Racial Equity & the City

Experiences of People of Colour in London

Insight Cards and Takeaways

These 'Insight Cards' and 'Takeaways' are part of a set of resources which have been extracted from Arup's **'Racial Equity and the City: Experiences of People of Colour in London'** report. The other two resources are the 'Layers of the City' framework and the 'Community radio series'.

These resources present the learnings and insights from the research project. The content has been adapted from the report; designed to be used by urban practitioners, together or individually, as a set of starting points and prompts for discussion. They aspire to:

- Support reflection
- Inform decision-making
- Facilitate conversations
- Aid the user in developing anti-racist practices.

Download the **'Racial Equity and the City: Experiences of People of Colour in London'** for ideas and examples of how to use the resources and more information on the research.

Insight Cards: Narratives

People of Colour's sense of self can be shaped by negative area narratives.

Perceptions of neighbourhoods not being invested in and valued by decision-makers can make residents feel neglected. This can impact their sense of self and deteriorate relationships and trust with those who shape areas.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour see and experience their neighbourhoods as being valued, respected, and invested in?

Insight Cards: Narratives

People of Colour can be deterred from emotionally and financially investing in places due to negative area narratives.

Perceptions of, and stories about, neighbourhoods can influence how people engage with places and spaces. These narratives can deter people from settling in areas, developing connections and investing emotionally.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

resources are spent on celebrating the existing strengths of marginalised neighbourhoods while collaborating with residents to develop new positive narratives.

Insight Cards: Agency and Power

People of Colour's expectations can be diminished by negative experiences in the built environment.

Repeated discrimination and sub-standard services can diminish people's expectations and hopes. This can lead to downplaying negative experiences, not raising concerns, and reduced trust in processes or systems.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour consistently receive and can access the same high-standard of services as other members of society.

Insight Cards: Agency and Power

People of Colour can feel disempowered due to negative experiences in the built environment.

Precarious situations, external pressures, or a fear of repercussion can mean people do not feel safe or empowered to demand equity.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour are not disproportionally exposed to precarious situations and are empowered to raise issues without repercussions.

Insight Cards: Agency and Power

People of Colour can feel disconnected from the process of shaping the built environment.

A distant and complex system of processes and decision-makers can lead to people feeling disconnected and not knowing how to get involved.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

the process of shaping the built environment is designed to be welcoming, accessible and communicated to People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Agency and Power

People of Colour can feel involved only in tokenistic ways.

Experiences of broken promises, undelivered plans, and poor communication can make people feel as though their involvement is neither genuinely valued nor impactful.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

decisions are transparently communicated and the viewpoints of People of Colour are listened to, reflected on and meaningfully incorporated into approaches and proposals.

Insight Cards: Agency and Power

People of Colour can feel under-represented.

A lack of diversity and under-representation in decision-making positions can make people feel as though their interests and needs are not considered.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour are meaningfully represented in decision-making roles, positions of authority and the engagement process.

Insight Cards: Agency and Power

People of Colour can feel they have no sense of ownership.

Restricting people's ability to shape and manage their environments can reduce their sense of ownership and agency in the city.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour are empowered to shape, manage and develop ownership over their environments.

Insight Cards: Interactions

People of Colour can experience discriminatory surveillance.

Experiences of discriminatory surveillance and monitoring can restrict people from full use of public and private spaces and can impact their sense of safety and well-being.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour are free to move about the city without being subjected to, or at fear of, discriminatory monitoring or surveillance.

Insight Cards: Interactions

People of Colour can experience harassment.

Experiences of threat, harassment, and violence can displace people, impact their health and well-being as well as limiting their ability to accrue wealth or establish roots in an area.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

the lives of People of Colour are free from direct and indirect forms of threat, harassment, and violence.

Insight Cards: Interactions

People of Colour can feel forced to mask their culture.

Experiences of bias from authorities and wider society can discourage people from authentic cultural, religious and self expression. This can lead to the masking of defining attributes to avoid mistreatment or judgement.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour are enabled, encouraged, and celebrated for expressing their identity and culture.

Insight Cards: Interactions

People of Colour can experience othering.

The prominence and dominance of one culture in society can make people who identify outside of this feel othered, socially excluded, or as though they do not belong.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

one culture does not dominate to the detriment of others and People of Colour are respected as core parts of society.

Insight Cards: Interactions

People of Colour can experience discrimination

Implicit bias or discriminatory approaches by those who manage or control spaces and services can exclude people. This can impact well-being and limit access to services and amenities.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour are not exposed to, or limited in their use of the city by the discriminatory views and actions of others.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack spaces designed for a diversity of users.

A lack of spaces that support and provide for a diversity of lifestyles can mean that people feel under-served, and forced to curtail or change their ways of living.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

there is adequate provision of a variety of appropriate and adequate cultural spaces that meet the needs of all People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack secular social spaces.

A lack of secular social spaces that are free and open to everyone can make people feel isolated or restricted in where they can publicly socialise with family and friends.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

there is adequate support, provision, and access to secular social spaces for all People of Colour

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack 'third spaces'.

A lack of access to, and provision of 'third spaces', where people can come together and socialise, can be a barrier to forming and sustaining friendships and support networks.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

there is adequate support, provision, and access to public communal spaces for all People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack safe spaces for young people.

A lack of safe and welcoming spaces for young people puts an undue burden on parents to safeguard their children from threat and restricts young people's independence.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

there is adequate support, provision, and access to safe and stimulating environments for all young People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack diverse cultural representation.

A lack of celebration and representation in the built environment of a diversity of cultures can mean that people are unable to look to the city to connect with their culture and history.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

the heritages and cultures of all People of Colour are designed for and celebrated in the built environment.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack spaces for cross-cultural celebration.

A lack of spaces that provide opportunities for connections to form between different ethnic, cultural, or religious communities can increase the potential for misunderstanding, divisions or conflict.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

there are safe places and spaces that encourage and facilitate different communities to come together.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack amenities that reflect the diversity of residents.

A lack and limited variety of places, spaces and services that reflect a diversity of cultures, religions and ethnicities can make people feel unsafe and unwelcome.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

neighbourhoods appropriately reflect the needs and preferences of the diverse cultures that inhabit them.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack appropriately designed and affordable housing.

A lack of stable and adequate housing arrangements coupled with complex application routes can place a strain on people's mental health and mean they do not put down roots in areas.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

there is reliable, accessible and affordable quality housing provision that meets the needs of all People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Spaces

People of Colour can feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhoods that are both perceived to be and have realities of danger can create restrictions on people's freedom to move around areas and impact their quality of life.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

People of Colour feel and are safe in all urban spaces.

Insight Cards: Spaces

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can lack inclusive green spaces.

A lack of public and open green spaces that allow for multiple activities and users can make people feel excluded and unwelcome.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

high quality green and blue infrastructure is accessible and welcoming to all People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Systems

Government services can fail to meet the needs of People of Colour.

Competing funding priorities for public services can lead to gaps in support for communities. This creates an unsustainable reliance on volunteer networks, which cannot always meet everyone's needs.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

government services adequately and equitably meet the needs of all People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Systems

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can be disconnected and lack key infrastructure.

Neighbourhoods that are not well-connected and lack quality, inclusive services, can isolate and exclude people, limit opportunities, and restrict them from living full lives.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

the neighbourhoods of People of Colour are interconnected with the whole city and have high quality infrastructure.

Insight Cards: Systems

Informal and small businesses in the neighbourhoods of People of Colour can be under supported.

A lack of support for small and informal businesses can result in neighbourhoods which do not provide for, or support, a diversity of cultural and community needs.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

small, informal, and independent businesses in the neighbourhoods of People of Colour are given adequate and equitable support so that they flourish.

Insight Cards: Systems

People of Colour can feel that their neighbourhoods are de-prioritised

When disparities exist between the quality of urban amenities in the neighbourhoods of marginalised communities and those of other, majority-white areas residents can feel de-prioritised.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

the neighbourhoods of People of Colour receive equitable and adequate provision, support and investment.

Insight Cards: Systems

The neighbourhoods of People of Colour can be unmaintained.

Persistent lack or limited maintenance of housing, infrastructure and public spaces can make communities feel undervalued and reinforce negative stereotypes.

Discuss how urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

there is long-term sustainable investment and continued maintenance in the neighbourhoods of People of Colour.

Insight Cards: Systems

Housing services in the neighbourhoods of People of Colour can be inadequate.

Experiences of inadequate, low-quality housing, combined with residents' feeling as though their concerns are disregarded, can have long-lasting impacts to financial, emotional, and physical well-being.

Discuss how *urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .*

the neighbourhoods of People of Colour have quality, equitable and accessible housing services.

Takeaways: Narratives

Urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

all the neighbourhoods of People of Colour are invested in, respected and valued while positive narratives are platformed and celebrated.

Takeaways: Agency and power

Urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

all People of Colour have meaningful representation, decision-making powers and the agency to shape their neighbourhoods.

Takeaways: Interactions

Urban practitioners can support the creation of a city where . . .

all People of Colour are explicitly welcomed and included in the city whether through challenging racist behaviour or celebrating diversity of culture.

Takeaways: Spaces

*Urban practitioners can support
the creation of a city where . . .*

all People of Colour have access to
safe, affordable,and appropriate
places and spaces that reflect
and serve their needs.

Takeaways: Systems

*Urban practitioners can support
the creation of a city where . . .*

all People of Colour are supported
by a sustainable system that
meets their needs, is adequately
resourced, functions effectively
and is equitably distributed.