



Statement of Accountability

As you may be aware, OPIRG-Carleton has been going through some changes that will help us enact better policies to support our community. Nevertheless, this decision to review our organizational structure did not happen overnight; instead, it was a product of a series of incidents and comments from community members that forced us to confront our biases and shortcomings head-on.

Through our community discussions, it prevailed that there is a long history of anti-Blackness and ableist sentiments at our organization. We have heard from folks that there were numerous incidents where they felt unsafe and uncomfortable within our space, with Black, East African, queer, and neurodivergent folks feeling the most vulnerable. They felt like their experiences and needs were dismissed and disregarded, which clearly means that OPIRG-Carleton has failed those it needed to serve the most.

Furthermore, OPIRG-Carleton needed to better provide a safer environment around harm-reduction as well as be clearer and more transparent about its limited capacity to deliver mental health services. All of these are elements that have contributed to making our space less safe and less accessible for the most vulnerable.

Due to staff-turnover, many of the current staff were not there when these incidents took place. We acknowledge that we have inherited this painful history and are complicit in the legacy of anti-Blackness and ableism within our organization, but we won't pretend to merely turn a new page - we will continue working on righting our wrongs and eradicating these injustices.

We have A LOT of work to do internally and we welcome any suggestions on how we can do better. In the meantime, we hope that the below short-term goals are a step in the right direction.

- As part of its new regular programming, OPIRG-Carleton will hold a monthly community meeting space solely for Black folks to discuss Blackness in the organization, community, and the world.
- OPIRG-Carleton will review its relationship with its Working Groups and the values they uphold.
- OPIRG-Carleton will make increased training mandatory to its staff, Board members, and Working Groups with emphasis on anti-oppression as well as Accessibility and Disability Justice training.

Additionally, we are tirelessly working to implement our long term goals at an organizational level to uphold our

mandate to the community members we seek to serve. Including but not limited to:

- Creating a holistic Safer Space Policy
- Creating an organizational conflict resolution policy
- Revising our practices and mandate around harm reduction
- Creating an Advisory Board as a body for ongoing community accountability and direction