

OUR STRATEGY

2022-2025



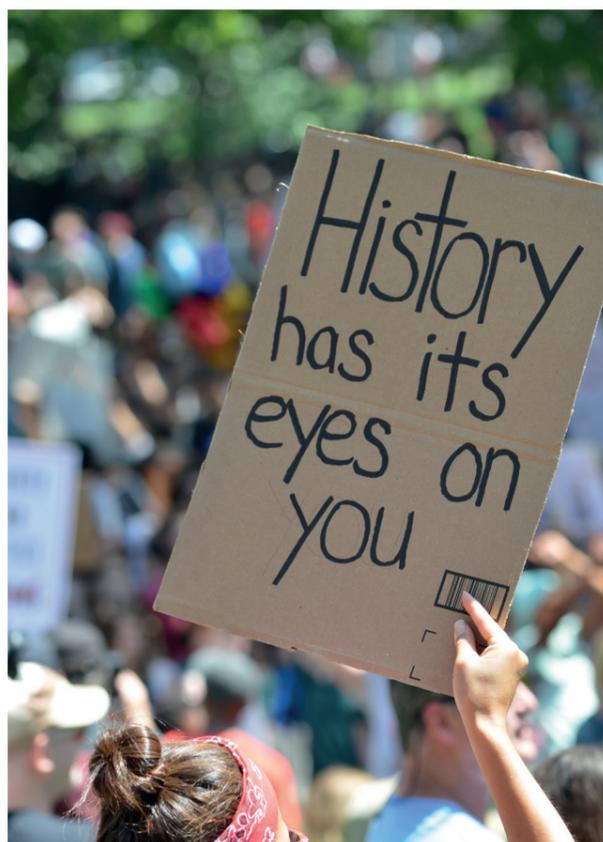
“A stronger and more inclusive civil society to meet the needs of BAME and other disadvantaged communities.”

INTRODUCTION

Voice4Change England (V4CE) developed out of a national summit held in October 2005. The event brought together over 40 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) organisations to discuss how the sector's interests could best be represented within national policy making and programme development. The overwhelming conclusion was that the BME sector needed a coherent national voice and that this voice should speak through a national body drawn from the existing BME national and regional infrastructure organisations. This proposal attracted initial funding through the Home Office Active Communities Unit Strategic Funding Programme and gave V4CE financial stability and credibility as a Strategic Partner.



Director, Kunle Olulode MBE



SIXTEEN YEARS ON, THE NEED FOR V4CE IS AS STRONG AS IT EVER WAS.

The environment which fostered our early development has changed. Nonetheless, there is a continuing need for a national body with the reach and credibility to represent the sector's interests to policy makers and to help with the development of the BME sector. In recent years, the political landscape changed considerably with a few seismic events shifting the Overton window - the spectrum of ideas on public policy and social issues considered acceptable by the general public at a given time.

Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the institutional flaws that contribute to and exacerbate systemic racism. In the COVID-19 Marmot Review it stated BME groups experienced higher rates of mortality from COVID-19 - this related to their disproportionate experience of high-risk living and working conditions. Furthermore, the report attributed this in part to longstanding impacts of discrimination and exclusion associated with systemic racism.

V4CE served as a lifeline to organisations securing resources via V4CE's COVID-19 Partnership Fund to ensure neglected communities received the support they needed. This financial assistance has aimed to ameliorate BME inequalities and deliver mental health and well-being services to those impacted by the pandemic.

In addition, we have been at the forefront of supporting the vaccination uptake in the BME community because of the negative experiences within a culturally insensitive healthcare system. These are just two ways in the midst of a public health emergency in which we have managed to serve the needs of our members.

Secondly, both the Windrush scandal and the murder of George Floyd in 2020 ignited the public consciousness around racism. It shone a spotlight on how endemic this scourge is and increased literacy around how it still blights the structures that enable this discrimination to persist. This translated into an increased recognition of the significance of supporting the BME voluntary and community sector (BME VCS).

V4CE looks to empower these organisations financially, including being a source of funding, and also looks to represent their interests as a leading advocate in the public policy arena.

We have demonstrably shown this via V4CE's policy and research arm including the Bridging the Gap report on sector fundraising (2015) which still stands up as the most important document on the issue over the last 10 years. The Home Truths report issued last year in partnership with ACEVO set the benchmark for understanding race issues in the charity sector from the perspective of BME staff in a way that was unprecedented in the sector.

The work on Windrush and our involvement in procurement through the Crown Service Review has also led to key policy discussions. In relation to procurement: **a new Green Paper has come out from Government recognising the Social Value element in contracts and evoking a call for a 10% ring-fence on government contracts each year for the third sector - equivalent to £7.5bn in monetary value.** V4CE's pipeline of cutting-edge research continues to go on from strength to strength with the sanctioning of Home Truths 2. Finally, our partnership with the Institute of Funders and University of East London will yield a new report on the professional experiences of BME fundraisers based on the experience of around 200 fundraisers.



The work on Windrush and our involvement in procurement through the Crown Service Review has also led to key policy changes.

V4CE has grown in the last two years and needs to adapt to its larger scale model by having a full review of its administrative systems. This increase in income, size and headcount has presented challenges which we will strive to overcome. We will seek to modernise and implement systems that will enable us to keep improving the quality of our output and provide an enhanced experience for our members.

We intend to revolutionise our members experience with the creation of the official Membership Plan in 2021 with a focus on Leadership, Empowerment, Action, Rebuilding and Networking (LEARN). These two marked shifts

in direction we envision will shape an engaging and vibrant relationship between V4CE and our members. We believe we can capacity build in this way and strengthen this rapport further by our communications output. We are stalwart in our belief in a relationship with our members that is reciprocated and hope to do this by the creation of content that resonates with our audience. We will also attempt to diversify our production of content via a myriad of communications channels in the hope that our members will consume our content on different platforms.



Going forward, V4CE will strive to act as a source of counsel, advice, and support for the BME sector and in conjunction act as the bridge between the Sector, Government, and other key policy / decision makers. This document will outline how V4CE will endeavour to achieve these objectives and detail how we see V4CE evolving and the crucial role it will play in civil society.

VISION

A stronger and inclusive civil society, fit to meet the needs of BME communities.

MISSION

To work to build a stronger and more inclusive society and end race discrimination and inequalities

VALUES

Our Strategy, governance and service delivery are underpinned by values of –

- **Fairness:** we will strive to treat all individuals and organisations with respect and with an even hand
- **Innovation:** we will seek to work in ways which are new and creative, and which define new solutions to the problems faced by our sector.
- **Transparency:** we will ensure that all our operations are clear, visible, and honest.
- **Transformational:** we will seek to transform our own organisation as well as those of our partners for the better.

GOVERNANCE

Voice4Change England is a member-led organisation managed by a Board of Directors. To be eligible for full membership, organisations have to be BME sector organisations - this includes unincorporated community groups, voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises, community interest and other companies with ethical aims, non-governmental organisations, trade unions, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations;

Full membership is also open to BME individuals who are working in line with the objects of Voice4Change England. Full members have voting rights.

Non BME organisations and individuals who are interested in furthering the objects of Voice4Change England are able to take up associate membership which gives invitations to general meetings, additional opportunities for interaction and access to information, but does not include voting rights.

Appointments to the Board of Directors are made by the membership at the Annual General Meeting with further provision for Board members to make direct appointments to the Board outside of AGMs.



V4CE STRATEGIC AIMS

WE HAVE AGREED FIVE AIMS FOR THE DURATION OF THIS STRATEGY.

These describe our high-level intentions. Under each aim we list our strategic Objectives (which break each aim into the key steps or areas of work needed to meet the aim), delivery processes and outcomes.

Our strategic aims are both inward looking to aid the sector, and outward looking to develop engagement, knowledge, and race equality. For the first part, aims 1, 3 and 4 help the BME sector to increase engagement and influence, particularly with policy development, and to develop organisational capacity and sustainability. For the second, aims 2, 4 and 5 are to help develop recognition of the Sector’s value and impact, as well as develop strategic relationships and collaboration to increase race equality, increase funding resources and access to income diversity programmes and ensure the BME perspective on issues that shape society is heard.

- 1:** To provide leadership and resources to increase BME Sector involvement and representation in key decision making and policy forums
- 2:** To increase awareness and respect of BME Sector role, activities, impact, and added value
- 3:** To strengthen the BME Sector and race equality through direct infrastructure service delivery, advocacy and improving infrastructure provision through partnership and collaboration
- 4:** To increase opportunities for BME organisations to develop resources and sustainability through enterprise, creativity and sector led grant making
- 5:** To harness the BME voice through partnership, research, and consultation, to ensure the BME perspective is heard in issues that shape society

STRATEGIC AIM 1

To provide leadership and increase BME Sector involvement and representation in key decision making and policy forums.

Strategic Objectives		
To equip BME Sector organisations to engage with policy and decision makers at local and national levels, by empowering these organisations through the provision of support, information, training, consultation, and development help.	To provide leadership and advocacy on important and challenging issues that face BME Sector.	To coordinate BME Sector responses to Government and other relevant policy consultations and contribute to general policy development work for the benefit of the BME Sector.
Delivery Process		
<p>Provide resources (e.g., templates / messages) for members to engage with policymakers in relevant Government and other policy consultations.</p> <p>Provide online electronic and print publication of educational materials on policy issues of the day and the V4CE perspective for submissions.</p> <p>Host workshops and seminar events, as necessary, for discussion of policy and formulation of action to take.</p> <p>Develop and host thematic policy forums and roundtables drawn from members and the BME Sector through online polls & social media.</p> <p>Develop opportunities for engagement e.g., Ambassadors from the BME Sector.</p>	<p>Conduct regular “State of the Sector” surveys and disseminate findings to highlight issues and challenges that need policy development.</p> <p>Conduct policy scans and prioritise those that are felt to have greatest impact on the BME sector and lead action for members and other interested people around key priorities.</p> <p>Host workshop/seminar events to increase awareness and understanding of relevant legislation, proposed initiatives and on race equality issues.</p> <p>Develop and implement advocacy, as needed, e.g., to increase race equality in policy, or ensure inclusion of marginalised BME organisations in policy consultations.</p>	<p>Collaborate on cutting edge research with various think tanks, civil society, and other organisations to shine a light on key BME Sector issues which have yet to be explored.</p> <p>V4CE to survey and consult its membership when formulating policy stances and when drafting programme design/consultation/submissions.</p> <p>Democratise V4CE decision making on significant policy positions through work to host BME assemblies which represent interests or provision of online voting for all members.</p>
Outcomes		
<p>Increased skills and confidence of BME organisations in terms of engagement with policymakers at local and national levels.</p> <p>Increased ability of BME organisations to engage in relevant policy consultations and forums.</p> <p>Improved awareness within the BME Sector of opportunities within policies, strategies, and initiatives.</p> <p>Increased methods of engagement e.g., if roles such as Ambassadors are utilised.</p>	<p>Better recognition of V4CE leadership and advocacy and increased ability for BME organisations to benefit from this.</p> <p>Increased awareness within the BME sector of opportunities within new policies and strategies.</p> <p>Improved BME Sector lobbying for race inclusive policy, underpinned by dependable intelligence.</p> <p>Improved V4CE ability to bring required action on key issues affecting the BME sector.</p>	<p>Greater coordination of a collective BME voice leading to more influence on policy.</p> <p>Improved BME contribution to public and grant making policy formulation through the development of a collective voice.</p> <p>Increased awareness and value of V4CE role as enabler of coordinated BME responses to policy development.</p>

STRATEGIC AIM 2

To increase awareness and respect of BME Sector structure, role, activities, impact, and value added.

Strategic Objectives		
To publish reports and disseminate information to show the value of the BME Sector and its achievements.	To develop and support BME third sector organisations through the provision of infrastructure services.	To promote partnership working between V4CE and frontline/ infrastructure organisations in order to access mutually beneficial opportunities.
Delivery Process		
<p>Develop and implement techniques to collect information on a regular basis from BME organisations on the needs they meet and their impact.</p> <p>Organise publications and events to publicise the work, impact and added value of BME organisations.</p> <p>Organise needs, work, and impact according to themes and use this thematic information in relevant consultations and in influencing work.</p>	<p>Development of culturally appropriate infrastructure resources and workshops; built on the learning of work with organisations funded by V4CE grants programmes.</p> <p>The development of the official Membership plan for 2021 with a focus on Leadership, Empowerment, Action, Rebuilding and Networking (LEARN).</p> <p>Providing branded training materials and workshops for members e.g., Exclusive training for members in collaboration with the Chartered Institution of Fundraising.</p> <p>Development of peer learning and support through collaboration, workshops, and online resources.</p>	<p>Development and implementation of strategic collaborations on infrastructure to build greater choice in provision</p> <p>Joint local information, consultation, and training events</p> <p>Collaborative provision of infrastructure support “.</p> <p>Help BME organisations develop relationships to increase opportunities in influence and funding.</p>
Outcomes		
<p>Strengthened V4CE network leading to increased audiences.</p> <p>Improved ability to collect relevant information from BME groups.</p> <p>Improved visibility and value for BME organisation work and impact.</p> <p>Greater awareness and value for V4CE relationships and knowledge of the BME Sector.</p>	<p>High quality, responsive BME infrastructure support that is tailored for the BME Sector.</p> <p>Contribution to networks and collaborations, through peer learning and other support, improving the visibility of impact.</p>	<p>Sustainable BME infrastructure locally.</p> <p>High quality responsive BME infrastructure support.</p> <p>A networked BME Sector.</p>

Strategic Objectives		
To raise visibility of BME organisations and their impact, by enabling and building their participation in initiatives and forums and increasing their ability to build key relationships.	To provide customised advocacy and representation support where BME Sector organisations are denied access to opportunities.	To improve access to organisational development resources and providers.
Delivery Process		
<p>Increase V4CE role as informant and connector to help BME organisations build the relationships they need.</p> <p>Host webinars and collaborate with other leaders to help BME organisations understand how they can engage in areas that are relevant and need their input. Examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health awareness in the BME Community (In collaboration with MIND). Religion and Faith (Muslim Charities Forum and Multifaith Network). <p>Utilise V4CE Communications to increase output and visibility of successful BME organisational and partnership work to act as examples to encourage other BME organisations to take similar action and to encourage non-BME organisations to actively seek BME partnership and involvement.</p> <p>To build a bank of willing members who would like to be used as case studies to increase engagement and partnerships.</p>	<p>Advocacy and representation on behalf of excluded members.</p> <p>Advocacy and support to build inclusion of members in initiatives and forums relevant to them that they are unable to join.</p> <p>Development and provision of advocacy role.</p> <p>Collection of feedback from BME organisations to determine priorities for action and cases to take up.</p>	<p>Brokering relationships between third party providers and the BME Sector.</p> <p>V4CE to explore grant making specifically designed to improve organisational development and to contribute to building BME Sector access to these.</p> <p>V4CE to build BME knowledge of existing specialisms by inviting BME organisations to workshops run by external experts. Areas of workshops could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigning Marketing Governance and infrastructure Research Equalities.
Outcomes		
<p>Increased visibility and value of BME work leading to improved relationships and collaboration.</p> <p>Development of BME ability and collaboration to deal with intersectional issues.</p> <p>Greater ability to take up opportunities presented by Government, other key initiatives, and funders.</p> <p>Improved opportunities to join useful consortia e.g., to bid for service contracts.</p> <p>Greater influence of BME organisations in their local areas.</p> <p>Improved relationships leading to a better foundation for sustainability.</p>	<p>Continued representation on race equality issues BME debate continue.</p> <p>Increased help for BME organisations to build their inclusion.</p> <p>Developed advocacy and support for better BME involvement and representation.</p> <p>Improved inclusion and race equality through greater BME involvement.</p>	<p>Increased awareness within BME Sector of opportunities within new policies and strategies.</p>

STRATEGIC AIM 3

To strengthen the BME Sector and race equality through direct infrastructure service delivery, advocacy and improving infrastructure provision through partnership and collaboration.

Strategic Objectives	
To help the BME Sector build equalities and inclusion particularly with regard to race, through work and relationships developed by infrastructure provision.	To promote partnership working between V4CE and other infrastructure organisations in order to access mutually beneficial opportunities and provide an increased range of services for BME organisations.
Delivery Process	
Utilise infrastructure work to identify issues that have an equalities dimension, particularly those connected with race and build this knowledge. Prioritise issues and determine key areas of action. Develop and run campaigns or policy initiative for key priorities to improve race equality and build collaboration with affected organisations on this work. Develop and implement infrastructure services to build BME organisational ability to tackle race discrimination, including where this has led to structural underfunding and poor access to services.	Development and implementation of strategic collaborations on infrastructure to build greater choice and effectiveness in provision. Joint information, consultation, and training events. Collaborative provision of infrastructure support.
Outcomes	
Greater capacity of V4CE to campaign for race equality through information from BME organisations and members. Greater ability to build collaboration for influence. Increased ability of BME organisations to tackle race discrimination.	Improved strategy on infrastructure provision through collaboration, decreasing competitive damage. Improved choice of infrastructure help at different levels – local, regional, and national. Collaboration leading to more opportunities for learning and development for a high quality, responsive BME infrastructure support. Greater efficiency and resourcing through collaboration.

Strategic Objectives		
To develop and support BME third sector organisations through the provision of infrastructure services.	Establish a BME policy forum allow the creation and debate of forward thinking BME policies.	Create opportunities to participate in wide-ranging debates on future government direction and policy.
Delivery Process		
Development and provision of culturally appropriate infrastructure resources and workshops, built on the learning of work with organisations funded by V4CE grants programmes and through member engagement. Development and provision of the official Membership plan for 2021 with a focus on Leadership, Empowerment, Action, Rebuilding and Networking (LEARN). Provision of branded training materials and workshops for members e.g., exclusive training for members in collaboration with the Chartered Institution of Fundraising. Development of peer learning and support through collaboration, workshops, and shared resources.	Establish a V4CE people's assembly with representative model or a direct democracy model (with a guiding role of members without the added bureaucracy.) Opportunity to hold thematic policy forums drawn from members input (expertise).	Thematic policy forums drawn from members (online polls & social media). V4CE roundtables. Possibility for V4CE members to become ambassadors and represent V4CE externally.
Outcomes		
Improved provision of high quality, responsive BME infrastructure support that is tailored for the BME Sector. Greater opportunities for development of BME organisations through the provision of infrastructure support. Improved benefits, help and support for V4CE members. Increased contribution to networks and collaborations, through peer learning and other support, improving the visibility of BME organisational impact.	Increased awareness within BME Sector of opportunities within new policies and strategies. BME Sector is supported to pursue opportunities presented by government and third sector policy.	V4CE has strong relationship with stakeholders and collaborators from both BME Sector and beyond Increased awareness within BME Sector of opportunities within new policies and strategies. BME Sector is supported to pursue opportunities presented by government and third sector policy.

STRATEGIC AIM 4

To increase opportunities for BME organisations to develop resources and sustainability through enterprise, creativity and sector led grant making.

Strategic Objectives		
To reverse current trends and ensure greater access to social investment.	To increase opportunities in developing resources and sustainability through enterprise and grants.	To build stakeholder engagement to aid the BME Sector to adapt, survive and thrive in volatile political, social, and funding environments.
Delivery Process		
<p>Development to set up and run a V4CE led endowment fund for the sector to help with social investment to increase asset acquisition, joint ventures, and structured finance.</p> <p>Development of specialist capacity building programmes to increase ability of BME organisations to be investment ready.</p> <p>Work with social investment funders to ensure inclusive social investment policy and practice.</p>	<p>To set up a training and resources programme to help BME organisations develop skills, confidence, and knowledge for successful enterprise.</p> <p>To link BME organisations with established leaders in the field and with funds.</p> <p>To work to keep a V4CE-led grant fund for BME groups that is particularly suitable for small, volunteer run BME community groups.</p>	<p>Host quarterly networking forums to include stakeholders and third sector reps focussing on priority issues e.g., localism, funding, social enterprise.</p> <p>Provide an up-to-date funding calendar complete with deadlines, links, and support.</p> <p>Develop relationships with relevant stakeholders and funders to aid the BME Sector and ensure relevant information on BME organisations and issues is disseminated.</p> <p>Help key stakeholders develop their race equality strategies and practice.</p> <p>Host talks and events to help build creativity and innovation and share ideas.</p>
Outcomes		
<p>Greater inclusion in social investment and development of programmes that cater well to groups that are often excluded e.g., BME groups.</p> <p>Growth of the BME sector through increased access to social investment.</p> <p>Improved V4CE programmes for social investment.</p> <p>Greater recognition of V4CE role and skills in increasing access to social investment.</p>	<p>Increased sustainability of BME groups.</p> <p>Increased capacity for BME groups to deliver for their communities.</p> <p>Improved opportunities for income diversity.</p> <p>Empowerment through giving greater agency to BME organisations to determine which path they deem suitable for their organisation.</p> <p>More opportunities to build creativity and innovation in the sector.</p>	<p>Empower BME Sector to connect with different models of revenue stream in fast changing funding ecosystem - secure a sustainable future.</p> <p>Empowers/gives agency to V4CE members to determine which path they deem suitable for their organisation.</p> <p>Increased stakeholder knowledge of the BME Sector, its value, and issues it faces to help develop more inclusive agencies.</p> <p>Development of a more empowered BME Sector through better, more inclusive engagement with key stakeholders.</p>

STRATEGIC AIM 5

To harness the BME voice through partnership, research, and consultation, to ensure the BME perspective is heard in issues that shape society.

Strategic Objectives		
To establish, develop and maintain strategic partnerships that provide the BME perspective in issues that shape society and build recognition of V4CE as a sector leader and advocate.	To commission and disseminate or collaborate on research to raise understanding of BME contribution and issues faced, particularly with regard to discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion.	V4CE to continue and expand policy work/positions.
Delivery Process		
<p>Provide BME organisations and members with up-to-date policy guidance on government legislation and initiatives and initiate complementary consultation on key issues to publicise this and formulate V4CE positions.</p> <p>Develop and maintain strategic partnerships to aid this work.</p> <p>Develop a thematic map and set up partnerships and relationships with key advocates in the BME sector that can be consulted on major policy initiatives.</p> <p>Act as direct representation of the BME Sector to Government Departments and other key decision makers.</p> <p>Work to enable dissemination of the BME perspective to lead to appropriate action.</p> <p>Work with the BME Sector to ensure that the sector is engaged with the development of appropriate leadership channels to help organisations express views and deal with issues.</p>	<p>Explore and set up collaborations with civil society organisation, funders and think tanks to shape and fund research that is relevant to the BME sector.</p> <p>Enable sufficient research on issues of race discrimination, marginalisation, and exclusion in order to develop action to tackle these.</p> <p>Capture views and experiences of BME organisations to ensure findings and evidence of research reflect a comprehensive and valid views of the Sector.</p> <p>Maintain existing and productive research collaborations e.g., Home Truths 2.</p>	<p>Provide members with up-to-date policy guidance on government legislation with complementary consultation from members on formulation of V4CE policy positions.</p> <p>Act as direct representation of BME Sector to government departments and local authorities.</p>
Outcomes		
<p>Better V4CE relationships with stakeholders and collaborators from the BME Sector and wider.</p> <p>Greater ability for organisations in the BME Sector to develop appropriate leadership channels, ensure their perspective is heard and their views on issues that shape society is listened to.</p> <p>Greater opportunity for effective and meaningful action as a result of increased attention to the BME perspective.</p> <p>Greater recognition of V4CE as a mandated voice on behalf of the BME Sector.</p>	<p>V4CE has strong relationship with stakeholders and collaborators from both BME Sector and beyond.</p> <p>Increased resources to produce research that gives the BME perspective on issues that shape society.</p> <p>Increased attention paid to the BME perspective through improved research and dissemination of this.</p> <p>Improved resources to build race equality and inclusion.</p> <p>Greater recognition and value of V4CE for its specialist knowledge and reach.</p>	<p>V4CE is recognised as a mandated voice on behalf of BME Sector.</p> <p>V4CE has strong relationship with stakeholders and collaborators from both BME Sector and beyond.</p> <p>V4CE is recognised for its specialist knowledge and reach.</p>

