WE ARE HERE

BLACKSPACE
Annual Report 2022-2023
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.
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.
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.

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.

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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.

Black urbanists & firms hired

neighborhood activations

cO-created design & archival strategies

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The project included site documentation, precedent research, community visioning, and design strategy to help create a more inclusive church identity and expanded community hub.
In collaboration with Brownsville Heritage House (BHH), a Black-led house museum, we started the year working with archivist group, Archival Alchemy. Archivists guided BHH through defining a collection scope, auditing current collection materials, and documenting past collection practices. Volunteers took part in community sorting days to sort and categorize their extensive 40+ year old collection.

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

We ended the year focused on selecting co-design recommendations to bring to life and drafting final schematic drawings for the future reading room renovation – to enhance it as a space for people to 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!
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.

### Urbanist Experiences

- **Local Events Hosted**: 7
- **Cousins Activated**: 12
- **Urbanists Gathered**: 85

### Oklahoma City

- **Freedom Drinks + Urbanist Dinner @ Black Walnut OKC**
- **Garden Day @ Lillian Timber Farms**
- **Urbanist Brunch @ Spiked Coffee**
Indianapolis

Freedom Drinks at Retreat @ Currency Exchange Café

Chicago

Black Heritage Bus Tour
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.

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average workshop satisfaction score of 5
Project Partners activated
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
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
- Lorrryn 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 (ex-officio)

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
- Eunika Rogers-Sipp
- Katanya Raby
- Lourenzo Giple
- Tawkiyah Jordan
- Vanessa Morrison

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
- Lilian Webb
- Michael Williams
- Nathalie Jolivert
- Nicholas Forest
- Nmadili Okwumabua
- Quardean Lewis-Allen
- Rafael Smith
- Rasheed Lucus
- Ron Romi Morrison
- Rosanna Valencia
- Shady Radical
- Shawn Whitehorn
- Walter Cruz
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

EXPENSES
Total Expenses: $573,095

REVENUE
Total Revenue: $635,616

Programs 81.8%
Contributions & Grants 61.3%
Restricted Contributions 27.6%
Program Revenues 11.1%
Operations 15%
Fundraising 3.2%
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 Whinters
Kaela Mei-Shing Garvin
Karnia Thomas
Karen Cumberbatch-Sullivan
Karla Hovde
Katy McShane
Kimberlee Barr
Kinetic Communities Consulting
King A-F
Kirk Allen
Lauren Coakley Vincent
Leslie Schuyder
Leul Fecadu
Lorrryn Young
Louise Yeung
Meghan Welsch
Melanie Martin
Mia White
Michelle Albritton
Milagros Barsallo
Mimi Lien
Nate Sherman
Nathalie Jolivert
Nicole Payne
Noeliel Bell
Peter Robinson
Raven Whitley
Raven Wynn
Recast City
Reginald Cloyd
Robyn Walker Murphy
Rogelio Sullivan
Ronaldo Sullivan
Rosalie Genevro
Samra Lakew
Shayla Webb
Sophnie Joseph
Stephanie Pereira
The Laundromat Project
The Streets are Planning Podcast
Theda & Eldrich Cammon
Tiffany Costley
Tine DiLucia
Vanessa Morrison
Vileti Akolo
Zuri Sullivan

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

**DONORS**

**Individual and Corporate**

Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
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Anonymous
Abby Zan
Adjua Gargi Nzinga Greaves
Aiha Nguyen
Aiysha Mubarki
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
Ayasha Williams
Ayodele Oti
Brad Thomas
Bre Robinson
Bridget Burns
Brittainie 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 Osoe
Elita Walker
Emma Osoe
Emma Pfohman

**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
STAY IN TOUCH

BlackSpace Urbanist Collective, Inc.
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www.blackspace.org
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@blackspaceorg
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