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# City of London - City of London Diversity, Race Relations and Inclusivity Award - Nomination Form

## Section 1 - Information of Group/Organization Being Nominated

Name of Youth, Group or Organization you are nominating: **Emancipation Day Celebration**

Address of Nominee (please include City, as well as postal code): **801-985 Huron Street, London, N5Y 5E4**

Name(s) of Contact People (including position titles): **Justine Turner, Event Organizer**

Business Phone #: **5196973430**

Business E-mail address: **justine@emancipationdaycelebration.com**

Organization Website (if one exists):

Which of the following categories does this group/organization fit into?: **Social/Community Services (49 or fewer)**

Does the nominee meet the eligibility criteria?: **Yes**

## Section 2 - Your Reason for Nominating

What is the initiative this group/organization implemented?: **Emancipation Day Celebration**

At what time during this year did this initiative take place? (eg. Spring 2017): **September 23, 2018**

Name the key individuals, departments or committees involved: **Justine Turner**

Brief description of initiative: **Emancipation Day Celebration is an annual event held to celebrate the historical significance of the black community in London and their ancestors who sought freedom from slavery. The first incarnation of event ran from 1948 to 1986 and was re-established in 2013 by Justine Turner to promote inclusivity and diversity by creating a shared and welcoming space for Londoners to learn about black history.**

How has the initiative contributed to the promotion of diversity, race relations, inclusivity and human rights in London and promoting London as a welcoming city? eg. Number of people who benefited from this initiative, success stories, etc.: **Across North America and the Caribbean, Emancipation Day Celebrations commemorate the freedom of enslaved people of African descent. It is an important day in which we acknowledge the struggle and loss suffered by the hundreds of thousands of people who tirelessly fought for freedom from slavery. In London, Emancipation Day Celebration has a long tradition of bringing diverse groups together to celebrate freedom from this dark period of history. For many Londoners of African descent, it is a day to remember the suffering and determination of their ancestors who travelled here seeking safety and a life free of bondage. For allies and other event attendees, Emancipation Day Celebration represents an opportunity to acknowledge the incredible struggle and sacrifice of those who sought freedom, while also celebrating London's history as a beacon of safety for so many on their arduous journey of hope. As a city with a predominantly white-Caucasian demographic, it is especially important that events like Emancipation Day Celebration exist to provide a welcoming and inclusive space to learn about black history in the city. The event encourages all Londoners to join and learn more about the history of slavery in North America and the symbolism of the Meeting Tree. This helps to promote diversity and foster a shared understanding by beautifully showcasing black history through songs and stories. The Meeting Tree and the work of the event organizer to protect it is also an important aspect that promotes inclusivity and belonging. The Meeting Tree exemplifies that all Londoners are connected to history through the nature arounds us and reminds us to respect each other and our environment.**

What short or long-term impact has/will the initiative have on the promotion of diversity, race relations, inclusivity and human rights in London and promoting London as a welcoming city?: **The growth of this event over the last five years demonstrates its value in the London community and especially those of African descent. As the event continues to grow and expand in the future, the larger community will become more knowledgeable about the event and as a result black history in the city. This will inspire others to become involved in the Emancipation Day Celebration as well as other events celebrating diversity and black history in London. Of equal importance is the Meeting Tree and its symbols of strength, courage, perseverance, hope and safety celebrated at the Emancipation Day Celebration. Through the work of the event organizer, the Meeting Tree was designated as a Heritage Tree in 2012 and has become a centerpiece of the day. Heritage Tree designation ensures that it will be preserved in the city to allow future generation to learn about its historical**

**importance to many in the black community in London.**

What is the potential for expansion and/or inspiration for replication of the initiative?: **This event will continue to expand each year as more and more Londoners become aware of it as well as the Meeting Tree and its significance to many in London's black community. Through this, the larger community will become more knowledgeable about the event and as a result black history in the city. This will inspire others to become involved in the Emancipation Day Celebration as well as other events celebrating diversity and black history in London. This could lead to potential future community collaborations including other installations that commemorate its significance or benches for people to sit in the vicinity to take in its beauty and reflect on its importance to the city.**

How can receiving this Award be used to further promote diversity, race relations, inclusivity and human rights in London and to further promote London as a welcoming city?: **Through the Emancipation Day Celebration a striking element of London's history is retold and remembered for attendees who visit and learn of its significance through the ceremony at the Meeting Tree. By receiving this award, this important work will have increased recognition in the community through news, social media and other City of London promotions. The award would also reinforce the importance of efforts of those who strive to commemorate black history in our community and encourage others to learn more and become involved. Finally, this award is an opportunity to educate Londoners about Emancipation Day Celebration and the Meeting Tree. This will help ensure that the event goes on for many years and continues to engage Londoners—now and for generations to come.**

Do you wish to attach a document or photo in support of your nomination?: **Emancipation Day Celebration 2018 Poster.jpg**

Another document or photo?:

Another document or photo?:

Another document or photo?:

### **Section 3 - Nominator Information**

Your Name: **Amber Matthews**

Your Address (please include postal code):

Your Phone #:

Your e-mail (a copy of this submission will be sent to the e-mail address you provide):

Submitted on: **9/30/2018 5:47:03 PM**