



THE BLACK FARMER **SUPPORT SMALL CHARITIES** **MISSION STATEMENT**

I am Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones, The Black Farmer, and I am calling for the way businesses approach charitable giving to change! For too long big businesses have directed their support towards a handful of huge charity partners, meaning thousands of smaller charities get left in the dark, both financially and on an awareness level. As we approach Christmas, I believe it is time for us to shine a light on these wonderful charity underdogs, the tireless heroes who find themselves overshadowed by large organisations, even though their work is simply as important, if not more.

So who am I to call for this change I hear you ask?

After being diagnosed with life-threatening Leukaemia in 2014, I spent a lot of time in hospital having treatment which gave me time to think and work out what I really wanted to do with my life. Whilst I had experienced a great deal of business success that I was of course hugely grateful for, when you're in that position of contemplation you really have to ask yourself what's important to you? For me, the key fell on what I was going to leave behind, and, in turn, how I could use my position in life to enhance those of other people and the organisations that help them.

When I left hospital, I knew that I wanted to do something to help, but unfortunately the bigger charities didn't give me the time of day. In many ways, I was too small for them, and they were too big to care. I was dumbstruck that there could be someone offering to help, but that they wouldn't want this support. I quickly found that, by contrast, the smaller charities were crying out for help and welcomed those willing to deliver with open arms. They were struggling to gain awareness and financial support to instigate some sort of structure to their organisation, whilst a core group of larger charities were so big they were turning away people and businesses. This huge gap within the charity sector truly shocked me and I felt compelled to do something about it.

After doing some research, it became clear that the charity sector was hugely flawed in this sense, and much of the problem was coming from an unbalanced relationship with business. Large organisations were only working with the large charities that already had a global level of awareness. As such, it meant that this odd third sector/big business handshake deal was making the largest charities even bigger, whilst the rest were struggling to see the light of day. It's almost as though businesses are glory hunting when it comes to these charity partnerships and this is to the detriment of smaller third sector offerings.

So what do I want to change and how can you help?

Of course all charity giving is great but what I am calling for businesses to do is to challenge conventions and break from the norm. Rather than donating or working solely with the big charity names we all know, why not give some of your CSR activity to a smaller charity of your choice? Donate your time and money to these smaller partners and you could honestly transform lives for the better. When you give your budget to a huge charity partner do you even see where it goes? With a smaller charity you will see how you are enhancing their mission on a ground level and every penny matters. Not to mention, there are so many ways you can work together to benefit the charity beyond a basic donation!

For example, the Christmas period is the most commercial time for any business - rather than using your advertising space to make additional profit - why not gift it to a smaller charity, or

give them airtime by funding a TV campaign for them? Why not work together and produce something that is totally beyond what people would expect to be a charity advert? This is what we at The Black Farmer are doing. In fact, we have paid for an advert to run on Christmas Day and have donated the TV time to 'Hope For Tomorrow' – a small charity supporting those undergoing cancer treatment by providing mobile chemotherapy units.

We know that change doesn't come solely from business, it also comes from employees! I am here to challenge you, the great British public, to put pressure on your employers and ask them to support a small charity. In the future, I would love to see big corporations donating 50% to the larger charities, and 50% to the small ones – an equal cut for the greater good.

If you would like to join me on my mission, you can sign **my pledge**, which I, The Black Farmer will be using to campaign to big businesses to help make a change this Christmas.

Not sure which small charity to support? The Black Farmer website will host a small charity directory where said charities can come and upload a profile to make them more discoverable. Visit **here** to get listed and to find a partner you care about.

Whatever your cause, whatever your chosen charity; join me this Christmas and help to make a change. As employees and employers, it's our responsibility to show that we care for bigger things than just the products we sell and make a change to those charities that are struggling for support this winter.

Yours Faithfully,

Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones