

Few BME Groups Make Good Use of Support Bodies

Nearly 72 per cent of BME groups make no meaningful use of the services available to them, according to the Performance Hub's *Performance and Race Equality Project*, which included interviews with 80 sector organisations.

The hub is now calling on BME organisations to engage more with sector support agencies and wants support organisations to make their services more relevant and accessible to BME groups.

Richard Piper, joint manager of the Performance Hub, said it was important that BME groups took advantage of the available support in order to compete effectively for funding and avoid operating "on the margins of the sector", unable to plan for the future, track progress or demonstrate their value.

"To make more of a difference to their users, BME groups should embrace performance as an opportunity, not a threat," he said. BME groups often felt the need for such support but shied away from support organisations that failed to "ring any bells" with them, Piper added. "It's not about ghettoising BME groups and saying they necessarily need specialist support, but sometimes, they do because of the particularities of funding of the BME sector, which has moved away from pots for each racial group to a high-level emphasis on cohesion It is important to understand that context."

Piper said support also needed to be better publicised via local champions and advertising on specialist media used by BME groups.

The Interface Project has been set up to improve contact between existing infrastructure providers and front-line organisations, and to support front-line organisations as they deliver public services and promote good practices through benchmarking exercises.

www.thirdsector.co.uk/