



THE NATIONAL FORUM ON ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

# Final Report

October 2021




THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



## Land Acknowledgement

The University of British Columbia acknowledges that the UBC Vancouver campus is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the  $x^w m \theta k^w \dot{a} y \dot{a} m$  (Musqueam) people. We also respectfully acknowledge that the UBC Okanagan campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation.

# Table of Contents

<b>Land Acknowledgment</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>About This Report</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>About the National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism</b>	<b>11</b>
Everyday Racism	13
Participation	14
Structure of the Forum	15
Day One	15
Day Two	15
Student Session	15
<b>What We Heard</b>	<b>16</b>
Student Dialogue	17
Opening Plenaries	19
Overall Themes	22
Panelist Sessions	25
 <b>Health</b>	<b>26</b>
Key Takeaways	28
Proposed Directions	33
 <b>Justice System</b>	<b>37</b>
Key Takeaways	38
Proposed Directions	38
 <b>Representation in Media, Arts and Culture</b>	<b>39</b>
Key Takeaways	40
Proposed Directions	42
 <b>Issues in Housing, Social Services, Elder Care</b>	<b>43</b>
Key Takeaways	44
Proposed Directions	47
 <b>Government, Policy and Political Representation</b>	<b>48</b>
Key Takeaways	49
Proposed Directions	54
 <b>Economic Issues: Employment and Business</b>	<b>55</b>
Key Takeaways	56
Proposed Directions	59
 <b>Grassroots Organizing and Coalition Building</b>	<b>61</b>
Key Takeaways	62
Proposed Directions	63



<b>Education</b>	<b>64</b>
Key Takeaways	65
Proposed Directions	67
<b>Francophone Session</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Future Considerations</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Moving Forward</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Appendix A - Steering Committee Members</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Appendix B - Forum Recordings</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Appendix C - Panelists and Speakers</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Appendix D - Resource Kit</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Appendix E - The National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism Community Guidelines</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Appendix F - Wellbeing Resources</b>	<b>87</b>



# Executive Summary

Amidst a surge in anti-Asian racism and violence, University of British Columbia (UBC) President Santa Ono convened the National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism. The Forum aimed to facilitate candid conversations in order to formulate directions for future action. The targeting of those considered as Asian has a long history in Canada. However, with anti-Asian hate crimes on the rise and making headlines across Canada, a national discussion needed to take place.

“ We know there has been a growing tide of xenophobia, discrimination and racism directed at various Asian groups since the start of the pandemic and continues to this very day. A new Angus Reid Institute poll, done in partnership with the University of British Columbia, reveals the depth of this problem. One of the key findings of the poll, which will be discussed in detail during this Forum, is that Canadians of Asian descent aged 18-34 are the most likely to have experienced and been affected by anti-Asian racism and bigotry over this past year. This is why these difficult but much-needed conversations need to take place. ”

Dr. Santa Ono

Community organizations and organizers from across Canada who have been active in combating anti-Asian racism were invited to join a Steering Committee (Appendix A) to advise the Forum's goals and the planning process. In addition, advisory committees composed of academics, researchers and students were also established to help shape this important conversation.

The Forum was held online June 10 and 11, 2021, and a separate Student Dialogue was held online on June 18, 2021. The Forum involved 126 panelists (Appendix C) and over 2,100 participants from across Canada. Recordings from the Forum can be accessed through links found in Appendix B.



This report below is a summary of what was shared and heard during the two-day Forum and during the Student Dialogue held shortly after the national event.

# Setting up for the Forum

The Forum would not have come together if not for the collective labour and efforts of many Asian Canadian students and scholars, public and private sector leaders, and community organizers. With the guidance of the Steering Committee, the Forum was organized around specific sectors. Panelists who could help guide and shape issues for discussion from community organizations, universities, government, health care, media, public policy, law, K-12 education, and a wide range of individuals from the private and the not-for-profit sectors were identified and invited with the advice of the Steering Committee, Academic Advisory Committee and Student Advisory Committee. A resource kit featuring suggested readings, engagement projects and information about community organizations can be found in Appendix D. This guide features suggested readings, engaging projects and information about community organizations.

# Sector Topic Areas

Guided by the various committees, eight sector topic areas were identified for deeper discussions:

- Health
- Justice System
- Representation in Media, Arts and Culture
- Issues in Housing, Social Services and Elder Care
- Government, Policy and Political Representation
- Economic Issues: Employment and Business
- Grassroots Organizing and Coalition Building
- Education

## What We Heard

Conversations hosted at the Forum were complex, multi-faceted and connected across various topics. The majority of this report summarizes what was discussed during the Student Dialogue and over the course of the two-day Forum. The UBC editorial team along with report writers reviewed notes taken during the Forum and referenced the transcripts and videos in order to compile them into this summary report.

### Student Dialogue

Following the Forum, a separate student session was held on June 18, 2021. Student participants recognized the need for a space to share and discuss their unique experiences and observations when confronting anti-Asian racism. Five key takeaways emerged during the session (page 17): student labour, tokenization of student work, lack of resources, recognition of informal organizing and diverse coalition building.

### Overall Themes

Throughout the two days of the Forum, discussions spanned multiple topic areas. While the eight topic areas were highly varied, several common intersections emerged among the topic areas (page 22):

- There is a need to “debunk” the Model Minority Myth in order to understand diverse Asian Canadians’ experiences and develop culturally relevant supports and services.
- Collecting and analyzing race-based data is essential to identifying gaps within health care, education, legal services, employment, housing and social services, and allocating
- Representation is necessary but may not be enough to shift balances of power in government and institutional settings.
- Coalition-building across Asian Canadian communities will strengthen our work, but deeper collaboration with other equity-deserving communities can help bridge differences.

- Employment inequity is a concern across sectors and must be addressed on a systemic level.
- Current anti-racism activism is missing cross-sectional representation, leading to a simplified narrative and lack of culturally responsive solutions.
- Intersecting impacts of settler colonialism, systemic racism and white supremacy are found in all sectors.
- Possibilities exist to harness the energy and bold visions from students and young people to co-create a different future.
- There is a need for capacity building in order to take action and maintain long-term sustainable changes.

## Opening Plenaries

Three opening plenaries framed the discussions of the Forum:

- Why are we here? Surfacing the impacts of anti-Asian racism.
- Common cause? Coalition building across Asian Canadian communities.

- What does the media have to do with anti-Asian racism?

Plenary speakers each made opening remarks and then responded to subsequent questions posed by the facilitator. Speakers eloquently and powerfully shared their lived experiences related to each of the questions posed. Within these broad topics, discussions ranged from the need for anti-Asian racism to be examined through the multiple lenses that make up our many identities to calls for strengthened collective action to the need for greater Indigenous, Black, People of Colour (IBPOC) representation in media.

## Sector Key Takeaways

Day One (June 10) was organized around public panel discussions where audience members were invited to contribute their questions and thoughts. On Day Two (June 11), smaller breakout sessions focused on each sector, addressed issues raised on Day One and outlined key takeaways and proposed directions in response.

Topic	Key Takeaways
Health	<p><b>Key Takeaway #1:</b> Representation matters in health care and training of healthcare professionals</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #2:</b> We cannot measure disparities in healthcare without race-based data</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #3:</b> Interconnected barriers that hinder equitable access to health care need to be removed</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #4:</b> Culturally competent care must be embedded in health care services, understood by health care workers, and held accountable by organizations and organizational leaders</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #5:</b> We need to recognize and rectify the links between racism and health outcomes</p>
Justice System	<p><b>Key Takeaway #1:</b> The lack of Asian Canadian representation in the legal system is connected to the history of colonialism, racism and discrimination against non-white people in Canada</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #2:</b> We need to address barriers to reporting and prosecuting hate crimes and use alternatives to the criminal justice system to report and respond to racism</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #3:</b> We need community lawyering and community-based legal supports</p>

<p>Representation in Media, Arts and Culture</p>	<p><b>Key Takeaway #1:</b> Mandating racial diversity is crucial to shifting from extractive representation to true representation</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #2:</b> We must address funding inequities to achieve and sustain representation</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #3:</b> Creating an IBPOC Hub will support diverse art and content from Asian and other IBPOC Canadian creators</p>
<p>Issues in Housing, Social Services, Elder Care</p>	<p><b>Key Takeaway #1:</b> Qualitative and quantitative data needs to be collected to understand how Asian Canadians interact with social services</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #2:</b> Culturally appropriate care must be embedded in elder care and social services</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #3:</b> Coalitions across communities and sectors can help build capacity and share strengths for collective success</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #4:</b> Care workers provide essential work and should be recognized, supported and valued</p>
<p>Government, Policy and Political Representation</p>	<p><b>Key Takeaway #1:</b> Representation is important: Asian Canadians must be seen in positions of leadership and power</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #2:</b> White supremacy and racism are embedded in our political structures; dismantling it will require sustained commitment from political leaders</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #3:</b> We cannot act alone; leveraging allyship and coalition building is crucial to winning, building and sharing political power</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #4:</b> Exploring “Asian Canadian” as a political identity can bring new conversations to electoral politics, but it could also further “other” or tokenize Asian Canadian communities</p>
<p>Economic Issues: Employment and Business</p>	<p><b>Key Takeaway #1:</b> There is a need for awareness and education of poverty and precarious economic conditions experienced by Asian Canadian populations</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #2:</b> Addressing racism and discrimination in corporate environments is crucial to building diverse leadership and inclusive organizational cultures</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #3:</b> The government must play a larger role in promoting employment diversity, mandating employment equity, protecting racialized and precarious workers, and working to reduce poverty among Asian Canadians</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #4:</b> Addressing inequities requires collecting and analyzing disaggregated, race-based data</p>
<p>Grassroots Organizing and Coalition Building</p>	<p><b>Key Takeaway #1:</b> Broad coalition building requires solidarity across generations, ethnicities and races</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #2:</b> Equitable funding distribution is essential to address gaps in resourcing among grassroots organizations</p> <p><b>Key Takeaway #3:</b> Evidence-based, quantitative and qualitative research is needed to capture the Asian Canadian diaspora’s lived experiences and support decision-making based on the most urgent needs</p>



## Education

**Key Takeaway #1:** Incorporating culturally considerate and diverse educational curriculum and viewpoints is needed to address historically Eurocentric curricula

**Key Takeaway #2:** We must achieve greater IBPOC educator representation and mandate cultural sensitivity training

**Key Takeaway #3:** There is a need for an Asian Canadian resource hub to support Asian Canadian educators and make resources more accessible for educators of different backgrounds

**Key Takeaway #4:** Institutions need to address and be accountable for acts of anti-Asian racism

**Key Takeaway #5:** Engaging in broad and inclusive consultations focussed on the topic of educational systems is necessary to advance these conversations

## Moving Forward

This Forum was one step in our collective work to combat anti-Asian racism and there is much work that needs to be done. During the Forum, several actions were announced:

- To build on this Forum, Ryerson / "X" University will host the National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism: Building Solidarities on November 9 and 10, 2021.
- A Centre for Asian Canadian Research and Engagement to be created by UBC
- The Asia Pacific Foundation will be advocating for BC K-12 curriculum reform to improve representation of Asian stories.

These upcoming initiatives will help advance dialogue, learning and action to respond to ongoing systemic anti-

Asian racism. The Forum revealed several callouts for continued work within and outside of institutions, and panelists shared a collective desire to develop strategies and actions to build a more inclusive society that recognizes, values and supports all individuals, with their diverse racial backgrounds and identities.

There is great potential to continue building intergenerational and cross-institutional knowledge-sharing at local and national levels. The key takeaways and guiding directions identified throughout the report can help chart a path ahead so that all Canadians feel empowered and supported to actively participate in anti-Asian racism efforts.

**Content warning:** The following report includes descriptions of violence experienced by Asians in Canada. We encourage readers to take care when reading the report. For a list of wellness resources, please see Appendix F.



## About this report

This report provides a summary of discussions at the Forum and actions identified by participants to end anti-Asian racism. This report only reflects the voices of those who participated in the two-day Forum and the Student Dialogue. It does not reflect the lived experiences and perspectives of all Asians across Canada.

The summary has been prepared by the University of British Columbia with advice and input from the Forum Steering Committee and the assistance of Argyle. We wish to acknowledge the support of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

Recordings of the Forum can be found at [events.ubc.ca/national-forum-on-anti-asian-racism](https://events.ubc.ca/national-forum-on-anti-asian-racism) or in Appendix B.

# About the National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism

“The more recent wave of anti-Asian rhetoric and violence amplified by COVID-19 is the latest chapter in a long and tortured history...It is only by working together across racial lines that we can stand in solidarity to succeed in our struggle against all forms of racism, including anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racisms.”

President Santa J. Ono, the University of British Columbia, convenor of the National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism

The Forum took place in June 2021 amidst a surge in national awareness of anti-Asian violence and assaults in Canada and after six Asian women were killed in shootings in Atlanta, Georgia on March 16, 2021. Reports of anti-Asian hate crimes across Canada made headlines, with the Vancouver Police Department reporting a 717 per cent increase between 2019 and 2020, and over 600 incidents of anti-Asian hate self-reported by community members through an online tool created by [Project 1907](#). However, the targeting of those considered Asian has a long history in Canada, and for many who have experienced the ongoing effects of racism and worked within communities to combat it, explaining its causes and proposing actions in response require a broader perspective that goes far beyond the high-profile anti-Asian hate and violence between 2019 and 2021. A national discussion about anti-Asian racism needed to take place, but it needed to acknowledge and be connected to other forms of racism created by white supremacy in Canada. Indeed, discussions on anti-Asian racism during this moment cannot be isolated from other events such as ongoing protests against anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in policing, and the confirmation of unmarked graves at Indian Residential Schools where thousands of Indigenous children who never returned to their families and communities had been buried. Horrifically, just a week before the Forum, a family was murdered in London, Ontario by an anti-Muslim white supremacist.

In March 2021, UBC President Santa J. Ono committed the University to host a national conversation online, stating: *“Speakers will be invited across sectors and across Canada to have frank conversations about anti-Asian racism and discussions will be facilitated to lead to the articulation of bold and concrete recommendations for action.”* Pledging the

University’s full institutional support, including its longstanding strength in research and teaching on, and engagement with, Asian Canadian communities, President Ono directly connected the Forum to the University’s commitment to its Indigenous Strategic Plan and the mandate of a University Task Force to address institutional racism at UBC.

## Asian Canadian

**Asian Canadian is an umbrella term that refers to all Canadians who are of Asian descent, or identify as such. It can be used as both a demographic grouping, or as a political and social identity. The term originated as a Canadian counterpart to the more widely used term “Asian American,” which arose in the late 1960s as a term of empowerment and coalition building between those who had been racialized and targeted as “Asian” or “Oriental.” Although similar terms for joint advocacy such as “Asianadian” and “Asian Canadian” arose in Canada, they did not develop the widespread usage that the terms “Asian American” and “Asian American Pacific Islander” have in the United States. Some find the term “Asian Canadian” to be both too limiting and too encompassing. For example, critics have raised concerns over how the term “Asian Canadian” privileges Canadian nationality and citizenship, while others have pointed out that using the term to aggregate communities with very different histories and situations can perpetuate overgeneralizations that erase the needs of the most marginalized communities.**

Following President Ono's public commitments, an organizing committee was created to provide event planning and logistical support. A Steering Committee (Appendix A) made of community organizations and organizers who have been active in combating anti-Asian racism helped shape this critical conversation. Lastly, advisory committees composed of academics, researchers and students were also established to advise on sector topics.

With the guidance of the Steering Committee, the Forum was organized around specific sectors ranging from health to media to education. Panelists who could help guide and shape issues for discussion, drawn from community organizations, universities, government, health care, media, public policy, law, K-12 education, and a wide range of individuals from the private and the not-for-profit sectors, were identified and invited with the advice of the Steering Committee, Academic Advisory Committee and Student Advisory Committee.

Day One (June 10) was organized around public panel discussions where audience members were invited to contribute their questions and thoughts through Slido, a virtual audience interaction tool. On Day Two, smaller breakout sessions focussed on each sector discussed issues raised on Day One and outlined actions in response.

Students from UBC and universities across Canada were an integral part of the Forum. They took part in organizing and documenting the discussions, and were prominently featured as speakers on every panel and sector discussion. Their high profile presence and impact was noted by a large proportion of participants, with many emphasizing that the significant role played by students was a signature aspect of the Forum.

A week prior to the Forum, the Angus Reid Institute released [a poll](#) commissioned by UBC that revealed the depth and scope of the impact of anti-Asian racism in Canada. Providing a substantive context for the Forum, the findings of the Angus Reid Institute poll are included in this Summary Report below.



# Everyday Racism

Participants of the Forum concluded that anti-Asian racism was not only about the violence and assaults that were happening daily and being featured in news headlines. The [self-reporting system](#) set up by Project 1907 and EliminateHate, for example, revealed that these assaults had become commonplace, an alarming fact combined with the horror of seeing videos of elderly men and women (the majority of victims of anti-Asian racist assaults were women) being violently shoved to the ground. The Angus Reid Institute poll conducted in May 2021 showed that a majority of Asian Canadians (58 per cent) had experienced anti-Asian discrimination in the last year, while more than one-in-four (28 per cent) reported exposure “all the time” or “often.” One in five Asian Canadians said that they “have consistently changed their routines or behaviours to avoid situations that may be uncomfortable or dangerous” and one in ten said they have “routinely felt disrespected.”

Widespread media attention in 2019-2021 to the everyday occurrences of incidents of anti-Asian violence and assault helped raise awareness among Canadians of the problem of anti-Asian racism. However, the daily nature of racism should not be understood only in relation to moments of violence and assault. Elder Larry Grant of Musqueam, in the opening quote of this Summary Report, expressed how as a person whose mother was Musqueam and whose father was Chinese Canadian, he faced racism “every day of my life.” We must listen to Elder Grant’s statement as an assertion that racism is a daily experience, whether one is physically assaulted or not.

If there is one single unifying theme from the Forum, it is the fundamental truth that Elder Grant expressed that every day of his life—and those of everyone in Canada who are targeted as non-white—is shaped by racism. Racism is the product and consequence of white supremacy. Those who experience racism are subject to those experiences because they are deemed non-white. Those who are “invisible” when it comes to racial categories enjoy a privilege that is deeply woven into Canada’s legal and economic fabric. To be “white” means that you do not need to worry about being a victim of racism. Race defines others. Racism is for others. Even terms such as “visible minority,” used to categorize non-white in Canada, are based upon the foundational presumption that white

Canadians are the “invisible majority” who do not need to be concerned with sufferings of racism.

The difficult reality captured in Elder Grant’s simple yet profoundly revealing expression is that Canada—through its laws, institutions, manner of distinguishing the different ways in which those considered white and those considered non-white are treated—was designed and built to enshrine white supremacy historically and into the present day. This design shapes the lives of all who reside in Canada. The everyday nature of racism came up at every session of the Forum; understanding the depth of everyday racism and its effects was crucial for tackling many of the pressing questions raised throughout the two days of the Forum. Who holds leadership positions in organizations and institutions? Who gets excluded from these positions? How does it feel to be a token minority in a room full of people who do not need to consider the effects of their decisions on racialized peoples? What barriers make it difficult for racialized peoples to apply for and receive grants and other resources? Why do ostensibly race-neutral policies adversely affect the physical and mental health of Asian Canadians and other racialized groups?

Another way in which readers of this report might understand the importance of these discussions is how they address the everyday experiences of so many Asian Canadians and others in Canada who are categorized by their race and “visible” non-whiteness. Some participants in the Forum used terms such as “systemic racism” or “structural racism” to describe the ways in which institutions and established ways of operating have been set up to benefit those who are white. Even as explicit racism has been made illegal and numerous Canadian institutions have adopted official policies against racial discrimination, the systemic manner in which non-white populations have been disadvantaged remains.

“As a Musqueam Elder of Chinese and Musqueam ancestry, I experience [racism] every day of my life.”

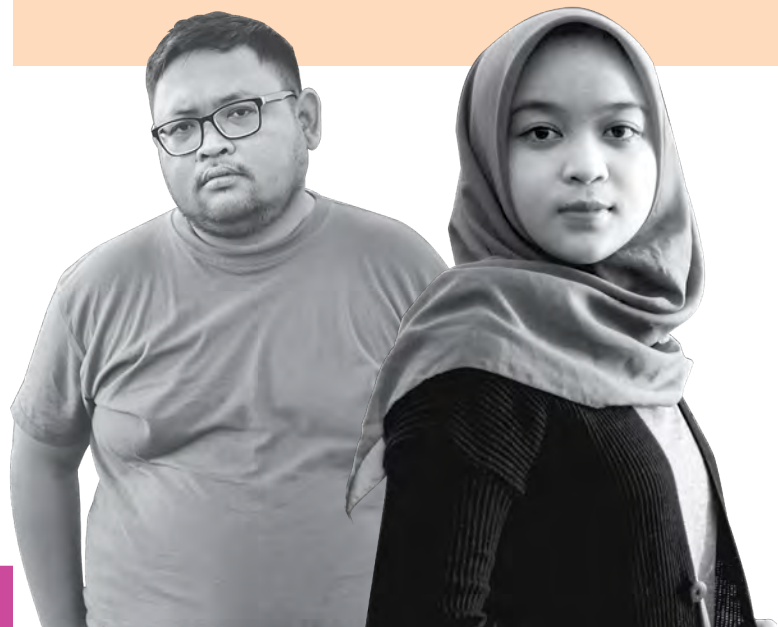
Elder Larry Grant, Musqueam

All participants in the Forum were keenly aware that the spectacular nature of anti-Asian violence in 2019 and 2020, and the resulting rise in awareness of anti-Asian racism, has created an urgent need for a national discussion. However, nearly every one of the 126 panelists and speakers emphasized how anti-Asian racism shapes the everyday lives of Asian Canadians, from the need to change behaviours to avoid potential assault to more mundane experiences such as wondering if a remark made by a co-worker or being passed over for promotion was because of being a non-white “visible minority.”

Ending the daily assaults endured by those considered to be Asian in the last two years requires ending the systems that continue to reinforce everyday anti-Asian racism. For those who took time out of their busy lives to come together to have this important discussion, ending anti-Asian racism means changing Canada’s institutions so that systems that were built to entrench white supremacy can be dismantled to achieve equitable treatment for all people living or working in Canada. This particular moment not only offers the opportunity to do so but also highlights the responsibility to come together and start the conversations necessary to ignite and incite action.

### **White supremacy and racialization:**

**White supremacy refers to the processes by which people are racialized as white and non-white in order to provide preferential access to resources to those considered white, and to deny resources and privileges to those categorized as non-white races. More broadly, the term is used to describes how systemic racism creates and maintains social, political, legal and economic regimes which were originally created under settler colonialism to enforce these differences in resources and the historical and ongoing advantages of being considered white.**



## Participation

The Forum involved 126 panelists (Appendix C) and more than 2,100 participants from across Canada who tuned in virtually over the two-day event. Participants were invited to comment and ask questions using an interactive question and answers platform.



# Structure of the Forum

## DAY ONE

The first day of programming was open to the public and participants were welcomed by Amber Cardenas of the Syilx Okanagan Nation, Penticton Indian Band and Elder Larry Grant of Musqueam. Elder Grant shared a welcome and opening statement that reflected on some of the overlapping histories and experiences that Indigenous people and Asians in Canada face. Participants then took part in three opening plenaries focussed on unpacking these questions:

- *Why are we here? Surfacing the impacts of Anti-Asian Racism*
- *Common cause? Coalition building across Asian Canadian communities*
- *What does media have to do with anti-Asian racism?*

The plenaries were followed by eight concurrent panelist sessions about:

1. Health
2. Justice System
3. Representation in Media, Arts and Culture
4. Issues in Housing, Social Services and Elder Care
5. Government, Policy and Political Representation
6. Economic Issues: Employment and Business
7. Grassroots Organizing and Coalition Building
8. Education

In each of the virtual breakout rooms, panelists and participants were invited to share experiences and observations related to anti-Asian racism. Further, they were asked to identify priorities and the people needed to enact meaningful change.

To end the day, a plenary session was dedicated to summarizing the outcomes of the breakout panels.

## DAY TWO

Day Two of the Forum offered a working session with sector leaders. Informed by the outcomes of Day One, panelists, speakers and registered participants were invited back to discuss, and refine proposed directions for each of the eight topics.

The day culminated in a public session. Panelists shared their list of bold key priorities and directions with a wider group of virtual participants and viewers.

## STUDENT SESSION

On June 18<sup>th</sup>, a student dialogue event was held to centre student voices and calls to action regarding anti-Asian racism. Students representing a variety of institutions across the country were present to contribute their ideas and lived experiences to the conversation.



## What we heard

This section summarizes what was discussed throughout the two day Forum and during the student dialogue. Student note-takers were present at each panel session and captured highlights and key takeaways. The UBC editorial team, along with report writers, reviewed the notes and referenced the Forum transcripts and videos to compile the summary below. This summary is a reflection of what we heard during the Forum. It is not meant to be representative of all Asian Canadian experiences and perspectives.

### **A note about language**

The diversity of terms used in this report reflects the diversity of panelists and participants who contributed to the discussion. Terms used in one sector may differ from how the term is interpreted or understood in another field. As such, readers should refer to terms in the context of the specific sector discussions.



# Student Dialogue

Following the Forum, a separate student session was held on June 18, 2021. Student participants recognized the need for a space to share and discuss their unique experiences and observations when confronting anti-Asian racism. More than 50 students participated in the two-hour event. A recent UBC graduate led the session with the support of 12 student facilitators. Five key takeaways emerged during the session:

- Uncompensated student labour
- Tokenization of student work
- Lack of resources
- Recognition of informal organizing
- Need for diverse coalition building



## KEY TAKEAWAY 1

### UNCOMPENSATED STUDENT LABOUR

One main concern was about student labour in community and campus organizing. Many students described how their labour often went uncompensated, how they often lacked mentorship and resources and how the high expectations led to burnout. Other students also recounted how this lack of support often led to gatekeeping and cliques within organizations. To rectify this, some student panelists want to shift student organization work from short-term projects to long-term projects that would allow student organizations to build institutional knowledge, gain support and create longer-term funding bases. In contrast, others want more support for less ambitious projects that do not set such high expectations on students. Overall, students want more compensation and funding to avoid burnout and avoid engaging in too much unpaid work.

## KEY TAKEAWAY 2

### TOKENIZATION OF STUDENT WORK

Students who participated in the session often felt that their work was tokenized. They are often asked to lend their perspectives to short-term, one-time conversations (such as the Forum) without being given the opportunity to engage in longer-term work. Participants want to continue holding conversations about meaningfully including student perspectives. They want institutions to wholly rethink the relationship between student labour and the institutions that benefit from their work. Additionally, participants of the discussion want institutions to create processes specifically aimed at providing space for students—especially marginalized students—to share their perspectives and play central roles over a more extended period, and want institutions to cede some of the decision-making power to students, rather than only giving students a handful of token opportunities to provide their feedback.

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

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#### LACK OF RESOURCES

Participants pointed out that resources for Asian Canadian and other IBPOC students are often only available once, are underfunded, and rely on complex and sometimes uncompensated labour. Students felt that IBPOC students are often asked to engage in anti-racist work and make advancements regarding equity, diversity and inclusion without adequate support. Additionally, some students noted that many opportunities (including the opportunities provided by the Forum) were provided through informal “whisper networks.” These networks exclude those who do not have access. Student participants want to see more accessible, better-funded opportunities for IBPOC students on campus so that students can engage in anti-racist organizing with better institutional support without having to rely on informal networks to access opportunities.

### KEY TAKEAWAY 4

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#### RECOGNITION OF INFORMAL ORGANIZING

Despite the challenges that informal networks can pose, some student panelists acknowledged the importance of informal organizing on campuses and recognized the long history of informal campus activism, which has frequently been an important site for organizing. The students want to continue holding conversations on this topic. They want future conversations to recognize the importance of informal identity-centred networks and acknowledge intra-community power dynamics. Many students want to hold further discussions on how to continue this tradition of informal activism and to make such organizing more equitable.

### KEY TAKEAWAY 5

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#### NEED FOR DIVERSE COALITION BUILDING

Lastly, the student panelists felt that anti-racism work tends to silo students and organizations by race, ethnicity or generation. Some pointed out that the Forum’s Student Dialogue was not an exception in this regard. Student activism, in particular, often lacks engagement with older generations, which is a contributing factor to the lack of mentorship. Going forward, the students want to collaborate across generational lines; create a national student coalition to work with students at other universities; with Indigenous, Black and other students of colour; and hold broader conversations to think through how intra-community tensions can harm Asian Canadian student organizing. The students want to ensure that future Asian Canadian activism represents the diversity of Asian Canadians rather than make overly broad, stereotypical generalizations, and gives space to all Asian Canadians.

“ The Student Dialogue Event served as an opportunity to validate the experiences we share as Asian Canadian students, enlighten one another about the hopes we have for our communities across the country, and was a catalyst for nation-wide dialogue about Anti-Asian racism. The connection and sharing of our lived experiences highlighted the need for spaces to continue this dialogue. Most importantly, it mobilized attendees to advocate for students’ representation, inclusion and equity. ”  
-Student Participant

# Opening Plenaries

“ These are not conceptual issues. They are also for most of us, our lives, histories, cultures and embodied experiences. In other words, this is intimate and personal. We experience anti-Asian racism in multiple different ways. Given the complexities and Asian as a category, these conversations can thus be challenging and taxing as they are shaped by these intersectional realities. ”

-Participant

“ While this is definitely a moment for anti-Asian racism in Canada, people have been doing this work for a long time and there are generations of people who have come before us and will come after us and that will continue doing this work. ”

-Panelist

Three opening plenaries framed the discussions of the Forum. Plenary speakers each made opening remarks then responded to questions posed by participants via Slido.

## PANEL 1

### WHY ARE WE HERE? SURFACING THE IMPACTS OF ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

Speakers on the first panel, which included a mental health specialist, advocate, student and community organizer, shared their experiences of how anti-Asian racism impacts them as individuals and the wider community. Key themes that emerged were focussed on intersectionality and the need for action at the institutional level. When speakers discussed intersectionality, there was a call for anti-Asian racism to be examined through the multiple lenses that make up our identities. Class, gender and sexual orientation as they intersect with race require greater examination. Furthermore, speakers stressed that an equity approach needs to be taken to ensure those who experience marginalization, such as those who lack citizenship or permanent resident status or low-income, precarious workers, have their experiences considered. There was also a call for shifting the onus for enacting change from the individual to institutions. Speakers want to see real change deeply embedded in institutional structures and for those in power to be accountable for meaningful change.



## PANEL 2

### COMMON CAUSE? COALITION BUILDING ACROSS ASIAN CANADIAN COMMUNITIES

In this plenary, community organizers and activists, students, professors and a start-up founder spoke powerfully about the coalition building that has already happened and the future work that is needed to strengthen collective action. Each speaker brought their experience, understanding and analysis to what coalition building looks and could look like across the country. Speakers shared how white supremacy, both overtly and subtly, impacts their experiences as Asians. As such, panelists called for awareness-raising around these issues. Furthermore, they called for the building of intersectional solidarity across organizations, groups and individuals to dismantle white supremacy. There was a shared emphasis on the need to include people of different classes, sexual orientations, gender identity, race, religions and language proficiency. Asian precarious workers, sex workers and massage workers are disproportionately impacted by racism. Speakers also called for collective organizing and advocating for better access to jobs and employee services and protections of employee rights.

### Intersectionality:

First coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality is an analytical framework through which to understand the complex and cumulative ways in which systems of oppression interact, overlap and combine with each other to function as mutually constitutive rather than as isolated or distinct forms. Intersectionality as a critical approach can reveal how a single-issue approach to addressing discrimination and exclusion can work to reproduce further injustices. For example, strategies to promote the advancement of women can result in the differential result of primarily white women being advanced while women considered non-white remain relegated to low status, low pay or precarious employment.

“ We need to fight the divisions imposed upon us by colonial systems. ”

-Panelist

“ We have the receipts. This is not in our head, this is not imagined, this is not unique to just a few people out there or to a certain segment of the community, this is much more broad. So, when you asked the question does the media have a role? Absolutely. One hundred percent. ”

-Panelist

### PANEL 3

#### WHAT DOES THE MEDIA HAVE TO DO WITH ANTI-ASIAN RACISM?

In the final plenary, speakers leading and shaping Canada's media industry tackled how media impacts anti-Asian racism. Panelists shared from their own experiences, and spoke to how media shapes our understanding of our identities. Speakers acknowledged that media is an essential form of socialization in our society, and it is powerful because it shapes race relations. Furthermore, media shapes how marginalized communities are perceived. Speakers emphasized the importance of harnessing media power. They acknowledged that it may feel abstract to many, yet it is necessary, as the media and its broader industry controls whose stories are broadcasted and championed. Panelists called for greater support when it comes to amplifying marginalized voices, and emphasized how important it is to uplift youth voices. Speakers made a call to action for all participants to like, share and follow marginalized voices to gain power in our currently white-dominated media landscape.

#### **A note about participation guidelines**

To ensure panelists, moderators and participants were emotionally safe throughout the Forum, discussions were guided by [UBC's Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff](#) and the [National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism Community Guidelines](#) (Appendix E). Further, a dedicated ombudsperson and supportive active listeners were available to those who experienced a high level of distress.

# Overall Themes

Throughout the two days of the Forum, discussions spanned multiple topic areas, revealing the intersections among the eight topics. It became clear that diversity must be centred across all sectors—and that it cannot be considered a standalone goal without meaningful action grounded in community contexts. The following list of **Overall Themes** provides a snapshot of these recurring intersections and how they must be considered as a whole when formulating guiding directions.

## **1. There is a need to “debunk” the Model Minority Myth to understand diverse Asian Canadians’ experiences and develop culturally relevant supports and services.**

- A singular narrative fails to capture the diversity of Asian Canadians’ experiences across geographies, generations and socioeconomic statuses. The perception of universal success among Asian Canadians is inaccurate. Asians are more likely to live in poverty than white Canadians, and the Model Minority Myth leads to the erasure of both internal and external challenges these populations face. Within educational institutions, panelists emphasized the opportunity to shift language to describe the complexities of Asian Canadian experiences—and come up with solutions to challenges that have often gone unspoken.

## **2. Collecting and analyzing race-based data are essential to identifying gaps within health care, elder care, education, legal services, employment, housing and social services, and allocating funding to where it is most needed.**

- Asian Canadians have different needs for and access to health care, elder care, legal services, employment, housing, social services and elder care, but there is currently a lack of availability of and access to race-based data to fully understand who is accessing these services and who cannot. Panelists discussed the general misconception that Asian Canadians are economically successful and do not have the same health care and social service needs as other equity-deserving communities; having the data to debunk this myth will help identify service gaps and prioritize funding needs.
- Panelists also raised concerns over how best to collect the data, with a desire to centralize Asian Canadian communities in data collection to ensure it is done sensitively and in a way that captures a breadth of experiences. Though most called for the federal government to take the lead on this, they were also emphatic that there should be more support for community organizations and other non-government groups to carry out their own data collection.

## **Model Minority Myth**

**The Model Minority Myth refers to the notion that Asians in Western society have overcome past discrimination through individual effort and hard work to become a disproportionately socioeconomically successful minority group. This mythology has been used to argue that inequities of the past can be overcome through hard work alone. In addition, the Model Minority Myth serves to elevate Asians as a “model” for overcoming racism, and thus justifies the ongoing exclusion of other racialized non-whites. In both Canada and the United States, the Model Minority Myth distorts ongoing realities of discrimination and systemic racism. Asian Canadians and Asian Americans are in fact disproportionately overrepresented below the poverty line and in low-income, precarious employment, including among the vulnerable front-line work in the health-care and service sectors.**

### **3. Representation is necessary but may not be enough to shift balances of power in government and institutional settings.**

- From hiring to workplace treatment to compensation, Asian Canadians continue to face barriers to recognition and often do not see themselves reflected in those who hold power. Representation is just one step towards achieving equitable outcomes, and panelists in all eight panel topics identified the need to go beyond representation.
- Panelists focused on the urgent need to continue encouraging representation while simultaneously recognizing its limitations within Eurocentric systems to avoid tokenism and complacency. Speakers identified the risk that representation could be used for political gain, leading to positive short-term but negative long-term outcomes.

### **4. Coalition building across Asian Canadian communities will strengthen our work - but deeper collaboration with other equity-deserving communities can help bridge differences.**

- Actively strengthening existing coalitions and fostering new connections with other equity-deserving communities ensure that we build on what has been done. By drawing from combined experiences and knowledge bases, coalitions allow us to leverage collective resources and uplift each other rather than compete for limited funding and government support.

### **5. Employment inequity is a concern across sectors and must be addressed on a systemic level.**

- Addressing these inequities will require concerted efforts from the federal government, public sector organizations (including healthcare providers and educational institutions), private sector companies and grassroots organizations to build employment equity into recruitment, hiring and labour standards.
- Corporate leaders should take an active role in dismantling employment discrimination by setting racial diversity goals grounded in cross-racial coalitions and creating structures for accountability.

### **6. Current anti-racism activism is missing cross-sectional representation, leading to a simplified narrative and a lack of culturally responsive solutions.**

- The full diversity of Asian Canadian communities is not adequately represented in much of current, anti-racism activism. It is important that solutions, approaches and funding recognize and respond to the community's diversity, the intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality, and the unique circumstances faced by the most marginalized individuals
- Panelists and participants expressed interest in more proactive outreach to marginalized populations to understand the harm that systemic discrimination has caused and develop solutions that recognize the intersectional identities of Asian Canadians.

### **7. Intersecting impacts of settler colonialism, systemic racism and white supremacy in all sectors.**

- Many panelists cited the complexities of navigating and resisting the inherent impacts of systemic racism across various domains. Examples of racism included overt racism and microaggressions in public, workplace and educational environments and structural racism experienced on a day-to-day basis. Panelists articulated the need for high-level changes as structural systems we live within were developed to erase and exclude Asians and other racialized communities, particularly Indigenous and Black communities.
- Panelists recognized the complexities of their experiences, marginalized identities, diverse positionalities and histories. Throughout multiple panel discussions, panelists urged for racism and white supremacy to be named and insisted that it be confronted, not just for the benefit of Asian Canadian communities but in solidarity with other racialized communities and equity-deserving groups.

## **8. Possibilities to harness the energy and bold visions from students and young people to co-create a different future.**

- Having a “seat at the table” is not enough when the table was not originally built to welcome and include diverse communities. Panelists discussed the need for more opportunities to respond to community calls to dismantle and rebuild structures that perpetuate racism, instead of solely advocating for representation within a Eurocentric system.
- Panelists expressed the desire for more opportunities for open and frank knowledge exchange to leverage the wisdom and experience of elders, the sustained and boundary-pushing work of academics and community organizers and the ideas and insights of students and young people, to collectively forge a path ahead.

## **9. Need for capacity-building in order to take action and maintain long-term sustainable changes**

- There is an urgent need to build capacity to reach shared goals of justice. Action must be taken at all levels, particularly at the institutional and policy levels, to ensure sustainable and long-term changes.
- Much of this labour currently falls on the backs of grassroots, community and student organizers, many of whom are overcapacity and face barriers to committing to larger-scale full-time work. The lack of funding, and the complicated process of applying for funding, was also touched on in many of the sessions. Another theme focussed on the lack of access to networks and mentors to share knowledge and distribute work.







## Panelist Sessions

This section highlights the key takeaways and proposed directions that emerged from two days of topic-specific panel discussions.

During the first day of concurrent panelist discussions, moderators and panelists held creative and critical discussions focussed on eight topic areas: Health; Justice System; Representation in Media, Arts and Culture; Issues in Housing, Social Services, Elder Care; Government, Policy, Political Representation; Economic Issues: Employment, Business; Grassroots Organizing and Coalition Building; and Education. Forum participants were invited to join any of the eight concurrent sessions on the first day. Participants were encouraged to submit questions via Slido, a live question and answer platform.

The morning of the second day was a working session with panelists from the previous day and registered participants spent the morning delving into each of the eight topic areas. This was a time of reflection, discussion and opportunity to identify meaningful ideas and actions to dismantle anti-Asian racism.



HEALTH

Several thoughtful questions were posed to speakers on both days:

**DAY ONE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- Drawing on your own experience, expertise and observations, what are the relationships between health and racism?
- How has racism been embedded at different levels and types of healthcare systems and services from the front line to the organizational level to the health policy level? And how does this lead to health disparities?
- What are some actions that can be taken to address the impact of racism on health and healthcare and how the system can be more culturally and structurally competent?

**DAY TWO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

Building on the session from Day One, panelists focussed on articulating specific priorities, actions and recommendations related to the health sector. The guiding questions were:

- What do we want to see changed in the health sector?
- What do we need to accomplish these goals?
- What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
- Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
- What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading and who needs to be at the table?

“ Racism is a public health crisis, full stop. Looking at the specific impact of anti-Asian racism on health, we can easily look to the harm that’s been inflicted on our communities, all of which that have been exacerbated during the pandemic, including the rise in mental health crises and suicide in youth from school age to young adults, microaggressions across all populations[...] I really resonate with the microaggressions against health providers, the microaggressions experienced by patients and our healthcare systems, systemic racism, the lack of paid sick days, the exploitation of migrant workers, and the impact on care workers who are predominantly part of the BIPOC populations. ”

-Panelist

# Key Takeaways

Across the board, people are deeply concerned about the short- and long-term health impacts of anti-Asian racism. These impacts manifest in different ways at both individual and systemic levels: from microaggressions or lack of cultural competency that Asian Canadians face navigating the health care system, to a lack of representation within health care, education and institutions, to the long-term mental health impacts of discrimination within health-care professions. Key takeaways included:

- Key Takeaway #1: Representation matters in health care and the training of healthcare professionals
- Key Takeaway #2: We cannot measure disparities in healthcare without race-based data.
- Key Takeaway #3: Interconnected barriers that hinder equitable access to health care need to be removed
- Key Takeaway #4: Culturally competent care must be embedded in health care services, understood by health care workers, and held accountable by organizations and organizational leaders
- Key Takeaway #5: We need to recognize and rectify the links between racism and health outcomes.

“When we do seek out mental health care, we are not always met with culturally representative or culturally sensitive practitioners. I have been to four therapists before I found an Asian woman and I recognize the privilege of even being able to go to therapy, that lack of accessibility is a red flag... We need representation in mental health but for the sake of our own mental health, we need representation everywhere.

–Panelist

Five key takeaways related to health emerged during the two days of discussions. Within each of the key findings, several guiding directions for future action emerged. Guiding directions are bolded throughout and are listed at the end of this section.

## KEY TAKEAWAY 1

### REPRESENTATION MATTERS IN HEALTHCARE AND TRAINING OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

When it comes to healthcare, there is a need for Asian Canadian individuals to access healthcare that is appropriate and culturally competent. Creating this level of access may require broad changes to how healthcare professionals are trained and how patients receive care.

According to panelists, there should be a **greater diversity of voices at all levels of health, not just for frontline workers but in mentorship, administration and leadership positions**. When it comes to training and educating healthcare professionals, there should be a **push for greater representation of marginalized communities and an encouragement to be candid about burnout and other mental health outcomes resulting from systemic and other forms of racism**. The Model Minority Myth and the assumption that receiving an education in the healthcare field and careers are based on a meritocracy, where race does not matter, conceal barriers for Asian Canadians, and other visible minorities and immigrants face when working in healthcare systems and establishing themselves in leadership positions.

More broadly, the idea of a “model minority” can lead to disparities and unrecognized, unmet needs for patients and practitioners. Several panelists referred to the troubling effects of a perpetual silencing or non-listening of Asian Canadians’ health concerns, leading to a lack of culturally competent care. When we do not have the space or language to be assertive about our needs, it is challenging for practitioners to access support to help them do their job and challenging for patients to advocate for their health-care needs.

“ Race intersects with other determinants of health, age, gender, migrant status, socioeconomic status, all in profound and nuanced ways. ”  
-Panelist

## KEY TAKEAWAY 2

### WE CANNOT MEASURE DISPARITIES IN HEALTHCARE WITHOUT RACE-BASED DATA.

- Across the two days of the Forum, the theme of health care disparities and a need for race-based data to understand and address them emerged as a top priority for panelists. Panelists spoke to the need for sustained investment in health care disparities research and inclusive health research on sociocultural factors, including:
- Governmental **collection of disaggregated race-based data to capture health care access and outcome indices that reflect diverse Asian Canadian populations' experiences**
- **Mixed-methods research** using qualitative and quantitative data to better **identify the healthcare needs of Asian Canadians**
- Support for **community participatory action research** that increases awareness of Asian Canadians' health needs, empowers and mobilizes Asian communities and ensures that data on Asian Canadians are collected with cultural awareness and sensitivity.

To support these research endeavours, panelists suggested:

- **Rethinking research funding criteria and adjudication personnels and processes.**
- Building **Asian Canadian communities' capacity for research;**
- Decreasing **barriers for publication and dissemination of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion-centred research.**

## Meritocracy:

A meritocracy is a political system that assumes that political power, political positions and economic rewards are bestowed upon the most deserving individuals and groups. Though supposed meritocracies often profess to be race neutral, critiques of meritocracy focus on how criteria for merit can in practice reinforce existing white supremacy and exclusions of those who are considered undeserving. Anti-racism requires questioning how such criteria are defined and by whom, and how people who already are in positions of power and privilege often reproduce definitions of merit that serve to maintain existing inequities.

“ It's not like a black or white dichotomized thing, and...representation matters, it matters at all different levels. It matters if you are early career or training or a student, and you can share that experience openly in a safe environment. But it also matters if you are in a position of power or privilege that you create or foster that kind of environment for others. And it also matters even individually as you seek care in the system. If you're not getting the services you need...we can all speak up. ”  
-Panelist

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

#### INTERCONNECTED BARRIERS THAT HINDER EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE NEED TO BE REMOVED

Panelists highlighted several barriers to accessing equitable health care. Many spoke to **the need to fund trained interpreters and translated material as part of our health-care system, including for basic medical appointments, specialized care and access to administrative information.** There are concerns that, in many cases, family members or community volunteers are often the first resource when it comes to interpretation (both linguistic and cultural); without these resources, many Asian Canadians cannot access culturally competent and compassionate care. As such, a recommendation that emerged from discussions about policy change was **advocating for the federal government to fund trained interpreters in health-care institutions** rather than relying on family members or untrained staff to provide this service.

### Race-based data:

By collecting data using a wide range of categories but not disaggregating data by racial categories that have been shaped and created by historical racism and white supremacy, the ongoing effects of racism become difficult or impossible to perceive, analyze and counteract. Disaggregated data that includes racial categories allows for analyses that take into account the differential and often disproportionate impacts suffered by non-whites in Canadian society. Without racially disaggregated data, it is impossible to specify and analyze the different experiences and the everyday impact of racism on different racialized individuals and communities.

“Going back to your question about how racism is embedded... identifying and monitoring race-based inequities... within the health system also requires us to have the necessary information... data that's disaggregated based on racialization, based on particular visible minority groups, and having that data stewarded and used in a way that's going to alleviate those inequities.”

–Panelist

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI):

EDI is an acronym that stands for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and is an umbrella term for policies and practices that aim to address systems and histories of discrimination and exclusion in programs and institutions. Each facet of EDI refers to a specific goal that is necessary for reducing systemic discrimination. Equity refers to the removal of barriers and the reduction of systemic discrimination, which is necessary to achieve fair treatment of all individuals and groups. Diversity refers to sociodemographic differences (for example, but not limited to race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, migration status and more), and puts the focus on groups who remain particularly underrepresented and marginalized. Inclusion refers to actions, practices and policies with goals of overcoming historical exclusion and which ensure that all individuals affected by an institution's practices are valued, respected, supported, and empowered.

Additionally, there were concerns around the communication involved in health care assessments and decisions: in many cases, the patient or client may want privacy or may need sensitive health information that is not filtered by family members. While some communities do have resources and capacity to offer translation, others do not.

Equitable access extends beyond interpretation and translated materials. Participants spoke to the intersection between equitable access and socio-economic class and gender. For example, patients who are employed in precarious work are not able to access care during regular clinic hours, and those living in poverty are not able to access many health care services that require fees. When it comes to equitable access to mental health care, panelists highlighted that perceptions of mental health may be ingrained from family experiences or narratives which can impede access to care. As a response to these gaps, participants emphasized the importance of recognizing differences in communities across Canada and the need to allocate resources accordingly. Lastly, related to access is the need to collect and analyze race-based data across the health-care system to understand priority areas and devote funding and resources as needed.

“...from my vantage point working for [organization], we are making efforts to ensure that we address some of the system challenges, including policies and guidelines that are based on a Western-centric notion of medicine...we’re a very pluralistic society, we need to be aware of how to provide health, equitable and not equal health-care system and pay attention to the the values of the patients that we’re serving and not be centred around one model of care for all standardized sort of care.”

-Panelist

“...we need mental health care professionals that share our lived experience. We deserve culturally sensitive and equipped [care] and we need Asians in mental health, as it is already so hard to navigate the conversation around mental health. And when we are ready and willing to talk, we need people who we don’t need to explain our racial identity and background to.”

-Panelist

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 4

**CULTURALLY COMPETENT CARE MUST BE EMBEDDED IN HEALTH CARE SERVICES, UNDERSTOOD BY HEALTH CARE WORKERS, AND HELD ACCOUNTABLE BY ORGANIZATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS**

In patient care, there must be a shift towards culturally competent care, grounded in community engagement. A major concern that Asian Canadians have is that health-care professionals may hold beliefs based on stereotypes and/or pigeonholing of diverse cultures and populations. Our current health-care system is based on a dominant biomedical model which does not always make space for different cultural norms, ranging from grief to caregiving to expressions of love. This is particularly important for some Asian cultures where communications around care are nuanced and may require sensitive questions or prompts to understand emotions or experiences that otherwise go unsaid. Relatedly, panelists discussed the presence of Western individualistic cultural values and worldviews in our health-care system; this has implications on bioethics, notably patient autonomy versus families having a say in treatment.

Another area that panelists identified for action was policy changes to address health disparities among racialized populations. Many of the discussions within the health panel recognized that we need structural change across institutions to address the negative impacts of anti-Asian racism within health care, all the way from embedding culturally appropriate care to actively seeking representation within health-care institutions.

These different systems of care are all connected and impact health outcomes--as well as contribute to the disparities that panelists identified for both health-care workers and patients/clients receiving treatment.

Discussions often returned to the different cultural understandings around mental health. For example, accessing therapy or counselling is often part of a holistic health, yet for many Asian Canadians, talking about mental health is taboo and is often shaped by our ethnic origin, cultural background, and family situation. How Asians address mental health is deeply tied to the Model Minority Myth and a cultural expectation to be quiet and to deal with challenges internally rather than communicating openly about them.

Adding to this internalized narrative, mental health services are difficult to access for many Asian Canadians. When a person does seek out care, they often find that practitioners do not reflect the communities they come from, which can lead to communication gaps or a lack of trust. The result is a lack of culturally responsive mental health services and the potential for negative, long-term mental health outcomes for Asian Canadian populations.

What will help bridge these gaps in cultural understandings and improve universal access to Canadian health care? A few ideas emerged, including:

- **Embedding professionally trained interpreters throughout our health-care systems.**
- **Developing culturally appropriate health care services for higher-needs groups**, including IBPOC individuals experiencing mental health crises and emergencies; rural residents; those of low socioeconomic status; those who need assistance with end-of-life issues and palliative care; adolescents and elderly with mental health issues; those using substances; and those experiencing legal or child protection issues.
- **Developing tailored health-care services** in collaboration with community leaders to respond to needs that may be sensitive and difficult to articulate.
- **Embedding cultural safety, competency, and humility training along with EDI standards into policies and practices that can be used to hold health care providers accountable.**

“ In my personal experience, the Model Minority Myth manifests in the roles I see parts of my identity in, and where I do not. When societal standards view Asian Canadians through this Model Minority Myth, where we are seen as complacent and okay to pay the debt of discrimination. We will think that’s our place and our role...This leaves very little room for mental health discourse and our mental health struggles can be belittled. ”

-Panelist



## KEY TAKEAWAY 5

### WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE AND RECTIFY THE LINKS BETWEEN RACISM AND HEALTH OUTCOMES.

Relationships between health and racism have been magnified by COVID, but these trends are not new. Speakers and participants shared their own personal experiences and observations of the relationship between racism and adverse health outcomes, particularly for mental health, including anxiety, depression and isolation.

Despite these clear links, there is a lack of medical studies and race-based data that document how experiencing racism can lead to negative health outcomes. We know that exposure to racism in childhood can lead to adverse impacts that manifest later as experiences of racism and trauma can accumulate over a lifetime and lead to negative mental health outcomes. However, without longitudinal studies that collect data on mental health throughout an individual's lifetime, these connections may continue to go unacknowledged. It is difficult to address social determinants of health when systemic racism is prevalent and experienced in different ways - and is further complicated by a tendency for some Asian cultures to see mental health as a taboo topic. When we do not have the language to express mental health challenges, it is difficult to build them into our healthcare system. As emerged in other panels and topic discussions within the Health sector, it is imperative to **collect race-based data and centre Asian Canadian populations in health studies to better understand, measure and address the connections between racism and health outcomes.**

“As diverse Canadians need all to work together as part of the solution. We don't want to be seen as the victim, certainly, only. We want to be part of the people helping to solve the problems.”

-Panelist

## PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Push for a greater diversity of voices at all levels of healthcare, not just for frontline workers, but also in administration and leadership positions.
- Prioritize greater representation of marginalized communities within educational institutions and encourage students, educators, and administrators to be candid about burnout and other mental health outcomes that result from systemic, and other, forms of racism.
- Invest in health-care disparities research and inclusive health research on sociocultural factors to capture health-care access and outcome indices that reflect diverse Asian Canadian populations' experiences.
- Adjust research funding criteria and adjudication personnel and processes in order to build Asian Canadian communities' capacity for research and decrease barriers for publication and dissemination of EDI-centred research in health care.
- Professionalize and fund interpreters and translated material as part of the Canadian healthcare system, including for basic medical appointments, specialized care and access to administrative information.
- Advocate for the federal government to fund professional interpreters in healthcare institutions rather than relying on family members to provide this service.
- Collect and analyze race-based data across the healthcare system to understand priority areas and devote funding and resources as needed.
- Ensure that Asian Canadian healthcare professionals, service users and family members have a voice at the decision-making level and are empowered with leadership roles to ensure culturally safe and competent patient care.
- Embed professional interpreters throughout our healthcare systems to support developing culturally competent healthcare for higher-needs groups.



JUSTICE SYSTEM

The following is a list of questions that panelists were asked in the justice system session:

**DAY ONE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- How has anti-Asian racism manifested, both in terms of the contemporary moment and as the consequence of historical structures?
- What are priorities for what needs to change in order to combat and eliminate these impacts?
- Who needs to be convinced/involved to act in order to make the necessary changes?

**DAY TWO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What do we want to see changed in the justice system?
- What do we need to accomplish these goals?
- What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
- Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
- What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading and who needs to be at the table?

Panelists who took part in discussions about the justice system voiced concerns about barriers faced by Asians pursuing or working within the legal profession and those who need access to legal resources. Panelists traced some of these barriers to links between the creation of the current Canadian legal system to white supremacy and colonialism. They noted that even though some members of the Asian community have broken through the “Bamboo Ceiling,” there is still a strong need and desire for Asian Canadian legal professionals to connect with, advocate for and

promote their peers and other racialized community members, particularly in light of the history of state-sponsored exclusion of Asian Canadians from participation in the legal community.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Over the two days of the Forum, the Justice System panel centered their discussions on three major themes.

- Key Takeaway #1: The lack of Asian Canadian representation in the legal system is connected to the history of colonialism, racism and discrimination against non-white people in Canada
- Key Takeaway #2: Address barriers to reporting and prosecuting hate crimes and use alternatives to the criminal justice system to report and respond to racism.
- Key Takeaway #3: There is a need for community lawyering and community-based legal supports.

## Bamboo Ceiling:

Asian Canadians are underrepresented at senior levels within organizations and institutions in both the public and private sectors, and the term “Bamboo Ceiling” refers to the specific forms of employment discrimination and systemic barriers that prevent those racialized as Asian from attaining or even being considered for management and executive positions.



## KEY TAKEAWAY 1

### THE LACK OF ASIAN CANADIAN REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM IS CONNECTED TO THE HISTORY OF COLONIALISM, RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST NON-WHITE PEOPLE IN CANADA

Panelists across both days discussed how the legal profession's long history of discrimination against racialized people, including Asian Canadians, means that Asians who pursue careers in this field often face unacknowledged barriers. For example, several panelists emphasized that many Asian Canadians often have less access to mentors, role models and professional networks than white Canadians. Panelists called for the federal government to **conduct a thorough review of barriers that Asian Canadian lawyers face and collect data about the racial makeup of members of the legal profession from across the nation.** Some panelists also called for **legal institutions to commit to the "50-30 challenge", setting firmer public targets to improve equity and diversity within the legal profession and make it easier to hold institutions accountable for their actions.**

### 50-30 Challenge:

The 50-30 Challenge is an initiative spearheaded by Canada's federal government, diversity and equity organizations, and business leaders, and which aims to improve diversity in the corporate sector. The Challenge asks that organizations publicly commit to: (1) achieving gender parity by ensuring that women make up 50% of senior management and board members; (2) achieving significant representation of other underrepresented groups including IBPOC individuals, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ2 individuals by ensuring that these groups make up at least 30% of senior management and board members.

“ Institutional racism is pervasive. In fact, I think it's important to name that racism is a product of white supremacy in Canada, that our country was founded on, and it continues to this day in many insidious ways. ”

-Panelist

“ There are not enough racialized lawyers, and only 8 per cent of those racialized lawyers are partners in law firms and in senior level leadership positions ... what we have to do is increase the diversity of lawyers, increase the diversity of the legal profession, and once they are called and are practising, we have to support them. ”

-Panelist

## KEY TAKEAWAY 2

### ADDRESS BARRIERS TO REPORTING AND PROSECUTING HATE CRIMES AND USE ALTERNATIVES TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM TO REPORT AND RESPOND TO RACISM.

Another key takeaway was the current system for reporting hate crimes, and incidents of racism are complex and can pose additional barriers for Asian Canadians, some of whom may already struggle with language barriers. Additionally, the current evidentiary bar for prosecuting hate crimes is high. Unless racist epithets are expressed explicitly, hate crimes against Asian Canadians can be hard to prosecute. Police are often hesitant to recommend that minor offences be charged as hate crimes, and even when they do, further obstacles include possible language barriers, re-traumatization and uncertainty in navigating the prosecutorial process.

There are also few alternatives to reporting and prosecuting racist incidents that are serious, but do not meet the government's definition of a "hate crime". **The panelists want the federal government to review the barriers to reporting hate crimes and other racist incidents, simplify the reporting process, including by increasing funding for translations to remove language barriers, and financing and promoting non-prosecutorial solutions for dealing with racist incidents, including restorative justice approaches.**

“ The real victimization that can occur through the process of having to testify and relive the events and be vigorously cross-examined on them. There's uncertainty in the process. Charges can be dismissed for a host of reasons varying from strength of the evidence, credibility assessments that can be impacted by cultural factors and linguistic barriers, and constitutional challenges can even result in a dismissal of the charges. So there is never certainty in conviction, even once the charges are laid. ”

–Panelist

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

#### THERE IS A NEED FOR COMMUNITY LAWYERING AND COMMUNITY-BASED LEGAL SUPPORTS.

Panelists also expressed the need to increase access to community lawyering. Access to community lawyering is essential because of the linguistic, cultural and educational barriers faced by many Asian Canadians. Further, without access to community lawyering, a significant number of low-income individuals and families would be unable to access legal services. To support community lawyering, **panelists called on the government to reduce barriers to having community organizations apply for funding.**

Panelists shared that funding applications are very resource intensive: they are time-consuming, and often only available to project-based work that require measurable results and convincing narratives. Many applications also require data as evidence to support the need for particular projects. Given the current dearth of race-based data, this makes writing a successful grant application very difficult. Collectively, these barriers make it difficult for community lawyers, particularly ones who wish to represent low-income and racialized individuals, to access funding and increase their organizational capacity. Panelists mentioned that several measures adopted temporarily during the COVID-19 pandemic, including virtual access, could be adopted permanently to help improve access to the justice system and legal services.

**Community lawyering:**  
Community lawyering uses a grass-roots approach to providing legal services by integrating lawyers into the community, and giving community members a voice within legal proceedings and services.

“ Another barrier to funding applications that we face is that you have to be able to tell a convincing story with evidence that you know your project is worth funding, but sometimes you need the funding to be able to collect the evidence. ”

-Panelist

“ I think just trying to think more creatively about who gets funded and maybe that doesn't have to be like an established nonprofit or an established organization but if a group of people come together and they each show a track record of...making a difference in their communities, maybe that can be enough. ”

-Panelist

#### PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Conduct a thorough review of barriers that Asian Canadian lawyers face and collect data about the racial makeup of the legal profession from across the nation.
- Commit to the “50-30 challenge”, setting firmer public targets to improve equity and diversity with the legal profession and make it easier to hold institutions accountable for their actions.
- Review the barriers to reporting hate crimes and other racist incidents, simplify the reporting process, increase funding for translations to remove language barriers and help finance and promote non-prosecutorial solutions for dealing with racist incidents, including restorative justice approaches.
- Reduce barriers for community organizations to apply for funding to access community lawyering.



# REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA, ARTS AND CULTURE

The following is a list of questions that were asked to panelists in the session about the Media, Arts and Culture section.

#### QUESTIONS POSED ON DAY ONE:

1. How does anti-Asian racism manifest in media, arts and culture?
2. What changes need to happen in media, arts and culture?
3. Who should be in the room or at the table when we want to make change? Who needs to be listening? Who needs to be learning? Who needs to be committing?

#### QUESTIONS POSED ON DAY TWO:

1. What do we want to see changed in the media, arts and culture sector?
2. What do we need to accomplish these goals?
3. What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
4. Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
5. What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading and who needs to be at the table?

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

Speakers in the media, arts and culture panel called for several issues in their field to be addressed. The concerns were focussed on the need for more meaningful Asian Canadian representation and the need to address funding inequities. Conversations also centred on the specific impacts that panelists have witnessed and experienced. The following are three key takeaways from the two days of discussions:

- Key takeaway #1: Mandating racial diversity is crucial to shifting from extractive representation to true representation
- Key takeaway #2: We must address funding inequities to achieve and sustain representation
- Key takeaway #3: Creating an IBPOC Hub will support diverse art and content from Asian and other IBPOC Canadian creators

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 1

##### MANDATING RACIAL DIVERSITY IS CRUCIAL TO SHIFTING FROM EXTRACTIVE REPRESENTATION TO TRUE REPRESENTATION

Although many panelists broadly agreed that there is a need for more representation of Asian Canadians in media and arts, several panelists raised concerns about how this may become extractive. They shared that aspects of Asian cultures, identities, stories and arts are often extracted from original content and adapted to suit the needs of white-dominated institutions, or to meet particular diversity and inclusion goals, or to simply suit the interests of white audiences. Panelists further shared that creators are often tokenized or forced to be part of these processes, limiting recognition for their original work and their freedom to tell their own stories.

“ These organizations go out into community, they find the shiny things, the good stories, and they extract them and bring them back into their system into their organization [...] how do we change that system, how do we change it from being extraction to one that is generative to one that is contributing in a significant way? ”

-Panelist

Panelists called for mandated racial diversity to not only mitigate tokenism and extractive representation but to better support diversity in arts and cultural institutions as a whole. **Panelists proposed that the government should fund and support the creation of a “National Racial Equity Screen Office” for Asian Canadians, similar to other Equity Screen offices that already exist.**



## KEY TAKEAWAY 2

### WE MUST ADDRESS FUNDING INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE AND SUSTAIN REPRESENTATION

Due to the concerns around extractive and tokenizing processes that are commonly seen in present-day Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, panelists shared that this has further impacted their access to funding and grants. They explained that most applications seek written pieces focussed on project-based deliverables, which significantly hurts IBPOC creators who primarily work in performance-based media (e.g., dance, theatre, film). Panelists also pointed out that funding bodies tend to gravitate towards concepts that they are familiar with, leaving Asian Canadian creators feeling like they must shape their work into easily understood categories and downplay the cultural specificities of their lived experiences to obtain funding.

**Panelists called for the need to create more opportunities for Asian and other IBPOC artists to secure funding.**

**Additionally, speakers would like to see existing funding and review bodies to allow for more art forms and creative freedom.** They further emphasized that **Asian and other IBPOC creators must be further consulted with**, in order to move away from creating art and content that aligns with Eurocentric standards.

“ I think one of the things that really is a huge barrier to artists, is just like the amount of criteria, you have to meet in order just to even get grant funding...and then on the flip side of an institution, how can we make it so that we are able to prioritize certain groups and how do we make sure we can get that money directly to equity denied groups. ”

-Panelist

“ We like to talk about policies and grant funding as if they're really objective and they were never written to prioritize certain groups, but we know that all our cultural policies are inherently very colonial and completely tied to the way the Multiculturalism Act was, and how it became policy in this country. ”

-Panelist

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

#### CREATING AN IBPOC HUB WILL SUPPORT DIVERSE ART AND CONTENT FROM ASIAN AND OTHER IBPOC CANADIAN CREATORS

Panelists proposed that another solution to addressing inadequate representation and funding would be to **create a hub for Asian and other IBPOC Canadian creators.**

This would help to build coalitions and create safe spaces founded on trust for racial minorities to tell their own stories. Racialized creators would receive the creative freedom to do their work without being subject to extractive processes by the white-dominated, Eurocentric arts and culture industry, or having to ensure their art is palatable to a white audience and conforming to Westernized standards.

#### PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Fund and support the creation of a “National Racial Equity Screen Office” for Asian Canadians, similar to other Equity Screen offices that already exist. This should be an effort from the government.
- Create more opportunities for Asian and other IBPOC artists to secure funding.
- Ask existing funding and review bodies to allow for more art forms and creative freedom.
- Create a hub for Asian and other IBPOC Canadian creators in order to shift away from creating art and content that aligns with Eurocentric standards.
- Better consultation with Asian and other IBPOC creators.

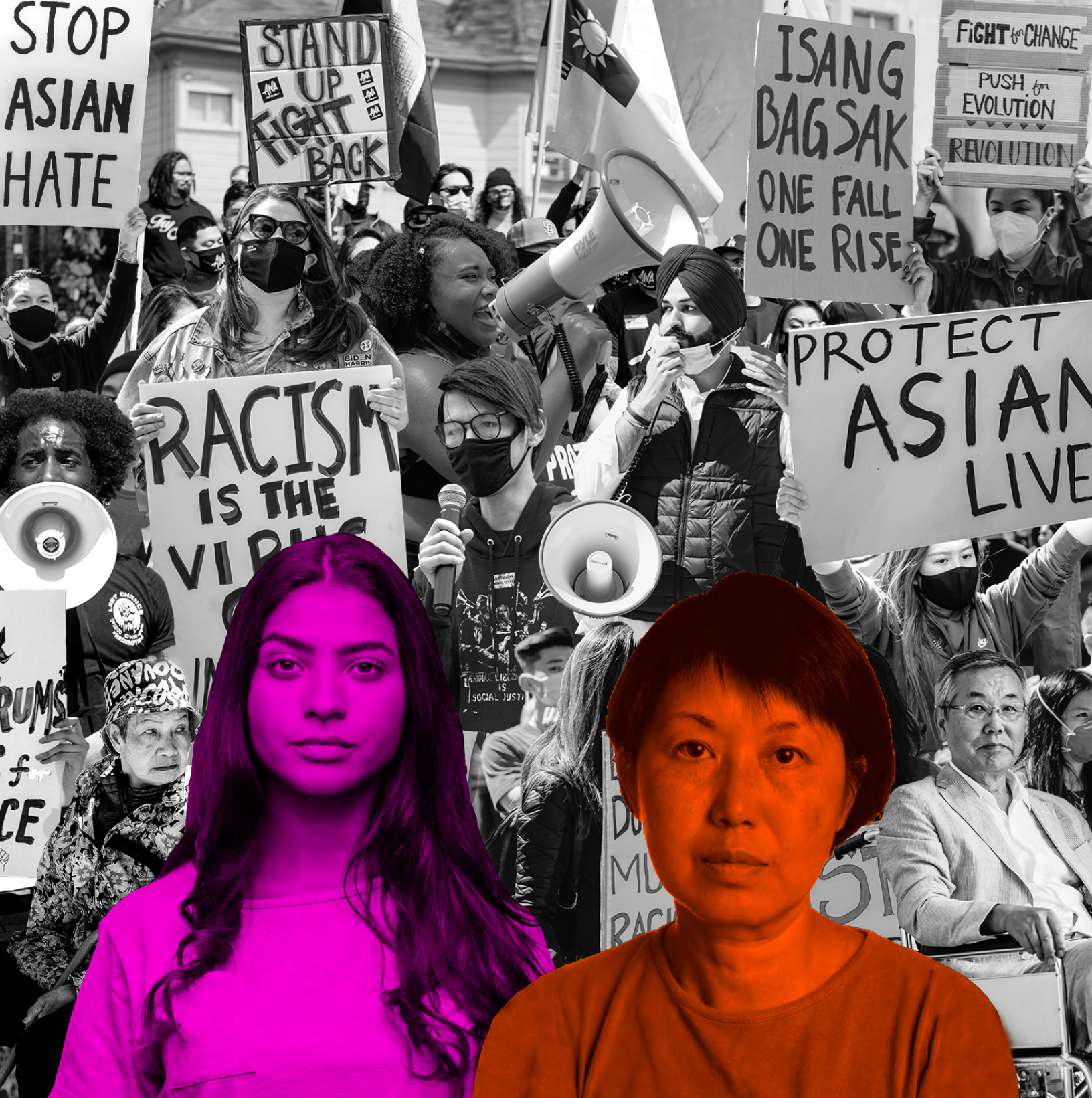
“ We need some sort of a hub, or like something that replaces a news wire that would also include academics and researchers and reporters, and also artists that are working on projects. Especially young emerging artists that are in universities, and even not in universities that are just freelance doing [work] on the side. ”

-Panelist

“ I want a website that you know, I can go and say hey you know, is there, somebody somebody in the Community, working on similar issues that I [can] collaborate with? I think that that will be actually very helpful. ”

-Panelist





ISSUES IN HOUSING,  
SOCIAL SERVICES,  
ELDER CARE

The following is a list of questions posed to panelists in the session about Housing, Social Services and Elder Care:

**QUESTIONS POSED ON DAY ONE:**

1. How has anti-Asian racism manifested, both in terms of the contemporary moment and as the consequence of historic structures?
2. What are the priorities for what needs to change in order to combat and eliminate these impacts?
3. Who needs to be convinced/involved to act in order to make the necessary changes?

**QUESTIONS POSED ON DAY ONE:**

1. What do we want to see changed in the housing and social service sector?
2. What do we need to accomplish these goals?
3. What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
4. Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
5. What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading and who needs to be at the table?

The Housing, Social Services and Elder Care panelists' discussions centred on how biases (both internal and external) about Asians as economically successful residents hinder their access to social services, affordable housing and elder care. These biases have led to a lack of understanding of the most pressing concerns among populations experiencing marginalization. As with many of the other panels, funding emerged as a theme. Community organizations that provide housing, social services and elder care services for Asian Canadians receive little to no funding and face barriers to accessing government funding. Based on these discussions, proposed directions included securing consistent government support for community organizations to provide services and in-house care.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Key takeaways of this topic included:

- Key takeaway #1: Qualitative and quantitative data needs to be collected to understand how Asian Canadians are interacting with social services.
- Key takeaway #2: Culturally appropriate care must be embedded in elder care and social services.
- Key takeaway #3: Coalitions across communities and sectors can help build capacity and share strengths for collective success.
- Key Takeaway #4: Care workers provide essential work and should be recognized, supported, and valued.

“It’s easy to call out racism when there’s an overt act of violence, a racial slur and assault. But the erasure, neglect and dismissal of the Asian experience can be just as violent. And these are some of the experiences that characterize anti Asian racism...How do we prove the existence of these harms when we are constantly being told that it’s not happening?”

–Panelist

## KEY TAKEAWAY 1

### QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA NEEDS TO BE COLLECTED TO UNDERSTAND HOW ASIAN CANADIANS INTERACT WITH SOCIAL SERVICES.

As with the Health panel, panelists agreed that **we need more and better data to understand how Asian Canadians are currently interacting with social services and identify where services are needed to support those experiencing marginalization.** Mainstream narratives perpetuate the idea that Asian Canadians are economically prosperous and do not struggle with employment, housing, and financial stability. Asian Canadians are overrepresented among those living at the poverty line and working in precarious jobs—especially in care work. Without the data to represent this trend, we cannot pinpoint where the most significant funding and resourcing is needed in social services.

**Disaggregated race-based data would help policy- and decision-makers identify problems, connect service providers to sustained funding, and prioritize supporting the most marginalized members of Asian Canadian communities.**

The panelists recognized that there is incredible diversity within these communities. Many Asian Canadians who need social services are often not represented within data sets and research (e.g., individuals who do sex work). Without understanding how marginalized groups access services, providers are not able to meet their needs. Adding to this lack of data is the myth that Asian Canadians are successful and do not have an acute demand for social services. **We urgently need data to dispel this misconception. Data will identify where Asian Canadians are currently accessing services and identify gaps within social services.**

## Butterfly: Asian and Migrant Sex Workers Support Network

Butterfly uses a radical centering of Asian and migrant sex workers' lived experiences to address their most pressing challenges in a way that respects a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and aspirations.

“ There’s so much research done on income inequality and housing and poverty and mental health issues and everything in the social service sector in this neighborhood, not one of them focuses on looking at what is happening with the Chinese community or the Asian community. ”

–Panelist

## KEY TAKEAWAY 2

### CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE CARE MUST BE EMBEDDED IN ELDER CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES.

Overall, there is a lack of culturally appropriate care with elder care and social services. Further, the care that is currently available to seniors may not be financially sustainable. Currently, care tends to be piecemeal in long-term care settings and is offered mostly through family members and community organizations through unpaid or low-wage labour. Language barriers pose a roadblock to delivering culturally appropriate care. **Panelists pointed to a need for more funding and support for interpreters, translators and translated materials so that these essential components of caregiving are not viewed as add-ons.**

## Culturally appropriate elder care

BC Care defines culturally appropriate care as supportive, meaningful and beneficial. It facilitates delivery of care to seniors that aligns with cultural values, beliefs, and ways of life.

“ To ensure there are equitable health outcomes for seniors there must be greater investment into culturally appropriate care. In fact, there are so many services that are unspoken due to language and cultural barriers. ”

–Panelist

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

#### COALITIONS ACROSS COMMUNITIES AND SECTORS CAN HELP BUILD CAPACITY AND SHARE STRENGTHS FOR COLLECTIVE SUCCESS.

While the issues of accessing housing, social services and elder care are complex and interwoven with larger systemic issues such as income inequality and housing commodification, panelists shared a sense of optimism about the way ahead. Many community organizations are already providing culturally responsive care that is grounded in relationships and holistic support. There are opportunities to support and build on this work, but it will take time, additional labour and long-term support from government and health-care institutions. The careful and nuanced work of coalition building cannot be rushed. It requires structures to document the work, identify gaps and challenges and come to solutions. Some panelists suggested that we can **redefine or reimagine definitions of social services in institutional settings. For example, institutions like universities could be facilitators and/or providers of social services and supporting informal networks of social services in a decentralized way.**

### Performative activism:

Performative activism is a colloquial term referring pejoratively to those who are perceived to be politically active out of a desire to advance their own social standing and garner attention, for example by championing superficial or ineffective actions that do not in effect change ongoing inequities.

### KEY TAKEAWAY 4

#### CARE WORKERS PROVIDE ESSENTIAL WORK - AND SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED, SUPPORTED, AND VALUED.

Asian Canadians are disproportionately involved in care work. Elder care is not adequately valued or resourced. Seniors care is primarily delivered by low-wage workers, precarious workers and family members. Panelists want the government to **improve labour standards in care industries, increase workers pay and create job stability in these sectors. Panelists also tended to agree that institutionalizing unpaid or underpaid labour would support culturally responsive care for elders and other Asian Canadians who access social services.** This could take the form of roundtables convened by government institutions that build collective knowledge from care workers using a strengths-based approach. However, some speakers felt that this model may run the risk of performative activism or tokenism whereby individuals and groups doing this “invisible” work are asked to provide the additional labour of sharing their experiences with government representatives - without the guarantee that their knowledge will inform government interventions, policy or funding. These concerns highlight the need for the government to provide the structure, funding, and accountability to formalize knowledge-sharing between care workers and social service providers. Further, any efforts to address labour conditions in these industries must be redistributive to ensure that the most vulnerable are not left out.

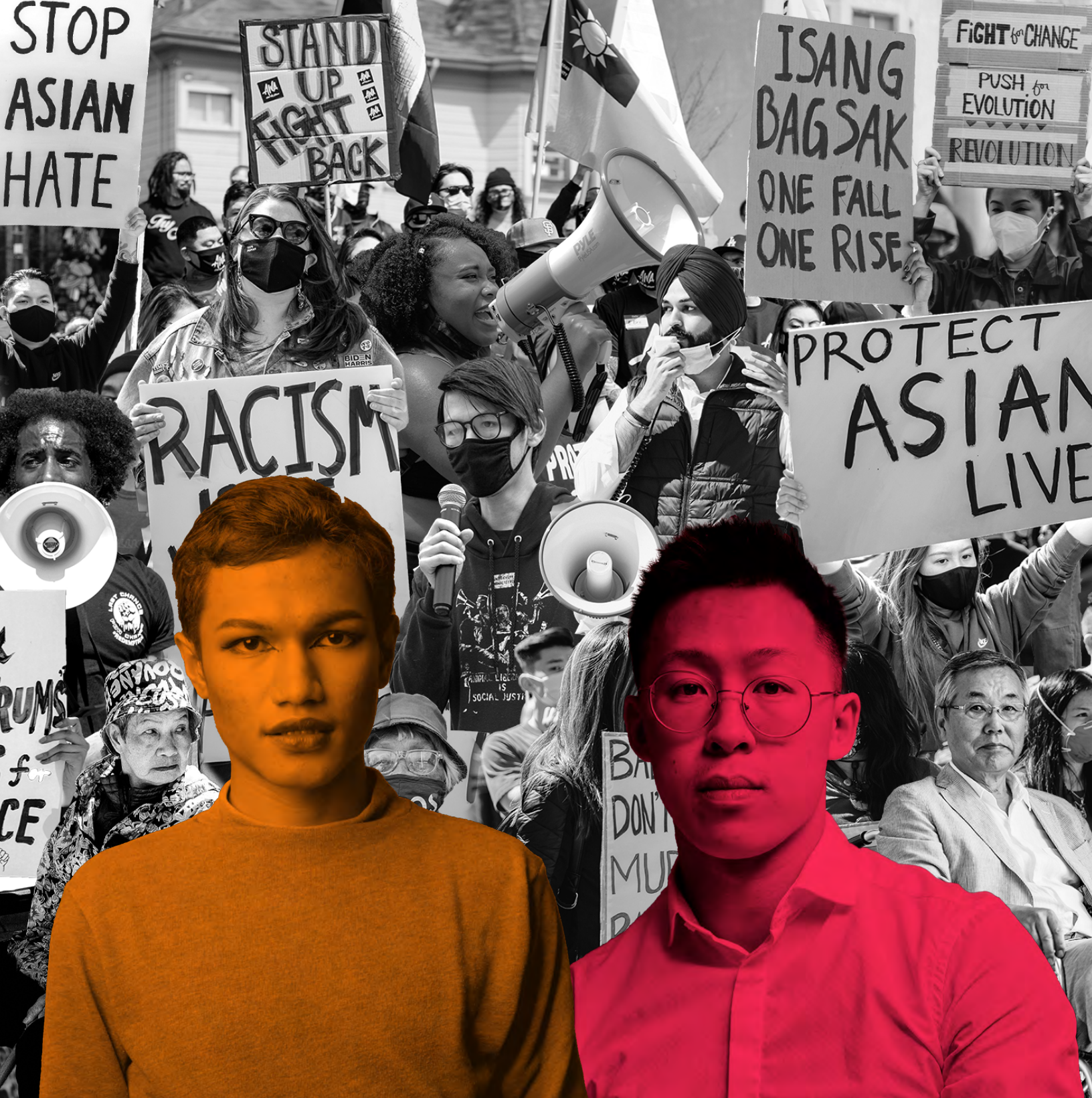
## PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Prioritize collecting more and better data to understand how Asian Canadians are currently interacting with social services, and to identify where services are needed to support those experiencing marginalization.
- Draw from disaggregated, race-based data to help policy- and decision-makers identify problems, connect service providers to sustained funding, and prioritize supporting the most marginalized members of Asian Canadian communities.
- Fund and provide institutional support for interpreters, translators and translated materials to recognize and embed these essential components of caregiving into elder care, housing, and social services.
- Improve labour standards, increase wages, and implement measures to increase job stability in care industries to support and retain skilled workers.
- Explore social service provision models in institutional settings, for example, by including universities as facilitators and/or providers of social services; and supporting informal networks of social services in a decentralized way.
- Provide structure, funding, and accountability to formalize knowledge-sharing between care workers and social service providers.
- Ensure that funding efforts to address labour conditions in elder care are redistributive and centre vulnerable workers.

“ I totally agree that only with coalition and collaboration, we’ll [build] a better community and really be able to [engage] with all the folks and [build] on the strength of many, many different communities.”

-Panelist





# GOVERNMENT, POLICY, AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION



The facilitator posed thoughtful questions to the panelists of the Government, Policy, and Political Representation session.

**QUESTIONS POSED ON DAY ONE:**

1. How has anti-Asian racism manifested, both in terms of the contemporary moment and as the consequence of historic structures?
2. What are priorities for what needs to change in order to combat and eliminate these impacts?
3. Who needs to be convinced/involved to act in order to make the necessary changes?

**QUESTIONS POSED ON DAY TWO:**

1. What do we want to see changed in the government sector?
2. What do we need to accomplish these goals?
3. What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
4. Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
5. What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading and who needs to be at the table

Speakers shared that when it comes to political representation in government and public service, we are in an era of “firsts.” There is some, albeit, limited representation of Asian Canadians at all levels of government. Accordingly, political leaders are speaking about concerns central to Asian Canadian communities. However, this narrative of “firsts” can sometimes reinforce tokenism and perpetuate the belief that representation in political positions will lead to representation in policy- and decision-making. There is also a risk of Asian individuals being used as political capital in a system that was not designed to share power with diverse constituencies.

As with other panels, these discussions invited viewers to be active participants in anti-racism efforts. Speakers acknowledged that supporting Asian Canadians in politics and having diverse representation in political spheres is an important step. Still, the balance of power remains rooted in Eurocentric models of political representation. Government officials must actively seek out and listen to the needs of individuals and communities and make sure those with diverse perspectives are invited to the table. Constituents need to vote, support and keep elected officials accountable to the critical work of advocating for ongoing political representation from diverse communities. Asian Canadians will likely continue to face barriers to entering political spaces. We must continue to uplift individuals and communities. This could include encouraging Asian Canadians to run for political office, centering their voices in the media or having leadership figures that demonstrate politics is a viable and rewarding career path for young people.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Key Takeaway #1: Representation has limitations. As such, holding those in power to account is important.
- Key Takeaway #2: White supremacy and racism are embedded in our political structures; dismantling it will require sustained commitment from political leaders.
- Key Takeaway #3: There is a strong appetite for tangible change in political representation - but a lack of consensus on where to begin.
- Key Takeaway #4: Exploring “Asian Canadian” as a political identity can bring new conversations to electoral politics - but it could also further “other” or tokenize Asian Canadian communities.

## KEY TAKEAWAY 1

### REPRESENTATION HAS LIMITATIONS. AS SUCH, HOLDING THOSE IN POWER TO ACCOUNT IS IMPORTANT.

Representation and diversity in both government and public service is an essential first step. Still, there is a risk of tokenism and the potential for diverse individuals to be used as political capital. Panelists shared that while the representation we are seeing is important, we need to continue to push for more - and acknowledge that one person cannot represent an entire ethnic community. We must recognize that Asian Canadians are not a monolithic group with equal access to education and opportunities to pursue careers in politics — that there is diversity within our communities and that individuals hold intersectional identities of which race is just one part. Representation is an integral part of advancing more diverse political offices; however, to effect long-term change, **it must be accompanied by an active commitment by constituents to vote for candidates who represent them and hold elected leaders accountable to their campaign promises.**

“ I’ll end with a quote from Rosemary Brown, who was the first black female elected to a Canadian provincial legislature and she said that we have to open those doors, but we have to ensure that the doors remained open. So, really it’s not about the first, and I’m not elected government, but I was the first Asian Canadian elected Executive Vice President for the BC Government and Service Employees’ Union. I appreciate that honour, but there’s got to be more, more representation, and we all are accountable. What we do as elected [officials], but also citizens have to be taking that role. ”

-Panelist

## KEY TAKEAWAY 2

### WHITE SUPREMACY AND RACISM ARE EMBEDDED IN OUR POLITICAL STRUCTURES; DISMANTLING IT WILL REQUIRE SUSTAINED COMMITMENT FROM POLITICAL LEADERS.

Representation is just one step in rebuilding political systems that reflect diverse constituents. Asian Canadians need to see themselves reflected in political leaders - but it is not enough. Panelists spoke to the roots of our political systems and how they reinforce who has access to political capital: this ranges from the role of the Canadian legislature to the funds, human resources, and connections required to run a successful political campaign (particularly when running against an incumbent).

“ I learned a lot about the history of BC and it can be lost on us the role of the legislature when it comes to upholding white supremacy in the past, and how embedded all of that legislation is in our structures. ”

-Panelist

Given the structural reinforcement of white supremacy in electoral politics, anti-racism work is all of our work as Canadians. We need collaboration and participation at all levels of government, community organizations, and educational institutions to effect change. **Government officials must listen to the needs of individuals and communities and make sure diverse perspectives are invited to the table; and constituents must vote, support and keep elected officials accountable and use their voices to bring the issues that matter to them to the forefront.**

Like other panels, **speakers pointed out the need for better collection of disaggregated data that reflects the diversity within Asian Canadian communities to understand how anti-Asian racism is experienced within political contexts and identify levers for change.** This will require multi-year, long-term resourcing and funding for capacity building within government sectors and developing benchmarks to measure progress - recognizing that racism is experienced in many different ways and requires nuanced solutions grounded in cultural understandings.

Notably, we must recognize systemic barriers to voting and the associated mistrust or disconnection that some Asian Canadians may have with our electoral system. For example, Japanese Canadians did not have the right to vote until 1949. Coupled with historical and ongoing discrimination, it is no surprise that participation in Canadian electoral politics may feel like a barrier to some Asian Canadian communities.

**One possible way to address this barrier is for political leaders - including some panelists - to continue fostering connections with younger voters so that they see themselves reflected in political leadership.** Continued education, awareness, and community-building within politics are crucial to embedding Asian Canadian representation into a system that remains dominated by those with the most power, privilege, and financial and social capital.

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

#### WE CANNOT ACT ALONE: LEVERAGING ALLYSHIP AND COALITION BUILDING IS CRUCIAL TO WINNING, BUILDING, AND SHARING POLITICAL POWER.

There are many ways to support better political representation, from getting involved with local campaigns to building community capacity to get political issues on the table to sharing success stories in the media. Panelists tended to speak positively about allyship and the potential to share power with other equity-deserving communities. We can make space for those who are not invited to or included at the table through active allyship.

Speakers shared that active allyship requires us to be proactive in building solidarity and foundational relationships with other marginalized communities through everyday interactions - not just in times of crisis. There are opportunities for equity-deserving communities to come together and uplift each other, yet there are also challenges in navigating media narratives that perpetuate division and a zero-sum game when it comes to representation. We can build stronger coalitions by creating structure and spaces for learning, including outlets for regular communication and resource sharing. **For example, panelists proposed creating a resource-sharing hub to connect different organizations, build a space for regular communication, and maintain a database of the resources and organizations already doing policy and coalition building work.**

“ I know at one point, Japanese Canadians did not have the vote until 1949. And I know sometimes when asked to speak on say International Women's Day...celebrating the vote, right, in 1918 for women and then I will say that wasn't all women. So South Asian and Chinese Canadian women in 1947 and I'll say Japanese Canadians in 1949, and then status Indians in 1960...Inuit [people] actually got the vote in 1950, but they were in isolated areas with no polling booths so they couldn't actually exercise their right to vote. So for all intents and purposes they actually couldn't vote till the 60s until that systemic barrier was removed for them...So it's all tied in with the representation that we have. ”

-Panelist

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 4

EXPLORING “ASIAN CANADIAN” AS AN IDENTITY CAN BRING NEW CONVERSATIONS TO ELECTORAL POLITICS - BUT IT COULD ALSO FURTHER “OTHER” OR TOKENIZE ASIAN CANADIAN COMMUNITIES.

Representation and diversity are essential in government and public service, but we must be sensitive to the potential for tokenism and the exploitation of diverse individuals as political capital. It is crucial to keep in mind that Asian Canadians are not a monolithic group. There is diversity within our communities, and we must be aware of individuals’ intersectional identities. **Nonpartisan education programs starting at the high school level could increase civic participation and build a broader base of IBPOC political candidates, supporting increased participation and representation and coalitions among diverse elected officials and public service members.**

KEY QUESTION: CAN ASIAN CANADIAN IDENTITY FUNCTION AS A POLITICAL IDENTITY?

Aside from the key findings described above, an important question emerged across the two days of discussion: Can Asian Canadian identity function as a political identity? Underlying that question is: Can ethnocultural identity alone determine what a political leader stands for?

Unlike the other questions discussed, the panel did not come to a conclusion on this question. Some panelists framed their answers in terms of electoral politics, arguing that Asian Canadians have come to function as a voting bloc through a set of shared concerns, and that Asian Canadians should further use their status as a voting bloc to put pressure on politicians to enact change (and hold them accountable to their commitments). Others argued that the diversity of the Asian Canadian population limits what they termed an “ethnic politics” approach and could undermine elected leaders’ ability to fully represent their communities, of which ethnicity is just one part of identity. Conversations touched on the limits of electoral politics in pursuing an anti-racist political agenda. Some panelists suggested that it would be more effective to pursue political participation from outside the electoral system—such as grassroots organizing.

#### Ethnic politics:

Ethnic politics refers to policies and political strategies that are centered around making appeals aimed at disparate ethnic groups, and that attempt to build political support for candidates on the basis of the perceived ethnic identity of voters. In contrast, political advocacy based upon anti-racism generally attempts to build coalitions and solidarity by ending and dismantling policies and practices that divide and control ethnic communities by marginalizing them, often pitting them against each other for limited resources designated for “ethnic” communities while core funding and resources maintain ongoing systemic racism in institutions.

“ How do we get beyond just the so-called ethnic politics approach of so many political parties in our country which... works, which gets people elected, maybe tips them over the balance because there’s some extra edge...It’s so important to be able to demonstrate that regardless of our skin colour, ethnicity or origin, that we can play lead roles and represent, just like Douglas Jung [First Chinese Canadian elected Member of Parliament] did representing this country to the United Nations. ”  
-Panelist

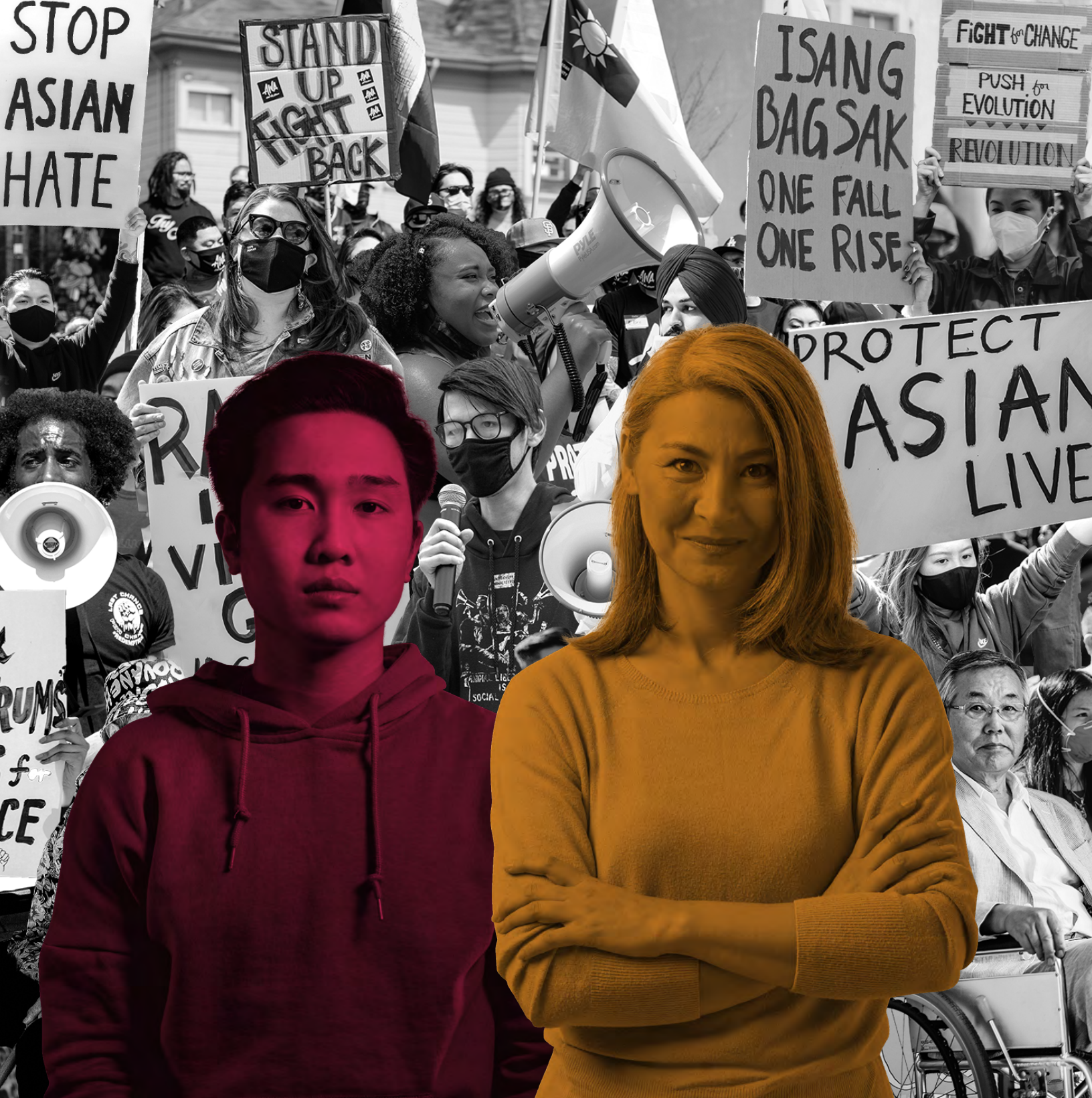
## PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Government officials must listen to the needs of individuals and communities and make sure diverse perspectives are invited to the table.
- Constituents must actively commit to voting for candidates who represent their communities and to hold elected leaders accountable to their campaign promises.
- Collect disaggregated data that reflects the diversity within Asian Canadian communities to understand how anti-Asian racism is experienced within political contexts, and identify levers for change (e.g., Elections Canada's Open Data Portal).
- Foster connections with younger voters so that these younger generations see themselves reflected in political leadership and feel empowered to pursue careers in politics and public service.
- Create a resource-sharing hub to connect different organizations, build a space for regular communication, community engagement, and maintain a database of the resources and organizations already doing policy and coalition building work.
- Develop nonpartisan education programs to demystify the electoral process for people, including youth, younger voters, and new immigrants, to increase civic participation and build a broader base of IBPOC political candidates.
- Embed allyship with Indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities in our work.



### Allyship:

Allyship according to [PeerNetBC](#) is a long-term process of building relationships based on trust, consistency and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people. Allyship is not self-defined—our work and our efforts must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with.



# ECONOMIC ISSUES: EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS

### DAY ONE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following is a list of questions that were posed to panelists in the session about economic issues.

- In terms of this contemporary moment, how is anti-Asian racism manifested? And what are the consequences of historical structures?
- When it comes to changes, what should we prioritize in order to combat and eliminate the impacts of anti-Asian racism?
- Who needs to be convinced and/or involved to act in order to make the necessary changes?

### DAY TWO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do we want to see changed in the economic sector?
- When it comes to the changes we want to see, what do we need to accomplish?
- What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
- Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
- What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading and who needs to be at the table?

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

In the panelists' opening remarks and when responding to the sector questions, many spoke to how racism is built into our structures and systems. Speakers shared how the Model Minority Myth harms lower-income Asians and is used to protect the status quo. Even Asians who have been able to break through the bamboo ceiling are expected to overproduce to meet the stereotype that they can overcome discrimination.

Participants also shared and discussed findings that highlight poverty rates among Chinese, South Asian and Korean Canadians. They expanded on how ripple effects from the COVID-19 pandemic have disproportionately impacted workers of colour. Panelists also shared how

During discussions, a speaker referred to a study by Philip Oreopoulos titled, ['Why Do Skilled Immigrants Struggle in the Labor Market? A Field Experiment with Thirteen Thousand Resumes.'](#)

systemic inequities and racism are responsible for the challenges they and their families faced when seeking employment and finding success in the business sector.

Several panelists also emphasized how contemporary economic issues cannot be separated from histories of poverty and exploitation of Asian peoples in the labour market. Panelists also linked historical acts of discrimination that continue to thread themselves in our current reality.

“ Racism doesn't exist in isolated behaviour, but it is reflective of what's been built from very colonial and racist history and our Canadian history of anti-Asian racism [...] over 175 anti-Asian laws that were implemented in this country [...] were designed to ensure a white majority and white supremacy. And it saw a version of Asian people as subhuman abstract labor and racial capitalism. ”  
-Panelist

Lastly, panelists acknowledged the complexities of what it will take to create and sustain meaningful change. They identified that folks in power should be held accountable and that everyone has a role to play when it comes to dismantling the structures that further racism.

- Key Takeaway #1: There is a need for awareness and education of poverty and precarious economic conditions experienced by Asian Canadian populations
- Key Takeaway #2: Addressing racism and discrimination in corporate environments is crucial to building diverse leadership and inclusive organizational cultures
- Key Takeaway #3: The government must play a more significant role in promoting employment diversity, mandating employment equity, protecting racialized and precarious workers, and work to reduce poverty among Asians
- Key Takeaway #4: Addressing inequities requires collecting and analyzing disaggregated, race-based data



## KEY TAKEAWAY 1

### THERE IS A NEED FOR AWARENESS AND EDUCATION OF POVERTY AND PRECARIOUS ECONOMIC CONDITIONS EXPERIENCED BY ASIAN CANADIAN POPULATIONS

The panelists discussed poverty and labour issues among Asians. To counter the stereotype which portrays Asians as being disproportionately economically successful, a few panelists brought up statistics showing that a higher percentage of Asian Canadians live in poverty than white Canadians. The poverty rate varies widely within the Asian Canadian population, with some Asian ethnic groups (such as Korean Canadians) experiencing much higher poverty rates than others. Some panelists expressed surprise at these statistics, while others explained how the persistence of the Model Minority Myth makes it uniquely difficult for impoverished Asians to receive support, and how the myth makes it difficult to target specific anti-poverty measures towards Asians. **The panel emphasized the need to spread awareness of Asian Canadian poverty and ensure that their economic struggles do not go unnoticed by the government or by the general public.**

“ Since most of us derive our income from employment, the racialization of poverty is directly linked to structural racism within the labour market. ”

-Panelist

## KEY TAKEAWAY 2

### ADDRESSING RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION IN CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTS IS CRUCIAL TO BUILDING DIVERSE LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

“ ...as it now stands, most workplaces don't even have those kinds of employment equity policies. I think it really depends on the situation and whether you have support within your company or your workplace to speak outright. Some people may feel comfortable speaking to their manager, but not everyone can. So having support both within the company or outside is important. ”

-Panelist

Panelists discussed the complexities of Asian representation and the lack of representation in corporate environments, particularly referring to the “bamboo ceiling” that prevents Asians from ascending into leadership roles. Many panelists are interested in seeing corporate leaders take an active role in combating this form of racism and discrimination. Speakers suggested that corporations large and small form equity committees and set diversity targets. Further, they would like to see more coalitions formed. One panelist shared the work of the “Black North Initiative,” which asks corporations to make public diversity and inclusion pledges. They mentioned this as one of many potential frameworks of how discrimination could be addressed in the workplace. Panelists also expressed the desire to collaborate with Indigenous, Black and racialized communities to hold corporations accountable for their actions. **They called on the government to strengthen equitable employment standards at the federal level and urge provinces and territories to adopt employment equity at the legislative level.**

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

#### THE GOVERNMENT MUST PLAY A MORE SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT DIVERSITY, MANDATING EMPLOYMENT EQUITY, AND PROTECTING RACIALIZED AND PRECARIOUS WORKERS AND WORK TO REDUCE POVERTY AMONG ASIANS

A third central theme of this panel was the desire for the government to play a larger role in promoting workplace diversity, mandating employment equity and protecting racialized and precarious workers. Many panelists did not feel that the private sector could be trusted to set goals and be held internally accountable. As such, speakers **want the federal government and provinces and territories to strengthen the Employment Equity Act for Asians and other workers of colour.** One panelist pointed out that Ontario is the only province that has anti-racism legislation in place. Panelists also called for **mandated diversity and inclusion training for private organizations. They also want to see the formation of human rights commissions or independent auditors to ensure corporations are not violating workers rights and replicating racial biases in the employment process.** To better protect workers with precarious employment statuses and non-residency statuses, **panelists also called on the government to reduce the barriers to obtaining permanent residency, increase standards and mandate support for Asian workers in precarious roles.** Further, speakers called for the skills of **professional immigrants to be recognized when they immigrate to Canada, as this group often ends up in precarious and dangerous working conditions without access to social services and rights.**

### Precarious employment:

Precarious employment is employment that meets one or all of these characteristics: low-wage, lacking legal protections and standards, unpredictable, and unstable. Workers in these jobs frequently have little control over their schedules, work conditions and pay, and have few avenues through which to protect themselves from poor treatment. The term also includes work that is legally unrecognized or criminalized—such as sex work.

### KEY TAKEAWAY 4

#### ADDRESSING INEQUITIES REQUIRES COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DISAGGREGATED, RACE-BASED DATA

Much like in other panel discussion areas, speakers in this group were concerned with the lack of disaggregated racial and ethnic data. Many voiced that it is necessary to collect data this way as members of different Asian Canadian communities experience racism and its impacts in unique ways. **Panelists called for the federal government to commit to collecting disaggregated data to develop strategies for reducing employment discrimination, including the need to collect data regarding precarious occupations to identify the industries and roles which most urgently need reform.**

“ So as we prepare for the post-pandemic economic recovery, we really need to know what is in store for us. We need all levels of government to collect this aggregated race-based data to better measure and understand the differential impact of government policies and practices on different racialized groups. We need to strengthen the federal Employment Equity Act, and make sure all the provinces and territories have similar legislation. ”

–Panelist

## PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Spread awareness of Asian Canadian poverty and ensure that the economic struggles of Asians do not go unnoticed by the government or by the general public.
- Develop stronger protections in the Employment Equity Act for Asians and other workers of colour.
- Mandate diversity and inclusion training for private organizations.
- Form human rights commissions or independent auditors to ensure corporations are not violating workers' rights and replicating racial biases in the employment process.
- Commit to collecting disaggregated data in order to develop strategies for reducing employment discrimination, including the need to collect data regarding precarious occupations in order to identify the industries and roles which most urgently need reformation.
- Recognize skilled and professional immigrants, as this group often ends up in precarious and dangerous labour situations.
- Recognize skilled and professional immigrants, as this group often ends up in precarious and dangerous working conditions without access to social services and rights.



# GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING AND COALITION BUILDING

The following is a list of questions that were asked to panelists during sessions related to grassroots organizing and coalition building.

**DAY ONE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What are the consequences of historic structures?
- What are priorities for what needs to change in order to combat and eliminate these impacts?
- Who needs to be convinced/involved to make the necessary changes?

**DAY TWO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What do we want to see changed in the grassroots sector?
- What do we need to accomplish these goals?
- What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
- Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
- What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading, and who needs to be at the table?

Panelists who were part of the discussion on grassroots organizing and coalition building focussed on the importance of building capacity and strengthening networks to advance collective goals for justice. Many reflected on network and resource gaps including the lack of funding and under-resourced leaders who often organize in the community in addition to their full-time paid jobs. Many also spoke to the shifting narrative of generational organizing work. Panelists talked about the shifting desire to have “a seat at the table.” Previous generations of organizers fought for a seat at the decision-making table, while younger generations of organizers question the goal of being at a table that was never designed to be inclusive. Panelists all recognized that folks who do grassroots organizing show up in different ways. Further, speakers emphasized that Asian Canadian communities, racialized and equity-deserving communities should be given space and priority to tell their own stories and histories.

“ Our elders fought for a seat at the table, and a lot of other people are saying no, we don’t want to sit at that table. This table is flawed. We need to build our own table. ”  
-Panelist

“ It’s really about giving space back. Not just sharing it and not just giving one seat at the table...it permeates everything that happens in those professions... are the folks that we’re talking about, are they actually here or are we speaking on behalf of them? So, yeah, we need to give up some of that space and let cultural communities tell their own stories. ”  
-Panelist

**“A seat at the table” metaphor:**

The metaphor of having “a seat at the table” is frequently used to describe which groups and individuals have a voice in decision-making processes and governance, and which are left out. Panelists at the Forum frequently employed the metaphor when discussing next steps, but also challenged and critiqued the metaphor and the notion that Asian Canadian and other IBPOC communities should primarily be fighting to be represented at the decision-making table, rather than dismantling the systemic racism and structural inequality that built the table.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Key takeaway #1: Broad coalition building requires solidarity across generations, ethnicities and race
- Key takeaway #2: Equitable funding distribution is essential to address gaps in resourcing among grassroots organizations
- Key takeaway #3: Evidence-based, quantitative and qualitative research is needed to capture the Asian Canadian diaspora's lived experiences and support decision-making based on the most urgent needs

### KEY TAKEAWAY 1

#### BROAD COALITION BUILDING REQUIRES SOLIDARITY ACROSS GENERATIONS, ETHNICITIES AND RACE

The panelists' conversations on coalition building highlighted the necessity of proactively building coalitions and showing solidarity across generations, ethnicity and race. Multiple panelists described how in their experiences, organizing within the Asian community tends to silo groups by age and ethnicity. Panelists shared that instead, they want to **build more multi-generational and multi-ethnic coalitions to improve mentorship opportunities and pool resources to strengthen organizational capacity**. Similarly, the panelists emphasized the importance of proactively demonstrating solidarity and aiding Indigenous, Black and other racially marginalized groups. The panelists want to ensure that grassroots and community organizers would be able to provide support to the most vulnerable groups, such as sex workers, and to not exclude community members by siloing groups from each other.

“ I see capacity building as critical for communities gaining the ability to be self determined. ”

–Panelist

“ Putting our foot down and saying we're not going to do this data, you know wrangling for you for free, you know, and we're not going to do all the legwork for free [...] and it's hard because often if we don't do it it doesn't get done right so there's that double edged sword of. You want to make sure the folks in your community who are giving their expertise and their time are compensated for that time but at the same time if you're not stepping up you know it's not going to get done at all or will completely get forgotten in the process. ”

–Panelist

### KEY TAKEAWAY 2

#### EQUITABLE FUNDING DISTRIBUTION IS ESSENTIAL TO ADDRESS GAPS IN RESOURCING AMONG GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

Funding was a primary concern for the panelists. Grassroots organizing relies on volunteers and unpaid labour. Panelists want to see **adequate funding to create paid jobs that pay a living wage** to build organizational capacity. Sustained support of paid employment in this sector would help build up institutional knowledge within grassroots organizations and help organizations to navigate challenges such as submitting funding applications and advocating for more grant allocation to Asian Canadian groups by mainstream funders. **Multiple panelists asked for more support from the federal government but were also open to private support**. In addition to sustained and reliable funding, the panelists also pointed out the importance of diversity among the organizations funded. Often, smaller, grassroots-organizing community groups do not receive enough support for their work compared to larger organizations.

### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

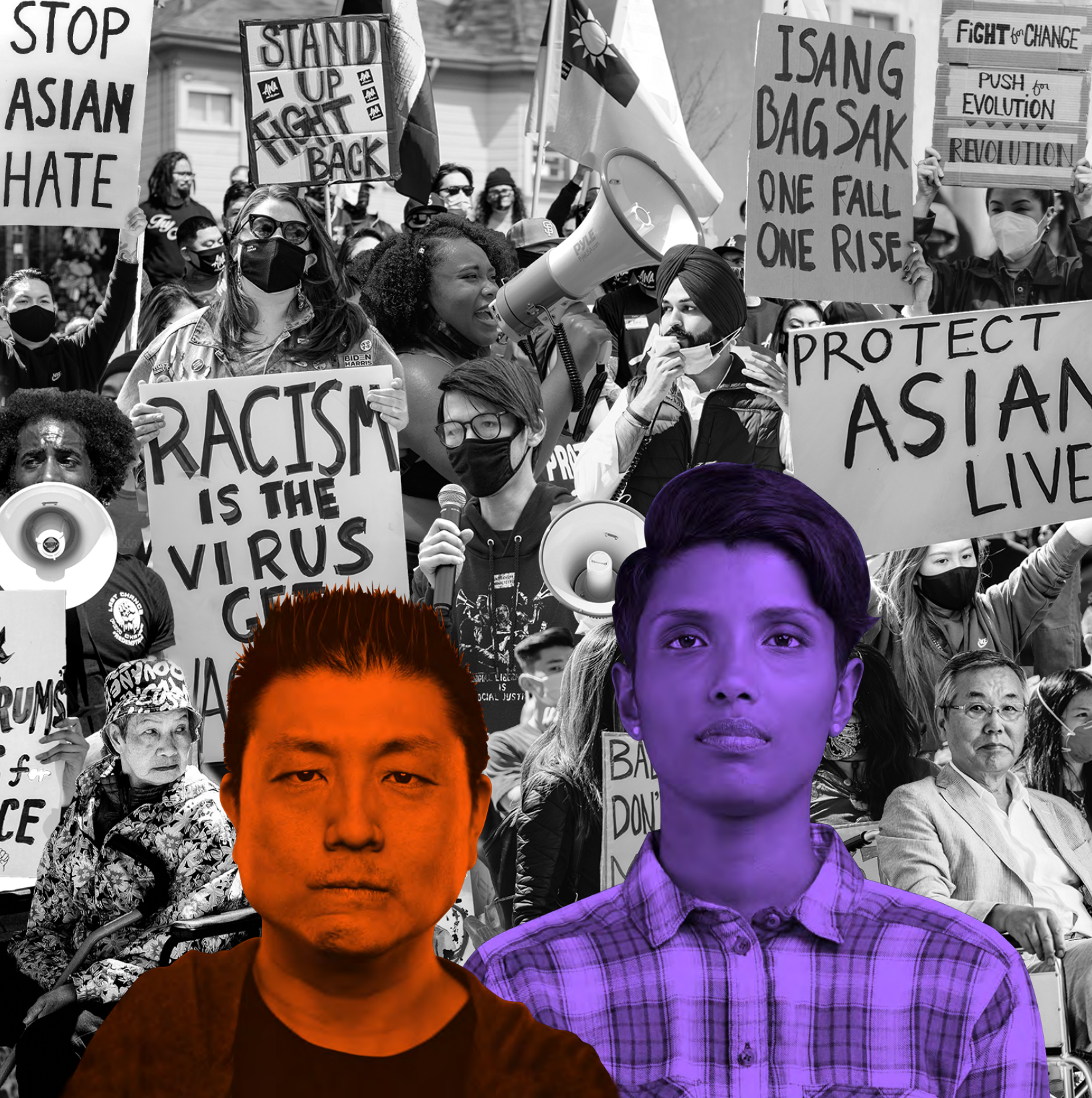
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#### EVIDENCE-BASED, QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IS NEEDED TO CAPTURE THE ASIAN CANADIAN DIASPORA'S LIVED EXPERIENCES AND SUPPORT DECISION-MAKING BASED ON THE MOST URGENT NEEDS

Like many other sector breakouts, the panelists also advocated for the government to collect race-based, disaggregated data. In addition, **panelists would like to see funding for grassroots and community organizations to conduct evidence-based, quantitative and qualitative research that more adequately captures the Asian Canadian diaspora's lived experience.** With this information, community advocates can better understand and engage with disaffected community members who are excluded from decision-making.

#### PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Build more multi-generational and multi-ethnic coalitions to improve mentorship opportunities and pool resources to strengthen organizational capacity.
- Acquire more support and funding from the federal government and private sector to build organizational capacity.
- Acquire funding for grassroots and community organizations to conduct evidence-based, quantitative and qualitative research that better captures the Asian Canadian diaspora's lived experience.



EDUCATION



The following is a list of questions that were asked to panelists in the session about education.

#### DAY ONE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What are the consequences of historical structures?
- What are priorities for what needs to change in order to combat and eliminate these impacts?
- Who needs to be convinced/involved to act in order to make the necessary changes?

#### DAY TWO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do we want to see changed in the education sector?
- What do we need to accomplish these goals?
- What systems or reporting is required to ensure accountability to accomplish these goals?
- Who else do we need to include in these discussions?
- What are the next steps (at least 2-3) immediately following the Forum? Who should be leading and who needs to be at the table?

With regard to Education and anti-Asian racism, panelists shared a number of reflections and calls to action. Conversations across both Forum days centred around the need for diversification of school curriculum at all education levels, as well as diversification of educators and decision-makers. On Day One of the Forum, several panelists highlighted concerns regarding the harmful and embedded impacts of the Model Minority Myth and Yellow Peril, topics which have been raised across multiple discussion topics at the Forum, but have a particular weight in education as these racist stereotypes impact the way learners are perceived and treated in educational environments. On Day Two of the Forum, many student panelists shared concerns about the inequitable distribution of labour when it comes to anti-racism work at higher education institutions.

### Yellow Peril:

The term “Yellow Peril” refers to negative and racist representations that portray Asians as a threat or menace to “Western” society, thus requiring their suppression, exclusion and/or removal for the benefit of maintaining Western society for those who are defined as white. These representations originated in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, and were used as justifications for violence (such as the 1907 anti-Asian riot in Vancouver) and for imposing racist laws targeting Asians such as stripping Asians of the right to vote and to own land, denial of employment in industries reserved for whites, and immigration exclusion and the dispossession and removal of those considered too successful and thus a threat to the wealth and well-being of those considered white and Western. Tropes describing the rising threat of Asia and Asians are still employed today to justify racism towards Asians.

Overall, there were five key takeaways that emerged through the panel discussions on Anti-Asian racism in the education tables.

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Key Takeaway #1: Incorporate culturally considerate and diverse educational curriculum and viewpoints
- Key Takeaway #2: Achieve greater IBPOC educator representation and mandate cultural sensitivity training
- Key Takeaway #3: Need for an Asian Canadian resource hub
- Key Takeaway #4: Institutions need to address and be accountable for acts of anti-Asian racism
- Key Takeaway #5: Engage in broad and inclusive consultations focussed on the topic of educational systems

“ I advocate for culturally responsive curricula that values the knowledge of Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, that destabilizes Eurocentrism as the centre of education and culture. ”  
-Panelist

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 1

##### INCORPORATING CULTURALLY CONSIDERATE AND DIVERSE EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM AND VIEWPOINTS IS NEEDED TO ADDRESS HISTORICALLY EUROCENTRIC CURRICULA

Panelists emphasized the urgency for governments and politicians to reform K-12 curriculum and include more IBPOC histories and viewpoints, particularly Indigenous histories and viewpoints. In particular, several panelists spoke to the influence of the Yellow Peril discourse and the Model Minority Myth in historically shaping teacher education and curriculum, and how this impacts the way students see themselves reflected in school. Some also spoke to how racism in post-secondary spaces manifest differently from racism in K-12 education. Language discrimination was also mentioned by panelists as a key concern, and there is a need to reform the English as a second language (ESL) system. All **panelists urged higher education instructors to incorporate more IBPOC-centred works in course syllabi**, at every education level.

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 2

##### WE MUST ACHIEVE GREATER IBPOC EDUCATOR REPRESENTATION AND MANDATE CULTURAL SENSITIVITY TRAINING

Speakers were interested in improving the representation of IBPOC teachers in the education system as a means to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity among educators. This can include hiring more IBPOC staff and educators so that Asian youths may have role models and feel a greater sense of belonging, but can extend further to ensuring that all educators regardless of racialization or marginalization, have a sense of cultural awareness.

**Panelists called for teachers to undergo mandatory cultural sensitivity training as part of their teachers education**, and many panelists also suggested **reviewing, improving and diversifying hiring criteria and practices in order to combat discrimination against IBPOC educators during hiring processes**.

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 3

##### THERE IS A NEED FOR AN ASIAN CANADIAN RESOURCE HUB TO SUPPORT ASIAN CANADIAN EDUCATORS AND MAKE RESOURCES MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR EDUCATORS OF DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS

**Many panelists brought up the need for a collective resource hub - ideally in the form of a website or digital hub**. Such a network would provide support to current Asian Canadian educators and would make these resources more accessible for educators of different backgrounds, and from different provinces and territories. This network would also provide materials that all educators could use when teaching Asian Canadian history in their classrooms.

“ I think the basic for for those of us who are fighting white supremacy within the educational sector is to really understand that you have every right to be represented, to have your experiences, even in the contemporary to be reflected in the contemporary moment as opposed to having to wait years and years for somebody to write about the farmers' protest, for example, right in India or for somebody to write about things that are happening in the now. ”  
-Panelist

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 4

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##### INSTITUTIONS NEED TO ADDRESS AND BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR ACTS OF ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

Students raised concerns that educators may offload the work of anti-racism onto them, as opposed to enacting change at higher levels. Many felt that there is significantly less being done at higher education institutions than within K-12 education, and called for structural changes at institutional levels. **Panelists called for institutions to be accountable for improving existing reporting systems for hate crimes, and to discontinue protecting perpetrators of racial violence on campus.** Students also shared that they are interested in remaining advisors on these issues, but believe that they should not bear the primary responsibility for developing solutions. They called for institutions to be proactive in combating racism, rather than reactive and responsive to particular violences when they have already occurred.

#### KEY TAKEAWAY 5

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##### ENGAGING IN BROAD AND INCLUSIVE CONSULTATIONS FOCUSED ON THE TOPIC OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IS NECESSARY TO ADVANCE THESE CONVERSATIONS

Across two days of discussions, panelists concluded that there is a **need for broader consultation focussed on education systems.** This should involve more stakeholders, including racialized community leaders, teacher unions, school trustees, grassroots organizers and individuals with lived experiences of racism within the education system. Many panelists were interested in continuing these conversations sparked by the Forum in order to discuss concrete solutions with other key stakeholders identified during the Forum.

#### PROPOSED DIRECTIONS

- Incorporate more IBPOC-centred works in course syllabi, particularly in higher education.
- Ensure that teachers undergo mandatory cultural sensitivity training as part of their formal education.
- Review, improve and diversifying hiring criteria and practices in order to combat discrimination against IBPOC educators.
- Develop a collective resource hub – ideally in the form of a website or digital hub.
- Hold institutions accountable for improving existing reporting systems for hate crimes, and to stop protecting perpetrators of racial violence on campuses.
- Engage in broad consultations focussed on education systems.

# Francophone Session

During the very first panel on Day One, the objectives of the Forum were presented in French before the panelists proceeded with the discussion on anti-Asian racism in francophone contexts. The conversation, loosely guided by questions from panelists and the audience, centred around four themes. First, the panelists spoke about the impacts of being racialized and experiencing racism from a young age, particularly through the lens of their own personal experience. **They agreed that being exposed to racist taunts and marginalization when growing up has a profound effect on how we formulate our identities, and these experiences can contribute to internalized racism. These impacts are even more complicated for Asian adoptees raised by white parents, who are likely to find navigating their own identities to be difficult.** Asian children of first-generation immigrants can also carry the burden of being “translator children,” having to translate interactions and documents for their non-francophone/allophone parents. This can result in them also experiencing the brunt of racism and microaggressions during such interactions.

**The panel also emphasized the importance of intersectionality when discussing anti-Asian racism, particularly with regard to gender, sexuality and class.** In terms of gender, they noted how the sexism and racism facing Asian women are very different from the experiences of white women or Asian men. Likewise, Asian members of the LGBTQ+ community can feel like a “double minority,” which is the compounded effect of racism, homophobia and/or transphobia. Moreover, the panelists illustrated how Asians, and particularly new immigrants, continue to face economic inequality. They talked about a “double crisis” as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic: new immigrants are not only experiencing the spike in anti-Asian racism, but also poverty and a lack of socioeconomic support from governments. Some highlighted the absence of discourse and policies addressing the needs of new immigrants.

Third, the panel discussed the perception of immigrants in Quebec and their francophone context, i.e., being a linguistic minority in Canada. **They noted that the emphasis on preserving French language and culture in Quebec can be instrumentalized to promote xenophobia, as discourse surrounding “cultural values” can feed the misconception that immigrants are a threat to Quebec.** The importance of the French language in Quebec can fuel the idea that there are “good” and “bad” immigrants based on their grasp of French. However, it is clear that Asian people who are fluent in French still experience racism and discrimination, be it overt, implicit or institutional.

Fourth, the panelists proposed different ways to support Asian communities in francophone contexts and fight against anti-Asian racism. **They all agreed that there needed to be more support and policies tailored for Asians in francophone communities, particularly initiatives and resources geared towards Asians that account for intersectional identities.** The challenges faced by individuals of Asian descent are often overlooked or ignored, and this invisibilization of Asian issues is reflected in the absence of government policies that support our communities. Similarly, some panelists also called for a sustainable redistribution of resources to immigrant and newcomer communities in order to address racial and economic inequality.

Finally, they spoke about exploring alternative methods of healing after experiencing racism. These methods include safe spaces created by and for Asians that facilitate frank discussions about trauma, and more media and resources about the diverse range of Asian experiences in Quebec and other francophone contexts. Similar initiatives are already being organized by Asians in Quebec, such as the *Groupe d'Entraide Contre le Racisme Envers les Asiatiques au Québec*. There are promising possibilities to build from this community-grounded work to ensure that Asian Canadian populations in Quebec can access and pursue healing in a way that feels safe, supported and culturally relevant.

# Future Considerations

“To move forward and do better, we must acknowledge Canada’s history as a settler colonial state as well as the violence, displacement and exclusion of Asian Canadians. Claims of multiculturalism, tolerance and innocence from those in power should not stop us from examining these root causes and their impacts (continued and past) on intersectional communities.”

–Panelist

Throughout the two days and across sector tables, we heard many important and recurring themes from the discussions:

#### **COMBATING EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION AND ADDRESSING PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT:**

Asians in Canada are living in greater poverty than white Canadians. The compounding effects of employment discrimination, precarious or part-time work combined with the lack of citizenship or residency status creates unsafe and poor working conditions for Asians in the country. Better protections from senior levels of government are needed for Asians of all statuses.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGING WHITE SUPREMACY AS A KEY ORIGIN OF ANTI-ASIAN RACISM:**

Anti-Asian racism stems from Canada’s reality as a settler colonial state, a nation produced by white supremacy, as well as the violence, displacement and exclusion of Asian Canadians. Claims of multiculturalism, tolerance and innocence from those in power should not stop us from examining these root causes and their impacts (continued and past) on intersectional communities.

#### **DRAWING ON ASIAN CANADIANS’ TRANSNATIONAL BACKGROUNDS AND HISTORICAL INTERGENERATIONAL MOVEMENTS AND ACTIVISM:**

We can address anti-Asian racism by drawing upon the transnational context of many Asian Canadians and intergenerational movements and activism. These include, but are not limited to:

- The anti-W5 movement in 1979-80, where community groups banded together across racial lines against CTV’s racist depiction of “foreign students” taking university spots away from (white) Canadians. CTV apologized a year later.

- The UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP) launched in 2020, as it is a model that implements the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

- Gaining a “seat at the table” analogy was brought up by many during the event; however, we also need to realize that the ‘table’ is itself structurally inequitable and built on systems of oppression and white supremacy. Emerging dialogue suggested that we may need to build a new table that includes all generations, gives the most marginalized a voice, and is not founded upon excluding many while giving only a select few a seat.

#### **INTEGRATING CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND HUMILITY:**

Cultural humility is an important theme that emerged across concurrent panels. The Justice and Education working groups highlighted this with regards to teaching future lawyers and students, while the Media and Grassroots Organizing working groups illustrated how the lack of cultural humility has led to uneven funding structures and white, Eurocentric storytellers telling harmful stories about Asian Canadians.

#### **THE NEED FOR CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES AND ACCESS TO SUPPORT IN ASIAN LANGUAGES:**

The lack of culturally appropriate health care and social services for Asians and non-English speakers creates uneven health, social and economic outcomes. Unpaid family caregivers, precarious health-care workers and volunteers are filling in gaps that need to be structurally addressed. In the short term, funding for interpreters and translated materials in health and social services is needed.

#### **GARNERING REPRESENTATION WHILE AVOIDING TOKENISM:**

While representation of Asian Canadians matters, more work needs to be done to improve representation in all the fields covered by the sector breakouts. Critical change also needs to occur in terms of diversifying funding and positions of leadership and decision-making. There are longstanding unaddressed barriers in academia, particularly the trap of so-called “meritocracy” which perpetuates the Model Minority Myth, and strengthens a “secret curriculum” (family connections, volunteering, resume padding) often inaccessible to Asian Canadians, especially those from first generation and working class backgrounds.

#### **CHANGE NEEDS TO COME FROM MULTIPLE SECTORS:**

Change cannot come from the federal level alone. All levels of government need to adopt frameworks of anti-racist action in policy-making and funding decisions. Furthermore, private entities, NGOs, academic institutions and non-Asian communities have an essential role in this work. Agency comes from everybody; between the silent observer and activist, there are varying levels of participation in between, such as those sending emails to political leaders, those participating in surveys, and those who are supporting victims of anti-Asian racism by actively listening.

#### **NEED FOR DISAGGREGATED, RACE-BASED DATA:**

In order to facilitate greater collaboration across different fields and sectors of society, the disaggregation and reform of quantitative data should come alongside increased attention and resources allocated to culturally sensitive quantitative and qualitative research about Asian Canadian communities. Collection of data is a “two way street”; sharing data with surveyed communities makes them a greater stakeholder in the research process and in governance, increasing comfort and participation. Translation of research findings into non-official languages increases accessibility. Asian Canadians need to be involved in this collection of data, and more funding needs to be allocated for the collection of disaggregated data.

#### **INCREASING FUNDING AND REDUCING BARRIERS TO ACCESSING IT:**

All sector panels reiterated a need for more funding and a reduction in barriers to accessing funding. When funding organizations do not take into account intersections of identity, it is challenging for community organizations to access the funding required to undertake complex and resource-intensive work, often aimed at supporting the most marginalized members of our communities. Funding and language barriers that target non-citizens and immigrants should also be addressed. All sectors wanted more long-term funding to build capacity and resilience in their sectors.

#### **CREATING GREATER URGENCY FOR CHANGE:**

Resoundingly, panelists and participants spoke to the urgent need for change. The Forum topics and discussions allowed us to collectively acknowledge and unpack the past and ongoing effects of anti-Asian racism, yet also made space to envision a future where diversity is central to Canadian identity rather than being a box to check. Throughout the Forum, we heard that there is incredible energy, knowledge and experience to push for change, both within existing institutional structures, and by dismantling and building new structures. Creating further opportunities to hear and learn from each other will allow us to harness the energy of young activists, many of whom are students, and draw from the insights and experience of different generations to collectively forge a path ahead.

# Moving Forward

While this Forum was a first step to help combat Anti-Asian racism, there is much work that needs to be done. During the Forum, the following actions were announced:

- To build on this Forum, Ryerson / “X” University will host the National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism: Building Solidarities on November 9 and 10, 2021. The Forum aims to deepen our collective understanding of the subtle and overt ways systemic racism shapes higher education in Canada by connecting and amplifying the voices of people from across our university communities. For more information, visit [www.ryerson.ca/national-forum-on-anti-asian-racism/](http://www.ryerson.ca/national-forum-on-anti-asian-racism/)
- As an ongoing commitment to creating capacity to work with those who came together for the Forum and identified issues outlined in this Report, UBC will be creating a Centre for Asian Canadian Research and Engagement.
- The Asia Pacific Foundation will be advocating for BC K-12 curriculum reform to improve representation of Asian stories.

These upcoming initiatives will help advance dialogue, learning and action to respond to ongoing systemic anti-Asian racism in Canadian communities. The Forum revealed several callouts for continued work within and outside of institutions, and panelists all shared a collective desire to develop strategies and actions to build a more inclusive society that recognizes, values and supports all individuals, regardless of their racial backgrounds and identities. This work is challenging and complex, and requires sustained funding, resources and supports across all levels of government.

Given the broad interest and participation across the two days of the Forum, it is clear that providing space and structure for discussion is an important part of collective learning and reflection that underpin structural change. There is great potential to continue to build intergenerational and cross-institutional knowledge sharing at local and national levels. The key takeaways and guiding directions identified throughout this report can help chart a path ahead so that all Canadians feel empowered and supported to actively participate in anti-Asian racism efforts.

# Glossary

**50-30 Challenge:** The [50-30 Challenge](#) is an initiative spearheaded by Canada’s federal government, diversity and equity organizations, and business leaders, and which aims to improve diversity in the corporate sector. The Challenge asks that organizations publicly commit to: (1) achieving gender parity by ensuring that women make up 50 per cent of senior management and board members; (2) achieving significant representation of other underrepresented groups including IBPOC individuals, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ2 individuals by ensuring that these groups make up at least 30 per cent of senior management and board members.

**Allyship:** Allyship is a long-term process of building relationships based on trust, consistency and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people. Allyship is not self-defined—our work and our efforts must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with.

**“A seat at the table” metaphor:** The metaphor of having “a seat at the table” is frequently used to describe which groups and individuals have a voice in decision-making processes and governance, and which are left out. Panelists at the Forum frequently employed the metaphor when discussing next steps, but also challenged and critiqued the metaphor and the notion that Asian Canadian and other IBPOC communities should primarily be fighting to be represented at the decision-making table, rather than dismantling the systemic racism and structural inequality that built the table.

**Asian Canadian:** Asian Canadian is an umbrella term that refers to all Canadians who are of Asian descent, or identify as such. It can be used as both a demographic grouping, or as a political and social identity. The term originated as a Canadian counterpart to the more widely used term “Asian American,” which arose in the late 1960s as a term of empowerment and coalition building between those who had been racialized and targeted as “Asian” or “Oriental.” Although similar terms for joint advocacy such as “Asianadian” and “Asian Canadian” arose in Canada, they did not develop the widespread usage that the terms “Asian American” and “Asian American Pacific Islander” have in the United States. Some find the term “Asian Canadian” to be both too limited and too encompassing. For example, critics have raised concerns over how the term “Asian Canadian” privileges Canadian nationality and citizenship, while others have pointed out that using the term to aggregate communities with very different histories and situations can perpetuate overgeneralizations that erase the needs of the most marginalized communities.

**Bamboo Ceiling:** Asian Canadians are underrepresented at senior levels within organizations and institutions in both the public and private sectors, and the term “bamboo ceiling” refers to the specific forms of employment discrimination and systemic barriers that prevent those racialized as Asian from attaining or even being considered for management and executive positions.

**Community lawyering:** Community lawyering uses a grassroots-approach to providing legal services by integrating lawyers into the community, and giving community members a voice within legal proceedings and services.

**Culturally appropriate elder care:** [BC Care](#) defines culturally appropriate care as supportive, meaningful and beneficial. It facilitates delivery of care to seniors that aligns with cultural values, beliefs and ways of life.



**Ethnic politics:** Ethnic politics refers to policies and political strategies that are centred around making appeals aimed at disparate ethnic groups, and that attempt to build political support for candidates on the basis of the perceived ethnic identity of voters. In contrast, political advocacy based upon anti-racism generally attempts to build coalitions and solidarity by ending and dismantling policies and practices that divide and control ethnic communities by marginalizing them, often pitting them against each other for limited resources designated for “ethnic” communities while core funding and resources maintain ongoing systemic racism in institutions.

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI):** EDI is an acronym that stands for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and is an umbrella term for policies and practices that aim to address systems and histories of discrimination and exclusion in programs and institutions. Each facet of EDI refers to a specific goal that is necessary for reducing systemic discrimination. Equity refers to the removal of barriers and the reduction of systemic discrimination, which is necessary to achieve fair treatment of all individuals and groups. Diversity refers to demographic differences (for example, but not limited to race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, migration status and more), and puts the focus on groups who remain particularly underrepresented and marginalized. Inclusion refers to actions, practices and policies with goals of overcoming historical exclusion and which ensure that all individuals affected by an institution's practices are valued, respected and supported.

**Intersectionality:** First coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality is an analytical framework through which to understand the complex and cumulative ways in which systems of oppression interact, overlap and combine with each other to function as mutually constitutive rather than as isolated or distinct forms. Intersectionality as a critical approach can reveal how a single-issue approach to addressing discrimination and exclusion can work to reproduce further injustices. For example, strategies to promote the advancement of women can result in the differential result of primarily white women being advanced while women considered non-white remain relegated to low status, low pay or precarious employment.

**Meritocracy:** A meritocracy is a political system that assumes that political power, political positions and economic rewards are bestowed upon the most deserving individuals and groups. Though supposed meritocracies often profess to be race neutral, critiques of meritocracy focus on how criteria for merit can in practice reinforce existing white supremacy and exclusions of those who are considered undeserving. Anti-racism requires questioning how such criteria are defined and by whom, and how people who already are in positions of power and privilege often reproduce definitions of merit that serve to maintain existing inequities.

**Model Minority Myth:** The Model Minority Myth refers to the notion that Asians in Western society have overcome past discrimination through individual effort and hard work to become a disproportionately socioeconomically successful minority group. This mythology has been used to argue that inequities of the past can be overcome through hard work alone. In addition, the Model Minority Myth serves to elevate Asians as a “model” for overcoming racism, and thus justifies the ongoing exclusion of other racialized non-whites. In both Canada and the United States, the Model Minority Myth distorts ongoing realities of discrimination and systemic racism. Asian Canadians and Asian Americans are in fact disproportionately overrepresented below the poverty line and in low-income, precarious employment, including among the vulnerable front-line work in the health care and service sectors.

**Performative activism:** Performative activism is a colloquial term referring pejoratively to those who are perceived to be politically active out of a desire to advance their own social standing and garner attention, for example, by championing superficial or ineffective actions that do not in effect change ongoing inequities.

**Precarious employment:** Precarious employment is employment that meets one or all of these characteristics: low-wage, lacking legal protections and standards, unpredictable and unstable. Workers in these jobs frequently have little control over their schedules, work conditions and pay, and have few avenues through which to protect themselves from poor treatment. The term also includes work that is legally unrecognized or criminalized—such as sex work.

**Race-based data:** By collecting data using a wide range of categories but not disaggregating data by racial categories that have been shaped and created by historical racism and white supremacy, the ongoing effects of racism become difficult or impossible to perceive, analyze and counteract. Disaggregated data that includes racial categories allows for analyses that take into account the differential and often disproportionate impacts suffered by non-whites in Canadian society. Without racially disaggregated data, it is impossible to specify and analyze the different experiences and the everyday impact of racism on different racialized individuals and communities.

**White supremacy and racialization:** White supremacy refers to the processes by which people are racialized as white and non-white in order to provide preferential access to resources to those considered white, and to deny resources and privileges to those categorized as non-white races. More broadly, the term is used to describe how systemic racism creates and maintains social, political, legal and economic racism that creates and maintains social, political, legal and economic regimes which were originally created under settler colonialism to enforce these differences in resources and the historical and ongoing advantages of being considered white.

**Yellow peril:** The term “yellow peril” refers to negative and racist representations that portray Asians as a threat or menace to “Western” society, thus requiring their suppression, exclusion and/or removal for the benefit of maintaining Western society for those who are defined as white. These representations originated in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, and were used as justifications for violence (such as the 1907 anti-Asian riot in Vancouver) and for imposing racist laws targeting Asians such as stripping Asians of the right to vote and to own land, denial of employment in industries reserved for white, and immigration exclusion and the dispossession and removal of those considered too successful and thus a threat to the wealth and well-being of those considered white and Western. Tropes describing the rising threat of Asia and Asians are still employed today to justify racism towards Asians.

# Appendix



# Appendix A – Steering Committee Members

- Abigail Cheung, *Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, BC*
- Amy Go, *Social Worker, Past President of Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice*
- Dr. Amy Tan, *Palliative care & family doctor*
- Barbara Lee, *Vancouver Asian Film Festival (VAFF)*
- Carol Liao, *Allard School of Law, UBC*
- Chris Lee, *University of British Columbia*
- Doris C., *Project 1907*
- Elena Lam, *Butterfly Asian, and Migrant Sex Workers Network*
- Ellen K., *Project 1907*
- Henry Yu, *University of British Columbia*
- Janice Fukakusa, *Ryerson University*
- Dr. Jaswant Guzder, *Professor, Centre for Child Development and Mental Health Institute of Family and Community Psychiatry*
- Jessica Chen, *Wabi Sabi Planning Laboratories*
- Jing Wen (Jenny) Liu, *Ryerson University Health Network Toronto*
- Dr. Kenneth Fung, MD, *University of Toronto, University Health Network, Society for the Study of Psychiatry and Culture*
- Lara Honrado, *former City of Vancouver planner*
- Lisa Uyeda, *Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre;*
- Lorene Oikana, *National Association of Japanese Canadians*
- Mary Kitagawa, *University British Columbia Asian Canadian and Asian Migration (ACAM) Studies, community supporter*
- Renay Egami, *University of British Columbia, Faculty of Cultural and Creative Studies*
- Rickey Yada, *University of British Columbia, Faculty of Land and Food Systems*
- Satwinder Bains, *University of Fraser Valley, Social, Cultural, & Media Studies*
- Shirley Nakata, *University of British Columbia*
- Tosh Kitagawa, *University of British Columbia, Asian Canadian and Asian Migration (ACAM) Studies, community supporter*
- Victoria Lee, *Fraser Health*
- Wendy Yip, *University of British Columbia*
- Zool Suleman, *Lawyer*
- Jackie Liang, *Toronto's Nail Technicians' Network*
- King Wan, *Pacific Unit 280 and Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society*

# Appendix



# Appendix B - Forum Recordings

## DAY ONE

- [Welcome and Opening Remarks](#)
- [Panel: Why are we here? Surfacing the impacts of Anti-Asian Racism](#)
- [Panel: Common Cause? Coalition-building across Asian Canadian communities](#)
- [Panel: What Does Media Have To Do With Anti-Asian Racism?](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #1: Education](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #2: Health](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #3: Justice System](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #4: Representation in Media, Arts, and Culture](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #5: Issues in Housing, Social Services, Elder Care](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #6: Government, Policy, Political Representation](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #7: Economic Issues: Employment, Business](#)
- [Concurrent panelist Session #8: Grassroots Organizing and Coalition Building](#)
- [Plenary panel and summary of Day 1 concurrent sessions](#)

## DAY TWO

- [Summary of Day 1 and Day 2 outputs](#)
- [Keynote and Closing Remarks](#)

# Appendix



# Appendix C - Panelists and Speakers

Aaron Bains	Deborah Lim	Jessie Penner	Monica Anne Batac	Roshni Narain
Abigail Cheung	Diane Lam	John Shiga	Mustafa Ahmed	Santa J. Ono
Ainsley Carry	Donette Chin-Loy Chang	Josephine Wong	Nadia Farinelli	Sarah-Lê Côté
Alex Ash	Doris Chow	JP Catungal	Natasha Jung	Satwinder Bains
Amanda Wan	Edward Ou Jin Lee	Julia Shin Doi	Nathan Ip	Shachi Kurl
Amber Cardenas	Elene Lam	Julie Tran	Nathan Sing	Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra
Amy Go	Ellen K	Julie Yu	Nelly Shin, <i>Member of Parliament - Port Moody-Coquitlam</i>	Sheryl Lightfoot
Amy Tan	Emi Sasagawa	Kai Li	Nicholas-A-Fook	Shirley Nakata
Ananya Mukherjee Reed	Erin Williams	Karen Cho	Niki Sharma, <i>Member of Legislative Assembly - Vancouver-Hastings</i>	Sibo Chen
Andy Pham	Esther Sim	Karen Kobayashi		Sophie Hamisultane
Angela Leong	Excel Garay	Kenneth Fung		Sophie Lui
Anne-Claudie Beaulieu	Fred Mah	Kevin Au-Yeung	Nilesh Patel	Stephanie Cheung
Audrey Kobayashi	Gage Averill	Kimberley Wong	Noorjean Hassam	Stephanie Sarmiento
Avvy Go	Gerald Chan	Lara Honrado	Olivia Lim	Steven Ngo
Barbara Lee	Grayson Lee	Elder Larry Grant	Pamela Sugiman	Stewart Beck
Belle Cheung	Halie (Kwanxwa'logwa)	Leilan Wong	Parsa Alirezaei	Sultana Jahangir
Brad Lee	Bruce	Lorene Oikawa	Patrick Leong	Sun Woo Baik
Brandt Louie	Hanna Cho	Madi Wong	Patti Pon	Sydney Flores
Brian McBay	Henry Yu	Margie Parikh	Pengcheng Fang	Teresa Woo-Paw
Carla Hilario	Hiro Ito	Marissa Largo	Prem Gill	Tetsuro Shigematsu
Carol Liao	Isobel Mackenzie	Honourable Mary Ng, MP	Queenie Choo	Tina Chen
Carolyn Doi	Izumi Sakamoto	Michael Lee, <i>Member of Legislative Assembly - Vancouver - Langara</i>	Rachna Singh, <i>Member of Legislative Assembly - Surrey- Green Timbers</i>	Vicki George
Charles Cong Xu	Jacqueline Louie			Violet Cai
Christine Chen	Janice Fukakusa	Michael Tan	Ratana Stephens	Wendy Yip
Danni Olusanya	Jennifer Chow	Minelle Mahtani	Rickey Yada	Xiaobei Chen
Dean Lawton	Jenny Liu	Mohammed Hashim	Rosel Kim	Zool Suleman
	Jessica Chen			



# Appendix





THE NATIONAL FORUM ON ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

# Resource Kit

These resources were identified during discussions at the National Forum for Anti-Asian Racism, which took place in June 2021.

*Disclaimer: This resource kit contains links to external websites. These links are provided as references to help you identify and locate other resources that may be of interest. Parties other than UBC independently develop and maintain these resources. UBC does not assume responsibility for their accuracy or the appropriateness of the information they contain. UBC does not control the content of, or maintain any type of editorial control over, these resources.*

## ARTICLES

- [UBC and Angus Reid Institute Study on anti-Asian discrimination](#)
- [Anti-Asian Racism in Canada: Where Do We Go from Here? Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada report](#)
- [Asian American Civil Rights Group Urges U.S. Attorney to Drop Case Against University of Tennessee Professor Wrongly Prosecuted Under the “China initiative” After Trial Results in Deadlocked Jury](#)
- [The white elephant in the room: anti-Asian racism in Canada](#)
- [The model minority myth hides the racist and sexist violence experienced by Asian women](#)
- [A tale of Asian triangulation and what that has to do with racism](#)
- [Vancouver Sun article March 24, 1938 “Campaign Against Trade Licenses for Vancouver Japanese Collapses”](#)
- [Viral images Show People of Colour as Anti-Asian Perpetrators. That misses the big picture](#)
- [Review of Anti-Asian Racism Data 2019-2021 that features the data/report](#)

## RESOURCE GUIDES

- [Elimin8hate Style Guide: reporting on Asian Canadian Communities](#)
- [Ryerson Responding to Hate Toolkit](#)
- [#AtlantaSyllabus by Dr. Lori Lopez, Dr. Lisa Ho, and Dr. Erica Kanesaka Kalnay from the Asian American Studies Program, UW-Madison](#)
- [Hollaback! Training to Stop anti-Asian/American and Xenophobic Harassment](#)
- [Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada Resources for Combatting Anti-Asian Racism & Learning About Canadians of Asian Descent](#)
- [Act2endracism Asian Canadian Essential Workers — Feature Stories](#)
- [Butterfly \(Asian and Migrant Sex Workers Support Network\)](#)

#### VIDEO/AUDIO

- [Eyes Open PSA](#)
- [CBC All in a Day with Alan Neal interview with Xiaobei Chen, professor of sociology at Carleton University](#)  
[8 killed in Atlanta Spa Shootings — sparking fear in the Asian community](#)
- [CBC Radio Canada International interview with Yafang Shi on journalism work on gender, race and intersectional issues and thoughts on anti-Asian racism](#)
- [Let's Talk About Microaggressions Video by Act2endracism](#)
- [Model Minority — A History of Silence Video by Act2endracism](#)
- [National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism PSA Videos](#)
- [Please Vote for Me: Documentary Film](#)
- [Self Evident: Asian American's Stories Podcast](#)
- [We Need to Talk About Anti-Asian Hate by The Try Guys](#)

#### COMMUNITY EVENTS

- [ACCT Chinese Canadian Leaders' Summit](#)
- [CRAG Autumn Tigers Screening](#)
- [D'Arcy McGee High School student videos. Students calling out their effects of their experiences with anti-Asian hate. Contact: Danielle Jepson — \[djepson@wqsbc.ca\]\(mailto:djepson@wqsbc.ca\)](#)

#### CALLS FOR ACTION

- [Butterfly \(Asian and Migrant Sex Workers Support Network\) Open Letter: "We cannot tolerate it anymore! Racist attacks being waged by some anti-trafficking organizations against Asian massage parlours and sex workers must end." Sign the statement.](#)

#### ORGANIZATIONS

- [UBC Asian Canadian and Asian Migration Studies](#)
- [Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice](#)
- [Critical Refugee Studies Collective](#)
- [#Elimin8Hate](#)
- [#Elimin8Hate — Report a Racist Incident](#)
- [Healing in Colour](#)
- [Toronto For All](#)
- [Project1907](#)
- [Project Protech](#)
- [Support Asian Canadians Fund](#)
- [Butterfly \(Asian and Migrant Sex Workers Support Network\)](#)  
Email: [cswbutterfly@gmail.com](mailto:cswbutterfly@gmail.com)

#### JOURNALS

- [Inter-Asian Cultural Studies](#)

# Appendix





## The National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism Community Guidelines

The National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism invites attendees to participate in creative and critically engaged dialogue. We are guided by UBC's [Respectful Environment Statement](#) to ensure a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all participants.

### Engagement Guidelines for a Respectful Environment

Creating a respectful dialogical space is a shared responsibility. To foster vigorous and free exchange of ideas, we invite you to be mindful of these guiding principles to ensure everyone is able to participate in a meaningful way:

- Be respectful in your dialogue and treat all speakers, staff, and participants with respect.
- Feel free to take up space and make sure you make space for others.
- Respect the confidentiality of other participants. Take away ideas but not personal or identifying information.
- Expect non-closure. You might have more questions at the end of the Forum, and answers or solutions may not lie within the expertise of speakers and participants.
- Be mindful that everyone comes to this Forum from different walks of life, forms of engagement, and levels of experience or familiarity with concepts or language used. We are here to meet everyone where they are at regardless of background, location, or expertise.
- Welcome multiple viewpoints and speak from your own experiences by using “I” statements.
- Critique with care. Find ways to respectfully critique others and be open to critiques of your own views.
- Exercise caution around sharing any personal or identifying information.



In the event of behaviour or disruptions that are not consistent with the principles outlined above, the organizers may respond with actions that lead up to and include banning or removal from the Forum. Activities that do not align with UBC's [Respectful Environment Statement](#) will not be tolerated. These include but are not limited to:

- Bullying, harassment, or encouraging harm;
- Demeaning or intimidating comments or conduct;
- Verbal aggression, including talking over another person or regularly interrupting others
- Doxing (searching for and publishing identifying or private information about someone without their consent);
- NSFW content (not safe for work content that may contain nudity, intense sexuality, profanity, violence, or other potentially triggering/disturbing subject matter);
- Trolling, spamming, or phishing.

**A dedicated Ombuds person is available throughout the Forum if there is a need to address concerning behaviour or disruptions raised in connection with the Forum. They can be reached at 1-604-827-2209.**

# Appendix





## A Note About Self-Care

It is normal to experience difficult feelings and thoughts when engaging in conversations on racism and anti-racism. These reactions can surface in the moment or at a later time-sometimes days or weeks later.

We encourage you to actively take time to care for and nurture yourself as a way to find balance and meet your needs. You know what is best for you and we hope that you will have the support you need. Below are some suggestions you might consider when reflecting on your self-care practices.

### Care for yourself.

Before, during, and after the Forum, we encourage you to take part in activities that are relaxing, bring you joy, or bring you energy. Take a break, focus on your breath, make a cup of tea, talk to a friend. Be kind to yourself and respect your needs. You know yourself best: how can you take care of yourself in the moment?

### Care for others.

Everyone is joining the conversation with different experiences and types of knowledge. It is important to remember to approach others with empathy and kindness as we engage in the topic of anti-Asian racism. Check-in with members of your community as a way to foster a supportive experience for everyone.

### Have a supportive conversation.

It can be helpful to talk about your experiences with someone in your support network. Reach out to those in your friend, spiritual, familial, or work communities to have a conversation with someone you trust.



During scheduled times throughout the Forum, there will be Supportive Active Listeners available to have conversations with attendees in the moment. Information about how to connect with the Listeners will be shared at the Forum.

## Access your network of resources and services.

Sometimes it is helpful to access resources or services beyond our immediate support networks. Seek out information about what resources are available to you through any workplace, professional or union organizations, academic institutions, community groups, and/or spiritual communities you are connected with. Your family physician and/or primary care clinic can also be an excellent place to start learning more about local resources. A handful of national resources and services will be shared at the Forum.

If you have immediate safety concerns about yourself or others, call 911 or go to your local emergency department.

## Wellbeing Resources

We want you to be emotionally safe and cared for throughout this Forum and afterwards - and encourage you to take care in all the ways that work best for you. You are invited to selectively participate in whatever parts of the Forum feel right, important and/or necessary to you, and then balance that with time to rest, recharge, and recenter. It can be helpful to talk about your experiences with someone in your support network. Reach out to a trusted person in your friend, spiritual, familial, or work communities to have a conversation with someone you trust.

## Supportive Active Listeners

For those who are experiencing a high level of distress and would like to talk to someone in the moment, there is a team of supportive active listeners on standby who are available to have a 15–30-minute conversation with you during the following hours:

- June 10, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. PDT
- June 11, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. PDT and 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. PDT

To speak to someone during the operational hours please use the following zoom information:

<https://ubc.zoom.us/j/63461406057?pwd=WFZwaHRSQmJRTE83dkVoTnBFBk2Mvdz09>

Meeting ID: 634 6140 6057

Passcode: 123456

This service is available in English only.

## Mental Health Resources

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 9-1-1 or go to your nearest hospital. If you need emotional support, help is available.

### [Wellness Together Canada](#)

Mental health and substance use support in multiple languages available 24/7 to all people in Canada and Canadians abroad.

Call 1-866-585-0445 (Adults), 1-888-668-6810 (Youth) or text WELLNESS to 741741 (Adults), 686868 (Youth)

### [Crisis Services Canada](#)

Available to all Canadians seeking support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide,

Call 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET).

### [Kids Help Phone](#)

Available 24 hours a day to Canadians aged 5 to 29 who want confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors.

Call 1-800-668-6868 (toll-free) or text CONNECT to 686868.

### [Hope for Wellness Help Line](#)

Immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada.

Call 1-855-242-3310 (toll-free) or connect to the [online Hope for Wellness chat](#).

### **Local or Provincial Resources**

We recognize that there are many resources available to you depending on where you are located. While not listed, you can also search for provincial or local community/health supports:

- Health authority
- Local [distress centres and crisis organizations](#)
- University student service program
- Employment insurance



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