

The Big PROMISE™



ONE PROMISE THAT WILL MAKE A MASSIVE IMPACT

A UK-wide initiative where organisations and their employees commit to a promise to deliver real impact on race inequality in their workplace.

HOW TO DO IT RIGHT!

WHY THE BIG PROMISE - THE CONTEXT

DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH



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**NOW IS THE TIME.
TOGETHER WE CAN
CREATE CHANGE.
IF NOT NOW, WHEN?**

INTRODUCTION

Senior leaders and employees personally select one promise that they commit to which will make an impact on race inequality in the workplace.

There are four sets of promises to choose from. These have been carefully determined by a collection of people with lived experience of race inequality in the workplace.

This approach will enable change through individual empowerment across all layers of an organisation.

This is more than just words.

This is about meaningful action and creating workplace culture change.



WE ARE SOLUTIONS - FOCUSED

Move beyond talking and identifying what's not working.

Take action with Race Equality Matters.

We aim to inspire and guide by creating solutions and working with organisations and their employees to implement them.

It is not a talking shop – it is about action.

[Join our new initiative: The BIG Promise](#)



MESSAGE FROM THE CO-FOUNDERS OF RACE EQUALITY MATTERS

“

We want to drive meaningful change that is relevant to ethnic minorities

Despite race being such a pertinent issue, discussed in offices, on shop floors, in corridors and boardrooms across the UK, there has been very little impact on workplace cultures. We are still seeking ways to create diverse and inclusive workplace cultures that are truly free of systemic racism, prejudice and discrimination.

With focus on race equality heightened by issues and news relating to a number of tragic events including the killing of George Floyd, the impact of COVID and inequalities faced by ethnic minority communities, we are at a unique moment in time when there is a real passion and drive amongst both allies and ethnic minorities for change.

Building on this, there is a real **opportunity right now** to unite and **collaborate to create meaningful change** (beyond just PR activity) in racial equality both in the workforce and society.

There is a great deal of real hope, but there is also fear that we may lose this opportunity.

We are inviting you and your organisation to be part of a movement that transforms the future!



Raj Tulsiani
CEO | Green Park



Javed Thomas
Founder & Director |
The Collaboratory

Race Equality Matters

Race Equality Matters (REM) is a NEW not-for-profit **community** founded by Green Park, Black History Month and The Collaboratory, with support from a number of our other partners.

Our purpose is to accelerate meaningful and positive change for ethnic minorities in the UK workplace through collaborations with equality networks, allies, organisations, individuals, and experts.

We want to drive meaningful change that is relevant to ethnic minorities, addresses the workplace issues that they face in the UK, and is action-oriented and impact driven.

Together, we can amplify the voices of those not being heard within businesses and institutions alike and, through the masses, ensure real change finally happens.

Race equality is good for business, employees and society.

Raj and Javed
Co-Founders of Race Equality Matters





COLLABORATING WITH THE EXPERTS – THE GOVERNANCE FORUM

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It not only recognises legislation such as the Equality Act 2010, but adopts a simple yet robust ‘apply and explain’ approach

■ Why a partnership with Race Equality Matters?

Race Equality Matters and the BIG promise complement our approach, which is to provide an integrated approach to equality, diversity and inclusion on a strategic, business-like-level, with a robust accountability framework for race. We need tools, practical solutions and a network of committed practitioners to change the race equality landscape.

■ Why is this so important

The stubborn lack of change over many decades of racial inequity, i.e. representation in Board and senior leadership teams, is going to require something different, radical and strategic to what we have been doing in the past.

■ What is the governance forum?

The governance forum (tgf) is a niche consultancy specialising in corporate governance solutions. In order to assist corporate and organisational Boards in promoting race equality in their organisations, leading governance experts, early adopters from the private, public and voluntary sectors as well as proponents for race equality have joined with the Governance Forum to develop and establish the RACE equality Code 2020

■ What is the RACE Equality Code 2020?

In essence, this single Code uniquely provides one set of standards, applicable to every organisation irrespective of size or sector, which has been endorsed, robustly reviewed and is ready for immediate adoption and application. By reporting, tracking, educating and creating accountability at the top, we expect to see change.

■ Why is this different?

There have been enough reports, charters and recommendations.

Now is the time to act!

This Code does not create new obligations, but provides one set of standards and an overarching accountability framework based on existing laws, codes and best practice.

It draws together 200+ recommendations outlined in reports, charters and pledges, which aim to tackle diversity and inclusion challenges.

It not only recognises legislation such as the Equality Act 2010, but adopts a simple yet robust 'apply and explain' approach housed within its four key principles:

- REPORTING** – it's time to report on race
- ACTION** it's time to demonstrate accountability from the top
- COMPOSITION** – it's time to get to define the right targets
- EDUCATION** – it's time to educate and provide psychologically safe places

It highlights the Must, Should and Could do's

The BIG Promise as part of your wider EDI approach is a must do for organisations serious about tackling race inequality

Karl George | MBE | Managing Director

The Governance Forum Ltd
www.theracecode.org

Twitter: @KarlGeorgeMBE



Karl George | MBE | Managing Director





THE CASE FOR THE BIG PROMISE

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The BIG Promise will highlight organisations and leaders who are serious about Race Equality.

Race Network Lead

Our in-depth interviews and research¹ have evidenced that the majority of ethnic minority employees feel that whilst organisations have issued a number of statements around addressing racism in their organisation, there has been very little visible action to move towards the deeper and more meaningful change required.

Those interviewed felt that in recent months organisations have been quick to publicise their superficial awareness to race equality; however, in general, feedback from employees suggest minimal (if any) real commitment to change. Furthermore, and arguably of greater concern, is that the original impetus towards achieving race equality within organisations is rapidly disappearing.

The Big Promise initiative has been developed to ensure that momentum on this important issue is maintained and that race equality remains at the forefront of an organisation's agenda.

¹Based on over 70 in-depth interviews with a wide range of companies, race networks, experts in the field of race equality, employees and allies.

Concerns expressed by research participants include:

- Organisations doing what is easiest and most convenient but that, typically, will not result in meaningful change.
- Virtue signalling.
- Lack of defined activities and/or measures.
- Organisations look to Black and ethnic minority employees to come up with solutions
- Lack of senior leadership buy-in and/or sponsorship to race equality.
- Tick box exercises including unconscious bias training and lunch and learns.

On the surface it looks like organisations are taking meaningful action, but underneath, organisations and their leaders are treating race and inclusion and recent activity as a tick-the-box exercise.²

Very few organisations or leaders are doing anything differently, so how can we expect change to workplace inequality?

■ Signing a charter is not a solution

In recent months, there have been numerous charters launched, revised, and relaunched, with hundreds of organisations signing up to them.

However, organisations have been signing a variety of race charters for years. What evidence is there to show the difference these have made?

In our research, the majority of those interviewed could not name a single organisation that was meeting the needs of their ethnic minority employees. Those that could name an organisation could only name one, and those were typically led by an ethnic minority individual.

So, what happens when an organisation signs a charter? Is progress measured? What are the consequences when organisations do not deliver (either in part or in full) their commitments? Who is accountable?

Whilst some organisations believe activities like unconscious bias training, having a lunch and learn session, cultural food festivals, and setting up a race network are a step in the right direction, there is little evidence that these create real change. Making a statement of commitments without an action plan and supporting resources is unlikely to achieve desired outcomes.

One of the ways to enable real, impactful change is to develop, share and implement a clear action plan with tasks, owners and timescales; just as we would for any normal business activity. The action plan should be easy to follow and measurable and most importantly linked to a set of defined race equality objectives.

WE STAND WITH YOU.

#BlackLivesMatter

#TheShowMustBePaused

²A quote from a Race Equality Matters workshop participant.



WHAT IS THE BIG PROMISE?



WE INVITE YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES TO
INDIVIDUALLY COMMIT TO A BIG PROMISE.

SIMPLY CHOOSE YOUR BIG PROMISE, SHARE
YOUR COMMITMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA, AND
KEEP YOUR PROMISE.

THE BIG PROMISE TURNS WORDS INTO ACTION.

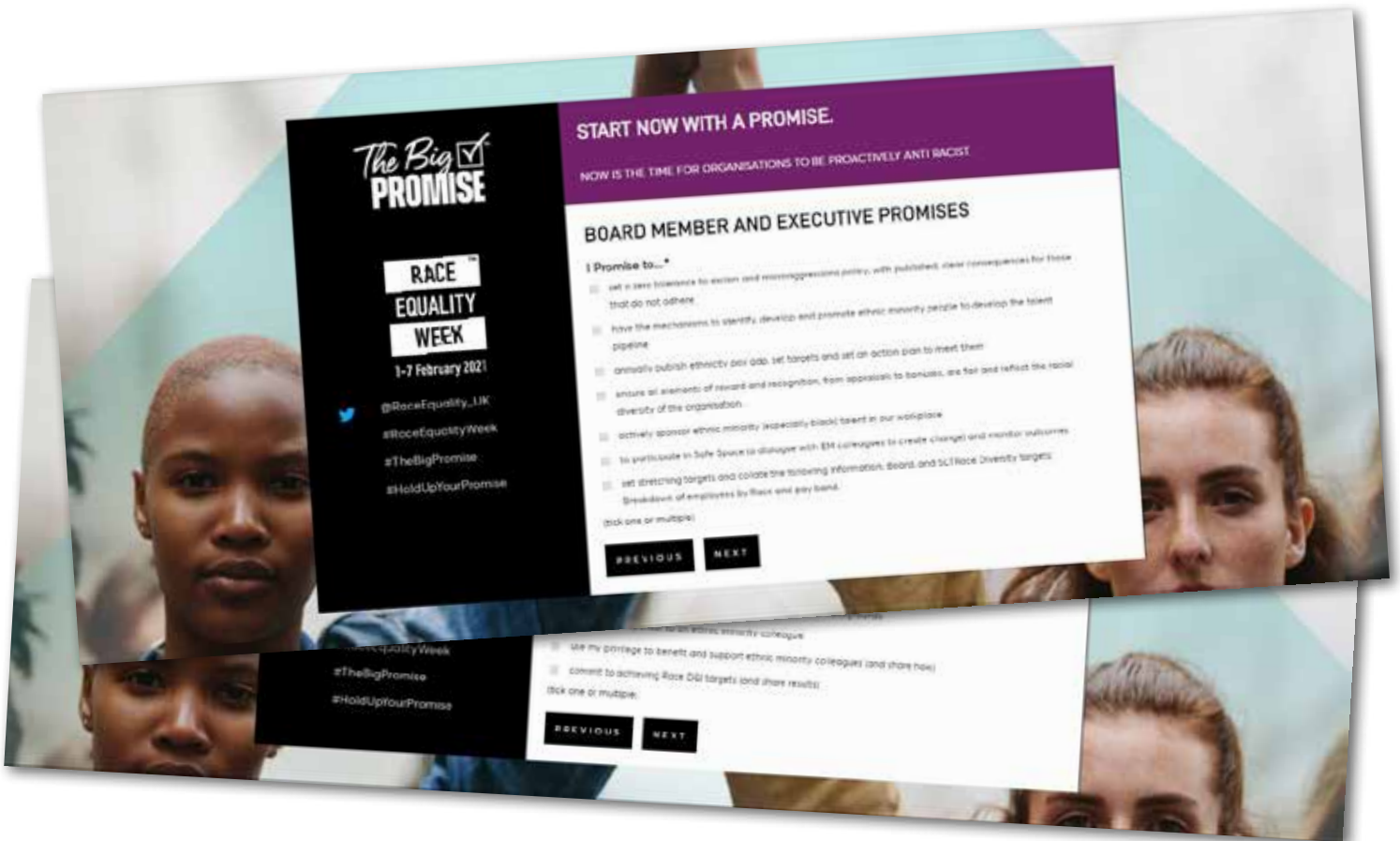
‘ONE PROMISE THAT WILL MAKE A MASSIVE IMPACT’

INTRODUCING THE MAGNIFICENT 7

Following the work mentioned earlier, and utilising the governance forum’s Race Code, we have identified bespoke sets of Magnificent 7 promises for:

- Board, ExCo and C-suite
- Senior leaders
- Allies
- Ethnic minority colleagues

The sets of 7 promises have been developed specifically so that each will make a real impact on race inequality in the workplace.



Each person selects a minimum of one promise which they commit to fulfil and, for transparency and accountability, they share with others.

United, and through social media, we can really drive change.



WHY THE BIG PROMISE?

The BIG Promise has been created in collaboration with senior leaders, race network chairs, ethnic minority employees, D&I and race experts, and one of our partners, the governance forum.

■ 200+ commitments – where do you start?

Our collaborator, the governance forum's Dr Karl George MBE, has recently reviewed more than 15 race charters, which collectively have more than 200 'commitments'.

However there is no guidance around how to deliver these commitments.

■ When we make a promise, we do not break it!

Imagine the impact if hundreds of companies and hundreds of thousands of employees made and kept a promise that helps to tackle race inequality.



■ Why is the BIG Promise important?

What gets measured gets done!

It was clear from our research that there is a need for measurement, accountability and transparency.

This is what keeps organisations, departments, leaders and employees honest and focused. It also enables every employee to play a part in the culture change.

However, our research highlighted that when it comes to race equality in the workplace, typically there is:

- A lack of appropriate measures.
- A lack of transparency.
- A lack of accountability.

Race network chairs and Diversity & Inclusion experts say the factors above are fundamental to efforts to move the dial on race equality in the right direction.

■ How did we develop the promises?

Through one-to-ones and group workshops with the Race Equality Matters community, and by collaborating with the governance forum and Dr Karl George MBE, we have identified promises that are measurable, accountable, and transparent and that will create meaningful change.

The sets of promises have been determined by those with a lived experience of racial inequality. By this we mean people who have faced race-related challenges in the workplace in a variety of circumstances. These challenges include microaggressions and barriers to career progression as well as discriminatory recruitment practices. We hear their stories every day, and we want organisations and their employees to listen to what has been said and take action so that we can improve the lived experience for people, now and in the future.

WHY RUN THE BIG PROMISE?

Here are just some of the reasons why you and your organisation should participate:

1 Take positive action to demonstrate your organisation is serious about race.

2 Unite with organisations nationally to demonstrate that corporate UK is serious about race equality.

3 Kick-start and maintain the momentum of your race equality agenda.

4 Pioneer action on race equality.

5 Attract and retain talent through your visible and real commitment to race equality and inclusion.

6 Demonstrate that uncomfortable conversations can lead to real change, taking your commitment to race beyond just words.

7 Stand out to existing and potential clients by proactively leading change.

8 Turbo-charge your inclusive culture to positively impact performance and your bottom line.

9 The business case is clear that equal, diverse, and inclusive workplaces can positively impact on performance, profitability, recruitment, retention, and talent development.

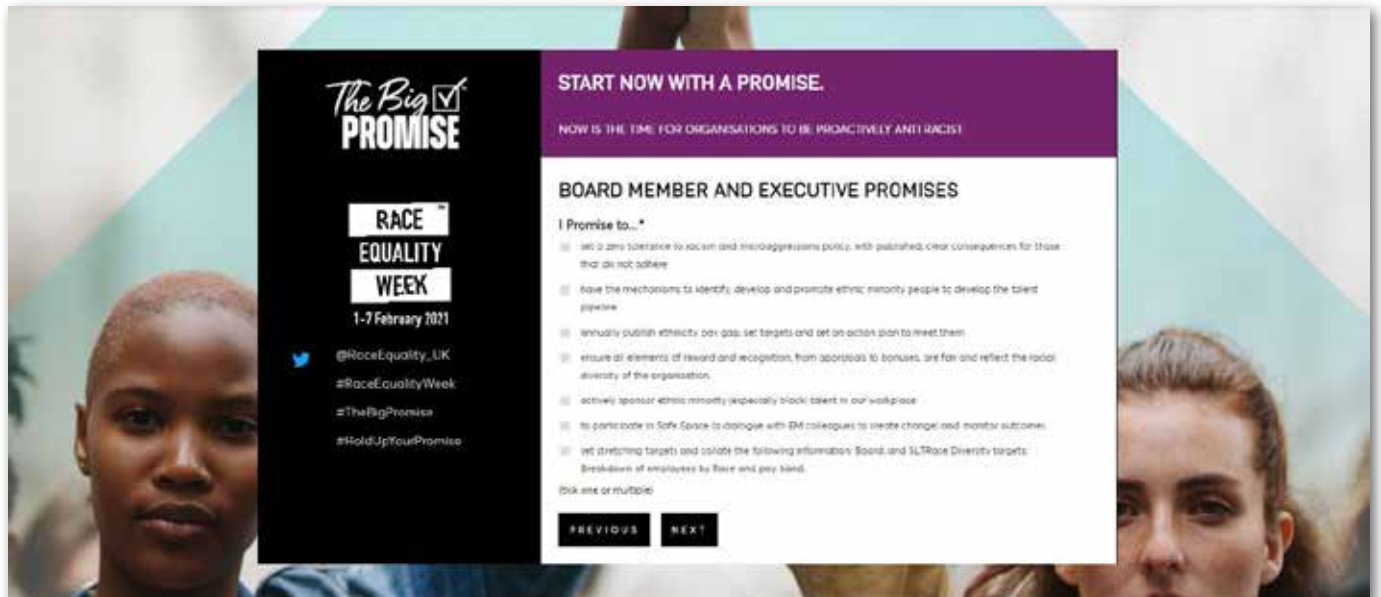
The Big PROMISE

The BIG Promise is an inclusive, positive and achievable initiative that allows everyone in an organisation to take action on race inequality. To summarise, the BIG Promise is about:

■ Inclusive action

Making a BIG Promise is something we can all do. Simply choose your promise from those provided and keep your promise.

There are four sets of tailored promises – one each for your Board/ExCo/C-suite, senior leaders, allies and ethnic minority colleagues.



KICKSTARTING AND MAINTAINING ACTION

Sometimes it is hard to know where to start, or what to do next, when addressing race inclusion. By making a BIG Promise, we commit to taking action as individuals. It is a great way to kickstart action on race inequality.

ORGANISATION-WIDE ACTION

The BIG Promise will run across your organisation, bringing employees together to take action on race inequality.

If you can, track the promises being made. It's a great way to identify if you can offer any additional support. For example, by signposting to further information or providing training.

NATIONWIDE ACTION

Join organisations across the UK in running your BIG Promise Day during Race Equality Week (1-7 February 2021). Play your part in showing corporate UK's commitment to taking action on race inequality.

MAKING REAL IMPACT

Each promise has been developed and reviewed by ethnic minority employees from organisations across the country. Each is designed to make a real impact on race inequality if it is kept.



1-7 February 2021

WHAT MAKES RACE EQUALITY MATTERS DIFFERENT



WE ARE:

SOLUTIONS-FOCUSED

We don't just talk. We believe in having meaningful discussions that lead to concrete action.

If it won't make an impact, we won't do it.

COLLABORATORS

We work with organisations, networks, individuals and experts to implement the change(s) our members and the community seek.

We bring people together to identify and understand the barriers to race equality, and to build and test concepts and solutions.

UK-WIDE

We work with organisations across the UK and across sectors.

We provide toolkits, solutions, information and expertise to accelerate meaningful change in the UK workplace.



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Go to the 'How to do it right - Part 2' guide to find out how your organisation and colleagues can be part of the BIG Promise.

OUR SUPPORTERS



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