Black Thrive Global

2022 - 2023

Impact Report

Global Black Thrive

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Mission Statement

Black Thrive Global exists to address the inequalities that negatively impact the mental health and wellbeing of Black people. We are reimagining and co-creating a world in which all Black people thrive.

One

A Letter from Our CEO

I joined Black Thrive Global at the beginning of 2023. It is a privilege to be part of an organisation that aims to address and tackle the inequalities that negatively impact on the mental health and wellbeing of Black people. We know that these inequalities have been produced by years of anti-Black racism and we are committed to challenging them. Black Thrive Global is set for a challenging yet exciting journey, which I am honoured to be leading. I am proud of the results that we have achieved within the short time since our inception.

In the past year, our efforts to address race equity through system change have produced significant achievements. We have successfully built strong partnerships with key stakeholders such as our work with the Wellcome Trust, King's College London and South London and Maudsley, in addition to forging greater community links with organisations such as Disability Advice Service Lambeth, Happy in Schools Project, and others. We have effectively led policy discussions and been involved in decision-making processes at both local and regional levels. Examples of this work are far-reaching, including our involvement in the pilot of the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF), our consultation work with the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) where Black community members discussed how to hold the police accountable for the groups it pledges to serve.

A core tenet of our work is that we act in collaboration and partnership with the system to bring about change. A notable example is the work of our Culturally Appropriate Peer Support & Advocacy Service (CAPSA) team with the NHS, who acknowledge and confront the racism within mental health services and improve healthcare, using tailored support to aid individuals in the Black community. In recognition of our outstanding dedication, we were awarded the winner of the Best Not for Profit Working in Partnership with the NHS at the Human Service Journal Partnership Awards 2023.

Black Thrive Global works with teams in Lambeth, Haringey and Birmingham, building movements and empowering communities to advance our mission. Our collective power to gather and galvanise community members, system shapers and individuals is most evident during our community assembly events. They are a testimony of our work and a lively demonstration of the way that we intend to build new ways of generating ideas and returning power to the community.

We have continued to build partnerships to bring change around race equity and help equip communities to take leadership. The Black Thrive Research Institute uses a community research model which lets the communities' insights influence policy and practice. The team is working to research the stop-and-search process and its impact on mental health. This year the project has moved to its next stage, developing a data dashboard which is an accessible and reputable source of information for the public, especially Black communities who are most affected by Stop and Search, as well as to scientists and policymakers. Community members were involved before and during the development of the dashboard to

make it more effective. The Black Thrive Lambeth community and research teams hosted an experience sharing event for <u>Folkets Husby</u>, a non-profit association from Stockholm, Sweden where we presented and discussed our Stop and Search and community engagement work in Lambeth. We will continue to share and learn from our exchanges with organisations that hold similar aims to us both locally and on an international scale.

Earlier this summer we appointed Professor Camara Phyllis Jones MD, MPH, PhD as our patron. Professor Jones is a family physician and epidemiologist who is currently a Leverhulme Visiting Professor at King's College London, with an outstanding track record in academia, advisory roles and campaigning against racism in the USA. Her work focuses on naming, measuring and addressing the impacts of racism on the health and wellbeing of the Black community. We have had a successful year, however, there were many challenges faced and lessons learnt.

We are a small and dedicated team with a heavy mandate and workload, as such at times our capacity has been stretched. Despite this, we have been able to achieve some amazing outcomes and outputs including: our stop-and-search database; our emergent work and relationship building around disability, race and employment; and developing our young researchers – these are just a few that I have named here. In the coming year, we will increase our organisational capacity and in so doing reach greater heights. In addition, we intend to continue to embed research throughout the organisation. Our aim is to boost our investigative capacity, we will strengthen collaborations with academic institutions and thought leaders with whom we have clearly aligned interests, such as King's College London amongst others. We will continue to play a significant role in bringing the knowledge from the community to systems, offering different innovative, community-sourced and trialled solutions.

We are committed to continually growing and improving our work to a consistent standard and developing our expertise in the various methods of system change, drawing on concepts such as Collective Impact to drive meaningful progress. We will apply evaluative processes that support learning and inform action, and we will continue to be accountable to the communities that we serve.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the work of Black Thrive both historically and at the present. Black Thrive is immensely grateful for the community members in Lambeth, Haringey and Birmingham, and to our funders, collaborative partners and our staff. We will continue to honour those who came before us and created the space for us to be able to work on this important mission.

Dr Souci Frissa
CEO Black Thrive Global

Two

A Brief Overview of Our Activities

This report aims to provide an overview of the progress, findings and challenges of Black Thrive's work from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023.

Black Thrive Global has secured grant funding of up to £793,732 from Impact on Urban Health (IoUH) covering the period 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023. The funding is for Black Thrive to operate as a 'backbone' organisation to achieve improved outcomes for Black people by centring the perspectives of Black communities to identify the root causes of inequality, facilitating collaboration between organisations and mobilising and aligning resources to tackle issues. The funding is primarily for work in Lambeth but also includes work in Southwark, management and overhead costs and a wellbeing fund for all Black Thrive employees.

Furthermore, in collaboration with IoUH, we prepared and submitted a grant proposal for core funding which adds to the flexibility of Black Thrive Global and thus empowers the organisation to adapt over time. An important ambition of this work is that it operates as a true partnership of equals rather than a conventional funder/grant holder relationship. We hope the partnership between Black Thrive and IoUH will help achieve the ambitions and priorities of both organisations and provide opportunities to add value to each other's work, to go beyond the financial and transactional norms and align our actions on key strategic issues.

Last year we reported that the underspend from the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) would be pooled, and together with the Thriving Futures Collective (TFC) we would decide on a strategic and mutually beneficial investment for the entire collective. Reflecting on that decision we recognise the limitations of this approach. Although, the process of joint decision making fostered a sense of collectivism, it also reduced each locality's autonomy. We have decided to discontinue pooling our underspend to ensure our locality partners have more flexibility and agency over their budgets.

We are pleased to share that our funders have granted us the flexibility to carry forward our underspend allowing us to utilise these resources without restrictions, moving forward. This marks a significant achievement and greatly strengthens the sustainability of our initiatives. The capacity to harness unused resources, stemming from delays in recruitment, ensures continuity that will amplify the effectiveness of our endeavours. Furthermore, we are actively pursuing additional fundraising opportunities to establish a diverse range of income streams that support our collective activities. This strategic approach will enable us to drive lasting, sustainable change over time.

We are emergent in our approach to determine the core aspects of embedding race equity in systems change and, in this regard we are identifying what can be adapted in each work stream and locality. As this work evolves it will further inform and strengthen our strategic direction and implementation. As a result of this approach, our work has continued to develop and flourish across each locality. Due to the developing nature of our work, we have adopted a flexible approach to delivery and a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances.

Building upon our strong foundation, moving forward we will continue to learn and document our ways of embedding race equity in systems change. We aim to develop a strategy that allows for adaptation while maintaining rigour. In addition, we will be implementing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, which will enable us to make informed decisions based on regular assessments that guide programme improvements and optimise our impact.

Over the reporting period, our efforts to address race equity and prioritise issues pertaining to Black communities have yielded significant achievements. We have successfully forged strong partnerships with key stakeholders, including community organisations and others working towards racial equity. These collaborations have been instrumental in informing our work to amplify the voices of Black communities affected by systemic inequities. Through our persistent advocacy efforts, we have effectively influenced policy discussions and decision-making processes at both local and regional levels. Our research and thought leadership have provided critical insights into the design of equitable systems that centre and benefit Black populations. While progress has been made, challenges remain and areas for improvement have emerged.

Working with established agents of various systems has proved challenging, as often our expertise is requested at the delivery stage of implementation rather than the design phase. To address this, we are actively advocating for early engagement and collaboration to ensure race equity considerations are integrated into solutions from the outset. We are building stronger relationships with systems and their agents to emphasise the value of diverse perspectives in system design and decision-making processes that place Black communities at the forefront.

Thriving Futures programme

Progress towards our ambitions and milestones: Thriving Futures Year two

Our work has been categorised under four programme objectives:

- Black communities driving change
- Knowledge construction and dissemination
- Community-led systems change
- Strong and agile backbones.

Black communities driving change

With the success of the CommUNITY Assemblies last year, Black Thrive (BT) have continued to pursue these objectives in Year two.

We have found that the assembly continues to be an excellent forum for engaging with Black communities and receiving feedback. It is important for us as an organisation to remain accountable to Black communities, so that we can continue to collaborate and develop solutions alongside them. We do this so that we can authentically centre their perspectives within our efforts for systems change. The data collected and evaluated from the assemblies give us an understanding of the issues important to these localities and their perception of our organisation. We will continue to listen and respond to the needs of our community to ensure Black Thrive's works remains relevant and engaging.

We are reflecting on how best to improve our monthly Thriving Futures Collective (TFC) meetings. Typically, these meetings have consisted of locality updates from Black Thrive Lambeth (BTL), Black Thrive Birmingham (BTB), Black Thrive Haringey (BTH), Black Thrive Global (BTG) and the Black Thrive Research Institute (RI). They have also been attended by one of our research partners Ratio and our NLCF Growing Great Ideas (GGI) Portfolio Officer. While these meetings have been fruitful as a space to collaborate on ideas and share learnings from across the TFC, we intend to turn these meetings into learning forums that frame systemic change within our work and draw out common themes across the localities with the support of one of our learning partners, Place Matters.

We are producing a Thriving Futures Docufilm, in which we share the story of our journey, our ambitions and what we have achieved so far. The short film will feature interviews from key stakeholders across the collective, alongside footage from our community events and projects. The project is in the early stages of filming; once it is ready for release, Black Thrive will host a series of events to promote the film and create spaces for critical conversations around its content.
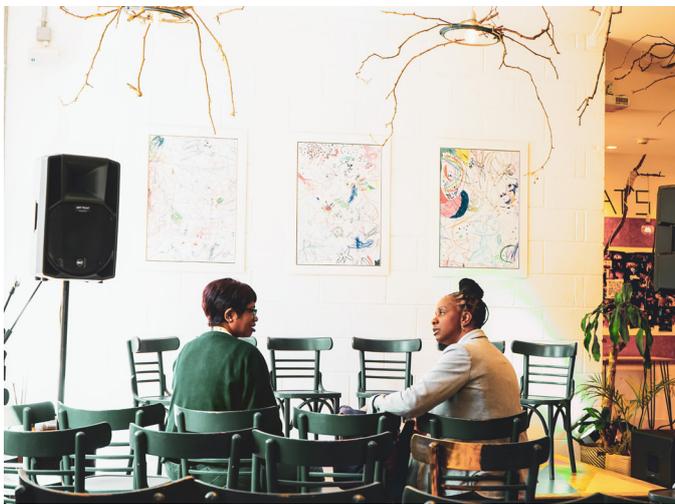
The Black Connections Book (BCB) aims to create a network of Black-led organisations in Lambeth, Haringey and Birmingham. A survey has been designed to add contacts to the network map and we are promoting this within Black Thrive's locality teams and their networks. Initially, the BCB was to take the form of a public directory and a network map; however, key considerations have arisen from the internal trial, mainly around how to sustain engagement with the map, defining the BCB's potential and ensuring the benefits are clear for map members. As a result of this, we have shifted our focus to research and consultation with Black-led community organisations to better understand their needs and determine what the BCB can offer to address them. The format of the public directory is yet to be finalised, though we will use our consultations to inform the design and purpose of the directory.

Akin to the BCB, we are trialling the Leadership Academy (LA) internally across Black Thrive and collating feedback and insights to inform and shape the external academy. The LA will support and develop a multi-skilled (hard and soft-skilled) Black leadership curriculum, that values the lived experience and expertise of its students. The internal LA is approaching its seventh session of twelve. Feedback meetings are held every four sessions, and they have been instrumental in helping us evaluate the academy. In Year three we aim to establish a more structured system for evaluation that incorporates quantitative and qualitative data. The LA sessions have mainly been co-developed with Black facilitators and non-Black facilitators have been encouraged to frame their expertise using a race-equity lens. We are thinking through the details of a potential facilitation agreement, and what the impact will be for those who will continue working with us for the external academy. What is evident from the LA so far is that these sessions are helpful to participants; feedback has stated that it has been a helpful space to explore the different avenues towards systems change, frame theory in their workstreams and build confidence and understanding. We are eager to see how this will manifest itself in the external Leadership Academy.

Knowledge construction and dissemination

Stop-and-search data has been the first dataset of the Shared Measurement System (SMS). The Black Thrive Research Institute (RI) alongside partners has created a national stop-and-search dashboard to make stop-and-search data transparent and accessible to everyone. Combined with other datasets, the RI is also investigating the relationship between Stop and Search and young Black people's mental health. Once the dashboard is ready to be released, the RI intends to conduct public engagement sessions. Stop-and-search focus groups have already taken place in Birmingham, and the RI plans to explore how best to conduct further focus groups in our other localities. However, capacity within the Institute is currently limited.

The RI will continue to evolve Black-led theories and methodologies, to support race equity in systems change. For instance, the RI has developed a Theory of Change Model, that offers two approaches for research: Track 1: using data clubs, which are community-produced and owned data; and Track 2: repurposing existing systems data. The data clubs have been carried out in Lambeth (within the LGBTQ+ workstream) and in Birmingham with their partner Maternity Engagement Action (MEA), with community groups collecting their own data and creating new evidence to challenge and address gaps in health systems research. An ongoing challenge of this work is access; discovering what is the best way to gain access to more datasets from systems. We will repurpose and analyse the data via a Black lens and determine whether Black people reach the same conclusions. The RI will consult further with community groups on the most impactful datasets to repurpose, in addition to this they will draw on learnings from data clubs, and other sources, to reflect on the Theory of Change model.

We intend to publish our learning resources, blogs and publications in an accessible manner on the Black Thrive Global website. This work has been delayed slightly due to capacity issues; however, we are currently working collaboratively to ensure the success of the website's redesign. We are working with partners to develop and adapt existing models for systems change. The models will be filtered through a Black Thrive lens, meaning that they will focus on addressing the inequalities that negatively impact on the mental health and wellbeing of Black people. Moving forward, we aim to better understand the learning being generated across Black Thrive, explore the common challenges and lessons learned and disseminate this content in a variety of forms for external use.

Community-led systems change

The RI have facilitated research training for community groups, equipping them with the tools to repurpose data and to collect their own information to influence systems change. Further training has been discussed in terms of how best to disseminate findings. It is hoped that this work will create new evidence by incorporating Black perspectives that challenge system assumptions and provide alternative evidence and data for system shapers to use.

In addition, we are developing two learning partner relationships, with Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) and Place Matters.

Our relationship with SHU is well established and has been ongoing for several years. SHU adopted a developmental evaluation approach and worked with Black Thrive Lambeth to understand:

- how it can continuously improve its efforts to achieve its aims and
- the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its goals, specifically in how it functions as an intervention in driving systems change.

This piece of work was completed in June 2023. The team at SHU are currently finalising the report and its findings to share with us.

This next phase of work is going to explore the common challenges and reflect on the lessons learned across our localities which will translate into a learning journey and resource that shows the trends and patterns. This work will inform our second learning partnership, with Place Matters, who will support us in embedding the learning across Black Thrive to meet our strategic aims and create tools and frameworks to develop our approach(es) for advancing race equity systems change.

Strong and agile backbones

We are planning a two-day Black Thriving Futures strategic awayday event at the start of Year three. The first day will be attended by the whole Black Thrive team who will come together and explore the ideas and learnings from the work being generated in each workstream and locality. The second day is for the Senior Leadership Team to determine overarching Thriving Future strategy and objectives, informed by the learnings from the workstreams, to improve the facilitation of impactful community-led initiatives and projects. Our entire staff have been involved in co-producing the agenda, as we want everyone to feel invested in the process.

We are committed to continually growing and improving as an organisation and as people. We are working with Place Matters and SHU to co-develop the skills and tools necessary to become a learning partner for other organisations.

As with any organisation, staffing is vital. Black Thrive is in a time of transition with its staffing structures, meaning we have an opportunity to reflect and restructure, utilising the skillsets, fresh perspectives and energy of new appointees.

We are currently developing a framework for how we work with other organisations to deliver systems change. We are keen to build more relationships with organisations (particularly Black-led ones) and will ensure that the communities we serve are prioritised and protected through this framework. We know that our work is a small part of a larger movement to enact system change. Therefore, we will continue to collaborate with other organisations, to propel each other through shared learning and co-production.

Three

Research Institute (RI)

The Black Thrive Research Institute has accomplished much over the last 12 months, a summary of our activities has been organised under the following categories:

- Management and Organisational Citizenship
- Empirical Research, Data and Analysis
- Communication and Engagement
- Commercial Activities and Funding.

Management and Organisational Citizenship

These cover our contribution to internal matters and infrastructure and have established and structured a collective journal club enabling: organisational learning; critical engagement with race equity; systems change initiatives; and social engagement between staff members. The journal club has covered an array of topics ranging from mental health to microaggressions to policing.

In a similar vein, we have delivered both quantitative and qualitative training internally enabling staff to engage in conversations about what data they already collect and emboldening them to discern statistical evidence presented by systems partners.

Following on from last year, we have deployed a survey of Black Thrive staff which has served as an important tool for understanding morale and staff satisfaction.
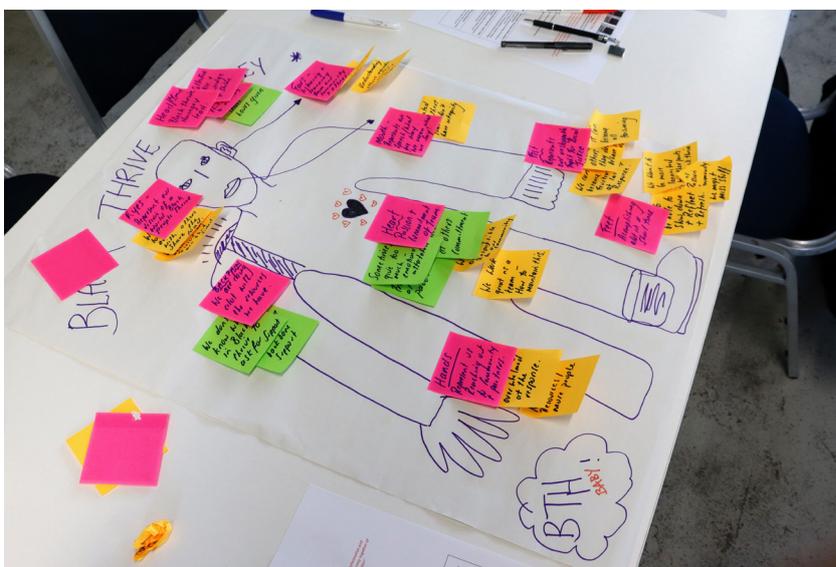
Our research team's ongoing relationship with King's College London (KCL) continues to provide us with the resources essential to our work, such as training opportunities to all BTG staff, library access, software access and, more intangibly, a connection to an academic institution which prevents us from being excluded from research opportunities because of the systemic marginalisation of other forms of knowledge production.

We also held our second research away day which helped us to establish priorities and strate-

gies going forward, as well as providing an opportunity to bond and share productivity tips.

Empirical Research, Data and Analysis

Given that empirical research is our core business an exhaustive account of our research work is beyond the scope of this report. What follows is a brief description of research projects which have either concluded or produced outputs.

The impact of Stop and Search on young Black people's mental health

We have been successful in securing funding from the Wellcome Trust for our stop-and-search work. This work has focused on making stop-and-search data more accessible and comprehensible, making insights more readily available for the public and exploring the link between Stop and Search and young Black people's mental health. This has involved two rounds of funding lasting six months each; Round 1 provided £40,000 and Round 2 provided £100,000. We have made excellent progress in this project, including: the creation of an R package for extracting and analysing stop-and-search data; a prototype data dashboard for presenting and making available data; and provisional analyses of the relationship between Stop and Search and mental health, by combining stop-and-search data with data from Understanding Society.

Outsourced workers' project with Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF)

The focus of this project is to co-develop a piece of research on the low-paid outsourced workforce in the UK, with a particular focus on the experiences of Black workers. The initial phase of the project was divided into four stages: a review of existing data on outsourcing; a scoping review of the literature on low-paid outsourcing; initial development of a survey to fill data gaps; and a qualitative phase on the experiences of Black workers. Following the initial phase JRF and Black Thrive have discussed to proceed with the survey and qualitative stages of the project.

Primary data collection

In addition to repurposing and analysing systems data, we have begun collecting data through facilitated discussions with community members and other stakeholders relevant to our ongoing stop-and-search work. This has included data interpretation sessions, where we have asked community members for their interpretations of the quantitative data to which we now have access. This has provided important community-driven direction that makes our analyses uniquely relevant to issues of Stop and Search at local level.

Qualitative research

There have been excellent advances across several workstreams on the qualitative strand of research. Black Thrive Birmingham have been especially engaged and there are multiple projects that have seen important progress over the past 12 months:

1. **Community Research – Maternity Engagement Action (MEA) Partnership** – as part of our ongoing collaboration with Ratio, we have led a community research and systems change initiative, empowering community members to collect and analyse new data to challenge gaps in the healthcare system. The study involved a summer survey that collected data from 13 Black women, shedding light on both positive and negative aspects of their experiences. The report calls for a more respectful and personalised approach to maternity care for Black women, acknowledging the complexities of their experiences and advocating for systemic changes to improve their healthcare journey.

   We have written up a first draft of our findings which we will develop for publication. We

are also in the process of writing and recording in a more accessible way to share with the community.

MEA has expressed an interest in taking part in data clubs and systems data reflection beyond this initial pilot. However, currently we do not have the capacity or resources to facilitate this. We see this as an area to pursue for more funding.

2. **Stop and Search** – We are working with TFC member [Catalyst4Change](#) and youth organisation, [A Father's Child](#) to bring together community members to reflect on policing data, and to begin outlining a process for systems change and advocacy work around the practice of Stop and Search. We are currently in the analysis phase of this work and are looking forward to sharing our learnings and suggestions for systems change when it is complete.

3. **Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF)** – In Birmingham there has been some initial survey analysis conducted about the experiences of Black people accessing mental health services. This work was done as a collaboration between Catalyst4Change, the [Association of Jamaican Nationals](#) and [Making Connections Work](#). We are currently in the process of embedding the insights and learnings of this back into the framework. However, due to capacity within the RI this has been slower than anticipated.

Qualitative work has been delivered in the other localities. There is currently ongoing work being done in Lambeth around an LGBTQ+ data club and reinterpreting existing data, in addition to filling in gaps. In Haringey, we are currently scoping out work with our areas of focus being Stop and Search, particularly focusing on sections 135 and 136 of the Mental Health Act.

Aside from projects within our localities we have also been thinking through the wider impact of the Thriving Futures programme. We are working with team members on a Black Thrive approach to meaningfully combine data and public engagement, so that systems change is achieved. This is an evolving piece of work, which focuses on building and maintaining relationships across the network, tracking learning and insights and sharing them. We have been considering:

- sharing the relationship and learning journey
- what we know about Birmingham's (and other localities') reporting and strategy sessions
- engagement with public systems in each locality – e.g. BLACHIR
- tracking learning across the network and collecting data and case study material to turn into papers for dissemination.

Literature reviews

To support our work, we have completed, or partially completed, several literature reviews which buttress our wider work. Topic areas include Stop and Search, [employment support](#) and measuring structural racism.

Communication and Engagement

We have undertaken a range of public engagement activities and contributed to a significant number of talks. Some notable examples include closed and public presentations on the [Wellcome-funded project](#) (which have been well received and met with considerable interest and enthusiasm) – we have now presented this more widely, including to contacts at [LSE](#), [StopWatch](#), [the Centre for Social Policy](#), Wellcome partners and data providers (e.g. [Understanding Society](#)) and members of the public. Much of this engagement has stimulated further discussion and contributed to the cultivation of new relationships (e.g. with

researchers working on Understanding Society).

We have written several blogs on issues related to Stop and Search, the government's commission on racial and ethnic disparities and on personal stories. We have also released several blogs and updates relating to the Wellcome-funded project on Stop and Search. In addition, we have organised a schedule of blog outputs via Medium, which provides another avenue for disseminating our work to diverse audiences.

As part of our empirical work, we have engaged with various stakeholders directly through focus groups. This has included focus groups with individuals involved in holding police to account in Birmingham, activists, researchers and campaigners. There has been high engagement from participants, though on some occasions there has been wariness surrounding participation in tokenistic research, and we have been careful to avoid tokenism by planning and outlining how participants' input will be implemented and running follow-up sessions to check back with participants and explain what steps we have taken since their involvement.

All these activities contribute to raising the profile of Black Thrive broadly, and the Research Institute specifically, which begins to place us as a thought leader in the field of Black-led research.

Reflecting on our work and impact

Our activities have had (or will have) a significant impact in several areas. Crucially, we have shown that a Black-led organisation can undertake high-quality research. This achievement is extremely important in the context of knowledge production in the UK, and the Global North, where Black people do not experience equity in the academy. It is vital to recognise that our existence and the work that we do, in its own right, is a critique of the systemic marginalisation of Black voices and Black experiences. In a similar vein, we are developing new ways to engage Black people in research activities. This takes a critical perspective on the current paradigm of 'involvement' and community research, towards data ownership, action research and meaningful participation (e.g. Thriving Futures Programme). Other pieces of work have directly influenced how organisations use and disseminate data, focusing more closely on meaningfully interrogating disparities between Black people and their counterparts (e.g. shared measurement system).

Our stop-and-search work has the potential to revolutionise this domain of research, which has relied heavily on Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and significantly accelerate the public conversation about the use of police powers. We have created a novel method for acquiring and disseminating stop-and-search data on a large scale (approximately 1.5m searches updated monthly) which has hitherto been difficult to access by the public. In addition to making data more available for the public and researchers, as we progress the potential for this work to influence thinking on Stop and Search on a wide scale is becoming more evident. Our dashboard is at an early stage of development but is already positioned to facilitate public discourse by providing localised insight into Stop and Search, alongside key local actors who can be leveraged to make change (e.g. local councillors and police commissioners). This is the first of its kind and takes the scrutiny of Stop and Search to a higher level by empowering communities to challenge the monopoly on data and knowledge that statutory bodies currently enjoy.

Alongside and complementing this, our advances on the qualitative side have generated important knowledge that is unobtainable via quantitative methods or from statutory data alone. These activities have not only produced unique knowledge but also provide opportunities for community empowerment through, for example, community-owned data.

Although, there have been many successes and achievements, the past six months have seen significant changes within the RI. Some of these include the resignation of two of its key members – the Head of Research and the Qualitative Research Fellow. This has presented considerable challenges to the operation of the research team. Both previous postholders provided invaluable support, in subject expertise and in relationship and stakeholder engagement. We are working hard to backfill the vacant posts with people who will propel the mission and ethos of our research work.

Four

Our National Activities

Although we have firmly established ourselves within the local communities of Birmingham, Haringey and Lambeth our work on embedding race equity within systems to produce change is far-reaching across the country. Led by our founding Director, Dr Jacqui Dyer, we have been involved in crucial policy shifts that will culminate in significant changes for Black people in the UK.

MOPAC consultation and recommendations

The Mayor of London's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Metropolitan Police (Met Police) provide opportunities for Londoners to influence community policing. To explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in current community-police interactions, MOPAC commissioned Black Thrive Global and People Supported Intelligence (PSI) to consult Londoners on how to improve the mechanisms that exist for local communities to engage with the police and scrutinise police practice.

We delivered this consultation in partnership with PSI, which is an online platform that creates participatory experiences for communities and organisations that use collective intelligence design principles. The consultation focused on Black African and Black Caribbean communities, who are disproportionately impacted by police actions. The consultation aimed to gather suggestions for improving locally run engagement and scrutiny groups. We ran this from October 2022 to March 2023, engaging around 1,390 participants through online and in-person events. The online events garnered a lot of attention from Black communities across London, facilitated by Jacqui Dyer they featured Black community leaders in conversation, and an online audience, around targeted themes relating to improving police scrutiny and accountability. Some of the leaders in conversation were Andy George (President) and Charles Ehikioya (Met Chair) of the National Black Police Association, Member of Parliament Bell Ribeiro-Addy and community leader and activist Lee Jasper among others. We ran an extensive online and offline campaign to engage audiences with the consultation; with over 130 published posts and more than 59,000 people reached, it was one of our most successful campaigns of the year.

We established a working group to review the findings and feedback from the consultation. All members of the working group had lived experience in police engagement, police accountability and advancing anti-racism practices and policies. They collaborated with the consultation team to review findings from the consultation, as well as existing research in the topic.

Feedback from the participants of the consultation indicated that, as expected, there are many changes needed to overhaul the system. Current processes were seen as inadequate, with poor community-police relationships and a general lack of awareness about scrutiny groups. Opportunities for improvement included enhancing the scrutiny of police powers,

involving communities in misconduct investigations, engaging young people and the transparent leadership of accountability groups.

Six recommendations were developed using a framework to ensure they addressed concerns about police engagement and accountability and provided MOPAC with actionable steps to be implemented as part of the planned changes.

1. **Building Trust and Addressing Anti-Black Racism:** It is crucial to address anti-Black racism within the police force to foster trust within Black communities. This involves acknowledging the presence of racism and working with communities to implement anti-racist strategies.

2. **Independent Oversight:** Establishing an independent body to oversee and support both pan-London and locally led engagement and scrutiny of policing. This independent entity would ensure genuine action and prevent performative actions and efforts.

3. **Equity Framework:** Creating a Police and Community Safety Race Equity Framework (PCSREF), to enhance independence and scrutiny of police-related efforts. PCSREF would function as a centralised platform for community collaboration, setting priorities, tracking implementations and evaluating police engagement initiatives.

4. **Engaging Young People:** Empowering young people to influence policing practices and involving them in accountability mechanisms. Also, it has been recommended to focus on child safeguarding and reducing the impact of policing on their wellbeing.

5. **Enhancing Locally Led Engagement:** The working group found existing engagement and accountability groups inadequately engaged with Black communities. They recommend improving these mechanisms through independent governance, support, resources and infrastructure to effectively hold the police to account.

6. **Community Collaboration:** Incorporating voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE) into police engagement and accountability efforts. VCSEs would facilitate communication, embed anti-racist approaches and support the independent community-led body.

Additionally, the consultation identified a broader recommendation, which found a lack of support for individuals harmed by police interactions. This extends beyond local police engagement and accountability and emphasises the need for psychological support and advocacy during complaints and appeals processes. It is our hope that our ongoing work with the Metropolitan Police and the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime will lead to meaningful and tangible improvements.

PCREF pilot – Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework

Much like our work with MOPAC, our engagement with the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF) was catalysed by Jacqui Dyer. Her role as Mental Health Equalities Advisor for NHS England involves addressing mental health disparities through promoting equitable mental health services, and her involvement in the Independent Review of the Mental Health Act led to the development of PCREF.

PCREF aims to address the challenges faced by Black and minoritised groups, such as the impact of systemic racism on the mental health and wellbeing of racialised communities, the stigma associated with mental health and reluctance to seek support, leading to crisis-driven interactions with mental health services. This can result in inadequate care and inappropriate use of force, particularly among patients and service users from Black populations. PCREF was designed collaboratively with individuals who have experienced mental health challenges, alongside pilot Mental Health Trusts and early adopter sites partnering with Black and ethnic-led voluntary sector organisations. This participatory framework centres the voices of patients and carers, aligning their perspectives and solutions with the PCREF's goal to improve patient and carer access, experience and outcomes in mental health service provision wherever it is located.

PCREF is divided into three core components:

1. **Part 1 – Legislative and Regulatory Obligations (Leadership and Governance):** Mental Health Trusts need to comply with key legislation and regulatory requirements that impact on racially and ethnically diverse communities.

2. **Part 2 – National Organisational Competencies:** Six competencies are identified to enhance services' cultural competence, knowledge, partnership working, co-production, workforce and co-learning.

3. **Part 3 – Patient and Carer Feedback Mechanism:** This arm of the framework aims to amplify patient experiences and outcomes data as an integral form of feedback for service improvement. It focuses on measuring experiences, monitoring outcomes and involving patients and carers in shaping care.

These core components interact systematically and iteratively, fostering learning organisations that build trust and confidence with served communities. All NHS Mental Health Trusts, and mental health service provision, are required to have the PCREF in place by the end of the financial year 2024/25. Reporting the evidence of each component part will be critical to demonstrate how communities are involved in shaping services to better respond to the racialised experience. Each Trust should have a nominated executive lead, accountable for the PCREF delivery, elevation of community voices, partnerships, cultural care and commitment to anti-racism. Black Thrive (Lambeth) has worked with partners in London to deliver the PCREF pilot programmes, in particular South London and Maudsley NHS Trust (SLaM) and Croydon BME Forum.

As an example of how PCREF pilot sites have delivered their work, SLaM have embedded within their new strategy a vision to become a leading anti-racism organisation. This means that SLaM aim to make substantial progress and eliminate structural racism by taking demonstrable restorative and equitable actions. SLaM aims to roll out PCREF activist roles to help raise awareness and support communities to feel empowered and address racial inequalities.

Following the pilot programmes, one of the key deliverables for Black Thrive was a communications campaign to raise awareness of both PCREF as an NHS initiative and as an impactful, values-led Black Thrive programme. The campaign plan was split into a local and national approach, and included the following:

- a designated [PCREF landing page](#), with easily accessible information about PCREF for a wide audience
- blogs focused on the significance and relevance of PCREF, written by leaders in Black Thrive
- social media assets addressing key questions about PCREF for the general public
- two press releases, focusing both on the human story behind PCREF and the work Black Thrive has done to enable the launch of PCREF
- a database of relevant communications contacts across local and national media, to be contacted in the event of a national launch so BT can provide an expert voice on the Framework and its purpose.

Across our social media campaign, we have reached over 14,000 people, with more than 700 people engaging directly with our posts. Despite this, there have been some barriers to success for the communications campaign. Primarily, NHS England were unable to confirm a specific launch date for a nationwide rollout of PCREF beyond the pilot programmes. This has hampered aligned communications activities with partners and interrupted BT's own campaign launch, effectively putting a hold on any continued communications work. Learning from these issues, Black Thrive have worked closely with representatives from SLaM and Croydon BME Forum to develop an evergreen communications campaign which can be applied whenever the NHS is ready to formally launch PCREF nationally. It is hoped that this will be before the end of the year. In addition, to our advocacy and campaign work alongside colleagues in SLaM and the Croydon BME Forum we are continuing our work with our **Culturally Appropriate Peer Support and Advocacy** (CAPSA) team. Our CAPSA team were set up as a direct implementation of the second objective of PCREF (enhancing cultural competencies).

Five

Digital Communications and Audience Development

Over the past year the Communications team has made some significant changes including: developing and implementing a new communications strategy; hiring a full-time Digital and Communications Officer; revising the Black Thrive brand style guide; and launching a new Black Thrive Lambeth website in January 2023. This year we have focused on a campaign-driven style of communications. We have been spotlighting the activities of our workstreams, as well as engaging in external nation and international campaigns such as Movember, Disability History Month, and the commemoration of culturally significant events such as the New Cross Fire.

Audience engagement

The data reveals a remarkable increase in audience engagement, with engagement rates surging by over 100% within the 12-month period. Additionally, we have experienced a net audience growth of more than 15%, reflecting a growing and increasingly engaged online community. In the past our concerns were that this online community did not reflect our target stakeholders; however, over the past eight months we have seen a surge in Black people engaging with our content.

Content production

We have significantly scaled up our content production efforts, with a notable 50% increase in the number of posts during this period. We have adopted a mixed-method approach of videos, social media provocations, polling and infographics. A highlight for us has been embracing Instagram stories as a medium for sharing content, not only our own but also content from partner and like-minded organisations.

Platform-specific engagement

In a bid to diversify its communication channels, Black Thrive launched a TikTok page towards the end of 2022. To date, the page has garnered over 1,100 views across all videos, with the most popular video being related to the April Community Assembly, amassing over 800 views. Although the potential of TikTok as a high-yield platform is one that we acknowledge, we recognise that, if we are going to consistently perform well on it, we need to produce more engaging content. Moreover, past successes highlight that PCREF content might find a fitting home on this platform, contingent on senior leadership team approval.

LinkedIn has also proven to be an invaluable platform for us, with a significant increase in total engagements (139.9%) compared to the previous year. This platform is particularly instrumental in facilitating content sharing by other organisations. In contrast, Twitter's engagement has experienced a decrease, which may be attributed to ownership changes and its recent rebranding to 'X'. In an effort to combat this decline we have created a Threads account as a potential alternative to Twitter.

Increasing our digital following and content quality

For the communications team a key goal is to continue growing the organisation's digital following. We know that improving content quality and seamlessly incorporating communications within each workstream are pivotal to achieving this objective. This approach not only diversifies the types of content being produced but also enhances planning and workload organisation.

Website

The launch of a brand-new, fit-for-purpose Black Thrive Lambeth website has seen our organic visitors rate triple in number. The new Black Thrive Lambeth website houses accessible copies of our research, overviews of our workstream activities, blogs from our team and partners and links to our latest events and news.

CRM and HubSpot

Issues with HubSpot, our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, have arisen in relation to sending out the regular newsletters, due to subscription consent challenges and compliance to data regulation. As a potential solution, Black Thrive is considering reaching out to subscribers to request consent for stakeholder engagement content, although further discussions on this matter are pending.

Reflections

We have had significant progress in enhancing our communication strategies and engaging its audience. We have witnessed substantial growth in audience engagement and content production. However, challenges remain in terms of our CRM and the need for more engaging content on certain platforms. Integrating communications within workstreams and maintaining a focus on high quality will be crucial for us as we continue to pursue our mission of co-creating a world in which all Black people thrive.

Six

Development and Operations

In the past year, we have undertaken significant efforts to enhance various aspects of our operations, ensuring a positive impact on our employees and partners, and boosting our overall organisational efficiency. The priorities of our development and operations team have been to improve overall governance, secure core funding and improve arrangements for safeguarding, financial management, HR, accessibility, and health and safety. The following key achievements highlight the progress made during the last twelve months:

Operations

1. **Policy Review and Employee Awareness** – A dedicated team of our staff conducted a thorough review of all company policies, identifying areas for improvement. Special attention was given to enhancing staff awareness of these policies, fostering a stronger culture of compliance and understanding.

2. **Enhanced Safeguarding Measures** – We prioritised the safety and wellbeing of our staff and stakeholders by revising and implementing robust safeguarding policies and procedures. This included comprehensive training for our safeguarding leads, ensuring a higher level of protection for children and vulnerable adults associated and engaging with us.

3. **Inclusivity and Accessibility Improvements** – We made considerable efforts to identify and address the specific access needs of staff with health conditions or disabilities. We continue to implement reasonable adjustments to create an inclusive and supportive work environment for all our team members.

4. **Streamlined recruitment Process** – We have focused on optimising our recruitment process to attract top talent efficiently. We have also improved guidance and streamlined procedures which has enabled staff to make better hiring decisions and onboard new employees effectively. We want to continue to build an organisation made of passionate, talented and empathetic people.

5. **Strengthened Training Compliance** – Acknowledging the significance of continuous learning, we have worked towards improving compliance with compulsory training programmes. This ensures that staff remain up to date with essential skills and knowledge relevant to their roles.

Financial

1. **Secured Core Funding** – Through our persistent efforts, we have successfully secured core funding of £3 million over three to five years from Impact on Urban Health. This injection of funds will support the organisation's ongoing initiatives and future growth. We are incredibly grateful to them for their ongoing support.

2. **Positive External Audit** – In a significant milestone, we received an overall positive first external audit, validating the company's financial practices. The audit confirmed that our company's accounts were accurately prepared in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and the Companies Act 2006.

3. **Streamlining Our Financial Operations and Modernising Our Banking Services** – In our pursuit of greater financial efficiency and modernisation, we have implemented several initiatives. Firstly, we have optimised our payroll arrangements by streamlining communication with the payroll provider and providing direct online access to payroll information for staff. Secondly, we transitioned our banking services embracing modern and effective digital banking solutions that seamlessly integrate with our financial management platform and give budget holders greater control. Lastly, to enhance our financial operations and decision making, we successfully implemented an automated invoice approval process, further streamlining processes and increasing accountability within our financial management practices. These measures collectively underscore our commitment to staying at the forefront of financial best practices while maximising the impact on our mission.

Seven

Accounts Summary

Below is a draft summary of the accounts for the first three years of trading for Global Black Thrive CIC. The figures for the first two years are audited, those for 2022–23 are provisional and will be replaced with audited figures once those accounts are finalised.

Income			
	30-Jun-21	**30-Jun-22**	**30-Jun-23**
Restricted	£ 89,983	£ 1,147,086	£ 1,623,697
Unrestricted	£ 120,776	£ 315,715	£ 564,440
Total	£ 210,759	£ 1,462,801	£ 2,188,137
Expenditure			
Staff salaries and on costs	£ 55,656	£ 571,349	£ 931,417
Programme direct costs	£ 107,386	£ 629,801	£ 851,152
Support costs	£ 40,839	£ 187,954	£ 237,454
	£ 203,882	£ 1,389,105	£ 2,020,022
Surplus	£ 6,877	£ 73,696	£ 168,115
Funds at start of year	–	£ 6,877	£ 80,573
Funds at end of year	£ 6,877	£80,573	£248,688

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Our Funders, Partners and Supporters

Funders and pro bono support	
BBC Children in Need	Lankelly Chase
City Bridge Trust	Mental Health Allies (12 organisations)[1]
Freddie's Flowers	Mind – Heads Together
Google DeepMind	National Lottery Community Fund
Impact on Urban Health	Shearman and Sterling LLP
King's College London Centre for Society and Mental Health	Sophia Webster
Kearney	Starface World
Lambeth Council	Walcot Foundation

1   Anna Freud Centre, Centre for Mental Health, Mental Health First Aid, Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Innovations, Mental Health Network (NHS Confederation), Mental Health UK, Mind, National Survivor User Network, Royal College of Psychiatry, Samaritans, Young Minds.

Partners	
Andrea Wright	Maudsley Cultural Psychiatry Group
Anna Freud Centre	Marcus Lipton Community Enterprise
Black Out UK	Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing
Black Trans Foundation	Mind in Haringey
Brixton Immortals Dominoes Club	Mosaic Clubhouse
Carers Hub Lambeth	Myatt's Fields Park Project
Catalyst4Change	NHS England and Improvement
Department of Health and Social Care	NHS North East London Commissioning Support Unit
Disability Advice Service Lambeth (dasl)	Ratio
Dope Black	Renaisi
Exceed Reading Stars	Sheffield Hallam University
First Step Trust	Social Finance
Greater London Authority	South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
High Trees	The Social Innovation Partnership (TSIP)
Lambeth Links	The Ubele Initiative
Lambeth Police	UNJUST
Lambeth Together (including Living Well Network Alliance)	UK Association of Black Psychologists (UKABPsi)
London LGBTQ+ Community Centre	Vocation Matters
London Metropolitan University	Vocational Rehabilitation Association
McPin Foundation	Voice4Change

As well as community members, community organisations, Black professionals and allies from different communities.

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Acronyms

Acronyms and definitions	
BCB	Black Connections Book
Black-led	We define 'Black-led' as when more than 75% of an organisation's Trustees and more than 50% of staff members (including senior) are Black. We also recognise organisations whose work serves and creates better opportunities for the Black community.
BLACHIR	Birmingham and Lewisham African Caribbean Health Inequalities Review
BT	Black Thrive (this is a shorthand way to refer to Black Thrive Global, our localities and their facilitation teams)
BTL	Black Thrive Lambeth
BTB	Black Thrive Birmingham
BTH	Black Thrive Haringey
BTG	Black Thrive Global
CAPSA	Cultural Appropriate Peer Support and Advocacy
GGI	Growing Great Ideas
LA	Leadership Academy
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and more
MEA	Maternity Engagement Action
MOPAC	The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
NLCF	National Lottery Community Fund
PCREF	Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework
PCSREF	Police and Community Safety Race Equity Framework
RI	Research Institute
SHU	Sheffield Hallam University
SLaM	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust
TFC	Thriving Futures Collective
Theory of Change Model	a simple concept that takes our assumptions about what we want or expect to happen and tests those assumptions to see if they hold true
VCSE	Voluntary, community or social enterprise organisation