

Our Commitment to Fight Racism

The past months have caused many Canadians to take a step back and reflect on the issues of racism, inclusion and equality. The repeated instances of racial violence over recent months, ongoing protests against racial injustice and the COVID-19 pandemic have revealed that more work must be done to combat inequities and systemic racism in our institutions and communities. As an organization, we wanted to take some time to reflect so that we could provide a thoughtful response and fully commit ourselves to fighting and rejecting the racism that persists against Black and Indigenous people, as well as others, in Canada every day.

At SECC, diversity and inclusion are values in which we strongly believe. We want to highlight racism against Black people as well as discrimination against Indigenous persons, people of colour, women, LGBTQ2+ and other groups. We maintain our commitments to address those wrongs while we focus our efforts on responding to the racism that persists in our community. We also recognize that we have work to do.

One of the first steps of responsible ally-ship is educating ourselves on the issues of racism and acknowledging the hard facts. We acknowledge that:

- Systemic racism, which results from the inherent biases and prejudices of the policies and practices of social and political organizations, groups or institutions, does exist.
- Racism isn't limited to the intentional acts of bad people. It includes unintentional and subtle acts.
- Racism is a socialized condition that begins in our homes and hides behind how we see others, and in the implicit biases we must all confront and address.
- We have an ethical duty to speak up against racism or we are complicit in racist violence, behaviour and rhetoric.
- We must create a safe environment for people to speak up if we are to eliminate racism.

At SECC, we are making a public commitment to fight racism, to speak up when we see and hear racist behaviour and speech, and to work harder to eliminate racism in our community

and in our country. We realize that honouring and celebrating diversity is not enough. It's where we start. And we must start with our own organization.

Racism has been built up and reinforced for centuries, whether against Black, Indigenous people or people of colour. Only a sustained and committed effort will eliminate it and SECC is committed itself to that effort. To start, SECC will do the following:

1. We will ensure that our strategic plan includes initiatives to promote fairness and justice, and we will actively participate in a continuing conversation to educate ourselves and our community;
2. We will measure our progress and publish our efforts to ensure a better representation of Indigenous persons and people of colour on our board, in our volunteer base and in our staff;
3. We will involve people with lived experience of racism in a re-assessment of both our recruiting, evaluation and promotion processes and our Diversity and Inclusion efforts to eliminate barriers to Black and racialized colleagues;
4. We will provide mandatory anti-racism training for all staff and board; and
5. We will re-assess all of our policies and practices through a racialized lens to eliminate discrimination, specifically ensuring the enforcement of the anti-racism standards in our Code of Conduct, and the proactive use our programs specifically to help Black and racialized Canadians.

We know this is only a start, but SECC is committing to learning, growing and creating real change in our community.

SECC rejects racism and white supremacy and we apologize for our past racism and insensitivity. Until we take responsibility to eliminate racism, and commit to equity and justice, the list of individuals killed, harmed and traumatized by racism will only become longer.

Members of our Board of Directors and Our Employees