

CLOSING THE GAP'S STATEMENT ON LANGUAGE – JULY 2022

In October 2020, Stratford East announced the formation of **Closing The Gap**, Stratford East's anti-racism committee led by Global Majority staff.

Closing The Gap supports Stratford East's commitment to representation, equity, and inclusion. We choose to talk about 'equity' rather than 'equality', to recognise that individuals have distinct circumstances, and therefore, different allocations of resources and opportunities are needed to reach 'equality'.

Closing The Gap's Commitment to Language

In line with the [#BAMEOver](#) campaign led by Inc Arts UK in 2020, we have been discussing the question: What do we want to call ourselves?

We want to reset the terms of reference for people from Black, Asian and Global Majority backgrounds. We want to avoid the use of inaccurate language and reductive acronyms, which can be potentially harmful.

Stratford East's Manifesto

We reject the acronym 'BAME' and will no longer use it in internal or public communications. We will use the term 'people from the Global Majority'. This is a collective term that speaks to and encourages those who have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities', to think of themselves as belonging to the majority.

When referring to a singular person or ethnic group, we will always be specific and intentional with our language, and we will refer to their heritage or descent.

If we do not know somebody's ethnicity, we will ask them.

For example, we will use terms in the following ways:

- People or person of [country name e.g. Nigerian] descent
- People or person of [country/heritage name, e.g. South Asian/African/Middle Eastern/East Asian] heritage/descent

The full list of terms that we will use can be found [here](#).

If we are not able to ask somebody how they would like us to describe their ethnicity, or if we need to refer to people in the plural, we will use collective terminology. We will use the following terms:

- People or person of the Global Majority
- People who are ethnically and culturally diverse

Stratford East has a long and proud history of programming Black theatre, with a legacy of collaborating with our local East London and Global Majority communities. Amplifying these

voices has always been important to Stratford East, and we strive to make our theatre as inclusive and safe as possible for people from all walks of life.

We acknowledge that language is constantly evolving. This is a statement of intent: the terms that we have agreed today may change in the future. We recognise that this manifesto will need to be kept under review to best reflect the world in which we live. There is always more work to do, and we look forward to continuing this dialogue to create a more welcoming and inclusive space for all, with the hope this will encourage other organisations in the wider industry to follow suit.