

the

Winter 2021



# Beetle Feed

Health - Wellbeing - Equality



# CHOSEN

Protecting Your Circle

#ChosenFamily



Black Beetle Health

Health - Wellbeing - Equality

# A Word from the CEO



## **NEWSFLASH:**

*Protect Your Circle: Being Queer isn't about competition. It's about community.*

**I**f this news has come as a shock to you, you'll want to keep reading! I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Being Queer is NOT a competition! It's ALL about community.

You walk into a room full of Queer People of Colour. It's your first time returning to a queer social event since the start of the 'Great Rona'! Much to your own surprise, your heart sinks. "Well, this is overwhelming!", you think to yourself. "Everyone seems so confident." There are endless shades dyed hair, strappy platform shoes, tattoos that tell a story, shaved heads, and a range of well-established septum rings. To your left a conversation is effortlessly unfolding on Black Feminist Theory. To your right, someone erupts in unstifled laughter, as they turn and pose in receipt of praise for the latest ground-breaking pro-Queer TikTok video. You immediately think to yourself, "Am I Queer enough to be in this space!?"

Being Queer is not a competition, much in the same way that life itself is not a competition. With each individual person on their own journey, it is about both helping and inspiring others to reach their fullest potential. What is more, we each have the ability to make choices. These must best align with our capacity, values, and principles, and brings us vibrance and energy.



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# A Word from the CEO

*(continued from page 1)*

The work that we do at Black Beetle Health (promoting health, wellbeing, and equality for racially and sexually minoritised individuals), we do, not for the money, but because what? It aligns with our capacity, values, and principles as humans. It brings us vibrance and energy. We do this by rallying together, encouraging one another to press on when creativity is low, and the greater vision seems hazy. In doing so, we **protect our circle**.

Little is much when your **community** is at the heart of it all.

In unapologetic solidarity,

Harvey A. Kennedy-Pitt, MPH, PGCE, FRSPH (he/him)

CEO | Health Education & Promotion Specialist

Black Beetle Health CIO



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# Thank You To Our Funders

**A**t Black Beetle Health, we would like to give a huge thank you to all of our funders and supporters for enabling us to do more, be more and to reach more LGBTQ+ Black and People of Colour communities across the UK!

[Click here to view our 2021  
BBH Impact Report Video!](#)



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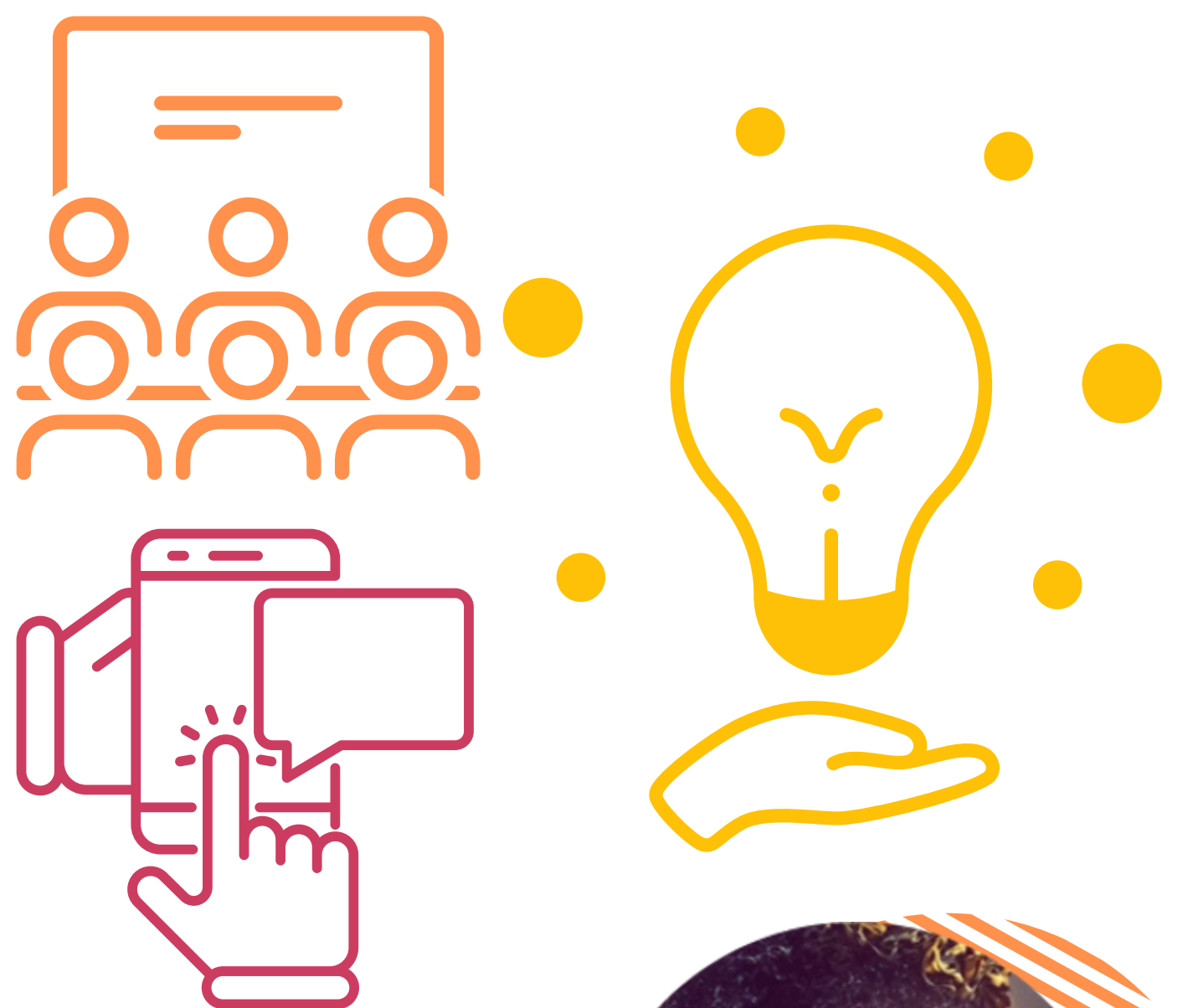
# The Pilot has Taken Off – H.E.A.T. Programme Review

**T**he H.E.A.T. Programme Pilot was completed at the end of December. We are so pleased to report its success. We shared a lot along the way, but we learned just as much.” I am in incredibly grateful to the participants. Their engagement will greatly aid in the delivery of the programme in the future.

We have had a lot of positive comments, but it is the constructive criticism that will help us grow and improve our accessibility. Accessibility is at the centre of everything we do, and we want to be able to empower individuals.



We are already confident that the work we have done so far with the pilot scheme will have a fantastic knock-on effect for QTIPOC. A lot of transformative conversations took place in these sessions. To readers of this article, I encourage you to continue to have these kinds of conversations. These may be challenging at times but are often rewarding. However, more importantly, protect yourself and don't feel it is your duty to educate everyone because we are here to do it for you.



*Elliss Lewin-Turner  
(she/her)*

*Development and  
Communications  
Manager*



# Bringing the H.E.A.T. – Piloting and Data

The H.E.A.T. Programme is a cultural safety development tool designed to combat racism, stigma, and misinformation that negatively affect the health outcomes and experiences of people in the LGBTQ+ BPOC communities.

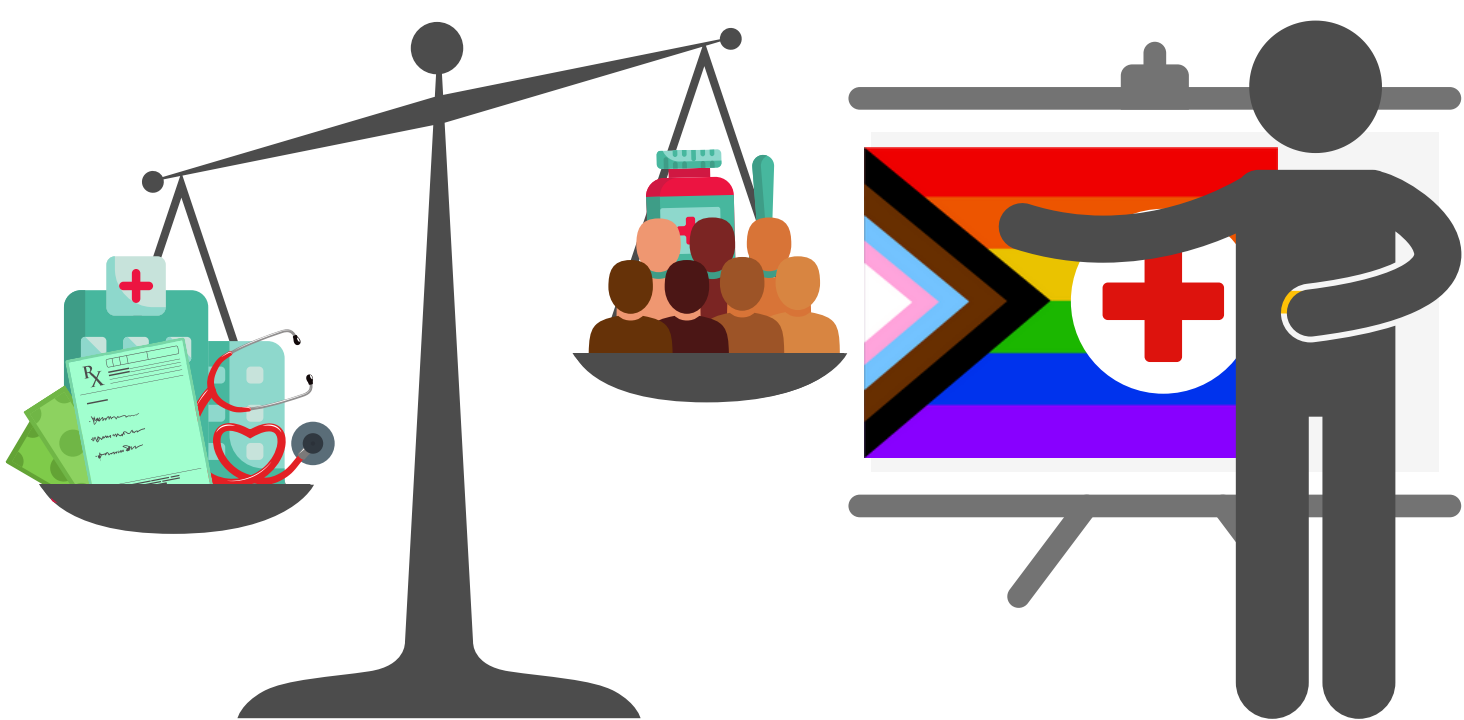


It is an essential programme for individuals from a variety of industries, jobs, and backgrounds.

Their recommendations provide an opportunity to adjust the programme in ways we may not have considered or acknowledged at the time of its creation.

With participant feedback, the H.E.A.T. Programme can be scaled up to meet the specific needs and requests of the audience, while still allowing us to achieve our main goal of redefining standard health by actively counteracting negative visibility of LGBTQ+ BPOC and shedding light on key health disparities.

*Jina  
Khoushnaw  
(she/her)  
Health & Wellbeing  
Project Officer*



It is designed for individuals in the UK who work with LGBTQ+ BPOC in the areas of Health, Wellbeing, and Equality. Throughout the piloting of the programme, I was in charge of the data collection procedure throughout this time, gathering descriptive and analytical feedback from participants.

Feedback from participants was extremely valuable, and the data showed that overall, the H.E.A.T. Programme is a success.



# Resource Development – What have we learnt?

**A**strophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson said,

**“One of the great challenges in life is knowing enough to think you're right but not enough to know you're wrong”.**

For the BBH team, the definition of “resource development” has morphed over time as we explored innovative ideas. In a few short years, we have produced virtual and print resources, catchy videos, an academic report, and more.

As a community-led charity, we endeavour to deliver content in formats that are relevant but educational. One of our biggest lessons was that our organisational culture is one of quality over quantity. We have learned to rely on one another's expertise and, as our wise CEO says, “Trust the process” :-). We have confronted our assumptions and found our voice.

The interesting thing about educating the public about health is that our understanding is dynamic and shifts the more we empathise with our community's lived experiences. Therefore, the way we develop resources and approach health, and wellbeing is (hopefully) dynamic too. We hope to provide well-rounded, evidence-based content while leaving room for new breakthroughs.



**Sarah Grant**  
*(she/her)*  
MPH, CHES  
Chronic Conditions  
Health Education and  
Resource  
Development Officer





# Chosen Family

**H**ola my new readers.

Many of you haven't heard of me or read my work before. I used to write about my living with HIV many moons ago, and now given the chance to enlighten new readers, I realised that this month's topic is about Community.

What does that mean to me?

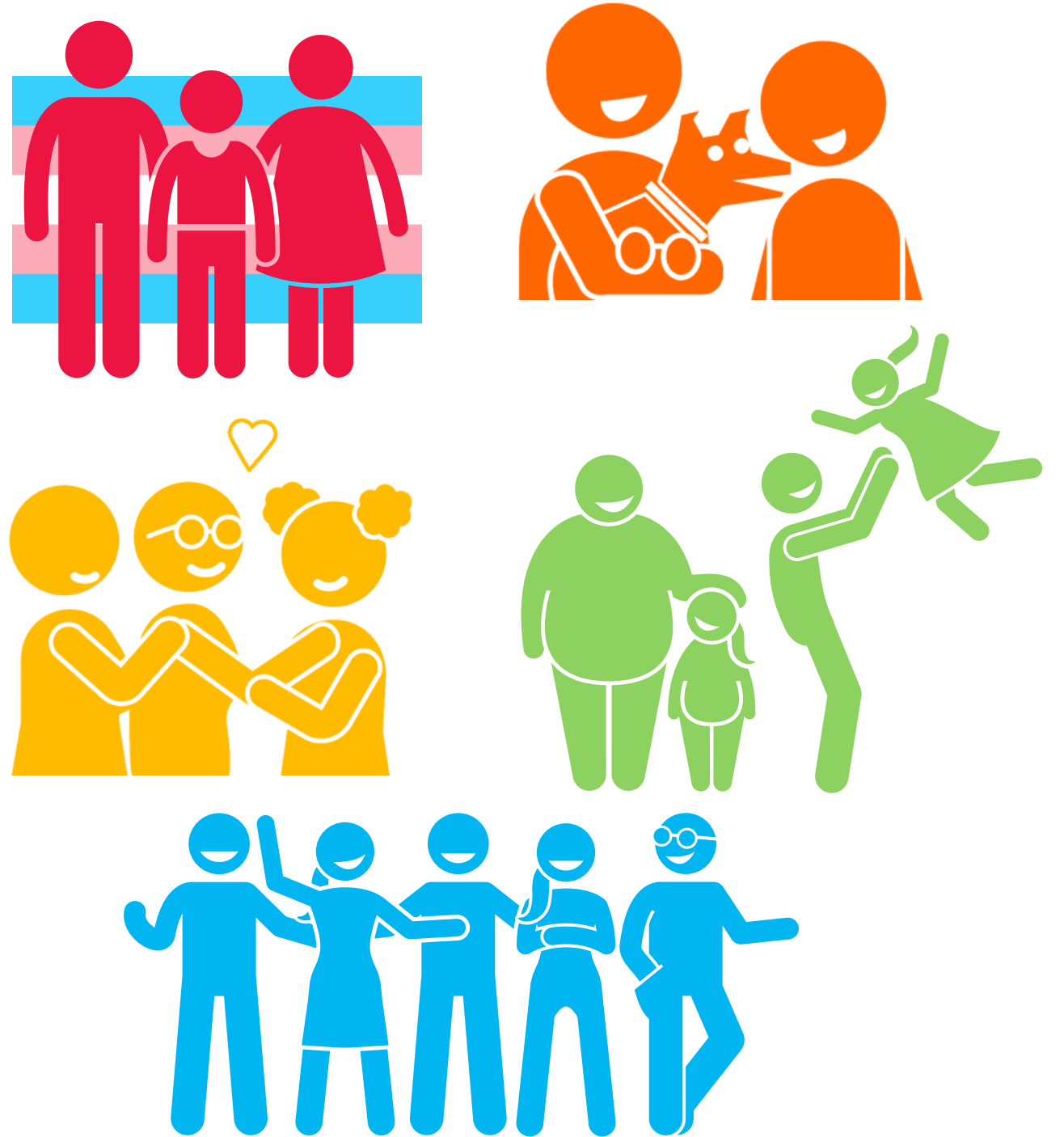
Well, chosen family within the LGBTQ+ community is something that we don't celebrate enough. Also known as found family,

**“A chosen family is made up of people who have intentionally chosen to embrace, nurture, love, and support each other regardless of blood or marriage”,**

says Bahiyyah Maroon, PhD.



The series *POSE* highlights the importance of “chosen family” within the LGBTQ+ community, and the importance of health professionals recognising that not all LGBTQ+ people have traditional hetero-normative families.



Who are your chosen family?  
And have you told them how much they mean to you?



# Chosen Family

*(continued from page 8)*

Chosen family is all around me and you. From seeing my neighbours give flowers to each other, to me ringing my ex-boss every day just to annoy him. Everywhere I look, I see chosen family.



It's a personal choice, and it means something different to you and me. But it's people you can count on, family don't have to agree, but family should be there when you need them.



*Patrick Ettenes  
(he/she)  
Health Equity and  
Advocacy Training  
(H.E.A.T)  
Programme Officer*



# Stigma on the Screen

On 19 November, I was invited to attend a showing of *Their Story Your Choice: Kwame and Nabil*. This was a series of short interactive films where the viewer chose how to progress each scene of the men's story.



This story's point of view comes from Kwame and Nabil, both men of colour and both men who have sex with men (MSM). Their story discusses: juggling their families, while seeing each other, keeping it a secret, becoming HIV positive, getting tested, stigma, and the effects it can have on everyone involved.

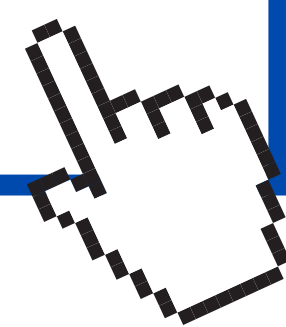
## Kwame and Nabil



Additionally, there are more films available from different people, showing that there is no one experience when living with HIV. Every one of the stories will have a different outcome depending on how the situation is handled. I believe these films are very important in reaching out to Black or People of Colour (BPoC) who may be affected by HIV. Hopefully these stories will help inform and connect to those within the communities.

The project was made by the Terrence Higgins Trust in collaboration with Brown Boy Productions, and screened at The Courthouse.

<https://www.tht.org.uk/our-work/community-projects/their-story-your-choice>



Yuyee Tucker  
(they/he)

Graphic Design  
Officer



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# All About Me!

## Newbie Spotlight



**W**e are excited to introduce Tan Payá Ramírez, who recently joined the Black Beetle Health family as one of our Health Education and Resource Development Officer and Consultant Peer-reviewer, supporting the development of health promotion guides for our Queer Trans Intersex People of Colour (QTIPoC) community.

Tan is a Latinx child and adolescent psychotherapist, who worked in public and private settings in Chile for 6 years before moving to the U.K. 7 years ago. They are currently training as a Counselling Psychologist at the University of Manchester.

Their research focuses on oppression and liberation in child-adult relationships and QTIPoC identity.



They have actively participated in LGBT+ community activism in Edinburgh and Manchester. Currently, working in the development of anti-racist initiatives at the University of Manchester.

They recently founded a grassroots group for PoC psychology and psychotherapy trainees in the UK. This group aims to fight institutionalised racism in academia and support students with the emotional and practical implications of these experiences.



# All About Me!

## Newbie Spotlight

*(continued from page 11)*

Tan is also a multi-disciplinary artist working with photography, collage, spoken and written word. They explore themes such as queerness, Latinidad and QTIPoC identities, bilingualism, disability, conversion therapy and transgenerational trauma.



*Tan Payá Ramírez (they/she)*  
*Health Education and Resource  
Development Officer/  
Consultant Peer-reviewer*

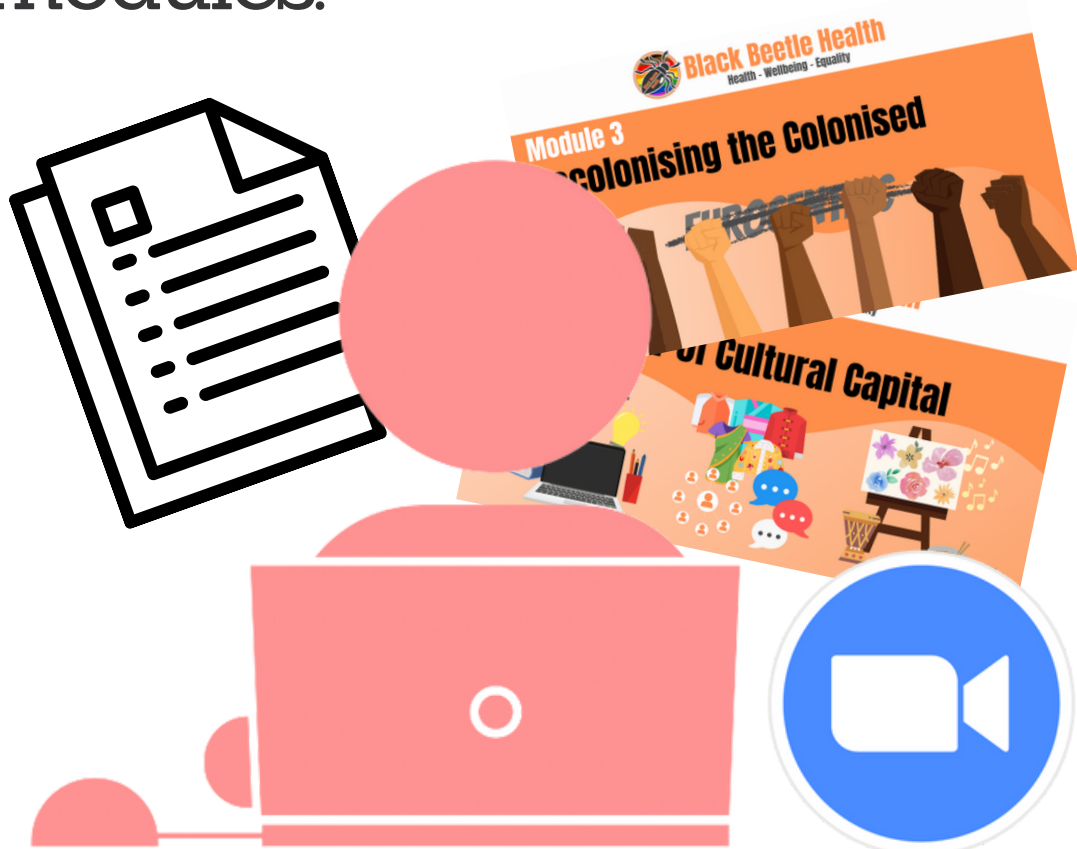


# Working as an Accessibility Assistant Q&A

Originally from Lithuania, student intern Urtė Simaityte, had the opportunity to complete a Q&A about her work and experience supporting someone with accessibility needs, and offer advice and insights.

***What important skills have you gained while working as an assistant for someone with accessibility needs?***

- I had the opportunity to participate in and help with the content production and delivery of the H.E.A.T. programme, as well as learn from my accessibility work partner who delivered the modules.



- I became proficient in Zoom through holding meetings on a regular basis, which allowed me to enhance my skills.

- Conducted fascinating research on LGBTQ+ BPoC in a two-person effective approach, sharing ideas and supporting one another.



***What would you do differently if you were given this responsibility again?***

- Take important notes during meetings to aid the continuation of future meetings and establish agendas in advance.



- Be more self-assured: I would express myself more and have greater faith in my abilities.
- Have more initiative.

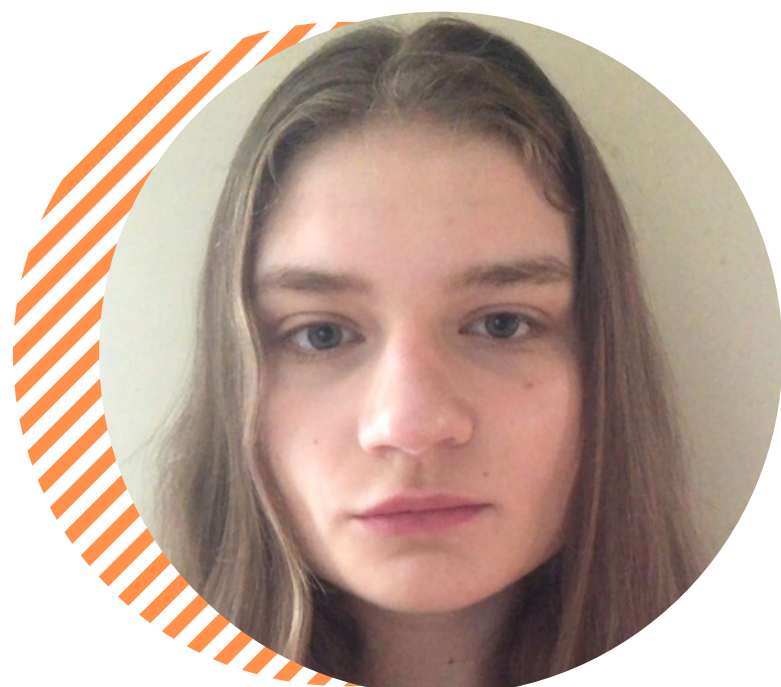
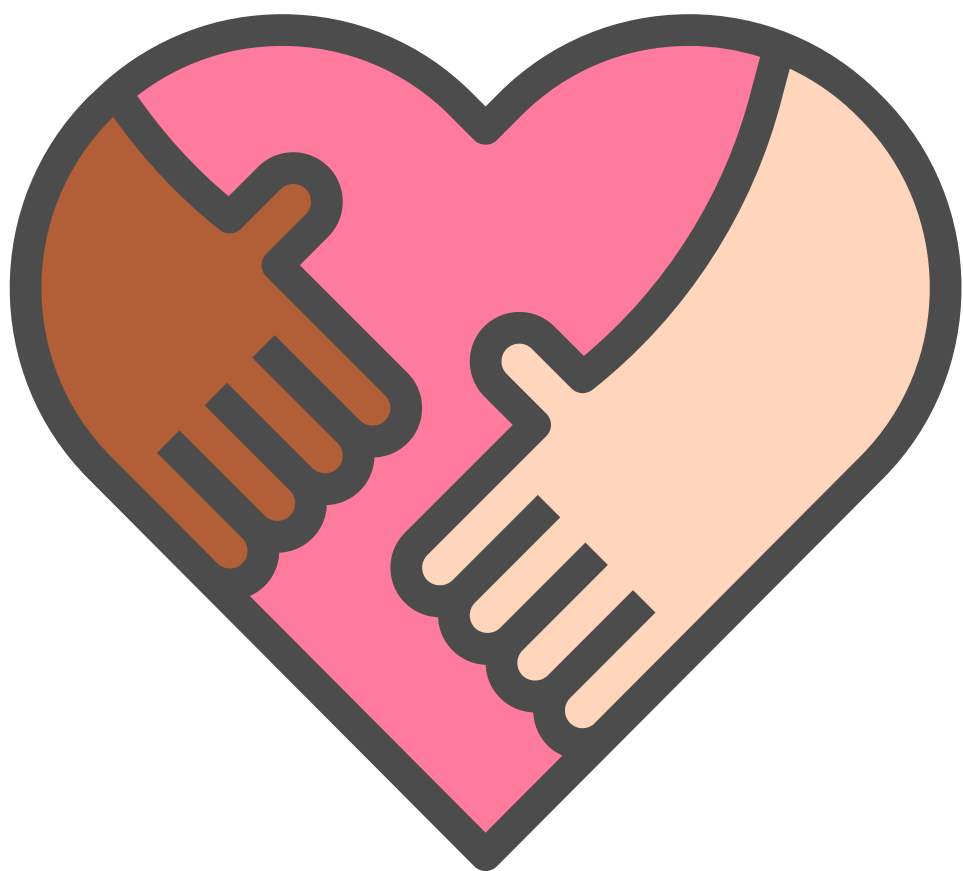


# Working as an Accessibility Assistant Q&A

(continued from page 13)

*Do you have any advice for someone entering a position like this?*

- Take the initiative anytime you perceive an opportunity to demonstrate your abilities.
- Don't be hesitant to inquire about the role.
- Send out Zoom invitations and be prepared before each meeting.
- **And Most Importantly:** be helpful and considerate of others with whom you work together with.



Urté  
Simaityté  
(she/her)  
Student Intern



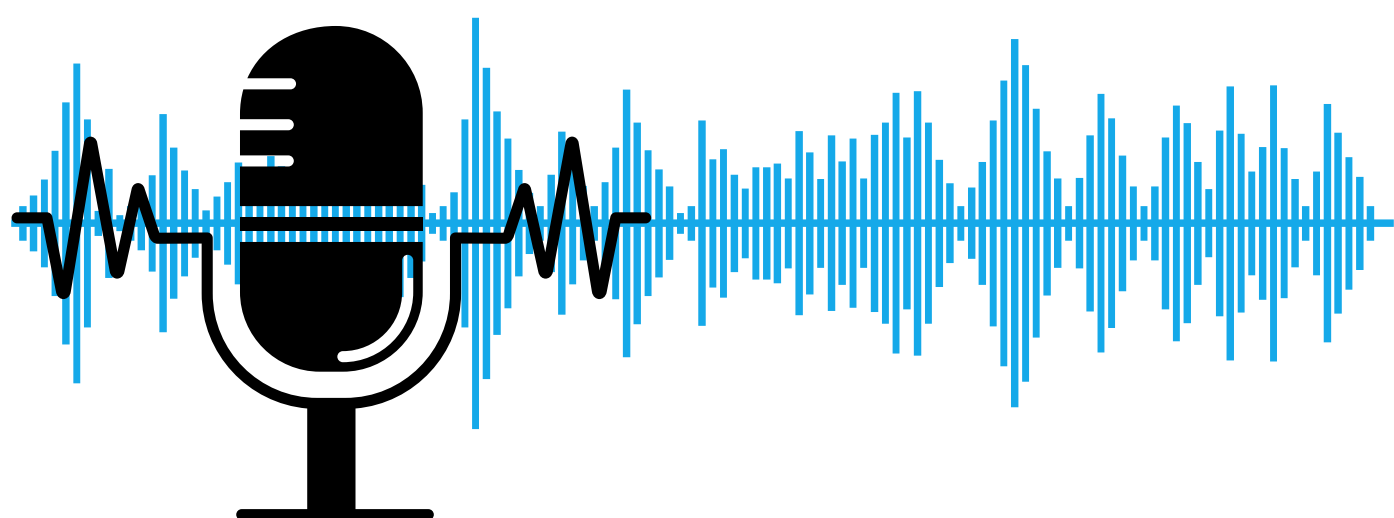
# Farewell!

Good Luck!

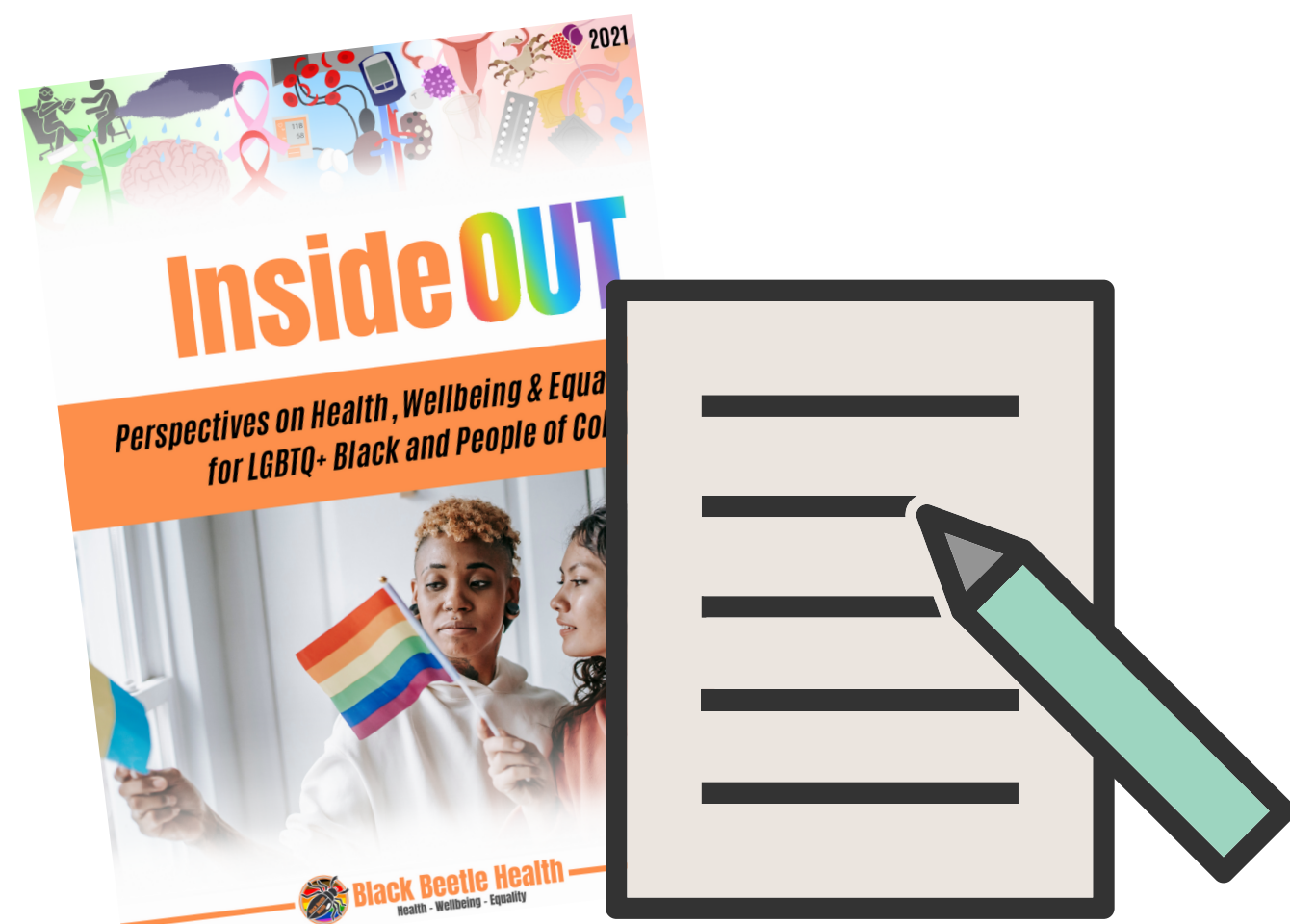
Our External Communications & Social Media Officer, Kevanté Cash, has departed from our team this quarter. We wish them well as they embark on a new chapter in their life! We had a chance to catch up with them on what they had worked on this quarter and what they had planned for their next chapter.

**What were the last things you were up to at BBH?**

- Preparing for the Podcast series, planning scripts, - I like curating a space where people can have honest conversations on anything that they want to talk about.



- Working with the student intern who is now Health & Wellbeing Project Officer on the rewrite of the InsideOUT Report (easy read), making it more digestible and accessible for everyone.



**What have you moved on to do or what do you hope to move onto next?**

- I moved on to become a full-time creative entrepreneur.





# Farewell!

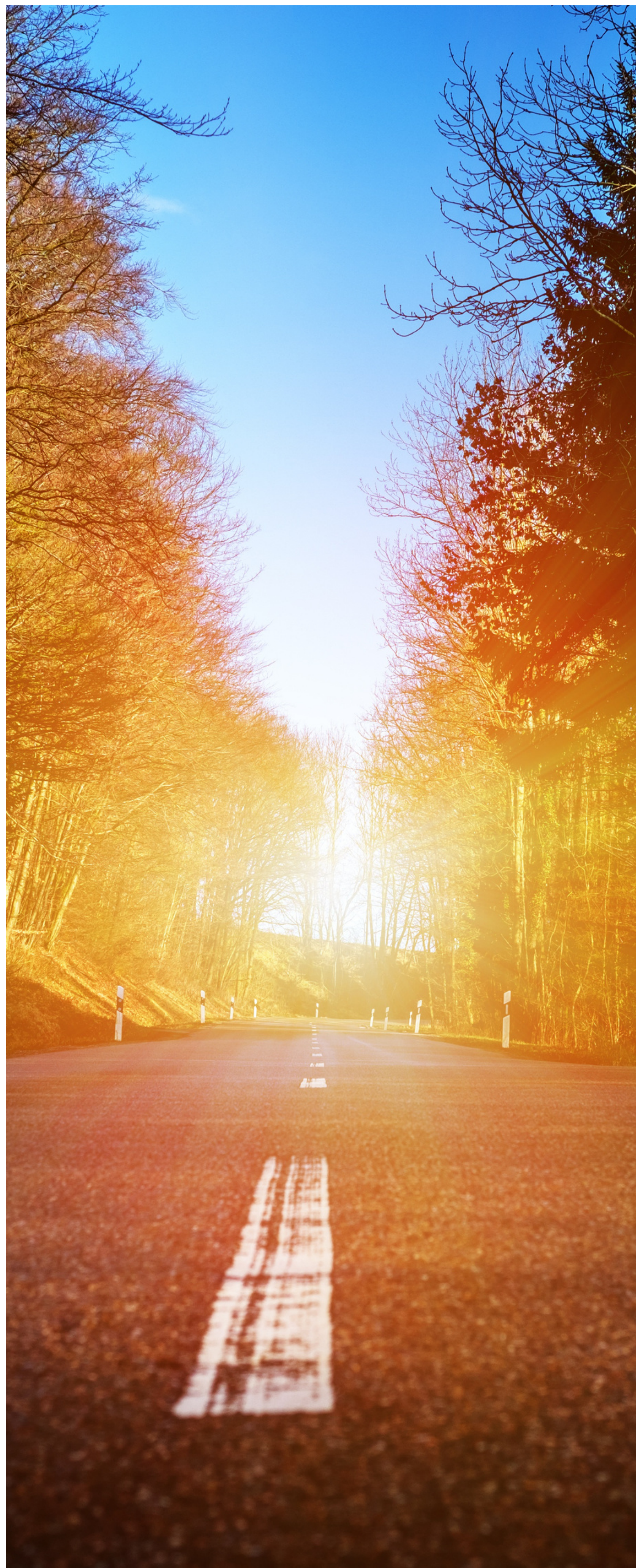
*(continued from page 15)*

- I have a small company back home with a friend/business partner where we do media management and marketing for charitable organisations and Caribbean artists.
- I have also been digging deeper into writing practice.



**Kevanté Cash**  
(they/she)

*External Communications  
& Social Media Officer*



# Welcome New Advisory Board Members:



## Jodi's Bio:

**Name:** Jodi

**Pronouns:** She/Her

**Background:** Criminology, with a focus on mental health, cybercrime, gender, class, and race.

**Goals:** I'm committed to bringing about positive changes and making spaces more diverse and inclusive.

## Makinder's Bio:

**Name:** Makinder

**Pronouns:** He/Him

**Background:** Working in the voluntary community sector field for over 9 years, primarily within LGB&T equality, HIV prevention and sexual health promotion.

**Goals:** Social change and equality through activism and campaigning, with an interest in intersectional identities and the impact on activism and campaign messages and promotion.



# Conversations in Pandemic

In this under-30-minute film, the members of the House of Noir discuss ballroom culture, the significance of community, and what being a part of a House means – particularly during a time of crisis – is truly all about.

**Get out your tear duct wipes because the film is sure to move you.  
The long awaited House of Noir Documentary is finally here!**

**You can access it [here!](#)**

# House of Noir

Conversations in a Pandemic



**Sponsored by**



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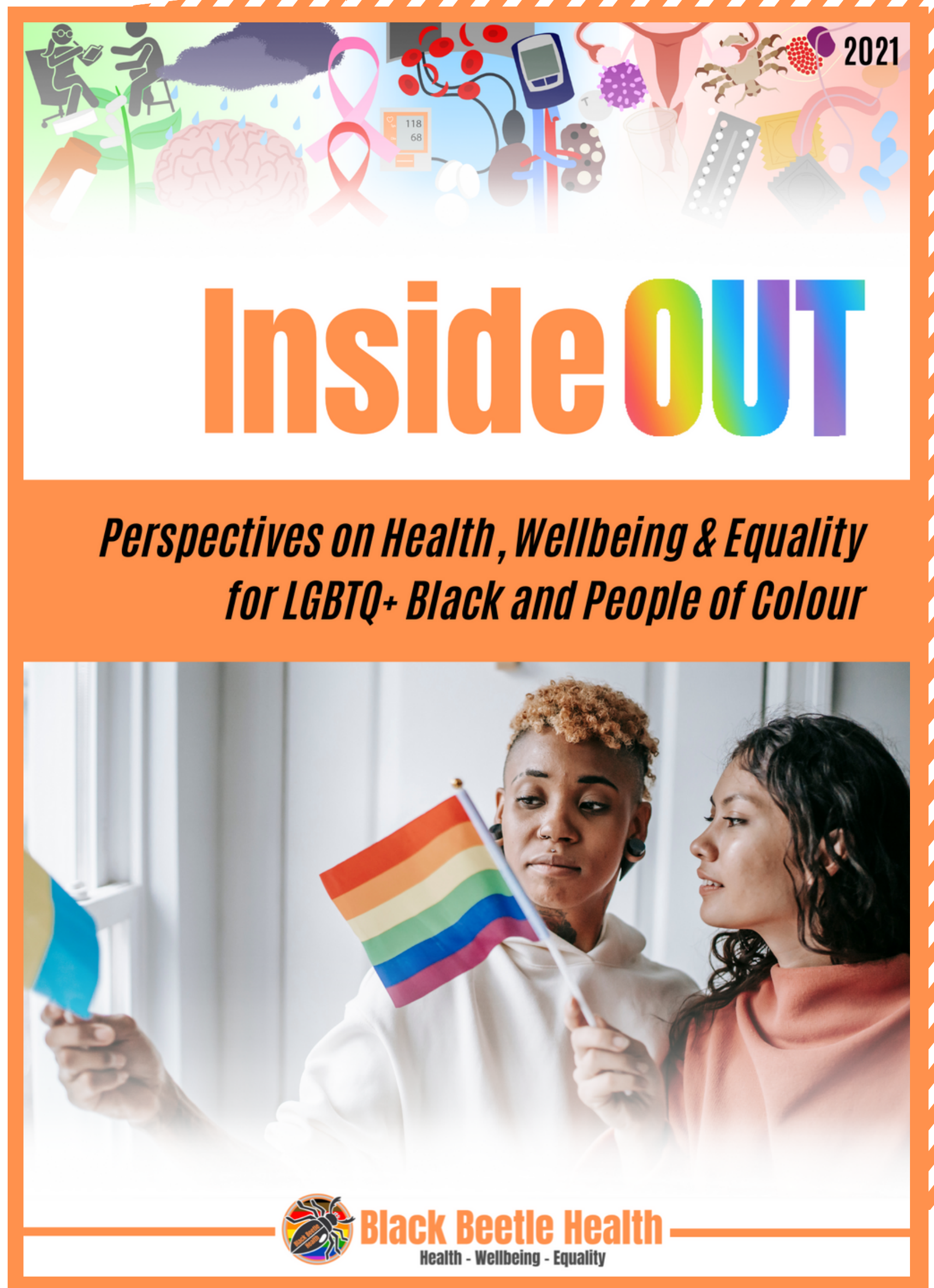
# InsideOUT

**Introducing InsideOUT, our very first organisational report—for the community, by the community.**

We are constantly going the distance to promote health, wellbeing, and equality for LGBTQ+ communities, by shedding light on important health disparities that disproportionately impact Black and People of Colour in the UK.

**Gathering unique perspectives from voices within the community discussing the four main pillars of our organisation:**

- **Sexual Health and Wellbeing**
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing**
- **Reproductive Health**
- **Chronic Conditions Management**



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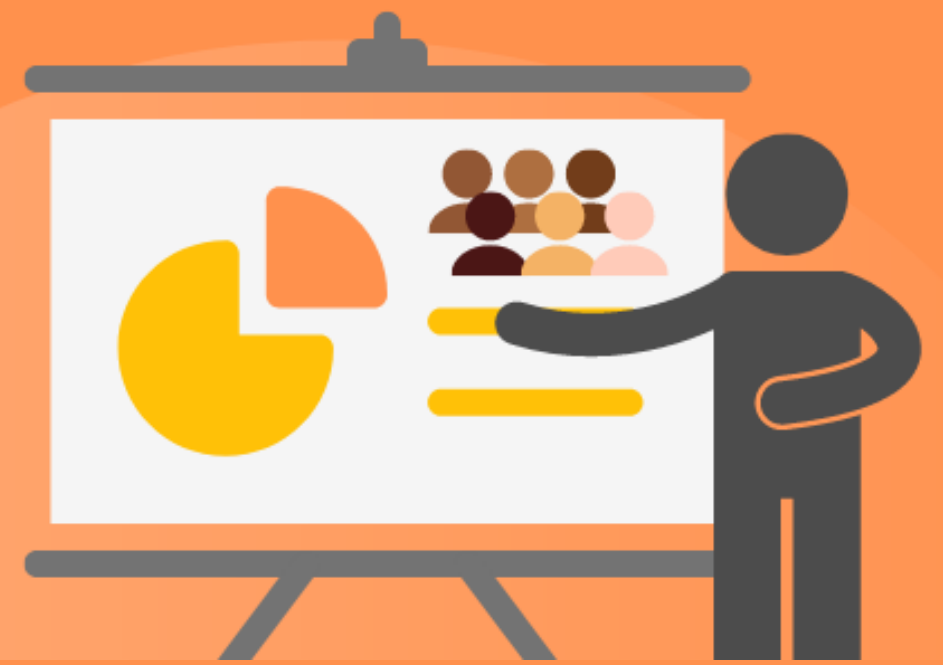
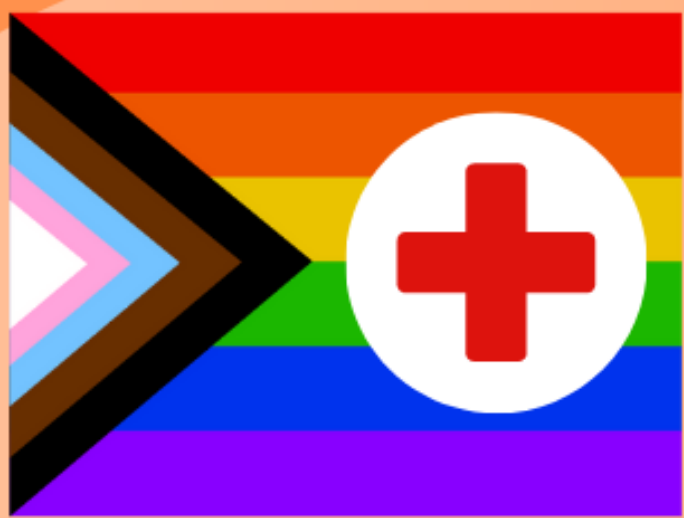
# H.E.A.T Programme

## We're turning up the H.E.A.T.



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### 'Health Equity and Advocacy Training Programme' (H.E.A.T)



A learning framework that facilitates an improved understanding, discussion, and decolonisation of theories and practices that continue to feed the appetite of ill health, and present a range of health disparities for LGBTQ+ Black and People of Colour (BPoC) in the widest definition of the phrase.

We hope this resource will help to redefine standard health and help-seeking practices within communities of colour by actively counteracting negative visibility of LGBTQ+ Black and People of Colour, and shedding light on key health disparities!

To sign up visit [www.blackbeetlehealth.co.uk/heatprogramme](http://www.blackbeetlehealth.co.uk/heatprogramme)



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