



Black Lives Matter Statement

The tragic killing of George Floyd and others in the USA¹ along with the [Black Lives Matter](#) (BLM) movement serves to remind us that there are continued inequalities and fundamental differences that exist within our society. Differences which are not acceptable.

The National Association of Disabled Staff Networks (NADSN) stands in solidarity with the BLM movement in speaking out against racial injustices and inequalities faced by our communities in the UK and beyond².

The pandemic has served to highlight further racial disparities in the UK. Death rates from COVID-19 were higher for Black and Asian ethnic groups when compared to White ethnic groups. This disproportionate impact is multiplied for Disabled Black and Asian people. The [Public Health England Report](#) found that structural racism plays a part.

“Together We Can - and Will – Transform”³

Our purpose as a super-network remains vital. As members, we seek to inspire support and success. As a community, we share our opinions, values, culture and best practice and deepen our understanding of each other, our world and how we can have a positive impact. At this challenging time, we urge all our members to look out for each other and empower one another. When we work in collaboration, we can achieve great change.

Ableism Has Much in Common with Racism.

We understand that ableism and racism are not equivalent. However, the experiences of ethnic minorities and Disabled people have some similarities. Disabled people regularly face systemic and institutional discrimination within society, education, work, and healthcare settings. We have been pitied, abused, excluded, stereotyped and met with disdain and platitudes. Disabled people have been underrepresented and misrepresented in entertainment and media. Our narratives and achievements have been appropriated and used as inspiration for non-disabled people. These forms of barriers are compounded for Disabled people from ethnic minority backgrounds, particularly those of us with a mental health condition or those of us who are neurodiverse.

Our Work.

Throughout our work, we strive to embed an intersectional understanding and approach. In 2019, we co-hosted a [National Intersectionality Conference](#) with the [LGBT+ Network of Networks in Higher Education](#). We also appointed an Intersectionality Lead and two Intersectionality Partners onto our diverse [Steering Committee](#). We will continue to work to better understand the inequalities and barriers Disabled people from ethnic minorities face and work to challenge and combat these. We will continue to work in partnership to support all members of our community, as well as seeking to set an example for others.

We strive to be a part of the solution.

¹ The wave of protests in the USA over the killing of George Floyd are the outbursts of anger and injustice that have erupted after the deaths of many other black Americans whilst in police custody. **Data:** US 'Mapping Police Violence' - <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/> and in the UK since 1990, 184 people from ethnic minorities have died as a result of police actions (20 due to police shootings and 164 in custody). <https://www.inquest.org.uk/bame-deaths-in-police-custody>

² Many of the Black people killed by police are disabled. Inquest notes that ethnic minorities were twice as likely to die after restraint or use of force, and twice as likely to die if they had a mental health condition. https://rudermanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/MediaStudy-PoliceDisability_final-final.pdf

³ Slogan: “Together we can - and will - transform” - <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>