

# The Ethnic Minority Race, Equality and Human Rights Network

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Background:** The Ethnic Minority – Race, Equality and Human Rights Network has developed from the Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network (EMNRN).

In March 2020 the EMNRN was formed to respond to the social, economic, health, cultural and welfare challenges brought about by the pandemic. Between March 2020 and May 2023 the EMNRN responded strategically to communities needs by;

- Developing community and rights holder intelligence on what was occurring in communities
- Acting a platform of solidarity and support to engage Scottish Government and other key duty bearers such as the NHS, Public Health Scotland and Police Scotland
- Provided practical service provision and capacity support via emergency sustenance fund, digital transition fund, tackling loneliness and isolation, multilingual mental health support. Research commissioning and vaccine inclusion and information fund.

As the Scottish Government has continued its transition from emergency health response back to core race, equality and human rights work EMNRN members have engaged in a consultation period with the network secretariat BEMIS Scotland to assess how best the network can respond to the present policy landscape.

## Overarching Principles

‘The Ethnic Minority – Race, Equality and Human Rights Network’ will seek to collaborate together in mutual respect and solidarity to re-engage rights holders and communities with key policy development.

- We will ensure that members and rights holders voices are heard and lived experience recognised and responded to in relation to the progression of the Race Equality Framework 2016-30
- We will ensure that members and rights holders have informed opportunities to engage directly in legislative developments that affect our communities and membership. For example, the new Human Rights Bill for Scotland and implementation of the Hate Crime and Public order Act (Scotland) 2021.
- We will commission research where necessary and practical to interrogate resistant aspects of societal inequality.
- We will liaise with other like-minded organisations, networks and institutions to progress our ambitions in a respectful and collegial manner.
- We will take a PANEL, Human Rights based approach to all of our work ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to engage, lead, inform and feel included and respected.

**Race:** We recognise that there is only one human race. Diverse across the world and reflected in our communities in Scotland. Nonetheless the imposition of racial hierarchies has created multi generation, institutional inequalities for communities and rights holders protected under the human rights provisions of Colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin (including citizenship).

In Scotland we have a duty to challenge these structural and institutional inequalities based upon Scotland's unique social, cultural and economic history and present. This includes acknowledging the specific migration patterns to Scotland over the centuries and the experience of these multigenerational communities now. In addition, many ethnic minority communities have migration patterns linked to historical geopolitical events such as the British Empire and slavery, WW2 and the holocaust, the global decolonising that happened in the aftermath of WW2 and more recent and present-day conflicts and refugee displacements. Our network will ensure that all Race human rights holders can inform policy in all aspects within which affects them. In addition, we recognise the multiple challenges faced by Race rights holders, the requirement to progress an Article 1 CERD anti racist approach while recognising the intersection with sex, gender, religion and socio-economic inequality.

**Equality:** Since the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 Scotland has largely followed a process of formal equality. The prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of Race (Colour, Nationality, ethnic or national origin) has provided a foundation to inform the provision of public services, experience in employment and other relevant areas.

However, the formal equality process has not delivered adequate change for those who continue to experience multiple inequalities. Equality should be a progressive and targeted ambition with concrete measures identifiable and progress experienced. We support a substantive equality model. Scotland must move beyond merely treating everyone the same and take targeted action to respond to multigeneration inequalities.

**Human Rights:** Scotland human rights journey is ongoing and is reflected in with the ambition to create a human rights bill for Scotland. To advance substantive equality, positive human rights obligations should be integrated into Scots law. We will support the evolution of Scotland's human rights protections across all international human rights law treaties that articulate the intrinsic rights of communities and citizens. We will support the integration of the International Convention of the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination into Scots Law.

## Membership

**Community membership:** Open to all ethnic and ethno / religious minority communities recognised under Article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination and provisions of RACE contained within the Equality 2010 (Colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin – including citizenship).

For example, this includes but is not reserved to, African, Caribbean, Black, East and Southeast Asian communities, Pakistani, Indian and other south Asian communities, Eastern European (Polish, Hungarian, Roma and others) multi-generational Jewish, Sikh, Irish, Scottish Gypsy Traveler and others, Syrian, Ukrainian and individuals and communities affected by immigration designations. This is not an exhaustive list but reflects the diversity of people and communities who have directly engaged with the EMNRR.

Membership is free and each member is an equal partner.

**Institutional Membership:** Statutory agencies, duty bearers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector intermediaries, Academic Institutions and national organisations such as the Scottish Government, COSLA, individual local authorities, Police Scotland, Public Health Scotland and others will be invited to engage as affiliate members.

This membership can evolve over time as the focus of the forum develops.

This means that we can engage institutional members to attend on the agenda matters of responsibility and interest. It is not expected or required for institutional members to attend every meeting.

## Aims and Objectives:

- **Engagement and Policy Development:** To act as a democratic forum for engagement with the Scottish Government and other relevant agencies on the progression and implementation of the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 – 2030 and other relevant legislative or policy developments.
- **Intelligence Development and Resilience:** To develop a network of partnerships across Scotland to enable us collectively to respond to any emerging challenges for our organisations and communities. For example, a pandemic, cost of living crisis or any other emerging issue.
- **Solidarity:** To work collaboratively together to respond to and progress Race, Equality and Human Rights issues in Scotland. Where issues affect us all we can advocate together. Where individual members are affected by particular issues we can provide solidarity and support on community focused issues.
- **Democracy:** That each member is valued, equal participant. We will reflect this by hosting meetings in different locations. Allocating duties such as chairing and agenda development across the forum as members engage to the level of capacity or interest they have.

## Practical Implementation:

- The forum will meet 4 times per year with the inaugural meeting / launch taking place in October 2023
- Following the October 2023 launch subsequent core meetings will take place in February, June, September 2024.
- The forum will retain the ability to call emergency meetings to respond to any significant emerging national issues such as our experience in March 2020. All members will continue to receive support from BEMIS on issues of specific importance with the option to address these on quarterly agendas as necessary.
- Membership and meeting notes will be published for archiving purposes initially on a dedicated forum page on BEMIS Scotland website. All members are equally welcome to publish these documents on their own websites.
- Core group meetings will be structured around the themes of the Race Equality Framework for Scotland.
  - 1) Overarching work
  - 2) Community Cohesion and Safety
  - 3) Participation and Representation
  - 4) Education and Lifelong Learning
  - 5) Employability, Employment and Income

## 6) Health and Home

- By structuring the core meetings arounds the REF 16-30 Themes and their associated goals and actions we will enable organisational experts or communities of interest to chair meetings, set the scene, and engage directly with officials on meeting focus and development.
- We will consider with relevant parliamentarians the opportunity to initiate a Cross Party Group on Race, Equality and Human Rights to act as a positive platform for forum engagement across all political parties. This will enable us to update MSPs, Ministers and interested institutions on the work of the forum and its influence on policy making. It will provide 3 or 4 roundtables per year to discuss broader issues linked too but separate to core forum meetings with Government and officials.

### Example Core meeting template development

Date	Theme	Location	Policy Support	Statutory Attendees
Feb 2024	Community cohesion and Safety	CSREC Offices Stirling	Policy linkages and members briefing: BEMIS  Meeting chair: Eman Hani (CSREC)  Agenda development pre meeting: SCOjEC/ GREC / Sikh Sanjog etc...	Scottish Government / Police Scotland
June 2024	Health and Home	GREC Offices Aberdeen	Policy support: BEMIS  Chair: D.Black GREC  Agenda development: CSREC, Dumfries and Galloway, FENIKS etc...	Public Health Scotland / NHS / Scottish Government

### Objectives:

- To establish the forum as an equal democratic forum for national citizen led engagement on Race, Equality and Human Rights issues

- To act as a positive, independent partner to Government, local authorities and other statutory organisations in the progression of the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030
- To compliment the work of other organisations, structures, institutions working to respond to race, equality and human rights issues in Scotland / UK / Europe in a collegial and respectful manner
- To engage with the Scottish Parliament on issues of interest to the forum and ensure that individual members have the opportunity to provide evidence to committees and parliamentary forums
- In time and where necessary to commission research to ensure the quantitative / qualitative and lived experiences of communities and rights holders create the substantive change required in their day to day lives.