

The background of the cover features several hands of different skin tones holding various fresh produce. In the top left, a dark-skinned hand holds a bunch of green leafy vegetables with orange roots. In the top right, a light-skinned hand holds a bunch of green leafy vegetables with a red root. In the middle left, a dark-skinned hand holds a bunch of green leafy vegetables with orange roots. In the middle right, a light-skinned hand holds a bunch of wheat stalks. In the bottom left, a dark-skinned hand holds three orange carrots. In the bottom center, a light-skinned hand holds two red strawberries. In the bottom right, a dark-skinned hand holds two blue speckled eggs.

Justice Equity Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Programme

EVALUATION REPORT

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ABOUT THE PROGRAMME TEAM

Eating Better is an alliance of over 70 civil society organisations, formed in response to growing evidence of the need for sustainable diets containing less and better meat and dairy. Our vision is for everyone in the UK to eat nourishing and affordable food; with more plants and less and better meat and dairy, produced in a way to benefit people, animals and the planet. The Eating Better mission is to catalyse the transition towards more plants and less and better meat and dairy in the UK in order to address the interconnecting health, economic, food security, nature and climate change crises.



Sustain is the alliance for better food and farming, with a membership of around 100 national organisations, and support for over 120 food partnerships in towns, cities and regions. Working together, Sustain runs highly effective and creative campaigns, advocacy, networks and demonstration programmes, aiming to catalyse permanent changes in policy and practice, and to engage more people, organisations and communities in being food system change-makers.



New Ways is a leadership and culture practice helping organisations close the gap between who they say they are and how they are experienced in practice. Founded by Letesia Gibson, New Ways works with leaders and organisations to understand how power, inequity and exclusion show up in their cultures, relationships and ways of working. Their work brings together anti-racism and anti-oppression, leadership development and culture change, helping organisations put their values into practice.



ABOUT THE FUNDER

Farming the Future is building a collective approach to philanthropy that accelerates the UK's transition to a just and regenerative food and farming system. Farming the Future works with other funders, they seek to increase the flow of trust-based funding to collective efforts to catalyse change.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2026, Eating Better and Sustain launched the first JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) Leadership Programme for leaders across the sustainable food and farming movement. Funded by Farming the Future and facilitated by New Ways, the programme was designed in response to a clear challenge identified through our previous sector-wide anti-racism work: while awareness and commitment to JEDI were growing, leadership capability, confidence and accountability remained significant barriers to progress.

Twelve senior leaders from across food, farming, public health and environmental organisations were invited to participate in a six-month leadership journey combining in-person workshops, online leadership sessions, individual coaching and an accountability buddy model. The programme focused on leadership practice, power, culture, accountability and organisational change, positioning JEDI as a leadership responsibility rather than a compliance exercise.

Participants reported increased confidence to lead conversations on justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, a deeper understanding of power and positionality, and greater readiness to act as visible champions for change within their organisations and the wider movement. Leaders described a shift from seeing JEDI as a specialist area of work to understanding it as a fundamental part of how organisations are led, governed and held accountable.

Importantly, the programme generated impact beyond individual learning. Participants reported taking practical action to embed JEDI within organisational strategy, governance, recruitment, communications and decision-making processes. The programme also strengthened relationships across organisations, creating trusted space for leaders to learn together, navigate challenges openly and build collective momentum around shared goals. These new and strengthened connections represent an important investment in the movement infrastructure needed to address the complex social, environmental and economic challenges facing our food system.

A particularly valuable insight was the role of peer support and accountability. The accountability buddy model created opportunities for reflection, challenge and learning, while highlighting the importance of building structures that sustain momentum beyond the life of a funded programme. Both leaders and buddies expressed a desire for continued collaboration, demonstrating a strong appetite across the sector for deeper engagement on justice, equity and inclusion.

The findings reinforce a wider lesson for funders and civil society organisations: meaningful progress in this work requires dedicated investment in leadership, culture and organisational change. While policy commitments and action plans remain important, this programme showed that lasting change is accelerated when leaders are equipped to understand and use their influence, challenge existing norms and create conditions where equity and belonging can thrive.

This report shares the programme's outcomes, challenges and recommendations to inform future practice across the sustainable food and farming movement and wider charity sector. It also provides evidence that investing in leadership development is an effective strategy for strengthening organisational resilience, collaboration and long-term systems change. We hope it inspires other organisations to adopt similar approaches and encourages funders to invest in the infrastructure required to build a more just, inclusive and sustainable future.

Although this was the first iteration of the JEDI Leadership Programme, the ambition extends far beyond a single cohort. The demand, engagement and outcomes demonstrated throughout the programme point to a significant opportunity for further investment and expansion. Eating Better and Sustain remain committed to building leadership capacity across the movement and we hope to see this work become increasingly collective, shared and embedded across the sector. We invite other organisation and funders that are interested in this work to get in touch and explore this future with us.

Idman

Idman Abduraham

Inclusive Movement Lead
Eating Better

Sareta

Sareta Puri

Diversity Outreach Coordinator
Sustain



INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Eating Better and Sustain are two alliances in the sustainable food and farming movement that have been collaboratively leading work across the sector on justice, equity, diversity and inclusion since 2023.

In 2026, Eating Better and Sustain hosted the first JEDI Leadership Programme for the sustainable food and farming movement. The programme built on previous anti-racism workshops, mentoring support and collaborative work delivered across 2024 and 2025. During that prior work, staff across the sector, particularly those from racialised backgrounds, repeatedly identified leadership commitment, accountability and willingness to use power as the determining factors in whether organisational change was sustained.

The programme was managed by Idman Abdurahaman, Inclusive Movement Lead, at Eating Better and Sareta Puri, Diversity Outreach Coordinator, at Sustain and was developed and facilitated by Letesia Gibson of New Ways (a change and leadership consultancy that has supported both alliances with anti-racism work) with funding from Farming the Future. The programme team, referred to throughout this report, was Letesia, Idman and Sareta and the collaboration between the three was key to ensuring that the programme focused on what the sector needed and what builds trust and confidence around JEDI issues.

The programme was designed in response to a clear need in the movement: to provide leaders with the space to critically examine how power, privilege, organisation culture and leadership behaviour shape outcomes. Existing approaches often focused on policies and procedures. This programme addressed the leadership conditions that determine whether those policies translate into meaningful change and trust.

The programme ran from February to July 2026, following a three-month planning and recruitment period.

PARTICIPANTS

Twelve leaders from national food, farming and public health organisations participated in the programme. They were invited from organisations already demonstrating some commitment or progress on JEDI issues and represented a mix of organisation sizes, focus and leadership structures.

Participants were:

- Julia Kirby-Smith, [Better Food Traders](#)
- D'Arcy Williams, [Bite Back](#)
- Rebecca Sunter, [Eating Better](#)
- Bonnie Hewson, [Farming the Future](#)
- Dan Crossley, [Food Ethics Council](#)
- Anna Taylor, [The Food Foundation](#)
- Carina Millstone, [Foodrise](#)
- Anna Chworow, [Nourish Scotland](#)
- Katherine Jenner, [Obesity Health Alliance](#)
- Jamie Agombar, [SOS UK](#)
- Brendan Costelloe, [Soil Association](#)
- Kath Dalmeny, [Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming](#)

Collectively, these leaders hold significant influence over organisational strategy, culture, governance, resource allocation and public advocacy across the sustainable food and farming movement. The programme therefore represented a unique opportunity to create change through those with the greatest decision-making power.

ACCOUNTABILITY BUDDIES

At the start of the programme, each leader identified an accountability buddy from within their organisation or professional circle. The model was intentionally light-touch, providing space for leaders to reflect on learning, discuss organisational challenges and explore practical application. Buddies were to act as critical friends, sounding boards and accountability partners throughout the programme and leaders were encouraged at the start of the programme to engage with their buddies as they saw fit. It was not expected that buddies were there to check in or hold leaders to account.

EVALUATION DATA

The evaluation findings are based on:

- Programme content
- Introductory baseline surveys completed by all participating leaders and accountability buddies
- End-of-programme surveys completed by 10 of the 12 participating leaders (83% response rate)
- End-of-programme surveys completed by 8 accountability buddies (67% response rate).
- Facilitator and programme team reflections gathered through post-programme debrief sessions

The evaluation explores participant experiences of the programme, perceived changes in leadership confidence and practice, organisational actions emerging from the programme, and lessons for future delivery.

“

I'm extremely grateful to have been selected for this programme, and for the time, care and expertise that Letesia, Sareta, Idman and the whole cohort put into creating such a safe and supportive space. **I'm committed to ensuring that this investment in my leadership translates into meaningful action for the sector and the communities we serve.**

”



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME DESIGN

The programme was co-designed by the project team and was built around the principle that JEDI leadership is a practice of awareness, responsibility and action. The aim was for leaders to be challenged not only to examine organisational systems and inequities but also their own leadership habits, assumptions and use of power.

The programme included:

- Two half-day in-person workshops
- Four online leadership workshops
- One individual coaching session per participant with the facilitator
- Independent reflection activities
- An accountability buddy model

The programme combined personal reflection, peer discussion and practical application, creating space for honest dialogue about some of the complex realities of leadership in the context of equity and social change.

The initial session was getting to know one another, grounding, setting the scene and exploring introductory topics such as 'what is JEDI?'. It was valuable to do this in-person to make that human connection and to strengthen the peer-support element. The in-person sessions were also valuable not just across the cohort but also with the programme team. The closing session gave space to reflect and look ahead, as well as reconnecting as a cohort in-person.

Across four interconnected online workshops, leaders were encouraged to reflect on their own leadership practice, consider how organisational cultures are shaped and maintained, and explore how they can use their influence to create conditions where belonging, accountability and justice are more possible.

1. VISIBLE LEADERSHIP

The first workshop explored how leaders are experienced by others and how their leadership creates visibility or invisibility within conversations about justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. Leaders reflected on emotional responses to equity-related challenges including defensiveness, discomfort and fragility, and considered how these responses can influence trust, openness and organisational culture. They examined their positionality, recognising how lived experience, identity and access to power shape perspectives, priorities and decision-making. The session encouraged greater self-awareness and curiosity about the impact leaders have on those around them.



2. CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP

The second workshop focused on helping leaders identify underlying patterns, assumptions and organisational norms that can limit progress towards equity and inclusion. Rather than concentrating on individual incidents or technical solutions, participants explored how inherited ways of working can shape leadership behaviours, organisational priorities and approaches to change. Leaders reflected on recurring patterns that can slow or deprioritise JEDI work and considered how leadership accountability can challenge these dynamics. The workshop emphasised critical thinking, honest reflection and greater awareness of the systems influencing organisational decision-making.



3. RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

This session examined the role of relationships, belonging and culture in creating environments where people feel valued, respected and able to contribute. Leaders explored how both belonging and exclusion are communicated through leadership behaviours, organisational practices and cultural signals. The workshop encouraged leaders to pay attention to the wider atmosphere experienced by staff, communities and partners, and to consider how trust is strengthened through accountability, repair and meaningful solidarity. Discussions focused on the responsibilities leaders hold in building cultures where participation is widened and where people are not left carrying the burden of change alone.



4. COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP

The final workshop explored what it means to lead with courage when commitments to equity and justice are tested by competing priorities, risk, uncertainty or organisational pressure. Leaders reflected on the role of power in leadership and considered how decisions are influenced when organisations face difficult challenges or trade-offs. Through discussion of real-world leadership dilemmas, the session examined the importance of truth-telling, accountability and the conscious use of influence. Leaders were encouraged to think about how they create conditions for collective courage and how they can maintain focus on equity and inclusion, particularly when it becomes difficult to do so.



PROGRAMME REVIEW

FEEDBACK

All leaders and buddies were surveyed at the start and the end of the programme. 100% of both groups completed the initial survey, with 83% of leaders and 67% of buddies completing the final survey.

At the start of the programme, leaders were asked to share their challenges in this work, and buddies were asked what they saw as the barriers to progress. Both sets of answers aligned. These included:

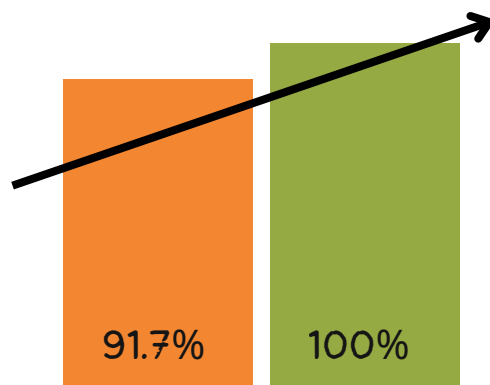
- Capacity and resourcing
- Policies, procedures and governance
- Tension making progress on JEDI issues in hierarchical organisation where responsibility isn't always within leadership
- Being more political, whilst avoiding identity politics
- Finding time to bring the right mindset and space to this work
- A slowdown in impetus as regressive politics creeps in and organisations need to spend more time on core activities
- Being a small organisation
- Being a not very diverse (or all white) organisation
- Challenge to know where and when to intervene or stand up and what to say and do e.g. on global injustices
- Leaning on deficit-driven narratives instead of being vision-driven, asset-based and focused on positive steps
- JEDI not being part of organisational strategy

There were several areas measured at the start and end of the programme to demonstrate progress. First, we asked leaders about whether JEDI was a priority in their organisation.

ON A SCALE FROM 0-5. HOW MUCH OF A PRIORITY IS JEDI IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

Before the leadership programme, 91.7% of respondents stated that JEDI was a priority within their organisations*.

After completing the programme, this rose to 100%.



*This counts those that answered 3, 4, or 5 to the question.

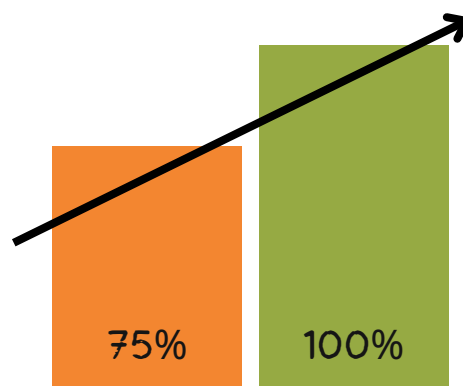
Second, we explored confidence in this work.

ON A SCALE FROM 0-5. WHAT IS YOUR LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN BEING AN ADVOCATE FOR JEDI WORK?

Before the leadership programme, 75% of respondents stated that they were confident in being an advocate for JEDI work.*

After completing the programme, this rose to 100%.

*This counts those that answered 3, 4, or 5 to the question.

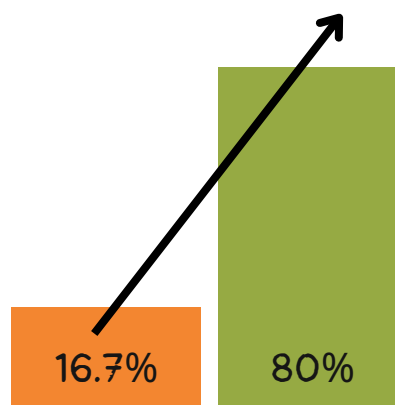


As well as level of understanding of key issues.

ON A SCALE FROM 0-5. WHAT IS YOUR LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE KEY JEDI ISSUES?

Before the leadership programme, one third of respondents felt that their understanding of key JEDI issues was 33.3% level 2, 50% level 3 and 16.7% level 4.*

After completing the programme, those answering Level 4 or above rose to 80%.



At the start of the course we asked leaders what energises them about their evolving JEDI leadership. Some of the responses included:

“

Thinking that we might develop powerful counter-narratives and (even more importantly) counter-practice that attracts people to follow an allyship path; and which help people leave behind the far right and the aggressive, politics, actions and attitudes that are generating such misery and division. **Finding ways to generate positivity that are effective, and not naive in the face of such negativity.**

”

“

I hope that we can articulate better the rich and diverse system (agroecology and food sovereignty) we seek and then back cast to what is needed now to achieve it and apply that thinking to how we work internally and how we fund. **This will provide some clarity and better align us with our values.**

”

“

The chance to get more confident, to be brave and take risks, to be more vulnerable, to platform others and to encourage others to do likewise.

”

KEY PROGRAMME LEARNINGS

LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

It was clear from the start of the programme that the challenge was not to convince leaders of the importance of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. It was supporting leaders to act with greater confidence, visibility and accountability. The programme demonstrated that creating dedicated space for reflection, peer challenge and honest conversation can help move from intention to action.

This finding reinforces what racialised colleagues have been saying across the sector for years: progress depends less on additional statements of commitment and more on how leaders exercise power, allocate resources, shape culture and hold themselves accountable.

“

There needs to be challenges to the systems, assumptions and cultures that exclude people, while actively building spaces where different communities can thrive, influence and be heard.

”

INCREASED LEADERSHIP AWARENESS AND CONFIDENCE

One of the strongest findings was how the programme helped leaders recognise power, positionality and leadership responsibility. They described developing a clearer understanding of how their identities, experiences and organisational power influence culture and decision-making.

Many leaders also reported increased confidence to hold in conversations about race, equity and justice, both internally and externally. Several described feeling more prepared to use their influence, advocate for change and act more visibly as JEDI leaders.

RECOGNISING PATTERNS

One of the most significant outcomes of the programme was the identification and naming of recurring leadership patterns that continue to slow progress on racial justice and equity across the movement. Importantly, these patterns were not isolated to individual organisations. They appeared consistently across leaders from different parts of the sector, suggesting common systemic barriers that require collective attention. These were:

1. **Stuckness, hesitation and waiting:** when JEDI work gets delayed because people do not yet feel ready, confident, clear enough or equipped enough to move.
2. **Collaboration becoming accommodation:** when the sector's instinct toward convening, diplomacy, niceness and common ground starts to override challenge, truth-telling or clearer leadership.
3. **No time or space to think about progress:** when urgency, workload, delivery pressure and constant crisis leave too little room for reflection, critical thinking or deeper sense-making about how progress actually happens.
4. **JEDI gets deprioritised and lacks accountability:** this can be through delay, weak follow-through, lack of clear accountability, insufficient resourcing, or justice work continually being displaced by what is seen as more urgent.
5. **Leadership feels too narrow, careful or constrained:** over-caution, over-consensus, or staying inside what feels familiar rather than what is needed leads the charge.
6. **Not owning JEDI as leaders:** when JEDI is treated as specialist work, delegated to others, or seen as something to support rather than something to lead.
7. **JEDI on the inside, but not on the outside:** when JEDI is held as an internal value, conversation or aspiration, but is not yet visible in how leadership shows up externally across the sector.

MOVING FROM INTENTION TO ORGANISATIONAL ACTION

Perhaps the strongest indication of the programme's effectiveness was that learning rapidly translated into organisational action. Over the programme, leaders reported changes to strategy, governance, recruitment, communications and accountability structures, demonstrating that the programme influenced decision-making across organisations.

PEER LEARNING AND SECTOR RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

Leaders consistently highlighted the value of learning alongside peers. The programme created opportunities for honest discussion, collective problem-solving and relationship-building where there is not typically space for these conversations. Many participants expressed a desire for this network to continue beyond the programme.

VALUE OF THE ACCOUNTABILITY BUDDY MODEL

Overall, feedback demonstrated that the model created valuable reflective space and helped sustain learning between sessions. Buddies reported helping leaders process learning, challenge assumptions and connect ideas to organisational realities. Many also described significant learning for themselves and really appreciated the online space to come together and meet towards the end of the programme. Buddies expressed that they would have appreciated coming together earlier in the cohort and would be interested in continuing to connect. Some leaders reflected that they would have liked more guidance on the buddy model.

Feedback from the accountability buddies included:

“

I like that we were not there to 'solve' the problem but rather **walk alongside the leader** within this journey.

”

PROGRAMME DELIVERY

A core strength of the programme was its responsiveness which made it more relevant. Session content was adapted as participants' needs, levels of confidence and organisational realities became clearer. For example, early sessions surfaced defensiveness around positionality and power, so later sessions were adapted to more directly engage with difficult organisational situations and practical leadership choices. Emerging concerns about the far right and the wider political context were also integrated into the learning.

One of the clearest lessons was that the programme required significantly more staff time, project management capacity and facilitation input than originally anticipated. It evolved to deliver a broader scope (in participation, depth and collaboration) than originally planned without a proportional increase in resources. Furthermore, recruiting a senior leadership cohort involved more coordination and communication than the original plans anticipated. And throughout the programme additional time was needed to support participants to engage with the materials, clarify tasks and support engagement with buddies.

BALANCING DEPTH AND BREADTH

Leaders valued the depth of reflection and discussion, but some felt there was insufficient time to explore specific topics in greater detail. Having a larger cohort and range of starting points meant that it was harder to get to the level of depth needed, at times, particularly given how time-poor leaders are. Areas identified for deeper exploration included conflict, accountability, organisational resistance and practical implementation.

“

I really appreciated the care, patience, and time you each took to lead our group through this work. I know at times it was not pretty, and a bit frustrating, but you all did incredibly well not to shatter too many fragile white egos and took most people on a meaningful journey of self reflection. Especially at a time when this work is more important than ever.

”

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The work did not end when the programme concluded. For some organisations, it helped to reinvigorate their commitment to this work. For others, it has enabled a new commitment to centre this work.

There was only funding for one round of this programme, however the ambition is to create longer-term change across the sector. That could mean more work with the leaders engaged in this programme; to engage with more leaders across the movement; or both.

The demand for this work, the calibre of leaders engaged and the organisational actions already emerging all point to a clear opportunity for further investment. Continued funding would enable this model to deepen support for the current cohort, reach additional leaders across the movement and accelerate sector-wide change at a time when equity and inclusion efforts are increasingly under pressure.



“

An improvement would be **a chance for the buddies to meet at the start of the programme**, and potentially have a couple of meetings over the course of the programme. Another would be to have our own session/s with the facilitator. Or to have preset times for chats with leaders.

”

“

The model gave them time for reflective practice, reimagining and a slower pace in the backdrop of the busyness. It also gave them another perspective on how they see the work we are doing or need to do and **deeper insight into the 'why' and what we could achieve as opposed to the deficit model we often approach the work from.**

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MOVING FORWARD AS ORGANISATIONS AND A SECTOR

Evaluation data and insight into actions since the programme wrapped up have surfaced several priorities for participating organisations and the wider sector.

EMBED JEDI INTO CORE ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICE

Progress is most likely to be sustained when JEDI is integrated into governance, strategy, recruitment, performance frameworks and organisational decision-making rather than remaining a separate initiative. All of the leaders committed to doing this and we are confident that they will continue to move towards embedding JEDI in their organisations, with 90% of leaders said that they had or were going to take it to team meetings and incorporate it into strategy.

A specific outcome was to encourage all organisations to take part in [The RACE Report](#), which is led by cohort member SOS UK. The RACE Report collects and publishes data on racial diversity in the UK's environment and conservation professions, and facilitates spaces for organisations to share learnings and turn insights into action on JEDI across the sector.

SHARED LEARNINGS AND ACTIONS

Several actions were agreed at the final session and more surfaced in the evaluation. These include:

- All leaders to share at least one blog, newsletter or update
- A joint statement condemning racist violence and divisive politics in the UK; and promoting inclusion and food system justice as a more attractive, humane and equitable way forward. This action is not only to stand in solidarity but to test how viable working collaboratively across a cohort on JEDI issues is
- A 'fireside chat' webinar hosted by Sustain trustee Beatrice Anomah with three of the JEDI Leadership cohort as guests has been scheduled for September 2026 - open to staff teams from the programme's participating organisations, to provide visibility for the programme and shifts in leadership
- Have more regular conversations with teams and trustees about actions and strategy
- Communicate with members to highlight the process of learning out loud on JEDI
- Incorporate JEDI more fully into branding and communications strategy
- Proactively fundraise to secure capacity and effective delivery of JEDI work
- Insist on better racial diversity on all panels and speaking events
- Pursue ways to curate better pipelines of more diverse, younger voices to enter the sector and use power to create safer spaces for current colleagues and a new generation of leaders

STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

Leaders consistently identified accountability as essential to maintaining momentum. The programme leads have offered 1- and 3- month check-ins with all leaders. Meanwhile, leaders have self-organised follow up meetings.

The evaluation identified the following accountability methods:

- A cohort WhatsApp group for regular communication and peer support
- Incorporation within strategic documents and action plans
- Governance structures e.g. boards of trustees, advisory groups and working groups
- Transparency and engagement with colleagues to ensure progress is continuous
- Make public commitments
- Be the voice in the room that speaks up on JEDI issues and opportunities

INVEST IN SECTOR-WIDE COLLABORATION

There is a significant appetite and readiness for collective action across the movement. Leaders committed to continued collaboration, shared learning and coordinated approaches to racial justice, representation and leadership accountability. Conversations have started on embedding JEDI work across public health organisations as well as collective approaches to political engagement.

RESOURCE JEDI WORK APPROPRIATELY

The evaluation highlighted the importance of dedicated funding, staff capacity and leadership attention if meaningful change is to be sustained. JEDI work should be considered core organisational infrastructure rather than an add-on. While funding pressures are real, the evaluation reinforces that meaningful progress does not happen without dedicated investment.

The programme lead organisations are committed to exploring how and where JEDI work can be resourced, both to support this programme and the wider agenda across their alliances. Several other leaders demonstrated a commitment to fundraising efforts for this work in the evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A FUTURE PROGRAMME

If there were resources to run this programme again, the following recommendations would make it even more impactful.

RESOURCE THE PROGRAMME APPROPRIATELY

A future version would benefit from a budget that reflects the true level of design, coordination and participant support required to deliver this depth of work. This could include:

- A budget that represents the size of the cohort and allocating all staff time as part of the full programme cost
- Allocating time and budget for project management, recruitment, communications and platform management
- Protecting a realistic responsive-design allowance throughout delivery

The programme was free to all participants and organisations. A future programme could be part-funded by paid places, perhaps based on the size of the organisation.

CREATE AN APPLICATION STRUCTURE

The first cohort was invited to engage and there was a 100% positive response rate from invites. However, it is unclear whether that means that the most committed and engaged organisations and individuals were on the programme, and how much it was valued. There were also enquiries from others in the sector who wanted to know how they could get involved. By having an application process, perhaps alongside a structured fee system, the programme could reach more people equitably.

INTRODUCE STRONGER ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURES

The accountability buddy model was a welcome addition to the programme that demonstrated the value of having feedback mechanisms. Future cohorts would benefit from:

- more structured buddy guidance
- scheduled accountability conversations
- peer learning groups
- follow-up check-ins after programme completion
- ongoing alumni or community-of-practice structures

INCORPORATE MORE CASE STUDIES AND DIRECT EXAMPLES

There is an opportunity to expand a future model that includes a second phase of more practical application which aims to move the sector towards more collaborative change projects, once the essential foundations have been covered.

“

I think over time, we should be proactively building the evidence base of how and where privilege and injustice is manifested in the food system, the structural causes of this, and the options and motivation for action. I still think we are massively lacking on evidence, stories, and fluency on these matters. **From fluency comes vocal advocacy.**

”

CREATE MORE SPACE BETWEEN SESSIONS

Longer intervals between workshops would allow participants greater opportunity to process learning, experiment with new approaches and implement changes within their organisations.

BUILD A CONTINUATION PATHWAY

One of the strongest messages from both participants and organisers was the need for structured activity beyond the programme itself. Options could include alumni networks, annual gatherings, action learning circles, peer mentoring or sector showcases that maintain momentum and support collective leadership.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FUTURE: REFLECTIONS FROM PROGRAMME TEAM

This programme demonstrated the value of investing in leadership development as a powerful lever for change across the sustainable food and farming movement. By creating space for senior leaders to reflect, learn and act together, the programme helped to shift JEDI from a compliance issue to a core responsibility of leadership, culture and organisational strategy. While we recognise that JEDI is a collective responsibility, it is especially important for those in senior positions, who hold greater influence and decision-making power, to use that power to drive meaningful change across their organisations and beyond.

As the programme team, and as people working on JEDI daily as part of our roles, we leave this programme feeling hopeful and optimistic about the seeds of change that have been planted. One of the clearest lessons from years of anti-racism work across the sector is that racialised staff cannot continue to carry primary responsibility for driving organisational change. Leadership action, resource allocation and accountability are consistently identified as the factors that determine progress. This programme sought to begin shifting that responsibility towards those who hold the greatest institutional power to act.

We hope to see this work become increasingly collective, shared and embedded across the sector. We invite other organisation and funders that are interested in this work to get in touch and explore this future with us.

Idman & Sareta



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written by Sareta Puri, Diversity Outreach Coordinator at Sustain and Idman Abdurahaman, Inclusive Movement Leader at Eating Better. With thanks for input from Letesia Gibson, New Ways, illustrations by Aleesha Nandhra and report design by Charlotte Jones at Eating Better.

We are grateful to Farming the Future for funding this programme and continuously advocating for JEDI work in the sector. Thank you to all the leaders and accountability buddies for showing up, participating so openly and committing to shaping the future of a more justice-centred food and farming movement.

EATING BETTER IS A REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1175669

SUSTAIN IS A REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1018643