

# WE ARE HERE

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## BLACKSPACE

Annual Report  
2022-2023



# INTENTIONS & GRATITUDE

BlackSpace Family,

This past year, we focused on reweaving our relationships, sharing completed projects that contributed to the capacities of Black-led organizations, and prioritizing our organizational health. We are on quite the journey and lucky to have y'all as co-navigators and guiding lights.

In the fall, we saw the re-emergence of community gatherings, rooted in exploring Black places and urbanist projects in Oklahoma and Indianapolis. We added training and over \$38,000 in financial capacity to small design studios. In the spring, our members reconnected to make strategic and ethical decisions about growing our organization and external fundraising, and threw our first fundraising event.

Laughter, food, and inspiring spaces are key components of building trust and safety in strong communities. We kept this same energy with our two major neighborhood-level projects for the year: Imani Baptist Church in East Orange, NJ and Brownsville Heritage House in Brooklyn, NY, offering community design projects to accomplish their social and spatial goals.

Through these collective experiences, we saw Black communities get stronger! By the end of the year, we received project updates from past clients who are building the spaces they co-designed with us and several collaborative projects emerged between members including urbanist art shows, collective writing projects, and design teams working in Black neighborhoods - formed in our network cities.

This annual report is a glimpse into being one year closer to both: the creativity and imagination possible when there is space for Black joy and power in design and with designers AND the radical possibilities opened when we bridge those gaps between people, place and power to realize racial justice with Black communities.

We invite you into a bit about the people we have been invited to co-design alongside and the designing we've done together. We're glad you're here with us in our navigating the complexities of uniting Black urbanists and creating social and spatial change alongside our communities.

In community,



Emma Osore + Kenyatta McLean  
Co-Managing Directors



# COLLECTIVE STORY

## Vision

We demand a present and future where Black people, Black spaces, and Black culture matter and thrive.

## Mission

We bridge gaps between people, place, and power to realize racial justice with Black communities.

## Purpose

We facilitate opportunities for Black urbanists to co-create social and spatial change in partnership with Black communities.

## Strategies

- projects centering Blackness in local development;
- workshops affirming Black principles in design;
- capacity building of Black urbanists to gather, publish content, and transform practice.

## Origins

BlackSpace was sparked at the inaugural Black in Design (BiD) conference in 2015. Our founding organizers were drawn together by a collective vision of what Black, interdisciplinary design and urban planning practice might be.

Over brunches in each other's tiny NYC apartments, -- working groups guided our first projects -- inspiring urbanists in Chicago, Oklahoma, Atlanta, and Indianapolis to start meeting up, too. Now, our national collective energizes multidisciplinary audiences nationwide to enact co-creative practices that fuse Black people, place, and power.



# CUSTOMIZED LEARNING

Our Manifesto-based learning salons, workshops, and design charrettes are customized for groups to reflect on their current practices and align their projects to Black-liberatory design principles. Our workshops are facilitated by small Black urbanist studios and freelancers we activate through our Project Partner Program.



4.6

average workshop  
satisfaction score of 5



13

Project Partners activated



177

introduced to Manifesto-  
based practice

## Our Clients

- Habitat for Humanity
- Howard University
- National Building Museum
- New York Women's Foundation
- Weitzman School of Design
- Weeksville Heritage Center
- WorkUrban

“National Building  
Museum takes a closer  
look at social justice in  
the built environment”

~ Metropolis

“BDS Students participate in ‘BlackSpace  
Charette’ with BlackSpace Urbanist Collective  
at the National Building Museum.”

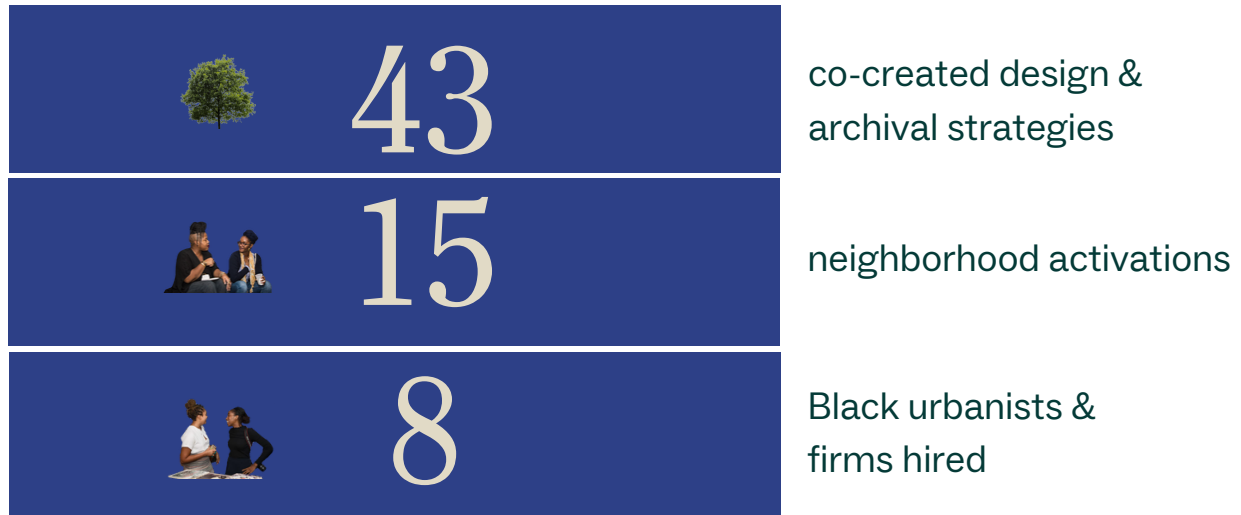
~ Baltimore Design School





# NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGY

Our neighborhood-level projects allow us to co-create spaces that affirm and amplify Black presence in public life. We prioritize co-design, reflection, and moving at the speed of trust with Black-led community-based organizations.



BlackSpace and Rokh, founded by Project Partner Danicia Malone, partnered with Imani Baptist Church, a 30+ year old congregation in East Orange, New Jersey.

The project included site documentation, precedent research, community visioning, and design strategy to help create a more inclusive church identity and expanded community hub.

Through a series of design workshops, Imanians engaged in community building, spoke to experts in Black church design, and engaged with local community organizations.

Finally, BlackSpace redesigned the social and spatial program to offer space use ideas and building upgrade priorities to enhance their community outreach and support Imanian's gathering and worship desires.



In collaboration with Brownsville Heritage House (BHH), a Black-led house museum, we started the year working with Black-led archivist group, Archival Alchemy. The archivists guided BHH through defining a collection scope, auditing current collection materials, and documenting past collection practices. Volunteers took part in community sorting days, where we sorted and categorized their extensive 40+ year old collection.

Together with BlackSpace Project Partner Alicia Ajayi, founder of Studio AOA, and BOLT Architecture, we updated our design strategy with renderings of co-designed ideas for the BHH space.



We ended the year, selecting a few of our design recommendations to bring to life and drafting schematic drawings for our future renovation focused on enhancing BHH's reading room as a space where people enjoy exploring BHH's archive.



The Staff team visited Wolcott Street Farm -- our 2021 design project with client, Red Hook Initiative. They celebrated with farmers who brought the co-designs to life!





# URBANIST EXPERIENCES

Our cousins are learning communities across the country. They host gatherings and publish content to engage Black urbanists and communities in the power of Black spaces.



7

local events hosted



12

cousins activated



85

urbanists gathered

## Oklahoma City



Freedom Drinks + Urbanist Dinner @ Black Walnut OKC



Garden Day @ Lillian Timber Farms



Urbanist Brunch @ Spiked Coffee



# Chicago



Freedom Drinks at Retreat @ Currency Exchange Café



Black Heritage Bus Tour

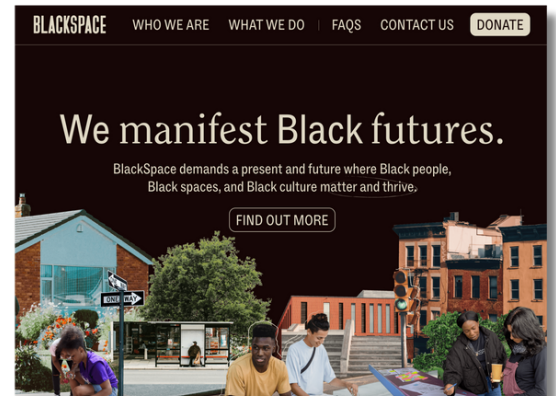
# Indianapolis



# FEATURES • AWARDS NEW LOOKS

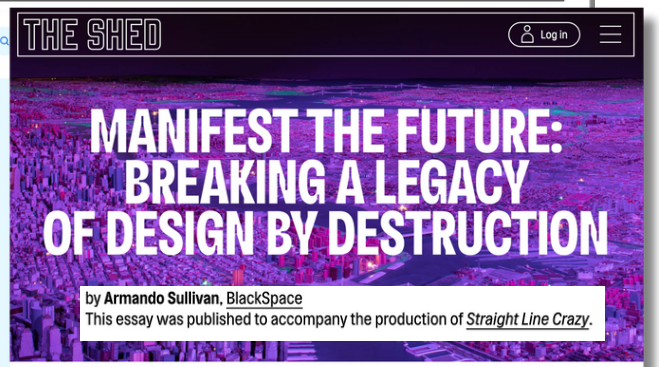
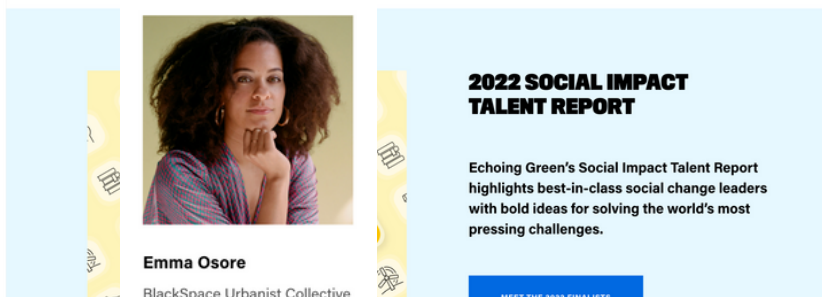
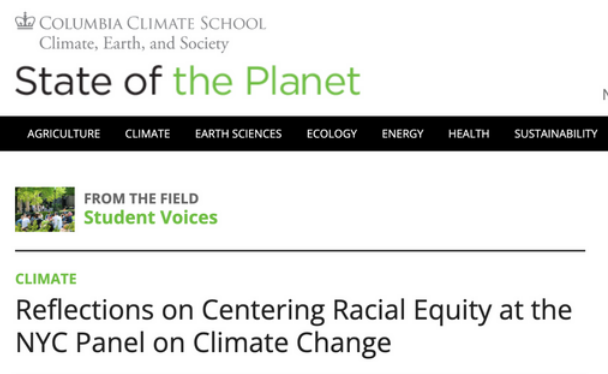
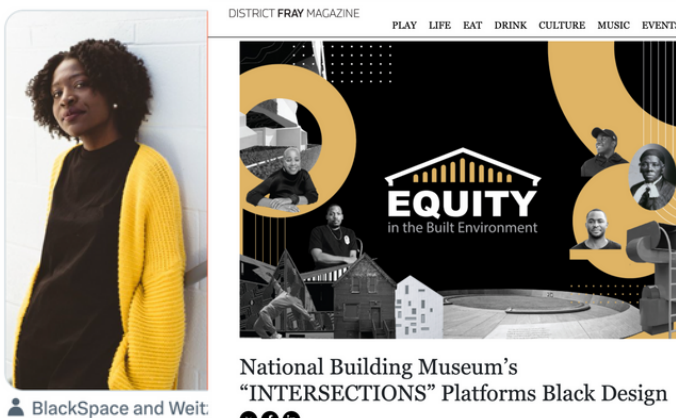
We're proud that BlackSpace's members were featured in 23 talks, press mentions, and published content to interrogate urban planning and design practice and amplify Black urbanists and spaces. Echoing Green and Webby Awards recognized us as finalists for our leadership in social entrepreneurship and activism.

To celebrate our 8th birthday, we got a fresh website and brand identity from Instrument and worked with Architect Pins for a custom pin to share our values even louder in public.



## New faculty and fellows advancing social justice

Cornell University College of Architecture, Art, and Planning (AAP)





We welcomed new Board, Staff, Project Partners, Cousins and a new Alumni Circle to expand and regenerate our Collective.

### Working Board

- Armando Sullivan
- Beryl Briane Ford
- Brittney Drakeford
- Daphne Lundi
- Devon Ginn (ex-officio)
- Emma Osore
- Jasmine Graves
- Jennifer Allen
- Jessica Smith-Peterson
- Kenyatta McLean
- Lorryn Young
- Natt Slober
- Peter Robinson
- Sophonie M. Joseph
- Vanessa Morrison (ex-officio)

### Project Partners

- Aleiya Evison
- Alicia Ajayi
- Armando Sullivan
- Danicia Malone
- Julia Jannon-Shields
- Leila Tamari
- Rosanna Valencia
- Breanna Robles
- Vanessa Morrison

### Staff

- Emma Osore, Co-Managing Director
- Kenyatta McLean, Co-Managing Director
- Sabea K. Evans, Partnerships Coordinator

### Cousins

- Armando Sullivan
- Beryl Briane Ford
- Britt Redd
- Camille Applewhite
- Chandra Christmas-Rouse
- Charlie Redd
- Etienne Jackson
- Ethan Lassiter
- Euneika Rogers-Sipp
- Katanya Raby
- Lourenzo Giple
- Tawkiyah Jordan
- Vanessa Morrison

### Alumni

- Afiya Wilkins
- Aldea Coleman
- Ajamu Brown
- Beryl Briane Ford
- Brenna Robles
- Brysan Brown
- Camille Applewhite

### Alumni Cont'd

- Cheria Caldwell
- Cara Michell
- Ifeoma Ebo
- Gina Sofola
- Jasmine Graves
- Jenneh Kaikai
- Joyous Pierce
- Joshua Broadway
- Justin Garrett Moore
- Justin Romeo
- Justine Johnson
- Kethia Joseph
- Krystin Hence
- Laurel Brown
- Ladipo Famodu
- Lillian Webb
- Michael Williams
- Nathalie Jolivet
- Nicholas Forest
- Nmadili Okwumabua
- Quardean Lewis-Allen
- Rafael Smith
- Rasheed Lucus
- Ron Romi Morrison
- Rosanna Valencia
- Shady Radical
- Shawn Whitehorn
- Walter Cruz

BLACK HISTORY  
IS MADE HERE



STAY IN  
TOUCH

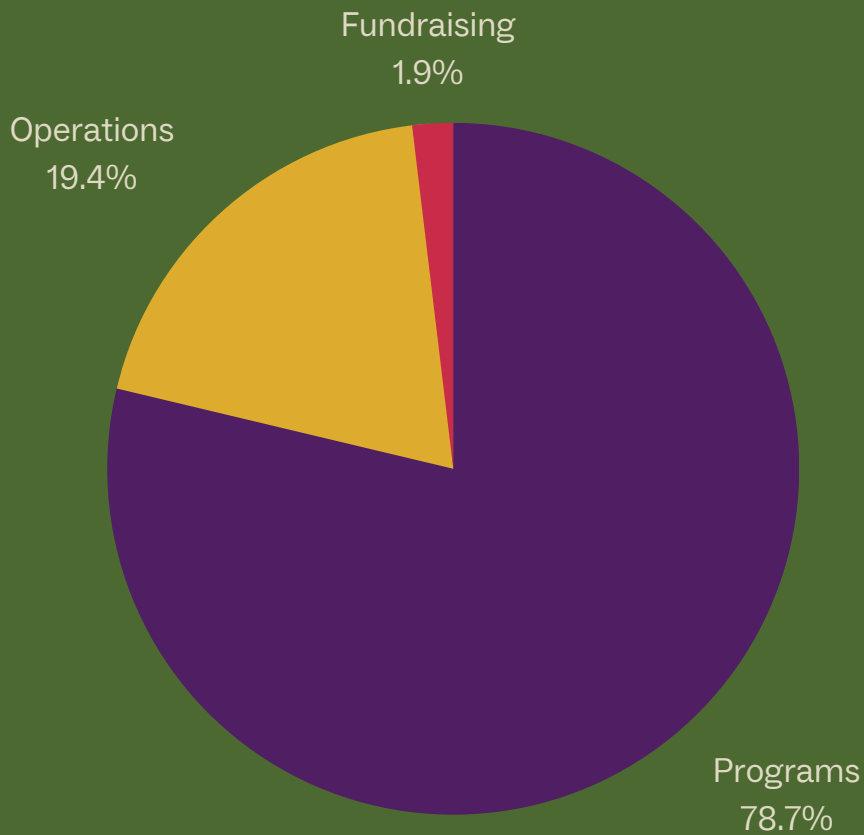
BlackSpace Urbanist Collective, Inc.  
501(c)3 tax exempt organization  
1000 Dean Street Brooklyn, NY 11238

[www.blackspace.org](http://www.blackspace.org)  
[contact@blackspace.org](mailto:contact@blackspace.org)  
[@blackspaceorg](https://www.instagram.com/blackspaceorg)

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## EXPENSES

Total Expenses: \$572,593



## REVENUE

Total Revenue: \$683,718





# DONORS

## Individual and Corporate

Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Abby Zan  
Adjua Gargi Nzinga Greaves  
Aiha Nguyen  
Aiysha Mubarik  
Alejandra Ruiz  
Alicia Boone  
Alyssa Curran  
Alyzza Hudson  
Amanda Colón-Smith  
Amanda Miller  
Anna Barsan  
Anna Ponting  
Ariel Dilworth  
Ariela Rutbeck-Goldman  
Arielle Ware  
Armando Sullivan  
Ayesha Williams  
Ayodele Oti  
Brad Thomas  
Bre Robinson  
Bridget Burns  
Brittanie Height  
Brittney Drakeford  
Camille Applewhite  
Corey Matthews  
Daniel Grushkin  
Danielle Cameron  
Daphne Lundi  
David and Pam Knowles  
David Briefel  
Dawn Neely  
Durrell Williams  
Elana Beale  
Eliseba Osore  
Elita Walker  
Emma Osore  
Emma Pfohman

Esther Earbin  
Genevieve Dixon  
Giovania Tiarachristie  
Heather Moore  
Irene Route  
Jacara Jackson  
Jacob Andreas  
Janis Foertmeyer  
Jeff Dade  
Jennifer Allen  
Jess Zimbabwe  
Jessica Gaines  
Jessica Smith-Peterson  
John Darcey  
Joshua Barnett  
Julia Jannon-Shields  
Justin Garrett Moore  
k. kennedy Whithers  
Kaela Mei-Shing Garvin  
Kamla Thomas  
Karen Cumberbatch-Sullivan  
Karla Hovde  
Katy McShane  
Kimberlee Barr  
Kinetic Communities Consulting  
King A-F  
Kirk Allen  
Lauren Coakley Vincent  
Leslie Schnyder  
Leul Fecadu  
Lorryn Young  
Louise Yeung  
Meghan Welsch  
Melanie Martin  
Mia White  
Michelle Albritton  
Milagros Barsallo  
Mimi Lien  
Nate Sherman  
Nathalie Jolivet  
Nicole Payne  
Noellel Bell  
Peter Robinson  
Raven Whitley  
Raven Wynn  
Recast City  
Reginald Cloyd  
Robyne Walker Murphy

Rogelio Sullivan  
Ronaldo Sullivan  
Rosalie Genevro  
Samra Lakew  
Shayla Webb  
Sophonie Joseph  
Stephanie Pereira  
The Laundromat Project  
The Streets are Planning Podcast  
Theda & Eldrich Cammon  
Tiffany Costley  
Tine DiLucia  
Vanessa Morrison  
Vileti Akolo  
Zuri Sullivan

## Foundations

1772 Foundation  
Melville Charitable Trust  
Moore Philanthropy  
Mosaic Fund  
New York Community Trust  
New York Women's Foundation  
Robert Sterling Clark Foundation  
The J.M. Kaplan Fund  
The Henry Luce Foundation  
The Kresge Foundation



Board member, Jessica Smith-Peterson, manifesting Black futures at our first fundraising event, "Communal Evolution" @ Kamau Studios in Brooklyn, NY

# Thank you



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