

Black Arts, Design & Global Engagement

Mission

The **Black Arts, Design & Global Engagement (BADGE)** initiative advances interdisciplinary research, creative practice, and engagement across the African Diaspora. Rooted in the understanding that the arts are the heartbeat of Black society, BADGE mobilizes the transformative power of arts and design to address socio-political issues that shape the lives of Black communities globally.

We convene and support artists, designers, scholars, and cultural workers whose work confronts and reimagines challenges such as environmental justice, reproductive rights, food insecurity, poverty, and systemic inequity. Through fellowships, collaborative research, public programming, and diasporic exchange, BADGE strengthens networks of creativity, fosters global dialogue, and uplifts the central role of Black arts and design in shaping more just futures.

Vision

BADGE envisions a world in which Black creativity is recognized and sustained as a driving force for social transformation, collective healing, and global connection.

We aspire to become a leading international hub—housed at Howard University and radiating across the diaspora—where artists and scholars collaborate, innovate, and build networks that transcend geography. BADGE imagines a future where:

- Diasporic artists and scholars are connected through a vibrant, intentional root system that supports shared knowledge and mutual empowerment.
- Arts and design methodologies are widely recognized as essential tools for understanding, addressing, and healing the impacts of social and political inequity.
- Technology is ethically harnessed to strengthen global connectivity, access, and collaboration.
- Black creative excellence is celebrated not only in the United States but across the full expanse of the African Diaspora, with shared leadership and rotating centers of gravity.

Through research, artistic production, dialogue, and global engagement, BADGE strives to catalyze a flourishing ecosystem where Black arts and design shape public discourse, expand possibility, and forge pathways to sustainable, liberated futures.

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Values

1. Artistic Excellence

We honor the brilliance, innovation, and rigor of Black artists, scholars, designers, and cultural workers. We champion creative practices that challenge, transform, and inspire.

2. Education and Access

We support learning environments—virtual and in-person—that uplift students, faculty, cultural workers, and communities. We ensure our programs remain accessible across diverse contexts throughout the diaspora.

3. Diasporic Connectivity

We cultivate relationships across geographic, cultural, and disciplinary borders. Our work is grounded in the belief that the diaspora is strengthened when its members are connected, visible to one another, and supported in shared purpose.

4. Social and Environmental Justice

We center artistic and scholarly practices that confront inequities impacting Black communities—including environmental justice, reproductive justice, economic disparities, and access to resources.

5. Healing and Restoration

We recognize the arts as a salve and a site of healing. Our work supports practices that mend, restore, and imagine new futures in the face of historical and ongoing harm.

6. Collaboration and Shared Leadership

We believe in collective stewardship. Our programs prioritize co-creation, shared decision-making, and community-centered inquiry. We elevate multiple voices and expertise across the diaspora.

7. Ethical Use of Technology

We are committed to exploring and modeling ethical approaches to technology that enhance global connection while protecting cultural integrity, community sovereignty, and creative ownership.

8. Accountability to Community

We prioritize relationships built on transparency, reciprocity, and responsibility. Our work must serve, reflect, and be accountable to Black communities locally and globally.