

SRUCSA AGM
25th June 2020
Agenda item: 9
Paper No: 7



Title: Black Lives Matter! But where are all the people of colour in the land-based sector?

Purpose: To embed work to improve racial diversity into SRUCSA policy and commit to solidarity for the Black Lives Matter movement.

Action: To approve

Black Lives Matter! But where are all the people of colour in the land-based sector?

Context

The horrifying death of George Floyd in the United States at the hands of discriminatory state violence, has again, quite rightly, reignited the debate regarding racial equality. Protests have spread around the world, with many protests here in the UK remembering those that have also lost their lives due to institutional racism in our own country.

Enough is enough! Change needs to happen now!

However, institutional and structural racism does not begin with state violence, that is just where it inevitably ends. The recent Black Lives Matter protests have, quite rightly, highlighted the need for white society to reassess and re-educate itself on how they perceive their history and structural systems.

While SRUC has restated its commitment to racial equality and diversity, which is welcome, much more can and should be done. Many factors still exclude Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) from accessing education, and when they do the Black attainment gap is still present. But this is an area where SRUC has the power to effect real change.

Employment in the land-based sector in the UK is over 99% white even though BIPOC people account for 13% of the population. Many estimates put the number of BIPOC people working in the land-based sector at less than 0.1%, which is way out of step with any other industry in the UK.

As SRUC is the leading land-based educational institution in Scotland with a renowned commercial division, as well as leading globally significant research, they are best placed to begin to address the racial imbalance in the land-based sector and the education they provide.

Black Lives Matter!

SRUCSA believes:

1. That research should be carried out to identify the barriers preventing BIPOC entering land-based education and employment, and that those barriers should be removed.
2. That additional bursaries and scholarships should be made available to BIPOC, to enable them to access education more easily in the land-based sector.
3. That BIPOC be specifically included in any policies and programs that seek to widen access to land-based education and employment.
4. That the curriculum should be assessed to ensure it celebrates the role of BIPOC in the land-based sector, while accurately addressing the damage caused by both historic colonialism and contemporary neo-colonialism, which continues to directly impact and cause harm to BIPOC.
5. That the discrimination, bullying, or oppression of BIPOC should not be tolerated under any circumstances.
6. That police oppression of BIPOC, including racial profiling, discriminatory stop and search policies, and the Prevent strategy, is damaging and potentially dangerous to their life; and that these practices should be condemned unequivocally.
7. That an unconditional commitment of solidarity should be made in support of the global Black Lives Matter movement.

Andy Robinson
Edinburgh Campus Officer
22nd June 2020