To the Dean of Architecture and   
Design, Scheri Fultiner, Department   
Head, Amy Kulper, and the faculty of   
the Department of Architecture at the   
Rhode Island School of Design,

***The Limits of Your Recognition: A***   
***Follow-Up Statement in Relation to***   
***the Listening Session of June 17th,***   
***2020 with the Rhode Island School***   
***of Design’s Administration***   
***Regarding the Multitude of Issues***   
***brought up and represented by the***   
***RISD BIPOC & Student Body in***   
***attendance. Sent on Friday,***   
***Juneteenth, 2020.***

Three weeks have passed since the   
horrific and extralegal killing of George   
Floyd that has ignited the nation in a   
movement against police brutality,   
economic injustice, and the   
devaluation of Black lives,   
experiences, and creative knowledge.

While the current efforts to bring   
attention to these issues impregnate   
our collective consciousness, we can   
no longer remain ignorant to the fact   
that the roots of these efforts stem   
from decades of action against the   
institutional and systemic injustices   
endemic to the building of this nation   
as well as to the practices of   
architecture, design, and institutions of   
higher education such as RISD.

Consequently, we can no longer ignore   
the actions of this institution leading up   
to this moment. The historical lack of   
accountability for those who have   
murdered Black people is one that has   
direct and indisputable parallels to the   
lack of accountability for the well-being   
and support of Black and BIPOC   
students by RISD faculty and   
administrators. In 2016, Black, BIPOC,

queer and other students took on the invisible labor ~~of making e~~xp~~licit their~~ P

personal traumas and struggles   
The Limits of Your Recognition: Race and Diversity at the D…Updated automatically every 5 attending RISD in the students when deemed   
 Not Your Token protest beneficial and self-  
 and The Room of promoting while   
 Silence film (Eloise erasing the   
 Sherrid). In addition to experiences, creativity,   
 the egregious lack of and labor of its Black   
 forethought your students. **This is an**   
 response to the current **unconscionable form**   
 situation has shown the **of**   
 deafening silence of **performative allyship.**

institutional change   
 As this historic moment beyond further   
tokenization with which should make   
these previous protests abundantly clear, these   
were met, and   
 protests are not about singular events, demonstrates a pattern   
of obstruction and individual   
intransigence towards (bad) actors, or unique   
radical   
 institutions, but rather are aimed at centuries transformation against   
anti-Blackness at of systemic oppression   
RISD. Not only was against black people   
RISD’s   
 designed to ensure their dismissal, pedagogic response   
insufficient—a couple dehumanization, and   
of wintersession devaluation. RISD is   
courses on   
 not alone in these acts, but they are endemic to intersectionality and   
pedagogy—but the practices of   
the underlying points architecture and design   
made evident in the   
 as we know them. This demands that RISD’s Not Your Token   
Protests and The Division of Architecture   
Room of Silence film and Design and   
were co-opted by RISD   
Department of Architecture marketing campaigns   
(Our RISD), effectively acknowledge   
undermining and Architecture as a   
nullifying the   
 politically driven discipline in which opportunity for

institutional reflection professed “neutrality” is

and itself a stance enabling

transformation that further violence that

these two acts against can no longer be

systemic injustice tolerated as tenable

offered. RISD’s and sustainable. As

repeated inaction and Black and BIPOC

inability to recognize its students and alumni

own position, from the

involvement in, and Department o~~f~~

responsibility to ~~Architectu~~re, ~~we~~   
dismantle regimes of Published by Google   
racial inequity only   
further demonstrates Drive – Report Abuse

it’s   
simultaneous minutes   
exploitation of Black

https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vQOJCqfs62hajaijnwVVapmUQmsUE98KBfEmXZfsBuC7sWlriBlnIMTuf-vNQiDbmrIbJbH3cBDKlS6/pub 2/12 2/1/2021 The Limits of Your Recognition: Race and Diversity at the Department of Architecture

demand that RISD move beyond   
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performative students. Break down   
recognition and take the barriers to   
immediate and education by providing   
actionable steps more scholarship   
towards consciously opportunities and TA   
dismantling positions so that   
institutionalized anti- student’s work   
Blackness. The experiences directly   
following are our benefit   
recommendations for them professionally   
**beginning** what will be and their   
a continuous and dynamic process: studio work does not

suffer   
from their financial

1. **Representation**: need. Black students

make should have more   
 opportunities to teach   
legitimate strides to and any rejected   
increase proposals should have   
the Black Faculty &   
 a very clear Student constructive   
Body from the **current** language that is helpful   
**4%**. We recommend for the student to edify   
open design   
 their future programs and work. Faculty should   
competitions by the not be   
institution to appeal to permitted to offer   
the multitude of students

prospective artists and unpaid internship

students that already opportunities, and

exist within Providence should also be open to

and beyond. Your hiring and working with

treatment of Black new

students in the BEB TAs over the course of

directly the

affects the perspectives academic year.

and   
 3. **Acknowledgmen**t:   
opinions current and Directly acknowledge   
prospective students the history of   
hear and a true commitment to diversity Market Square as a

and inclusion will reflect slave

positively on the market and the direct

department and

and institution at large. indirect funding of

institutions

2. **Accessibility**: RISD   
must   
ensure a **support**   
**system** for   
disadvantaged

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roGoogle Driv wn and   
ReIS–DRepor fromt   
Abuse

minutes

https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vQOJCqfs62hajaijnwVVapmUQmsUE98KBfEmXZfsBuC7sWlriBlnIMTuf-vNQiDbmrIbJbH3cBDKlS6/pub 3/12 2/1/2021 The Limits of Your Recognition: Race and Diversity at the Department of Architecture

ventures that capitalised off of   
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every 5Black bodies. Rather than

approaching this **Black**

history with **architects are still**

the ambivalence and **secondary or non-**

timidness that the **existent** and we are

institution currently no longer content with

poses; leverage it as a alternative voices to

site for a constant architectural practice

reflection of how and history being

**society literally**  relegated to seminars

**capitalizes**  and sporadic winter

**on Black bodies**. We session courses. We

suggest seasonal demand that the

exhibitions and architecture

installations by Black department bolsters

artists its

campus and city-wide commitment to placing

with alternative voices

ample financial and within our

creative education.

support, and in the Furthermore, these

context of the BEB examples should not

some seasonal or come

annual design from the already

archaic and   
challenge that ‘canonized’ meta of

allows Black voices to the

be Maghreb, there are

dominant in a place multitudes of

that was historically forgotten, unique,

dehumanizing. fascinating, and

innovative   
4. **Decentralize**: The architectural practices   
push to ‘decentralize’ outside of the Middle   
Europe in our East and   
education is a promise

that the majority of us Northern Africa and

have heard at we

some point in our time challenge the

at RISD. In the context respective faculty to

of the take strides in doing

architecture research outside their

comfort zones.

department, we The inclusion of Black   
believe that promise is voices in course   
more of a claim as we syllabi should be a   
are still not

presented with course ~~requireme~~nt

enough content by a~~nd when~~ Published by

Black architects. **In**  Google Drive – Report

**every**

**course syllabi,**  Abuse

**precedents**  minutes

**and projects by**

the lack of alternative voices is   
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every 5raised, there should be no

repercussions to   
students for doing so. 7. **Design/Build**   
 **Equity**: Create a   
5. **Accountability**: Policy on Design/Build   
The Projects in which all   
Accountability and students have the   
assessment of non- opportunity to design   
Black faculty should and all   
be a definite devotion students share the   
to reviewing and labor of   
expanding diversity in building. There are too   
the many examples of   
educational content BIPOC being   
not just in the BEB but given only labour   
campus-wide. **The**  tasks in   
**labor of this review**  group projects and   
**and**  assignments.

**assessment should**

**not**   
**simply be given to a**   
**body of Black staff**   
**and faculty** but   
should be pursued

and   
demanded of **all**   
faculty in the BEB.

6. **Training**: Require   
Art School Specific   
Diversity Training for   
Instructors: under the   
context of art and   
design learning and   
practice, we believe   
that faculty should   
undergo specific   
training under these   
contexts to   
**understand the**   
**existence**   
**and propagation of**

**microaggressions**

**and**

**racism**, consciously

or   
unconsciously in their   
teaching and critique   
practices.

8. **Sponsorship:**   
**Access to tools and resources that**   
**support academic**

**and**   
**professional growth through sponsorship of Black**   
**students to attend**

**one**   
**conference per**   
**annum** (such as   
AfroTech, NOMA, and other Black-led   
conferences). **The**   
**financial support of**

**these**

**initiatives should not be**

**relegated to the CSI**,

the   
elevation of minority voices in architecture should be a   
collaborative effort.

weeks, discussions responses

with **Black students**  that are no longer   
**and the larger**  acceptable:   
**architecture student**  being “ready to listen,”   
**body**  being   
**have pointed to our**  “ready to learn,”   
**workloads and the**  “opening up   
**minimal**  the space to…”, these   
**promotion of**  institutional ‘blanket’   
**communities**  responses are not only   
**and initiatives** like paternalistic but   
NOMAs for their also avoids   
underutilization. The accountability by   
effects of the passing the work that   
architecture needs to be done onto

curriculum and the shoulders of

workload on our BIPOC. **Should the**

personal and social **end result of the**   
lives is not a new **discourse of this**

subject, and as we **letter be the shifting**

mentioned earlier in the **of**

letter **responsibility on yet**

RISD’s NOMAs chapter **another task force**

gets all their funds from **formed purely of**

CSI and is not **Black people and**

supported directly by **people of**

the **color, then the**

architecture **Department of**

department, and **Architecture and**

this must change **RISD would have**

immediately. NOMAs is **failed once again.**

the **primary**

**community** in the

Architecture **Finally, change the**

Department for BIPOC **attitude towards**

and our inability to fully **discussions of**

utilise this **racism, diversity, and**

community by virtue of **inclusion as ‘tasks’**

the **that ‘must be**

design of our **completed’ - the**

curriculum and its **discourse (and**

anaemic support **changes) that we**

reflects **larger issues**

**of mental and social**   
 **hope these demands**

**generate should**

**health** within the **center ar**Published b

Department **ound the** y **fa**Google

of Architecture. Driv **ct that dis**e**c**–

10. **Labor**: Moving **us**Repor **sion**t Abuse **s**

forward, we want the **on**   
department to

understand several minutes

things: institutional

https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vQOJCqfs62hajaijnwVVapmUQmsUE98KBfEmXZfsBuC7sWlriBlnIMTuf-vNQiDbmrIbJbH3cBDKlS6/pub 6/12 2/1/2021 The Limits of Your Recognition: Race and Diversity at the Department of Architecture

**race, diversity, and inclusion are**   
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every 5**constant and dynamic**. The

relegation of these who embraced their   
discussions to diversity trauma and similarly   
training days, diversity presented their   
talks, and sporadic thoughts, feelings and   
events during Black experiences with the   
history month only institution and we hope   
hinders your capacity that with this letter we   
to change. Be it at the can provide the BEB   
student-teacher level, and the RISD some   
to larger conferences help in tackling the   
with the institution, **all**  issue at hand.

interactions concerning   
race, diversity, and   
inclusion should be **Below are names of**   
approached head-on **Black students and**   
with a genuine **alumni in the**

willingness to have the **Department of**

conversation, the **Architecture that**

respect to listen to the **have contributed to**

conversation, and the **or read this letter**

heart to **urging for the**

evaluate what was said **dismantling of anti-**

against our personal **Blackness. By**

biases and **signing, they each**

misconceptions no **support this**

matter how **message.**

uncomfortable, or from   
an institutional Abena Danquah,

standpoint, B.Arch ‘23

‘unprofessional’ the Ayotunde Sule, B.Arch   
conversation may ‘23   
seem. **Once again,**  Charles Ba Oumar,   
**what we want is**  B.Arch ‘23 Clarence   
**action that leads to**  Mensah, B.Arch ‘23   
**tangible**  Fawz Hussein, B.Arch   
**change.**  ‘23   
 Joshua Coverdale, B.

Arch ‘23 Leah Lara, We are open to having   
more direct B.Arch ‘23   
**conversations** with the Mackenzie Luke,   
department, and we B.Arch ‘23   
emphasize   
**conversations,** to Quincy Casey, B.Arch

expand or clarify the ‘23

demands we are Danasha Kelly, M.Arch

presenting. We will not, ‘22

however, be called to Elizabeth Mbrokoh-

defend, curtail, or even Ewoal, B.Arch ‘22

apologize for these JaPublished b ckey

demands. We are Robiy nsGoogle Driv on,

adding our voices to M.Arceh–‘22Report

those of our respective Abuse

colleagues and peers minutes