

Work Placement - Toby Underhill

To give an overview of my placement and not first mention how welcoming, engaging, and inspiring BSWN is, would be a disservice to the time I have spent here. From the second that I walked into the office, I was not only met with trust and enthusiasm but also a work ethic that is exemplary. Kat and Mina had full faith in my independence and self-sufficiency, but also provided frequent support; they were both happy to answer any questions I had and provide feedback on my writing.

I was given the opportunity to write a blog and conduct an interview that would then be transcribed and posted as a separate blog piece. I had the pleasure of interviewing Margaret, Vice-Chair of CoRE, who gave me an insight into how other organisations work alongside BSWN to tackle racial inequality. My blog and interview were focused on the UN's International Day of Education on the 24th of January. From the outset of my placement, my writing was focused on a subject that was personal, which greatly benefitted the quality of my writing, and in turn my experience. I have ambitions of teaching in the future, so writing about the importance of education, and especially inequality within education, was a real motivator. Working alongside fellow writers also allowed me to develop my voice and acquire useful feedback. This is something that I will bring with me going forward.

Working within a racial justice organisation was an educational experience, not to mention an inspiring one. Despite being passionate about the fight for racial equality, I had never been involved in a professional environment that focuses wholly on promoting, strategising, and educating others on racial injustice. The practicality and level of hard work required to tackle a systemic issue like racial injustice can often be overlooked and underappreciated, so working with BSWN has made me appreciate the efforts of racial justice organisations like BSWN even more. The moral drive of BSWN gave me a direct sense of purpose and motivation, something that is shared so evidently with every employee of BSWN.

Although I was ambitious with my workload, I had the full support of BSWN and was assured that I would be able to push myself, whilst prioritising my well-being. The caring and supportive ethos of BSWN certainly made my experience productive, but most importantly, enjoyable. I could not have wished for a better experience on my work placement and will certainly remain in contact with BSWN in the future.