

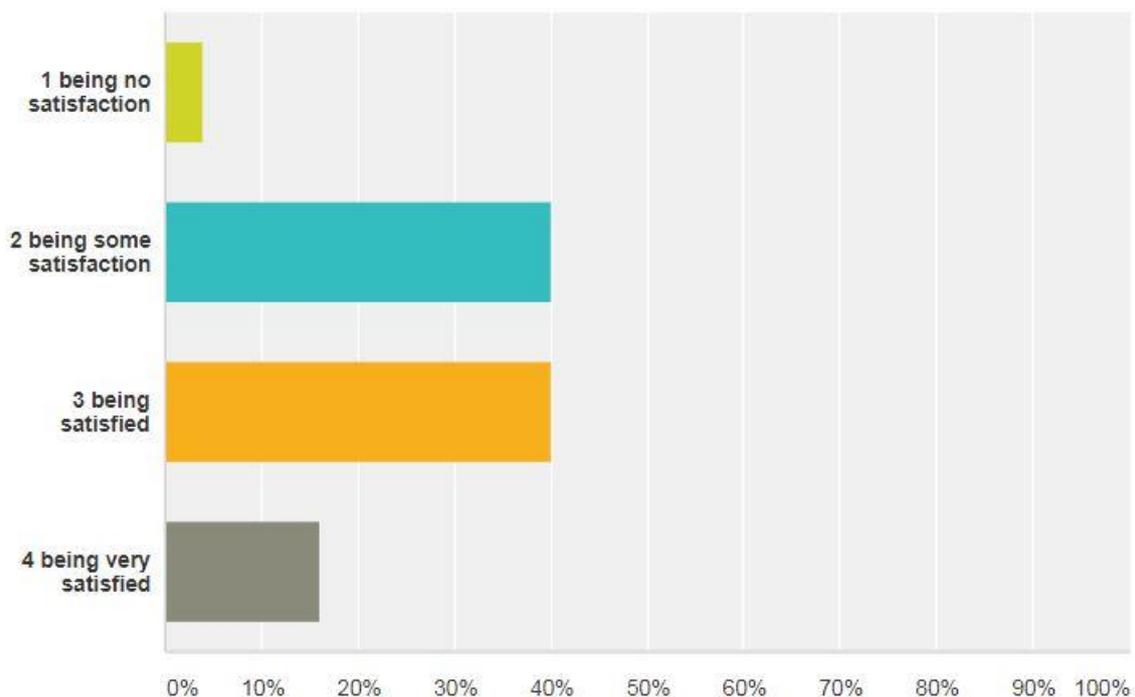
Museum Detox – BAME Museum Employee Survey report

Museum Detox surveyed their members about race and their workplace. The survey was completed by people in a range of museum roles, across a wide range of museums and heritage organisations and with different seniority levels.

The survey asked about career progression, whether BAME museum staff were satisfied in their job and have they faced or witnessed racial discrimination in their museum. 40% of workers said they had some satisfaction in their job and 40% were satisfied in their job. 50% said they had progressed in their organisation and 50% has not.

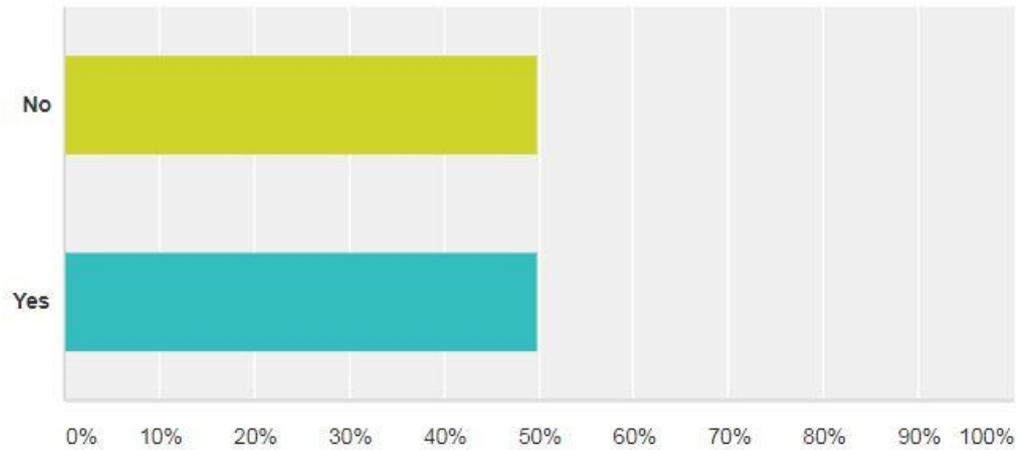
On a scale of 1-4 how satisfied are you in your job?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 0



Have you progressed in your career since joining this museum?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 0

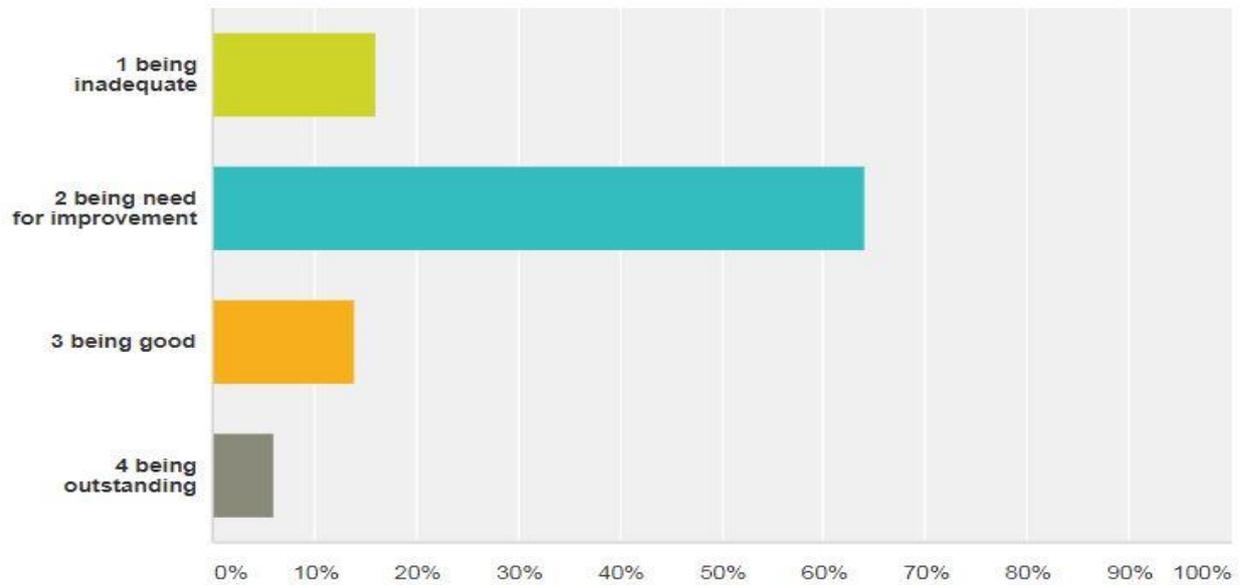


Answer Choices	Responses
No	50.00% 25
Yes	50.00% 25
Total	50

Though the respondents came from a diverse pool of BAME museum workers and organisations the results highlighted a consistent and alarming message that museums can be hostile places for BAME people to work in. With 42% of people reporting that they have experienced, witnessed, continue to experience discrimination in the workplace. 64% also stated that their museum needed to improve understanding about Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and 16% rated their organisation as having no understanding of EDI issues.

On a scale of 1-4 where would you place your organisation in relation to understanding and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion?

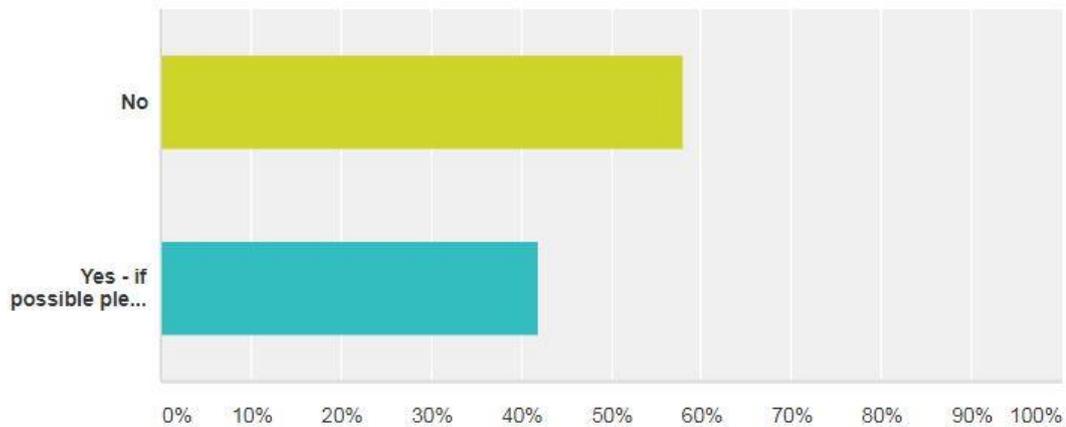
Answered: 50 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
1 being inadequate	16.00% 8
2 being need for improvement	64.00% 32
3 being good	14.00% 7
4 being outstanding	6.00% 3
Total	50

Have you or any BAME employee you know experienced discrimination on grounds of race?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
No	58.00% 29
Yes - if possible please provide further details.	42.00% 21
Total	50

The majority of responses reported experiencing stereotyping, micro-aggressions, casual racist remarks, passive aggressive and undermining attitudes from white museum staff, senior management, volunteers and visitors. Respondants wrote that they hear comments about people of colour being difficult to work with and labelled as difficult to manage. When racial abuse gets reported it is not dealt with by senior management, and audience development to better represent BAME people in exhibitions gets overlooked.

One respondent wrote: 'The issue is institutional racism. Conscious and unconscious bias that leads to casual racist remarks, stereotyping and undermining, patronising people of colour, staff and communities.'

Another wrote, 'Have been singled out in team meetings and blamed for things going wrong by one particular member of senior staff. This staff member also speaks to me in a manner completely different to others in the team (I am the only non-white person in my team!). It **feels** like he's always looking for a way

to undermine any of my achievements. In previous meetings, he's gone out of his way to highlight faults when others have praised me.'

Others go on to say how BAME workers get boxed into certain roles
'Patronising approach to 'non-white' participants. Stereotyping of work given to facilitators from BAME backgrounds.'

'Its really a maybe, very difficult to tell as issues could be weighted to be wrapped up in gender discrimination and favouritism of other colleagues over a period of 20yrs. Insulated incidents but all have a cumulative effect on the individual.' This also highlights the issue of intersectionality and how someone on a multitude of levels gets unfairly treated because of race, gender, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religion.

Another response was 'I think attending a staff meeting of 40 people to find that myself and my line managers PA being the only BAME people in the room is atrocious.'

On the issue of representation and audience development some people wrote that despite a particular display being outdated and making them and some visitors, feel uncomfortable they have felt powerless to change anything. 'If I have mentioned it being a problem it is laughed off as no big deal or not urgent. Also I was made to feel as if I was causing a fuss for no reason or making a big deal out of nothing.'

Another person wrote:

My work place is almost an exclusive homogenous white majority. It is a museum within a larger heritage site and has a historically patriarchal charitable objective. I am only one of 5 brown staff (3 in finance, plus 1 admin assistant) and the only on the museum side. It's a completely whitewashed history and heritage that is promoted. Having never worked in heritage before I feel like I've gone back 100 years to where women have no voice. A brown woman? Forget it. We have no exhibition space or public programme or marketing to use as a platform for diversity. Therefore our visitors are 85% white retirees (which is not seen as a problem at all) and we have no-one challenging us. Our govenors are all white too. It's dispiriting and despairing. If looking solely at acts of discrimination I'd have to say that there is nothing aggressive

but it's more the feeling that I am (and all other BAME races) are completely invisible. Heritage? Who's heritage? Ain't mine.'

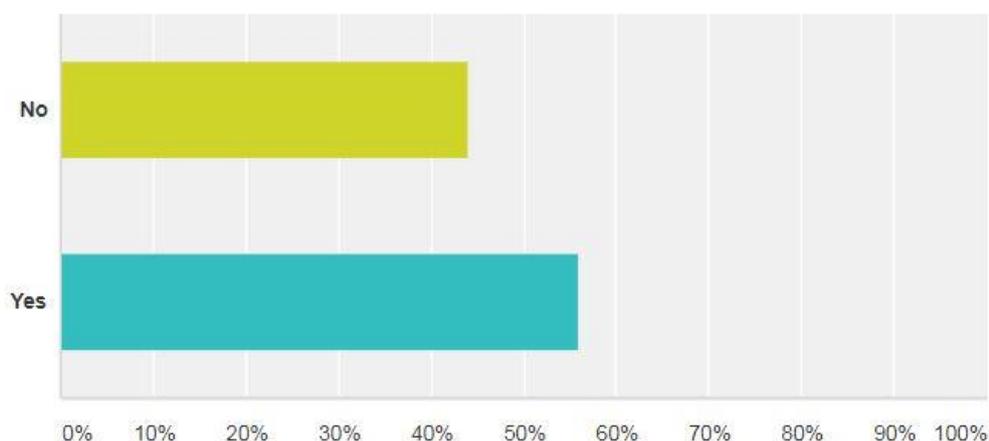
This raises the question of relevance. Can an organisation be more relevant to an increasingly diverse population when it has no relevance to its own staff.

Other comments shows the limitations in organisational and management thinking when it comes to the opportunities better representation brings. 'There have been occasions at work where I have been excluded by colleagues from participating in projects that were linked with members of my own community.' This should be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat.

Finally the survey asks whether there were BAME representation in senior management roles and on board of trustees. 44% said no and 56% said yes. The limitations of this question means that it does not separate between senior management and board of trustees. It also does not specify what the BAME senior manager's role is. The power to enact change in programming, organisational and audience development, vision and mission does not lie with financial and admin functions, nor corporate and business development, it lies in curatorial, interpretation, marketing and learning.

Are there any BAME workers in senior roles or as a trustee in your organisation?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
▼ No	44.00%	22
▼ Yes	56.00%	28
Total		50

This short survey was carried out to help Museum Detox gain further insight and to share with the sector what it is like being a BAME museum worker. The experiences shared in this report through the survey are typical of people across our network, who for the specific focus of the survey could not take part. What it also highlights is the progress made in some organisations in how it has included and promoted BAME museum staff. There is incredible resilience demonstrated by BAME museum staff in order for them to get on with their job. Survive or thrive, the emotional labour costs are still too high.