

Racial Equity Lens - Grants Search - Terms of Reference

17 June 2021

Turn2us is recruiting an anti-racist consultant; preferably one who works with local community organisations, to assess our grants search tool through a racial equity lens and identify changes required to ensure the tool is not contributing to racial inequity and make it as racially equitable as possible.

We require practical suggestions on how to improve the design of the tool to make it user friendly and accessible to minoritised communities in order to continue to support our purpose as an organisation and achieve greater impact.

Turn2us Purpose

So everyone has the opportunity to build financial sustainability and thrive, Turn2us offers the information and support people need in the face of life changing events, and collaborates to tackle the causes and symptoms of poverty.

Objectives

- To look at the current grants search tool through a racial equity lens and offer us feedback on how it might be creating barriers in reaching black and minoritised ethnic communities..
- To propose ideas on what the tool should look like to meet the needs of black and minoritised ethnic people in need of financial support.

Output

A report of no more than 10 pages that includes an executive summary, and actionable recommendations. The report will include:

- Ways in which the tool inadvertently contributes to racial injustice.
- Recommendations on how Turn2us can address this.
- Suggestions of ways in which the grants search tool can balance standard funds and funds specially designed to help people from BAME backgrounds?
- Point us to similar digital tools that have a racial equity lens.

Out of scope

Please note that the scope of this report should not extend to analysis of the broader grant giving sector. Although knowledge of the sector is needed in order to properly assess the tool, the report should be focused on the tool itself.

Context

The Grants Search tool (<https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/>) is designed to provide financial support to people in financial hardship through identifying charitable funds offering grants and other forms of financial support.

In order for the grants search to bring about the most relevant results, we require users to search based on who they are rather than their need.

For example a black, catholic engineer aged 36 in need of a fridge would be better off searching by the occupation category filter than searching by his need i.e. fridge.

There may be a schemes specifically designed to help people from BAME backgrounds but it may be better approaching the charity based on occupation or health instead as they will be more likely to get the help they need.

With the explanation above, one main question we will be looking to the consultant to help us answer is how the grants search tool can have a mutual relationship with standard funds and funds specially designed to help people from BAME backgrounds.

Rationale

We recognise that many people in the UK face significant systemic barriers around work and financial wellbeing. Research carried out by ourselves and other organisations has highlighted that people of colour are disproportionately represented in low paid jobs in sectors such as hospitality, retail and the health and social care sectors.

The Covid pandemic impacted people from black and ethnic minorities disproportionately and we know that existing social inequalities and structural discrimination in the UK played a role in this. This is supported by the Social Metrics Commission reporting in 2020 that;

“People in Black and Minority Ethnic families are between two and three times as likely to be in persistent poverty than people in White families. For example, three in ten people (28%) living in families with a head of household that is from a mixed or multiple ethnic background, are in persistent poverty, compared to 10% of those living in families with a White head of household. However, 80% of those in persistent poverty live in families with a head of household who is White”

In November 2020, Turn2us published their Financial Resilience Report which reiterated the fact that BAME were disproportionately affected by the pandemic and were more than likely to run out of money by the end of the month. The report stated:

“While over a third of people from both Asian and Black ethnic backgrounds frequently run out of money (34%, 36%), only a fifth of people from white ethnic backgrounds experience frequently running out of money (21%). Similarly, while only 36% of people from Asian ethnic backgrounds could cope for more than three months, if they lost their main source of

income, more than half of people from white ethnic backgrounds (51%) could cope for more than three months”

With the above statistics, it is only right that we strive to target the reach of our tools to those people who have been worst affected by the pandemic.

Some dynamics that we are aware of are:

- White British users of grants search are over-represented compared to the UK population in poverty.
- Conversely, BAME users of the grants search tool are under-represented.

Last month we sent out a survey to some funds on the grants search to assess where they stand with applying a racial lens to grants giving within their organisations and also asked their views on applying a racial lens to the grants search - [You can see the results of that survey here](#)

We aim to work with the charitable funds listed on the tool, who have shown an interest (via their responses in the survey above) in tackling racial inequality, to find ways in which we can provide better support to people most disenfranchised through our role as hosting the grants search tool.

This piece of work will seek to understand if there is anything we are not aware of in the design or accessibility or useability of the grants search tool that makes it more popular amongst white British users than minority ethnic users and explore the various ways in which we can practically overcome these barriers and improve the reach of the tool within minoritised communities.

Resources and Approach

We will provide the consultant with the following information:

- A link to the grants search tool
- General information on the current functionality of the tool

The consultant will be responsible for:

1. Research into other search tool models that apply a racial equity lens
2. Writing a report detailing the findings and recommendations for change

Profile and qualifications of the consultant

- Strong analytical, research, writing and communication skills
- In depth knowledge and practical understanding of the concept of racism, racial equity and racial justice in the UK grant making sector
- Strong links with local community organisations - highly desirable
- Previous experience analysing search tools using a racial lens desirable but not mandatory
- An understanding of the impact the pandemic has had on BAME communities

Management

The consultant will report to the Information Manager.

How to apply

A maximum 2 page proposal of how the consultant would deliver this within the timescale to be submitted in electronic format to the following address:

christelle.tambi@turn2us.org.uk

The proposal should include:

- Details of / links to previous work carried out of a similar theme
- A proposal for how the work would be carried out
- A budget (with VAT if applicable)