Preliminary Research Presentation

Black Brilliance Research Project Preliminary Report Presentation advanced slides for December 14, 2020
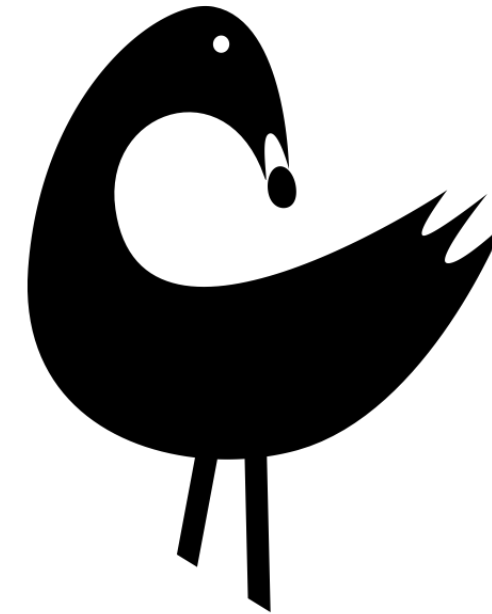
Black Brilliance Research Project

BACKGROUND

Historical Context

What made this research possible

- This work is built on decades of organizing in defense of Black lives and in support of Black liberation.
- In the summer of 2020, King County Equity Now (a Black-led ecosystem of Black-led organizations spearheading regional equity efforts) and Decriminalize Seattle (a BIPOC-led coalition spearheading pro-community, pro-people initiatives and divestment from policing) wrote the 2020 Blueprint for Police Divestment and Community Reinvestment.

Looking back to look forward

- Every day, community members marched (and continue to march), held demonstrations, and advocated for the City of Seattle to implement Black-led equity solutions.
- While waiting for the City to act, King County Equity Now and its many partner organizations came together to start this work.
- In response to community pressure, Seattle City Council overrode the Mayor's veto, allocating $3M toward this historic, Black community-led research project.

Overall Project Process

Projects are iterative and often return to earlier stages as we learn more. We present preliminary findings weekly to community via teach-ins and use community responses to inform us, too.

01 ISSUE

Identify an issue and form a clear idea about how to talk about it.

02 LOOK BACK

Review existing conversations, data, and reports related to the topic.

03 HYPOTHESIZE

Come up with an informed direction based on research.

04 RESEARCH

Talk to community, collect data, use art, and read resources about our informed direction.

05 CONCLUSION

Interpret the results and present our conclusions.

Black Brilliance Research Project

RESEARCHER OVERVIEW

Black Brilliance Researcher Training, Support, and Work

Training and Support

- The CITI Program Human Subjects Ethics Training educates researchers about the ethical principles around researching with humans and the regulatory requirements for conducting research.
- Onboarding meetings help provide context, answer questions, and provide support
- A research manual "cookbook" helps guide the work. The cookbook includes research methods, templates, examples, and step-by-step guides.
- Video and live training provide support and direction
- Research professionals provide technical and review support for all needed aspects of the research process
- Regular anti-oppression education and discussions

Relationships to the research

- We have over 100 researchers, including youth, elders, people with different levels of experience in the criminal legal system, artists, healers, educators, etc.
- Researchers are involved in every step of the process, from research topic, research questions, data analysis, and reporting findings.
- Researchers aren't just collecting data, they are bringing their full expertise to what needs to be studied, how best to collect that data, and how to present it in a way that is accessible and accountable to the communities they serve.
- Researchers are building relationships across research teams. This project was built with a strong focus on relationship building and facilitation which has resulted in new collaborations and new insights.

Black Brilliance Research Organizations

## Black Brilliance Research teams (current)

Black Trans Prayer Book
Bridging Cultural Gaps
East African Community Services
Forever Safe Spaces
Freedom Project
King County Equity Now
Sacred Community Connections
The Silent Task Force
Wa Na Wari
Note: 100+ total researchers contribute

Black Brilliance Research teams (prospective)

Africatown Community Land Trust
Black Trans Task Force (WA-BTTF)
Divest SPD
Estelita's Library
Lake City Research Team
Liberation Medicine School
Liberation Strategies
Rainier Chamber of Commerce (fiscal only)
Seattle Equitable Internet Initiative
Transwomen of Color Solidarity Network

What teams do to collect data
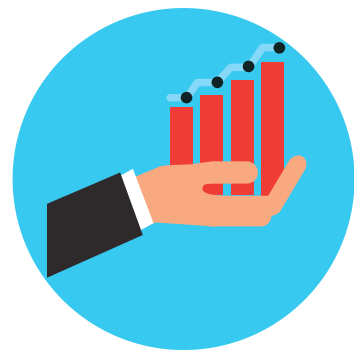
Simplify statistics

We use statistics and numbers to talk about common issues and weave that in with maps and stories

Ask for nuance in stories

We ask deeper questions about how systemic violence affects us, individually and collectively

Bring elders & youth together

Our elders hold important wisdom and expertise that grounds us; our youth grow legacies forward
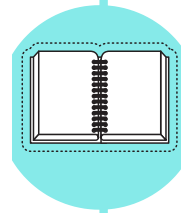
Amplify solutions

We're used to over-explaining well-identified problems, but now we will build new solutions
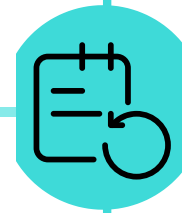
Research Methods

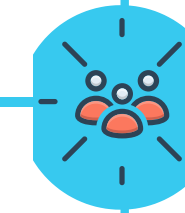## Black Brilliance Research Project

LITERATURE REVIEW

We look at existing work, community stories, previous data and findings.

SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

We re-run analyses, or re-conduct research with new people

DIALOGUES & INTERVIEWS

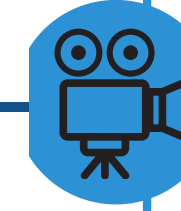Using Zoom, phone calls, and in-person meetings

CASE STUDIES

We collect stories about what's working and discuss how to apply those insights

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

We collect data and explore statistically significant differences

ARTS-BASED APPROACHES

We use photos, videos, murals and more to collect and share data and analyes

Black Brilliance Research Project

RESEARCH DETAILS

Our Focus: Community Health, Safety, and Thriving

Black Brilliance Research Project

HOUSING & PHYSICAL SPACES

01

Housing diversity and the need for more Black-led residential and Black-led commercial spaces came up often in the research. This priority was shared by non-Black people as well. Physical space is essential.

MENTAL HEALTH

02

Researchers and community members were adamant that we need new culturally responsive and caring mental health networks led by people with lived experience. A new and equitable payment structure is required to ensure people receive proper care by appropriate healers.

YOUTH & CHILDREN

03

Childcare and out-of-school time supports were big priorities for several teams, particularly for children facing systemic violence and trauma.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

04

The urgent need for economic relief during the triple crises of COVID-19, economic recession, and systemic racism.

CRISES & WELLNESS

05

There's strong support for alternatives to the currently harmful 911 and crisis response system. Staffed by trained and skilled community members.

Invest in lived experience

We keep each other safe, especially when we intimately understand each other. Culturally responsive care is essential. Fund community workers, support the solutions they develop.

Address root causes of harm

Create healing, connection, nourishment, safety and support to prevent harm. Invest more in proactive and preventative solutions.

Stop punishing individuals for systems' failures

Transform failing systems (for example: legal, land use, education, healthcare , employment)

Fully embrace a new normal

Listen, follow, and normalize leadership from those closest to the issues. Foster solidarity across the oppressions that typically push us apart from each other (including: anti-Black racism, transphobia, ableism, ageism, sexism).
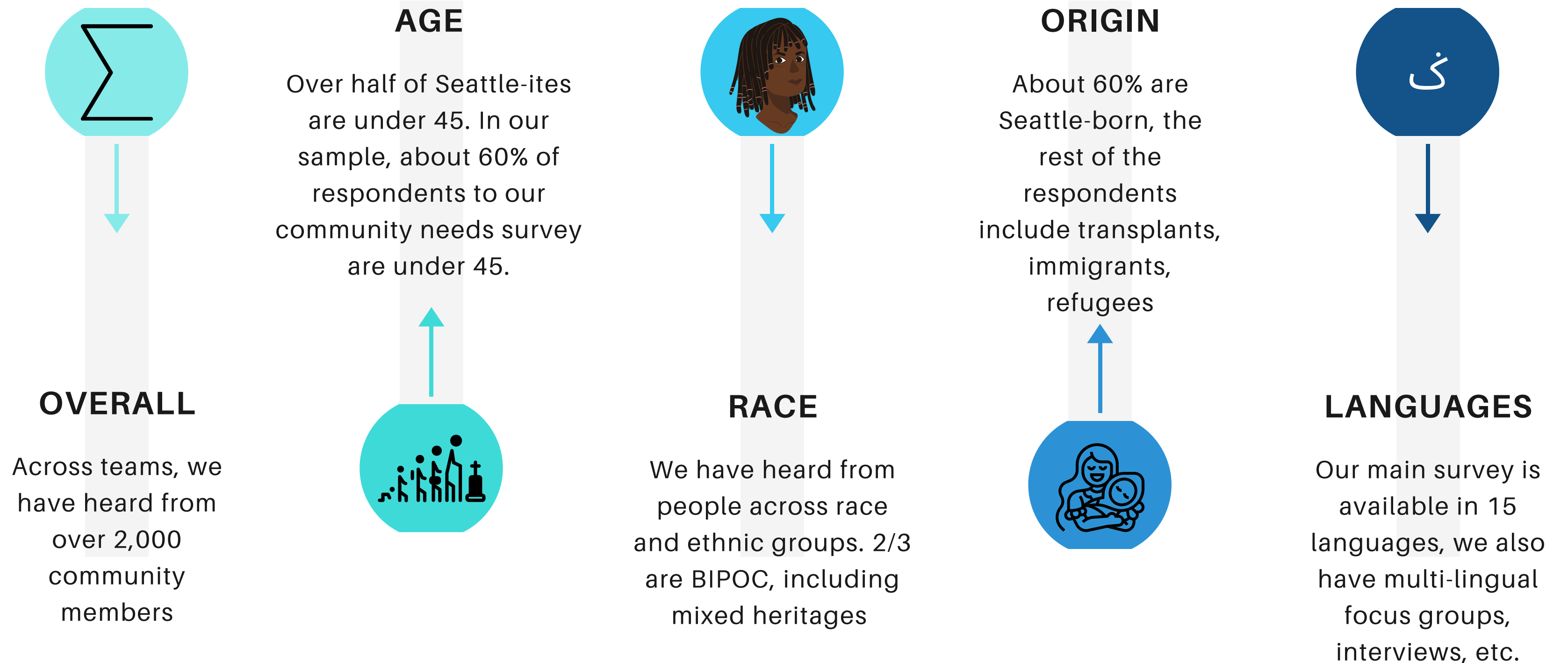
Community is eager to build a better world

Most people are not interested in continuing to invest in policing. They are interested in learning how to keep each other safe without police, coercion, or the threat of systemic violence.

Who we have heard from

Black Brilliance Research

AGE

Over half of Seattle-ites are under 45. In our sample, about 60% of respondents to our community needs survey are under 45.

ORIGIN

About 60% are Seattle-born, the rest of the respondents include transplants, immigrants, refugees

LANGUAGES

Our main survey is available in 15 languages, we also have multi-lingual focus groups, interviews, etc.

OVERALL

Across teams, we have heard from over 2,000 community members

RACE

We have heard from people across race and ethnic groups. 2/3 are BIPOC, including mixed heritages

Overall Recommendations

Black Brilliance Research Project

STOP CAUSING HARM

- Divert criminal legal & foster care investments
- Eliminate workers and work that harm us
- Cut police, court, corrections, probation funding, reinvest into community

CREATE INCLUSIVE POLICIES

- Prioritize workers with empathy & lived experience
- Include cultural and artistic expression in healing
- Fund community work up-front

FOLLOW BLACK LEADERSHIP

- Black-led community organizations that specialize in the work
- Black workers elsewhere can create new opportunities

PAY FOR COMMUNITY EXPERTISE

- Fund Black community priorities
- Pay for Black healers through innovative models
- Fund exploratory research & pilots

INVEST IN THRIVING SOLUTIONS

- Treat root causes
- Make it easier to find existing effective resources and programming
- Fund spaces and land to anchor programming

Black Brilliance Research Project

2021 PB PROCESS

Steering Committee Roadmap (in progress)

Black Brilliance Research Project

01

STEERING COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

Determine criteria for an effective steering committee

03

SELECT STEERING COMMITTEE

Post criteria to join steering committee, applications are reviewed by a body.

05

BLACK BRILLIANCE RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Created, shared & vetted with community via weekly check-ins, conversations, etc.

02

DEFINE ACCOUNTABILITY

Develop and refine processes that will hold steering committee accountable to community

04

STEERING COMITTEE STARTS

Develops rules for Participatory Budgeting, with approvals from community

Participatory Budgeting Participation Roadmap (in progress)

Black Brilliance Research Project

1: DESIGN THE PROCESS

A steering committee that represents the community creates rules and engagement plan, with approvals from community.

Community resources prepare community for PB, including expanding internet access

2: BRAINSTORM IDEAS

City, PBP, and steering committee align.

Communities share and discuss ideas for projects.

PBP = Participatory Budgeting Project (a nationally recognized nonprofit)

3:DEVELOP PROPOSALS

Community "budget delegates" develop the ideas into feasible proposals that reflect Black priorities as identified in the Black Brilliance Research Project.

4: VOTE FOR BEST PROJECTS

Community members vote on the proposals that most serve communities' needs.

5: FUND PROJECTS

The City of Seattle funds and supports implementation of winning proposals.

Evaluate project success and lessons learned for rooting this process in equity.

Steering Committee Experiences

Steering Committee Experiences to Prioritize (preliminary)

1. People with lived experience with every stage of the criminal legal system, e.g. formerly incarcerated
2. Black people with ties to Seattle
3. Youth (at least 2 people)
4. People from the African Diaspora
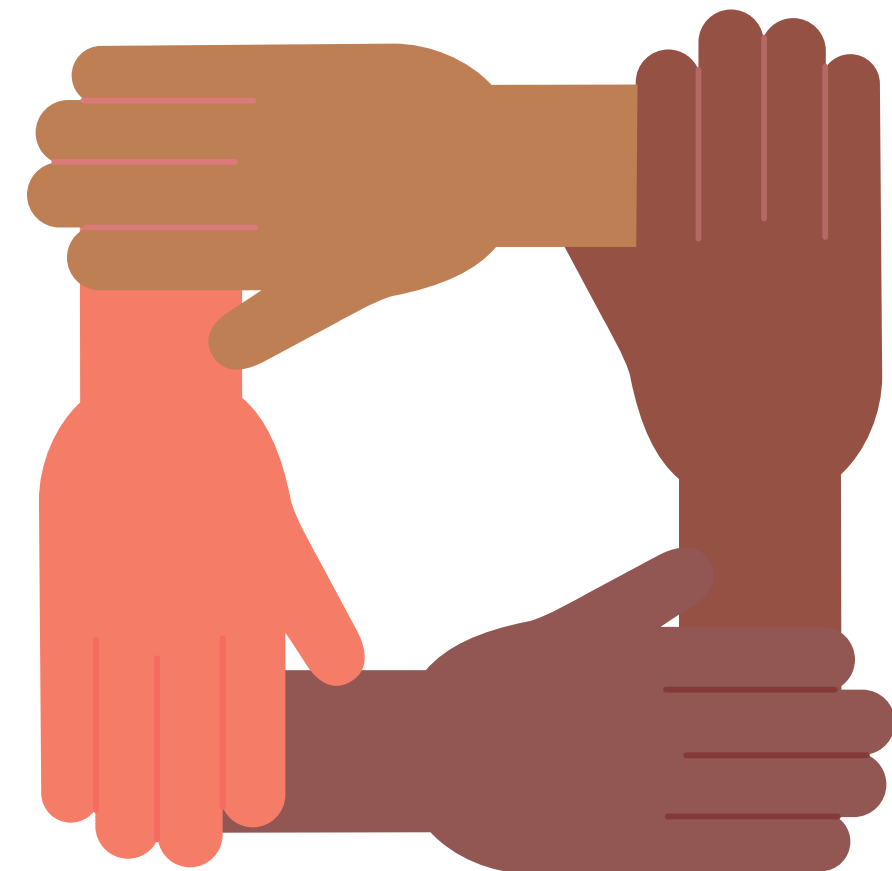
Accountability priorities (in development)

Accountability to each other

1. Steering committee will name, engage, and respond to the needs in our communities.
2. Steering committee members will foster an environment of mutual respect, trust, and partnership with those most impacted.
3. Committee will engage in ongoing work and trainings to create inclusive and positive relationships with each other.

Accountability to the public

- Be transparent through weekly reports
- Ensure that there are office hours where community members can engage, ask questions, provide feedback, and request clarification about the PB process
- When the committee is challenged to act differently by community members, committee will respond with compassion in a timely fashion

Priority for City Departments Providing Support (in development)

Follow community leadership

- Take the lead from community members, with a focus on community development
- Know how to get dollars out the door that are responsive to community needs
- Track record working with tens of millions of dollars in a given year
- No strategic advisors, instead follow community leadership for strategic direction to develop and foster partnerships in community.
- Community should extend the invitation to departments before they start work.

Provide key supports

- Data support, particularly with mapping key quantitative and spatial data to help visualize racial equity
- Technical support to community steering committee and long-term planning
- Administrative support
- Financial support, financial management, compliance support
- Partner or liaison with other departments that can provide communications and administrative support

Select project highlights

The next presenters will present visuals from some of their work as part of this research

Black Brilliance Research Project

THE FACES OF TRAUMA

The Faces of Trauma Freedom Project

JUSTICE

FOR

MANNY

Photo Credit- Sophia Thomas

Photo Credit- Maryama Abdullahi

Juvenile Trauma

Trying to navigate that system or the criminal justice system as a juvenile...you're trusting. You think they have your best interest at hand...once you grow up you become a critical thinker you realize that's not necessarily the case.

–Jamel Joe

Housing

Formerly incarcerated people are almost 10 times more likely to become houseless than the general population.

"An unacknowledged trauma is like a wound that never heals over and may start to bleed again at any time" –Alice Miller

Call to Action

- STOP GROWING THE SYSTEM
- Stop incarcerating children.
- Stop enforcing policies that ban formerly incarcerated people from employment and housing.
- Stop excluding formerly incarcerated/BIPOC from decision making roles.
- STOP ADDING TO THE TRAUMA

Black Brilliance Research Project

ZERO TO 100 INITIATIVE

OUR ASKS

- We ask that investments no longer be made in "solutions" that grow the system. More specifically organizations such as probation, DSHS, or any entity that historically has increased the systems.

- Offboard as much as the state can from the system to the community.

- Through the **Zero to 100 Initiative**, invest these monies into community organizations that will develop systems of support, networks of resources and collaborations with community housing, education and employment services. Also giving attention to clothing, transportation, food and other necessities.

OUR SOLUTION

The **Zero to 100 Initiative** believes that "Accountability without relationship feels like abuse. Accountability with a relationship feels like love."

- Our proposal is the elimination of community custody. The harmful, debilitating and limiting system of community custody should never follow a prison sentence. Instead, individuals releasing from incarceration should be met with care, understanding and true community support.

- We propose that this support be relational, initiated and made up of people in the community with shared experience and community organizations that are culturally responsive and trauma informed. This support shall consist of no less than: support groups, peer mentorship, relational therapy coupled with increased family involvement and monetary, housing and clothing support.

- We propose that the pressure to better oneself is only effective in the realm of "social pressure", by those within an individual's community. Those who because of shared experience have an honest, vested interest in seeing all those within that community thrive and be brilliant - especially those who have survived incarceration. This proposal is that the state invests in community solutions and not community custody.

Perry Delaney is a project manager at the Freedom Project, where he works on creating equality and helping heal the trauma of the formerly incarcerated. His empathy to their plight runs deep, having spent 25 years in incarceration himself. While there, he acquired a GED, A.A Degree, multiple vocational certifications, and participated in various re-entry, self-betterment, and cognitive programs. He believes that God will only change the condition of a people when they first begin to change the condition of themselves, and intends on working tirelessly to give the marginalized the opportunities to do so.
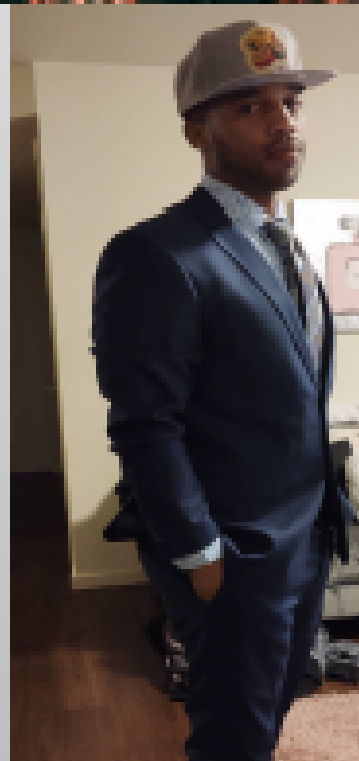
Quinton Clark. A strong advocate for social justice and equitable treatment. He is a peer mentor, and society ethics and human behavior major at the UW. Quinton is a researcher for the Freedom Project where he works to make changes to the infrastructure of the "system" i.e. community custody, the school to prison pipeline, and RCWs. He is directly impacted by the system spending ten years incarcerated. He looks beyond his incarceration and forward to the successes of the future. Quinton also looks forward to the day when we all can look upon this country as inclusive and fit for all like.

Steven Allgoewer is a Curriculum Developer, Public Speaker/Presenter, Community Organizer & Advocate and Law, Economics and Public Policy major at the University of Washington. He is a Researcher with the Freedom Project, is the founder of the Freedman's Coalition for Justice, and is working on publishing his first book. After serving over half of his life in prison, Steven is now committed to centering the voice of his constituents, speaking truth to power and creating equitable legislation & inclusive policy that counters systemic racism and empowers his community members.

Black Brilliance Research Project

WE ARE FAMILY ALWAYS

EACS' Black Brilliance Research

Youth Survey Findings

It is clear from our data collection and findings that there is a concern for community youth.

As caregivers navigate and build for their families, the ability to nourish their children with a quality life is challenging pre-pandemic and during this time in pandemic. Long term outcome is to increase social mobility with reinvest into youth with health and wellness, and cradle to career support.

Survey was completed by Community Youth between the ages 11 to 24, with close to 300 responses. three-quarter of respondents speak Somali, with close to 70% who have 6 or more people living in their house; most from the ages 15 to 17 and 18 to 21; more than half live in South Seattle; and close to half consider themselves as first generation.

"We are family. **Always**." − EACS' Organizing Mantra

EACS' Black Brilliance Research

Youth Survey Findings

==Mental Health==

The findings show there is a need for investment in on accessible and quality holistic, health, and wellness services

There is a need to increase conversations and normalize mental health challenges. Bringing together youth and their peers through healing circles is requested.

- **42% and 28%** say it is not easy to have a conversation about mental health about their community; more say it is easy to have a conversation about mental health with their friends
- **39% to 50%** are experiencing mental health challenges during pandemic or was experiencing mental health challenges before pandemic
- **Only 41%** know strategies to cope when experiencing mental health challenges
- **Close to 20%** do not know where to find mental health resources
- **30%** of those experiencing mental health challenges have not spoken to a therapist.

EACS' Black Brilliance Research

Youth Survey Findings

Community & Education Opportunity

The findings suggest the need for cradle to career support

There are gaps for network and leadership opportunities, which may prevent community youth from upward mobility. This also may impact youth's perception of success with lack of representation

- Close to half do not know or unsure if they know their community leaders; are unsure or do not know of volunteer opportunities in their community; and do not have at least one mentor in their life.

- More than one-quarter say the know teachers that look like them and can relate to them.

"We are family. **Always**." − EACS' Organizing Mantra

EACS' Black Brilliance Research

Youth Survey Findings

Requested Programs & Supports

The findings suggest that youth need support in all areas of life

- **48%** are asking for sports; outdoor; and social activities
- **37%** college help
- **30%** arts and culture; and tutoring and homework
- **Open ended comments** include demand for strong mental health resources and a safe pace.

"We are family. **Always**." − EACS' Organizing Mantra

EACS' Black Brilliance Research
Youth Survey Findings

Summary

The findings suggest that youth need support in all areas of life

These categories are separate in writing but are all challenges that are intertwined. With investment to holistic services may also come mentorship, trust, and healing to move forward and increase education attainment. To get to the long-term outcome for healthy and thriving families is to increase social mobility. Meeting youth's social and emotional needs currently is critical for education attainment.

"We are family. **Always**." − EACS' Organizing Mantra

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THE SILENT TASK FORCE

T.S.T.F
The Silent Task Force

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CENTRAL AREA CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM (CACE) 21

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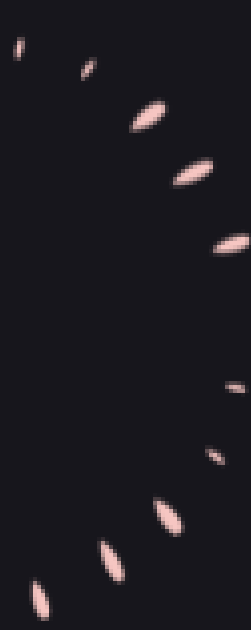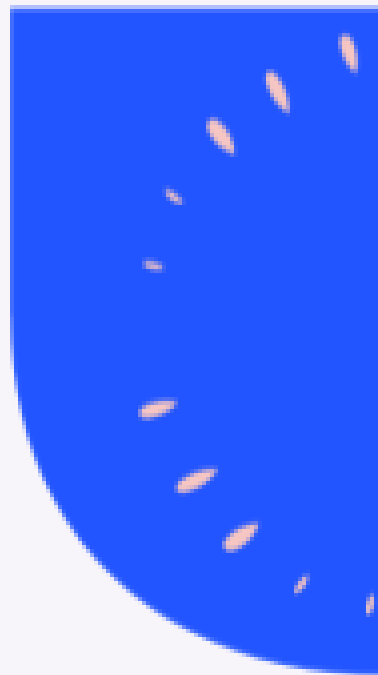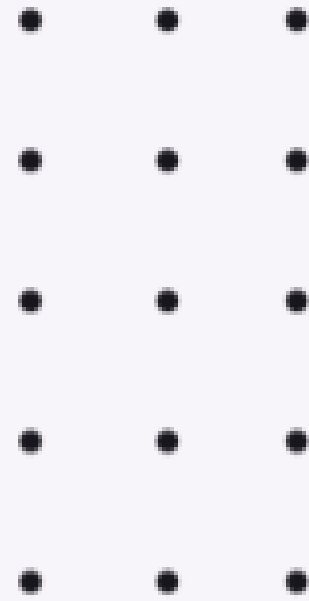
FOREVER SAFE SPACES
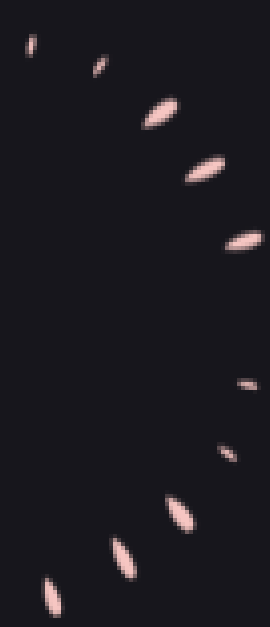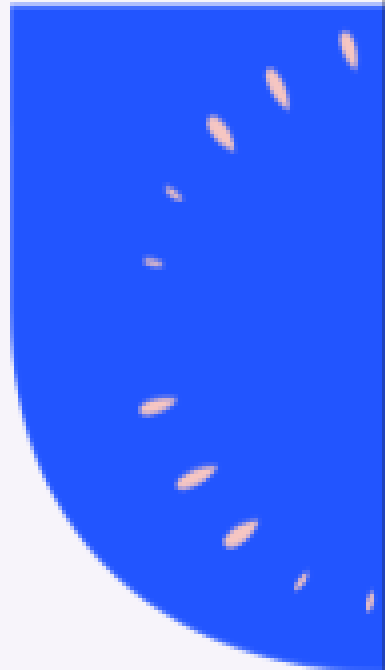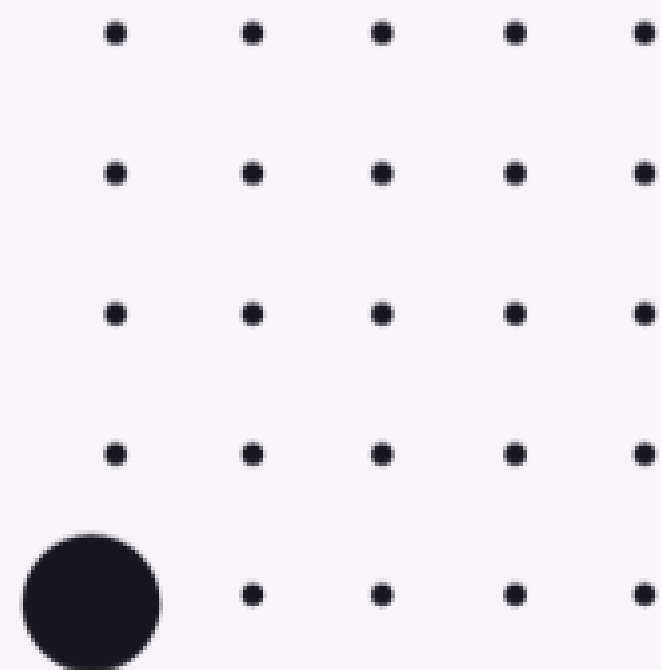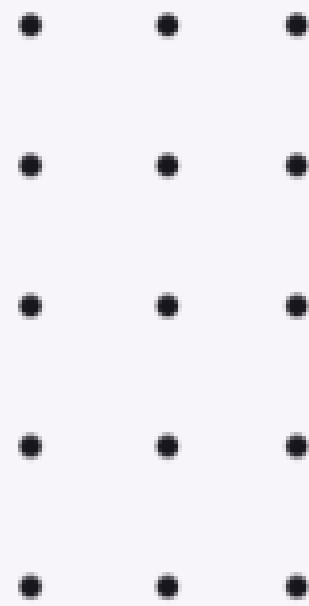
Grassrooted in the ethos of

mutual aid & community self-determination

Our Shorterm Goal

is to interweave, stabilize, and flexibly resource 250-500 cultural workers of color most vulnerable to displacement, homelessness, and other effects of disparity so they can not only survive but

thrive in place

›

Longterm Goals: ⟩

- Creating opportunity for all people of color including youth, the justice-system involved, the neurodivergent, the differently-abled, and more to thrive in creative industries. (With sustainable liveable income!)

  - Fostering more creative, hyperlocal, cooperative business, land ownership, and revenue-generation models in Seattle's cultural ecosystem. (Aquiring land together!)

    - Building a case and model for the direct subsidization of low income cultural workers of color as an effective means of reparative investment in communities. (As recommended in this 2019 Report!)

- Supporting public health and safety policy that divests public dollars from putative solutions and instead fund community-led efforts. (Defunding police!)
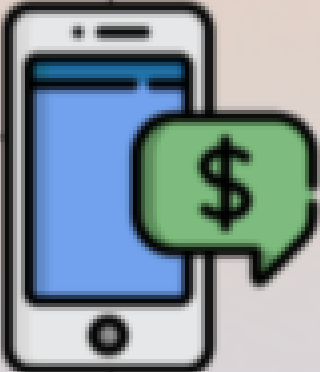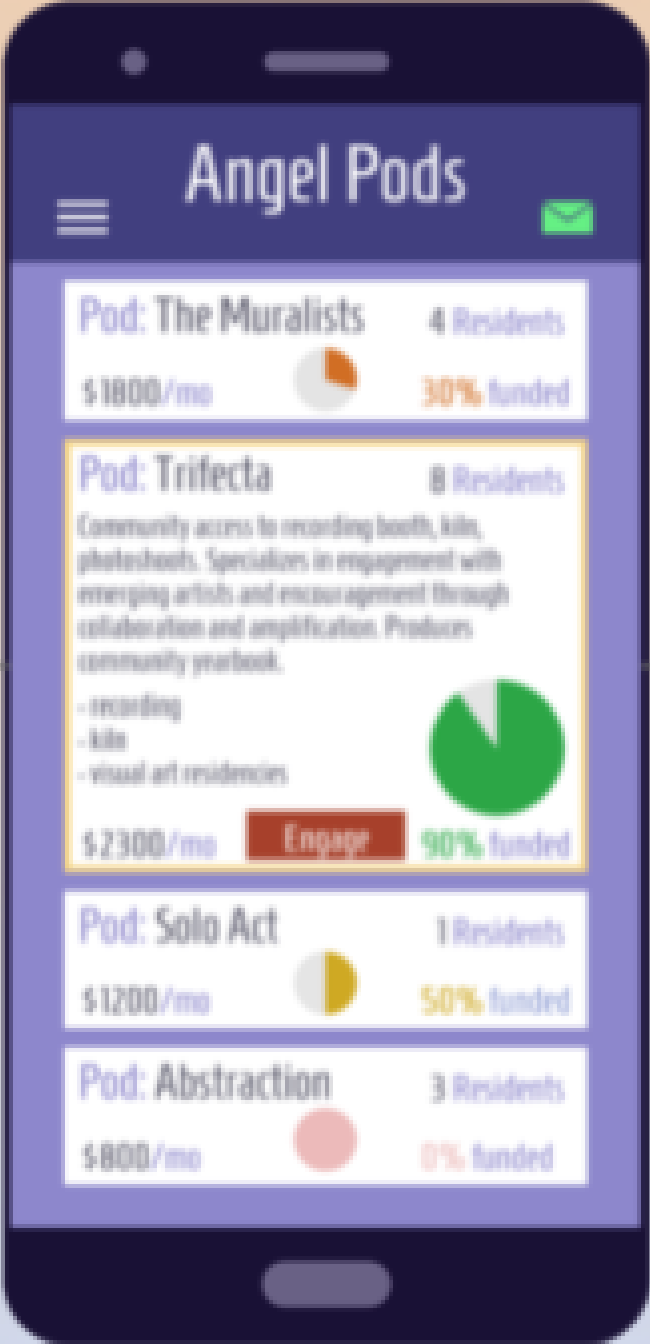
Our Priorities

Our ecosystem includes 1,000-1,500 artists in disciplines ranging from youth service, cultural organizing, theater, dance, music, visual art, design, technology, literature, drag, fashion, and more representing over 120 independent collectives, spaces, small businesses, and/or grassroots organizations. Of the 533 community members we have demographic data on, 48% identified as BIPOC. From March to May of 2020 this community experienced over $3M in self-reported loss due to COVID-19, and on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being most urgent, the average severity of need was 2.4, a number and urgency we know has only grown since our initial surveying. This is how we are internally prioritizing initial pod curation

Black Brilliance Research Project

SACRED COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

SYSTEM FAILURE ALERT!

http://systemfailurealert.org/