG's senior officials' involvement at times.
- Succession planning must include, as agreed in the procurement tender, the development of the MOU from DAG to future AROS for its relationship to host and SG its future independent relationship.

After DAG— national conversations on expertise to build anti-racism infrastructure

In support of Scottish Government and its commitment to build an anti-racism accountability organisation for Scotland, the DAG have secured funding to host a series of national conversations in August, October and December 2025.

The invite to participate, which has been extended to the Minister, is opened to members involved in the ERG the AIGG, and the DAG, and will include the researchers and consultants.

It is anticipated to focus on local, national and international perspectives on **Safety, Safeguarding, and Anti-Racism Practice** for people and processes contributing to the set-up of AROS, with an intention to demonstrate after-care and develop institutional memory within Scotland among people who are knowledge holders of delivering an anti-racism infrastructure at a national level. These national conversations are envisaged to be key to hold the systems and processes accountable in a public forum of anti-racism experts and perspectives in Scotland. Some sessions may use a “witness seminar” approach bringing together the expertise over the last few years to build national anti-racism infrastructure.

Appendix 1:

Quick overview of the background of the various groups and work that have led to this moment

Appendices

Appendix 1: Quick overview of the background of the various groups and work that have led to this moment

In response to the recommendations of the [Expert Reference Group on Ethnicity and Covid-19 \(ERG\)](#) and the [Immediate Priorities Plan \(IPP\)](#) a group was formed to determine how best to create the infrastructure for an anti-racism observatory for Scotland and determine collective ambition to bring about meaningful system change for those who experience racialised inequity.

The [Anti-Racism Interim Governance Group to Develop National Anti-Racism Infrastructure \(AIGG\)](#), was established by Ministerial Appointment in April 2022. The AIGG had three main aims:

- to determine the optimal model to create and sustain the Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS)
- to explore the accountability process in relation to anti-racism in Scotland, specifically to reflect upon and to track the work of the implementation of the IPP
- to build awareness in communities that new anti-racism infrastructure was being developed in Scotland, and to hear from them about how the infrastructure could best work for them.

The AIGG was formed from academic experts, young people, community and organisational leaders with a specific interest in anti-racism in Scotland. Between April 2022 and Sept 2023, 12 formal AIGG meetings were held. During this time the AIGG produced several documents which articulated their thinking around the development of the Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland and Scotland's processes and systems for accountability on anti-racism and equality work linked to inception modelling document.

Future AROS Vision – as proposed by the AIGG

To establish a competent understanding of principles of anti-racism and embed these in infrastructure and scrutiny across Scotland's sectors, so that the work of our public institutions is effective and fit for purpose for all communities, especially those who are most adversely impacted by racism.

The Anti-Racism Observatory will be led and co-produced with people from communities most adversely impacted by racism. The Minister ratified the AIGG recommendations November 2023.

The AIGG recognised the importance of future AROS to build strong community links and prioritises lived expertise and co-production in the development of the observatory's research and accountability work. AIGG set out seven strands of work for future AROS [linked here](#).

Appendix 2:

Word bank

Appendix 2: Word bank

These are not definitions. This word bank is designed to help readers understand our use of terminology in this report. We paid attention to the guidance from the [“Approach to language”](#) in the NHS Race and Health Observatory’s Rapid Evidence Review.

Ableism

Discrimination in favour of able-bodied people.

Academic

A teacher or a researcher in a university or other higher education organisation. Academia is the part of society connected with studying and research.

Accountability (or hold to account)

To make sure that a person or organisation does what they say they will do.

Activism

Campaigning or working for an organisation to bring about political or social change.

Adversely racialised

Individuals or groups who suffer adverse consequence due to racialisation (see below) because of the domination over their assigned group by (an)other group(s).

Advocacy (being an advocate)

Giving a person or group of people support to help them express their views or stand up for their rights.

Anti-racism

The process of breaking up systems, structures, policies, practices and attitudes so that resources and power are shared fairly across all racial groups.

Anti-semitism

Prejudice against Jewish people.

Authentic

Being true to who you are.

Bystander training

Learning how to successfully intervene in or challenge discriminatory behaviour.

Cis-heterosexism

Prejudice against people who are not heterosexual or straight.

Casework

When organisations work with people who need their help.

Citizenship

At its most basic, the legal right to live in a state or country.

Classism

Prejudice against people of a particular social class.

Co-creation, co-design, co-production

When people come together as equal partners to create, design or produce something.

Co-learning

When those we would normally think of as teachers and as students, both teach and learn from each other.

Colourism

Discriminating against people with darker skin tones (see also, Internalised colourism)

Community-engaged research

Research where the people who will be affected by its outcomes are not just involved but are treated as equal partners throughout the process.

Community liaison

People who keep organisations and communities in touch with each other.

Company limited by guarantee

Like not-for-profit or social enterprises and charities, these companies have no shares or stakeholders. They are owned by guarantors who agree to pay a set amount of money towards company debts.

Emergency preparedness

The steps organisations should take to make sure people are safe before, during and after an emergency.

Epistemic oppression

When people are excluded from creating or adding to knowledge, because others do not consider their knowledge to be legitimate or valid. (See also, Institutional oppression and Structural oppression.)

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Assessments meant to make sure that policies are fair and do not discriminate against certain groups. In 2012 Scottish Ministers put specific duties on Scottish public bodies to help them meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (2010). These included carrying out EQIAs.

Feminism

The belief in the social, economic and political equality of the sexes.

Focus group

Where a group of people (normally 6-12) come together to discuss agreed topics.

Gender identity

Whether someone personally feels they are male, female, both, neither, and so on.

Governance

The process of overseeing the control and direction of an organisation.

Health inequalities

Unfair and needless differences in health between different groups in society.

Homophobia

Prejudice against gay people.

Inclusive

Making everyone feel welcome and valued.

Inequity (racial, gender, and so on)

Unfairness and discrimination against a group of people because of their “race”, ethnicity, gender, and so on.

Institutional oppression

The systematic oppression of people who belong to certain groups by society or its institutions. (See also, Epistemic oppression and Structural oppression.)

Intergenerational learning

When people of all ages learn together and from each other.

Internalised colourism

When dark-skinned people discriminate against themselves and others with dark skin tones (see also, Colourism)

Internalised racism

When those discriminated against, agree with the discrimination. (See also, Racism.)

Intersectionality (and intersecting oppressions)

When different forms of inequality or discrimination (e.g. because of age, gender, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) come together to create further discrimination and oppression.

Islamophobia

Prejudice against Islam or Muslim people.

Iterative process

Creating, testing and revising something until it is right.

Language barrier

In this context, when people don't share the same first language, making it harder for them to understand each other.

Life-long learning

Learning that goes on throughout a person's life, in personal, academic or professional places.

Lived experience

The personal life experiences people have had.

Lived expertise

Expertise gained from people's own experiences and learning that can be used to bring about change.

Marginalisation

When a group of people is made to feel less or not important, making it harder for them to get basic services or the same life chances as other people.

Minoritisation

When a dominant group treats another group as subordinate to it or somehow less than it, in a way that harms the subordinate group's members or is unfair.

Multicultural

Made up of more than one cultural or ethnic group.

Neurodiversity

Differences in the way people's brains work.

Non-binary

A term people use to describe genders that do not fall into one of the two categories of male or female.

Participants (in research)

People who take part in a study in a way that goes beyond filling in a questionnaire. (See also, Respondents.)

Personally mediated racism

Racism that is shaped by people's personal prejudices. (See also, Racism.)

Pilot (group)

A small group of people brought together to test a way of working before committing to it fully.

Policy and policy-making

A set of ideas or ways of doing things, e.g. a law, rule or process, put in place by a government or organisation.

Positionality

A person's social position and power because of their various social identities (e.g. age, race, gender, occupation, etc.)

Power dynamics

The balance of power (including privilege, influence, etc) between different people, groups or institutions.

Power structures

The people, groups or institutions in control.

Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination based on nine characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Public or public-sector institutions or bodies

Organisations that are run by the government and funded by the taxes we pay, e.g. the NHS, the police and the courts, public education, public transport.

"Race"

A social and political system that classifies people into a hierarchy based on interpretations of factors like physical appearance, social factors and cultural backgrounds^{5,6}.

"Race" or racial equality

Similarity in opportunities or support for people grouped into different races⁷.

"Race" or racial equity

The absence of unfair, unjust, avoidable or remediable differences between people grouped by race⁸.

"Race science"

The false belief that people can be divided up into "races" and that some "races" are superior or inferior to others.

⁵ From the Talk Glossary of Genomic and Genetic Terms by the National Human Genome Research Institute. Available from: <https://www.genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Race>

⁶ Jones CP. Toward the Science and Practice of Anti-Racism: Launching a National Campaign Against Racism. *Ethn Dis*. 2018 Aug 9;28(Suppl 1):231-234.

⁷ Schmelkes S. Recognizing and Overcoming Inequity in Education. *UN Chronicle*. 2020 Jan. Available from: <https://www.un.org/en/un-chronicle/recognizing-and-overcoming-inequity-education#:~:text=Equality%20means%20providing%20the%20same,to%20those%20most%20in%20need>

⁸ Overview on Health Equity from the World Health Organization. Available from: https://www.who.int/health-topics/health-equity#tab=tab_1

Racialisation

The process through which social meaning is assigned to individuals or groups based on shared characteristics such as phenotype, culture, language, nationality, religion, and class for the purpose of generating or maintaining a hierarchy where some groups have dominance over others⁹.

Racial literacy

The knowledge, skills and awareness to talk thoughtfully about race and racism.

Racism

A system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks, that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources³⁴. (See also, Internalised racism, Personally mediated racism, Structural racism and Systematic racism.)

Redress

Putting right or compensating someone for an unfair or unjust action.

Reflective practice

Reviewing our actions in a process of continuing learning.

Reflection workshops

In this context, when people come together to interpret data or evidence and discuss what conclusions they can draw from it.

Reflexive practice

Testing and reviewing our own beliefs, experiences and judgments and their impact on us and others.

Relative poverty

When a household has an income of less than half the average (median) income.

Representative (survey)

A survey whose respondents reflect the population it is studying, without speaking to everyone in that population. (See also, Representation bias.)

Representation bias

When the sample or group of people taking part in the research does not truly reflect the wider population being studied (See also, Representative.)

Respondents (in research)

The term usually given to people who take part in a study that involves answering questions in a survey or questionnaire. (See also, Participants.)

⁹ Adapted from Omi M, Winant H. *Racial Formation in the United States*. Routledge; 2014.

Sexism

Usually prejudice against women.

Sexual orientation

Who people are sexually attracted to and want to have a sexual relationship with. Click here for Stonewall's [list of sexual orientation terms and their definitions](#).

Short-life working group

A group that brings people together to work on a specific task for a limited time only.

Socio-economic

To do with a person's social class and how much money they have.

Social desirability bias

When respondents change their answers, particularly to sensitive questions, because they think it will make them look better.

Standardised data

Data that has been defined, labelled and organised in the same consistent way so that it can be compared with other data.

Structural oppression

The systematic oppression of certain groups through society's or an organisation's policies and practices (See also, Epistemic oppression and Institutional oppression.)

Structural racism

When a society's laws, rules and policies result in and support the unfair treatment of others because of their "race" or ethnicity.

Systematic racism

Racism that is built into our systems and our society. (See also, Racism.)

Third party

An organisation that is not one of the main organisations in a situation but which has a lesser, often neutral, interest in it.

Thought leadership

Showing, through your ideas and actions, that you are an expert in a certain area, someone people turn to for advice.

Transcreation

Combining "translation" and "creation", transcreation is putting content in another language while keeping its original meaning, style and tone.

Transphobia

Prejudice against transgender people.

Trauma-informed

Something is trauma-informed if it is based on an understanding of, and is responsiveness to, the impact of trauma on people.

Unconscious bias

Acting against certain groups in a biased way without being aware of it.

Unstructured interviews

Unlike in a questionnaire (where there are mainly set questions and set replies to choose from), unstructured interviews are more of a free-flowing conversation.

Xenophobia

Prejudice against people who are from another country.

Appendix 3:

Communication strategy

Appendix 3: Communication strategy

Organisations known for interactive digital presence and communications:

1. [Amnesty International UK](#)
2. [Black Lives Matter](#)
3. [Show Racism the Red Card](#)
4. [Stop Hate UK](#)
5. [Stand Against Racism & Inequality](#)

AROS Website Communications Strategy 2025-2026

This communications strategy outlines how the future AROS website will serve as a digital platform for advancing systemic change through policy accountability, research, and community co-production. The strategy aligns with future AROS's core mission to become a national centre of excellence in developing and delivering policy through an intersectional, anti-racism lens.

1. Strategic framework

1.1 Vision

To establish a digital platform that enables competent understanding of anti-racism principles and embeds these in infrastructure and scrutiny across Scotland's sectors.

1.2 Core objectives

- Support delivery of genuine and irreversible systemic change
- Enable transparent policy accountability
- Facilitate community-led co-production
- Build capacity for anti-racism practice
- Foster evidence-based policy development

2. Digital content pillars

2.1 Policy accountability hub

Purpose

To track and analyse policy implementation across Scottish institutions

Example Features

a. *Interactive policy tracker*

Example: A detailed dashboard monitoring healthcare accessibility and systemic barriers for refugees in Scotland's NHS system

b. Policy analysis blog series

Example: Monthly analysis pieces by policy experts examining topics like "Decolonising Scottish Educational Policy: A Critical Analysis of the 2024 Curriculum Framework"

2.2 Research & evidence base

Purpose

To build a comprehensive repository of anti-racism research and data

Example Features

a. Academic research database

Example: A searchable collection of peer-reviewed studies on systemic racism in Scottish institutions, including research like "Institutional Barriers in Scottish Healthcare: A Longitudinal Study 2020-2025"

b. Data visualisation portal

Example: Interactive charts showing longitudinal data on employment equity in Scottish public institutions, with intersectional analysis capabilities

2.3 Community co-production space

Purpose

To facilitate meaningful community engagement in policy development

Example Features

a. Digital engagement platform

Example: Online consultation tools where community members can contribute to developing anti-racism accountability frameworks

b. Community voice blog

Example: Regular posts from community leaders discussing topics like "Reimagining Community Consultation: Lessons from Glasgow's Housing Policy Review"

3. Content types & examples

3.1 Regular content

a. Monthly policy briefs

Example: "Analysis of Anti-Racism Implementation in Scottish Universities: Progress and Gaps"

b. Quarterly reports

Example: "Systemic Change Indicators: Q3 2025 Assessment of Public Institution Progress"

c. *Expert commentary*

Example: Guest post by (an academic), (university): "Beyond Diversity Metrics: Investigating Institutional Barriers for Women of Colour in Scottish Workplaces"

3.2 Interactive content

a. *Data dashboards*

Example: Real-time tracking of institutional compliance with anti-racism frameworks

b. *Policy implementation maps*

Example: Geographic visualisation of anti-racism policy adoption across Scottish local authorities

3.3 Educational resources

a. *Methodology guides*

Example: "Guide to Applying Intersectional Analysis in Policy Development"

b. *Training materials*

Example: "Understanding Systemic Racism in Policy Making: A Practical Framework"

4. Community engagement strategy

4.1 Digital co-production tools

- Online consultation platforms
- Community feedback mechanisms
- Collaborative document development spaces

Example implementation:

"Policy Co-Creation Hub" where community members can:

- Comment on draft policies
- Propose amendments
- Share lived expertise
- Track how their input influences final policies

4.2 Knowledge exchange

- Virtual forums for community dialogue
- Expert-community connection platforms
- Resource sharing networks

Example implementation:

Monthly online knowledge exchange sessions featuring topics like "Community Perspectives on Housing Policy Implementation"

- Advanced search functionality
- Multi-language support
- Data visualisation tools
- Document repository
- Collaboration spaces

5. Technical infrastructure

5.1 Core platform features

5.2 User experience

- Intuitive navigation

6. Content management process

6.1 Editorial guidelines

- Anti-racism language framework
- Accessibility standards
- Content review protocols
- Community verification process

- Mobile responsiveness
- Accessibility compliance
- Clear information architecture

6.2 Publication workflow

Example process:

- Content submission
- Community review
- Expert verification
- Accessibility check
- Publication
- Community feedback collection

7. Measurement & evaluation

7.1 Key performance indicators

- Policy implementation tracking metrics
- Community engagement levels
- Resource utilisation rates
- Knowledge sharing effectiveness

7.2 Impact assessment

Example Framework:

- Quarterly community feedback sessions
- Annual impact reports
- Continuous improvement cycles
- Stakeholder surveys

8. Implementation timeline

Phase 1: Launch (Q1-Q2 2025)

- Core platform development
- Initial content creation
- Community engagement setup
- Basic functionality testing

Phase 2: Enhancement (Q3-Q4 2025)

- Advanced feature rollout
- Content expansion
- Community co-production integration
- Full functionality implementation

Phase 3: Optimisation (2026)

- System refinement
- Impact assessment

9. Resource requirements

9.1 Technical resources

- Content Management System
- Data visualisation tools
- Collaboration platforms
- Security infrastructure

10. Risk management

10.1 Identified risks

- Data security concerns
- Community engagement barriers
- Content accuracy maintenance
- Technical accessibility issues

- Feature enhancement
- Community feedback integration

9.2 Human resources

- Content creators
- Community engagement specialists
- Technical support team
- Policy analysts
- Research coordinators

10.2 Mitigation strategies

- Regular security audits
- Community support systems
- Expert verification processes
- Accessibility testing

AROS Social Media Strategy 2025

1. Strategic objectives

1.1 Primary goals

- Increase transparency around policy implementation
- Amplify community voices and lived expertise
- Share evidence-based research and analysis
- Build public understanding of systemic racism
- Foster meaningful engagement with stakeholders

1.2 Target audiences

- Policy makers and public institutions
- Community organisations and leaders
- Academic researchers
- Third sector organisations
- Media organisations
- General public interested in systemic change

2. Platform strategy

2.1 LinkedIn

Purpose

- Share policy analysis and research
- Engage with professional networks
- Highlight institutional accountability

Content Examples

- Policy implementation updates
- Research findings
- Expert analysis pieces
- Institutional progress reports
- Professional development opportunities

Sample Post:

"New Report: Examining career progression barriers for Women of Colour in Scottish public institutions. Key findings show systemic challenges in recruitment and promotion processes. Read the full analysis: [link] #SystemicChange #AntiRacism #Scotland"

2.2 Twitter/X

Purpose

- Real-time updates
- Community engagement
- Public discourse
- News sharing

Content examples

- Live updates from events
- Policy announcement analyses
- Quick stats and findings
- Community spotlights
- Engagement with stakeholders

Sample post:

"🔍 Just Released: How are Scottish institutions implementing anti-racist policies? Our latest dashboard shows progress across sectors. Explore the data: [link] #ScottishPolicy #SystemicChange #Accountability"

2.3 Instagram

Purpose

- Visual storytelling
- Community engagement
- Educational content
- Behind-the-scenes insights

Content examples

- Infographics on key findings
- Event highlights
- Community stories
- Visual data presentations
- Educational carousel posts

Sample post:

"Swipe ➡ to understand how systemic change happens in Scottish institutions. This 5-part series breaks down the key steps in policy implementation. #SystemicChange #Scotland #AntiRacism"

3. Content pillars

3.1 Policy accountability

- Implementation tracking updates
- Progress reports
- Institutional responses
- Change indicators
- Success metrics

3.2 Research & evidence

- Study findings
- Data analysis
- Expert insights
- Comparative studies
- Methodology explanations

3.3 Community voices

- Lived expertise
- Community perspectives
- Success stories
- Change maker profiles
- Impact narratives

3.4 Educational content

- Term explanations
- Process breakdowns
- System analysis
- Historical context
- Best practices

4. Content calendar

4.1 Regular features

[#MethodologyMonday](#): Breaking down research approaches

[#TransformationTuesday](#): Highlighting systemic changes

[#WednesdayWisdom](#): Expert insights

[#ThoughtLeaderThursday](#): Community voice features

[#FindingsFriday](#): Research updates

4.2 Monthly themes

Example themes:

- [January](#): Setting Accountability Frameworks
- [February](#): Education System Analysis
- [March](#): Women's Leadership in Systemic Change
- [April](#): Health Equity Assessment
- [May](#): Employment Policy Progress

5. Engagement strategy

5.1 Community Interaction

- Regular Q&A sessions
- Twitter chats on specific topics
- Response protocols
- Community feedback incorporation
- Stakeholder engagement

6. Content guidelines

6.1 Voice & tone

- Professional yet accessible
- Evidence-based
- Solution-focused
- Inclusive language
- Clear and direct

7. Measurement & evaluation

7.1 Key performance indicators

- Engagement rates
- Reach and impressions
- Community growth
- Content sharing
- Link clicks
- Comment quality
- Policy maker engagement

5.2 Crisis communication

- Response framework
- Escalation protocol
- Statement templates
- Stakeholder communication plan
- Recovery strategy

6.2 Visual identity

- Consistent branding
- Professional design
- Clear data visualisation
- Accessible formats
- Representative imagery

7.2 Impact metrics

- Policy discourse influence
- Stakeholder engagement
- Community feedback
- Knowledge sharing effectiveness
- Public understanding improvement

8. Implementation plan

Phase 1: Launch (Q1 2025)

- Platform setup
- Initial content creation
- Community building
- Basic engagement

Phase 2: Growth (Q2-Q3 2025)

- Content expansion
- Engagement increase
- Community development
- Feature utilisation

Phase 3: Optimisation (Q4 2025)

- Strategy refinement
- Advanced features
- Impact assessment
- Community leadership

9. Resource requirements

9.1 Team needs

- Social Media Manager
- Content Creator
- Community Manager
- Data Analyst
- Design Support

9.2 Tools & technology

- Social media management platform
- Analytics tools
- Design software
- Content calendar
- Monitoring tools

10. Safeguarding mechanism

Safeguarding is fundamental to all aspects of AROS's communications work. Detailed advice and recommendations for protecting communities and addressing potential risks are provided in the main report.

10.1 Identified risks

- Misinformation spread
- Trolling/harassment
- Message misinterpretation
- Platform changes
- Community conflict

10.2 Mitigation strategies

- Clear guidelines
- Monitoring protocols
- Response frameworks
- Community support
- Platform backup plans

Accessibility guidelines

1. Core principles

1.1 Universal access

- All digital content must be accessible to people with diverse abilities
- No user should be excluded from accessing information
- Multiple ways to access the same content
- Clear pathways to essential information

2. Website technical requirements

2.1 Visual accessibility

- High contrast options
- Minimum text size of 16px
- Scalable text up to 200%
- Clear heading hierarchy
- No reliance on colour alone for information
- Alternative text for all images
- Captions for all videos
- No flashing content
- Consistent navigation layout

2.2 Screen reader compatibility

- Proper HTML structure
- Accessible Rich Internet Applications labels where needed

1.2 Cultural considerations

- Content available in multiple languages including:
- English, Common community languages (Arabic, Urdu, Polish)
- Cultural sensitivity in design and content
- Respect for diverse cultural practices
- Appropriate terminology use

- Descriptive link text

- Logical reading order

- Proper form labels

- Skip navigation options

- Keyboard accessibility

- Focus indicators

2.3 Navigation & structure

- Clear menu structure

- Consistent layout

- Breadcrumb trails

- Search functionality

- Site map

- Multiple navigation options

- Error prevention

- Clear feedback mechanisms

3. Content Accessibility

3.1 Text content

- Plain language principles
- Short paragraphs
- Bulleted lists for clarity
- Clear headings and subheadings
- Important information first
- Consistent terminology
- Glossary of terms
- Reading level guidance

4. Social Media Accessibility

4.1 Image Posts

- Alt text for all images
- Image descriptions in captions
- High contrast visuals
- Clear text on images
- Readable font sizes
- Colour combination considerations
- Multiple format sharing
- Content warnings when needed

4.3 Text posts

- CamelCase hashtags
(#AntiRacism)
- Limited emoji use
- Avoid special characters

3.2 Multimedia content

- Transcripts for audio
- Captions for video
- Audio descriptions
- Sign language options
- Downloadable alternatives
- Multiple format availability
- Clear media controls
- Pause/stop options

4.2 Video content

- Captions on all videos
- Transcripts available
- Sign language options
- No strobing effects
- Clear audio quality
- Volume controls
- Pause functionality
- Description of visual content
- Clear language
- Thread numbering
- Content warnings
- Alternative formats
- Translation options

5. Document accessibility

5.1 PDF Documents

- Tagged structure
- Searchable text
- Alternative text
- Logical reading order
- Bookmarks for navigation
- Proper heading structure
- Table of contents
- Accessible forms

5.2 Word documents

- Heading styles
- Alternative text
- Table headers
- List formatting
- Colour contrast
- Font selection
- Page numbers
- Navigation pane

6. Forms and interactive elements

6.1 Form design

- Clear labels
- Error prevention
- Validation messages
- Required field indication
- Generous time limits
- Auto-fill support
- Clear instructions
- Multiple submission methods

6.2 Interactive features

- Keyboard navigation
- Clear focus states
- Timeout warnings
- Save progress options
- Alternative paths
- Help documentation
- Error recovery
- Success confirmation

7. Mobile accessibility

7.1 Mobile design

- Responsive layouts
- Touch targets (min 44x44px)
- Pinch zoom enabled
- Portrait/landscape support
- Simple gestures
- Alternative navigation
- Offline functionality
- Battery consideration

7.2 Mobile content

- Simplified layouts
- Prioritised content
- Quick loading
- Data-light options
- Touch-friendly controls
- Clear feedback
- Error prevention
- Save states

8. Testing and monitoring

8.1 Regular testing

- Screen reader testing
- Keyboard navigation
- Colour contrast checking
- Link checking
- Form validation
- Mobile testing
- Cross-platform testing
- User feedback collection

9. Emergency access

9.1 Crisis information

- Clear emergency paths
- Multiple contact methods
- Quick exit options
- Offline alternatives
- Simple instructions
- Priority access
- Alternative formats
- Backup systems

8.2 Monitoring tools

- Accessibility checkers
- Automated testing
- User feedback systems
- Error tracking
- Performance monitoring
- Usage analytics
- Device testing
- Regular audits

9.2 Support access

- Help documentation
- Multiple contact methods
- Clear instructions
- Response times
- Alternative formats
- Language support
- Technical support
- User guides

10. Implementation checklist

Pre-launch

- ☐ Screen reader testing
- ☐ Keyboard navigation testing
- ☐ Colour contrast verification
- ☐ Language support verification
- ☐ Mobile responsiveness check
- ☐ Form accessibility testing
- ☐ Document accessibility check

Regular maintenance

- ☐ Monthly accessibility audits
- ☐ User feedback review
- ☐ Content update checks
- ☐ Link verification
- ☐ Document updates
- ☐ Media accessibility review
- ☐ Translation updates
- ☐ Technical compliance check

11. Training and resources

11.1 Staff training

- Accessibility basics
- Content creation guidelines
- Testing procedures
- Update protocols
- Emergency procedures
- Support provision
- Regular updates
- Best practices

11.2 User support

- Help documentation
- Training materials
- Video guides
- Written tutorials
- Support contacts
- Feedback channels
- Update notifications
- Resource library

Appendix 4:

Expertise of DAG People

Appendix 4: Expertise of DAG People

Samina Ansari

- Former CEO Amina - Muslim Women's Resource Centre.
- Third sector equity, inclusion and anti-racism practitioner.
- Expertise in gendered islamophobia community engagement and developing community voice.

Dr Ankna Arockiam

- Lecturer - Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- Artistic Director - Westbourne Music
- Regional Committee Vice Chair - Musicians' Union.
- Co-convenor - Shared Narratives (Platform for researchers of colour in the performing arts).
- Board Member - (MusiQuE) Music Quality Enhancement Researcher

Ndaye Lisa Badji-Churchill

Previous AIGG member

- Advocacy Officer at Shelter Scotland
- Volunteer Manager at Black Girls Hike C.I.C.
- Activist and freelance writer.
- Experienced in lived expertise participation, intersectional policy analysis and youth-led anti-racism practice.

Rahela Cirpaci

- Community Leader at Romano Lav. An organisation steered by the voices of the Roma communities in particular the voices of Roma youth.
- Expertise in community engagement and developing community voice.

Shulamite Ezechi

- CEO of ANYISO
- Expertise in sharing community voice, developing intersectional approaches within local government partnership and funding.

Miura Lima

Previous AIGG member supporting young people

- Youth Advocacy Lead at Intercultural Youth Scotland (IYS)

- Period Dignity Activist
- Co-Founder & Board President of Minamuanon
- Love Your Menses' Program Manager (Period Dignity)
- Experienced in lived expertise participation and youth-led anti-racism practice.

Monica Lee-Macpherson MBE

Previous AIGG member

- Head of SHIMCA (Scottish Highlands & Islands and Moray Chinese Association) Inverness.
- Expertise in developing community voice, understanding of governance structures and building new organisations.

Michael Matovu

Previous AIGG member

- **DAG Co-Chair**
- Co-Founder and Director of Radiant and Brighter Community Interest Company.
- Expertise in developing community voice, and understanding of racism and anti-racism within the labour market.

Olalekan Oyedepo

- Researcher, Co-Founder and Project coordinator at the Hope Project Scotland.
- Expertise in engagement with national health organisations in relation to sickle cell and LGBTQ issues.
- Researcher expertise in examining co production processes of 3rd sector and SG, and inequalities in the UK.

Nusa C Parinussa

- DAG member from Dec 2023 – April 2024
- Project Manager April 2024 – Aug 2024
- DAG member from August 2024
- Artist, Anti-racist arts production, project managing & policy consultant
- Founder-Director of ID.Y CIC
- Organiser & Advocate in Queer, Trans, Black and People of Colour (QTIBIPOC) community.
- Expertise in community engagement and developing community voice.

Adebusola Ramsay

Previous AIGG member

- Visual Artist, Independent Researcher and Data Linkage Practitioner.
- PhD candidate.
- Expertise in history of “race” and processes of racialisation and racialised data.

Zaki El Salahi

- Freelancer in 'Dark Matter Education'.
- PhD candidate.
- Expertise in human rights, participation & safeguarding especially in relation to social work, education, heritage & health sectors.

Dr Mark Wong

Previous AIGG member

- **DAG Co-Chair**
- Senior Lecturer in Public Policy and Research Methods and social and urban policy subject group lead at University of Glasgow.
- Expertise in tackling racial bias and discrimination in artificial intelligence, data, and use of co-design methods for digital innovation.

Talat Yaqoob

Previous AIGG Co chair

- DAG co chair Dec 2023-February 2024
- DAG member from Dec 2023–Aug 2024
- Policy and strategy, participation and influencing with and by marginalised communities, community research methods on racism/sexism issues, application of intersectionality.

Professor Ima Jackson

Previous AIGG member- co chair

- DAG member and informal project lead December 2023- August 2024)
- **Project Lead for the Design Advisory group August 2024**
- Professor of Community Engagement in Research, Social Policy and Infrastructure Development.
- Experienced in lived expertise participation, intersectional policy analysis and anti-racism practice.

Appendix 5:

User Research Design Proposal

Appendix 5: User Research Design Proposal

Introduction

This research design proposal outlines the framework for conducting a needs assessment for the future development of the Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) digital interactive library. The goal of this assessment is to gather critical insights into the needs and expectations of diverse user groups, which will inform the design and functionality of the platform. The interactive library aims to be a comprehensive, accessible, and inclusive resource that actively supports the fight against racism while fostering community engagement and systemic change.

This proposal highlights the importance of user-centred design in the library's development, ensuring that it serves the broadest possible audience, including marginalised communities, individuals with varying levels of digital literacy, and organisations working toward anti-racism and social justice. By focusing on inclusivity, the needs assessment will prioritise multilingual support, accessibility, and clear navigation to enhance the user experience.

The assessment will also explore key aspects such as the integration of intersectionality, transparency in data use, and the need for interactive features like incident reporting and community feedback mechanisms. The findings from this research will guide the creation of a digital library that not only serves as an information repository but also as a platform for community empowerment and advocacy.

This proposal provides the design lead with a clear direction for conducting the needs assessment, ensuring that the library is built to be a sustainable, adaptable, and impactful tool in the fight against racism across Scotland.

Key Elements of the Research Design

1. Inclusivity and Representation

- Information collection for the AROS digital library will actively involve organisations from diverse sectors, including the third sector, public bodies, and higher education institutions (HEIs), ensuring broad community representation.
- Special priority will be given to engaging with groups that are often underrepresented in research, such as youth organisations, rural communities, and organisations focusing on intersectional identities (race, gender, disability).
- The selection of organisations for participation will be unbiased, based on their relevance to the AROS objectives, rather than their prominence or popularity. This approach ensures that all voices are represented equally in shaping the library's design.

2. Community Empowerment and Participation

- The development of the AROS digital library will be community-led, with input from users to guide the design and functionality. Communities will have a central role in determining how the library addresses their needs and concerns.
- A co-production model will be employed, where communities are not passive subjects but active partners in the research process. Their feedback will influence the methodology, design decisions, and overall direction of the library.

3. Transparent Selection Process

- Organisations invited to participate in the needs assessment and design process will be selected according to a clear, transparent set of criteria aligned with the core values of the AROS initiative. These criteria will focus on organisations' work in anti-racism, intersectionality, and their potential impact on policy or public services.
- The selection process will be communicated transparently to build trust with participants and ensure accountability throughout the development of the digital library.

4. Focus on Widening Outreach

- The development process will prioritise the inclusion of underrepresented voices, particularly from grassroots organisations and rural communities, as well as those with limited resources to engage in large-scale research.
- Efforts will be made to reach out to communities that are often overlooked or hard to access, ensuring that a diverse range of perspectives informs the development of the library.
- Engagement will also include local authorities, public bodies working on anti-racism and equalities, and educational institutions to ensure alignment with key stakeholders and promote a holistic, cross-sector approach to the project.

5. Neutral Research Methods

- Research methodologies will be designed to be neutral, avoiding any preconceived biases. Data collection will be framed in a way that ensures accessibility and inclusivity for all groups, including through language support, culturally relevant approaches, and accommodations for disabilities.
- Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods will be employed to capture diverse community narratives and provide measurable insights that will inform the library's design.

6. Intersectional Lens

- The research will apply an intersectional lens, recognising the interconnected nature of race, gender, disability, and other social categories. This will ensure that the library's design reflects the diverse needs of individuals with intersecting identities and addresses systemic inequalities.

7. Unbiased Analysis and Reporting

- The data gathered will be analysed and reported impartially, ensuring that the experiences and voices of all participants are represented without bias. The final report will offer a comprehensive view of the needs and preferences of the communities involved, guiding the future design of the AROS interactive digital library.

This approach ensures that the information gathering process is comprehensive, community-led, and aligned with the core values of inclusivity and intersectionality. By prioritising diverse voices and focusing on systemic reform, the development of the AROS digital library will be grounded in the real needs of the communities it aims to serve.

Importance of Mapping Public Bodies in the Research:

Public bodies function at the intersection of policy development and implementation, serving as key drivers for racial equality, inclusivity, and addressing racialised inequalities in Scotland. Their involvement in this research aligns with the Anti-Racism in Governance Group's (AIGG) seven strands, which focus on improving racial justice through systemic change, leadership, workforce diversity, and community empowerment. Mapping public bodies helps in:

1. **Understanding Implementation Mechanisms:** Public bodies like the Scottish Government's Race Equality Network and the NHS Steering Groups play a central role in rolling out race-related policies and are responsible for bridging the gap between policy and practice. Through their networks, they oversee the fair implementation of programs aimed at race equality. Understanding their governance structures and challenges can provide insights into how anti-racism policies are being internalised and acted upon.
2. **Highlighting Barriers to Progress:** By mapping these organisations, the research will identify challenges in areas like data collection (as seen in the **Race and Ethnicity Data Working Group**) and accountability in employment equity (through groups like the **Cross Justice Working Group on Race**). Addressing these barriers is essential for understanding how policies are failing certain communities.
3. **Engaging with Policy-Makers and Decision-Makers:** Public bodies are often at the centre of legislative change. Entities such as the Scottish Government's Directorate for Equalities, Inclusion, and Human Rights and Hate Crime Strategic Partnership Group influence laws and policies. By including them in the research, we ensure that recommendations are heard by those with the power to enact meaningful change.

Alignment with AIGG's Seven Strands:

1. **Systemic Change & Public Accountability:** Public bodies directly engage with institutional policies that address systemic racism. The work of the Scottish Government's Race Equality Network on recruitment and retention within the Scottish Government mirrors AIGG's goal to promote racial equity across institutions. Their initiatives help pinpoint how public employment practices can be enhanced to support diversity and inclusion.
2. **Leadership Representation:** Groups like the Race Equality Network's **Black Identity Group (BIG)** and the Minority Ethnic Women's Group reflect AIGG's emphasis on promoting diverse leadership in the public sector. By engaging with these bodies, the research can explore how public institutions are—or are not—creating opportunities for minority leadership.
3. **Workforce Equity:** Public entities such as the **NHS Steering Group on Race** and the **Directorate for Economy** are focused on workforce equity. Their efforts to improve recruitment, retention, and advancement opportunities for minority ethnic staff align with AIGG's workforce objectives.
4. **Public Narratives and Education: The Empire, Slavery, and Scotland's Museums (ESSM)** Steering Group aims to address the lack of representation of minority ethnic narratives in Scottish heritage. This aligns with AIGG's call to reshape public narratives around race and colonialism, ensuring that minority perspectives are included in the stories told in public spaces.
5. **Community Empowerment and Participation:** Public bodies such as the **Human Rights Lived Experience Board** provide a platform for minority voices in shaping public policy. This directly supports AIGG's goal of community-led decision-making and ensuring lived experiences inform policy reforms.

In conclusion, mapping public bodies is vital for this research as it helps evaluate how institutional structures support—or hinder—racial equality. It ensures that the research remains grounded in systemic change, aligning community-led insights with institutional accountability. Public bodies, such as those involved in the Cross Justice Working Group or the Race Equality Network, serve as a conduit for enacting the seven strands of the AIGG's mission, ensuring that the research supports long-term systemic transformation.

The AIGG Mission has seven key strands:

1. Co-Producing Anti-Racism with Communities

Communities lead in shaping anti-racism principles within our work and Scotland's public institutions.

2. Building Capacity

- Public Institutions: Empowering staff to integrate intersectional and anti-racist approaches in policies and services.
- Communities: Enabling communities to scrutinise and influence public policies and services.

3. Accountability for Public Institutions

Co-developing tools with communities to ensure the Scottish Government and public institutions adopt anti-racist principles and can be held accountable.

4. Digital Anti-Racism Library

Creating an interactive, digital library to track, learn from, and assess anti-racism work within Scotland's public institutions.

5. Improving Data and Research

Establishing standards for race and ethnicity data collection while avoiding reinforcing systemic racism, and building research capacity in both communities and researchers.

6. Clear Communication with Communities and Partners

Building transparent, collaborative relationships with public and creative sectors to share anti-racism best practices and the realities of racism in Scotland.

7. Advocating for Racialised Communities

Advocating for equal power and scrutiny over decisions in public institutions, alongside more anti-racism training across Scotland.

Purposive Sampling

In developing the future Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) digital interactive library, it is essential to ensure that the platform meets the needs of diverse user groups and effectively supports anti-racism efforts across Scotland. To achieve this, purposive sampling will be employed as a strategic method to gather relevant, focused insights from key stakeholders and organisations working in anti-racism, community engagement, and social justice.

1. Clear Research Objectives and Criteria

- **Defining Specific Objectives:** The primary aim is to understand how public and community-led organisations are addressing racism and how these insights can inform the design and functionality of the AROS library. Purposive sampling will help identify organisations with proven commitments to anti-racism, ensuring that the data collected is directly aligned with the goals of the library.
- **Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria:** Organisations selected for the research will be those involved in advocacy, policy development, or direct action against racism, including public bodies, non-profits, and educational institutions. This will allow us to gather actionable, relevant data that informs the library's design.

2. Diverse and Representative Sample

- **Variety of Sectors and Perspectives:** The sampling approach will ensure a range of organisations across sectors, including local government, education, healthcare, and grassroots community groups. This will capture a wide variety of anti-racism strategies and perspectives, helping shape a well-rounded library resource.
- **Inclusion of Key Stakeholders:** The research will focus on both large, well-established organisations and smaller, grassroots efforts to ensure that the voices of all types of anti-racism initiatives are represented. This diversity will provide valuable insights into the challenges and successes faced by different groups across Scotland.

3. Key Informant Strategy

- **Target Decision-Makers or Experts:** By identifying and engaging key individuals involved in anti-racism policy, such as diversity officers, advocates, and practitioners, the research will gather targeted insights into the approaches and strategies that are most effective in combating racism. These insights will inform the library's functionality, particularly regarding content and interactive features.

4. Snowball Sampling for Reach and Depth

- **Referral-Based Selection:** Snowball sampling will be employed to extend the reach of the research, with key informants recommending other individuals or organisations with valuable insights. This approach ensures the inclusion of expert voices and trusted participants, uncovering deeper and more comprehensive insights for the digital library's design.

5. Geographic and Demographic Considerations

- **Covering Diverse Locations:** Purposive sampling will also prioritise a diverse geographic range, ensuring that the research captures how anti-racism strategies vary between urban and rural regions across Scotland. This will ensure the library is designed to meet the needs of users from different locations.
- **Diverse Demographic Profiles:** Organisations that serve marginalised communities—such as communities of colour and other racially adversely affected groups—will be prioritised. This will ensure the library reflects the varied experiences of racialised populations in Scotland.

6. Quota Sampling

- **Balanced Representation:** To avoid skewed data, quotas will be set to ensure balanced representation of organisations from different sectors, regions, and community groups. This approach guarantees a holistic view of anti-racism efforts, allowing the library to serve as a resource for a wide range of stakeholders.

7. Data Saturation

- **Sample Until No New Insights Emerge:** Data collection will continue until saturation is reached, meaning that no new information or themes emerge from further interviews. This approach ensures thoroughness and efficiency in gathering data while avoiding redundancy.

8. Ethical Considerations

- **Sensitivity and Confidentiality:** Given the sensitive nature of anti-racism work, the research will be conducted with care and respect for participants, particularly those from marginalised communities. Ethical considerations, including voluntary participation and confidentiality, will be upheld throughout the process to ensure trust and safety for all involved.

9. Logistical Feasibility

- **Access to Participants:** The purposive sampling approach will prioritise organisations that are accessible and responsive to the research timeline, ensuring the project progresses on schedule.
- **Balance of Time and Resources:** By carefully selecting a manageable number of participants, the research will balance depth with feasibility, ensuring that insights are gathered efficiently while maintaining the quality of data.

Conclusion

Purposive sampling will play a crucial role in gathering targeted insights from relevant organisations and individuals to inform the design and development of the AROS digital interactive library. This approach ensures that the library is based on diverse, practical, and actionable information while adhering to ethical standards and logistical feasibility. The outcome will be a resource that is truly reflective of Scotland's varied anti-racism efforts, empowering communities and driving systemic change.

Appendix 6:

Reporting Guidance

Appendix 6: Anti-Racism Community Engagement Fund: Reporting Guide

We are maintaining flexibility around how and what you report as we are learning from the process as much as we are learning from the content of your events. *Your event report is for future AROS and will shape how the organisation engages with groups/organisations like yours in the future.*

At each stage of the report you can reflect on what worked and what didn't work, this is not a test, or an evaluation of your organisation, future AROS wants to learn from you: what worked well in this process, what didn't, what could be improved upon?

However, in general we are hoping groups and organisations will provide information on the following, it is up to you how you structure your report but you may find this useful.

How you found the process of accessing the Anti-Racism Community Engagement Fund

- Where did you find out about it
- How did you find the process of application
- Why did you decide to apply
- Did you meet with the outreach workers during the process of application
- Is there anything you would like to have been different

A summary of your event

- The logistics of your event - where, when, how many participants took part
- How you chose to structure the event - did you prepare participants in advance

A summary of what you spoke about

- What themes and issues were discussed at the event
- Were the questions from the facilitation guide discussed or did you develop your own
- How were these discussed - small groups, individually, whole group discussion
- What were the conclusions/responses of the discussion

Think specifically about how people understand systemic racism in their lives and how they want this new organisation to work for them.

Any other conclusions

How to Report

You can provide this information in a format that works for you. This could be:

- A written report
- Illustrated notes drawn during your event by a visual notetaker
- Edited audio or video recording of the event *Please check in with our Outreach Team in advance if you plan to report using this method and ensure that you have necessary consent/permissions in place*
- Edited transcription of audio recording

You could think about how you integrate reporting into the format of the event and could use creative methods like zine making or an annotated collage. These could then be scanned or photographed and shared with the DAG.

Your event report should be submitted to the Design Advisory Team using this email address admin@antiracismobservatoryforscotland.org

Appendix 7:

Building a Digital Interactive Library for the Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland: Nine Case Studies and Key Considerations

Appendix 7: Building a Digital Interactive Library for the Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland: Nine Case Studies and Key Considerations

This document presents case studies on the development of a digital interactive library for the Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS).

Key features include focus on multilingual support, interactive tools, community-led contributions, and a trauma-informed approach. The library will evolve based on user feedback and emerging trends.

The overarching goal of the project is to provide an accessible, user-centred accountability focused resource built through community engagement.

Central to the library's design is its commitment to inclusivity, with a strong emphasis on making the platform accessible to a broad audience, including those with varying levels of digital literacy. It will prioritise community-led engagement by capturing lived expertise, facilitating contributions, and providing ongoing education and outreach. It will incorporate multilingual support, clear navigation, and adaptive features to ensure it meets the diverse needs of its users.

The library's functionality will extend beyond simply hosting information. It will feature tools that enable interactivity, such as incident reporting, discussion forums, and feedback loops, while promoting transparency and demonstrating how users' contributions lead to tangible actions. Special attention will be given to safeguarding user data, ensuring privacy, and moderating content to protect against misuse. The platform will also adopt a trauma-informed approach, providing emotional support and ensuring contributors' well-being.

The case studies explore various aspects of the library's design, including the integration of intersectionality of experience, the importance of transparency and trust, the need for a robust framework for data collection, and the long-term sustainability of the platform. With an eye toward continuous improvement and adaptation, the library will evolve based on user feedback, emerging trends, and technological advancements to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.

These case studies demonstrate how the digital library can become an essential tool in the fight against racism, not only by serving as a repository of knowledge but also as a space for community empowerment and advocacy, ultimately contributing to meaningful social change through addressing systemic racism.

Case Study 1: Enhancing Digital Library Development for Public Sector Organisation

This interview with a public sector organisation highlights key strategies for creating a modern, user-centric digital library that prioritises accessibility, community engagement, and long-term sustainability in order to develop public accountability for anti-racism efforts.

1. Community-Led Development

- Involve community members directly in the conceptualisation and design process to ensure the library reflects their needs and aspirations.
- Make it a participatory project, where the library itself becomes a cornerstone for community engagement under initiatives like AROS.

2. Finding the Right Builders

- Engage young talent in tech, particularly those exploring innovative fields like graphics, 3D modelling, and interactive digital experiences.
- Collaborate with professionals who specialize in modern, user-centred design to avoid outdated or clunky interfaces.

Treat this as an opportunity to explore creative, cutting-edge approaches that resonate with diverse audiences.

3. Holistic Accessibility

- Consult for example, with organisations and individuals representing neurodivergent, visually impaired, and hearing-impaired communities to ensure true inclusivity.
- Accessibility must go beyond compliance—think holistically about how people with varied abilities and needs interact with digital spaces.
- For example, incorporate features like screen-reader compatibility, sign language integration, and adaptive navigation tools.

4. User-Friendly and Dynamic Navigation

- Create a design that is intuitive, ensuring users can easily find what they're looking for without frustration.
- Design with future scalability in mind, allowing the addition of categories, resources, and content as the library evolves.

5. Data-Efficient Mobile Access

- Optimise the platform for mobile use, minimising data consumption to make it accessible for users with limited internet or data resources.
- Aim to create a system that can be easily accessed by individuals in vulnerable situations, such as asylum seekers relying on basic SIM cards.

6. Community Interaction and Connection

- Build interactive features into the library, such as spaces for discussion, collaboration, and shared learning.
- Leverage platforms like Discord to create a discursive hub where users can discuss library content, participate in reading groups, or engage in workshops.
- These features can make the library not just a resource hub but also a dynamic, ongoing community project.

7. Cultural Sensitivity and Trauma-Informed Design

- Ensure that content and design align with trauma-informed principles, recognizing the sensitivity required for certain topics or audiences.
- Provide clear, supportive messaging to guide users through resources in a way that feels empowering rather than overwhelming.

8. Flexibility and Longevity

- Build a platform that can adapt to new technologies, trends, and user needs. This includes an expandable infrastructure to accommodate evolving content types.
- Think of the library as an evolving entity, with room for periodic updates and continuous community-driven improvements.

9. Sustainability and Vision

- Embrace a long-term vision where the library grows as an integral part of community initiatives.
- Develop partnerships with educational institutions, NGOs, and tech developers to sustain and enhance the platform.

10. Content as an Active Resource

- Move beyond a static repository by incorporating live events, such as webinars, live Q&As, and interactive workshops.
- Highlight curated, user-recommended content and updates to keep the platform fresh and engaging.

By integrating these elements, the library can become more than a collection of resources—it can transform into a living, collaborative platform that adapts to the needs of its users while fostering connection and empowerment.

Case Study 2: Creating a Living Library: Harnessing Embodied Knowledge for Anti-Racism and Inclusion

The creation of a community-driven library can be transformative when it becomes more than a repository of static resources. By integrating embodied knowledge, fostering community engagement, and embracing a dynamic, evolving approach, this initiative aims to establish a living library that serves as both an educational and advocacy tool for anti-racism and inclusion work in order to build public accountability of those efforts.

Key Considerations

1. Embodied Knowledge Holders

- **Incorporating lived expertise:**

Individuals with direct experience hold invaluable personal insights. Their lived experiences provide a depth of knowledge that transcends written reports.

- **Building human connections:**

Ensuring these individuals are contactable fosters a model of mutual learning—emphasising the principle of “each one teach one.” Their availability encourages deeper understanding through dialogue.

- **Trauma-informed approaches:**

Considering trauma when designing resources can create a library that is both healing and educational, acknowledging the challenges faced by those involved in anti-racism work.

2. Living Archive

- **Interactive and Evolving Content:** The library should present materials back to the community, fostering continuous dialogue and engagement. Informal feedback sessions, such as “coffee chats” or community events, will allow real-time interaction with the archive’s content.

- **Dynamic Engagement with the Community:** By evolving in response to community feedback, the library will remain relevant and accessible, avoiding the risk of becoming a static resource.

- **Avoiding Passive Repositories:** This approach transforms the library into an active space for ongoing participation, ensuring it remains integral and valuable to the community.

3. Community Education and Advocacy

- **Collaborating with community educators:**

Partnering with experts in community education bridges the gap between resources and the people who need them. This ensures broader accessibility and effective usage.

- **Prioritising advocacy:**

Advocacy ensures the library stays alive and relevant, preventing it from becoming

dormant. By embedding advocacy, the library is designed for interaction and continuous participation.

- **Inclusive participation:**

Community involvement in designing and delivering library content from the off is key to making the resource meaningful and impactful.

4. Practical and Resource Considerations

- **Acknowledging resource needs:** A living archive is resource-intensive, but its long-term benefits—relevance, accessibility, and community engagement—justify the investment.
- **Expertise in archiving:** Combining the skills of archivists and curators with community educators, in particular those such as decolonising the archive and other anti-racism experts is essential to maintain and grow the library as a living, engaging resource.

Conclusion

This living library concept redefines the traditional archive, making it a space for human interaction, dialogue, and advocacy. By integrating embodied knowledge and fostering participation, it evolves into a dynamic resource that empowers communities, amplifies marginalized voices, and promotes anti-racism and inclusion work.

Case Study 3: Designing a Digital Interactive Library for Anti-Racism in Scotland: A Dynamic Approach

The Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) is developing a digital interactive library to support anti-racism initiatives. This case study outlines the key considerations for creating a resource that is thematically organised, community-driven, and designed to evolve as a living repository of knowledge in order to build systemic competence and accountability.

Key Components

1. Thematic Organisation and Tagging

- **Simplifying navigation:** The library will be categorised thematically, such as by employment journeys, workplace culture, or role-specific issues.
- **Searchable and user-friendly:** Tagging and search functionality will ensure users can quickly access the resources most relevant to their needs.

2. User Interaction and Community Engagement

- **Creating a community space:** A dedicated section for user interaction will foster dialogue, enabling individuals to share experiences, discuss applications of library resources, and provide feedback.
- **An active resource:** The library is envisioned as a dynamic platform where users feel empowered to contribute, ensuring it remains responsive to evolving needs.

3. Academic and Qualitative Research Integration

- **Access to trusted studies:**
Key reports, such as those from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) or the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER), will anchor the library in evidence-based anti-racism work.
- **Relevant networks:** Resources from organisations and professional networks will provide high-quality, up-to-date content.

4. Proactive Research and Resource Discovery

- **Literature reviews and updates:** The library will proactively highlight emerging studies, ensuring users stay informed on the latest anti-racism research.
- **Custom alerts:** Notification systems, inspired by tools like Knowledge Exchange, will inform users of new publications relevant to their interests.

5. Stakeholder Engagement and Lived Experience

- **Centring lived experiences:** Input from people from a racialised minority and other key stakeholders will shape the library's design and content, ensuring its relevance to real-world challenges.

- **Ongoing feedback loops:** Stakeholder feedback will drive continuous improvement and refinement of the library's offerings.

6. Cross-Sector Collaboration

- **A hub for anti-racism efforts:** Partnerships with advocacy groups, government agencies, and educational institutions will enhance the library's reach and collaborative potential.

7. Dynamic and Living Resource

- **Continuous evolution:** The library will be regularly updated with new research and community insights, ensuring it remains a living and responsive resource.
- **Community-driven updates:**
Ongoing participation will keep the library relevant and engaging.

Conclusion

By integrating thematic organisation, community interaction, and lived expertise, the AROS digital library aims to become a vital tool for anti-racism work in Scotland. This dynamic, evolving resource through co production of mechanisms could support individuals and organisations, through fostering education, advocacy in the fight for racial equity.

Case Study 4: Creating an Evolving Anti-Racism Knowledge Hub

To address the need for a centralised, user-friendly platform for anti-racism resources, this initiative focuses on developing a comprehensive digital library. The platform aims to empower users through thematic organisation, stakeholder engagement, and continuous updates, ensuring it serves as a living repository for knowledge and community input. Key features include advanced search functionality, a user-driven interface, and diverse resource formats, all designed to promote accessibility, inclusivity, and effectiveness.

Key Considerations

1. Thematic Organisation

- **Structured by Themes:** Resources could potentially be categorised into themes like recruitment, workplace culture, and retention, ensuring intuitive navigation.
- **Tagging System:** Robust tagging will allow users to efficiently find resources relevant to their needs.

2. Comprehensive Search Functionality

- **Advanced Search Features:** Filters by resource type (e.g., reports, podcasts, videos) and topic will streamline the user experience.
- **Minimising Overwhelming Results:** Smart algorithms will refine searches, preventing information overload.

3. User-Driven Interface

- **Interactive Features:** Forums and comment sections will encourage discussion, feedback, and peer learning.
- **Community Contributions:** Users, especially those from underrepresented groups, will be able to share resources or lived experiences, enriching the platform.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

- **Collaborative Networks:** Partnerships with local authorities, professional bodies, and community organisations will keep resources authentic and updated.
- **Lived Experience Integration:** Authenticity will be ensured by reflecting the voices of those directly impacted by systemic inequalities.

5. Resource Aggregation

- **Centralised Repository:** The library will address the issue of scattered resources by consolidating materials into one easily accessible hub.
- **Diverse Sources:** Internal data, academic research, and trusted networks will form the foundation of the resource pool.

6. Validation and Credibility

- **Quality Assurance:** Analytical teams will vet resources for relevance and reliability.

- **Lived Experience Validation:** Incorporating real-world perspectives will ensure materials resonate with users.

7. Diverse Resource Formats

- **Multimedia Inclusion:** A mix of videos, podcasts, articles, and reports will cater to different learning preferences.
- **Regular Updates:** A consistent update cycle will keep resources fresh and relevant.

8. Accessibility

- **User-Friendly Design:** The platform will ensure compatibility across devices and adhere to web accessibility standards.
- **Cultural and Language Support:** Multilingual and culturally sensitive content will engage a diverse audience.

9. Feedback and Evaluation

- **Feedback Channels:** A mechanism for user feedback will guide continuous improvement.
- **Performance Metrics:** User engagement data will inform iterative platform enhancements.

10. Community-Led Focus

- **Amplifying Voices:** Ensure the platform centers voices from racialised communities and frontline organisations, making it a genuinely participatory tool.
- **Facilitating Dialogue:** Create opportunities for community-led discussions and knowledge-sharing within the platform.

Conclusion

This digital library is designed to be more than a repository—it will be a dynamic, living resource fostering continuous learning, co production, and engagement. By incorporating thematic organisation, user-driven features, and authentic stakeholder input, the library aims to support development of public accountability in the fight for racial equity. The inclusion of diverse formats and proactive updates will ensure it remains relevant and impactful, addressing the evolving needs of its users.

Case Study 5: Designing an Inclusive and Evolving Anti-Racism Digital Library

The Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) aims to establish a digital interactive library that serves as an accessible, inclusive, and authentic repository of resources. This initiative seeks to build accountability expertise for individuals, communities, researchers and policymakers, by creating a platform that fosters understanding, engagement, and co production. The design of this library emphasises inclusivity, accessibility, and lived expertise while ensuring it remains adaptable to future needs.

Key Considerations

1. User-Centred Design

- **Inclusive Interface:** The library will be designed with input from young people and underrepresented communities, incorporating features like text-to-speech, high contrast mode, and adjustable font sizes.
- **Guidance and Tutorials:** Interactive videos and step-by-step instructions will cater to users of varying digital literacy levels.

2. Thematic Resource Organisation

- **Categorisation by Theme:** Key themes such as justice, education, employment, and climate change will structure the library for intuitive navigation.
- **Search Optimisation:** A robust tagging system will enhance search relevance, ensuring users find targeted information quickly.

3. Authentic Representation and Community Contributions

- **Value of Lived Experiences:** Community narratives will be prioritised, ensuring authenticity and representation alongside professional resources.
- **Balanced Language:** A mix of professional terminology and accessible storytelling will maintain the integrity of community contributions.

4. Comprehensive Resource Repository

- **Diverse Formats:** Multimedia resources, including podcasts, videos, and articles, will cater to various learning preferences.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Resources will be aggregated through partnerships with public sector organisations, academic institutions, and community groups.

5. Safeguarding and Emotional Safety

- **Privacy Protections:** Safeguarding policies will protect sensitive data while ensuring transparency.
- **Trigger Warnings and Support:** Content warnings and access to trauma-informed support will ensure emotional safety for users engaging with potentially sensitive topics.

6. Accessibility and Support Mechanisms

- **Mobile Optimisation:** The library will be fully optimised for mobile devices, with adaptive design features for seamless navigation.
- **Support Services:** A dedicated contact point will offer technical assistance and emotional support, particularly for marginalised communities.

7. Engagement and Feedback

- **Interactive Events:** Webinars and face-to-face sessions will promote awareness and user trust in the library.
- **Feedback Loops:** User input will shape ongoing improvements, ensuring the library remains relevant and user-friendly.

8. Sustainability and Future Growth

- **Adaptability:** The library will evolve to include emerging policies, research, and community contributions.
- **Building on Past Efforts:** Insights from previous anti-racism initiatives will inform long-term strategies.

Conclusion

The AROS digital library is designed to be more than a static repository—it is envisioned as a vibrant, inclusive space that reflects the diverse voices of Scotland’s communities. By integrating user-centric design, authentic narratives, and robust support mechanisms, the library will serve as a vital resource for fostering understanding, driving policy change through accountability to support anti-racism efforts.

Case Study 6: Building a User-Focused Digital Repository for Anti-Racism Advocacy

To effectively address systemic racism and empower communities, the Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) envisions a digital repository that serves as a central platform for resources, reporting, accountability and advocacy. This repository aims to balance accessibility, trust, and functionality while fostering systemic change through evidence-based action. By incorporating user needs, robust functionality, and community co production principles, the repository will establish itself as an indispensable tool for individuals and organizations dedicated to anti-racism efforts.

Key Considerations

1. User Needs and Expectations

Understanding the diverse goals of users—including those adversely impacted by systemic racism, community groups and organisations, third sector, academics, policymakers, —is central to the platform's design.

- **Tailored Support:** Users should find resources that align with their specific needs, whether seeking support, or accessing educational or accountability materials.
- **Inclusive Access:** Multilingual support and simple interfaces ensure engagement from individuals with language barriers or limited digital literacy.
- **Interactivity:** Dynamic features like tools for accessing related conversations, locally, nationally and internationally.

2. Fostering Confidence and Trust

To gain user trust, the repository must operate with sensitivity and transparency.

- **Visibility of Impact:** Demonstrating how engaging can lead to tangible outcomes fosters confidence in the platform's value.
- **Transparency:** Sharing clear data usage policies and outcomes builds community credibility and trust.

3. Functional Excellence

The platform must provide an intuitive experience supported by advanced technical capabilities.

- **Ease of Use:** Simplified navigation, filters, and jargon-free language ensure accessibility for all users.
- **Smart Categorisation:** AI-driven systems streamline reporting, categorise cases effectively, and direct them to appropriate resources or authorities.
- **Comprehensive Resources:** The repository will house historical records, policy documents, case studies, and educational materials for varied user groups.

4. Community Engagement and Feedback

Community-driven input ensures the repository reflects real-world needs and remains relevant.

- **Educational Initiatives:** Providing resources how systemic racism can be recognised and understood as collective knowledge grows.
- **User Feedback:** Ongoing careful skilled co production with those adversely impacted by systemic racism will support processes to evolve that embed their expertise.

5. Technical Integrity

Scalability and security are essential for a platform that interacts with sensitive data and public sector systems.

- **Interconnectivity:** Seamless integration with existing systems avoids inefficiencies caused by outdated infrastructure.
- **Data Privacy:** Adherence to strict data protection laws and transparent privacy policies safeguards user trust and confidentiality.

6. Long-Term Vision

The repository aims to drive systemic change and remain sustainable over time.

- **Advocacy and Awareness:** By providing evidence-based insights and resources, the platform supports efforts to dismantle systemic racism through increased accountability and knowledge sharing.
- **Sustainability:** Regular evaluations and alignment with evolving community needs ensure the repository remains impactful and widely utilised.

Conclusion

The proposed AROS digital repository is more than just a storage system—it is a transformative tool designed to address systemic racism, empower communities, and inspire systemic change. Through a user-centric approach, robust functionality, and community-driven principles, it promises to bridge gaps in access, trust, advocacy and accountability.

Case Study 7: Developing an Inclusive and Impactful Digital Library for Anti-Racism Advocacy

The Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) envisions a digital library as a transformative resource to document, hold to account, amplify, efforts to address systemic racism. With a strong emphasis on accessibility, transparency, and sustainability, this platform aims to serve people in racially marginalised communities, grassroots orgs, policymakers, third sector and public sector organisations.

Key Considerations

1. Accessibility and Inclusion

Ensuring equitable access and meaningful representation is foundational to the library's design.

- **Access for Marginalised Groups:** The platform prioritises user-friendly interfaces, bridging the digital divide to ensure people adversely racialised and grassroots and community organisations can fully engage.
- **Community- Contributions:** Mechanisms for active engagement with diverse groups will help the library reflect lived experiences and address real challenges faced by its users.

2. Functionality and Purpose

The platform must serve as a centralised and practical resource to combat systemic racism effectively.

- **Comprehensive Repository:** The library will host reports, studies, and documentation on topics such as housing inequality, health disparities, and intersectional issues like female genital mutilation (FGM). Open access ensures continuity in addressing these challenges.
- **Amplification of Critical Research:** By archiving critical reports on systemic racism, the platform ensures these findings remain visible, challenging attempts to downplay or dismiss important evidence.
- **Accountability Through Transparency:** Public access to findings fosters accountability and highlights actionable steps to address systemic issues. Documenting historical contexts and proposed solutions ensures a constructive pathway forward.

3. Community Engagement and Impact

Engaging users actively ensures the platform's relevance and effectiveness.

- **Interactive Features:** Discussion forums, comment sections, and feedback tools allow users to share insights, discuss findings, and contribute to future policy recommendations.

- **Advocacy Platform:** Grassroots organisations and racialised communities can leverage the library to advocate for systemic change, building collective understanding and fostering collaborative solutions.

4. Sustainability and Future-Proofing

A long-term vision ensures the library's utility and relevance for future generations.

- **Preserving Institutional Knowledge:** By archiving past work, lessons learned, and recommendations, the platform prevents redundancy and provides a rich resource for new initiatives.
- **Leveraging Existing Partnerships:** Collaborations with organizations like the Hunter Foundation highlight strengths while identifying areas for improvement. These partnerships pave the way for new engagements with public and private stakeholders.

Conclusion

The AROS digital library is designed to be more than just a repository; it is a catalyst for change. By prioritising accessibility, amplifying critical research, and fostering community engagement, the platform will elevate marginalised voices and drive systemic change. Through sustainability and future-proofing, it aims to preserve knowledge and adapt to evolving challenges, ensuring its impact for years to come. This initiative underscores AROS's commitment to transparency, advocacy, and building a more equitable society.

Case Study 8: Developing a Transformative Digital Interactive Library for the Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS)

The Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) seeks to create a digital interactive library to advance anti-racism efforts through inclusivity, accessibility, and transformative engagement. This case study outlines the library's proposed design, functionality, and impact, emphasising community-led contributions, holistic frameworks, and sustainable outcomes. By addressing barriers to access and fostering collaboration, the library aims to become a vital tool for empowering communities and dismantling systemic racism.

Key Considerations

1. Accessibility and Community-Led Engagement

To ensure inclusivity, the library prioritises education and outreach:

- **Community Education:** Workshops and campaigns will educate communities about the library's features, encouraging active participation.
- **Outreach to Underrepresented Groups:** Mechanisms will be developed to digitise oral and undocumented histories, amplifying voices often overlooked.
- **Inclusive Access:** Efforts will address barriers like language, digital literacy, and socio-economic challenges to ensure equitable access for all users.

2. Framework and Protection

Recognising the complex intersections of racism, the library incorporates protective measures and holistic frameworks:

- **Intersectionality:** By considering issues like poverty, education, and gender, the platform adopts a feminist lens to highlight the compounded effects of racism, especially on women from Black and Brown communities.
- **Trauma-Informed Design:** Contributors sharing lived experiences will be safeguarded with clear assurances on data usage and the library's purpose.
- **Protection from Misuse:** Robust moderation will prevent bad-faith uploads or exploitation of marginalised communities' pain, ensuring ethical integrity.

3. Functionality and Purpose

The library's interactive and purposeful design fosters collaboration and preserves vital knowledge:

- **Community-Centric Features:** Tools like commenting and content submission empower users to contribute and engage, fostering collective action.
- **Knowledge Documentation:** The library will archive oral histories and previously undocumented experiences to ensure a comprehensive, diverse repository.
- **Transparency and Impact:** Demonstrating how contributions inform policy and systemic change builds trust and motivates further engagement.

4. Holistic Anti-Racism Approach

Beyond documentation, the library will advocate for systemic reforms:

- **Structural Reforms:** Using collected data, AROS can promote reforms in welfare, education, and public services to address systemic inequalities.
- **Interconnected Solutions:** By framing racism as intertwined with socio-economic and systemic barriers, the library advances a nuanced understanding of racism's impact.

Conclusion

The AROS digital interactive library has the potential to become a transformative tool in Scotland's approach to address systemic racism. By prioritising accessibility, intersectionality, and community-led contributions, the platform ensures inclusivity and relevance. Its commitment to preserving knowledge, protecting contributors, and driving systemic change positions the library as more than an archive—it's an active agent of anti-racism advocacy and accountability. Through this innovative approach, AROS sets a benchmark for using technology to dismantle processes within systemic racism.

Case Study 9: Developing an Accessible and Community-Centred Digital Library for AROS

The Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS) aims to create a digital interactive library that serves as a comprehensive, inclusive, and transparent platform for documenting the impact of systemic racism and holding to account systemic efforts to address it. By focusing on accessibility, and community engagement, the library will not only provide a centralised repository of valuable resources but also foster trust, transparency, and active participation.

Key Considerations for Development

1. Accessibility and Inclusivity

The library must be user-friendly and accessible to all, including non-native English speakers and individuals with varying levels of literacy. Key features will include:

- **Multilingual Support:** Translation services and accessible formats (audio, video, text) to ensure broader reach.
- **Clear Tagging and Definitions:** A well-organised system with clear filters and explanations to accommodate cultural and linguistic differences, ensuring ease of navigation for all users.

2. Centralised and Streamlined Information

A unified platform will house all relevant data, research, and resources, categorized for easy access:

- **Tagging and Theming:** Topics will be clearly categorised, allowing users to connect related issues and themes.
- **Glossary:** A glossary for acronyms and technical terms will ensure that all users, especially community groups, can engage with the content confidently.

3. Trust, Transparency, and Data Integrity

Building trust is essential for user engagement:

- **Credibility:** Sources will be clearly indicated to ensure authenticity, and the origin of resources will be transparent.
- **Authenticity:** Highlighting trusted third-sector organisations and academic contributions will establish the platform's credibility.

4. Community Education and Engagement

To ensure that users can navigate the library effectively and feel confident contributing:

- **Workshops and Outreach:** Continuous education through training and community outreach will promote active participation.
- **Ongoing Support:** Regular assistance will be provided to ensure users can fully engage with the platform.

5. Framework for Data Collection and Contribution

A clear data collection framework will be established to encourage contributions from marginalised groups:

- **Inclusive Data Gathering:** Measures will be taken to protect contributors' privacy and encourage participation, particularly from communities with concerns about their immigration status or societal judgment.
- **Anonymous Submissions:** Options for anonymous contributions will be incorporated to reduce barriers to sharing sensitive experiences.

6. Trauma-Informed Approach

Recognising the emotional toll of sharing sensitive experiences:

- **Supportive Environment:** The platform will ensure contributors understand the purpose and impact of their submissions.
- **Actionable Insights:** Rather than focusing on the trauma itself, the platform will emphasise positive outcomes and actionable insights for systemic change.

7. Interconnectedness of Issues

The library will link racism with other systemic issues:

- **Holistic Framework:** The platform will address the intersectionality of racism with topics like education, welfare, health, and social care.
- **Gender Considerations:** Particular attention will be paid to the compounded effects of racism on women, especially Black and Brown women, through an intersectional feminist lens.

8. Moderation and Safeguarding

To maintain the integrity of the platform:

- **Active Moderation:** A carefully and expertly crafted and resourced best practice moderation team will be developed to oversee the platform to prevent bad-faith contributions, misinformation, and exploitation.
- **Data Protection:** Strong safeguards, built from deep understanding of anti-racism principles, will be put in place to protect sensitive information and prevent active misuse or inadvertent systemic harm.

9. Unified Frameworks and Cross-Sector Learning

Aligning with national frameworks will encourage collaboration across sectors:

- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** The library will support shared learning and best practices by integrating with Scotland's National Performance Framework and other public sector initiatives.
- **Breaking Down Silos:** Promoting interconnectedness between departments will enhance collaboration and reduce systemic barriers.

10. Continuous Improvement

To remain relevant and effective, the library will evolve:

- **Feedback and Refinement:** The platform will be treated as a living system, with regular updates and improvements based on user feedback and technological advancements.
- **Ongoing Evaluation:** Periodic reviews will ensure the library's structure and functionality meet emerging needs and continue to serve its users effectively.

Conclusion

The proposed digital library for AROS aims to be more than just a resource hub—it will be a dynamic, community-driven platform that empowers users to engage with accountability, contribute, and advocate for systemic change. By addressing barriers to access, incorporating a trauma-informed approach, and fostering transparency, the library can help to build trust and credibility with those most adversely impacted by systemic racism. The promotion of cross-sector collaboration will support the library to contribute to a broader anti-racism agenda of structural reforms across Scotland's public systems. Through continuous improvement and community engagement, the library will remain an essential tool in the fight against systemic racism.

Appendix 8:

CEO/Co CEO Role Recommendation

Appendix 8: CEO/Co CEO Role Recommendation

The following CEO/Co CEO role advert specification has developed from the advice, experiences and expertise from the AIGG and DAG and built from other organisations seeking leadership for transformative systemic change. This is a new, unique role and it must not simply seek a lead in the same way CEO's are usually recruited. The following is provided to support and encourage intersectional anti-racism critical thinking within recruitment. It recommends ways to present the role, articulates some of the key skills and importantly shares thinking about best practice in recruitment.

Foreword

Hello and thank you so much for your interest in the Chief Executive of the Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS) In 2020, the Scottish Government accepted the recommendations from the **Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity (ERG)**. One of the key recommendations was the establishment of a new, independent body designed to develop community-led accountability processes. This body would support the Scottish Government and other public institutions in addressing systemic racism within Scotland.

Building on these recommendations, the **Anti-Racism Interim Governance Group (AIGG)** provided a set of recommendations in October 2023 to the Minister for Equalities, Migration, and Refugees. Among the recommendations was the creation of a new **Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS)** to tackle systemic racism in the country. The AROS would be guided by the lived experiences **and expertise of individuals who face the negative consequences of racial inequality**.

The purpose of the future AROS is as one part of national-level oversight infrastructure. It will become the mechanism through which the Scottish Government (SG) and other public bodies are supported, scrutinised and held accountable to deliver genuine and irreversible systemic change.

The intention is to be a national centre of excellence in Scotland on developing, delivering and holding to account policy ambitions across all areas of government and their key stakeholders through a co production, intersectional, anti-racism lens.

The model for future AROS was determined by the AIGG where it was agreed to build the new organisation through community-led co-creation with people who are most adversely impacted by racism.

The **Design Advisory Group (DAG)** was created through invitation to the outgoing AIGG to support the SG to sustain and build from the work developed by the AIGG during an interim from December 2023 to December 2024. The interim occurred because of the timescales created by public procurement of an independent host organisation for 2 years for the future AROS.

During this period, the Scottish Government also sought a host organisation to support AROS during its first two years. After this initial phase, it is anticipated that AROS will become fully independent, continuing its crucial work in addressing and dismantling systemic racism in Scotland.

2. AROS Vision & Mission

Our vision is that our public institutions work equally well for everyone, no matter what their “race” or ethnicity. We will draw up a set of anti-racism principles or ways of working. We will expect all Scotland’s public institutions to adopt these principles and we will monitor them to make sure they do. Both this work and the AROS itself will be led and co-produced by communities adversely affected by racism. The future AROS principles as set out by AIGG in the [AROS Vision and Mission document](#).

Vision:

To establish a competent understanding of principles of anti-racism, and embed these in infrastructure and scrutiny across Scotland’s sectors, so that the work of our public institutions are effective and fit for purpose for all communities, especially those who are adversely impacted by racism.

The Anti-Racism Observatory will be led and co-produced with people from communities adversely impacted by racism

There are seven strands to our mission.

Mission:

- 1. Co-producing anti-racism with communities** — Communities leading us as together we build anti-racism principles into our work and the work of Scotland’s public institutions.
- 2. Building the capacity of institutions and communities** — Public institutions: Giving those working in our public institutions the capacity to be intersectional and anti-racist in their policies and services. — Communities: Giving communities the capacity and power to scrutinise and shape the policies and services of our public institutions.
- 3. Holding our public institutions to account** — Co-creating, with communities, effective ways to make sure that the Scottish Government and other public institutions are building anti-racism principles into their work. — Co-creating, with communities, tools and ways to assess how the Scottish Government and other public institutions are building anti-racism principles into their work
- 4. Building a digital anti-racism library** — Building and hosting an interactive, digital library of information on anti-racism policy and action. This will allow those adversely affected by racism, as well as those whose role it is to tackle it, to: — Learn about, and from, past work on anti-racism. — Keep up to date with what is being done now. — Assess how well Scotland’s public institutions are doing to become anti-racist.
- 5. Improving data and research** — Making it easier to assess public institutions’ progress on becoming anti-racist, by: — Agreeing on what good-quality “race” and ethnicity data looks like. — Investing in ways of researching, collecting and analysing data that do not: — Reinforce the false

ideas of “race science” and other systems of racism, — Create systemic inequality in other ways.
— Working with communities to build their capacity and that of researchers.

6. Communicating clearly and openly with communities and partner institutions — Although the AROS will be fully independent of the Scottish Government, it will: — Be overseen by a unique partnership that includes representatives from across Scotland’s public sector and its adversely racialised communities. — Build strong, open, successful working relationships with its partners. — Share best practice from across Scotland and beyond. — Share, with help from creative-industry partners, the real extent of racism and anti-racism action in Scotland and the world.

7. Being an advocate and speaking up for adversely racialised communities — Calling for: — The power and means to a) decide what should be done, b) scrutinise what is done and c) hold institutions to account for what they have or have not done, to be shared equally with adversely racialised communities. — More training on anti-racism in and across Scotland’s public institutions.

3. The AROS Chief Executive will play a critical role toward Scotland's commitment to anti-Racism accountability with their responsibility including driving forward the work, beginning with the areas of focus identified in AROS [Vision and Mission](#) as determined by the AIGG.

They will lead the AROS team to ensure clarity about the organisation's role and responsibility, internally and externally and support the host organisation and AROS team to make clear and consistent decisions about the programme of work, and why. This will include the development of an annual rolling workplan of activities. With support from the host organisation, the Chief Executive will ensure the necessary resources of people, time and money are available to AROS and are directed towards fulfilling its short, medium and long-term responsibilities.

Working closely with the AROS team and the host, the Chief Executive will develop and manage the organisation's single operating framework which includes annual rolling workplans, budgeting, risk, reporting and follow-up. This will be complemented by an approach to staff development that enables each member of the team to effectively and confidently discharge their responsibility and embed anti-racism principles in all of its operations and strategies.

Key Activities:

The Chief Executive will work based on AROS [Vision and Mission](#) as established by the AIGG.

- The Chief Executive will play a lead role in determining and modelling the organisation's culture and embedding anti-racism principles in AROS organisation culture.
- Have an integral approach to the AROS's deliverables and focus on the provision of an impartial secretariat to the AROS governance structure, as recommended by the AIGG, to ensure it can hold the Scottish Government and public sector to account on anti-racism infrastructure, including the future AROS. This may be done through the commissioning of independent impact analysis and evaluation of the work of AROS.
- To support collaborative implementation, the Chief Executive will build and develop a strong network of partnerships unified around Scotland's shared purpose to anti-racism accountability and infrastructure. This will contribute to sustaining high profile commitments made to the community adversely impacted by racism, and support change to ensure progress is made to fulfil these, at pace.
- The Chief Executive will make sure the AROS governance structure, as recommended by the AIGG, receives accurate and regular reports on the AROS's progress. The advisory board will require to understand the alignment of the AROS's vision and mission to Scotland's ambition to anti-racism accountability, as well as a robust approach to identification, management and mitigation of risk, that includes an escalation process and hand off with the AROS governance structure.

- The Chief Executive will lead a national community-led, co-creation process to deliver AROS [Vision and Mission](#). This will involve reviewing the strategies in place across organisations to anti-racism accountability; an assessment of whether sustainable progress has been made across the Scottish Government and public sector on anti-racism.
- The Chief Executive will identify gaps to be filled; and key priorities where a robust change process must be identified and delivered throughout the life span of AROS. It will require extensive, detailed engagement at national, local and community level, an analysis of the progress achieved.
- In tandem, the Chief Executive will comprehensively review the AROS's purpose, activities and structures and recommend to the AROS governance structure, as recommended by the AIGG, any changes required to deliver its contribution to achieving AROS [Vision and Mission](#).
- The Chief Executive will be responsible for providing support to the AROS host, Scottish Government, and public sector to meet their responsibility to set Scotland's strategic direction and culture to ensure anti-racism accountability and AROS [Vision and Mission](#) is fully realised.

Main Activities:

- Make sure the AROS is work-planning, managing delivery, reporting and follow-up with community on its contribution to lead and support change towards Scotland's commitment to anti-racism accountability, firstly via contribution to achievement of AROS [Vision and Mission](#).
- Produce a review and monitoring of the AROS direction and agenda to make sure it is heading towards AROS set of objectives, mission, vision and values.
- Make sure the AROS, supported by the host organisation, have the necessary resources, procedures and operations in place, keeping this under review to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- Promote anti-racism principles and a non-oppressive work culture, ensuring they are regularly monitored, reviewed, and adapted to align with intersectional methodologies.
- Lead the AROS team, with support of the host and governance structure as recommended by the AIGG, to ensure they are supported, equipped, able and confident to fulfil their responsibilities at the pace and quality required.
- Engender a culture which enables the AROS team to thrive. Model and support the anti-racism values of listening, reflection, compassion, continuous improvement and understanding of the challenges involved in achieving change. Ensure the culture supports excellent and productive relationships with communities, partners, including the AROS governance structure.
- Engage, as a partner, the wide range of organisations, public sector agencies, governments, communities, academics and grassroots groups making changes, supporting them to ensure these are felt by people adversely affected by racism. Where necessary, provide appropriate and constructive challenge to accelerate progress and remove barriers.

- Principal accountability for identifying and proactively managing risks to Scotland's progress, beginning with delivery of the AROS [Vision and Mission](#).
- Support the development and implementation of an approach to communicating that proactively informs and influences, communities, partners and individuals about Scotland's work and progress towards anti-racism accountability. Act as a lead spokesperson for the work of AROS.
- Work closely with the host and the AROS governance structures, as recommended by the AIGG, to ensure the host fulfils its statutory requirements and can exercise excellent standards of governance.
- From the point the host is appointed, ensure AROS is positioned and able to lead Scotland's work to devise AROS [Vision and Mission](#), through an extensive community-led process, built on analysis of the progress achieved by AROS [Vision and Mission](#) and a review of the strategic context.

Essential Criteria

- Experience of being a senior leader within an organisation operating in an anti-racism environment.
- Evidence of anti-racism work and its impact to the communities adversely impacted by racism.
- Demonstrable planning, budgeting, project management, reporting and follow-up skills.
- Strong understanding of systemic racism and the anti-racism agenda with a demonstrable personal commitment to work associated with the vision and mission of AROS.
- People leadership experience grounded in anti-racism values, collaboration, participation and care, with the ability to create the conditions for colleagues to excel and develop to their full potential.
- An ability to absorb a wide range of complex information, and an ability to think analytically in the evaluation of competing needs;
- A strong understanding of risk, including how to identify, manage, mitigate and escalate.
- Demonstrable track record of placing anti-racist practice and lived experience at the heart of anti-racism work.
- Strong awareness of strategies to prevent and resist co-optation by existing systems while ensuring effective anti-racism accountability.
- Lived experience of anti-racism and / or a deep, demonstrable understanding of the principles established by AROS.
- An understanding of design, improvement, implementation, evaluation and / or systems changes.
- Excellent relationships building and collaboration skills, at a senior level with focus on the communities adversely impacted by racism.

- In-depth understanding of the political and policy environment, with an awareness of current context for Scotland's commitment to anti-racism accountability, and insight into the challenges of public service reform.
- Confident public speaking skills, with an ability to comfortably present to multiple audiences as a key spokesperson for AROS
- Build and maintain impactful relationships and partnerships with a range of stakeholders from community groups, activists to politicians, academics and other relevant people/groups.

[*Note for host/recruitment committee:* Once the essential criteria agreed, we would encourage for the criteria to be put through a gender decoder to pick up any language bias]

Desirable Criteria

- Able to work proactively and with agility, to manage own workload and work flexibly to meet work demands and tight deadlines.
- An appreciation of the need to meaningfully engage those who need and use public services.
- Experience of working and reporting to an advisory board or equivalent governance structure
- Confident public speaking skills, with an ability to comfortably present to multiple audiences as a key spokesperson for AROS
- Strong persuasive and influencing skills, with a diverse range of partners, including Scottish Ministers, civil servants, as well as third sector and community/grassroot groups.
- Ability to cultivate the empathy and understand the pain, challenges, and needs of marginalised groups. This involves listening actively and validating experiences of those adversely affected by racism.
- Experience and/or demonstratable ability to effectively manage organisational change and challenges, such as backlash and resistance, whilst pushing forward the vision and mission of an organisation.
- Ability to respect the experience or point of view of others that are different to your own and willingness to make decisions that align with the organisational values but may be unpopular to others.
- Cultivate transparency and encourages a culture where employees and communities feel safe to express their concerns about racism

Candidates with anti-racism expertise/lived experience who meet at least 70% of essential criteria outlined below, and candidates declaring a disability and meet the essential criteria, should be offered an interview.

Salary

The post Chief Executive of the AROS Scotland has been benchmarked resulting in a salary in the region of c. £95,000.

Pension

It is anticipated that the AROS Host Organisation has a pension scheme that employees will be contractually enrolled into, making a minimum contribution of 5.5% of their qualifying earnings, with The AROS Host Organisation contributing 13%. Employees may opt out at any time.

[note to host/recruitment committee: check organisational policy, but suggest to match the above as a minimal, in order to attract talent]

Working Conditions

The AROS Scotland recognises the value of agile working practice. Its office will be at.....

****The Chief Executive is required to:**

- comply with the articles of association or equivalent (as amended from time to time) of AROS and/or the host
- abide by any statutory, fiduciary or common-law duties to the host/AROS;
- not do anything that would result in disqualification from acting as a Chief Executive;
- do such things as are reasonable and necessary to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation
- comply with such anti-racism, anti-corruption and bribery policy and related procedures as may be put in place from time to time;
- faithfully and diligently exercise such powers and perform such duties as may from time to time be assigned, unless prevented by incapacity;
- comply with all reasonable and lawful directions;
- report their own wrongdoing and any wrongdoing or proposed wrongdoing of any other employee, or equivalent, to the AROS governance structures, as recommended by the AIGG, immediately on becoming aware of it;

and

- use their best endeavours to promote, protect, develop and fulfil the purpose of the host to anti-racism accountability by 2030, at the latest.

4. How to apply

The deadline for applications is...

To apply, please send your CV (no more than four pages of A4) AND an application form / covering letter (no more than three pages) outlining why you think you would be a competent Chief Executive of the AROS to ...

[note to host/recruitment committee: it should be indicated what should be covered in the letter to allow for fair evaluation, not just who writes/articulates points the best - which could mean an application form would be most ideal]

Please provide contact details for two referees with one able to comment on your performance in your most recent professional / community role.

If you would like a conversation with the team to help you decide if the role is for you, please email...

Note: If you don't feel you meet the full criteria, we want to still hear from you. We want to encourage applications from under represented communities as we want the new AROS team to reflect communities of Scotland.

Interviews will be held in....

Interview / Selection Process

- parallel panel
- interview with Black woman in position of power – respect and follow direction
- scenario-based
- show evidence of work
- reimbursement

- The format will be an informal conversation with members of the AROS team (30 minutes) followed by a panel interview (1 hour). The interview will include inviting responses to scenario-based questions, which link to scenarios that relate to challenges anticipated for developing AROS and delivering its vision and mission as identified by the AIGG.
- There will also be a parallel panel of people with lived experience of racism/anti-racism. The assessment of this panel is not necessarily aspects of the job criteria, but relevant skills required as Chief Executive of AROS, e.g. social connections, ability to listen to people with lived experience, etc. The decision/scoring of the parallel panel will be taken with equal weighting to the interview panel.

- There will also be an interview task that require candidates to demonstrate they can respectfully work with people most adversely impacted by systemic racism in leadership positions. E.g. doing 'hypothetical' work tasks, showing they can listen to direction from people most adversely impacted by systemic racism (in leadership positions and/or in community).
- Compensation for time preparing for the interview tasks listed above will be offered.

The interview panel will comprise of four people: The DAG & Design Team representatives and a Director/Senior Leadership of the AROS Host Organisation, and at least one member of communities most adversely impacted by racism (serving as external oversight who is not part of AROS team/host).

[Note to host/recruitment committee]

insert the following according to the host organisation policy, and good practice suggested below are:

- Include an organogram so the candidate can visually see numbers and posts that they will be overseeing
- Need to refer to working arrangements eg hybrid, fee for relocation, hrs, leave entitlement, flexible working, job share, reference to some policies eg EDI, dignity at work;
- important to also highlight reasonable adjustments and provide examples of what they can be]

Many thanks for your interest.

The AROS Host Organisation.

Suggested advertising text:

Are you committed to advancing race equality, social justice and creating anti-racism in Scotland?

We seek our first CEO.

This is an opportunity to make a profound and lasting difference.

[insert link to job advert]

Appendix 9:

Anti-Racism Community Engagement Fund Scotland: exploring the costing model

Appendix 9: Anti-Racism Community Engagement Fund Scotland: exploring the costing model

Introduction

This document represents one of the firsts in a series of briefings examining Scotland's pioneering approach to resourcing anti-racism community engagement. It outlines the costing structure and rationale for the [Anti-Racism Community Engagement Fund](#). It focuses specifically on the funding process and its underlying anti-racism principles. This fund was commissioned by the [Design Advisory Group](#) and administered by [Impact Funding Partners](#).

It is anticipated that further briefings will be developed by the future AROS. Future AROS will have time and resources to allocate for focused analysis of what people expressed. Analysis is likely to include community experience and recommendations about engagement and findings about systemic racism operating in their lives. Most importantly it will examine and report on how people would like future AROS to work for them.

The costing model has been developed with reference to [existing good practice](#), including similar initiatives by the Welsh Government, and reflects a commitment to valuing community expertise appropriately.

It has been specifically designed using trauma-informed principles, recognising the impact of systemic racism on communities. This approach prioritises creating safe, respectful, and empowering spaces for engagement while ensuring appropriate compensation for participants sharing their lived expertise. By centring the needs and dignity of affected communities, the fund aims to facilitate meaningful participation while minimising potential re-traumatisation during the engagement process.

Context and significance

The significance of this work lies in its departure from traditional community engagement models. This fund explicitly recognises and compensates lived expertise at the same rate as learned expertise. This shift reflects growing local, national, and international recognition that non-payment or tokenised payment for the lived expertise of systemically marginalised communities is no longer appropriate. The DAG also recruited two community outreach workers to work with grassroots groups and community organisations during application stage, developing event(s), facilitating and reporting. The ambition and outcome for this role are discussed in a full report. A specific briefing exploring the role may be developed.

The costing model builds upon

- Scottish Government's [existing guidelines for compensating lived expertise](#)
- Successful precedents from [Welsh Government](#) and [other jurisdictions](#)

- Emerging [international best practices](#), aligning with similar work being conducted in relation to [addressing poverty initiatives](#) and in [healthcare settings](#) in Scotland and the rest of the UK.
- Contemporary understanding of systemic change and co-production approaches

“The compensation guidance was developed because Scottish Government identified a gap in processes, one which particularly needed addressing as participatory approaches have been more frequently drawn on in the past few years. Teams such as the [Poverty and Inequality Commission](#) have paid participants for some time now. We drew on their experiences to develop guidance that would be useful across the whole organisation. We also learnt a lot from other organisations who have done work on this issue (examples include [SHRC](#), [NIHR](#)).”

(SG representative involved in developing the guidance)

The approach undertaken within this fund, represents unprecedented work in Scotland's anti-racism landscape, establishing a foundation for future community engagement through the Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS).

Key principles

1. Valuing lived expertise and acknowledging emotional labour:

- Compensation rates aligned with Scottish Government guidelines for expert consultation
- Builds on precedent set by Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan engagement funding (2020-2021)
- Recognition of lived expertise as equal to institutional knowledge
- Acknowledgment that sharing experiences of racism requires significant emotional investment

2. Accessibility and inclusion at the forefront:

Additional accessibility support made available on demonstrated need basis

Research indicates:

[Higher participation rates among women](#) in community engagement events and therefore resourcing needs to acknowledge that some participants (based on demographic trends and their role as primary caregivers) may have additional accessibility requirements to attend.

Accessibility costs were therefore available for:

- Interpreter services
- Accessibility accommodation such as transport subsidies and

- care subsidies (e.g. childcare, elderly care, or reimbursement for carer/chaperone to enable participation)

3 Creating safe and supportive spaces:

- Recognition that discussing experiences of racism can be challenging and potentially re-traumatising
- Commitment to trauma-informed facilitation
- Prioritising participant wellbeing throughout the engagement process
- Ensuring culturally sensitive and appropriate support mechanisms are in place

Cost structure breakdown

DAG costed the fund to meet what they reasonably considered might be the likely number of organisations they anticipate might apply. And broadly aligned with Welsh Government model. It is important to note that the amount proposed by DAG to meet an anticipated community capacity matched near exactly the 144k. This meant that all successful applications were awarded funding and no applicants were unsuccessful or were rejected due to the fund having already been allocated. The DAG and the Community Outreach Consultants considered this a success of the initiative, as it meant groups were not in direct competition for funds.

Core event costs (10-15 participants were encouraged as an appropriate number)

Participant expertise payments rates aligned with Scottish Government guidelines for expert consultation participants

- Participant involvement requiring no or a small amount of preparation (less than one hour), plus approximately two hours of activity: reimbursement approx. £80
- Participant involvement which is approximately half a day's activity, which may require no or a small amount of preparation time (less than one hour): reimbursement approx. £120

To facilitate participation funding guidance encouraged organisations and groups to consider the following costs:

- Venue hire
- Catering
- Facilitator fee
- Materials and supplies
- Report writing
- Outreach and communication with intended participants

- Volunteering/staff support expense

Comparative context

The [Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan](#) community engagement funding provided useful precedent:

- 2020 initiative provided up to £5,000 per organisation and focused on direct community engagement. It emphasised inclusive participation.
- 2021 initiative provided up to £5,000 per organisation and prioritised multiple engagements and reporting methods.

Cost structure for this fund

Two strands:

- [Strand 1](#) up to £2,500 per event
- [Strand 2](#) up to £5000 for a series of events.

Reporting requirements:

- An event report for future AROS was required within two weeks. It was recognised that this is a short timeframe. Flexibility was maintained around how and what was reported. It was recognised that we are learning from the process as much as we are learning from the content of the events. ([See appendix.](#))
- Financial reporting was required within two weeks and submitted to IFP. Comprehensive documentation of costs supports transparency and future funding model development.

It is anticipated that the insights gathered from this process will contribute to future AROS's development of:

- Sustainable cost-effective trauma-informed community engagement approach
- Funding frameworks for future AROS's anti-racism initiatives such as future community led [accountability work](#)

Links to national and international best practice organisations

The following organisations are leading the work in this area and should be engaged with '[Developing a Pilot Movement Fund](#)' which explains the consultation process and recommendations made. This is the work they are doing now:

<https://www.jrctmovementfund.org.uk/>

The practise of participatory grant making has been around for some decades and you can find lots of resources and best practise here, and future AROS can probably find

some organisations who work directly with government institutions and build with them
<https://www.participatorygrantmaking.org/>

These two organisations in particular are viewed as beacons for being daring and rooted in community practise, as well as communicating their work well, [Frida Feminist Fund](#) and [Red Umbrella](#).

Appendix 10:

Reporting from Impact Funding Partners

Appendix 10: Reporting from Impact Funding Partners

Overview

The Anti-Racism Community Engagement Fund aimed to provide community groups and organisations with funds, within this short timescale, to create a focused engagement on the future Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS). The Design Advisory Group (DAG) and the future AROS value lived expertise as equally important as learned expertise. It is essential that we gather community expertise, not only about how people understand systemic racism in their lives but also to use that knowledge to build how they want this new organisation to work for them.

Attempts to address systemic racialised inequity have not managed to address the inequality. Evidence suggests that many outcomes have worsened (see [CRER report](#)).

All events reported community responses to the DAG on behalf of the future AROS.

Organisations led by people adversely impacted by racism were particularly welcomed. They did not need to have been involved in the Anti-racism Interim Governance Group (AIGG) community research phase as the fund seeks new voices. Applications from organisations and community groups previously not engaged were encouraged.

Fund Aim

The intention for the funding was:

- To build a deeper community understanding of the future AROS.
- To undertake focused conversations about how the participatory community research undertaken by the Anti-Racism Interim Governance Group (AIGG) in 2023 fed into the developing plan for the new organisation (See [Community Briefing](#)).
- To explore, from this baseline, how people think the future AROS could work for them.

Available Funding

Organisations could apply to Strand 1 to support one event up to a maximum of £2,500 to host a community consultation

Alternatively, organisations could apply to Strand 2 if they had time, capacity and interest to run a more sustained engagement between 10th September and 15th November with their members, as opposed to a one-off event. The resources agreed under Strand 2 were to support organisations to host a dedicated series of community events/conversations that build evidence for the future Anti-Racism Observatory of Scotland (AROS). Strand 2 criteria meant that each event should contribute uniquely to the overall engagement strategy. A maximum of £5,000 was available for a series of events.

For both strands, additional funds for accessibility could be accessed if required. More detail on the costing structure is discussed the briefing here (go to Appendix).

Promotion

- The fund was promoted by the DAG directly to organisations who had been involved in the AIGG community research.
- Impact Funding Partners (IFP) promoted the fund widely to organisations on their mailing list who were potentially eligible for support.
- IFP ensured the fund was visible on open funding databases, Funding Scotland and GrantFinder.
- IFP promoted the fund on IFP social media accounts, taking care to turn off comments.
- IFP set up three online fund information sessions and ran these together with the DAG. 62 organisations registered to attend.

Support to Applicants

A dedicated inbox was set up by IFP and the team responded by email and telephone to enquirants. Support was provided regarding eligibility and completion of the online application form. The Community Outreach Consultants engaged by the DAG were also available to support applicants to formulate their plans.

Assessment of Applications

Applications were assessed on a rolling basis. Given the challenging timeframe, it was important that decisions and funding could be issued quickly and events organised. The process is explored in more detail [here](#).

Headline Figures

- 62 Applications received
- 41 Applications successful (23 Strand 1 and 18 Strand 2)
- 12 Applications unsuccessful
- 9 Applications withdrawn (6 because they did not meet their deadline for updating their application)

How did Applicants hear about the Fund?

- Word of mouth = 12
- Direct email = 26
- Website = 11
- Third Sector Interface (TSI) = 10
- Other = 3 (local council contact, organisation members, partner organisations)

—

Fund Distribution

- Total fund distributed £137,961
- Smallest award £1,100
- Largest award £5,738
- Average award £3,365

Breakdown of costs applied for:

Participant Costs	£60,600
Facilitator Costs	£23,621
Transport	£6,461
Accessibility Costs	£8,568
Venue Hire	£8,238
Food costs	£13,045
Reporting Costs	£8,684
Volunteer/support staff expenses	£8,744

Local Authority	Number funded
Aberdeen	6
Dumfries and Galloway	1
Edinburgh	5
Glasgow	22
North Lanarkshire	1
Renfrewshire	2
Scottish Borders	1
South Lanarkshire	1
Stirling	1
West Lothian	1
Total	41

Impact of Applicant Support

62 organisations registered for information sessions and 28 of these submitted a funding application. 21 of the 28 submitted their application following the information session and 13 (62%) of these were successful at the first attempt. The other eight were eligible and

received further support from a Community Outreach Consultant to refine their application.

- Total number of Applications successful at first attempt = 23
- Total number of Applications successful at second attempt = 18 (24 received additional support, 6 did not meet their deadline to update applications so were withdrawn)

Key Learning and Recommendations for Future AROS

Timescales and Development Process

Timescales were incredibly tight to develop and agree fund criteria, application and promotion materials, particularly when effectively working with two commissioners i.e. The Scottish Government and the DAG. Added to this, the involvement of the commissioners in the detail was much more than IFP would normally encounter. Ordinarily we are appointed as a fund manager to develop the fund and then the commissioner signs off with minimal changes to drafts.

New decision-making processes were developed by IFP to meet the specific needs of the DAG and the groups engaged in anti-racism work. One of the main barriers was time to agree and implement these. Some had to be developed after the fund had launched and assessment started.

It was very ambitious to introduce a Strand 2 element to the fund given the already extremely tight timescales for application, assessment, delivery and reporting. Applicants had little time to fully develop a proposal and many of these applications did not meet the Strand 2 criteria, particularly at first submission.

Recommendation 1: Sufficient development time must be built in before the launch of a fund to develop all materials and processes.

Recommendation 2: If commissioner is involved in writing any of the materials, then use of a shared drive should be considered to facilitate multiple users inputting.

Recommendation 3: Make use of the experience of any future fund manager to take the aim and agreed criteria for the fund and produce fund information documents that are more easily accessible and digestible for the third sector.

Recommendation 4: Experience of operating two strands in this fund combined with other previous experience of any future fund manager should be considered before deciding on the best approach to achieve the aims of the fund.

Recommendation 5: Timescales for promotion, developing understanding of a fund and provision of pre-application support must be carefully thought through, and must be realistic to make best use of resources and have meaningful engagement.

Communication

IFP created weekly reports for the DAG and the Scottish Government. IFP's Programme Manager held weekly meetings where actions were agreed and distributed appropriately amongst the team. On top of this however there were regular ad-hoc requests for information, often with tight deadlines and at times it was information that had already been shared in a different format.

Recommendation 6: A clear and timebound communication and information sharing protocol should be agreed at the outset by all parties.

Decision Making Process

Having a second layer of scrutiny on IFP recommendations by the DAG meant that decisions were not issued as quickly as would be the norm in this type of rolling engagement fund. It is not usual for grants of this value to be subject to another layer of decision-making.

The opportunity to amend an application following support from a Community Outreach Consultant also added to the timeline for decisions and is not a process IFP has previously used. IFP was able to flex the process to accommodate the requirements of the DAG and provide the Consultants with bespoke feedback enabling them to have supportive conversations with applicants.

There were clear benefits to this approach in supporting the organisations but there are also considerations to take account of for any future fund.

Recommendation 7: Consideration should be given to the best approach, taking into account factors including due diligence, proportionality, time limitations and impartiality.

It is clear that the section of the third sector that is working in the anti-racism space needs capacity building support. Overall, the applications were of a poor quality, even those funded at the first attempt. Assessors had to ask follow-up questions on pretty much every one, prior to recommending for funding. Barriers include English not being the first language and a lack of experience with applying for funding. Refer back to Recommendation 3 above.

Recommendation 8: Capacity building support is required e.g. workshops or surgeries on how to write a successful funding application, budgeting and more fundamentally, understanding the process of applying for and managing a grant.

Recommendation 9: Providing translation of fund documents to support applicants where English is not their first language would be beneficial to increase understanding of the fund aim and criteria and to support the development of stronger applications.

Appendix 11:

Redesigning Community Fund Application process through anti- racism practice

Appendix 11: Redesigning Community Fund Application process through anti-racism practice

This briefing is for policy-makers, funders, and those working in public institutions, who seek to commit to transforming how systems work with people in communities through the funding of consultation and engagement processes.

This briefing explains the development of a transformative process of funding application trialled within a dedicated anti-racism community engagement fund September–October 2024.

Background to this fund

[The anti racism community engagement fund](#) provides community groups and organisations with funds to create a focused engagement/or a series of engagements about the future [Anti Racism Observatory for Scotland](#) (AROS).

It is essential that community expertise is gathered, not only about how people understand systemic racism in their lives but also how to use that knowledge to build how they want this new organisation to work for them. Attempts to address systemic racialised inequity have not managed to address the inequality. Evidence suggests that many outcomes have worsened ([see CRER report](#)).

This application process has been developed with the [Design Advisory Group](#), [Impact Funding Partners](#) (IFP) and the Scottish Government on behalf of the future AROS. IFP are leaders in this field and have more than 40 years of expertise on the administration of community funds.

Currently 41 organisations, from grassroots community-led to larger and more established groups have been successful in this process. The fund closed on 11th October. Every organisation that met the core criteria and/or engaged with the process of revision received funding.

Events are ongoing all across Scotland, through October until 16th November, 2024. A rapid report on the events and an overview of the conversations, principles, hopes, collective visions, and ideas will be shared in December 2024.

It is anticipated that future AROS will develop detailed analysis to support its future processes of community engagement.

This briefing should be read alongside a forthcoming costing document that will provide detailed financial frameworks and considerations for implementing similar engagement processes.

“For IFP, our success lay in truly understanding the unique needs of an anti-racism community engagement fund. By working hand-in-hand with the Design Advisory Group, we adapted our processes and empowered our outreach workers to provide personalised support. This enabled meaningful conversations with applicants, transforming the traditional assessment process into a collaborative journey of trust and dialogue.”

This fund:

1. represents and demonstrates a new approach to funding within social justice work, where lived expertise is valued and costed appropriately.
2. enables people adversely impacted by systemic racism to build a deeper understanding of the future AROS
3. explores through focused community conversations how people think the future AROS could work for them and how they could work with future AROS.

Disrupting usual systemic processes

- Valuing community knowledge as equal to institutional knowledge, encouraging genuine co-creation and paid participation at a rate similar to those with formal qualifications
- Recognising that understanding how systemic racism impacts people’s lives requires complex, nuanced expertise
- Agile support building from a we will support you, rather than a one size fits all approach

“This fund showed us a different way of working was possible, instead of instant rejection we got real conversations and support to strengthen our ideas. It felt good to be truly heard rather than just assessed.”

Reimagining resource sharing

- Building a model that does not risk creating competition for funding between marginalised people, groups or organisations
- Organisations and groups evaluated on their own merits, not ranked against each other
- Creating solidarity, confidence, and trust whereby there is potential to foster an environment where organisations and groups can focus on their communities’ perspectives and knowledge without fear of losing out to others

Enabling responsive funding frameworks

- Two dedicated community outreach workers were recruited specifically to support applicants through the process (and will also support the events and post-event reporting)
- Applications were independently evaluated by IFP who have extensive expertise. IFP also sought and welcomed anti racism expertise within their evaluation process
- If applications were eligible but didn't fully meet the criteria, outreach workers provided targeted support for revisions
- Support focused on refinement rather than replacement which, for example, recognised that the funding available for lived expertise was often unexpected but once explained and trusted, was welcomed as an indication of “doing things differently”
- Organisations and groups weren't asked to start over, just to enhance, explain or develop specific aspects of their applications
- Multi-channel (phone call, video calls, emails) accessibility ensured organisations could engage in ways and at times that worked best for them
- It was anticipated that English would often not be the primary language of communication. The outreach workers facilitated and recognised linguistic diversity

“To be able to ... build trust with groups and encourage them and be a sounding board where they can actually be honest about where they're at. They don't need to pretend that they know exactly how this is going to work, or exactly what they're doing that you're there to help them work with their community”

Funding is from the Scottish Government, to support community engaged co production during this interim development phase whilst a host organisation for future AROS is sought. It is anticipated that the outcome from public procurement of a host organisation for future AROS will be announced early 2025.

Appendix 12:

Building our way of working

Appendix 12: Building our way of working

This is a live working document for the Design Advisory Group which welcomes all members' feedback, contributions and adjustments as ongoing through our work together.

Starting with acknowledging both the crucial importance of, and the inherent challenge in anti-racism work, we aim to build a collaborative way of working together which builds trust, support for one another, and centres the principles of anti-racism.

The following values were discussed at our meeting on 19.2.24 and now open as a shared document for further contribution.

Please add comments, suggestions, questions, propose additions or changes in your own time. Next we will write this into a statement which we can refer to and remind ourselves of.

Design Advisory Group principles:

- recognising no one being is more important than another
- mutual respect, openness, honesty and non-judgment
- avoiding assumptions, navigating knowledge gaps through questions
- communicating our needs, keeping open dialogues through the work
- willingness to challenge the system, be intentional, anticipatory
- working with rigour and attention to detail as a practice of care
- integrity, transparency and accountability
- supporting one another, giving each other space to learn and grow
- welcoming change, working through challenges together; not throwing each other under the bus
- valuing learning from mistakes, negotiating these with generosity
- prioritising care for ourselves; silence for self care
- protecting confidentiality - not making public comments about work without speaking
- wherever possible keeping it straightforward
- accountability:
 - hold power to account
 - holding each other to account and
 - allowing space for communities to hold the group to account.