

## TOPIC: Race and Equity

### POSITION STATEMENT

Virginia has made the Black travel experience a focus area.

### SUGGESTED USE

- Is this work a response to the protests against racial injustice?

### CORE MESSAGES

- Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) research into the Black travel experience began in 2019 when VTC was having discussions around how to bring more attention to the history of slavery in Virginia.
- The protests that took place throughout the summer of 2020 further revealed the importance of this work and increased our sense of urgency around these efforts.
- We are working to make the Black travel experience more equitable and authentic by adding more Black perspectives to our team to ensure these perspectives are represented throughout our tourism work.
- We are creating and enhancing experiences that focus on bringing attention to Virginia's Black history.
- We are designing resources to help travelers locate and plan Black cultural experiences.

### PROOF POINTS

- VTC sponsored a study by Share More Stories, *The Black Travel Experience*, which analyzed the Black traveler experience in Virginia to help sites and destinations better understand this audience segment and engage with Black travelers in a more authentic and equitable way.
- VTC created an advisory committee designed to ensure the inclusion of Black perspectives while making decisions around how we tell the historical narrative of Virginia and how to improve the Black traveler experience in Virginia.
- VTC has partnered with projects to bring more attention to Black history in Virginia; for example, VTC promoted the movie *Harriet* by hosting and coordinating screenings, developing associated itineraries and a podcast, and supported bringing Monticello's traveling exhibition, "Paradox of Liberty: Slavery

at Jefferson's Monticello” to the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia.

- VTC has developed website content that highlights great experiences for connecting with Black culture and tools to help travelers plan those experiences.
- VTC has created a Virginia Black History Trail that lists museums and sites with permanent exhibits and tours.

## **AUDIENCE SEGMENTS**

- Black travelers
- Non-Black travelers interested in inclusive experiences
- Non-Black travelers who don't understand or appreciate inclusive experiences
- Industry