

EDUCATION & TRAINING



RedQuadrant working with London Borough of Newham

Reciprocal Mentoring Scheme, RedQuadrant and London Borough of Newham

The London Borough of Newham launched Tackling Racism, Inequality and Disproportionality (TRID), an ambitious work programme aiming to dismantle systemic racism and ensure Newham is a beacon of social change. RedQuadrant was appointed as a provider and partner with the council to design and deliver the introduction of a best-in-class reciprocal mentoring scheme, a key element of the TRID programme.

We co-developed the programme with Newham, running design workshops with a design group including TRID programme leads and senior managers, and Black, Asian, African, Caribbean, and minority ethnic and heritage staff. We ran a ‘train the trainers’ programme to help Newham develop the capacity to continue the scheme into the future.

The core training consisted of a launch event with an exercise exploring identities in the group; four half-days of deeper group work focusing on self-awareness, developing self within a (mentoring) relationship, and skills development. During this core training, the co-mentor pairs were formed and started their contracting process. Action learning sets in peer mentor groups (Black Asian, African, Caribbean, minority ethnic, heritage non-senior staff and senior managers) occurred after the 1st and 4th mentoring sessions followed by a learning workshop with the cohort.

The whole programme has been delivered online on a zoom platform. The initial client and participant feedback is overwhelmingly positive. We have been recommissioned to support the next phase and the client sponsor is more than happy to recommend our work.

Results have been positive – we have completed two cohorts and a third is launching in early 2023. We have also begun cohorts of similar programmes at other local government bodies.

Initial feedback received – “blended approach and interactive – opened up”; “empowered to act”; “safe space and open for vulnerability”; “equal coming together”; “provocative, challenging”; “Being challenged to go out of comfort zone”; “focused sharing of lived experience and identified personal strengths – and do things differently”; “Have been a victim – but now stand up – a platform to speak openly about racism to a white male”; “Space to express and reflect and find a voice”; “Breaking barriers –a sense of belonging ...learning about assumptions and biases”

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