



# the apothecary network Principles and Values

## Overview

the apothecary network is a prototype project to explore how creative technology can play a role in climate action.

Our project will create a mobile or web app to share the knowledge people may need to establish decolonial community apothecaries which centre intuitive practices and ancestral knowledge. We believe that the apothecary should be grounded in community, beginning at the place each person calls home, providing support through laypersons herbal medicine.

We do not believe in replacing Western medicine but recognising the benefit that plants can have in our lives, how they may strengthen and complement the body, mind, heart and spirit.

The approach we will take will focus on building relationships with plants, caring for and working with them, to address the psycho-emotional impacts of the climate crisis on our communities while empowering people to claim a sense of agency in green spaces and the natural world.

This is about community, collective care, joy and healing with nature.

## Our People

During the prototype period, our project will focus on diaspora and racialised communities in Bristol and the South-West that are interested in establishing a relationship of reciprocity with green spaces (from window ledge to allotments) which will allow them to feel a sense of agency with the land they call home.

Beyond the prototype period, our long-term target audience will be anyone who wishes to engage with the natural world on their own terms and values while recognising or aligning with the principles and values laid out in this document. We welcome people at different stages of their journeys and ask all to be open to the principles that we have agreed upon.

We ask that all collaborators of the apothecary network recognise the ancestral knowledge of diaspora and racialised communities (including, but not limited to, African, Caribbean, South Asian, East/South-East Asian, Latin American, and Indigenous groups) that is being shared, and to respect the past, present and future context of the knowledge and experiences shared.

We respectfully request those who do not identify as being part of a diaspora or racialised group to recognise that they are a guest in a space created by and for people of colour.

We consider those who use and engage with our app to be collaborators and contributors to the community that the apothecary network is facilitating.

## **Aims**

We aim to facilitate communities to establish a new relationship or strengthen an existing relationship with green spaces providing them with a sense of agency.

We aim to provide tools to learn and build a practical, nurturing and reciprocal relationship with plants that will help communities feel a tangible connection with nature.

We aim to create a connection to traditions and knowledge that honour lived experiences and recognise the devastating impact colonialism has had on our communities.

## **Design Justice Principles**

We will adhere to the Design Justice Network Principles.

**Principle 1:** We use design to sustain, heal, and empower our communities, as well as to seek liberation from exploitative and oppressive systems.

**Principle 2:** We centre the voices of those who are directly impacted by the outcomes of the design process.

**Principle 3:** We prioritise design's impact on the community over the intentions of the designer.

**Principle 4:** We view change as emergent from an accountable, accessible, and collaborative process, rather than as a point at the end of a process.

**Principle 5:** We see the role of the designer as a facilitator rather than an expert.

**Principle 6:** We believe that everyone is an expert based on their own lived experience, and that we all have unique and brilliant contributions to bring to a design process.

**Principle 7:** We share design knowledge and tools with our communities.

**Principle 8:** We work towards sustainable, community-led and -controlled outcomes.

**Principle 9:** We work towards non-exploitative solutions that reconnect us to the earth and to each other.

**Principle 10:** Before seeking new design solutions, we look for what is already working at the community level. We honour and uplift traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge and practices.

More information can be found here:

<https://designjustice.org/read-the-principles>

## Our Values

**Community:** We will support and centre diaspora and racialised communities of friends, collaborators and like-minded people in all that we do with the aim of creating a creative tech solution which honours the ancestral knowledge and intuitive practices of those who have come before us.

**Honesty and Transparency:** We encourage everyone in the project to feel able to be open and to bring their thoughts and feelings to the table, to question them and to respect people's differences and similarities. We will be open about our values in whatever solution we create and ask that those who engage with us do the same.

**Inclusion:** We insist that all those working on the project are actively working to challenge and breakdown the social, economic, racial and physical barriers that prevent people from creating, engaging with and participating in creativity in the natural world. We will honour and uplift the ancestral knowledge and intuitive practices of diaspora and racialised communities.

**Environmentalism and Climate Justice:** We recognise the climate crisis as a product of colonialism, imperialism and racial capitalism. We will actively seek to reject these harmful systems of oppression. Our project will acknowledge that those who are most affected by climate breakdown are the least responsible, recognise that the climate crisis compounds existing oppressions, and advocate for solutions that redistribute power and centre the most affected communities. We will aim to be mindful of our environmental impact, advocate for sustainable practices and carry out due diligence on any third party engagements.

**Decolonialism:** We will seek to undo the harmful impact of colonialism within our communities by honouring knowledge, traditions and practices that have been lost, destroyed or stolen while recognising that our links to those ancestral ways may have been severed. We recognise the joint oppressions of people and plants, and will advocate and build means of liberation for both.

**Collaboration:** We will foster an environment of openness and sharing, allowing all voices to be heard equally. We will seek to extend this to how people engage with our project to enable communities to collaborate with each other. We recognise the potential of being part of something bigger than ourselves and the benefits this may have to our communities.

**Anti-Racism:** We will be actively anti-racist in our practice by challenging the structures of colonialism and racial capitalism, creating a community-led project and honouring the lived experiences of diaspora and racialised communities.

**Care and Wellbeing:** We will create a project that centres care by focusing on the psycho-emotional impacts of the climate crisis on our communities. In our working practices, we will consider people's personal lives, work commitments and access requirements. We will strive to ensure that no one feels overworked, overwhelmed or overstretched during the development of this project. We aim to create an environment which builds confidence and allows everyone to feel safe, welcomed and creative.

**Legacy:** We hope that this project will have a long term and positive impact on diaspora and racialised communities. This legacy should be led and held by the communities we seek to serve. We will aim to provide the knowledge for people to forge their own paths in growing and herbalism.