

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2025
"Standing firm in power and pride!"

**BLACK DIGITAL
INNOVATORS' SHOWCASE**

13th - 23rd October 2025

IMPACT REPORT



TEKSHAQ
@tekshaqq_c.i.c



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Black Digital Innovators Showcase Impact Report.

Prepared by Dr. Oma Eguara, Lead Organiser and Founder, TEKSHAQQ C.I.C. November 2025.

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BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE IMPACT REPORT

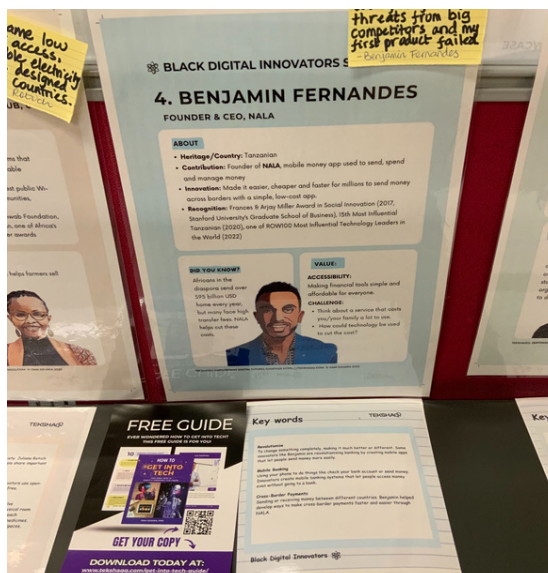
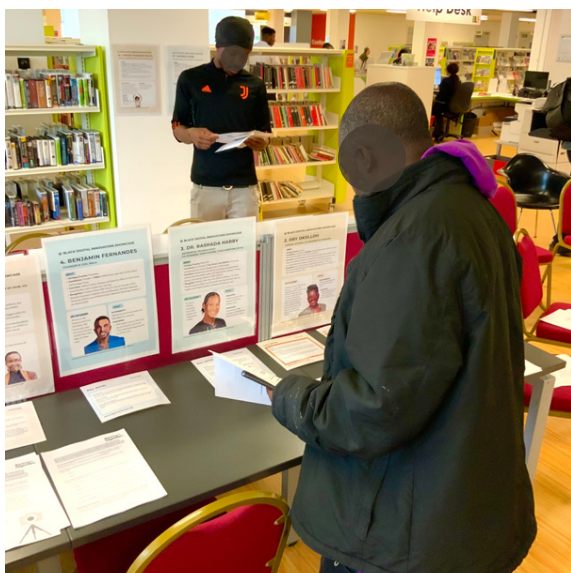
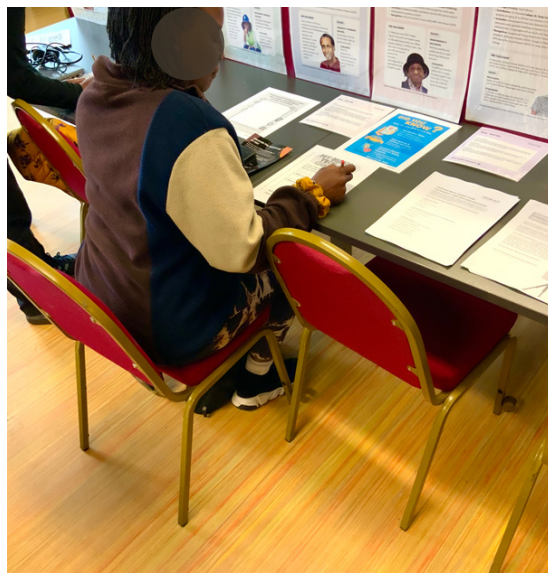
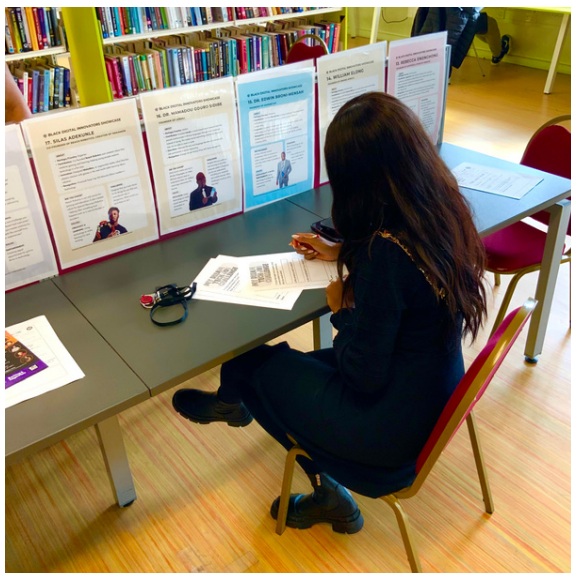
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Black Digital Innovators Showcase celebrated the achievements of 30 present-day Black technology innovators from across Africa and the diaspora. Over ten days, the showcase inspired 71 in-person visitors and engaged a further 27 registrants who expressed interest online but were unable to attend, plus 40 vox pop participants. Attendees explored interactive posters and completed learning activities linking innovation, creativity, and social problem-solving. The event revealed a clear local appetite for positive, forward-looking narratives of Black excellence in technology and entrepreneurship.

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Scenes from the event



CONTEXT & NEED (WHY THE WORK MATTERS)

Across the UK, Black History Month activities in schools and institutions often focus narrowly on slavery, racism, and entertainment figures, rather than on innovation and invention. This framing reinforces a limited, backward-looking view of Black identity and achievement, omitting narratives of creativity, technology, and progress.



During street and event interviews with 40 individuals of diverse ages and ethnic backgrounds, only one person could name a Black tech innovator: most referenced sportspeople or activists. This demonstrates a major knowledge gap in mainstream education and community awareness and an underrepresentation of Black innovators in public consciousness.

Only one person in 40 could name a Black tech innovator: most referenced sportspeople or activists.

This lack of representation is not a passive omission; it actively shapes social and professional outcomes. Persistent stereotypes, that Black people do not invent, do not innovate in technology, and make few contributions to science or digital progress, reinforce racial prejudices that erode community cohesion.

“Black people don’t invent things.”
- A Black Young Person in the community

Such views promote the false perception that Black communities are perpetual consumers rather than creators, and that their culture is defined only by music, sport, or activism.

When these assumptions circulate unchallenged, they foster racial bias, social fragmentation, and exclusion. They can also produce **“representation cascades,”** where the absence of visible Black innovators in education, media, and tech spaces leads to teachers, careers advisers, employers, and young Black people themselves internalising the message that technology is “not for them.” This lack of role models narrows aspiration, stifles innovation, and limits access to high-growth sectors critical for economic mobility.



Representation cascade - expanding exclusion

Reframing Black History Through Innovation

TEKSHAQQ's Black Digital Innovators Showcase directly intervenes in this cascade by reframing Black history through innovation. By curating and showcasing 30 present-day Black tech innovators, TEKSHAQQ restores visibility, normalises Black excellence in technology, and redefines what people believe is possible for themselves. The showcase fosters pride, curiosity, and creativity while building bridges across communities through shared admiration for human ingenuity.



Empowering representation;
building bridges through shared admiration
for human ingenuity

WHAT WE DID

- **Created and exhibited 30 illustrated posters**

of contemporary Black digital innovators, highlighting their challenges, achievements, and global impact.

- **Hosted 71 in-person visitors**

across ten days, including children, young people, and adults.



- **Provided interactive learning sheets**

encouraging visitors to read, reflect, and respond to the innovators' stories.

- **Curated immersive learning activities**

to engage and to create opportunity awareness and self-belief, inspiring participants to see themselves innovating.

- **Provided free Get Into Tech Guide**

and resources for those inquiring about tech careers.

- **Engaged 27 additional registrants** through Eventbrite who expressed interest but were unable to attend.

- **Engaged 40 individuals** through street and event interviews to assess baseline awareness of Black innovators and their inventions, and to create awareness of the knowledge gap.



- **Distributed 1,800 flyers**, contacted 8 local primary schools, and reached out to a local college.

- **Collected written, verbal, and video feedback** demonstrating strong learning outcomes and emotional engagement.

- **Supported visitors with early-stage business ideas** by signposting them to enterprise support services.

Some resources from the event

DID YOU KNOW?

How we use GPS every day



Navigation Apps
GPS satellites tell your phone where you are and guide you to your destination.



Ride-Hailing & Delivery Services
GPS tracks cars, bikes, and parcels in real-time



Location-Based Services & Safety Features
GPS helps find your device, track fitness, and locate you in an emergency

Thank you, Dr. West!

TEKSHAQ

FACIAL RECOGNITION AI: YOU SEE IT EVERY DAY!



1 Unlock your phone
Some phones know it's you just by looking at your face.



2 Tag your friends in photos
Apps can spot who's in a picture and help you sort them.



3 Airport speed-up
Special gates check your face against your passport photo so you move faster.



4 Bank and shop security
Some places can check it's really you before letting you in or logging in.



5 Cameras in public spaces
Some cameras help find missing people.



5 Cameras in public spaces
Some cameras help find missing people or keep places safe.

Did you know? Facial recognition AI is smart, but it can make mistakes too!

TEKSHAQ

10 COMMON CONCERNS ABOUT GETTING STARTED IN TECH

1. "NOT SMART ENOUGH."

Tech is not just for "geniuses." Many tech roles value problem-solving, creativity, and teamwork more than intense technical skills. Start with the basics and build your skills one step at a time. There are plenty of beginner courses designed for people with no prior experience.

2. "TOO OLD"

Age does not matter in tech. People in their 30s, 40s, and beyond can bring valuable experience from other careers, and tech companies often benefit from diverse perspectives. Many organisations and training programmes welcome career changers of all ages.

3. "NO EXPERIENCE"

Start small by learning some tech basics or by taking a free online course. Even working on small projects, such as creating a basic website or learning a programming language, counts as experience and shows your willingness to learn.

4. "BEEN OUT OF WORK TOO LONG"

Tech roles are more flexible than many other jobs, so a gap in your work history is often less of an issue. Show your passion and commitment by taking courses or working on projects at home; these can prove your skills and dedication to employers.



CASE STUDY 1 : FROM RETAIL TO WEB DEVELOPER



Yasmin

"I used to work long hours in retail, but the pay wasn't enough, and I felt stuck. I wanted a career where I could use my creativity and earn more, so I signed up for a part-time web development course at a local college. Learning HTML, CSS, and JavaScript was challenging but exciting. After a year, I landed a job as a web developer at a tech company. Now, I earn more than I did before, and I love the flexibility of working from home. It's amazing to see the websites I build come to life!"

Yasmin, Web Developer

FREE GUIDE

ACCESSIBLE
TEXT-ONLY VERSION
ALSO INCLUDED



HOW TO GET INTO TECH
YOUR KINNEY GUIDE TO TODAY'S & TOMORROW'S TECH CAREERS
OMA EGUARA, PhD

OUT NOW!

GET YOUR COPY

VISIT WEBSITE TO DOWNLOAD
www.tekshaqq.com/get-into-tech-guide/

MY DREAM TECH JOB CHALLENGE

1. If you had super tech powers, what is one problem in your community that you would solve?

2. Why would you want to solve it?

3. Who would benefit if you solved it?

Name: _____

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More resources from the event

TEKSHAQQ
BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS' SHOWCASE

WELCOME!
Instructions: Please ...
 1. Explore the amazing achievements of Black innovators in tech & digital fields.
 2. Complete the activities on the section that's right for you - Kids or Teens/Adults.
 3. Drop the sheet in our Feedback Box. Thank you!

KIDS' ACTIVITY

- Who helped invent the Maths that makes **GPS** maps work? Answer: _____
- Ory Okolloh** and **Juliana Rotich** co-created a platform called _____.
- To recruit an African software developer, a company could use the platform **Andela**, created by ... Answer: _____
- Compare the work of 2 innovators.
'A' made it **easier communicating with people in prison**.
'B' made it **possible for computers to communicate in African languages**.
'A' is _____. 'B' is _____.

Something new I learned:

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TEENS' /ADULTS' ACTIVITY

- The innovator whose app was acquired by Apple for **\$1 billion USD** is _____.
- The **Algorithmic Justice League** founded by Dr. Buolamwini is to p_____ AI harm.
- To communicate in African languages through **voice messaging**, you can use _____.
- Compare the work of 2 fintech innovators.
'A' made it **easier to send money across borders**.
'B' made it **easier to make online payments**.
'A' is _____. 'B' is _____.

Something new I learned:

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
1. DR. TIMNIT GEBRU
COMPUTER SCIENTIST, FOUNDER OF DISTRIBUTED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Computer Science
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
 • **Experience:** Researcher at IBM Research, co-founder of Distributed Artificial Intelligence Research Institute (DAIR)
 • **Achievements:** Co-creator of TensorFlow, co-founder of DAIR, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
 • **Future:** To continue to lead in the field of AI research and to inspire the next generation of AI researchers.

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
2. ORY OKOLLOH
LAWYER, ACTIVIST, CO-FOUNDER OF UJAMAA

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Law
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Laws, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Lawyer, activist, co-founder of Ujamaa
 • **Achievements:** Co-founder of Ujamaa, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
 • **Future:** To continue to lead in the field of AI research and to inspire the next generation of AI researchers.

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
3. DR. RASHADA HARRY
ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGIST, CO-FOUNDER, YOUR FUTURE, YOUR AMBITION (YFPA)

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Business
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Entrepreneur, co-founder of YFPA
 • **Achievements:** Co-founder of YFPA, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
 • **Future:** To continue to lead in the field of AI research and to inspire the next generation of AI researchers.

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
4. BENJAMIN FERNANDES
FOUNDER & CEO, NALA

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Business
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Entrepreneur, founder of NALA
 • **Achievements:** Founder of NALA, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
 • **Future:** To continue to lead in the field of AI research and to inspire the next generation of AI researchers.

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
5. JULIANA ROTICH
CO-FOUNDER OF UJAMAA, CO-FOUNDER OF JUBA, CO-FOUNDER OF NALA

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Business
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Entrepreneur, co-founder of Ujamaa, co-founder of Juba, co-founder of NALA
 • **Achievements:** Co-founder of Ujamaa, co-founder of Juba, co-founder of NALA, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
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BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
6. PROF. VUKOSI MARIVATE
COMPUTER SCIENCE PROFESSOR, CO-FOUNDER OF LISAFA & DUST LEARNING INSTITUTE

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Computer Science
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Professor, co-founder of Lisafa & Dust Learning Institute
 • **Achievements:** Co-founder of Lisafa & Dust Learning Institute, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
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BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
7. DR. GLADYS MAE WEST
MATHEMATICS PROFESSOR, PIONEER OF CDS TECHNOLOGY

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Mathematics
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Professor, pioneer of CDS Technology
 • **Achievements:** Pioneer of CDS Technology, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
 • **Future:** To continue to lead in the field of AI research and to inspire the next generation of AI researchers.

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
8. JOHN HENRY THOMPSON
SOFTWARE ENGINEER, COMPUTER SCIENTIST

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Computer Science
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Software engineer, computer scientist
 • **Achievements:** Recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
 • **Future:** To continue to lead in the field of AI research and to inspire the next generation of AI researchers.

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
9. BRENDA BAGAZINI
CO-FOUNDER OF WASH VISION & CEO OF WASH VISIONS INC.

ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Business
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** Entrepreneur, co-founder of Wash Vision
 • **Achievements:** Co-founder of Wash Vision, recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
 • **Future:** To continue to lead in the field of AI research and to inspire the next generation of AI researchers.

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS SHOWCASE
10. IYINOLUWA ABOYEJI
IT LEADER & CYBERSECURITY EXECUTIVE

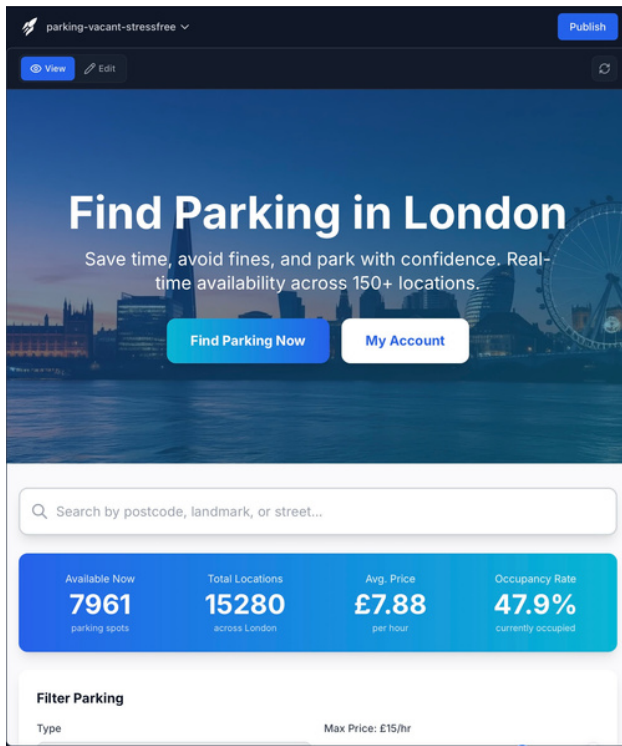
ABOUT
 • **Background/Training:** Information Technology
 • **Education:** Bachelor of Science in Information Technology, University of Lagos
 • **Experience:** IT leader, cybersecurity executive
 • **Achievements:** Recipient of the 2019 IBM Research Award for Innovation

THE FUTURE
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Some activities from the event: Tackling real problems with tech



A participant's app idea prototyped to help Londoners find parking.

"I might just try this, you know!"

- **Participant**, after seeing their app idea come to life



Ushahidi app co-founded by 2 of the featured innovators, deployed to tackle Dagenham's littering problem

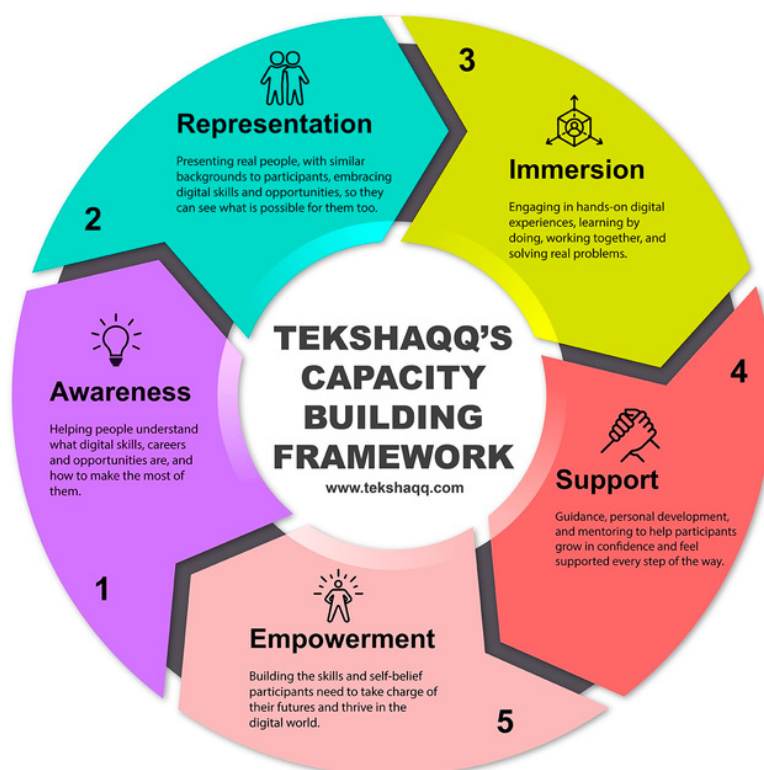
"I like that this app gives power to the public to get involved in solving crises."

- **Participant**, on learning about the Ushahidi app

WHAT CHANGED?

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The numbers and feedback tell a compelling story of both need and impact. There is a demonstrable lack of awareness about Black innovators, yet strong enthusiasm once people are exposed to their stories. TEKSHAQQ's showcase directly addressed this gap, engaging 71 visitors in person and sparking wider community interest from 67 others. These figures confirm that the model works, the message resonates, and there is clear potential to scale through digital and community outreach.



The Showcase is underpinned by TEKSHAQQ's Capacity Building Framework

Qualitative Impact

“Tech is something that I didn’t have much information about, but this event has been informative. It has given me a lot of insight into career paths. The innovators’ stories help me see what is possible. I am now going to do a bit more research as I want to get into tech.”

– **S, Participant**

“Being dyslexic and autistic, it is helpful seeing the information laid out visually, in bite-sized bullet points. I am seeing career opportunities that I didn’t know exist, that they don’t teach you in school or careers support programmes. It is giving me ideas of things I could do.”

– **O, Participant**

"I am inspired by all the stories of these innovators, ordinary people tackling challenges in their communities, inventing things to solve problems. I think young and older people could be inspired, especially by seeing people like themselves doing things."

- R, Participant

"I learned that to do things you have to overcome things."

- T, Participant

"Black people are doing better than the media shows."

- H, Participant

"Africans are also great inventors that could inspire one into becoming a great inventor as well."

- B, Participant

“I didn’t know there were so many Black people innovating in tech.” - **J, Participant**

“Interesting to see Africans creating tech to solve local and world problems.” - **P, Participant**

“There are lots of African inventors that lots of people don’t know about.” - **V, Participant**

“He’s a Nigerian. Like me!” - **A, Participant**

“A lot of Black people are making impact in the tech space, more than I initially knew, and I could be one soon.” - **M, Participant**

“Black innovators aren’t taught in school and are significant, and made an impact in history.”
- **P, Participant**

“I learned that Black people have created some well known software and gadgets.”
- **F, Participant**

The showcase not only informed but also helped to reconstruct identity and aspiration.

SOCIAL VALUE DELIVERED

The Black Digital Innovators Showcase successfully delivered the social, educational, and cultural benefits outlined in the original proposal to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD). The event created measurable and demonstrable impact across four key areas: Equality & Inclusion, Education & Skills, Community Cohesion, and Cultural Enrichment.

LBBD Benefit	How TEKSHAQQ Delivered	Evidence of Impact
Equality & Inclusion	Platformed underrepresented innovators; achieved diverse audience engagement.	Participants expressed feeling represented and inspired to innovate. Diverse participant feedback taken onboard for service co-creation.
Education & Skills	Introduced pathways to digital learning and careers; follow-on resources now in development.	Participants expressed interest in & requested support for digital up-skilling, tech careers & tech enterprise development. Resources & signposting were provided
Community Cohesion	Created shared celebration space, fostering unity and collaboration.	Positive atmosphere; new community connections formed - TEKSHAQQ invited to facilitate another showcase to a community group, service co-creation, future collaborators engaged, increased volunteering interest
Cultural Enrichment	Integrated Black innovation into cultural programming.	Enhanced pride, creativity, and local cultural identity. Expanded cultural knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The Black Digital Innovators Showcase has sparked new conversations, inspired fresh thinking, and opened doors to a richer understanding of Black contribution in technology and digital innovation. Over ten days, it created space for learning, curiosity and pride, not only among Black communities, but across the wider borough. By highlighting innovators whose stories often go untold, this project has helped to challenge stereotypes, strengthen community cohesion and inspire future pathways into digital careers and enterprise.

TEKSHAQQ looks forward to building on this success through continued partnerships with schools, families, community groups and local organisations, ensuring that digital inclusion and representation remain at the heart of our shared progress.



Partnerships

CALL TO ACTION:

BUILDING ON THE MOMENTUM

The Black Digital Innovators Showcase demonstrated a powerful appetite for positive, creative, and inclusive learning in our community. Visitors expressed a desire for more opportunities to develop digital confidence and skills, explore tech careers and business opportunities and connect with inspiring role models.

TEKSHAQQ is now exploring ways to:

- **Extend** the showcase's reach through community-based learning and engagement;
- **Collaborate** with organisations that share our values of inclusion, empowerment, and creativity;
- **Develop** educational resources that continue to inspire curiosity and confidence in innovation.

We welcome interest from partners who wish to support or collaborate in building an inclusive future through creativity, innovation, and education.

Contact us to discuss at hello@tekshaqq.com

Visit our website at <https://tekshaqq.com>

FINANCIALS & GOVERNANCE

TEKSHAQQ CIC was registered in November 2023 as a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee, with an asset lock ensuring all income supports its social mission. The 2025 Black Digital Innovators Showcase was self-funded by the founder, Dr Oma Eguara, with additional support from family members and one community volunteer. No external grant funding or sponsorship was received. Future funding will include income from product sales, paid workshops, and grant applications to local authorities and trusts. Governance oversight rests with TEKSHAQQ's directors, ensuring transparency, accountability, and community benefit in all activities.

**Whatever your age or circumstances,
You can achieve more of what you want with digital skills.**



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TEKSHAQQ thanks everyone who made the Black Digital Innovators Showcase possible.

We are grateful to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham for their continued support for inclusivity, creativity and innovation.

Thank you to all innovators, contributors, and participants who have shared their ideas, stories, and expertise. Your creativity helped bring this event to life.

Our thanks also go to the TEKSHAQQ team and volunteers for their dedication, and to local residents, schools, and community groups whose enthusiasm and feedback shaped this report.

In respect of privacy, individual names have not been listed, but we acknowledge everyone who played a part in making this Showcase a success.

Together, we are building a more connected, creative and inclusive digital future.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2025

“Standing firm in power and pride!”

BLACK DIGITAL INNOVATORS' SHOWCASE

TEKSHAQQ's Black Digital Innovators Showcase celebrated present-day Black excellence in technology, reframing Black history through innovation and creativity.

Held from 13–23 October 2025, the event attracted 71 visitors and revealed a striking knowledge gap — few could name a Black inventor before attending, yet all left informed of several.

Through 30 poster exhibits, interactive learning activities, and community engagement, the showcase challenged stereotypes, expanded aspirations, and sparked new interest in digital careers and enterprise. Participants described the experience as eye-opening and motivational, with some developing ideas for apps and ventures of their own. The project demonstrates how representation transforms perception, showing that innovation belongs to everyone, building confidence, curiosity, and cohesion across the community.



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