

Our Commitment to Racial Equality and Inclusion

Introduction / Background

2020 has opened all of our eyes to the gross inequalities that still exist around us. When it comes to race, the issues we're facing are systemic, deeply entrenched, and knotty.



We must be a courageous organisation to really make a change. Where no one acts, we act, where no one speaks, we speak.

I'm crystal clear that at the Co-op we are Anti-Racist - that means we won't stand by when we spot it happening. We will speak out against it and we'll commit all of our assets and our diverse talents whole-heartedly to making change happen.

I've no doubt that future generations will judge us on how well we respond to this challenge. So at the Co-op we've set ourselves a bold vision to **Co-operate for a Fairer World**.

This document sets out our commitment to tackling racial inequality head on. To be clear, we will not achieve our vision without delivering on these commitments.

We've got a long way to go. But I have the energy and determination of my colleagues alongside me.

Steve Murrells

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Our Commitments

In addition to zero tolerance approach to racism and bullying against our colleagues, whether that's from colleagues, managers or customers we'll...

- We'll publish annually our ethnicity pay gap. As we know transparency drives action so we will call on the government to make this mandatory for all businesses.
- Double the representation of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic leaders and managers by the end of 2022, moving from 3% to 6%, and then to 10% by 2025.
- Require diverse shortlists for all leadership roles - no exceptions, and we'll partner with organisations that will help us to reach talent from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Actively collect and monitor data which enables us to track progress and reduce inequalities within our internal systems and processes when it comes to promotion and opportunities.
- Require all of our leaders to have objectives that ensure they are playing their part in delivering to our commitments to racial equality from 2021.
- Create more diverse consumer and member panels to get closer to what our customers and members need from our businesses.
- Ask our members from Black and Asian and ethnic minority communities to tell us how they view us and what we need to change to make us more welcoming and inclusive. Once we really understand these views, we'll work to address the issues being raised.
- Develop specific products for ethnic minority groups and equip our colleagues with training in order to service our newly-attracted customers well e.g. our soon-to-be launched African and Caribbean funeral service.
- Ensure that we celebrate with communities and that our products meet the needs of our customers as they celebrate key cultural events.
- Work with our Co-op Academies Trust to develop a new curriculum on anti-racism so that the next generation knows what it means to be anti-racist. We'll then lobby the government to roll this out as part of the national school curriculum across the UK.
- Maximise the use of our apprenticeship levy and seek partnerships and opportunities which focus on benefitting Black, Asian and ethnic minority candidates.
- Use our Community Wellbeing Index, ethnicity data, external evidence and partner insight to understand issues of race inequality in the communities we support and where we need to focus our activity.
- Increase the number of local causes whose projects include Black, Asian, and ethnic minority beneficiaries to 25% through the Local Community Fund.
- Increase the number of ethnic minority led community organisations that our charity the Co-op Foundation will support.
- Provide targeted vocational and enrichment opportunities for Black, Asian and ethnic minority students at our Co-op Academy schools, building on their individual aspirations and ambitions.
- Target racial inequality as part of a broader focus on youth inequality through national programmes and the partnerships we select.
- Work with the Co-op Academies Trust to increase the representation of senior leaders in the Trust.
- Create more inclusive ways to access product and service information.
- Ensure stronger representation of Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups across all our marketing platforms.
- Change our procurement process so that we partner and invest more with suppliers that have a strong focus on inclusion and closing the inequality gap in their own businesses.
- Encourage ethnic diversity as a focus for the businesses we trade with and offer practical support and encouragement where we can to those that need to progress.
- Launch in October 2020 our Inclusion Think Tank, which will be chaired by our Co-op CEO, Steve Murrells, and will include both internal and external partners committed to furthering equality across the Co-op.
- We will ensure that inclusion is recognised as a key strategic programme and part of our strategy and business transformation portfolio.
- Publish annually our detailed targets and our progress, with the first reporting due in September 2021.