Black Lives Matter.
Black Art Matters.
Black Music Matters.
Black Poetry Matters.
Black Literature Matters.
Black Design Matters.
Black Lives Matter.

The University of Northern Iowa’s local chapter of Imagining America stands unequivocally in solidarity with our Black students, faculty, staff, and community members, locally and around the world.

As an anti-racist group, we condemn the murder of George Floyd at the hands of the police. We condemn the deaths of countless Black human beings under systems meant to protect some but not all, systems meant to allow some to thrive but not all. We condemn the on-going violent and systemic oppression of African Americans, a violence that began on this country’s shores 401 years ago and continues into the twenty-first century and to this very day. As a group that honors the role of the arts and humanities in our society, we vow to engage in the local, national, and global issues of our time courageously and creatively. We vow to uplift artists and creatives who continue to collaborate, illuminate, and uphold a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The world’s streets have filled with people of all ethnic and racial backgrounds protesting racial injustices, and the arts continue to be engaged with as mechanisms for righteous anger and protest, but we also acknowledge that throughout history, countless works of art, music, and literature have been appropriated, looted, and weaponized by privileged groups and individuals, perpetuating anti-black racism in western cultures. We recognize the arts have power, and we support all creative endeavors that not only celebrate diversity but give voice and a platform to those who have been historically marginalized and silenced.

We stand with the Black community, and we vow to listen more deeply, to reflect on our work more critically, to continue educating ourselves and those around us, and to use our privilege as an organization housed in an institution of higher education to actively fight against racism and other wicked injustices in the world.

Imagination is ineffective without action, but meaningful change cannot happen without bravely imagining it first.

Imagining America at UNI Advisory Board