

## **Introduction/background**

Our ‘Black Lives Matter: What Can You Do?’ webinar was our best attended to-date, with the topic clearly hitting a nerve amongst our colleagues. We came away aware that the challenges, issues and resolutions discussed were opening up new areas of engagement and curiosity, amplifying frustration and igniting energy in our audience.

We think there is a need for a forum to support individuals who work in the social housing sector to address racism, discrimination and navigate micro-aggressions in the workplace. Hence the proposition of an HDN BME Action Learning Set.

Our Learning Set is for any staff member identifying with “Black & Minoritised Ethnic” (BME), especially those unable to access inhouse Black/BME Staff Networks regardless of their seniority. This initiative is not in competition with inhouse ones. *We seek to fill a gap in provision and provide cross regional networking, support and learning.*

## **What is a Learning Set?**

Learning Sets are one of a range of personal development tools which can be used to learn **new ways of working, share experiences** and **help with problem solving**.

A Learning Set typically consists of a group of about 5-8 people normally who agree to meet together on a regular basis to discuss work-related issues or to develop skills in an area of common interest. Learning Sets give individuals time to explore issues that they need to resolve in an environment which is empowering and which helps the individual to find a solution – rather than be told what to do. Our Learning Set.

Our Learning Set will have 8 – 10 members and consist of colleagues from different organisations and different professional backgrounds. The group will be supported by a facilitator, though over time we envisage that groups may become self-facilitating.

## **How does a Learning Set operate?**

Learning Sets can operate in different ways – the approaches include:

- ‘Open’ sessions where individual members bid to discuss issues of concern to them. The members agree at the start of each meeting which bids will be successful and therefore will be discussed.
- ‘Planned’ sessions where the topic is agreed in advance.
- ‘Combined’ approach where the meeting is divided between “planned” and “open” sessions, allowing both the structure of a planned approach with the opportunity for individuals to raise issues of current concern as well.

### **What is expected from Learning Set members?**

Sets typically meet once a month for about a half day (this is negotiated with members). Members are expected to commit to attend all meetings – only in very exceptional circumstances should anyone miss a meeting. Issues such as confidentiality, trust, respect and so on are key to effective Learning Set working.

### **Is there a cost?**

HDN will make a small charge to employers - £200 per head - for 10 meetings to cover HDN’s staff time to organise, prepare, facilitate and evaluate the programme.

### **Next Steps and Selection**

1. Depending on demand and to enable the pilot project to run smoothly, we will only accept a maximum of 2 individuals from the same organisation. We could run the programme in-house for an organisation but that is a separate conversation.
2. Those expressing interest in joining the pilot BME Action Learning Set will be invited to complete an application form and attend the **Information and Registration Session** planned for **Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 10 to 11.30am.**
3. Selection for the pilot programme will be determined by those first expressing interest, who have submitted their completed application and have the written support of their employers to attend 10 monthly set meetings. Employers will be invoiced at the end of September.

If oversubscribed, we will run a parallel programme later this year. The cost of this will determined nearer the time.