Black Lives Matter. Product Hub stands together with our Black community to combat systemic inequity, racism and injustice.

At Product Hub, it is at the core of what we do to bring together diverse voices so we can build inclusive products that truly make the world a better place.

Yet in the face of unjust killings and systemic dysfunction from generation to generation, it took us a while to digest the notion that people more urgently needed improvement in their social environment than material living standards. We found it deeply troubling. In the face of seemingly intractable problems, even the steady march of technological progress only delivered material goods, but that was not enough. Sadly, some products even fell prey to hate speech while others reinforced entrenched racial biases, if not amplified. Is there anything we could do as product builders?

Yes. Our freedom and democracy is not a fate, but a product in the making. The values we share, the laws we create, and the policies we promulgate, are all products that we need to be a part of, whether it’s demanded of us or not. We need to be actively building our community, our schools, our police, our hospitals, our houses, our transportation, our nation and our world. These social products may not look like the gadgets we use or the apps we launch because the impact does not lie in the hyper growth numbers or the 5-year return-on-investment horizon. Instead, they will be the deaths we avoid, the people who escape from being locked into an underclass, and a future where we won’t have to stress that we stand with the Black community because we are treated truly as equals. We need to build a future where we shouldn’t see the bloody counterfactuals that are still happening in the world today.

Yes. Our computer vision models are only as good as the input data. Our technologies, whether inadvertent or not, are being used to dissolve social cohesion and foster echo chambers. Our system is still producing product builders who focus excessively on disruption and growth, without a due concern for bigger social implications and unintended consequences. If we remain silent, we are complicit. Whether we are building for a large tech company or our own side project, we need to think about what kind of future we want to create and whether the things we say we value actually map to what we do.

Yes. We are product builders, but we are citizens like everyone else. If we are fed up with what’s happening in the world, speak up, work for change, and vote. Support organizations fighting for racial diversity and policy reform. As Stanford professor Larry Diamond puts it well, “to fight for the values of our republic as if our own freedom is at stake”.

We choose to speak up for the Black community. We choose to build. We choose to fight for our collective freedom and democracy.