

An Introduction to Running Anti-Racist Campaigns:

What is Anti-Racism?

Put simply, Anti-Racism is the action of opposing racism. In practice, this means a multitude of things, including challenging white supremacy in all its forms and recognising your own role in systemic oppression.

The important thing to recognise here is **action** – racism thrives through inaction, and neutrality in racist situations can be just as harmful as racist actions or policies.

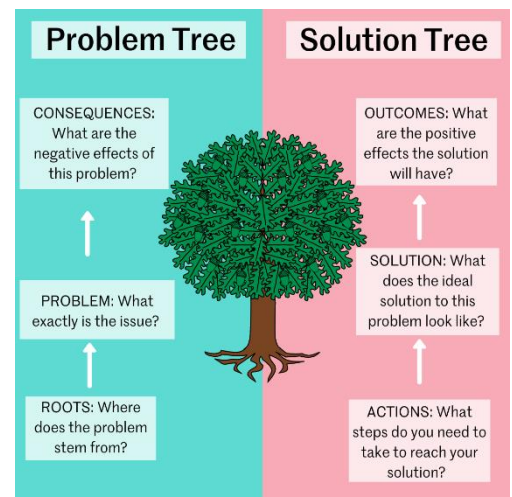
I want to run a campaign – how can I make it Anti-Racist?

Step 1: Plan properly!

When it comes to running any campaign, you need to be clear about what it is you are trying to achieve. In order to do this, you need to do your research and consult with anyone who may be affected by the issues you're campaigning on. There are a tonne of resources and groups out there, so reach out and see what information you can gather.

You can also use tools like the Problem & Solution Tree to visualise this.

You can use a Campaigns Canvas to map out the planning process – an template of this can be found [HERE](#)



Step 2: Be Prepared

Be prepared to handle factual inaccuracies and common attacks on anti-racist campaigns. This includes making sure you've got your facts all correct so you can challenge misinformation and stereotyping. Some of the resources below will help challenge racist ideas.

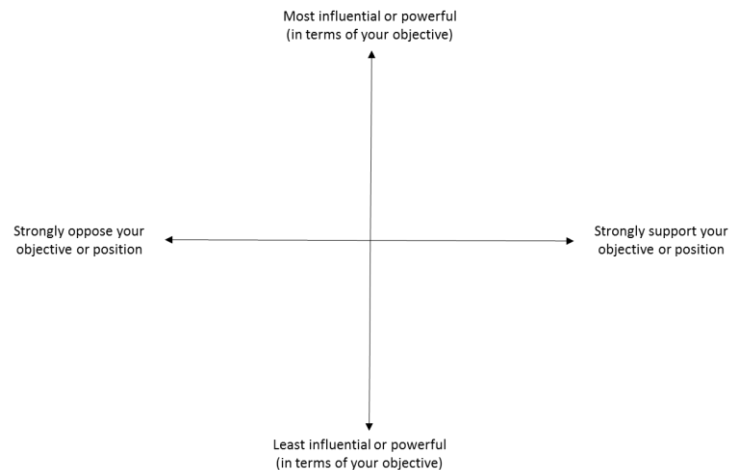
Make sure you are targeting the power holders i.e. focus your efforts on people who can make decisions about the issues you care about. This could be a local councillor, head of a University department, or anyone else who can make the change you wish to see.

It's also important to figure out who are your allies, and how you can utilise them effectively. Perhaps there is a local action group or charity who are working on the

same issue that you can team up with? This should all be clear in the planning, and you can use tools like power maps flesh this out.

Step 3: Take Action!

Whilst it may be difficult to campaign physically whilst restrictions are in place to combat COVID 19, there is still loads you can do. You can set up petitions, write letters to MPs and power-holders, attend demonstrations (but make sure you keep safe!), volunteer or donate to local and national causes, and much more.



Don't forget, an in-depth guide to running your campaign can be found [HERE](#).

Anti-Racism & Self-Care

Campaigning on anti-racism issues can be exhausting, so self-care is essential in campaigning. Audre Lorde wrote the following:

“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence. It is self-preservation and that is an act of political warfare”

Make sure you allow time for yourself away from campaigning – this is particularly important during the pandemic! This could be time to yourself to reflect, meditate, and unwind, or by spending time with friends and family.

You are not alone, so make sure you use your networks – this can be great for splitting up work as well as looking after each other.

Harvard University have collected some resources for BIPOC self-care, so feel free to check them out [HERE](#). Note that some of these resources are specific for America, so may not be relevant.

Strath Union will be here to support you with everything from planning, to communicating messages, and much more. If you need anything, please feel free to contact us. Your Exec are here to help, and you can find all their details [HERE](#).

Guidance for Allies

Firstly, you should think about why you want to run an anti-racist campaign, particularly if you are not BIPOC. If you want to be an ally, you should educate yourself and use your privilege to advocate for a marginalised group. Performative allyship¹ not only undermines campaigns, it is harmful to the community you are trying to support. If you are wanting to do an anti-racist campaign where you would receive benefit or praise for your actions, you should re-evaluate this before taking any action.

You should think about how best you can support anti-racist campaigns. Perhaps you can donate to anti-racist causes, start conversations about anti-racism with those close to you, or volunteer with anti-racist charities or campaigns.

Where to start?

Educating yourself is a key part of understanding anti-racism, particularly for allies. This includes developing an understanding of the following things:

- Understanding your own privilege and prejudices
- Understanding systemic oppression
- Understanding Intersectionality²
- Understanding specific issues affecting BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour)

One of the most important things allies can do is to active listening to the BIPOC community and not centre the conversation around yourself. This can be difficult and can require you to recentre your views and dig deeper understand your own prejudices.

A great place to start with this is by reading Me & White Supremacy. Strath Union is hosting a reading group during Black History Month – you can get involved [HERE](#).

What are the issues affecting the BAME Community?

1) Within Strathclyde University

We are committed to making learning and teaching at Strathclyde more reflective of its diverse population, we are leading a campaign to Decolonise the Curriculum. You

¹ 'Performative allyship... is when someone from [a] non-marginalised group professes support or solidarity with a marginalised group in a way that either isn't helpful or actively harms that group. (<https://forge.medium.com/performative-allyship-is-deadly-c900645d9f1f>)

² Intersectionality is the theory of how different types of oppression interact and impact people's lives (coined by Professor Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in 1989.

can find out more about this by getting in touch with Chelbi Hillan, your VP Education at strathunion.vpeducation@strath.ac.uk

We are also committed to tackling the BAME Attainment Gap in universities – it is well documented that students from BAME backgrounds are less likely to achieve the firsts and 2:1s than white students. You can find out more about the national pictures [HERE](#)

Make sure you check out some of our events for Black History Month [HERE](#)

2) In the community

You will have no doubt the Black Lives Matter protests that have been taking place globally since the death of George Floyd in March 2020. It's important to recognise that these campaigns aren't new – the Black Lives Matter campaign began in 2013.³ Black Lives Matter campaigns on a variety of issues, including voter rights, combatting police brutality, and much more.

Many issues affect BAME communities, including access to healthcare (including the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on BAME communities), housing, immigration rights, and much more. This is important to recognise – if you are running a campaign, you need to consider the impact it may have on BAME communities, amongst other groups. This can be done through proper planning.

DO THE WORK!

You must be committed to tackling anti-racism **wherever** it appears. For example, racist attitudes may surface during planning meetings or campaign information settings, as well as amongst your friends and family. These always need to be challenged, regardless of how uncomfortable you might feel.

If you are not BIPOC, it is important that you do not centre the narrative of an anti-racist campaign around your experience. This takes away from work BIPOC put into their campaigns and further alienates them.

It is also important to recognise that it is not the responsibility of Black people to defend their own liberation. What this means is that you can't leave issues that affect Black people to those who are affected by it, as this only perpetuates white apathy.

Be active in the work you are doing, and make sure you DO THE WORK.

³ <https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>

Useful Anti-Racism Resources

Websites to visit:

- [NUS Decolonise Education Campaign](#)
- [NUS Black Student Campaigners Network](#) (for Black student campaigns to join the national network)
- [Race Equity Tools](#)
- [Black Lives Matter](#)
- [The Anti-Racist Educator](#)
- [gal-dem Magazine](#)
- [EIS Anti-Racist Education Resources](#)
- [MobLab's 21st Century Advocacy Playbook](#)
- [Harvard University's Anti-Racism Resources](#)

Books to read:

- Check out [New Beacon Books' Essential Reading List](#)

Instagram accounts to follow:

- [The Great Unlearn](#)
- [UK Black Pride](#)
- [gal-dem](#)
- [Black Lives Matter](#)
- [Runnymede Trust](#)
- [The Black Curriculum](#)