



Tel: 416-912-2087; Email: connect@ubuntu-collective.ca

May 30, 2023

Re: Deputation In Support of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism – Year Four Update

Dear Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

The Ubuntu – Black Trans, Non-Binary and 2Spirit Collective strongly supports of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit in the ongoing implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. We ask that Committee Member support the unanimous adoption of the Toronto Action Plan Year Four Update.

The Ubuntu – Black Trans, Non-Binary and 2Spirit (2STNB) Collective is a relatively new collective, formed in 2022. We are made of up Black Trans, Non-Binary and 2Spirit people, who all live with intersecting identities such as disabled, newcomer/refugees, and more.

Ubuntu's

Mission - to create equitable access to quality life for all Black Trans+ people (including agender, non-binary, non-gender conforming, intersex, Afro-Indigenous 2Spirit), through goal-oriented, programs, services, and safe spaces for the empowerment of **ALL** Black Trans+ lives.

Objectives

1. To promote gender-affirming physical, mental, and sexual health for Black 2STNB people
2. To create gender affirming, culturally specific learning opportunities
3. To raise awareness about cultural stigma and discrimination against Black 2STNB Bodies
4. To create space for, and raise awareness about cultural stigma and discrimination against, Black 2STNB disabled people

At our community agency, we aim to address long-standing systemic disparities faced by Black communities, particularly Black Trans, Non-Binary, and Afro-Indigenous 2Spirit folks who live with disabilities. Our own experiences supporting Black residents and Black-mandated organizations tells us we need more long-term systemic interventions to address the root causes of anti-Black racism. Increased support through sustainable funding for Black organizations is a critical toward a solution and impactful change.



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Throughout COVID-19, Black communities were disproportionately impacted with the effects of the pandemic extending far beyond health outcomes impacting vital social, economic and wellbeing indicators for Black children, youth, seniors and families. Impacts can be seen across indicators such as housing and employment, where the unemployment rate among Black Canadians was at 12 percent, about 70 percent higher than the rest of the population (8 percent) and 36 percent Black renter households had twice the eviction filing rates compared to census tracts with 2 percent Black households, even after controlling for poverty and other important factors.

Additionally, Black Trans folks have been forcibly displaced during the COVID-19 pandemic, with many experiencing severe difficulty accessing food, shelter and many other basic needs. Many of those displaced are Black Trans and Non-Binary people with intersecting identities such as Refugees, Disabled folks, Sex Workers, Older Adults, and People who Use Drugs. The support of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit was critical in Ubuntu's ability to reach those are still being severely impacted by the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, those left unable to access employment, food, educational resources, and accessible programs.

The ongoing leadership of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit, the Partnership and Accountability Circle, and its partners will provide a comprehensive, community-informed approach to realize meaningful change to address the immediate and long-term challenges experienced by Black communities. Anti-Black Racism and its ongoing manifestations is one of the top challenges facing our communities, so we encourage the City to continue to take these critical steps to respond to the long standing demands for sustainable funding, capacity building supports, and addressing challenges such as food insecurity, housing and gentrification, and community health and well-being – including building on their efforts to make programs as inclusive as possible, through intention accessibility planning. These challenges preceded the pandemic and will continue well after without the City of Toronto's targeted action, intervention and support of local Black community leadership and increased action to address anti-Black racism in the City of Toronto.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism emphasizes that systems change is what we need now as the City of Toronto moves to recover and rebuild through and beyond the pandemic. Short-term solutions are not enough to address the intergenerational impacts of anti-Black racism. We are in full support the continued investment in the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism and look forward to a seeing the positive and necessary impacts it will continue to bring. Thank you to the members of the Economic and Community Development Committee for considering our comments today.



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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stévia", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Stévia P. Arthur

Program Director

Ubuntu- Black Trans, Non-Binary and 2Spirit Collective