

Black at Cannes - A different perspective

 By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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After George Floyd, an African American man, who was killed by police in the US, a group of creatives came together to create an organisation to help Black and Brown creatives prosper.

Floyd became a global symbol of how Black Lives Matter in all spaces including creative industries such as advertising.



Peter Ukhurebor.

Black at Cannes is a creative community curated to bring diversity and inclusivity for Black and Brown professionals in advertising globally. Their focus is to provide a platform to build solid connections and increase representation at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity.

More opportunities

“Black at Cannes was birthed to create more opportunities for Black and Brown creators and vendors on the biggest advertising platforms in the advertising world, the Cannes Lions. It was formed after the passing of George Floyd in 2020 when we saw the need to create an inclusive community for us,” said founder of the organisation Peter Ukhurebor.

“The main objective is to utilise our platform to elevate talent to support and commercially impact ad agencies and brands. Given their growing buying power and population rate, Black consumers possess more power and influence in the retail marketplace than ever, shaping industries from the inside out.”

In 2022, Black at Cannes touched down at Cannes with one focus in mind: inclusion. This year they come with an agenda to reclaim Bipoc cultural significance and to build a partnership with brands and agencies to diversify the advertising landscape to open its doors to empower economic advancement and opportunities for Black creators and vendors.

Access not charity

He adds: “We are seeking access, not charity; we have the most eclectic community of professionals with rich expertise and talent at levels to penetrate any business and level it up. For the longest time in advertising, products and services were created for us without involving us as professionals or consumers.



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“We look at equity and the power of the Black dollar, a global transaction valued at \$3.2tn and it will only rise. The vision is plain; we’re here for the long game and want to create an ecosystem where we all prosper and build an inclusive economy. We want to find a solution; collaboration is the most significant currency.”

Ukhurebor said since the death of Floyd, the industry has witnessed only a few pledges come to fruition, and they are still waiting to see more.

More diverse jury

“CEO of the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity Simon Cook, global jury director Lisa Berlin, director of judging Jonathan Branfield, director of content Natasha Woodwal, and the Cannes team have unequivocally pushed for a more diverse jury, and speakers on their platform as well as providing bursaries for young talent, not forgetting collaborating with others to infuse more diversity. Black at Cannes applauds and urges the rest of the industry to emulate them.”

He said diversity and inclusion are the best strategy to increase Black professionals activity in emerging markets.

“Investing in Black professionals with expertise in advertising who understand these needs and behaviours can only help better capitalise on this profitable market.”

Ukhurebor said they have pledged to open their doors to authentic brands and agencies willing to create equity beyond equality. They will host key events, cultural activations, and panel discussions to showcase Black and Brown talent as well as Black owned vendors this year.

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ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

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