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In 2020 The University of Salford's Library established an online anti-racist reading group. The group was formed in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement. The aim of this group is to provide a space for staff to educate themselves through discussions exploring racism, white supremacy and white privilege in an honest and open way. The reading group is an open and inclusive space for all staff who wish to attend, however the idea is that white people take on the anti-racism work and a fraction of the emotional labour that comes with this. The group discuss a wide range of content, including fiction, drama, documentaries, and non-fiction and is open to all University staff. The group has provided a space for staff to share anti-racist resources and learn from each other. The Teams site for the group has over 100 members and though they do not all attend the meetings they are able to access the content being discussed in their own time. The group meetings are attended by staff from across the University, bringing staff together from different teams and different levels to discuss racism and hopefully enable individuals to reflect on the individual actions they can take to become anti-racist.

The main challenge for the members of the group has been the time to attend meetings and read the chosen resources. In the beginning the group selected full length titles which were difficult for members to be able to read and access. To enable more staff to attend we now select shorter pieces in a variety of formats and have renamed the group Anti-Racist Discussion Group. We have discussed documentaries, films, journal articles, one of the University's art collections and songs – nothing is off limits! We have made the meetings shorter and offered a couple of meeting choices for each topic, at different times of the day and off and on campus options. Time is still a challenge though and many staff struggle to attend, especially during busy teaching times and we are also aware that discussion groups aren't for everyone and that not everyone feels comfortable discussing the themes/content.

In 2022 we sent a survey to all the members of the group's Team site. We received 23 responses to the survey and 18 responses were from people who had either stopped attending or had never attended, so it provided informative feedback on the barriers to taking part and how we could improve the group and make it more accessible. The responses confirmed that time was the biggest issue for members and so we implemented the changes discussed above. Overall, the feedback to the group was positive, with strong support for the group continuing and the value it has enabling staff to explore anti-racist resources with each other. We would be happy to share our experience with any Libraries looking to set up an anti-racist or other social activist reading group. These groups provide a fantastic opportunity for staff to learn from each other in an informal setting.