

HARM TO HEALING

Envisioning Racial Justice:
'The Harm to Healing Coalition'
Funder Briefing 2023

Envisioning Racial Justice: 'The Harm to Healing Coalition' Funder Briefing 2023

For Black-led 'by and for' groups/organisations, the pursuit of justice centralises community. The work is layered and complex, requiring (i) building community infrastructure to alleviate the harms of the criminal legal system by responding to the needs of those impacted while (ii) building effective resistance efforts towards achieving racial justice and eradicating criminal legal system harm. In service to the above goals, the opportunities for 'by and for' groups/organisations to provide peer support, share learning and have the space to collectively vision and strategise, are critical. To advance this work, attention must now focus on building the collective infrastructure based upon values of nurturing, safety, dignity, and belonging.

Investment

The transformation from harm to healing and towards racial justice will require a substantial and sustained investment over the long term. This investment would begin to redress the imbalance of chronic community disinvestment alongside increasing reliance on a substantially funded criminal legal apparatus. Towards this aim, it is necessary to develop the Harm to Healing Coalition: an ecosystem designed to effectively address racial injustice and criminal legal system harm - creating tangible community and systemic change.

Significant investment is required to enable the HtH Coalition to (i) build collective power through meaningful collaborative work focussed on the intersections of racial justice and criminal legal system harm (ii) strengthen the ongoing work of organisations directly addressing racial injustice within the criminal legal system and (iii) build the capacity of proximate community organisations and racial justice organisations from other sectors to develop and implement work centred on criminal legal system harms.

The HtH Coalition would be the first of its kind in the country, using a ground-up approach to address criminal legal system harm and centering the vision and leadership of the communities most impacted. The HtH Coalition will build a strategic movement with the power to not only address the needs of those most affected, but also to eliminate criminal legal harms and achieve systemic change.

Over an initial 2 year period, we are seeking to raise £3-5 million to support the development of this work, ensure solid foundations and to begin to resource the ecosystem. Longer term, to properly address the harms, and resource this ecosystem we seek to raise £10 million a year with commitments from funders of at least 5 years. The plan is to build the foundations for funding to flow into this space for the long term, to underpin this critical work on an ongoing and sustainable basis.

Structure

The HtH Coalition will be multi-faceted, comprising of varying membership layers:

- Harm to Healing Collective: membership for Black-led 'by and for' groups and organisations currently working at the intersection of racial injustice and the criminal legal system in England and Wales.
- Harm to Healing Alliance: membership for groups and organisations with proximity, working on issues of racial injustice or criminal legal system harm in England and Wales.
- Harm to Healing Global Network: membership for groups and organisations currently working at the intersection of racial injustice and the criminal legal system in other countries.
- Harm to Healing Resource Group: membership for funding organisations committed to creating tangible community and systemic change by addressing racial injustice and criminal legal system harm.

Governance

By necessity the HtH Coalition should be held by a collaborative, non-hierarchical core (including those identified through the Harm to Healing report) of Black-led 'by and for' groups/organisations. It is these groups/organisations who will guide and lead the ideation and curation of a transformative nationwide ecosystem capable of significantly growing community infrastructure towards achieving racial justice and eradicating criminal legal system harm. The HtH Coalition will champion ways of working rooted in shared values, practising democratic decision making, community accountability and transparency to build collective leadership and community power.

Recognising the range of subjectively different experiences of racial injustice for the various communities across England and Wales, the ecosystem will need to address the specific needs, experiences of harm and collective memory of those communities. Consequently, the pathway toward this vision must be intentionally patient, growing and developing at the pace of groups/organisations whilst steadily building community trust¹.

Regarding the distribution of resources and investment, we are committed to exploring a range of participatory and democratic processes to ensure the voices and experiences of those most impacted by racial injustice and criminal legal system harm play a central role from the outset. Building on the foundational work of many of the initiatives highlighted above, the HtH Coalition will create and resource the space for individuals, groups and organisations who have previously been excluded from decision-making spaces to have an opportunity to come to the table and help catalyse transformative systemic change.

The HtH Coalition is conceived of as both a methodology, that is a collectivist collaboration within and across communities working to respond directly to community needs and as a facilitator and builder of hope from which informed solutions can be imagined, sourced and enacted in service to communities.

¹ Mason W & The Unity Gym Project (2021) Radically slow? Reflections on time, temporality and pace in engaged scholarship In Clift B, Gore J, Gustafsson S, Bekker S, Costas Batlle I & Hatchard J (Ed.), *Temporality in Qualitative Inquiry: Theories, Methods and Practices* (pp. 142-157). Routledge.

Funding priorities

- Investment in the development of the core groups dedicated to addressing racial injustice in the criminal legal system to sustain, develop and grow their work (30% of total investment)
- Investment in the groups and organisations with proximity to community, enabling them to pilot new projects focussed on addressing racial injustice in the criminal legal system (39% of total investment)
- Investment in the development of the Harm to Healing Coalition Infrastructure (16% of total investment)
- The design of the coalition - ideation, visioning, strategy development and implementation through convening and programmes
- The development of strong coalition governance that is rooted in community values and principles, including the building of community accountability groups
- The development of community needs assessments and exploratory mapping work that supports the ideation of what an ecosystem needs to look like through undertaking analysis across the country
- The administration of the coalition, including building solid foundations for the smooth running of core functions and operational support
- The development knowledge production and community reasearch - building the evidence base for the ecosystem and strengthening public education efforts
- Investment in the development of the Harm to Healing Coalition partnership projects, shared work and collaborations (15% of total investment)
- The development of community and public education efforts, campaigning, influencing and advocacy work streams towards systemic change
- The development of a shared Dream, Build and Change Fund that resources coalition wide projects, campaigns and collaborations, including a community seed fund for youth and community members

A phased approach

Over a minimum five-year period, the HtH Coalition will evolve through a layered and multi-modal programme comprising three interconnected phases.

Development Stage: Phases I & II

An initial investment of £3-5 million over the first two years will resource the development stage of this work, laying solid foundations for the future.

Phase I: Laying the groundwork

Build the capacity of the HtH Collective

The HtH Collective will emerge through the intentional connecting and converging of the Black-led 'by and for' groups and organisations identified through this process, who will then hold and guide the HtH Coalition moving forward.

- Build solid foundations by defining concepts, determining the parameters, ways of working, principles of practice and goals for the HtH Collective.

- Curate visioning space(s) for the HtH Collective to imagine hopeful communities rooted in nurturing, safety, dignity, and belonging and lead the ideation of a transformative nationwide ecosystem toward community justice systems that protect disinvested communities from criminal legal system harms.

Build the capacity of the HtH Resource Group

A collaboration between HtH Collective members and invited funders and donors will build the Harm to Healing Resource Group membership. The HtH Resource Group would hold and guide the work to drive the necessary attitudinal and cultural change within the funding & philanthropic sector towards achieving racial justice. It would not be a requirement for all funders interested in investing in the HtH Coalition ecosystem to join the HtH Resource Group. However, this membership layer will form a crucial part of the HtH Coalition - ensuring it is sustainable.

- Build solid foundations by determining the parameters, ways of working, principles of practice and goals for the HtH Resource Group.
- Develop 'measures of impact' away from arbitrary output measures toward transformative 'quality of life' measures that seed the emergence of community infrastructure in service of the needs of communities most impacted by racial injustice and criminal legal system harm.

Phase II: Envisioning the wider HtH Coalition

- Engage groups and organisations with proximity, working on issues of racial injustice or criminal legal system harm in England and Wales (as identified through the mapping stage of this project)
- Design and launch an expansive peer support programme for the HtH Alliance membership - building their capacity to implement work centred on alleviating criminal legal system harms.
- Sustain the work of the HtH Collective members through core funding, peer support and needs based capacity building efforts.
- Build upon community knowledge to evidence how criminal legal harm takes place to inform (advocacy and legal) strategies and to build infrastructure to reduce and minimise the harms.
- Identify and engage international groups and organisations, drawing upon existing relationships, and create new opportunities to grow collective knowledge about how to protect communities from racial injustice and criminal legal system harms through the HtH Global Network.

Phase III: Growing the ecosystem

- Evolve the HtH Collective membership as more HtH Alliance members grow their capacity to work at the intersection of racial injustice and criminal legal system harm
- Grow the HtH Alliance membership - supporting more organisations to evolve their work to focus on addressing racial justice and criminal legal system harm
- Implement strategic system change work as envisioned and defined in prior phases to achieve the goals of the HtH Coalition

Towards A Well-Resourced Ecosystem

In order to see such an investment realised, it will be vitally important to invite other funders into the conversation as soon as possible. The bold and ambitious aims of the HtH Coalition will not be realised by any one group or organisation. We anticipate working alongside our colleagues at AB Charitable Trust to develop an agenda of work that will influence the wider funding sector and catalyse systemic change throughout the criminal legal system. By proposing this scale of investment, we intend to build upon the foundations of other racial justice focused funding initiatives.²

This proposal has been developed with the learning from past initiatives, and rooted in the findings of the Harm to Healing report directed by those closest to the harm. To build upon these solid foundations requires that we collectively take a chance on something bold. It asks that we trust in the values and process that underpin this work, and that flexible, long-term resourcing rooted in trust could have a transformative impact in this space, toward achieving justice.

Transitioning from harm to healing will demand a significant level of investment to redress the chronic levels of community disinvestment and to build an ecosystem that will reverse the illogical reliance upon the criminal legal system. We envisage the pathway from harm to healing will be considered, patiently growing at the pace of ('by and for' groups and organisations) trust. Being guided by the vision and hopes of those who are compelled to serve, and who contributed to the Harm to Healing report, the HtH Coalition will move us all closer to the goal of community transformation and systemic change.

² For example, the Phoenix Way, Baobab Foundation, Lloyds Bank Racial Equity Fund, Resourcing Racial Justice, Trust for London & City Bridge Trust Racial Justice Fund

www.harptohealing.uk

  @HARPTOHEALINGUK