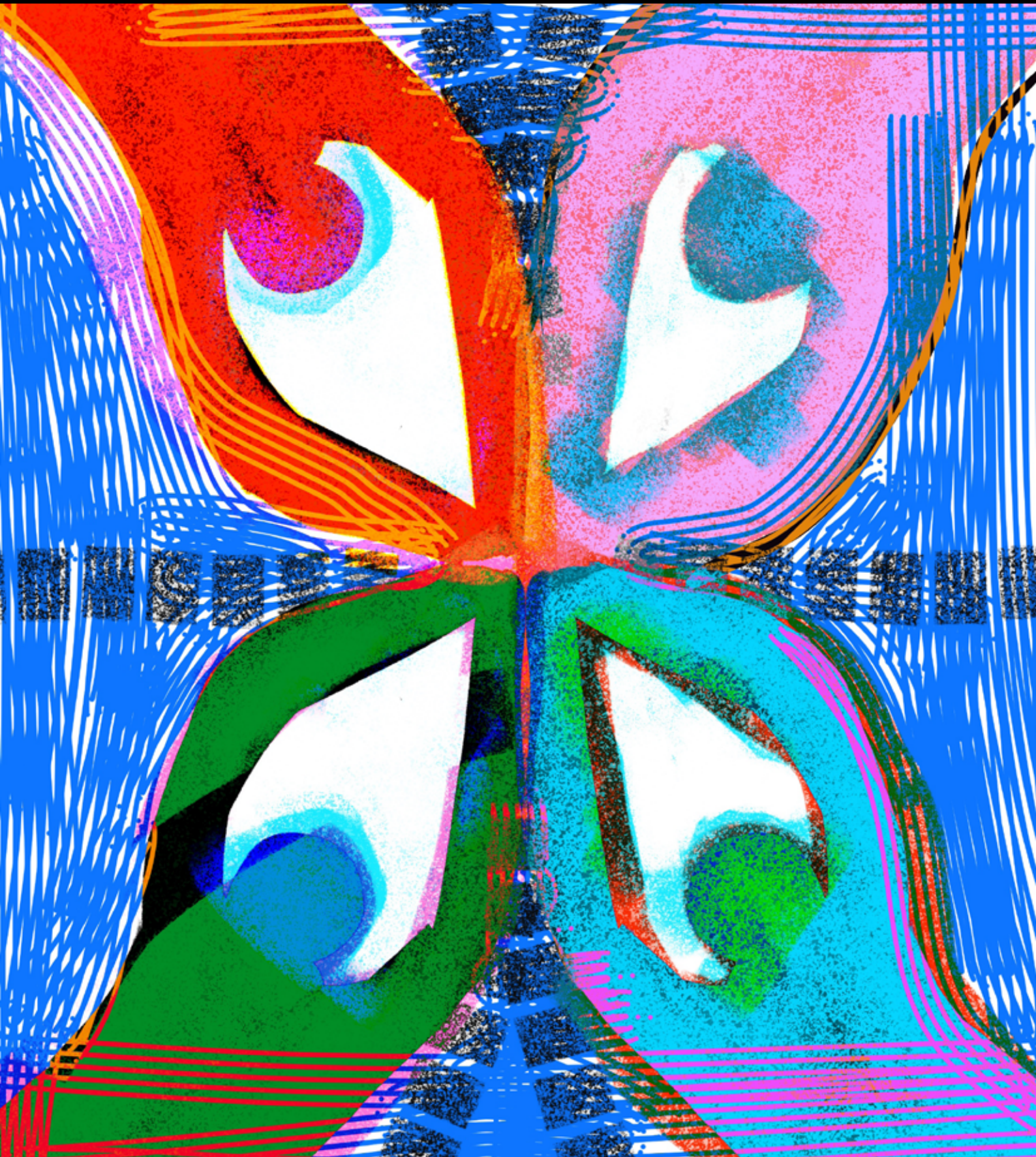


Programme plan 2026–2030

The Scott Trust
Legacies of Enslavement





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Welcome

Ole Jacob Sunde Chair of Scott Trust



As chair of the Scott Trust board, I am thrilled to share the Legacies of Enslavement programme plan with you, setting out our progress and objectives at the three year mark.

The Scott Trust launched the programme on 28 March 2023, setting out the intention to atone for the history of the Guardian newspaper. This was in acknowledgement of the fact that the founder of the Manchester Guardian, John Edward Taylor, and his funders, profited from transatlantic enslavement – a crime against humanity – through their business dealings in cotton and sugar. One – Sir George Philips – was an enslaver who co-owned the Success plantation in Jamaica. In short, the academic research findings warranted accountability and redress.

After the research and an initial period of consultation with experts, communities and civil society, we undertook a number of actions to set us on the pathway to repair. We issued a full [apology](#), launched an editorial series, [Cotton Capital](#); and announced a 10-year restorative justice programme with a budget of upwards of £10m. Alongside this, we made a significant investment in Guardian journalism, schemes to improve media diversity and partnership work with descendant communities.

Over the past three years, the programme has started to deliver on our commitments through the hiring of eight correspondents covering regions including east and west Africa, the Caribbean and South America and expanding our race, health and

community affairs teams in the UK and US; the launch of the Long Wave newsletter; and the expansion of bursary and traineeship schemes in the UK, US and Australia to enable routes into journalism for underrepresented groups. Critically, we have conducted further in-depth engagement with descendant communities and reparatory justice leaders and activists to understand what should be the focus of a programme of repair.

I hope you enjoy reading about what we have learnt. The Scott Trust remains steadfast in its commitment to this programme of restorative justice.



Ebony Riddell Bamber Director, Legacies of Enslavement programme



When I started in my role as programme director, Legacies of Enslavement had already been launched and

I was confronted with some profound questions: What would repair look like for the descendant communities to whom the Scott Trust was seeking to atone? How can the Guardian, given its role, seek to find out? And how could the Legacies of Enslavement programme respond?

Seeking to answer these questions has been the central task of our work as a [programme team](#) over the past three years.

There is not yet a model for how institutions should respond to a history of connections to transatlantic enslavement. Others have stepped into this space, and we have sought to learn from those examples as well as heed the insights from those who have campaigned for reparations for decades, such as the Rastafari community and reparations experts from across the diaspora and African continent.

Central to our approach has been the obligation to engage with those descended from the enslaved, to understand their restorative visions and priorities. These form the basis of this programme plan. The next steps are for us to share back and continue active listening and dialogue in those communities.

We have taken guidance from important regional frameworks, such as the Caribbean Reparations Commission's [\(Caricom\) 10-point plan for reparatory justice](#), key

[international standards](#), and African and indigenous concepts of restorative justice. We have sought to understand what we can do to atone locally, in the specific geographies where the Guardian founders profited from and exploited enslaved knowledge and labour, as well as how the Guardian could contribute to pressing and legitimate calls for reparatory justice.

Our commitment to truth-telling underpins the entire programme, and the programme will continue to publish independent research. We are incredibly grateful to Dr Cassandra Gooptar and the global team of researchers now working with the programme to enable a specific focus on the enslaved people whose stolen lives and labour created the profits used to found the Guardian.

Finally, we are grateful for the time, deep thought and grace that has been afforded to us during the process of scoping the programme with descendant communities, in particular in the Sea Islands and Jamaica. These are profound issues to discuss. This is not a history that everyone is [ready to reckon with](#). But it is one that the Scott Trust and Guardian have set out to face².

Programme summary

The Scott Trust Legacies of Enslavement programme is a 10-year project mobilising upwards of £10m to atone for the Guardian’s history and connections to transatlantic enslavement.

WHAT IT INVOLVES

Community-led repair
Providing resources and support to community-led initiatives aimed at repair in Jamaica, the Sea Islands and Brazil³.

Strengthening voice and accountability
delivering high-quality journalism via our correspondents and [newsletter](#) covering underreported regions and descendant communities affected by the legacies of enslavement across the world.

Truth-telling and raising consciousness
Commissioning and publishing independent [research](#) and cultural, heritage and educational partnerships to improve public knowledge of Britain’s historical involvement in slavery, its global impact and the lasting wealth and broader inequality it generates.



WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED SO FAR?

- Being present, listening and building relationships in our programme geographies of Manchester, Jamaica and the US Sea Islands.
- Over 900 meetings with community members, reparations experts, civil society and institutions.
- Eight Guardian correspondents covering east and west Africa, South America and the Caribbean, alongside expanded teams in the US and UK.
- The [Long Wave](#) newsletter, designed to connect people across the African diaspora, launched in October 2024 and has more than 35,000 subscribers.
- A [Landmark exhibition](#) on Manchester, cotton and enslavement to be launched in early 2027 in partnership with Science and Industry Museum.
- An expanded Guardian bursary, fellowship and cadetship schemes for entry-level journalists in the UK, US and Australia.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

2020 An academic review is commissioned by the Scott Trust into the history of the Manchester Guardian, founded by John Edward Taylor in 1821.

March 2023 The Scott Trust apologises for the fact that John Edward Taylor and his funders profited from transatlantic enslavement - a crime against humanity - through their business dealings in cotton and sugar. The Legacies of Enslavement programme is launched, setting out the intention to atone for this history over a period of 10 years.

June 2023-present day Capacity and expertise is brought into the Legacies of Enslavement team to design and deliver a programme of repair. Over the past three years the programme has focused on engaging descendant communities in Jamaica and the Sea Islands, regional and national bodies, civil society organisations, academics and reparations experts to identify what repair for transatlantic enslavement could look like and how an institution such as the Guardian could respond.

April 2026 A programme plan to cover activity from 2026-2030 is launched.

1

Jamaica Objectives 2026-2030



Sea Islands Objectives 2026-2030



2

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- ## Reminder

One of these men, Sir George Philips, was an enslaver and co-owner of the Success sugar plantation in Hanover, Jamaica. In 1835, Philips unsuccessfully attempted to claim compensation from the British government for 108 people enslaved on the plantation.



Programme plan

2026–2030



Our goal in responding to these facts should be to strive to do all we can in the present day to atone for these historical injustices and to support those who still live with the legacy of this brutal and dehumanising era”
Statement and apology from the Scott Trust board, March 2023



Former colonial powers cannot undo the damage inflicted on enslaved and colonised people, but they can engage in good faith with descendants, and address systemic inequalities⁶.”
Prof Olivette Otele, academic and member of the Legacies of Enslavement advisory panel⁷

Members of the Legacies of Enslavement team, Scott Trust and advisory panel



This programme plan, spanning 2026-2030, sets out what we have learnt since the launch of the programme about how to enable repair. We are excited to present these findings as the first step in delivering on our goals. A further plan for the final two years of the programme, which runs until 2032, will follow.

We have two overarching, closely interconnected goals

GOAL ONE
To contribute to realising repair for descendant communities linked to the Guardian’s founders.⁸.

How we will achieve it
By providing resources and support to descendant communities in areas connected to the Guardian founders to address their priorities for restorative justice

GOAL TWO
To support reparatory justice and truth-telling efforts on transatlantic enslavement in the UK and globally.

How we will achieve it
By truth-telling about transatlantic enslavement and its impacts through sharing academic research, partnering to raise consciousness of this history and strengthening accountability through our journalism.



Explainer

Concepts and terminology

Reparatory justice

Reparatory justice⁹ is a concept that describes specific actions designed to address historical harms or large-scale abuses of human rights, in this case the ongoing negative impacts of enslavement and colonialism.

A landmark United Nations [resolution](#) on reparatory justice was passed on 25 March 2026 – the international day of remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade – recognising “the trafficking of enslaved Africans and racialised chattel enslavement of Africans as the gravest crime against humanity”. The resolution was spearheaded by [Ghana](#) and backed by the [African Union](#) and [Caricom](#).

People of African descent have been calling for reparatory justice since well before slavery was abolished. The Manden Charter, also known as Kurukan Fuga, was proclaimed by the Mandinka people in the early 13th century in an area between modern-day Mali and Guinea. It is reportedly one of the earliest constitutions setting out people’s rights, including the right to reparation¹⁰. More broadly, the efforts of enslaved people to resist enslavement – such as the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804 or the Christmas Uprising in Jamaica in 1831-32 – can be understood as a cry for restitution as well as freedom¹¹.

More recent milestones include the [Abuja proclamation](#) of 1993, the [Durban declaration and programme of action](#) of 2001 and the [Caricom 10-point plan for reparatory justice](#).

In terms of international standards, the [UN basic principles and guidelines on the right to a remedy and reparation for victims of gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law](#) recognises reparations as a right and identifies five forms it can take: restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and non-repetition.

Symbolic reparations can include:

- Official apologies.
- Memorials and commemorations.
- Truth commissions.
- Historical or educational programmes.

Material reparations can include:

- Financial compensation.
- Restitution of human rights.
- Rehabilitation.
- Access to land, housing, healthcare or education.

While reparations have not yet been realised for the descendants of the enslaved, they were given to enslavers. In the UK, the 1833 Slavery Abolition Act and 1837 Slave Compensation Act abolished slavery in the British empire, rendered enslaved people as “property” and compensated enslavers through direct financial payments and by forcing the enslaved to continue to work for a further five years for free¹². The debt on the loan taken out to fund this compensation scheme was not paid off until 2015¹³.

Belinda Sutton Pioneering reparations advocate

There are several known cases of enslaved people calling for reparations for their stolen knowledge and labour. One of the earliest is [Belinda Sutton](#), who is thought to have been born on the Gold Coast of Africa, present-day Ghana, and then forcibly enslaved and trafficked to the United States. She successfully [petitioned](#) the Massachusetts State Legislature in 1783 for reparations after 50 years of unpaid labour on the plantation of Isaac Royall, who fled the US in 1775 at the advent of the Revolutionary War.

► Monument to Enslaved people of the Mona Estate, University of the West Indies, Jamaica

Transitional justice

“Transitional justice refers to how societies respond to the legacies of massive and serious human rights violations. It asks some of the most difficult questions in law, politics, and the social sciences and grapples with innumerable dilemmas. Above all, transitional justice is about victims.”¹⁴

Transitional justice encompasses a range of measures that align with reparatory justice and are viewed as complementary and equally important: truth-seeking, institutional reform, accountability mechanisms, commemoration and reparations¹⁵.

Though transitional justice is mainly directed towards governments, it can be a useful guide for how institutions can play a role in remedying harm for transatlantic enslavement due to the explicit focus on affected communities, the holistic approach to justice and redress and the understanding of the need for broad societal healing and repair.

There is also recognition that reparations can be administered collectively or across a community rather than via individual payments, particularly if identification can be complex or create division.

Nevertheless, in the context of transatlantic enslavement, there are legitimate concerns about the term or concept of victimhood being applied, particularly given the central role of enslaved people in resisting oppression, fighting for freedom and liberty and pushing for emancipation.

Restorative justice
Is the term used to describe the work of Legacies of Enslavement programme, which also distinguishes it from state-to-state reparatory justice efforts. Through our second programme goal we aim to be supportive of broader reparatory justice efforts.



Restorative justice

Restorative justice entails bringing together those who are responsible for harm with those who have been harmed to find a resolution. For centuries, cultures have used elements of this approach to resolve disputes collectively.

It is commonly known as an alternative approach to the criminal justice system, however is increasingly being understood as a method to support healing and reconciliation in cases of harm, wrongdoing, injustice or conflict. It utilises processes to restore agency, decision-making power and control to those affected by harm.¹⁶

This emphasis on dialogue and healing and its grounding in Afrocentric and indigenous principles such as community, interdependence (ubuntu¹⁷) and collaboration make a restorative justice approach particularly well suited to the work of atoning for transatlantic enslavement. This broad understanding of what repair should be, as liberatory across multiple domains, aligns with much of what we have learned during the scoping phase of this programme.

Community engagement

Nothing about us without us¹⁸

Our programme goals are based on feedback from descendant communities impacted by the Guardian founder and his investors’ complicity in the transatlantic exploitation of enslaved labour. Sustained engagement and relationship-building with descendant groups - mainly led by programme managers from, and working within, those communities - is central to our approach.

Our principles include:

- Practising humility and active listening.
- Being led by and accountable to descendant communities.
- Centring equity and gender justice¹⁹ and bringing a trauma-informed²⁰ approach to our work.

Since the launch of the programme in March 2023 we have had more than 900 engagements with community members, reparations experts, civil society organisations and academic institutions, among others. We have also conducted annual surveys and two region-specific surveys.

▼ *Participants at town hall meeting at Penn Center, Beaufort County, South Carolina, US*



Engagement numbers²¹

469

Meetings (face to face and virtual)

133

Surveys

300

Community meetings, townhalls and focus groups

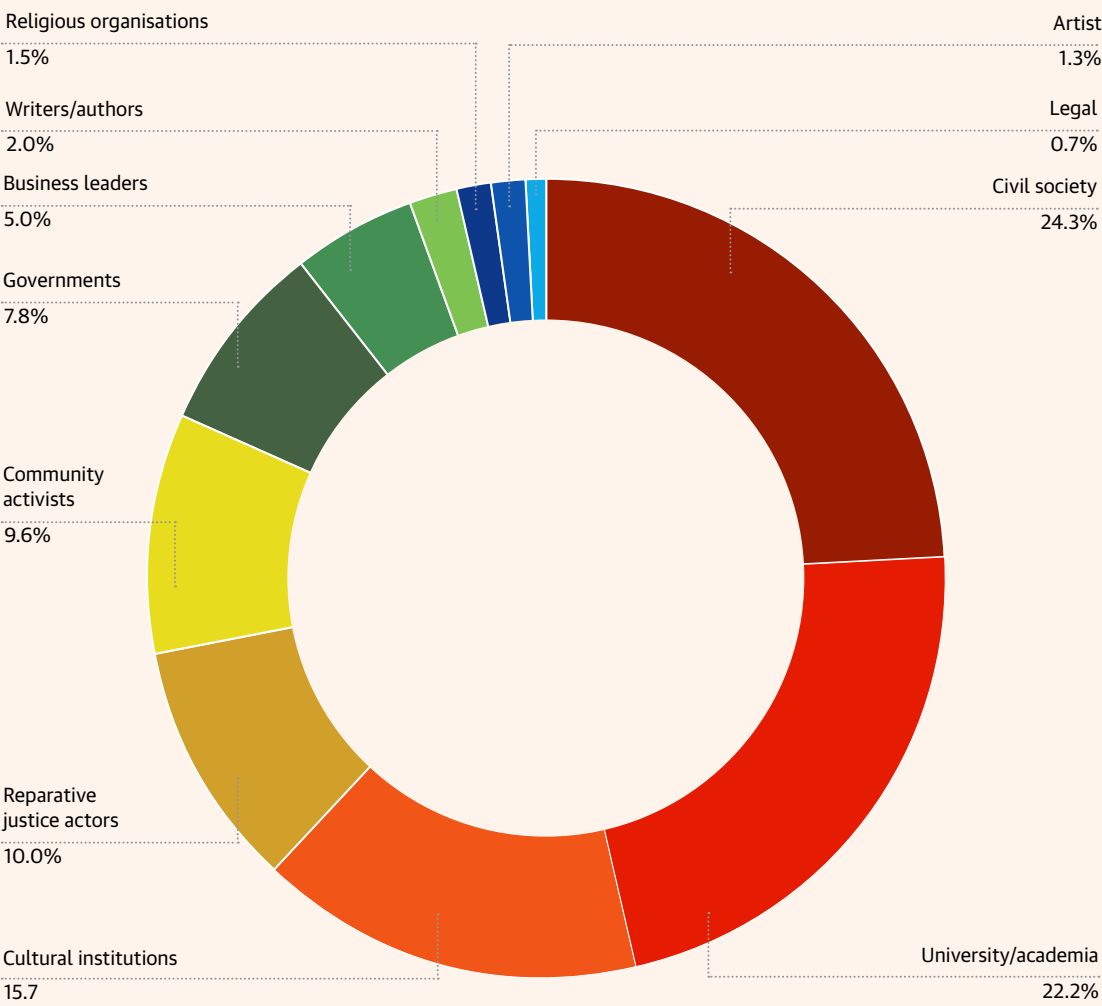
902

Total engagements

Engagement overview

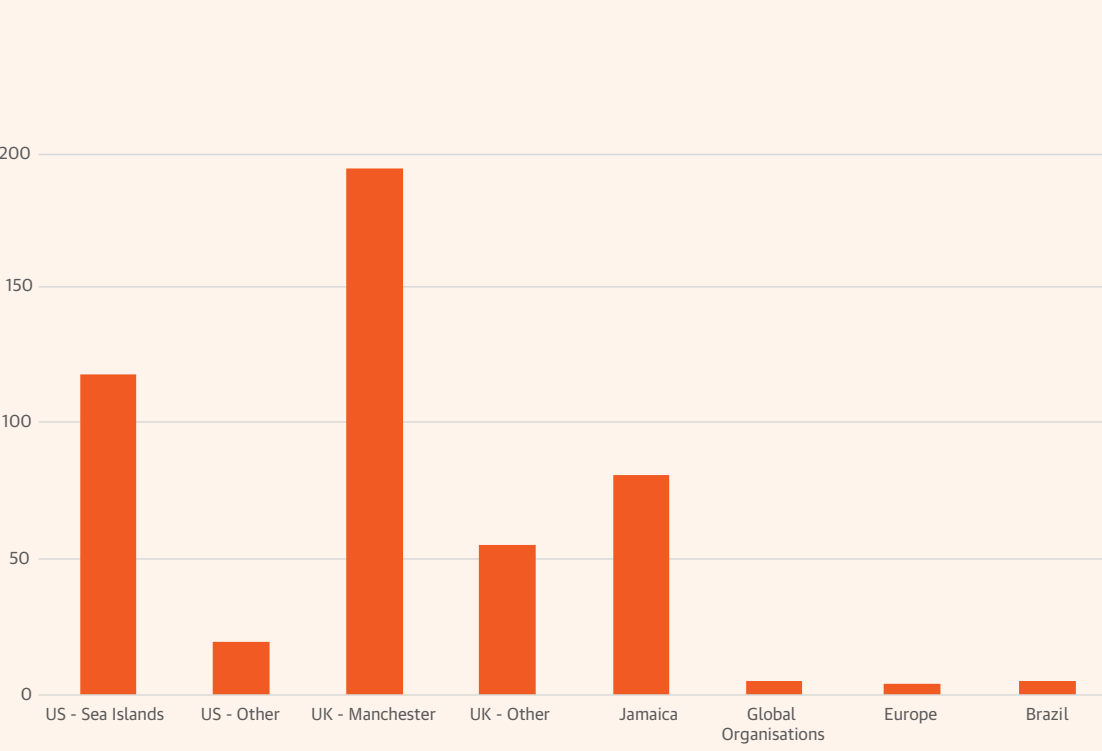
SECTORS

The following sectors have been represented:



GEOGRAPHIES

Engagements have been spread across the following geographies²²:



We are immensely grateful to the community members, reparatory justice activists, grassroots organisations, community leaders, institutions and civil society organisations that have shared their time, thoughts and wisdom with us. Without their openness and good grace, this work would not be possible.



Descendant voices

What repair looks like

The following priorities have emerged from our engagement work with descendant communities. These are their visions of repair



Economic justice

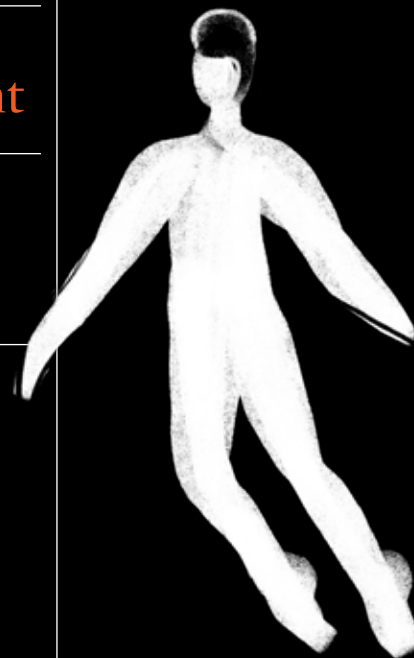
- Land preservation, retention and stewardship.
- Access to equitable education and skills (primary, secondary & tertiary).
- Support for entrepreneurship and Black-owned businesses.
- Opportunity to build generational wealth.

Climate and the environment

- Support for climate resilience measures for homes, schools and community assets.
- Desire for greater self-sufficiency, e.g. growing own food, small-scale farming.

Cultural and historical heritage preservation

- Decolonial history and education.
- Memorialisation and preservation of ancestral knowledge and traditions.
- Capturing oral histories, enabling community storytelling.



Diasporic connections

- Enabling cultural, heritage and other partnerships across the Black Atlantic.
- Educational exchanges and experiences for young people.
- Sharing news and features about people of African descent globally.

Community collaboration and convening

- Community conversations to explore repair and healing.
- Creating opportunities for resource sharing and signposting.
- Building togetherness and space to identify liberated future for people of African descent.

Goal 1

Contribute to realising repair for descendant communities linked to the Guardian’s founders



Jamaica To achieve our first goal in Jamaica, our programming will focus on the following priorities

Goal	How we will achieve it	Community priorities
To contribute to realising repair for descendant communities linked to Guardian’s founders ²³	By providing resources and support to descendant communities in areas connected to the Guardian's founders to address their priorities for restorative justice	● Education - equitable access, decolonial history and technical skills and training. ● Climate and environmental concerns. ● Economic justice. ● Strengthening accountability through journalism. ● Investments in cultural arts.

Descendant community priorities

The engagement data for Jamaica points clearly to an emphasis on improved access to education at all levels and reparative history, ensuring people know the history of enslavement and liberation and its contemporary legacies.

Enabling economic justice, responding to the challenge posed by the climate emergency and dealing with the psychological scars of enslavement - described as impacting the mental health of the nation - are also real concerns.

The devastation caused by Hurricane Melissa in October 2025 has further underlined the imperative to support climate justice and acknowledge the ongoing impacts of the plantation economy on Jamaica. As stated in a recent explainer by UN Human Rights: “Climate justice requires acknowledging that the climate crisis is rooted in the past of extraction and exploitation, dating back to enslavement and colonialism”²⁴

There is also a sense from some, as there is in all programme geographies, of wanting to be connected to the African continent and the African diaspora; to draw from a shared past, culture and traditions to imagine a joint future.

◀ Members of the Legacies of Enslavement team with students and staff from BA Communications, Arts and Technology at the University of Technology, Jamaica

PHOTOGRAPH: TRAVESE THOMAS/UJS NEWS

“We just want a respectful conversation ... can’t change history but can move forward together into the future”
Sydney Bartley, National Council on Reparations, Jamaica

“The whole of Jamaica is a heritage site”
Andrew Smith BA Communications, Arts and Technology programme director, University of Technology

“Unemployment is high and Hanover is a farming community. Getting children trained and skilled is our priority”
Sandra Bernard, headteacher, Success primary school, Hanover

“Investing in education and infrastructure in the affected regions, while supporting journalism and media creation that reflects the lives and legacies of people in affected countries like Jamaica. The documentation and preservation of knowledge and information is necessary for the empowerment of the people”
2024 survey respondent from Jamaica aged 18-29

Goal 1

Contribute to realising repair for descendant communities linked to the Guardian’s founders

➡ Continued from previous page

Engagement work in Jamaica

In Jamaica, at a local level, we sought to engage the small communities living in Success village and Gurney’s Mount, around the site of the former Success estate and plantation, in the rural parish of Hanover. We have connected with, and been generously assisted by, key community institutions such as the Gurney’s Mount Baptist church and Success primary school. We are grateful to many community members who have shared their thoughts and supported our efforts to partner with this community. We have held community meetings at local schools and places of worship and utilised community survey tools.

Hurricane Melissa prevented us from carrying out some planned engagement activities, yet the work has continued. The programme has been assisting the community, which has been **badly affected**, and exploring how we can support greater climate resilience going forward. Notably, there were also specifically gendered impacts evident in the Success community after the hurricane. Many women assumed leadership roles in coordinating support and recovery efforts alongside work and caring responsibilities²⁵. Local shops, the overwhelming majority of which were run by women, reported significant damage to buildings and stock. As many people, particularly women, across Hanover parish are employed in the hospitality sector²⁶, job insecurity and the closure of hotels have had a further detrimental effect on livelihoods.

Nationally, we have been privileged to be afforded audiences with the National Council on Reparations, government ministers and global reparations leaders such as Prof Verene Shepherd, Sir Hilary Beckles, Judge Patrick Robinson, Barbara Blake Hannah and the former prime minister Percival James Patterson. We have taken care to understand critical national action plans and strategies that relate to some of the restorative justice priorities of communities, such as the **Trend** initiative of the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information and Jamaica’s **Vision 2030** development goals.

At regional and international levels, we have

taken guidance from Caricom’s **10-point plan for reparatory justice**, engaged with Caricom commissioners and consulted globally recognised indicators – such as **latest data** in relation to the progress of the UN’s sustainable development goals (SDGs) – to consider the broader potential impact of the community-identified priorities.

Programme manager perspectives

Ahmed Reid
Jamaica programme manager



What has struck me most is the resilience shown by the community of Success in carrying centuries of historical pain. Listening to voices that have long been silenced has revealed the depth of intergenerational wounds and the courage it takes to confront them. The commitment to healing and accountability, even amid systemic challenges, is inspiring. These conversations remind me that reparative justice is not just about acknowledging the past but about actively shaping a future rooted in dignity and equity. I have seen how these conversations have led to new partnerships and strengthened trust within Success.

What has been hardest for me is holding space for grief and hope while navigating real-world crises. Hurricane Melissa showed how natural disasters compound historical inequities, deepen existing vulnerabilities and expose systemic gaps that reparative justice seeks to address. This reality makes the work even more urgent, demanding creativity and resilience from all involved. The Legacies of Enslavement programme is part of a global movement to repair historical harm and build a future where equity is not aspirational but a lived reality. Together, we aim to transform pain into purpose and create a foundation for generations to thrive.

You need to enable people to understand reparations and why they are important, otherwise repair is not complete”
Steven Golding, director of UNIA and member of Jamaica’s National Council on Reparations



Jamaica programme objectives

▲ National Council on Reparations, Jamaica, with members of the Legacies team

Based on the restorative justice priorities identified through our three-year process of engagement we have developed the following objectives for 2026-2030:

ECONOMIC AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

- Improve access to quality education in Hanover parish.
- Fund climate resilient post-hurricane reconstruction work, including supporting economic justice initiatives in Hanover parish.

CULTURE, HISTORY & COMMUNITY

- Honour the memory of the enslaved people of the success plantation.
- Organise community dialogue and

convenings aimed at repair and healing.

FUTURE GENERATIONS

- Support national initiatives aimed at decolonising curricula across the education system.
- Partner with universities to expand access to high quality training in journalism.

We will allocate several million UK pounds to deliver on these objectives in 2026-2030 through partnerships with community-led organisations and institutions in Jamaica.

Goal 1

Contribute to realising repair for descendant communities linked to the Guardian’s founders



Sea Islands To achieve our first goal in the Sea Islands region of the US, our programming will focus on the following priorities

Goal	How we will achieve it	Community priorities
To contribute to realising repair for descendant communities linked to Guardian’s founders ²⁷ .	By providing resources and support to descendant communities in areas connected to the Guardian’s founders to address their priorities for restorative justice.	● Land preservation, retention, and stewardship. ● Cultural heritage preservation. ● Climate and environmental concerns. ● Economic justice. ● Community collaboration and convening.

Descendant community priorities

The engagement data for the Sea Islands and coastal region indicates that land preservation, retention and stewardship is a key issue, alongside reparative history and education about Gullah Geechee culture. These priorities align with recognised areas for critical action to tackle racial inequity and enable repair²⁸. There is also a strong call for support to deal with the impacts of the climate emergency and environmental degradation, and enable economic justice for a community that has been systemically constrained from building generational wealth. Underpinning these priorities is a desire for greater community collaboration - to work together to address concerns, understand repair and share resources.

“Land ownership plays a great deal in what we want. We value land ownership on this island. That’s the most important thing to us.”
Attendee
St. Helena Island, Beaufort, South Carolina, US

“Education is the foundation. We want money, we want reparation, but we have to be educated with it.”
Attendee
Jacksonville, FL Town Hall

“Teaching our youth ownership of land, business, and heritage, creating a sense of pride, and pride of place.”
Marilyn Hemmingway
Marilyn Hemmingway, Gullah Geechee Chamber of Commerce, Georgetown, South Carolina, US

“I don’t want to receive anything and live in negative five to zero, teetering and tottering between trying to survive anymore. I want us to be in a place of what overflow looks like for us.”
Attendee
Brunswick, Georgia, US

◀ *Members of Sea Islands taskforce: Queen Quet, Djuanna Brockington, Patricia Gunn and Angel Parson at Beaufort County town hall*

Engagement work in the Sea Islands

Across the Sea Islands and coastal region of the south-eastern United States, we have engaged with communities across the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, a 12,000 square mile federally designated region of national heritage recognising the unique culture and history of the Gullah Geechee people²⁹.

This has included town halls in mid-late 2025 and community outreach events to ensure face-to-face engagement and information-sharing about the programme, its aims and the research. We have connected with, and been generously assisted by, key community institutions and philanthropic foundations such as the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, the [Center for Heirs Property](#), and the [Coastal Conservation League](#). We are grateful to many community actors and individuals that have supported us in this stage of the work.

At the state and national level we have met with key actors such as the the [National African-American Reparations Commission](#), [First Repair](#), [Coming to the Table National Reparations Group](#), South Carolina Reparations Alliance, [Center for Jubilee Reconciliation and Healing](#), [Decolonizing Wealth](#) and the [BLIS Collective](#) to understand advocacy priorities across the reparations movement. We have also engaged with state representatives and their staffers to deepen our understanding of local issues of concern.

We have also consulted national data to obtain a broad picture of some of the socio-economic challenges facing communities across the corridor, such as the [US Census Bureau Multidimensional Deprivation Index](#) and [America’s Health Rankings](#).

Goal 1

Contribute to realising repair for descendant communities linked to the Guardian’s founders

➡ Continued from previous page

Sea Islands programme objectives

Based on the restorative justice priorities identified through our three-year process of engagement we have developed the following objectives for 2026-2030:

- ECONOMIC AND CLIMATE JUSTICE**
- Improve access to education, advice and legal support to strengthen Gullah Geechee community land retention and land use.
 - Fund locally-led schemes to mitigate the impacts of the climate emergency and economic inequality

- CULTURE, HISTORY AND COMMUNITY**
- Support community efforts to preserve and memorialise Gullah Geechee culture and heritage.
 - Organise community dialogue and convenings aimed at repair and healing.

- FUTURE GENERATIONS**
- Partner with regional HBCUs to expand access to further education in priority areas.

We will allocate several million UK pounds to deliver on these objectives in 2026-2030 through partnerships with community-led organisations and institutions in the Sea Islands region.

Programme manager perspectives

Angel Parsons
Sea Islands/US programme manager



We mus tek cyare ah de root fa heal de tree” (we must take care of the root to heal the tree). This Gullah proverb reflects a core cultural truth that preserving legacy, lineage, and land requires tending to what lies beneath the surface, to nurture the foundations that we hope will sustain us for generations.

The Legacies of Enslavement programme aims to create a meaningful opportunity to support our communities in tending those roots. By intentionally curating spaces for truth-telling, the programme has acknowledged a violent historical legacy that has produced generations of pain, loss and separation, not only from land and communal practices but also from collective power and cultural identity.

As I travelled throughout the four-state Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, convening community conversations in partnership with regional and local leaders, a powerful message of unification, collaboration and collective action within Gullah Geechee communities emerged. While there was a clear understanding of the enduring impact of oppressive systems rooted in chattel slavery, there was also an equally strong affirmation of inherited resilience, creativity and innovation. Community members spoke of making much from little, drawing on our ancestral practices of resourcefulness. Participants willingly shared existing resources, and individuals with technical knowledge and skills stepped forward to serve as community liaisons.

These conversations have inspired a renewal of the core Gullah Geechee principles of creativity, heritage and community, while empowering practitioners and residents across regions to organize into working groups.

These groups are actively addressing critical priorities such as land preservation and climate impacts, and are envisioning sustainable community-led solutions for the Gullah Geechee people as a whole. As a result, our communities are beginning to envision a bold and collective future, one in which Gullah Geechee voices, stories and lived experiences are centered in advocacy and decision-making.

“At this point, anything and everything in our culture needs to be preserved: agriculture, preserving land, and holding onto what we have.”
Chef Benjamin “BJ” Dennis IV, Okatie, South Carolina, US



Advocacy and convening

The programme plan will move to address the priority areas identified during our engagement work in Jamaica and the Sea Islands, as outlined in the objectives above. However, the breadth of issues raised, and the profound nature of some of the structural problems, has led us to reflect on what we could and could not affect with our resources.

While we cannot directly address all of the concerns that have been identified at community level financially, the programme will seek to be an amplifier, convener and enabler - supporting descendant communities to realise their vision for their communities however we can. Alongside moving money in line with the priority areas, we will be convening key actors and changemakers and supporting local advocacy efforts that align with our restorative justice work. An example of this is assisting the Success and Gurney’s Mount community by uplifting their calls for improved road networks and connectivity.

Brazil

We will be sharing the latest research conducted by the Wilberforce Institute into the Guardian’s connections in Brazil later in 2026. Alongside that, we will commence engagement work with reparatory justice actors to identify the nature and shape of our work in Brazil. Some initial outreach and consultation has taken place and we look forward to contributing to the work of repair among the largest Black population outside Africa.

▲ Joseph Harker, senior editor for diversity and development and community members at Original Gullah festival

Goal 2

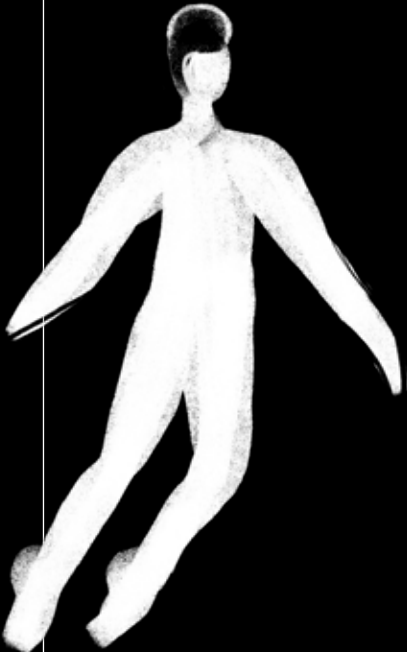
Support reparatory justice and truth-telling efforts in the UK and globally



Activities under Goal 2 have been under way since the programme launch in March 2023.

The following table outlines the work of the programme so far in support of Goal 2

Objective	Progress so far	Forthcoming work
● Promote truth-seeking and telling about transatlantic enslavement and its legacies through sharing independent research about the Guardian's founders and their links to this crime against humanity.	● Partnership with the University of Hull's Wilberforce Institute until March 2026 to conduct independent academic research into the Guardian's history, including the enslaved people who created the wealth and enabled its founding. ● First round of independent research published in full at launch in March 2023. ● Sharing research findings with descendant communities across programme geographies in appropriate forums and formats. ● Final phase of research is being carried out by local researchers based across the programme geographies of the US, Jamaica, Manchester and Brazil.	● Further research to be published from 2026 onwards. ● Continued journalism as part of the Cotton Capital series on the legacies of enslavement, memorialisation and the transatlantic trade. ● Support for follow-on research projects in relation to the Guardian's history from 2027 onwards.
● Raise consciousness of Britain's involvement in slavery, its global impact and the lasting wealth and broader inequality it generates through heritage, cultural and educational partnerships and exchanges.	● Manchester-based programme manager, Keisha Thompson, in place to lead work. ● Secured partnership with the Science and Industry Museum to develop an exhibition on Manchester, Cotton and Enslavement (early 2027).	● Educational resources based on Cotton Capital series to be launched in early 2026. ● Further cultural and educational partnerships to be announced from 2026 onwards.



Objective

- Promote truth-seeking and telling about transatlantic enslavement and its legacies, through sharing independent research about the Guardian's founders and their links to this crime against humanity.

Progress so far

- Support for various activities and a community-led working group to commemorate and raise consciousness of the 80th anniversary of fifth Pan African Congress.
- Ongoing community engagement to identify local priorities for further partnerships to build awareness of Manchester's history and the ongoing legacies of enslavement.

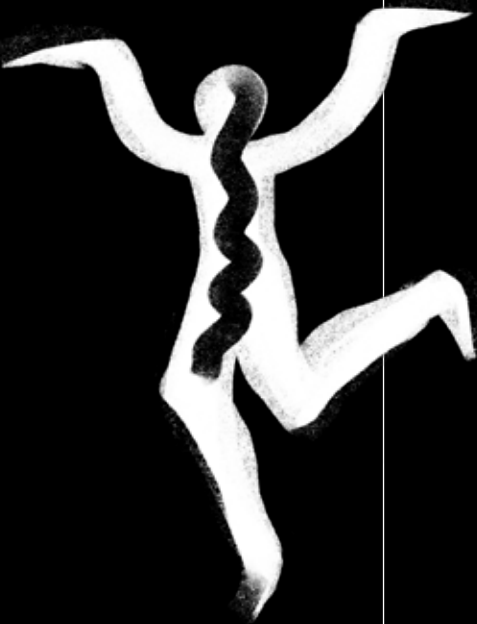
Forthcoming work

- Science and Industry Museum exhibition to be launched in early 2027.
- Cotton Capital articles and features based on latest academic research.
- Cotton Capital podcast 2.0.

- Increase the scope and ambition of Guardian journalism in covering underreported regions and descendant communities affected by enslavement around the world.

- Creation of eight correspondent roles covering east and west Africa, South America and the Caribbean, alongside expanded teams in the US and UK.
- Long Wave newsletter designed to connect people across the African diaspora launched in October 2024.
- Positive feedback from Guardian readers and descendant communities in relation to the impact of new correspondents' reporting, which has included citations in submissions to the International Court of Justice and recognition by the National Association of Black Journalists in the US.

- Continued reporting to reflect stories and issues of importance to communities of African descent globally.



- Create new opportunities for entry-level and mid-career journalists from under-represented groups.

- Bursary, fellowship and cadetship schemes up and running in the UK, US and Australia for entry-level journalists.
- Year 1: Five opportunities delivered (UK and Australia)
- Year 2: Seven opportunities delivered (UK, Australia and US)
- Year 3: Six opportunities delivered (UK, Australia and US)

- Mid-career fellowship scheme to be launched in the UK in 2026.

Manchester



▲ Keisha Thompson, Manchester programme manager, Dr Cassandra Gooptar, lead researcher and Amber Russell, conservator at John Rylands library

Manchester is the city of the Guardian’s birth. It has been the focus of our work in the UK to improve knowledge and understanding of the role of transatlantic enslavement in the nation’s economic development as well as the continuing legacies faced by Black communities. As mentioned above, the objective of our work in Manchester has been to raise consciousness of Britain’s historical involvement in slavery - its global impact as well as the lasting wealth and broader inequality it generates - through heritage, cultural and educational partnerships and exchanges. We are still in the process of listening to views within the local community and learning about how best we can do this while also building relationships and convening grassroots

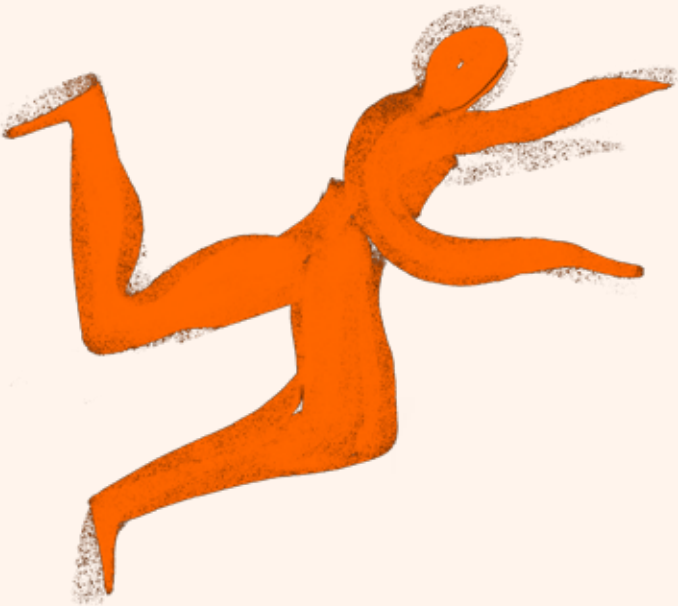
groups, activists and institutions that are involved in similar work. Through the programme, we have also added to our Manchester-based editorial team with the recruitment of Chris Osuh as our north of England community affairs correspondent, with a remit to cover Greater Manchester’s Black communities, alongside wider reporting on Britain’s Black, Asian and ethnic-minority populations and the issues that affect them.

Editorial lead perspectives

Maya Wolfe-Robinson



When we launched in 2023, we knew that this moment would have a deep impact on us as an organisation in the present, and it’s a delight to be able to see this every day in our journalism. Our eight additional correspondents, the Long Wave newsletter team and the Cotton Capital team contribute towards an unrivalled range of coverage of Black communities and populations around the world. This includes the impact of extreme weather events such as Hurricane Melissa on Jamaicans and analysis of the role that race played in Brazilian police’s deadly police operation in a Rio de Janeiro community, but it also includes the joy of food from the Black Atlantic, what we can learn from the sex lives of African women and coverage of a documentary about the first self-governed, autonomous city in South Carolina. Our audiences regularly tell us that our stories covering and connecting people across the African diaspora help them feel connected to a wider whole, which reinforces that journalism can be a powerful tool of repair. Nothing could be more meaningful.



Programme manager perspectives

Keisha Thompson
Manchester programme manager



My first year on the programme was exploratory. It was important to strike a balance between listening and doing. The Guardian’s apology and Cotton Capital material have served as a great foundation for critical and galvanising conversations. I found true encouragement and support across a range of sectors for us to raise consciousness around restorative justice. The appetite for us to reckon with our identity as the first industrial city in the world is palpable. Serendipitously, it was a significant year for Manchester as we marked the 80th anniversary of the fifth Pan-African Congress being held here in 1945. Convening a broad spectrum of stakeholders around this milestone has allowed me to make new connections and refresh existing ones across Greater Manchester and beyond. From community feedback, it is clear there is a decent level of awareness of our partnership with the Science and Industry Museum, support for our educational resources (currently in development) and a clear desire for our convening events to continue. Despite connecting with young people (16-30) this year, we clearly need to do more to capture those voices and ensure they have a meaningful influence on the programme as it develops.

Monitoring and evaluating impact

Any programme of this nature needs to have a clear framework for gathering data and evaluating impact, particularly as this is a restorative justice effort aimed at repair for a crime against humanity that has been the cause of multi-generational trauma. How people perceive repair matters, so it is vital to treat this information with care.

As such, we have set up systems to collect, collate and verify the feedback and insights we obtain through our engagement work and share that information back with descendant communities.

For example, we document our meetings electronically and take time to code and collate feedback to build up a data source of what constitutes repair.

It is important to acknowledge that data collection and research can be an extractive process, so we have tried to embrace our responsibility to work collaboratively and respectfully with community members, acknowledging their inputs, agency and co-production.

We seek to continuously improve and also be transparent about our activity, so we will learn from developing practice, utilise annual surveys and deliver regular reports in the coming years to share learning and progress.

You can learn more about our objectives and how we will evaluate impact [here](#).

► *Exploring the site of the former Success plantation in Hanover parish, Jamaica*

How will we measure success?

We will be monitoring our performance and sharing annual reports to demonstrate our desire to be transparent and accountable for this programme of restorative justice. However, we are acutely aware that the descendant communities we partner with will be the ultimate arbiters of whether the programme has been successful. Only they can define whether the work of the programme has helped to atone for the Guardian's history.



Closing remarks

This is a transatlantic restorative justice programme that aims to respond to the Guardian's links to transatlantic enslavement. So naturally the work spans immense geographies, diverse communities and multi-faceted priorities. We have witnessed much unity in wanting to engage in a good faith process to explore and define repair.

To those that have afforded us the gift of their time, attention and expertise over the past few years, we hope you see some of what you have shared reflected in this plan. It involves visions of transformative change. Nothing less is required to even begin to reconcile the multigenerational impacts of this crime against humanity.

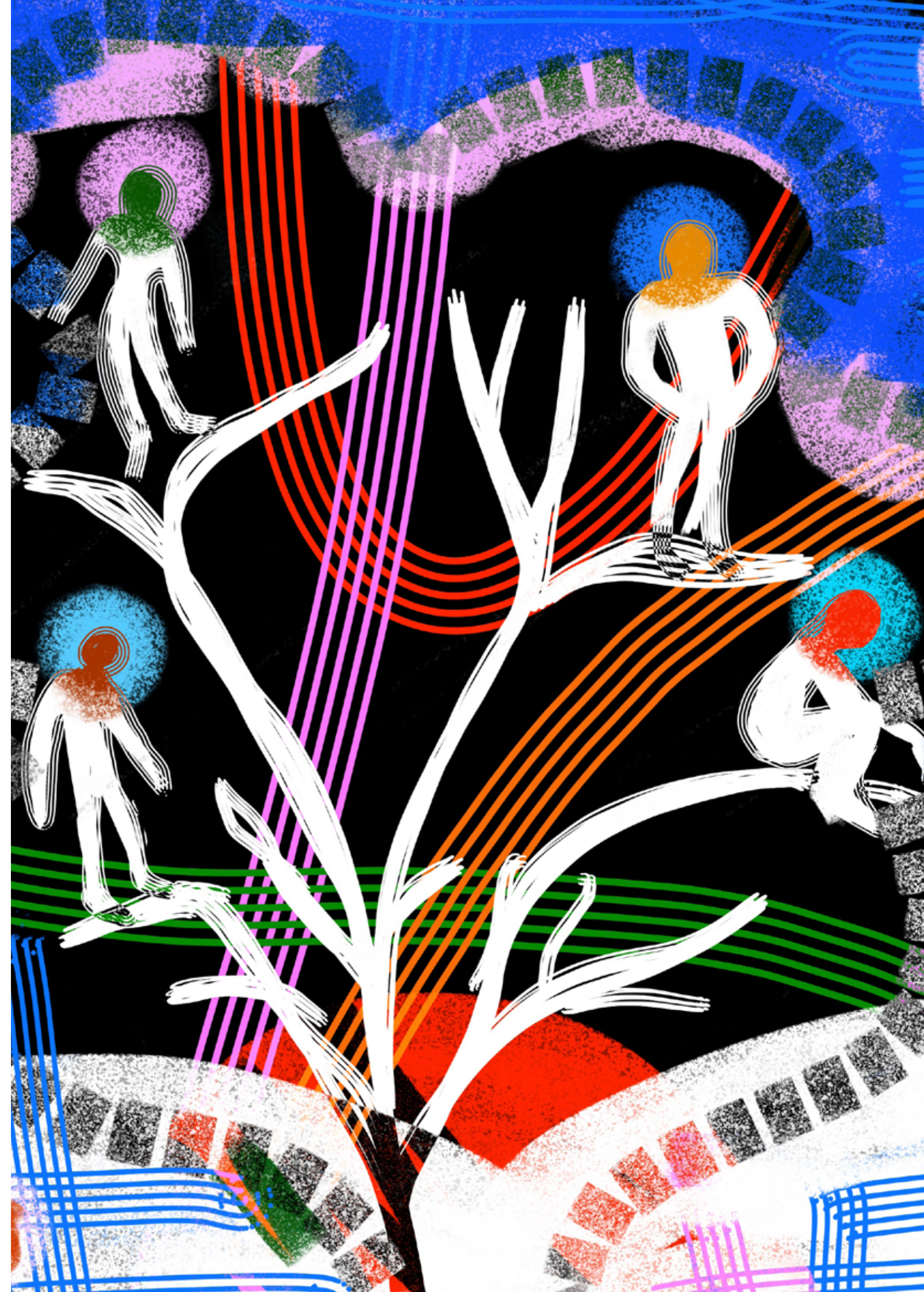
By bringing humility, sensitivity, accountability and collaboration to this endeavour, we aim to play a role in realising repair. We encourage other institutions with a similar history to do the same. Acknowledge and apologise, engage with descendant communities and take action to restore and repair, recognising their leadership and agency.

Please let us know what you think:
legacies@theguardian.com



PRODUCED BY: *Ebony Riddell Bamber*,
programme director, with contributions from the
entire Legacies of Enslavement team.

ILLUSTRATIONS *Ngadi Smart*



Endnote

Researchers involved in the Legacies of Enslavement programme since 2023

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University of Hull
- Dr Sheryllynne Haggerty
University of Hull
- Dr David Brown
University of Manchester
- Dr Dean Clay
University of Hull
- Dr Cassandra Gooptar
University of Hull

Phase 2 2024-25

- Dr Dexnell Peters
University of the West Indies
- John Shorter
University of Hull/Institute of Jamaica
- Dr Felipe Souza Melo
Paul Bairoch Institute of Economic History, University of Geneva
- Dr Cassandra Gooptar
University of Hull
- Dr Lance Parker
University of Hull

Phase 3 2025-26

- Janeillia Darien
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- Brian Sheffey
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- Darius Brown
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- Dr Shelley V Murphy
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- Malika N Pryor JD
International African American Museum
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- Dr Matthew Stallard
Independent researcher
- Jeevan Sanghera
Independent researcher
- Ella Sinclair
Independent researcher
- Megan Bridgeland
Independent researcher
- Destinie Reynolds
Independent researcher

Appendix

¹ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/ng-interactive/2023/mar/31/more-than-money-the-logic-of-slavery-reparations> and <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/series/edinburgh-race-report> for examples.

² <https://www.theguardian.com/news/commentisfree/2023/mar/28/how-our-founders-links-to-slavery-change-the-guardian-today>.

³ The Guardian’s founders’ connections to Brazil have been uncovered in recent stages of academic research. We will be sharing the latest research conducted by the Wilberforce Institute at the University of Hull later in 2026, followed by a process of engagement to scope the repair work in Brazil.

⁴See: <https://www.hull.ac.uk/research/projects/the-scott-trust-legacies-of-enslavement-report>.

⁵ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2023/mar/28/guardian-own-er-apologises-founders-transatlantic-slavery-scott-trust>.

⁶ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/ng-interactive/2023/mar/31/more-than-money-the-logic-of-slavery-reparations>.

⁷ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/legacies-of-enslavement/2024/mar/26/legacies-of-enslavement-advisory-panel>.

⁸ Namely Jamaica, where Sir George Philips was an enslaver and co-owner of the Success estate in Hanover parish; and across the [Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor](#) of the south-eastern United States, where John Edward Taylor was an agent dealing in Sea Islands cotton. This focus will expand to include Brazil during the strategy period in light of further research which will be published in due course.

⁹ See for more details: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/reparatory-justice-people-african-descent>.

¹⁰ See: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/manden-charter-proclaimed-in-kurukan-fuga-00290>.

¹¹ See: [International Network of Scholars and Activists for Afrikan Reparations, Global Report \(2019\)](#).

¹² For more information on those that obtained compensation through the 1833 act, see: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/social-historical-sciences/history/research/research-projects-and-centres/centre-study-legacies-british-slavery-cslbs>.

¹³ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/12/treasury-tweet-slavery-compen-sate-slave-owners>.

¹⁴ International Center for Transitional Justice: <https://www.ictj.org/>.

¹⁵ See: [Guidance Note of the UN Secretary General, Transitional Justice: A Strategic Tool for People, Prevention and Peace](#).

¹⁶ UNODC University Module Series: [Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Module 8 Restorative Justice](#).

¹⁷ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/dec/31/white-south-afrika-ubuntu-african-tutu>

¹⁸ “Nothing about us without us” is a key principle first used by disability rights activists to assert their right to full and direct participation in decisions that affect their lives. It is also now utilised by other marginalised groups to highlight the importance of centering their lived experience and knowledge in decision-making. See: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-of-persons-with-disabilities>.

¹⁹ For more detail see: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/gender-equality>; <https://www.caribbeangender.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Jamaica-Gen-der-In-Brief-2025.pdf>; <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/intersectional-feminism-what-it-means-and-why-it-matters-right-now>

²⁰ For more detail see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice>

²¹ As of the end of January 2026.

²² It is important to note that our core engagement in Manchester started earlier than our engagement in the Sea Islands and Jamaica, with our programme manager starting in autumn 2024.

²³ Namely Jamaica, where Sir George Philips was an enslaver and co-owner of the Success estate in Hanover parish; and across the [Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor](#) of the south-eastern United States, where John Edward Taylor was an agent dealing in Sea Islands cotton. This focus will expand to include Brazil during the strategy period, in light of further research which will be published in due course.

²⁴ See: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/racism/reparatory-justice-environmental-justice.pdf>.

²⁵ More information on gender issues in Jamaica can be found here: <https://www.caribbeangender.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Jamaica-Gen-der-In-Brief-2025.pdf>.

²⁶ More information can be found here: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2025-06/ToR%20TourismJamaica_26062025.pdf#:~:text=Women%20play%20a%20central%20role,and%20recreation.%20While%20tourism%20offers.

²⁷ Namely Jamaica, where Sir George Philips was an enslaver and co-owner of the Success estate in Hanover parish; and across the [Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor](#) of the south-eastern United States, where John Edward Taylor was an agent dealing in Sea Islands cotton. This focus will expand to include Brazil during the strategy period, in light of further research which will be published in due course.

²⁸ See: Liberation Ventures and The Bridgespan Group: Special Collection on Racial Repair and Reparations - And What Philanthropy Can Do (2023): <https://www.bridgespan.org/getmedia/64d1a76c-eace-4d78-b82b-1774cb27787c/special-collection-racial-repair-reparations-what-philanthropy-can-do.pdf>.

²⁹ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/ng-interactive/2023/mar/30/white-gold-from-black-hands-the-gullah-geechee-fight-for-a-legacy-after-slavery-manchester>.



Atoning
in the
present
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past

The Scott Trust
Legacies of Enslavement