

Anti-Racism Ambassadors Network (ARAN)

Questions & Answers (QAs)

1. What is ARAN? How is this different from work other networks are already doing in this space?

The Anti-Racism Ambassadors Network (the Network) was established to support existing efforts in the public service to **dismantle systemic racism with an intersectional lens**. The Network aims to create a space for public servants in Canada at the municipal, provincial, territorial and federal level, to share knowledge, spread information and take action.

ARAN is different in that it is a grass-roots group of public servants volunteering from across Canada and not tied to any Government organization.

Currently the Network acts as a community mobilizer and connector to collect, amplify, house and disseminate information and resources on Anti-Racism activity for all to use. In doing so, it will also amplify the work being done by BIPOC colleagues and connect all people working in this space.

It will also serve as a network to encourage and support members in taking practical action to dismantle systemic racism. We recognize that this is a community effort and it will take collective partnerships and action to affect change.

This includes but is not limited to the work of existing networks like the Black Employees Network(s), Indigenous Employee Network(s), Visible Minorities Network(s), Federal Black Employees Caucus (FBEC), 2SLGBTQIA+/Pride networks and other similar communities as well as resources from organizations and departments standing up their own Anti-Racism units.

As this Network grows, it aims to help bridge and identify gaps in the area of Anti-Racism across public service organizations in Canada where feasible.

2. Who are we?

Great question! The Network itself is the collective group of folks who wish to be involved and engaged in dismantling systemic racism across the public service in Canada, this includes you.

The team below are the folks who have been coordinating ARAN to date outside of their working hours. We are not experts in Anti-Racism, but rather a group of motivated public servants looking to identify and fill a gap. At this time, we are working to set up the Network and lay the foundation.

Meet the co-collaborators:

Aalya Dhanani Essa (She/Her)

Twitter: @AalyaDE

- Aalya is a community connector and policy professional currently involved in a data transformation endeavour with Transport Canada. She holds a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. in Sociology with specialization in Feminist and Gender Studies.
- Aalya brings her insight and experience of working across horizontal communities, including her experience working on GBA+, and mental-health training to the team. This includes her time volunteering as a crisis-line counsellor for sexual assault victims and at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre.
- Her personal lived experiences as a POC in the South Asian diaspora, educational/professional background and passion and commitment to support efforts that dismantle systemic racism led her to the Network.

Ali Khan (He/Him)

Twitter: @AliKhanGC

- Ali works at Service Canada and has years of experience building networks within the public service.
- He looks forward to working with his colleagues to continue to promote Anti-Racism within the public sector.

Barâa Arar (She/Her)

- Barâa Arar works at Shared Services Canada as a program officer in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Before joining the Federal Government, she worked alongside a number of charities and non-profit organizations on matters of social justice.
- She holds a Master's degree in History from the University of Toronto.

Elisabeth Martin (She/Her)

- Elisabeth (Liz) was born and raised in France. She decided to settle in British Columbia after visiting South Africa.
- Liz became a Public Servant 10 years ago. Her three favourite words are “why?” and “why not?” Her mantra is “Purpose over popularity”.

- Liz challenges status quos and unassumed biases and she believes in the power of grassroots movements.
- She graduated from a law school in France. Her time spent as a Black student in law school gave her powerful insight into systemic racism and she brings these insights to the Network.

Glennys Egan (She/Her)

Twitter: @gleegz

- Glennys is a recent addition to the public service, working on program policy and design at the Public Health Agency of Canada.
- She brings years of experience of working at the community and policy level in the non-profit sector, supporting and advocating for vulnerable youth in Canada and East Africa. She has also sat on the Board of Directors of the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre, an anti-oppressive feminist organization.
- Glennys holds a B.A. in Political Science and Human Rights and an M.A. in Political Economy.

Sarah Patrick (She/Her)

- Sarah is a recent graduate of Carleton University's Gender Studies B.A. program where she focused on queerness, disability, and class. She aims to leverage her privilege to amplify the work being done to end white supremacy, and challenge other white people to educate themselves and do better.
- She currently works at Shared Services Canada (SSC) as the Gender and Technology and Student Lead to the Chief Information Officer. Sarah is co-chair of SSC's LGBTQ2IA+ Network.
- Sarah also brings her experience in non profit and local activism to the table.

Vickie Patacairk (She/Her)

Twitter: @VLPatacairk

- Vickie is a long time Public Servant and advocate for Accessibility and Inclusion. Her strong background in HR and work in Unconscious Bias are the driving force of her mission statement.
- Vickie is the NCR Executive Representative to the ESDC Employees with Disabilities Network, advocating for her colleagues and advising on many committees and working groups to advance awareness across the departments and government at large.

- Vickie brings her experience as Mixed Indigenous – Polish Canadian and her lived experience as a disabled bilingual public servant to the Network.

In addition, we've had the incredible help of **Britt Hurley** who has played a key role in helping us get setup, provide technical guidance and advice, **Pat Heard** who helped execute the design and vision of our logo and **Shawn Thompson** who is helping to get our website setup.

3. What are you working on right now?

As we are still in early days, our current efforts are focused on setting up the network in a way that ensures its sustainability. We are looking to reach out to networks across the public service to gain a better understanding of the activity already happening in this space and where we can bring real value. If you belong to a network or know of a network we should connect with, please let us know.

Current work in progress:

- Developing an online site to house information and resources provided by Network members and all communities in this space.
- Developing a draft mandate/core principles for the Network and its longevity.
- Drafting a glossary of key terms used in this space for common understanding.
- Connecting with horizontal networks and communities across departments to build an inter-organizational group for monthly check-ins and knowledge exchange.
- Sharing information about events or resources to the slowly growing Network

As these pieces become ready, we will share them with the Network for feedback.

4. How can I get involved?

Through your expression of interest, you are already part of the developing Network and you can choose what level of active you are able to play.

There are a number of ways to get involved and thank you to everyone who has already indicated how they can participate and support the growth of the Network.

- **Represent your organization** - if you are already part of a network working in this space, consider representing your group at **inter-departmental/inter-organizational check-ins** and stay tuned into what others are doing and help minimize operating in silos.
- **Share resources** - if you have relevant educational information, templates, resources, events to promote or other informational/material of value, please share it with the Network.
- **Offer Your Subject Matter Expertise (SME)*** - We were so excited to see a large number of you with expertise in a range of topics. As activity in this space continues to

grow across departments, there will be a need for SMEs, as speakers or facilitators to support events. Consider offering to be contacted and included on our list of SMEs for folks and the Network to reach out to you.

*Many of you already signed up to provide your expertise through the survey. Our intent is to compile this information onto a list for community members to use and reach out to you directly. If you are **not** comfortable with this, please let us know by **November 20, 2020**.

- **Volunteer** - As activity in this space increases, volunteers may be needed across various events. By being on our volunteer list, you will receive information about call-outs for volunteer support at these activities where you can consider offering your time. Thank you to everyone who has already signed up to be contacted for this.

5. Do I need my Manager's approval to join the Network?

Like any other volunteer network, it is your responsibility to determine the nature and extent of your involvement and how that will impact your work/manager. There are many ways to support the network directly or indirectly so it really depends on what works best for you.

If you intend to use time during your working hours, it is highly recommended you discuss it with your manager and consider adding it to your personal learning plan.

6. Can I pass along information about the Network to others?

Absolutely. As we continue to develop and grow, we encourage you to share information and have folks sign up to be on our distribution list. More information on how to do this will follow.

7. Is this a bilingual (English and French) network?

- Being a grass-roots volunteer run network, we rely on the ability and capacity of the volunteers we have and the resources and information we receive.
- That said, wherever possible we will make an effort to provide information in French as well, however, we cannot guarantee it. If you are able to volunteer time to help with translating information to French, please contact us.
- We also recognize that the communities we are working to support may not have English or French as their first, second or even third languages and for many whose origins are native to Canada, the inclusion of Indigenous languages is also missing. This is awareness building we hope the network can look to bring across the organizations you are coming from.

8. How do we connect with you?

You can stay connected to information and resources the following ways:

- **Subscribe** to our distribution list: [click here](#)
If you received this document directly from us by email, you are already on our list.
- **GCcollab (temporary):** [Anti-Racism Ambassadors Network](#). Join the group for access to resources being shared from across departments as we receive them and get them uploaded.

***Please Note:** Once we have a web page setup, we will be redirecting information from GCcollab to the website for folks to access updated information.

For our public servant colleagues outside the Government of Canada, you can access GCcollab by invite, please reach out to us and provide the email address you want us to use so we can invite you to the page.

- **Twitter:** [@arannetwork_ps](#) specifically for information about activities and events
- **Slack:** If you are doing active work in this space, consider joining the Slack workspace to connect with others for knowledge exchange, access resources and information about events, and keep the dialogue going. Since the link to join is only active for a limited amount of time, please contact us to add you to the workspace.
- **Email:** aran.publicservants@gmail.com to reach us directly.
- **Website:** (coming soon) We are working to set up a space where we can post and store valuable information and resources to support your work and efforts in this area.

Thank you for your passion and commitment to supporting this important work. We look forward to working with you and growing together.