



Black Lives Matter – June 2020

In light of recent events, we want to show our support, solidarity and most importantly, commitment, to ensuring that we and our industry learn from the issues being raised by the Black Lives Matter movement.

Our role is to champion actors and creatives to the wider industry - to ensure that they are given every possible chance to succeed and make the connections they need to progress in an often challenging profession. It cannot be overemphasised that, just like other industries, structural racism is a very real problem in the business. We've seen from the drama schools all the way to the boards of production companies, from artistic directorships to producers; that we don't yet reflect the true face of modern Britain. Black voices are absent too much of the time and efforts to address this are all-too-often a sticking plaster that doesn't go to the heart of the problem. We know how important it is that actors and creatives know we have their back and that we are aware of what racism is and how it impacts on the lives of our non-white clients.

We know this is a huge problem to surmount and huge problems require huge effort. We also don't want it to be an empty series of platitudes thrown out at the height of a moment of awareness. We want our clients and those we engage with to know that we are listening and we want them to be able to talk to us. We are here to support our clients and if that means they need to have an uncomfortable conversation about their experiences then bring it on. We will make a commitment to be honest with them about what we see day-to-day in the industry and how that impacts black representation. We will ensure that we not only champion our clients but also the cause for greater diversity in all the work we do.

We also know there's more we can do to address the lack of people of colour across the agenting, creative, and casting worlds. We want to help understand that and to do what we can to address it. In the past we have discussed this when hiring but we recognise there is so much more to do.

Over the coming weeks and months we will start to look at what further practical steps we can take and we will report back on this but for the moment, following discussion as an office, we have agreed:

- Hiring Policy: we will not allow an all-white shortlist.
- Ensure charitable donations are only made to organisations who are demonstrably inclusive organisations.
- We will make an anti-racist statement on our website.
- Continue to make sure our casting suggestions are not restricted to clients on the basis of their race (or other protected category) and actively monitor this.
- Push for publicity opportunities for our black clients and challenge lists that that do not appear to be representative.
- Increase mentoring opportunities for under-represented creative talent starting out in the industry.
- Challenge organisations we work with if we are concerned about a lack of representation on a breakdown, availability-check list etc.
- We have signed up to: <https://theatrecalltoaction.wordpress.com/>

Thank you to those of you who have reached out already and we're looking forward to continuing the discussion.

AHA Talent believes that Black Lives Matter.

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