



Network for the Advancement
of Black Communities

Réseau pour l'avancement
des communautés noires

Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming 2026
Federal Budget

By the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC); Endorsed by the
following organizations:

August 1, 2025

AGATA Resource Centre Inc.	Ethiopian Association in the GTA and Surrounding Regions	Manitoba African Film Festival Inc. (African Movie Festival in Manitoba / Festival du Film Africain au Manitoba)
ABEPOG – Association of Black Entrepreneurs & Professionals of Ottawa-Gatineau	Food Processing Skills Canada / Compétences Transformation Alimentaire Canada	Maxdimes Hub
Association Canadienne pour la Promotion des Héritages Africains (ACPHA)	Foodpreneur Lab	Nigerian Canadians for Cultural, Educational and Economic Progress (NCCEEP) Ottawa Black Business Alliance
BTC Be the Change	Fondation Michaëlle Jean Foundation	Restoration and Empowerment for Social Transition Centres (R.E.S.T.)
Canadian Center for Women Empowerment (CCFWE)	Foundation for Black Communities Fulani Cultural Association of Ontario	Rwandan Canadian Healing Centre
Centre for Black Wealth Equity / Centre d'Équité de la Richesse Noire	Heritage Roots Coalition	Social Economy Through Social Inclusion Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation
CICA / AICC – African Identity and Culture Centre	HM Youth Foundation	Toronto Black Farmers and Growers Collective
Coopérative de Solidarité LaTERMITIÈRE CORP	Lianne Hannaway - Centre for Black Wealth Equity / Centre d'Équité de la Richesse Noire	Uzima Women Relief Group International
Cope Solutions Canada		
Durham Family and Cultural Centre		Yoruba Social and Cultural Association of BC

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[Network for the Advancement of Black Communities \(NABC\)](#)

The Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC) aspires to build a strong and sustainable Black community sector by enabling the conditions for systems change. We do this collaboratively through network convening, knowledge mobilization, service coordination, capacity building, evaluation, learning, government relations and policy, research, and smart grant making.

www.networkabc.ca

Recommendations

1. That the Government of Canada invest \$1 billion in a National Black Housing Strategy to support the development of 3,000+ affordable and supportive housing units by Black-led nonprofit providers; fund the Black Communities Technical Housing Resource Centre (BCTHRC) as a national capacity-building hub; and direct CMHC to prioritize equitable access to financing and tools for Black-led organizations
2. That the Government of Canada implement the \$23.6 million Black Justice Strategy by funding Black-led organizations and establishing co-governance across relevant departments; and invest \$25 million annually in a permanent Mental Health for Black Canadians Fund to strengthen culturally safe, community-led supports and research capacity across the health, mental health, and addictions sector.
3. That the federal government expand Black-led credential recognition pilots, diaspora trade partnerships, and youth employment pipelines to ensure full delivery of already-committed economic development funding - including the \$189 million Black Entrepreneurship Program.
4. That the Government of Canada deliver on its \$36 million commitment to the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI) and invest \$5 million annually in Black-led data and evaluation infrastructure to support Afrocentric performance metrics, race-based audits, and community-centered policy outcomes.

Recommendation 1: Housing and Infrastructure: Disproportionate Housing Need

Black households in Canada face critical barriers across the housing continuum:

- In cities like Toronto, nearly half of Black renters spend over 30% of their income on shelter—placing them in core housing need.ⁱ
- Black residents account for 31% of Toronto’s homeless population, despite being only 9% of the total population.ⁱⁱ
- Only 48% of Black Canadians owned their homes in 2018, compared to 73% of the general population.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Nationally, the core housing need rate among Black households (15.1%) is over 60% higher than the average (9%).^{iv}

Barriers to Federal Access

Despite having technical capacity and provincial and municipal support, Black-led housing organizations are consistently underrepresented in core federal delivery streams such as:

- The Housing Accelerator Fund
- The Rapid Housing Initiative
- The Affordable Housing Fund

Persistent structural barriers including eligibility complexity, limited navigation supports, and lack of legacy relationships with CMHC, contribute to exclusion.

Recommendation 1: That the Government of Canada invest \$1 billion in a National Black Housing Strategy to support delivery of 3,000+ affordable and supportive housing units through Black-led nonprofit providers.

This strategy should:

- **Prioritize Black-led access** to CMHC-administered programs via dedicated intake streams and technical assistance.
- **Activate federal land transfers** to Black-led housing providers—particularly those serving racialized youth, women, and seniors.
- **Provide sustained multi-year operational support (for up to 5 years)** to the Black Communities Technical Housing Resource Centre (BCTHRC)—currently incubated by NABC—to strengthen housing design, proposal development, and delivery readiness.
- **Expand replicable models**, such as the Habitat for Humanity Black Families Funding Initiative, to enable pathways to homeownership.

These investments do not create new demand; they unlock delivery of shovel-ready projects already in development pipelines but stalled due to inaccessible federal tools. This approach aligns with:

- The \$4 billion Indigenous housing precedent via NICH1;
- The federal government's stated priorities on red tape reduction, infrastructure acceleration, and intergenerational prosperity for equity-deserving groups.

Recommendation 2: Justice and Mental Health

Black Canadians continue to face systemic disparities in both justice and health systems:

- Overrepresented in correctional institutions and underprotected in public safety settings.^v
- Underserved by culturally appropriate mental health supports.^{vi}
- More likely to be criminalized for mental illness—particularly Black men and youth.
- Black women experience disproportionate exposure to trauma, violence, and caregiver stress.
- Black Canadians face higher rates of trauma and chronic stress, yet are less likely to access appropriate mental health services (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2023); (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2024)

Federal Commitments to Date (*Budget 2023–2024*)

- \$23.6 million through Justice Canada for the Black Justice Strategy.^{vii}
- \$54.6 million across departments including Public Safety, Health Canada, CSC, and the RCMP.

However, **without delivery infrastructure and co-governance, these funds risk being absorbed into status quo systems with limited transformative impact.**

Despite shaping these reforms, Black-led legal, policy, and youth-serving organizations remain underfunded and excluded from implementation. Critical services such as court navigation, bail supervision, and victim support, operate without stable federal investment.

Recommendation 2: That the Government of Canada implement the \$23.6 million Black Justice Strategy by funding Black-led organizations and establishing co-governance across relevant departments; and invest \$25 million annually in a permanent Mental Health for Black Canadians Fund to strengthen culturally safe, community-led supports and research capacity across the health, mental health, and addictions sector.

The Mental Health Fund should:

- Support Black-led organizations and researchers to deliver culturally safe, evidence-informed care.
- Document lived experience to inform public health policy.
- Ensure that youth-focused mental health investments—such as the \$8.8M through Health Canada and \$9.5M through ESDC—reach organizations directly serving Black youth, including those who are 2SLGBTQ+.

Inclusive delivery must recognize the compounded risks faced by Black 2SLGBTQ+ and disabled youth while avoiding siloed programming. Coordinating implementation of the Black Justice Strategy alongside a systems-based mental health fund ensures long-term wellness and reduced public system strain. Black communities must be empowered to lead this work—not as stakeholders to be consulted, but as full implementation partners.

Recommendation 3: Economic Inclusion, Workforce Mobility, and Black Entrepreneurship

Many Black immigrants and entrepreneurs in Canada are highly educated and business-oriented, yet continue to face structural barriers to full economic participation:

- International credentials are frequently unrecognized, leading to underemployment and lost productivity.
- Access to procurement opportunities is limited by opaque criteria and systemic discrimination.
- Federal programs often operate in silos, limiting alignment across immigration, trade, and innovation priorities.

According to the 2025 State of Black Economics report, **Black immigrants are twice as likely to have their international credentials go unrecognized** compared to non-racialized newcomers^{viii}—contributing to preventable poverty and unrealized economic growth.

Existing Investments

The \$189 million Black Entrepreneurship Program (BEP) represents a critical investment in Black business infrastructure^{ix}:

- \$100M National Ecosystem Fund
- \$160M Black Entrepreneurship Loan Fund (with \$130M from BDC and \$30M from the federal government)
- \$5M Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (co-led by Carleton University and Dream Legacy Foundation)

Recommendation 3: That the federal government expand Black-led credential recognition pilots, diaspora trade partnerships, and youth employment pipelines to ensure full delivery of already-committed economic development funding—including the \$189 million Black Entrepreneurship Program.

This should include:

- **Expanding credential recognition pilots beyond Ontario into Atlantic and Western Canada**, delivered by Black-led organizations attuned to regional labour markets.
- Establishing **diaspora entrepreneurship hubs to align the BEP with Canada’s Africa Strategy**—fostering bilateral trade, innovation in climate and digital solutions, and youth/academic exchange.
- **Advancing an African Canadian Immigration Strategy** with targeted pathways for skilled migrants and refugees from African nations.
- **Investing \$75M in Black-led organizations delivering culturally responsive settlement services for newcomers**—especially those affected by war, trauma, and anti-Black racism.
- **Embedding anti-discrimination safeguards across federal systems** that shape economic participation—including procurement processes, IRCC immigration selection criteria, and trade and export development programs—to ensure Black-led businesses and talent are not excluded through opaque or biased standards.

Recommendation 4: Data, Accountability, and the UN Decade for People of African Descent

Black communities in Canada remain systematically underrepresented in research, evaluation, and public policy systems:

- Only **1% of federally funded research** on economics, innovation, and labour policy meaningfully includes Black communities.^x
- Where race-based data exists, it is often fragmented, inaccessible, and disconnected from lived experience—undermining its usefulness for public decision-making.

This exclusion leads to public investments that fail to reflect community realities and leaves disparities unaddressed. Effective policy design requires more than disaggregated data—it requires structural inclusion of Black-led evaluation leadership and co-development.

Existing Investments and Limitations

While the federal government has allocated:

- \$1 million to Statistics Canada for race-based data work, and
- \$5 million to the Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub^{xi}

...these remain insufficient without dedicated infrastructure to support Black-led research, performance evaluation, and accountability frameworks across policy domains.

Recommendation 4: That the Government of Canada deliver on its \$36 million commitment to the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI) and invest \$5 million annually in Black-led data and evaluation infrastructure to support Afrocentric performance metrics, race-based audits, and community-centered policy outcomes.

This should include:

- Establishing a dedicated **Afrocentric Evaluation Fund administered through a community-governed, arm's-length mechanism** that can **partner with institutions like StatsCan and the Public Health Agency of Canada**.
- Supporting Black-led and Black-serving organizations to:
 - Develop culturally grounded impact metrics;
 - Conduct evaluations of federally funded initiatives;
 - Embed lived experience into federal performance frameworks;
 - Build internal capacity to lead policy and program evaluation across housing, justice, health, and employment systems.

As documented in the *Unfunded* report, Black-led organizations are **73% more likely to be denied government funding** than their mainstream counterparts—even when project quality and scale are comparable. Without data and evaluation systems that can identify and correct these inequities, federal funding remains inequitable and unaccountable.

Canada's obligations under the **UN Permanent Forum for People of African Descent** (2015–2024, extended globally to 2035) require long-term strategies to address systemic exclusion. While Canada initially committed to this framework, the Carney government has yet to affirm its continuation. Robust data and evaluation systems are essential to ensuring that equity investments produce measurable, transparent outcomes.

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- ^{iv} Statistics Canada. (2021, November 22). Housing experiences in Canada: Black people in 2018. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/46-28-0001/2021001/article/00006-eng.htm>
- ^v Statistics Canada. (2022, February 16). Perceptions of and experiences with police and the justice system among the Black and Indigenous populations in Canada. Juristat, Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00003-eng.htm>
- ^{vi} Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2025, expected). National Action Plan on Mental Health and Criminal Justice. Retrieved from <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/justicenap/>
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