



Black History Month

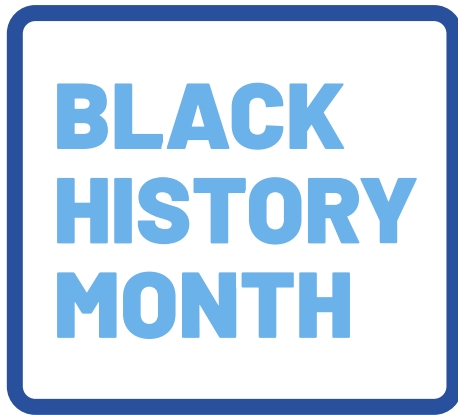
Commemoration Guide
2023



Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion
Centre canadien pour la diversité et l'inclusion

www.ccdi.ca

Black History Month 2023 Commemoration Guide



February is Black History Month, providing an opportunity for Canadians to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and contributions of Black Canadians and their communities. Learn more about Black history in Canada from the [Government of Canada](#).

For information on racism and anti-Black racism, we encourage you to view [CCDI's educational guide on racism and anti-Black racism \(PDF\)](#). This guide has been recently updated and contains a broad range of resources for individuals and organizations to learn about racism and how we can build anti-racist workplaces and communities.

We hope you find this guide useful, not only for Black History Month, but as part of your overall diversity, equity, and inclusion journey.

CCDI events

- [Black History Month: Unlearning anti-Black racism](#) – February 09, 2023 1:00 p.m. ET
- [Mois de l'histoire des Noirs : Comment désapprendre le racisme anti-Noir](#) – 09 février 2023 13h00 ET

Ideas for commemorating Black History Month

We've listed some suggestions below to support you in commemorating Black History Month. However, each organization's approach should be unique and reaching out for employee input is a highly recommended practice.



Centre joy and celebration in your Black History Month commemorations

- Encourage Black employees to share their stories and what makes them proud to be Black in Canada. Consider utilizing your organizational chat network (e.g., Slack or Microsoft Teams), holding “show-and-tell” or potluck events, or sharing stories through newsletters or other communication channels.

Ensure a safe space for those who share. For guidance, see the [CCDI webinar about building safe spaces for dialogue](#) and this article about [creating safe spaces for Black employees to share their stories](#).

- Create space for Black employees to network, share, and heal. This space could be in the form of an [employee resource group](#) or something more informal.

- Explore the following resources to learn more about the importance of focusing on joy, celebration, and achievement during Black History Month and throughout the year:
 - [A Beautiful Resistance: Black joy, Black lives, as celebrated by culture columnist Jeneé Osterheldt](#), Boston Globe
 - [Black History Month: Teaching the Complete History](#), Learning for Justice
 - [Black Joy, We Deserve It](#), Codi Charles on Medium
 - [Don't Teach Black History Without Joy](#), Education Week
 - [We need more 'trauma-free Blackness.' Here's a start](#), CNN
 - [What Black Joy Means – And Why It's More Important Than Ever](#), British Vogue



Learn about exceptional Black Canadians throughout history

- The [Black Canadian Calendar](#) from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario includes profiles of Black Canadians for every day of the year.
- Biographies and stories are also provided by the [Government of Canada](#) and the [Ontario Black History Society](#).
- [BlackPast](#) created a timeline that explores [Black history around the world](#).



Listen to, learn from, and engage with Black stories

- There are many books, movies, shows, and podcasts included in the [resource guide \(PDF\)](#).
- [A Different Booklist](#) is an African-Canadian-owned bookstore that showcases works from the African and Caribbean Diaspora and the global south.
- The [Cultivating and Celebrating Black Joy collection](#) from the University of Guelph McLaughlin Library includes Black-authored stories that evoke and celebrate Black joy.
- Consider participating in events like the [Toronto Black Film Festival](#).
- Explore the National Film Board's collection of films that "portray the multi-layered lives of Canada's diverse Black communities": [Black Communities in Canada: A Rich History](#).
- Explore Black-owned media like those on this list from [The Canadian Association of Black Journalists](#).
- Pairing media with a group discussion can help promote engagement. As you engage in discussion, make sure to create a safe and brave space for open and honest conversations about Black history, struggle, achievement, pride, and experience in Canada. Also, ensure the onus is not on Black folks to educate the larger group. We suggest referencing the [CCDI webinar about building safe spaces for dialogue](#) to assist you in creating these spaces.



Invite a speaker

- Be specific on the topic you want them to speak about, while also understanding and learning about their areas of expertise.
- To avoid treating speakers like a box to be checked off, ensure you reach out early and pay a fair speaking fee (if applicable).
- Organizations like the [National Speakers Bureau](#) and [Talent Bureau](#) have information about their roster of Black History Month speakers along with their areas of expertise.



Volunteer or donate to a charity supporting Black-led or anti-racist initiatives and support Black-owned businesses and organizations in your area

- The Black Opportunity Fund is a community-led registered Canadian Charitable organization, whose mandate is to help dismantle the impacts of anti-Black racism by establishing a sustainable pool of capital to fund Black led businesses and Black led not for profits and charities.
- [Support Black Charities](#) has many suggestions and allows you to search for organizations in your region, and [Canada Helps](#) has a [list of Black-Led Charities](#).
- Browse Black-owned business directories from [Shop Local Canada](#), [Canada Black Owned Marketplace](#), [AfroBiz.ca](#), [Black Business Initiative](#), [Black Owned Toronto](#), and [Black Owned Montreal](#).



Understand that the Black experience in Canada is intertwined with systemic racism

- Recognize that racial trauma is a mental health issue and a workplace health and safety issue. Review your workplace health and safety policies to ensure that they include space for psychological safety.
- Learn what it means to be anti-racist and how to apply this to your day-to-day operations.
 - The following CCDI webinars explore anti-racism and anti-Black racism:
 - [The difference between racism, not racist and anti-racist](#)
 - [Addressing anti-Black racism in the workplace - Fireside chat](#)
 - [Showing up for Racial Justice Toronto](#) and [The Anti-Racism Project](#) provide additional resource lists specific to anti-racism.

- Understand how intersecting identities influence individual experiences with racism and oppression.
 - [Black History Month: What Is Intersectionality?](#) Beloved Community on Medium
 - [Blackness and Disability: Addressing Gaps using an Intersectional Approach](#), Realize Canada
 - [Exploring Misogynoir](#), Canadian Women's Foundation
- Assess your policies and practices for inequalities and systemic barriers and solicit feedback from racialized employees. The [Ontario Human Rights Commissions](#) guide for workplace policies, practices and decision-making processes is a good starting point.
- To learn more about these points, visit our [educational guide on racism and anti-Black racism \(PDF\)](#).

Additional resources

The following resources provide additional information on Black history in Canada.

- [Black History in Canada](#), The Canadian Encyclopedia
- [Black History is about the future, not just the past](#), United Way of Greater Toronto
- [Black History Month video playlist](#), Toronto History Museums
- [Black History Month... by the numbers](#), Statistics Canada
- [Journey to Justice](#), National Film Board
- [Remembering Black Loyalists, Black Communities in Nova Scotia](#), Nova Scotia Museum
- [Significant events in Black Canadian history](#), Government of Canada
- [The Round Table on Black History Month](#)
- [The story of Africville](#), Canadian Museum for Human Rights
- [CCDI Webinar: History of race and racism in Canada](#)

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