

Handbook for postsecondary institutions applying for recognition

Dimensions

Equity, diversity and
inclusion Canada

Canada



JOINTLY ADMINISTERED BY



Table of contents

	Acknowledgements	7
Introduction		8
	The Dimensions program	9
	Realistic timeline	10
	How to use this handbook	11
	International programs	12
	Contact information	13
	Use of language	13
	Definitions	14
Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment		17
	Three principles of inclusive assessment	19
	Five categories of evidence	20
	Recognition stages	22
	Roles involved in the research community	25
	EDI in the research ecosystem: theory and practice	26
	How does EDI strengthen research?	26
	Systemic barriers in academia	26
	An expanded vision of EDI and intersectionality	28
	Catalysts and events	30
Chapter 2 – Self-assessment team		31
	Role	32
	The team	34
	The chair	34
	Composition	35
	Size	37
	Recruiting the members	38
	Distribution of work	39
	Recognition and compensation	39
	Scheduling and other considerations	41
	Governance	41
	Collaboration	42
	Training	43
	Groundwork	44
	Complaint mechanism	45

Where to start	48
Building trust	52
Communications to the research community	53
Scope and types of engagement	54
Senior management	54
Internal engagement activities	55
External engagement	55
Engaging with equity-deserving groups	56
Engaging with Indigenous Peoples	58
Engaging with persons with disabilities	61
Engaging with racialized groups	63
Engaging with LGBTQ2+ people	64
Engaging with women	65

Where to start	70
Aligning the environmental scan with the assessment and recognition stages	70
Scope of the scan	71
Elements of the environmental scan: the research community	72
Building the research ecosystem	72
Elements of the environmental scan: research excellence	81
Considering EDI in research	82
EDI in research teams	83
EDI training and development opportunities	84
Assessing excellence	84
Reconciliation and research	85
Awards	86
Elements of the environmental scan: institutional administration that supports the research community and its activities	87
Committee workload and distribution of EDI-related work	87
Governance	87
Leadership	88
Training for leadership	89
Leadership engagement with the internal and external community	89
Accommodation requests and solutions	89
Existing and ongoing EDI-related initiatives, campaigns and campus-wide programs	90
Communications materials and websites	90
Events/conferences	91
Built environment and infrastructure	92
Childcare infrastructure	92
Harassment and complaints	93
Campus security and policing	94
Pay equity	94
External community	95

Chapter 5 – Data collection and analysis

96

Existing internal evidence	99
Collecting evidence	100
Bias in evidence collection	102
Data governance and privacy considerations	103
Methodologies	104
Quantitative evidence	105
Researchers (faculty and staff)	106
Research trainees	106
Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire	106
Qualitative evidence	107
Guidance and practices	108
Ocap principles and Indigenous-led engagement	108
Accessibility	108
Evidence and harm	109
Benchmarking and comparing data	109
Analyzing and presenting the evidence	111

Chapter 6 – Action plan

113

Developing a Dimensions action plan	115
Defining the objectives	116
Outlining the rationale	117
Establishing timelines	119
Formulating actions	120
Scope of action plans	120
Adapting and building on existing EDI actions	121
Mutuality and collaboration in choosing actions	121
Impact versus progress	122
Successful versus unsuccessful plans	124
Layout of action plan	125

Appendices

126

Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages	127
Appendix 2 – Terms of reference template – self-assessment team	133
Appendix 3 – Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire	137
Appendix 4 – Suggested datasets and tools for benchmarking	140

Extra tools

143

End notes

146

Acknowledgements

The Dimensions program and this handbook were designed collaboratively, using a co-development process, with a cohort of 17 Canadian postsecondary institutions. These institutions provided extensive comments, feedback and suggestions, and they shared promising practices, expertise and valuable assistance.

Participating institutions:

Camosun College (British Columbia)
Holland College (Prince Edward Island)
Lethbridge College (Alberta)
Mohawk College (Ontario)
Mount Saint Vincent University (Nova Scotia)
Sheridan College (Ontario)
Simon Fraser University (British Columbia)
Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) (Ontario)
Université Laval (Québec)
University of British Columbia (British Columbia)
University of Calgary (Alberta)
University of New Brunswick (New Brunswick)
University of Ottawa (Ontario)
University of Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan)
University of Winnipeg (Manitoba)
Vancouver Island University (British Columbia)
Wilfrid Laurier University (Ontario)

Dimensions was also developed with the support of the Program Design Expert Committee (PDEC), consisting of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) experts who provided detailed advice and input into the content of the handbook and program design.

PDEC members:

Alison Anderson, Yukon College
Wesley Crichlow, Ontario Tech University
Dimitri Girier, Université de Montréal
Nancy Hansen, University of Manitoba
Jessica Kolopenuk, University of Alberta
Lynn Lapostolle, Association pour la recherche au collégial
Max Liboiron, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Bibiana Pulido, Réseau interuniversitaire québécois pour l'EDI (RIQEDI)

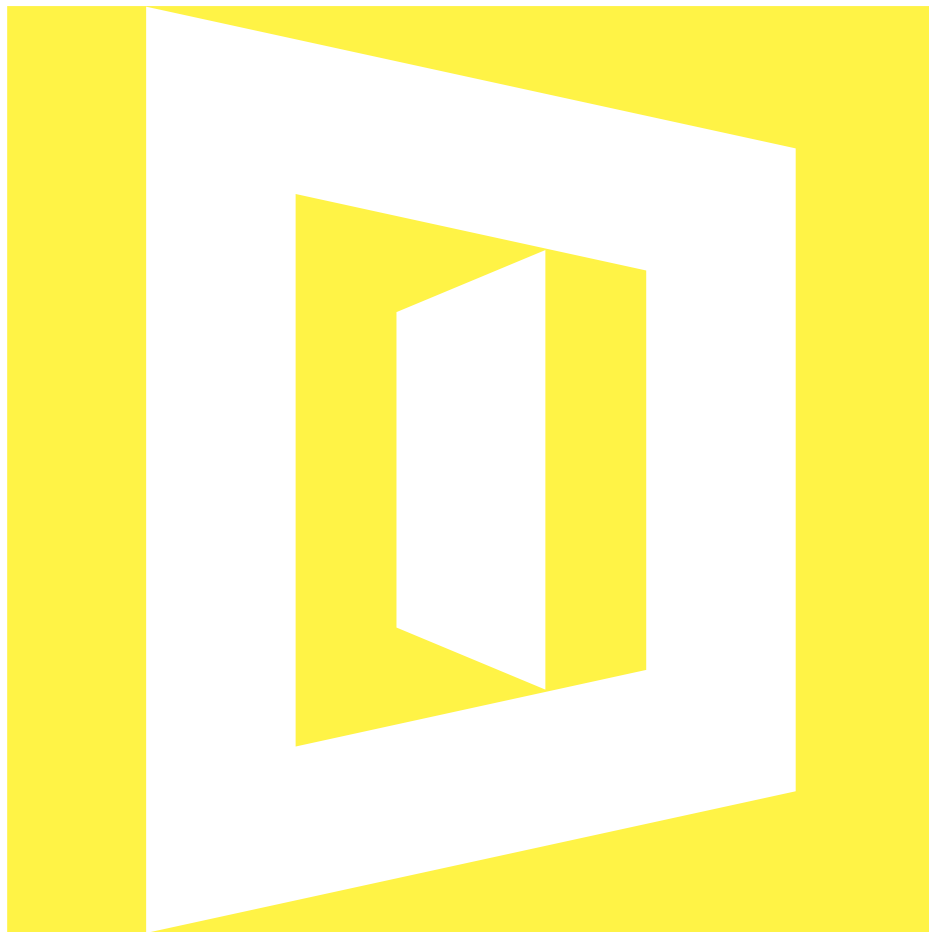
Acknowledgements and thanks are also extended to the advisory committee on equity, diversity and inclusion policy (ACEDIP) for its oversight and guidance. ACEDIP is composed of national and international EDI experts with extensive knowledge of postsecondary environments.

In addition to the cohort, 23 affiliate postsecondary institutions also provided insightful comments in the creation of the program; this support is gratefully acknowledged.

Advance HE, which administers the UK Athena SWAN program, and other international partners that have implemented similar programs, have also provided invaluable collaborations.

Finally, thanks are given to the participants of the various rounds of consultations (fall 2018 and winter 2019) held across the country at the outset of the program, which informed the development of the program and Dimensions charter.

Introduction



The Dimensions program

Dimensions: equity, diversity and inclusion Canada is a program designed to help postsecondary institutions increase equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and to help drive deeper cultural change in the research ecosystem.

The program is a flagship initiative of the Tri-Agency EDI Action Plan, administered collaboratively by the organizations that make up the Tri-Agency — the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), under the leadership of the [Canada Research Coordinating Committee \(CRCC\)](#).

The program addresses barriers and discrimination faced by equity-deserving groups, including women, Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis), persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities/ racialized groups, and members of LGBTQ2+ communities (see Use of language), in all disciplines and at Canada's postsecondary institutions — CEGEPs, colleges, polytechnics and universities. While these five groups are the focus, institutions are encouraged to include other groups relevant to their community and wider context.

Dimensions recognizes that a multiplicity of perspectives and lived experiences from diverse individuals foster increased research excellence, innovation and creativity in the postsecondary research sector. The program takes a multi-dimensional approach to EDI to achieve a future research community where all can thrive.

The program was co-developed during a pilot period with a cohort of 17 diverse postsecondary institutions from across Canada. It is intended to be “inclusive by design” — each part co-created in collaboration with those members of the research ecosystem who will use it and, hopefully, benefit from it. Co-development included pre-pandemic cross-country consultations and collaborations to develop the charter and spirit of the program, careful ongoing discussion with academic EDI experts and leaders, and in-depth working groups focused on the program's various components.

Dimensions has two components:

- All Canadian postsecondary institutions are encouraged to endorse the [charter](#)¹ as part of their commitment to increasing EDI within their institutions. The signature of the president (or equivalent) of the institution is required for the endorsement to be official. Other organizations that are research-oriented have also endorsed the charter.
- Postsecondary institutions can apply for Dimensions recognition, to be assessed on how actions have been taken to lay the foundations for transformation of the institutional EDI research culture and how such change has become a reality. Applications must include extensive evidence of efforts taken to date and of planning for strategic action. The evidence and information provided in applications will be assessed by academics and professionals with expertise in EDI-related scholarship and work, using an innovative peer review process to prioritize action, learning, and promising practices to be shared widely.

The program adopts a holistic approach, which should not be seen as a competition among institutions. During the adjudication process, institutions are not compared with each other. Rather, they are evaluated based on their realities, context, available resources, assets and obstacles. Dimensions is a recognition program, with four recognition stages intended to reflect the journey of carrying out EDI work and achieving success.

- Stage 1 – Foundation
- Stage 2 – Construction
- Stage 3 – Consolidation
- Stage 4 – Transformation

The Dimensions program does not include funding for EDI work. Participation in the program is voluntary.

The objective of Dimensions is to foster transformational change in the research ecosystem at Canadian postsecondary institutions. The program aims to identify and eliminate obstacles and inequities impacting graduate students and undergraduate students taking part in research, postdoctoral fellows, and part-time and full-time academic and non-academic staff, in order to support equitable access to funding opportunities, increase equitable and inclusive participation in the research ecosystem, and embed EDI-related considerations in research design and practices. The program's more specific objectives include:

- Creating a culture of critical self-reflection related to EDI;
- Supporting evidence-based EDI work, using both qualitative and quantitative data;
- Addressing the key challenges that present barriers to everyone's research career progression; and
- Fostering a community of practice that shares promising practices and resources.

While Dimensions is aimed at the research ecosystem, the lines between EDI in research and EDI in the whole institution are often blurred. It should be acknowledged that, while Dimensions involves the research community, the experience of the institution as a whole will influence members of equity-deserving groups, including their experience in research.

The program helps institutions achieve these objectives by providing guidance for advancing EDI work through the handbook, the application and review process, and a community of practice facilitated by Dimensions.

Realistic timeline

Experience has shown that applying for recognition can be a lengthy process. Setting appropriate expectations helps create realistic timelines and goals and help to ensure sufficient resources are dedicated to the task. Institutions should anticipate approximately 12 to 18 months from initial efforts to establish the self-assessment team to submission of the Dimensions application.

How to use this handbook

This handbook is intended to help institutions complete their application to receive Dimensions recognition. It should be read in conjunction with the recognition stages (see Recognition stages in Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment and Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages) to choose the stage for which an institution wants to apply, as different stages require different commitments. It should also be read in conjunction with the application form for the stage.

The application asks for:

- A description of the institution and an overview of Dimensions work
- Information on the self-assessment team and process
- An account of engagement with equity-deserving groups
- An environmental scan
- Details on data collection and analysis
- A five-year action plan

This handbook will be most useful to the self-assessment team members but can also inform many other individuals who want advice on how to address inequity, exclusion and a lack of diversity in their department or institution, even if they are not quite ready to apply for recognition. It provides comprehensive information and tips for institutions that aim to achieve research cultures and practices that are equitable, diverse, and inclusive.

This handbook is intended to guide the institution in the components of the Dimensions project; it does not (nor can it) provide a complete, comprehensive primer on the broad and complex topic of EDI. However, some general principles of EDI are discussed in Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment, with references to works that provide greater depth for interested readers.

Below is a list of the chapters that make up this handbook, and what they cover.

Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment

This chapter outlines the approach to conducting an assessment of EDI in a postsecondary institution – an assessment that is, itself, inclusive of many voices. The chapter outlines foundational principles, categories of evidence and tools. It also provides a high-level guide to the four stages of recognition and the cyclic process to achieve recognition and, hence, to improve EDI. The chapter provides a discussion of EDI in the research ecosystem, with references to other literature for those interested in the theoretical foundation of EDI.

Chapter 2 – Self-assessment team

In this chapter, institutions will receive guidance on creating and managing a self-assessment team (SAT), which will play a critical role in the Dimensions application. This chapter will introduce the role, membership composition, and structure of the SAT, and will help to navigate questions around compensation, distribution of the work, and training. It also includes information on how to report on the SAT in the final application.

Chapter 3 — Engagement strategy

This chapter lays out the groundwork for culturally accessible, respectful and safe engagement with the individuals and groups that make up the institution's research ecosystem. This chapter provides an approach for recognizing the local and broader social contexts that impact the institution's communities, building trust and reciprocal relationships, and engagement with the specific equity-deserving groups named in the Dimensions process.

Chapter 4 — Environmental scan

In this chapter, the focus is on generating a scan of the policies, structures and systems that inform day-to-day life in the research community. It provides details regarding the scope of this scan and the collection process, including a look at how an institution's internal context and the geographic and cultural context in which it is situated inform its EDI work.

Chapter 5 — Data collection and analysis

In this chapter, there is further elaboration of the scope of the research community as it relates to drawing out and listening to community members' stories. The chapter describes the quantitative and qualitative data-related expectations for the Dimensions application and provides resources for benchmarking and setting targets.

Chapter 6 — Action plan

This chapter provides direction for the development of the evidence-informed, context-appropriate five-year action plan that will form the core of the Dimensions application and future work.

International programs

The 2018 federal budget introduced a commitment to develop a program to promote EDI in the Canadian postsecondary research ecosystem. In developing Dimensions, the Tri-Agency looked to other jurisdictions for promising practices. The Athena SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) program has shown success and promise in advancing EDI for women in academia in the United Kingdom (UK) and in other jurisdictions where it has been adopted. Athena SWAN was selected as the starting point for a Canadian program, but Canada's program needed to be tailored to Canada's unique context. The Athena SWAN program is managed by Advance HE, a member-led, sector-owned charity that works with institutions and higher education around the world to improve higher education for staff, students and society.

Athena SWAN was first established in 2005 in the UK, to encourage and recognize commitments to advancing the education and careers of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Postsecondary institutions apply to receive an Athena SWAN award in recognition of their work and accomplishments to date. The applications are reviewed by UK academics and EDI experts using a peer review system. In 2015, Athena SWAN was expanded from STEM to include disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, professional and support roles, technical staff, and transgender staff and students.

Over the years, the Athena SWAN program has been adopted by and adapted for many countries. It continues to expand to meet demand for more EDI in the postsecondary sector internationally. As the Dimensions program has developed, it has become one of the leading international programs promoting EDI in higher education, along with Athena SWAN in the UK and Ireland, SAGE (Science in Australia Gender Equity) in Australia, and SEA Change (STEMM Equity Achievement) in the United States. Dimensions is a proud partner of, and collaborator with, these international organizations, which form an international community of practice in EDI.

Contact information

For any questions related to the program, contact:
dimensionsedi@nserc-crsng.gc.ca.

Use of language

Although all language is fluid, this is particularly the case in EDI work. The language used serves to describe sensitive topics; judicious language choice can help to demonstrate values and support an inclusive environment, while careless language can deepen alienation and harm.

Where possible throughout this handbook, wording was chosen based on extensive discussion with the Dimensions cohort and the Program Design Expert Committee (PDEC). Under the principle of “nothing about us without us,”* we have strived to use the language employed by groups and communities to self-identify.

In some places, non-ideal or outdated language is used because a reference is being made to the content of a specific document or law; for example, the *Employment Equity Act* of 1995 referred to “Aboriginal Peoples” and “members of visible minorities,” which have since shifted, respectively, toward “Indigenous Peoples” (or First Nations, Inuit or Métis, where contextually appropriate), and visible minorities/racialized groups.

In other places, there remains significant disagreement on the preferred terms for self-identification, such as the case of identity-first (disabled person) versus person-first (person with a disability) language. In these cases, we have alternated the use of terms to attempt to capture a broader picture of the community.

Finally, in trying to emphasize the complexity, malleability and Intersectionality (see intersectionality in Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment) of these categories throughout, in some instances a structural choice was ultimately made to facilitate data collection and analysis. This is the case, for example, with the somewhat arbitrary division of “women” into one category and LGBTQ2+ into another, rather than a separation by gender (as inclusive of all individuals not identifying as cisgender men) and sexual orientation.

* The phrase “nothing about us without us” was the title of an influential critical disability studies text by James Charlton. The phrase, originally used in the context of disability rights and activism, highlights the importance of oppressed peoples speaking for themselves, and that being denied the opportunity to speak for oneself is a key source of oppression. See: Charlton, James I. *Nothing about Us without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment*. University of California Press, 1998. <https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520224810/nothing-about-us-without-us>.

There is no consensus on the use of terms such as “underrepresented,” “underserved,” “disadvantaged,” “marginalized,” “oppressed,” “equity-seeking” and “equity-deserving.” None fully capture the harms, barriers and violence experienced by members of these communities. In some cases, words were dropped following feedback that they failed to capture the responsibility of those with privilege and power to rectify harms, or when they were thought to pathologize those to whom they apply, implicitly locating the source of inequity and exclusion within the equity-deserving groups. In other cases, using “non-expansive” language only when contextually appropriate (“underrepresented,” for instance, is appropriate when discussing demographic diversity in academic institutions, but does not suggest equity or inclusion concerns) was preferred. Connections were made between language and laws, where these connections help to point to specific obligations, commitments and impetus for change.

As is the case with EDI language, EDI practice is in a constant state of evolution. It is a continuous process of listening, learning, changing and growing.

Definitions

The Dimensions program is intended to foster EDI practices in Canada’s research ecosystem, from hiring, research design, and research environments to knowledge translation. While understanding that definitions evolve, Dimensions uses the following definitions:

Diversity is defined as differences in race, colour, place of origin, religion, immigrant and newcomer status, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age. A diversity of perspectives and lived experiences is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence.

Engagement, in the Dimensions context, refers to the process through which the SAT, on behalf of the institution, or others within the institution, collaborate with individuals and groups to co-create EDI. Engagement is a key part of the process of developing an understanding of the lived experiences of members of the research community and of upholding the principle of “nothing about us without us,” in which work for the empowerment and support of equity-deserving groups is founded on the needs expressed by members of the group. Engagement is also a key part of creating and implementing analysis and decision-making processes that are transparent, accountable and inclusive.

Equity is when the environment allows all to have equal opportunity. It can also be understood as removing systemic barriers and biases, enabling all individuals to have equal opportunity to access and benefit from the program. To achieve this, all individuals who participate in the research ecosystem must develop a strong understanding of the systemic barriers faced by individuals from equity-deserving groups (e.g., Women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, visible minorities/racialized groups, individuals from the LGBTQ2+ community) and put in place impactful measures to address these barriers.

Equity-deserving groups are groups of people who have been historically disadvantaged and underrepresented. These groups include the four designated groups in Canada — women, visible minorities, Aboriginal Peoples, and people with disabilities — and people in the LGBTQ2+ community with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. Equity-deserving groups identify barriers and unequal access, and actively seek social justice and reparation.

External community, in the Dimensions context, refers to the people, organizations and spaces that are connected to an institution via the geographic, cultural and professional contexts in which the institution is embedded.

Inclusion is defined as the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are equally supported. Ensuring that all team members are integrated and supported is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence.

Institution, for the purpose of the Dimensions program, encompasses CEGEPs, colleges, polytechnics and universities. Research hospitals as institutions are not eligible to participate in the Dimensions program. However, any organization or body that wishes to endorse the Dimensions charter principles is invited to do so.

Internal community, for the purposes of the Dimensions program, includes all people with a relationship to the institution, and especially those in the following six internal roles: faculty; part-time/contract faculty and other research staff; postdoctoral fellows; students/ research trainees; research administrative staff; and research participants.

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Is an analytical framework for understanding how aspects of a person's identity (for example, sex, gender, age, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation, ability) combine to create particular forms of discrimination and privilege. This framework helps to better understand the cumulative effects of different forms of oppression. Using an intersectional approach to develop policies and research projects helps better identify and address systemic barriers.

LGBTQ2+ is an acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and two-spirit. A plus sign or asterisk added to any acronym indicates identities not explicitly included in the acronym. There are many, similar acronyms that may be preferred by different individuals.

Mutuality, in the Dimensions context, refers to the role that collaboration and reciprocity play in EDI work broadly and in the Dimensions process specifically. It speaks to the need to avoid viewing EDI work as part of a competitive process, and to instead understand the work as part of a shared goal between and within institutions.

Racialized group a group of people categorized according to ethnic or racial characteristics and subjected to discrimination on that basis.

Racism can take the form of prejudice, hostility, discrimination, and even violence, whether conscious or not, against persons of a specific race or ethnic group. Racism can be manifested through individual actions or systemic or institutional practices. Racism also manifests itself in more subtle ways. It can, for example, happen in the form of discrimination based on the idea that certain cultures cannot be assimilated into the dominant or majority culture. It is vital to name and acknowledge these different forms of racism to address their unique historical and contemporary manifestations. There is no scientific basis for the concept of race.

Research ecosystem refers to the people, policies and practices involved in developing, undertaking and disseminating research in Canadian institutions. The distribution of legislative powers within Canada splits responsibility for research and teaching into federal and provincial jurisdictions, respectively. Dimensions, as a program of the federal Tri-Agency, specifically targets the practice of EDI in the research ecosystem —This includes students (undergraduate and graduate; postdoctoral fellows); faculty; part-time/contract faculty, research and teaching staff; administrative staff; research participants; and external communities.

Voices, in the Dimensions context, refers to the narratives and lived experiences of underrepresented, underserved, disadvantaged, marginalized, oppressed, equity-seeking and equity-deserving individuals and groups in the Dimensions process and in EDI work more broadly.

For additional definitions, see glossaries developed by various organizations:

- [Government of Canada: Guide on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Terminology](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Glossary of Terms](#)
- [Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Glossary of Terms](#)
- [NFRF Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research, Appendix A - Definitions](#)
- [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Lexicon of Terminology](#)

Chapter 1

Inclusive assessment

An abstract graphic consisting of several overlapping yellow and white rectangular shapes. The shapes are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and perspective, with some shapes appearing to be in front of others. The overall effect is a modern, minimalist design.

The inclusive assessment framework is the basic conceptual structure underlying the recognition component of the Dimensions program. The principles of the framework — the centrality of voices, mutuality and context-specificity, described in detail below — were co-developed with the 17 pilot cohort institutions and were intended to be the foundation of the rest of the program. The principles help to define what it means for institutions to conduct an inclusive self-assessment, as well as what it means to conduct an inclusive assessment of applications for Dimensions recognition.

The components of the recognition program were then co-developed with the three principles of the assessment framework top of mind: the four stages of Dimensions recognition, the criteria for each stage, the application form, as well as the approach to, and process for, reviewing applications. Going forward, the framework is intended to orient institutions as they carry out self-assessment and reviewers as they assess Dimensions applications.

Scholarship on EDI suggests that many issues confronted by members of equity-deserving groups are common to all postsecondary institutions and not context-specific. However, through engagement with the cohort, it became clear that institutions face different circumstances in addressing EDI, such that one-size solutions do not fit all. Therefore, Dimensions allows for flexibility and is non-prescriptive in terms of what types of data are collected and what methodologies are used, in recognition of the widely varied contexts and resources at Canadian institutions.

Depending on the recognition stage they are applying for, institutions will be expected to:

- **Engage** meaningfully with all of the five groups named in Dimensions program, including appropriate disaggregation and intersectional analysis (explained in detail below). The intention is that these groups be approached neither as siloed communities, recognizing that many individuals face multiple forms of oppression in complex ways, nor as monoliths, understanding that the experiences of forms of oppression* will vary greatly.
- Plan or conduct qualitative and quantitative **data collection and analysis** for members of the research community.
- Plan or undertake a **climate assessment** — a survey of employees' perceptions and perspectives of an organization. Such surveys address attitudes and concerns that help the organization work with employees to instill positive changes. The climate assessment should be designed to generate insight into the experiences of marginalized members of the research community, drawing from both existing (if applicable) and new engagement with community members.
- Conduct an **environmental scan** to examine policies, practices and procedures that impact EDI at the institution. Develop an evidence-informed, context-appropriate **five-year action plan** that will form the core of the Dimensions application and future work.

* Racism, sexism, gender discrimination, ableism, trans- and homophobia, and other forms of harm.

Three principles of inclusive assessment

The following principles are foundational to the Dimensions process and assessment. Institutions should always have them in mind throughout the process of applying for recognition.

1. Centrality of voices

Institutions are expected to address experiences of racism, sexism, gender discrimination, ableism, trans- and homophobia, and other forms of oppression in their communities. A key strategy for doing so begins with gathering “engagement-based” evidence, which emphasizes the centrality of voices of those impacted by histories and continuing experiences of inequity, exclusion and injustice in postsecondary institutions.

The intention is to ensure that such voices form the core of the evidence to identify priorities addressed in the action plan, and that the Dimensions approach is overall oriented toward promoting an equitable, diverse and inclusive postsecondary research ecosystem.

The voices of equity-deserving groups should be central to the application process, and the institution’s community should be kept up to date on the process through a variety of mechanisms, such as town halls, emails and web content. The community should also be updated about findings and analyses of engagement, and should be given the opportunity to respond to, and validate, what has come out of engagement. The communication strategy of the institution should include engagement with both internal and external communities. The institution’s communication, marketing or stakeholder engagement departments should collaborate on this process.

2. Mutuality and co-operation

The practice of mutuality and co-operation reinforces that an institution’s EDI commitments are not just to itself but to the improvement of the research ecosystem as a whole, and to any other institution that could benefit from its guidance or alliance. Institutions will be recognized for sharing with one another practices, tools, analyses and interventions that are successful, unsuccessful or promising. When sharing those, institutions should also share the process of getting there and the lessons learned, understanding that all institutions have different realities and contexts. This component is intended to help cultivate a community of practice among institutions, allowing them to build from existing work in EDI. Although many aspects of the postsecondary sector thrive under competition, EDI work advances most effectively when it is approached as a joint endeavour with shared goals.

Evidence should be examined to show not only how the institution is faring internally with its EDI work, but also how the institution perceives its work as a piece of the broader goal of supporting and re-imagining the broader research community.

3. Context-specific

It is critical to keep in mind the context in which an institution is operating. The Dimensions program aims to be inclusive of institutions of varying types, sizes and locations confronting different challenges and opportunities. A firm understanding of historical, cultural and geographical factors is key, including elements such as high populations of first-generation students, immigrants, international students and members of official-language minority communities. To accommodate the unique context and experiences of each institution, the application allows for flexibility in the evidence that is provided, with an emphasis on demonstrating how this evidence is being employed for further understanding and action. Institutions can submit information and evidence that represents their specific contexts, circumstances, communities and priorities.

Five categories of evidence

Institutions applying for Dimensions recognition will need to provide evidence of their efforts to address EDI in their research ecosystems. As part of the co-development process for the program, five categories of evidence that demonstrate this work were established. The categories of evidence, and their definitions, were designed to prioritize honest and authentic self-reflection, action and cultural shift. Institutions should always have these priorities, as well as the three principles of the assessment framework, in mind while developing their application. With an emphasis on building evidence that provides not only a numerical but an experiential picture, quantitative and qualitative tools should be employed with the goal of telling stories drawn from the institution's research community.

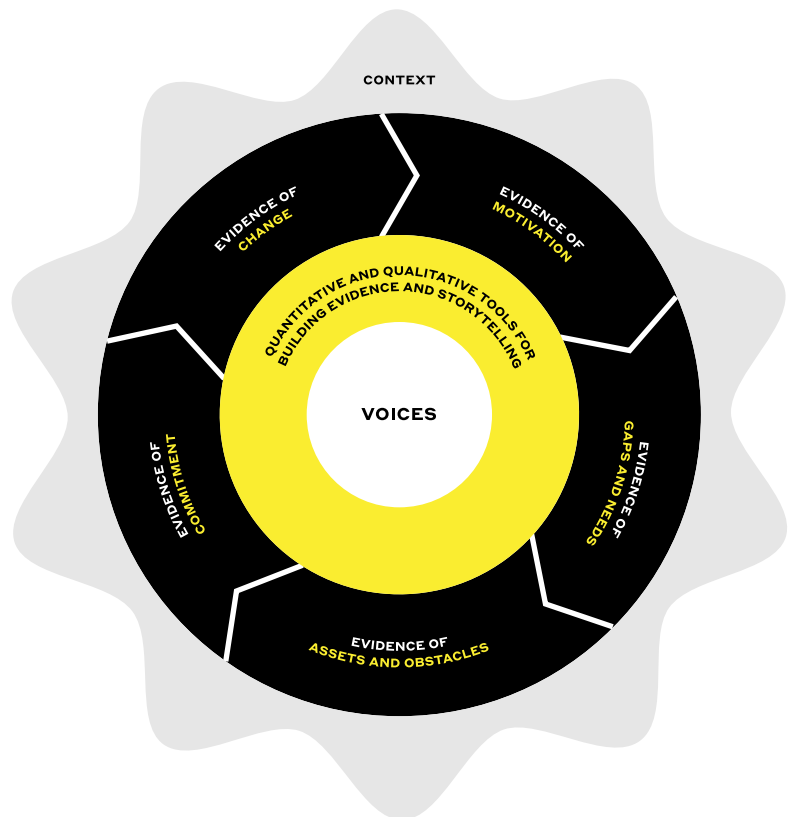
Engagement activities, the environmental scan, and qualitative and quantitative data will all contribute to generating an overall picture of inequity, challenges related to diversity, and exclusion at the institution.

The information should be gathered to respond to these five categories of evidence in the application:

- Evidence of **motivation**: Institutions should explain the reasons or catalysts (e.g., events, incidents, etc.) Motivating their efforts to address inequity, underrepresentation and exclusion in the research ecosystem. Such evidence should include specific reference to issues raised in their own institution and be supported by community engagement and other evidence-gathering activities. Transparency should prevail when explaining how to recognize the need for change.
- Evidence of **gaps and needs**: Both contemporary and historical gaps and unmet needs generated by inequities, underrepresentation, and exclusion, as well as the realities of many forms of oppression, should be truthfully and explicitly named and examined. Evidence provided here includes that related to culture and lived experience as well as demographics and representation. It should be skewed toward qualitative evidence based on lived experience and should include intersectional analyses. It should include a deep dive to get at the root of the systemic and structural reasons these gaps and needs have persisted.

- Evidence of **assets and obstacles**: Options should be considered to address the problems identified above, and consideration should be given to whether these are deemed feasible in a timeframe that corresponds to the application process and with available resources. Priorities must be justified and tied to a timeline. This should be an honest reflection of the institution’s current situation and should present both the progress already made and anticipated challenges for future work.
- Evidence of **commitment**: Institutions must demonstrate their commitment to the Dimensions program, to their internal and external communities identified in the engagement strategy, and to addressing identified EDI gaps and needs. Commitment is demonstrated not only through public-facing work, but also through internal evidence that an institution is taking ownership of, and holding itself accountable for, the findings of this process. Evidence of commitment will also include evidence that institutions are engaging with one another in the spirit of mutuality and collaboration and are committed to sustaining a community of practice.
- Evidence of **change**: Institutions should provide evidence of actions taken to date toward systemic and transformational change. Systemic change will take time to become apparent, other forms of change will be observable more quickly, and small but meaningful changes that feed into the big picture should be noted. Evidence of change will include evidence that EDI is being or has been woven into the institution’s culture and structure, rather than being approached as a siloed pillar of institution’s overall plans. Evidence of change should also show that institutions have put mechanisms in place to make their EDI policies, practices and cultures adaptable to unpredictable circumstances, such as COVID-19.

The following illustration captures the elements of inclusive institutional self-assessment, described above. It is meant to illustrate that Dimensions work is grounded in the voices and lived experiences of equity-deserving groups in the institution’s community. Quantitative and qualitative tools are intended to expand and augment the voices, all of which form the basis for the five categories of evidence required in the application. Finally, the Dimension program recognizes that activities take place within the institution’s unique context.



Recognition stages

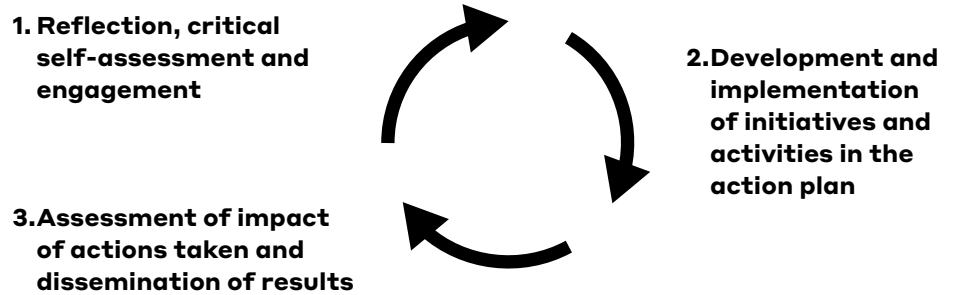
Recognition has four stages, based on an architectural metaphor of building or renovating. The recognition stages are conceptualized as a continuum. An institution in the early stages of addressing systemic inequity and exclusion in their communities will receive recognition for the first stage, “Foundation,” while an institution that shows advanced maturity and substantial depth and breadth in its efforts to address systemic inequity and exclusion will receive recognition for the fourth stage, “Transformation.” Importantly, attaining the fourth stage does not signal that an institution has completed the project of addressing systemic inequity and exclusion. Within the Dimensions program, these efforts are seen as ongoing and as never completely finished; there is no “end” or “completion,” because this work is dynamic and continuous. The following table provides a brief overview of the four stages. For greater detail, see Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages. Once an institution has received Dimensions recognition, following the application and review process, **action plan must be published online.**

* Cycle of Dimensions work: 1. Reflection, critical self-assessment and engagement; 2. Development and implementation of activities and initiatives in the action plan; 3. Assessment of impact of actions taken and dissemination of results.

<p>Foundation (stage 1)</p>	<p>The institution is in the early stages of strategically addressing EDI in a coordinated way. A strategy to collect representational data has been established. The institution has started but not necessarily completed a cycle of Dimensions work.*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A self-assessment team (SAT) has been established ● Quantitative and qualitative data collection, environmental scan, engagement and analysis/reflection are either underway or planned; the capacity to conduct these is being established, but these activities have not yet all been completed ● Has provided preliminary evidence in each of the five categories of the assessment as part of the application ● A five-year action plan with short-term objectives is in place
<p>Construction (stage 2)</p>	<p>The institution is strategically addressing EDI in a coordinated way. It has likely completed one full cycle of Dimensions work (See asterisk above).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has conducted honest and thoughtful engagement; has put mechanisms and systems in place to collect required data and to conduct required analysis; has developed and begun work on a five-year action plan, but has not yet made significant progress on the identified priorities ● Early stage of strategically addressing EDI in the institution’s communities (internal and external) is underway ● Has begun the process of engaging with other institutions and establishing connections and relationships, reflecting the principle of mutuality; this includes, if available at this early stage, the sharing of promising practices and collaboration on addressing common challenges ● Has provided more comprehensive evidence (greater depth and breadth) in each of the five categories of the assessment framework, as compared to the foundation stage

<p>Consolidation (stage 3)</p>	<p>The institution has made significant progress in addressing the issues established in its action plan. The institution has likely carried out two full cycles of Dimensions work (See asterisk on previous page) Course correction analysis has been performed, and the institution shows responsiveness to outcomes and analysis of implemented actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has well-developed systems in place for quantitative data collection and is sharing findings with community ● Has conducted honest, thoughtful and thorough qualitative engagement, and has analyzed and shared these findings with the community ● Has assessed the impact and effectiveness of its five-year action plan using quantitative and qualitative evidence ● Has made measurable progress on priorities in its five-year action plan ● Has made context-dependent progress in addressing the underrepresentation of members of the five equity-deserving groups in positions of institutional leadership ● Has started to embed EDI into core activities and decisions related to the research ecosystem ● Demonstrates the spirit of mutuality by providing evidence of efforts to assist and collaborate with other institutions in addressing their EDI challenges ● Evaluates completed actions for impact and effectiveness, redesigns future actions in light of findings
<p>Transformation (stage 4)</p>	<p>The institution has made substantial progress on issues identified in past or ongoing action plans and can provide evidence that shows representational and cultural change with respect to EDI. EDI is a regular core activity of the day-to-day research-related operations of the institution. Reaching the Transformation stage does not mean the project of addressing EDI is complete. The institution has likely carried out three full cycles of Dimensions work (See asterisk on previous page).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has advanced quantitative data-collection systems in place and shares findings with community ● Has conducted honest, thoughtful and thorough qualitative engagement, both to uncover issues and to assess progress on addressing action plan priorities ● Has successfully addressed priorities outlined in its five-year action plan, demonstrated by findings from qualitative data and engagement ● Has put systems in place that are transforming the institution over the long term; EDI is an integral part of all decision-making processes, in the implementation of new policies and guidelines, etc. ● Successfully exemplifies diversity and EDI allyship at top leadership levels across all levels of management ● Significant progress has been made addressing the underrepresentation of members of the five equity-deserving groups in positions of institutional leadership ● Demonstrates a core principle of mutuality through successful collaboration, assisting other institutions to address their challenges, and is recognized nationally as having successfully addressed key priorities

Dimensions-related work is meant to be continuous, iterative and cyclical, involving periods of transparent community-wide reflection, critical self-assessment and engagement, followed by the development and implementation of initiatives and activities in the action plan. The closing phase of the cycle will involve the assessment of impacts of actions taken as well as the dissemination of results with the institution's research community, broadly defined to encompass the research ecosystem. This diagram and cycle is not meant to be rigid but rather reflects a generic pattern of change, change management, and iterative evaluations that an institution could undertake to work toward greater EDI.



Institutions may have previous or ongoing EDI initiatives or plans that have followed similar patterns, including periods of critical self-assessment and engagement, development, implementation, and impact assessment of actions. Such efforts should be described in the application even if they do not perfectly match the “cycle of Dimensions work.” A key part of what differentiates the four recognition stages is the breadth, depth, and complexity of Dimensions related EDI work.

Separate from the recognition stages, a **special mention** may be awarded to an institution at any stage for work on a particularly strong or novel activity or initiative that is likely to be adopted by other institutions. The institution must be actively sharing aspects of this practice as part of the Dimensions principles of mutuality and co-operation.

	<p>Special mentions recognize particularly innovative and/or successful activities, initiatives and/or practices that have already been carried out by an institution applying to the Dimensions program.</p>
<p>Special mention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intended to amplify a particular EDI-focused activity, initiative and/or practice that is likely to be adopted by other institutions ● The institution is actively sharing aspects of this practice and how it came to be as part of its contribution to a Dimensions community of practice ● Intended to amplify the work of committees and/or individuals that impact the institution for the benefit of many ● Intended to amplify the work of institutions that may be at the beginning of their overall EDI journey but who are doing great work in specific areas ● Intended to amplify the work of those who might not see how valuable their own work is; can help showcase unique strengths of institutions

Roles involved in the research community

For the purposes of the program, an institution's research community is described as including seven roles:

1. Faculty (instructor and professor)
2. Part-time/contract faculty and other research staff
3. Postdoctoral fellows
4. Students/research trainees
5. Research administrative staff
6. Research participants
7. External communities*

It may not be feasible for institutions to address issues impacting all research community members at the same time. The rationale for focusing EDI efforts on particular roles in the research community should be stated in the application and driven by institutional context and realities. While institutions may focus on a specific role(s) involved in the research community, engagements, data collection and analysis, and actions must address all five equity-deserving groups in that role. For example, if institutions focus their efforts on faculty, EDI initiatives and activities should address barriers that impact all five groups within faculty – women, Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis), persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities/racialized groups, and members of LGBTQ2+ communities.

Requirements for roles to address at each recognition stage (also included in Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages):

- Foundation stage: at least one role
- Construction stage: at least two roles
- Consolidation stage: at least three roles
- Transformation: at least four roles

Institutions can continue to address issues experienced by members of other roles, if not as comprehensively, beyond those that are the focus for the application. Many EDI initiatives will likely spill over when activities are coordinated – people may be in more than one role, initiatives may impact the experiences and outcomes of members of more than one role – but the application should make it clear that a comprehensive effort of engagement, environmental scan, data collection and analysis, and actions focuses on all five equity-deserving groups within at least one role (for Foundation stage).

* External communities that are engaged in research or are beneficiaries of research activities.

EDI in the research ecosystem: theory and practice

How does EDI strengthen research?

It is increasingly clear that research, innovation and creativity are at their most relevant, reliable and rigorous when they are designed from multiple perspectives and sources of expertise and knowledge, and when they examine diverse and intersecting considerations and potential impacts.² Moreover, they are strengthened by environments that are welcoming and inclusive. Institutional culture and systemic changes are needed to address barriers that hinder equitable access to, and experience of, educational pathways, careers, research and funding opportunities for equity-deserving individuals.

EDI does not refer to one singular strategy, policy or practice. In addition to broad forms of oppression, multiple systemic factors specific to the academic and research contexts contribute to the marginalization of individuals from equity-deserving groups. These include:

- Unconscious and implicit biases in hiring, assessment and funding;³
- Hostile work environments;
- Bias in the metrics used to assess research excellence;⁴
- Gaps in supervision and mentorship;⁵
- Assumptions about the trajectory of research career paths;⁶
- Undervalued service and outreach contributions;⁷ and
- Socio-economic inequality.⁸

The advantages of EDI practices in the research environment include:

- Increased satisfaction across the research ecosystem;⁹
- Enhanced employee engagement, resilience, confidence and leadership skills;¹⁰
- Improved collective intelligence at an institutional level, creativity¹¹ and problem-solving,¹² quality of academic work,¹³ and complexity of research;¹⁴
- Research excellence, quality of decision-making and organizational performance;¹⁵
- An attractive working environment for job applicants and students;¹⁶ and
- Public recognition as an institution determined to support all members of its community through tangible results of EDI work.¹⁷

Systemic barriers in academia

Systemic barriers are pervasive structures, policies or practices that result in unequal access to or exclusion from full participation in society and community. These barriers can be insidious, may be deeply embedded in postsecondary institutions and can have serious and long-lasting impacts on the lives of those affected. A [Statistics Canada study on harassment and discrimination](#),¹⁸ for instance, demonstrated how

* The 2018 report published by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), Underrepresented and Underpaid: Diversity & Equity Among Canada's Postsecondary Education Teachers, highlights the persistent lack of diversity in the academic workforce and wage gaps between men and women, and between white, Indigenous and racialized staff.

** Research indicates that implicit bias can play a role in the assessment of CVs in different ways. For example, some studies indicate that CVs that are identical but that have either a non-European racialized or female sounding name are rated lower than those with a European or male sounding names. See: Banerjee, Rupa, Jeffrey G. Reitz, and Phil Oreopoulos. "Do Large Employers Treat Racial Minorities More Fairly? An Analysis of Canadian Field Experiment Data." <https://Doi.Org/10.3138/Cpp.2017-033> 44, no. 1 (February 23, 2018): 1–12.

*** Various issues with citational and self-promotion bias have been discussed in academic literature. Studies suggest that male authors tend to be cited more frequently than female authors, leading to a "citation gender gap". Racial and regional citation gaps have also been discussed. This gap has important consequences since the number of times an author has been cited is frequently used as an indicator of researcher quality and significance. See: Smith, Malinda S., Kimberley Gamarro, and Mansharn Toor. "A Dirty Dozen: Unconscious Race and Gender Biases in the Academy." In *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*, Edited by Frances Henry, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith, 263–96. UBC Press, 2017.

systemic issues in workplace culture can disproportionately impact members of equity-deserving groups; in the postsecondary sector, 34% of women and 25% of men reported experiencing harassment, and the risk of workplace harassment was highest among persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and members of sexual minority groups.

To address these barriers in the research ecosystem, individuals at all levels (e.g., Trainees, faculty, staff, researchers, students, administrators, research funding agencies, policy-makers, etc.) Must play a sustained role in mitigating them. This requires that all individuals in the ecosystem recognize that barriers exist, develop a strong understanding of what the barriers are and their consequences, and understand how the research community contributes to their persistence and how it can support their dismantling.

The peer review process continues to show bias when assessments are made on the basis of researcher stature rather than the quality of the research.¹⁹ The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)²⁰ has identified a "pressing need to improve the ways in which the output of scientific research is evaluated by funding agencies, academic institutions, and other parties," noting that the metrics that have historically been used to assess the quality of research fail to present a clear and unbiased picture of academic excellence.

The shift toward an equitable, diverse and inclusive society can be painfully slow. Despite many efforts toward change in recent years, a persistent lack of diversity remains in the academic workforce, compared with both the general labour force and student bodies, and wage gaps continue.* *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*,²¹ published in 2017, discusses the barriers in academia that continue to be faced by racialized and Indigenous faculty, including unconscious or implicit biases such as bias in curriculum vitae (CV),** accent bias, and bias in letters of reference, citation and self-promotion.*** Other barriers include those related to precarious work, White normativity, tokenism, ineffective equity policies, wage gaps and increased workloads ("the equity tax"). Elsewhere, the 2012 Council of Canadian Academies report Strengthening Canada's Research Capacity: The Gender Dimension²² highlights the bias, stereotypes, lack of role models and mentors, and barriers in institutional practices and policies faced by women in research, preventing their full participation. Members of the LGBTQ2+ community may face homophobic and transphobic harassment throughout their education, beginning in primary school and continuing through postsecondary studies.²³ Furthermore, almost half of students in postsecondary institutions reported witnessing or experiencing discrimination on the basis of gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.²⁴ Ableism in academia ranges from barriers and limitations in access and accommodations to widespread harassment and exclusion; 37% of disabled Canadians reported having to take a lower courseload because of their disability, while 11% reported ending their education early.²⁵

An expanded vision of EDI and intersectionality

Equality means accommodating and acknowledging people's differences so they can be treated as equals.

— Honourable Rosalie Silberman Abella, speaking as commissioner of the Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, 1984

Anti-oppression, indigenization and substantive transformation

The concept of EDI covers a great deal of ground and represents a crucial beginning in creating a more just society. However, it presents an incomplete picture; it is a necessary component of the social justice project, but more is needed to create and maintain lasting change.²⁶ Attention to the voices and experiences of those most impacted is necessary, which in turn means the creation of safe, brave or courageous spaces for communication and expression. These spaces do not spring up independently from EDI work but require dedication and a willingness to hear and sit with uncomfortable and often painful truths, and to acknowledge the physical and mental tolls of oppression.

Edi practices have often, by necessity, begun by acknowledging and working on the diversity component of the problem, as demographics, heuristics and perspectives of imbalances are often among the starkest and most easily measurable challenges an institution faces.²⁷ However, in targeting diversity to the exclusion of equity and inclusion, this work has not always succeeded in creating positive experiences and culturally appropriate spaces for members of those equity-deserving groups, nor has it progressed equally across the board. In particular, early EDI work focused on increasing the number of women in academia, but, in the absence of an intersectional analysis, this work ended up benefiting White women in particular, to the detriment of those belonging to other marginalized groups.²⁸ Even as the work has become more intersectional over time and begun to move toward the equity and inclusion components, it has still tended toward a future-looking model, without necessarily engaging with the myriad ways in which individuals and communities continue to suffer from past and current harms even as new paths are laid down for the next generation.

In EDI work, institutions are invited to *unlearn* and *dismantle* processes (biases, defensiveness and presumptions) as well as barriers and structures that do not serve to support the entire community. According to Paulo Freire, "The project of creating equity is not a gift given from the privileged to the marginalized, nor is it a burden for equity-deserving groups to shoulder. Instead, it is a mutual process undertaken in solidarity."²⁹ In addition to the broad models and practices, more targeted methodologies for expanding outside of the EDI lens in the Dimensions process could include queer theory and gender studies, disability theory, critical race theory, and Indigenous epistemologies. An anti-oppressive model can be useful in acknowledging power imbalances.³⁰ Edi work is not inherently anti-oppressive, but it can fit into such an anti-oppressive model.³¹

Following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report,³² as well as the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,³³ some institutions have developed action plans to meet the needs of their Indigenous students, faculty and communities. *Indigenization* seeks to “expand the academy’s still-narrow conceptions of knowledge, [and] to include Indigenous perspectives in transformative ways.”³⁴ Practices that are framed as indigenizing in the Canadian academy, however, do not all carry the same impacts or degree of commitment to change. Models of inclusion, reconciliation and decolonization demonstrate different degrees of engagement with the Indigenizing process. Surface-level engagement may bring about only demographic change while increasing emotional labour.³⁵ *Inclusion* involves hiring more Indigenous scholars and recruiting more Indigenous students, thus increasing the diversity of the research ecosystem but fails to create the necessary structural changes and support systems and requires those individuals to bear the burden of adapting to the institution’s existing environment.³⁶ *Reconciliation*, by contrast, recognizes the need to push back against assimilationist practices and to facilitate Indigenous spaces but without necessarily engaging beyond a rhetorical shift. Finally, *decolonizing* entails a transformative approach “rooted in decolonial approaches to teaching, research, and administration,” using a treaty-based model of university governance alongside a resurgence of Indigenous culture, politics, knowledge and skills.³⁷ Recognition of the depth of the colonial roots of Canadian research institutions, and of the ways that Indigenous research practices and ways of knowing have been systematically excluded from these spaces, is a crucial component of this work. This also entails facing up to the ways in which colonialism is the root of not only Indigenous suffering but also other forms of discrimination.

Finally, formal equality practices — often in the form of increased *representation* — are no guarantee of an improved *experience*.³⁸ Whereas *formal* equality focuses on removing obstacles, *substantive* equality entails a positive duty to not only identify and remove barriers, but also to look at the conditions under which they were erected. It is not enough to name the harms and to rectify them; how the systems sustaining these harms were built up and reinforced for so long must be honestly evaluated, to keep them from re-emerging in the future.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that recognizes that people’s identities and social positions are shaped by multiple factors, creating unique experiences and perspectives.³⁹ Elements of identity depend on one another and can impact lived experiences of discrimination in different ways. For example, an individual who is both a woman and Indigenous will not have the same experience as someone with one of these identities alone (woman or Indigenous). Experiences of oppression and discrimination are compounded. This approach is crucial to developing a complete picture of EDI issues and addressing the multiple barriers and disadvantages faced by individuals with intersecting social identities.

Although Dimensions targets five equity-deserving groups, it does not intend to represent these groups as siloed or monolithic. Individuals face complex discrimination and barriers, considering both their identification across multiple identities and their specific identities within these groups. As a result, both an intersectional approach and the judicious use of disaggregation of evidence, where possible, will be needed to capture a robust picture of EDI needs within the research ecosystem.

Intersectionality is equally critical, and any one group cannot be prioritized over another. There is a legacy in Canada and elsewhere of EDI initiatives focusing on concerns related to (primarily white) women's experiences, one consequence of which has been to leave the pursuit of equity for racialized communities, persons with a disability, Indigenous Peoples, and LGBTQ2+ people behind or "for the future."⁴⁰ Similarly, within each of the equity-deserving groups, there can be significant differences in experience. Considerations of intersectionality can help to avoid over-generalizing the issues certain groups or community members face and can help to acknowledge the distinct forms of experience faced by those of identify as a member of more than one equity-deserving group.

Catalysts and events

Catalysts and national and international events sometimes force institutions to adapt their environment and their approaches from their initial strategy. The COVID-19 pandemic is an example of a major global event that has impacted everyone in dramatic ways but has also unevenly impacted marginalized communities, often reinforcing, magnifying and, in many cases, worsening existing inequities, exclusions and forms of oppression more generally.⁴¹ For example:

- In the realm of research, COVID-19 has taken a disproportionate toll on women and racialized people.⁴²
- Members of the LGBTQ2+ community who may have found safety in being themselves at postsecondary institutions may have been forced to return to an unsupportive home environment because of the closure of these institutions.
- Anti-Asian racism has risen in prominence during the pandemic.

Thoughtful consideration should be given to these impacts. Additionally, COVID-19 has forced most institutions to deliver programs online; this has changed the nature of interaction dramatically but can be an opportunity for growth, change and increased accessibility.⁴³

The influence of the Black Lives Matter movement brought anti-Black racism to the forefront of public discussion and engagement.⁴⁴ Many postsecondary institutions have signed the Scarborough Charter,⁴⁵ the objective of which is to move "from rhetoric to meaningful concrete action to address anti-Black racism and to promote Black inclusion."

These examples have had significant impacts and help to illustrate the catalysts, events and incidents that institutions can use as moments to reflect on their own communities and how they manifest in unique ways. They also highlight pressure on institutions to address well-documented inequities and exclusions; as a result, institutions face risks if they fail to engage in EDI work. There are many other examples, some more focused in the Canadian context, and some regional or local. Overall, institutions should demonstrate knowledge and sensitivity toward issues and events particularly significant to their communities.

Chapter 2



Self- assessment team

Having an effective self-assessment team (SAT) is crucial to the success of an application. The SAT is responsible for engagements with internal and external communities; qualitative and quantitative data collection and intersectional analysis of data; and the development of and support for the implementation of a targeted and innovative action plan. It may conduct these activities on its own, coordinate them, or delegate them to other bodies or individuals that carry out the actions on its behalf.

The SAT members should have a clear understanding of their objectives in participating in the program and their vision for the Dimensions application. Additionally, they should have a clear understanding of the inclusive assessment and the recognition stages. As they develop components of the application, they must consistently keep in mind how work is connected to the five categories of evidence (see five types of evidence in Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment).

The composition of the SAT is a critical element of the success of the work carried out. It is important to set clear responsibilities and avoid overburdening members, acknowledging that, for most of them, this work is added to existing work. The terms of reference for the SAT (see Appendix 2 – Terms of reference template – self-assessment team) should address these considerations, as well as other points discussed in the chapter.

When preparing the application, institutions should describe the governance, structure, membership and activities of the SAT. Recognition and compensation for the work accomplished by the team members should also be described to provide evidence of commitment (see Recognition and compensation, below).

Role

The SAT will be required to:

- Engage with internal and external communities about EDI-related issues;
- Perform a scan of institutional policies and practices (environmental scan);
- Define areas of exploration and set goals relevant to the institution;
- Establish strategies to reach those goals (including data collection, as required);
- Develop an action plan based on results of data collection and analysis, and of the engagement strategy;
- Establish key performance indicators to measure the success of initiatives;
- Ensure that the Dimensions work is regularly communicated across the research community; and
- Prepare the application, including the action plan.

If institutions already have committees or other structures focused on EDI, the SAT can work as a complementary group. Alternatively, the SAT can operate under an existing committee, or an existing committee can function as the SAT for Dimensions purposes. Institutions should remember that EDI responsibilities should not rest solely on the EDI office, and membership in the SAT should be campus-wide. The structure of the SAT, how it relates to other committees (or EDI work on campus), what it is called, whether and how sub-committee or working groups are used, and other aspects, are at the discretion of the institution.

It will be important to foster buy-in from the highest levels of governance. Supportive leadership will be critical in communicating that Dimensions work is a key institutional priority. Furthermore, adequate resourcing for planned initiatives will be necessary. In addition to fostering support from leadership, work should be broadly communicated to the research community within that institution.

The SAT should collaborate with the administration and the various schools, departments, programs, faculty members, students, postdoctoral fellows, and staff throughout all aspects of its work to ensure full engagement throughout the institution, even with those not actively working on EDI measures. It will be key for faculty and staff to have a good understanding of the objectives of the Dimensions program and of the engagement and data collection and analysis that will be carried out. Transparency and clarity about how the data collected will be used will be critical. Ensuring that there is trust and an understanding of the work being done will help maximize engagement with the institution's research community. As it carries out its activities, the SAT should continue to communicate with those it has engaged with, for example, by sharing the institutional action plan and explaining the considerations in choosing initiatives and actions.

It will be important to consider other ongoing EDI initiatives to determine whether these are aligned with the Dimensions program. Institutions are encouraged to build on existing efforts as much as possible. Institutions participating in the Canada Research Chairs Program (CRC) or other EDI-related programs should be well-informed of the specific requirements for these programs, and teams involved in other EDI-related programs can collaborate with the Dimensions SAT.

Finally, from early in the self-assessment process, institutions are encouraged to plan how the SAT's responsibilities will continue after the application has been submitted. The role of the team may change to continue reviewing, and advising on, the implementation of the action plan, the impact of activities and integration of gaps that arise or new areas of intervention into the action plan. Additionally, institutions should continuously analyze data, consult with members of the research community and modify actions, as needed.

Key points to consider

- The SAT's key responsibilities are engaging with internal and external communities, collecting data on the institution, and developing and implementing the action plan.
- Fostering senior management buy-in and support of the SAT is critical.
- The SAT should have a clear understanding of the purpose of the Dimensions work, should communicate this understanding for the data-collection process and should advocate for the activities carried out.
- It is important to have a long-term plan for how the SAT's activities will continue after the Dimensions application is submitted.
- The SAT should seek to complement established structures and/or collaborate with other entities focused on EDI.

The team

The chair

This individual should be selected with care for their leadership skills, including being able to engage with different stakeholders within the institution, such as senior leaders; communicating the Dimensions activities at multiple levels; and coordinating the SAT activities and meetings effectively. EDI work can be challenging. It will be critical for the chair to navigate this role in a manner that promotes an inclusive environment. The chair can either be identified before the SAT is established and can help to assemble the team, or can be selected from the members of the team once the SAT is constituted. Based on each institution's situation, the SAT may appoint co-chairs or have rotating chairs.

The chair's key responsibilities include:

- Taking a leadership role in the SAT;
- Engaging in Dimensions activities and being well-informed of any program-level updates;
- Engaging with the institution's leadership and other sectors of the institution;
- Setting respectful rules of engagement that foster an inclusive environment for open dialogue (i.e., sharing circle approach);
- Ensuring that all SAT members are supported and able to contribute. The chair should be mindful of encouraging members to participate in discussion and decisions and provide helpful means for full participation. If meetings are held virtually, the chair can encourage members to participate in different ways (some may feel more comfortable expressing themselves with chat options, etc.);

- Ensuring that members are assigned tasks equitably, in a way that avoids overburdening any member, and overseeing the completion of tasks. The chair may want to have a discussion with the members on preferred processes for task oversight and management;
- Fostering a climate of trust and safety in meetings to truly benefit from the diversity of knowledge and perspectives;
- Interacting with the campus community, as well as leadership and administration, to articulate responsibilities related to process and outcomes (fact-based assessment, broad engagement, etc.);
- Setting the meeting agendas;
- Taking a leadership role in overseeing the preparation of the application, including the development of the action plan and its implementation; and
- Reporting to senior management.

Key points to consider

- The chair should ensure that SAT members are not overburdened, and tasks are split equitably.

Composition

The membership should be diverse. Members from each of the five groups (women, Indigenous Peoples [First Nations, Inuit and Métis], persons with disabilities, members of visible minority/racialized groups and members of LGBTQ2+ community) should be sought out, as their perspectives and considerations will be critical on the team and in developing Dimensions-related work on campus. Recognizing that members will have intersectional identities and ensuring that individuals are not expected to be the spokesperson or representative for a particular community will be integral to the process. If institutions are unable to identify participants internally, they may wish to consider seeking participation and engagement from external community members.

Institutions may choose to provide the option for members to self-identify, if it is appropriate. As a starting point, the [Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire](#) (see Appendix 3 – Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire) could be used. It should be made clear that it is optional for members to self-identify; the purpose for doing so is to ensure that there are diverse perspectives on the SAT. Ensuring the confidentiality, security and privacy of this information is key.

Institutions are also encouraged to include individuals who may be facing other Dimensions of inequity, such as those who are immigrants or refugees; have different linguistic preferences or abilities; come from diverse religious backgrounds; etc.

Institutions must avoid tokenism, which is “the practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from equity-deserving groups in order to give the appearance of ... equality within a workforce.”⁴⁶ All members should feel that they are in an environment where they can safely contribute and that their contributions are valued.

Institutions may consider forming, supporting and engaging with campus affinity groups so that members are connected to equity-deserving constituencies and that these groups can contribute and provide guidance on the process to create an action plan, rather than having a single representative on the SAT being asked to “speak for” the larger community.

Another consideration is the inclusion of allies. An ally can be defined as “one that is associated with another as a helper: a person or group that provides assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle.”⁴⁷ Allies may be part of a historically privileged community and should leverage this privilege to be champions for the SAT, to promote the work being done.

Institutions may also consider including representatives from:

- Faculties, departments, centres, institutes, and/or campuses;
 - If there are numerous campuses, consider including representatives from each location.
- Management levels;
- Academic ranks;
- Different functions (professional staff, technicians, librarians, human resource representatives, staff involved in EDI efforts);
- Union representatives;
- In-house Elders;
- Types of expertise (data collection and analysis, change management, cultural assessment, policy development, communication, etc.); and
- Levels of study (undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate).

Overall, an SAT with complementary expertise and diverse perspectives will strengthen the work undertaken. Individuals with relevant personal experiences can bring pertinent considerations and suggest concrete changes to programs, policies, or infrastructure to enhance EDI.

Representation of top management is important for a team’s effectiveness but should not result in a unilateral, top-down dynamic. Open discussion at the beginning of the process can help clarify goals and expectations and identify contentious issues that may be raised during the process. This could mitigate the risk of stalemates or persistent conflicts. Members of the team must be willing to learn and must act respectfully toward each other.

Key points to consider

- Involve members from each of the five groups and recognize intersectional identities.
- Avoid tokenism by making sure all can provide meaningful contributions.
- If members from equity-deserving groups cannot be identified internally, consider seeking participation from external community members.
- Seek members considered to be allies.

Size

The Dimensions program is not prescriptive when it comes to the number of members in a team. It should be large enough to include the representation described above, carry out the tasks for the application and implement the action plan effectively. The right balance for a diverse and productive team will vary across institutions.

Institutions that opt for a large SAT (more than 20 members), may consider having a central committee with various advisory committees or working groups. All committee, sub-committee and working group members should be chosen using the same approach and criteria used in the selection of the main SAT. Smaller institutions may consider a team with fewer members; however, this likely will result in more work for each member and may require other institutional and/or administrative support.

Key points to consider

- Adapt the size of the SAT to the realities of the institution (size, structure, demographics and dynamics).
- Strike the right balance for a productive and diverse SAT.
- Consider creating various sub-committees to carry out the many activities of the self-assessment process, develop the action plan and prepare the application.

Recruiting the members

An open recruitment process is encouraged if time permits and depending on the size of the institution. This will allow for a more transparent selection of individuals and communicate the EDI work being done in the institution, which some members of the institution's community may not have been aware of and may wish to engage in. Alternatively, SAT members can be selected among faculty, staff and students with an established EDI commitment. Based on institutional contexts, some administrators and union representatives may be selected because of the nature of their work.

An institution can adopt a mixed approach: selecting some members and having some positions open for applications. An institution could consider creating an open call that includes the desired skill sets and emphasizing that diversity considerations are a component in the hiring/recruitment process. It could then use a confidential self-identification survey to make recruitment decisions or conduct an anonymous survey after the team has been assembled to gather information about the composition of the team and recruit based on existing gaps.

There are many measures that could be used in recruitment, including:

- Senior leaders promoting SAT recruitment to faculty and staff;
- Targeted approaches to reach different members of the institution;
- Use of gender-neutral language in recruitment materials; and
- Recognition of various cultural or religious customs.

A variety of communication tools should be used, such as campus media, faculty and staff email lists, and/or institutional websites, as well as making sure that this information is shared across different university groups that can reach their own networks more adequately (student societies focused on specific EDI-related issues, campus groups dedicated to particular communities, etc.)

Finally, the SAT could rely on external expertise to complement the team and/or assist in conducting certain initiatives. For example, if the team is unable to find a representative or an expert within the institution, it may seek representatives from regional groups/networks to sit as a committee member or an external consultant. This could be done through open calls or through a well-defined internal selection process.

Key points to consider

- Consider having an open selection process, in which individuals can show interest.
- Publish notices through multiple accessible communication tools to reach the widest audience possible.
- Respect cultural or religious customs and practices to fully engage members.
- Engage key institutional leaders, as well as those known to be committed to EDI.

Distribution of work

Applying for Dimensions recognition will require time and energy from all members of the SAT as well as other members of the internal and external communities. The final submission should be the result of collaborative work, with support from the institution. It is essential that the workload is distributed as equitably as possible across the team, considering the personal factors affecting the members.

The experiences of initiatives in other countries indicate that SAT work is often disproportionately performed and championed by members of equity-deserving groups.⁴⁸ To create an inclusive community that maximizes the benefits of this process, all individuals must be involved. Allies should ensure that they are taking an active role in contributing to this work.

The SAT could use a system to track time and contributions to create a more equitable division of the workload. A Workload Allocation Model⁴⁹ may be useful to distribute the work. This model is now used in many UK universities to organize the allocation of staff to teaching, administration, management duties and even the time spent on research.⁵⁰

Key points to consider

- Acknowledge from the start the risks of disproportionate workload burden and seek ways to mitigate this possibility.
- Evaluate the workload of each position in the team and determine how to balance roles and responsibilities for everyone.

Recognition and compensation

Participation on the SAT is time-consuming, and work can go beyond meetings. The work of members can also be intense in terms of emotional labour. To prevent negative impacts on the career or performance of members, it is important that their contribution be recognized and/or compensated. This could be especially relevant for certain equity-deserving groups, considering the risk of disproportionate burden.

Measures to support and recognize members will depend on the capacity and context of the institution. Institutions are encouraged to be creative in their support of their teams' efforts; members from different faculties or departments may seek different recognition or accommodations. Institutions may consider the following measures:

Recognition of SAT work:

- Track and recognize the number of hours spent on SAT work;
- Consider SAT work during assessments for tenure and promotions, and/or consider the work as fulfilling service requirements; and
- Include SAT activities as important contributions during performance reviews and encourage staff to report SAT work in performance assessments.

Reduce or support regular workload:

- Reduce teaching load;
- Provide access to a research assistant or dedicated administrative support; and
- Provide course credits for students or consider participation as equivalent to a study placement.

Financial compensation:

- Offer stipends or other honorariums;
- Reimburse expenses related to participation on the SAT, such as the cost of transportation, meals, childcare, etc.; And
- Provide travel grants to conferences with an EDI aspect.

Access to mental health support:

- Ensure that SAT members have access to, are aware of, and are actively encouraged to use institutional supports and counselling services for mental health.

Public recognition:

- Publicly acknowledge the work of SAT members; and
- Consider recognition awards, letters of service recognition, etc.

Finally, ensure access to additional resources that may be required to support the SAT. Consider complementary mechanisms such as using external experts or community resources.

Key points to consider

- Determine how members' contributions will be recognized and compensated:
 - Develop a tracking system for contributions and/or time;
 - Ensure that recognition and compensation mechanisms support all members appropriately;
 - Be flexible, as members from different faculties or departments, or in different circumstances, may seek different recognition or accommodations; and
 - Ensure access to additional resources that may be required to support the SAT. Consider complementary mechanisms such as using external experts or community resources.

Scheduling and other considerations

The SAT should meet regularly to oversee the activities leading to the Dimensions application. Frequency and length of meetings should be adapted to the realities of the institution (i.e., availability, geographic distribution, structure, etc.) Experiences from institutions participating in Athena SWAN indicate that some SATs meet monthly.⁵¹ If sub-committees are established to undertake specific tasks, they may need to meet more frequently to complete their work, especially if their work is a prerequisite for other activities.

When setting up meetings, the SAT should seek accessible locations and/or provide other means of participation, such as virtual meetings, while fostering a sense of inclusion for members. Whatever the communication tools chosen, they should allow everyone to express themselves. Meeting materials should be provided in accessible formats — for example, they should be compatible with screen readers, or be on accessible websites. Considerations should also be given to accommodate parental duties and health needs.

Administrative support, including recording (minute-taking) of meetings could be a shared responsibility among members.

Key point to consider

- Meetings should be at regular intervals and in accessible locations and formats.
- Materials provided at meetings should be accessible and compatible with assistive tools.

Governance

It is important to establish a sustainable governance structure to ensure the necessary support for the SAT, its work and the related changes that will flow from it. There should be a clear and regular mechanism to report progress to the administration. Effective accountability could be facilitated by including high-level administrators and/or institutional leaders on the team. Clear communication channels with various levels of the institution — leaders, institutional research and analysis, human resources and others — should be established and used for regular communication.

An effective SAT also requires some level of autonomy to provide recommendations to the administration and to assess whether the action plan is being implemented. Institutions should maintain a clear balance between independence of the SAT and accountability to the research community and to senior administration. The SAT should also avoid conflicts of interest throughout the process.

Several months after the SAT has been established, institutions may consider assessing whether it is functioning well and meeting the needs of the institution. If necessary, changes should be made to strengthen it, whether in terms of governance, the composition of the team or its operations. SATs should remain adaptable and flexible.

Key points to consider

- Formalize the status of the SAT within the institution's administrative structure to ensure support for the SAT and a clear reporting mechanism.
- One reporting mechanism should include high-level administrators or institutional leaders.
- Establish clear communication channels with different levels of the institution, including institutional leaders, institutional research and analysis, human resources, etc.
 - Such communication should occur on a regular basis.
- The SAT must have a certain level of autonomy.

Collaboration

The SAT should not act in isolation but rather engage and communicate across the institution. Working collaboratively across departments, with faculty members and the executive team, as well as any other complementary EDI initiatives or programs, will help ensure the various tasks associated with Dimensions — from meaningful assessment and data collection and analysis, to selecting EDI objectives and achieving them through an action plan, to preparing the application — are conducted comprehensively and ultimately lead to a stronger and comprehensive application.

It may be practical to seek additional expertise on data collection, analysis and reporting from specialists in institutional research and analysis. For some of the specific or specialized tasks, the SAT may seek additional expertise internally and/or externally.

The SAT may also engage with key internal and external professionals to accomplish certain more technical tasks, such as engagement, the administration of surveys to gather confidential or sensitive information, or even the development of the action plan.

The Dimensions program prioritizes mutuality and collaboration among institutions to promote transformation of the national research ecosystem. Thus, the SAT may collaborate with other postsecondary institutions working on EDI initiatives and programs in Canada or internationally, and exchange lessons learned, promising practices, and innovative tools.

Key points to consider

- Seek broad collaboration to create an accurate and comprehensive self-assessment and application.
- If necessary, seek additional expertise (data analytics, evaluation, and impact analysis, etc.), either internally or externally.
- Exchange lessons learned and promising practices with other postsecondary institutions.

Training

SAT members will need to have a clear understanding of the objectives of the Dimensions program and how this process will have long-term benefits for their institution. It will be important to facilitate initial discussions surrounding this aspect to ensure that, at a minimum level, members of the SAT clearly understand the aims of this work and their role.

Additionally, although some members of the SAT will be on the team because of their EDI expertise, others may be on the team because of their experience in other areas (data interpretation, monitoring and evaluation, legal analysis, etc.) It could be useful for all to undertake the same training in certain areas in order to contribute to a more inclusive and productive environment. The institution should facilitate such training. (See Extra tools, at the end of this handbook, for resources.)

Unconscious bias training

Unconscious bias refers to how “many of our behaviors, in the workplace and elsewhere, are motivated by unconscious triggers and emotions, including racial biases. These behaviors, however, can be prevented by making conscious choices that enhance inclusion.”⁵² By being aware of biases, the SAT can implement strategies to manage and mitigate them. Institutions may use resources such as online training courses.

SAT members may also find it useful to learn about liberatory consciousness.⁵³ Members should be aware of the lenses they use and be willing to incorporate new/different perspectives into their role(s).

Conflict management or civility and respect training

Members should be prepared to have difficult conversations if opinions are divided. The SAT may benefit from training in conflict management and interpersonal resilience, both in relation to the team itself, and to its interactions with the institution and the relevant members of the research community. The members should explore ways to build skills in dialogue (e.g., Listening skills/compassionate listening, allyship skills, appreciative inquiry, etc.)

Considering the variety of expertise and lived experiences of SAT members, it may be useful to offer an approach that can foster common understanding, as well as constructive interactions and productive meetings.

Specific EDI training

Institutions should consider providing general training on each of the five equity-deserving groups to ensure SAT members have a basic understanding of the realities and barriers faced by each community. Consider providing training led by a professional facilitator, instructor or coach. Training in other Dimensions of inequity that are not specific to the equity-deserving groups should also be encouraged.

Key points to consider

- Have initial discussions about the Dimensions program, role of the SAT and objectives so that there is a shared understanding of the work being carried out.
- Encourage a minimum level of training for all members of the SAT in unconscious bias, conflict management/civility and respect.
- Ensure that SAT members are equipped to talk openly about issues related to different EDI Dimensions of inequity.

Groundwork

Members should first become familiar with the institution's strategic plan and key documents that outline priorities, as well as significant policies that affect researchers and their research activities. The SAT should also gain some familiarity with national and provincial policies affecting EDI broadly.

The SAT should familiarize itself with any reports, open letters, calls to action or recommendations that are EDI-related and may inform the self-assessment process. It is important to honour the work that has come before, particularly input from students.

Since data collection is an important role for the SAT, it should assess the institution's capacity to collect and analyze data, including what data is already available.

The SAT should be familiar with data protection protocols so that it can maintain the privacy of personally identifiable information (see Chapter 5 — Data collection and analysis).

SAT members should also be familiar with the institution's organizational chart, to make use of various resources available within the institution. Getting in touch with the librarians at the institution can be key starting point to gain stronger awareness of institutional context and history.

Key point to consider

- Become familiar with the institution's strategic plan or priorities, as well as existing policies and activities.

Complaint mechanism

The SAT may receive complaints about bias or discrimination at the institution, or about the SAT's work and processes.

Because of the sensitive nature of the SAT's work, the team or its members may receive complaints related to bias or discrimination at the institution. The SAT should not take on the role of handling or resolving such complaints, as an institution should have mechanisms in place to appropriately address complaints. The terms of reference for the SAT should explicitly state these limits to the purview of the SAT's work, and the SAT should clearly communicate this limitation to the research ecosystem.

Therefore, it is important for the SAT to determine existing institutional mechanisms to report EDI-related complaints and advise the complainant of the right place to voice their concerns. Accordingly, SAT members may use these mechanisms to report EDI-related complaints that they themselves may also experience. This could be through the institution's union groups, collective agreements and/or human resources department. If no such mechanism exists, and further engagements and data collection indicate that this is a significant gap for the research community of the institution, an SAT may want to consider including this in its action plan.

Related to this, the SAT should expect that it will receive input from the community regarding its own work and processes, and some of this may be critical of its own EDI practices. It should use this input and respond to it transparently, to better carry out its work.

To facilitate positive engagement and respond to constructive criticism, the SAT should establish a mechanism to receive input from the institution's research community continuously and to respond to it in a timely and transparent manner.

Key points to consider

- Avoid being the primary point of contact for EDI-related complaints.
- If the SAT does receive EDI complaints, it should provide guidance to the complainant on how to voice their concerns.
- The SAT should be prepared to address input, including complaints, regarding its own work and processes.

Chapter 3

Engagement strategy

An abstract graphic consisting of several overlapping yellow and white geometric shapes, including rectangles and trapezoids, creating a sense of depth and movement. The shapes are arranged in a way that suggests a 3D perspective, with some elements appearing to recede into the background while others come forward.

For Dimensions to be a catalyst for meaningful and effective cultural change in the postsecondary research ecosystem, it is crucial to engage members of groups that experience inequity and exclusion in its multiple forms. Engagement involves the SAT collaborating with individuals and groups in the institution to work toward achieving a more equitable, inclusive and diverse research ecosystem. An understanding of the lived experiences of members of the research community is needed to uphold the principle of “nothing about us without us,” in which the empowerment and support of equity-deserving groups is founded on the needs expressed by members of the group. Engagement is critical from the early stages of developing an understanding of gaps and barriers related to EDI in the institution through to later stages of developing and implementing an action plan of initiatives and activities aimed at responding to identified inequities. It is also a key part of creating and implementing analysis and decision-making processes that are transparent and accountable, and that include all relevant voices.

This chapter is intended to provide an overview of important points to consider when developing and implementing such a strategy. The overview includes considerations about how to engage, both to access the knowledge of members of the community and to implement inclusive and transparent decision-making processes.

Engagement is not something that happens once; it is a critical part of iterative processes involved in identifying inequities and barriers to inclusion and to co-creating interventions that could prevent harmful practices in the future. It is only with both a deeper knowledge and understanding of embedded systemic barriers and inclusive, transparent, accountable decision-making processes that institutions will be able to increase EDI in their environments effectively over the long term. Engagement can be about uncovering the realities for members of equity-deserving groups now, in the present, but it also might be helpful to engage with people who have left the institution to ensure that past experiences are heard.

Well-designed engagement efforts and activities should take intersectionality into account. Engagement activities that are sensitive to intersectionality will also work to recognize the patterns in the sometimes-disparate experiences of members of different communities, and patterns in experiences of those who are multiply marginalized.

Some key principles of responsible and meaningful engagement can include:

- **Clear objectives** and rationale for engagement (i.e., can the information be obtained through other sources? Why is it essential to consult this group?). This is linked to wanting to respect people's time and avoid **engagement burden**.
- **Timing of engagement** and the importance of starting any project with involvement of the groups affected by it. The later engagement occurs, the more it appears like a check-box exercise.
- **Reducing burden on groups** by providing all materials required to understand the issue, providing documents in an accessible format (or in different languages, as appropriate), and leaving adequate time for meaningful engagement, thought, reflection and follow-up discussions.
- **Ensuring feedback loop** by coming back to groups and explaining how their feedback was used and what changes or actions were taken because of it.
- **Importance of fostering long-term trust and relationships** with the institution's research ecosystem, which will result in stronger input and engagement efforts.

The engagement component is not meant to duplicate or disregard work that has already been carried out. Institutions that have already completed or planned engagement activities that predate Dimensions should include those efforts in their applications.

Where to start

Before an engagement strategy can be established, it is important for the SAT to be familiar with its institution's context. Some examples of what is meant by "context" include the institution's geographic location, history, size, the population and communities that the institution serves, and local and regional EDI considerations and events.

The SAT should also be aware of what stage of recognition the institution is applying for, as this may affect the engagement strategy. Institutions wanting to re-apply for a higher stage of recognition in the future should demonstrate how engagement will be maintained over the duration of the recognition, with the goal of supporting and sustaining engagement permanently.

Not all engagement strategies will look the same, and the institution should determine how to best engage with its communities. A situational awareness of the institution's context will help determine the strategy.

The SAT starts to coordinate and refine its engagement process by asking:

- Have engagement activities already been carried out on campus?
- Have the institution's previous methods of engagement been effective?
- What information has so far come to light as a result of engagement on campus?
- Who has been engaged with so far?
- Have any groups been left out?

The SAT will want to leverage members of the research community who have experience with engagement activities. Faculty with expertise in qualitative methodologies are valuable additions. There is also substantial scholarship about the experiences of inequity and exclusion at Canadian postsecondary institutions, as well as outside the academic context, that can serve as a starting point for the SAT's engagement plan.

Leveraging internal resources can also include community members with relevant lived experience or expertise in EDI, or those who may be affiliated with various relevant organizations or groups, such as campus affinity groups or employee resource groups. It is important that those developing and carrying out the engagement strategy are aware of past or ongoing efforts in engagement and qualitative data gathering, to avoid replicating existing work and so-called "survey fatigue." Identifying these resources may be challenging at institutions in which groups are not formally organized. In such cases, it may be useful to explore engagement through the student population, from which grassroots initiatives often arise, while being cautious not to take credit for the EDI work carried out by students.

Engagement-based work is particularly burdensome, especially for those community members sharing their experiences and personal stories. It is important that community members benefit from the process, as well as the institution. This reciprocity should be a foundational principle of the institution's engagement strategy, and this should be well-communicated. Community members, like SAT members, should be recognized and compensated (see Recognition and compensation in Chapter 2 – Self-assessment team).

Institutions are increasingly naming officers responsible for EDI (or key aspects of EDI) in human resources or other departments. These individuals are excellent points of contact, but they should not be expected to carry the full responsibility of engagement, for various reasons. For one thing, progress in EDI cannot consist only of top-down activities but should be institution-wide. Moreover, postsecondary institutions operate under a hierarchical structure, with uneven power dynamics. Addressing inequity and exclusion requires addressing the role of these structures and dynamics in generating and perpetuating inequity. EDI work therefore needs to be organized so that its importance and significance are clearly and forcefully communicated from the institution's administration, but authority over the work and organizing practices do not reinforce existing power dynamics. The dynamic between the institution's administration and those throughout the community involved in Dimensions work should strive to break down structural inequality and inequity within the institution.

Care must be taken to respect the privacy and feelings of all participants and to avoid overburdening members of equity-deserving groups, tokenizing their participation or putting them in a position of having to validate rather than simply share their experiences.

Other internal resources such as unions, university libraries (which can support the SAT with available information sources), alumni groups and institutional data analysts may also be good sources of information and contacts. It is recommended that SAT establish relationships with these resources, keeping them informed of EDI work and drawing on their expertise and networks.

An effective engagement plan will strengthen collaboration and co-creation with key stakeholder groups. For example, collaborating with other institutions for guidance in areas where they have expertise is strongly encouraged, since Dimensions is based on a collaborative nation-wide effort to catalyze change in postsecondary institutions and since the principle of mutuality is a core aspect of the assessment. Some institutions may have closer relationships with equity-deserving groups in their communities than others. Colleges, polytechnics, and smaller or teaching-focused universities tend to focus more on serving local communities, rather than national or international ones, and could be a good resource for how to engage with external communities. Identifying local community organizations that support equity-deserving groups could also present an avenue for external engagement.

It can also be valuable to seek the input and assistance of allies, “members of dominant groups who build relationships with and take stands against the oppression of members of non-dominant groups.”⁵⁴ “To be an ally requires that a person not simply notice an injustice, but also take action by bringing attention to the injustice and requesting that it be corrected.”⁵⁵ Equally important to willingness to action, though, is the ability to listen; good allyship means centring the voices and needs of those in the room with the least power.⁵⁶ Thus, Dimensions work can incorporate allies, while being careful to reflect on who determines whether someone is an ally — whether an ally is self-determined or whether members of equity-deserving groups determine what it means to be an ally.

In addition to the five groups of Dimensions, there are additional forms of marginalization that institutions could consider, depending on context. For example, one additional form of marginalization is that related to language. The reality of French minority-language communities in Canada is important to consider, especially when it comes to the use of French in research. Official-language minority communities should be engaged in their own language, where possible. Institutions can attempt to engage with members of their community in their preferred languages.

Practically, the long-term effectiveness of engagement can be enhanced by considering how frequently engagement efforts, meetings and opportunities should take place to maintain momentum; determining who is responsible for engagement activities; and determining how engagement will be monitored, evaluated in terms of effectiveness, and modified, if necessary.

Sharing promising practices with other institutions and working collaboratively toward the goal of culture transformation through cross-institutional engagement can also be a way of maintaining momentum.

While most community members will support the idea of EDI, there may be resistance,⁵⁷ especially by some who may fear that they will be negatively affected. It is important to be able to differentiate between, on the one hand, listening to the concerns of impacted individuals about the development and practice of EDI work and, on the other hand, expending energy convincing everyone of the value of a more equitable, diverse and inclusive environment at the expense of moving forward.

Resistance can come in direct or indirect forms and can often take passive or unintentional forms. Some common examples of passive but significant resistance include:

- Leaving the work of addressing inequity and exclusion to people in more junior positions, or to those who experience the inequity and exclusion;
- Allocating insufficient resources to EDI work;
- Having no system to measure the effectiveness of interventions; and
- Setting few or no clear goals or objectives to address specific forms of inequity and exclusion.

Key points to consider

- An institution's history and context can inform which forms of marginalization are relevant.
- Respect privacy and feelings, and avoid overburdening or tokenizing the participation of participants.
- Use the input, assistance and support of EDI allies, being careful to be transparent and careful about who defines "ally" and the nature of their participation.
- Sharing engagement-related promising practices with other institutions will help drive EDI transformation across the larger research landscape.
- When resistance is met, attempt to identify its origins to understand and respond appropriately.

Building trust

Engagement is about forming relationships, which requires a foundation of trust. Building this trust takes time and a philosophy of collaboration (rather than consultation). Putting the voices of those being engaged with at the centre of the process can help to establish long-term, respectful relationships. In terms of engagement related to research, “Researchers need to recognize that relationships of trust are the foundation for ethical research practice, and these relationships require substantial amounts of time, self-disclosure, and care as discussions about research get underway. Both community and academic partners must define who they are, the scope and nature of their authority over knowledge sources and methodologies, their purposes, plans, and expectations in relation to the project.”⁵⁸ Senior leaders and faculty can act as role models of openness and acceptance in this process.

Some general approaches that may help create and encourage a culture of trust and belonging include thoughtful, comprehensive and dynamic consent processes; protection of data and information provided; transparency about risks; and respect for individuals, cultures, experiences and feelings.⁵⁹

It is also important to ensure that groups who were active in EDI work before the Dimensions program are included, involved and credited for their efforts.

Institutions should create an environment in which people feel safe and encouraged to self-identify. This type of engagement is needed to obtain meaningful data, which is critical to the self-reflection process and subsequent action planning. Institutions that do not have a history of asking for self-identification data may want to consider specific actions to encourage the sharing of such information. Also, being clear and transparent about why self-identification data is being collected and what it will be used for is essential to achieving high response rates. Last, it is imperative to ensure that self-identification data remains private and confidential.

Taking time to establish trust with Indigenous communities and community members is particularly critical after centuries of colonial and paternalistic legislation, exclusion and marginalization. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission defined reconciliation as “an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships,” and states that “A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change.”⁶⁰ The recovery of thousands of unmarked children’s graves on the grounds of former residential schools in Canada during the summer of 2021 has renewed the sense of urgency for national reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and for postsecondary institutions to address their roles in the residential school system, anti-Indigenous racism and colonialism.

In 2019, the federal granting agencies, in conjunction with the Canadian Research Coordination Committee, released the report *Setting New Directions – to support Indigenous research training in Canada*. As part of this report, “Indigenous Peoples highlighted the importance of time and support to develop meaningful, respectful and sustaining relationships and to build trust with partners in the pursuit of Indigenous research.”⁶¹

Key points to consider

- Successful engagement requires building trust and relationships over time.
- Ensure groups who were active in EDI work before Dimensions are included, involved and credited for their efforts.
- Care should be given to consent processes and practices, and to protecting data and information provided.

Communications to the research community

It is important to communicate to the research community the institution’s commitment to the Dimensions charter and program and the central role that engagement will take in this process. It is also important to convey that EDI efforts are a shared responsibility across the institution.

Having a diversity of voices in internal and external communications contributes to setting a positive tone for engagement and promotes effective communication. Considering language of communication, where appropriate, can also promote effective communication. As part of this exercise, an institution may wish to assess its overall communications strategy and its impact on EDI efforts (e.g., including and championing people from diverse backgrounds in institution-wide communications)

Underlying all types of engagement is communication and transparency. Providing regular updates on EDI activities to faculty, staff and students helps build mutual trust, confidence and momentum around engagement activities and EDI efforts overall. In developing communication messages and materials, it is critical to consider representation. For example, brochures, web pages or physical displays on walls or in lobbies of buildings should include text and images that are representative of members of equity-deserving groups, while simultaneously ensuring that such messaging is honest and does not misrepresent the community.

Since an informed research community is likely to be more engaged, institutions should keep their communities informed of their plans, updates and successes. They may also wish to consider sharing their setbacks or challenges in a transparent manner to build trust. It may

be worthwhile to consider providing one or more individuals with media training to help in internal or external communications.⁶² Another suggestion is to create diverse two-way communication channels, such as a browseable and interactive intranet page, to share data.⁶³

Creating and communicating the longer-term plan for engagement activities can be helpful in establishing lasting and sustainable change. Institutions should decide the following:

- How often will engagement activities occur?
- How will engagement activities be evaluated?
- How will they inform what comes next?
- Who, or what position, will be in charge of engagement activities in the longer term?

The communications department or equivalent should be consulted in this process, as a thorough communications plan should be in place to keep all participants informed of how the information they provided is being used. To facilitate confidence, institutions should consider developing procedures to invite confidential feedback.

The SAT can play a role in encouraging and facilitating communication of its own activities and other engagement activities across the institution, through clear and established channels. It could also consider including individuals with communication expertise in its membership.

Key points to consider

- Communications should include a diversity of voices.
- Transparency about setbacks and challenges with the community is encouraged.

Scope and types of engagement

A suggested approach to build momentum is to categorize the scope and types of engagement. Engagement activities can be selected for various purposes: to learn and begin to understand the experiences of community members; to engage the community about strategies to address inequities and exclusions; to communicate findings and promote transparency in the process; and to inform and/or approve action.

Senior management

It is essential that the high-level administration of the institution support the Dimensions work and that the senior leaders set the tone for engagement, demonstrating their support by example and providing direct lines of communication as well as ample resources and personnel to ensure substantive implementation. The [2019 survey, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Canadian Universities](#),⁶⁴ conducted by Universities Canada, defined senior leaders in institutions as including “deans to presidents” and found that racialized people, people with

disabilities, LGBTQ2+, and Indigenous Peoples were underrepresented in senior leadership positions at Canadian universities. To encourage engagement, it is important to consider the diversity of the institution's senior leadership as part of the ongoing plan to increase EDI, in addition to their commitment.

Higher management should be kept informed of the progress of the engagement strategy and should emphasize the importance of EDI in their communications to help get the message across.

Internal engagement activities

Engagement activities could include:

- Meetings between the SAT and equity-deserving groups or their representatives, including campus affinity groups
- Presentations by equity-deserving groups to the SAT, the institutional administration and leaders, or, more broadly, to everyone on campus
- Collaboration between the SAT and equity-deserving groups on data gathering and other such activities
- Social gatherings
- Town halls
- Online forums
- Open-mic sessions

Offering frequent opportunities for casual exchange of thoughts and ideas can cultivate an understanding of the barriers or implicit and explicit biases being experienced by the groups. It can also lead to valuable qualitative data to inform the institution's action plan and foster a culture of inclusion beyond policies. The entire research community, including those in senior leadership positions, can benefit from and become more engaged through professional development, information sessions, guest speaker presentations and training opportunities.

External engagement

Engaging externally is also an important consideration. It helps the institution to have a presence in its local community and to be aware of the issues. Open web pages and an active social media presence prominently featuring information about the institution's EDI activities can stimulate engagement with both the institution's population and the surrounding community. As much as possible, reports, publications, strategies and action plans produced by the institution that address EDI matters should be posted publicly and easy to find. This encourages engagement and increases accountability.

It may be possible to connect with other nearby institutions or flagship organizations to create synergy, networks and partnerships. For example, professional and discipline-specific associations can be valuable sources of mentoring support, especially for early career researchers and trainees. Industry or not-for-profit groups can become important research partners that help diversify the research. Overall, both externally and internally, it is important to establish networks of expertise and support.

External engagement could involve faculty, staff and students participating in local events sponsored by various relevant organizations or volunteering at such events. This could include art exhibits, rallies, protests, food festivals and so on. Also, as researchers in postsecondary institutions are increasingly involved in knowledge translation and knowledge mobilization activities with external groups, it is important to consider how those activities might be of interest to the groups and to provide the support to reach diverse audiences.

External engagement could also include hosting public lectures by members of equity-deserving groups on topics of concern to those groups.⁶⁵ Casual conversations with community members from these groups or with those with experience in researching or assisting these groups could also be a way of engaging them.

Key points to consider

- It is essential for senior administration to support engagement activities.
- Offering frequent opportunities for casual exchange of thoughts and ideas can be beneficial.
- Publicly accessible communications about engagement activities and findings can help facilitate engagement with external communities.

Engaging with equity-deserving groups

Engagement should be enthusiastic and meaningful. Institutions should ensure that they have established a voluntary or opt-in environment for participation in engagement. However, these steps should include robust processes for members of the groups to refuse participation without penalty. It is important to signal that it is fully acceptable to decline to participate.

Institutions may also consider developing a strategy (e.g., key performance indicators) to help them measure progress or success in engagement. For example, some signs can indicate that an institution is succeeding in engagement with various communities: mutual comfort in contacting each other, mutual willingness to work together again, mutual satisfaction that issues have been addressed, and increased mutual understanding.

Institutions should also be aware of reasons why people from the different groups may be hesitant to engage and share information. For many equity-deserving groups, information — particularly self-identification information — has historically been used for surveillance or to cause harm to these groups. Acknowledging the role of government and powerful institutions in harmful uses of information could help open dialogue to ensure such uses do not recur and to build trust.

Institutions should avoid framing research involving equity-deserving groups in a way that concentrates on damage or loss (referred to as a deficit model).⁶⁶ Appreciative inquiry and strength-based approaches are recommended.

Some principles and practices to consider when building an engagement strategy include:

- Early engagement that continues throughout each stage of the Dimensions process;
- Familiarity with relevant terminology and inclusive language;
- Co-creation of respectful “rules of engagement”;
- Physical accessibility of locations, and emotional and cultural sensitivity of engagement processes; and
- Prioritizing engagement methods and strategies that are innovative, flexible and adaptable.

In addition to common approaches to all groups, some systemic barriers experienced by specific groups may call for more tailored approaches. The sections below provide discussion of some important points to consider when engaging with members of equity-deserving groups. The sections do not aim to cover all possible directions or forms of engagement that the SAT could take. They are also not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, they offer limited suggestions and resources that institutions may wish to adapt to their own contexts. Throughout any type of engagement, it is important to ask for what would be preferred by the individual or group being engaged with, and to put such considerations at the forefront.

Key points to consider

- Avoid deficit and damage framing when engaging with equity-deserving groups.
 - Appreciative inquiry and strength-based approaches are recommended.
- Engagement needs to be voluntary, so establish a robust process for community members to volunteer to participate or to decline the opportunity.
- Establish indicators that engagement is going well, including mutual communication, willingness to work together, and satisfaction with processes and outcomes.
- Begin engagement early in, and throughout, EDI-related work and activities.
- Co-create respectful rules of engagement with equity-deserving groups.
- Ensure locations are physically accessible, and engagement processes are emotionally and culturally sensitive.

Engaging with Indigenous Peoples

Engaging with Indigenous Peoples with respect and dignity can set the foundation for relationship-driven partnerships, such as shared decision-making and power. Engagement and consultation have very different and specific meanings for Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Engagement means discussing, participating and contacting on an ongoing basis (thus, it is both process- and relationship-oriented), while consultation is often associated with the Crown's legal duty to consult in regard to Aboriginal or Treaty rights, which is more event-oriented and contractually based.

As described in the Tri-Agency strategy *Setting New Directions – to support Indigenous research training in Canada*,⁶⁷ it is important to involve the entire community or communities when developing relationships with Indigenous Peoples, and to defer the community or communities when managing or interpreting data related to them, including the use of individual and community-based consent processes.⁶⁸ Additionally, it is important to recognize that most Indigenous Peoples live outside of their home communities (although not necessarily their home territories); an exclusive focus on First Nations or bands would miss this larger group. Also, in many cases, only chiefs and officers who have been designated to do so can speak on behalf of First Nations or bands. People should be referred to by their Nation affiliation whenever possible; people who do not have Nation affiliations can be referred to by the Indigenous People they belong to or by their home territory.

Before reaching out to Indigenous Peoples, it is important to learn about the history of each group in the area. Key aspects to research include the following:

- Nations, bands and political organizations;
- Land claims and treaties;
- History of residential schools in the area and the institution's relationship to them;
- Preferred collective name of each group and individuals (Indigenous, Aboriginal, Native, etc.);
- Proper pronunciation of each group's name (YouTube has many guides);
- Languages spoken;
- Cultural traditions;
- Basic protocols (including protocols for engagement); and
- Definitions of terms such as decolonizing, indigenization and reconciliation (a good reference is the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Lexicon of Terminology).⁶⁹

A good way to gather information is to do a literature review, scoping exercise or horizon scan, which are typical academic practices. Although helpful, scans do not always highlight the importance of relationships with Indigenous Peoples, particularly those of the region where the institution is situated. Such scans could be validated by the community. Additionally, discussions with Elders and other knowledge-holders involved with the institution or in the region where the institution is located can help include Indigenous knowledge shared through oral traditions. Many Indigenous Peoples and scholars have written extensively about issues in institutions and other communities; these resources can be used instead of asking Elders and knowledge-holders to repeatedly provide the information. Also, most organized groups such as the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis National Council, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Friendship Centres have annual reports that include priority issues.

A practical suggestion for engaging with Indigenous Peoples in the community, and a possible starting point, is to consider several existing models and protocols.

- Institutions that are members of Colleges and Institutes Canada and have not already done so may wish to consider signing the Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes.⁷⁰
- Institutions that are members of Universities Canada should follow Universities Canada Principles on Indigenous education.⁷¹
- Another practical tool that could be useful when engaging with Indigenous Peoples and assessing policies and practices is the Diversity, Equity and Indigenous Lens,⁷² created by confederation college.
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)⁷³ is an important model and reference.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action⁷⁴ and 10 Principles of Reconciliation.⁷⁵
- The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls final report.
- It is important to learn about and implement the First Nations principles of ownership, control, access, and possession (OCAP), which asserts that "First Nations have control over data collection processes, and that they own and control how this information can be used."⁷⁶

Institutions can document lessons learned from situations in which they made a mistake, during engagement activities or more generally. They may also document times when they learned from Indigenous teachings and moments of relationship-building, so that this can be shared with other non-Indigenous People at the institution. When documenting lessons learned, be sure to get approval from the community to use the example, individual names or other details. Institutions should develop a guide or protocol/handbook for best practices for Indigenous engagement.

SAT members can also attend open meetings, such as student group roundtables or a Friendship Centre luncheon, rather than having the institution call its own meetings. Before attending open meetings, the members should contact the host to explain the intention and reason for attending, and how it will benefit the Indigenous community and/or group.

The SAT should learn why it is important to acknowledge the traditional Indigenous land and territories on which an institution is located and to integrate the use of Indigenous language at events, ceremonies and meetings.⁷⁷ Personalizing a land acknowledgement demonstrates that it is more than an obligation but an honour to share. Neglecting to do a land acknowledgement is a form of erasure (a practice that erases the presence of Indigenous Peoples and their lands). Having respect for Indigenous ethics and protocols will also help set the stage for effective engagement with Indigenous Peoples.⁷⁸

It is important to learn and take the lead from Indigenous ways of knowing, methodologies and pedagogies. Learning to properly pronounce Indigenous terms is also respectful. It is said that there are as many ways of knowing as there are Indigenous groups.⁷⁹ However, there are several common characteristics that describe Indigenous approaches or worldviews: metaphysical, holistic, oral or symbolic, relational and intergenerational.⁸⁰

To increase the impact of engagement, a suggestion is to “ensure Indigenous culture and Elder / Métis senator involvement is visible and viable across all aspects of the institution, not compartmentalized as an equity office or human resources initiative.”⁸¹ Instituting a network of approved Elders, traditional knowledge-keepers, traditional healers and Indigenous-focused facilities to support those who desire these services may also encourage engagement. At the same time, it is important to avoid putting undue pressure on members of Indigenous communities, notably Elders, and to compensate people and communities for their time and labour.⁸²

When Elders or knowledge-keepers participate, it is important to present them with a gift and host them accordingly; this is protocol for almost every Indigenous group in Canada. Tobacco is sometimes given, but it is not always appropriate. Gift cards, coffee, handmade art, seeds, mugs, blankets and sustainable items are good examples of appropriate gifts; university paraphernalia should be avoided. If an institution has an Indigenous group that holds events on campus, attend to see what type of gifts they give, or ask the community or Elder/traditional knowledge-keeper what type of gift and protocol they prefer. At other times, an honorarium is appropriate and preferred.

Many institutions have established Indigenous Centres as a central resource. Faculty, staff and students should be encouraged to reach out to these centres for support. If the institution has an Indigenous administrator (i.e., Special Adviser, VP Academic, Indigenous Resource Officer, etc.), This person could provide advice specific to the regional context.

More practical suggestions and considerations for engaging with Indigenous Peoples can be found in the Canadian Environmental Law Association's webinar series Working with Indigenous Peoples.⁸³ Among many others, the following are a few considerations:

- Respect the schedule of Indigenous Peoples;
- Understand local culture and how it may affect engagement. For example, a death in the community may result in a temporary shutdown of band operations;
- Aim for community empowerment — engagement can be a great support for community empowerment;
- Adopt a “desire to engage” culture;
- An engagement strategy is not one-size-fits-all and cannot be built with a rigid timeline or fast-tracked;
- Refer to people by their Nation affiliation whenever possible; and
- For Nations that have a chief and council, understand that their chiefs and designated officers speak on behalf of Nations and bands.

These resources are useful for learning about how to be an ally for Indigenous Peoples:

- Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network's Indigenous Ally Toolkit.⁸⁴
- Laurentian University's guide How to Be an Ally to Indigenous Peoples.⁸⁵

Finally, it is important to be aware of an issue sometimes referred to as “race-shifting,” in which people who have questionable claims to Indigenous identity and ancestry are self-identifying as Indigenous and are representing Indigenous Peoples, sometimes in academic positions reserved for Indigenous scholars. This is considered ethnic fraud. Some institutions are beginning to move away from self-identification as a means of establishing Indigenous identity. Instead, some are asking for letters of reference, or similar documentation, from the Indigenous community to which the person in question belongs. More information can be found in Carleton University's Strategic Indigenous Initiatives Committee's May 2020 report,⁸⁶ or in the final report from the inaugural National Indigenous Identity Forum, Indigenous Voices on Indigenous Identity.⁸⁷

Engaging with persons with disabilities

As with any equity-deserving group, knowledge and learning will help facilitate the engagement process with disability communities.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,⁸⁸ which Canada signed in 2007 and ratified in 2010, notes the importance of addressing disability rights not only in their typical framing as accessibility of the physical environment, but also in systemic attitudinal, ableist and other issues that result in barriers and discrimination. Ableism in academia is a pervasive and significant issue.⁸⁹

In engaging with the disability community, particular attention should be given to the challenges of self-identifying as “disabled” in the workplace. Disclosure of disability status may involve disclosure of personal medical information. The ability to maintain confidentiality and anonymity should

be paramount. Safeguards should be in place to prevent repercussions against individuals who do choose to publicly self-identify. An awareness of the language and terminology used by the community to self-identify is also critical, and individual's language choices should be respected. The relationship to one's own disability can be complex, and Disability Studies "disrupts the idea that disabled people should be defined primarily through their disabilities by others, retaining instead the right for disabled people to define their own relationships with disability."⁹⁰

It is important for the engagement process to include existing disability-focused groups on campus, for example, student groups, formal or informal faculty, and staff groups or caucuses. It can be important to learn and take the lead from such groups, learning about initiatives already in progress, preferred modes of engagement and language, and other important aspects.

Familiarity with models of understanding disability is helpful.⁹¹

Accessibility of engagement activities is key to securing comprehensive engagement with the institution's disability community. This includes the physical accessibility of locations for engagement and the ready availability of assistive technology. It also means the emotional and cultural sensitivity of processes. The dramatic shift to virtual working and communicating environments brought on by COVID-19 highlights the need for expansive definitions of accessibility, including comprehensive approaches to making virtual spaces for engagement accessible. To allow individuals who are typically excluded from traditional engagement activities to participate, institutions must recognize the wide variety of forms of communication. During meetings, leaders should encourage participants to move around, leave the meeting and return as needed, and to participate in a way that is comfortable for them. Other considerations include:

- Providing documents in accessible formats, mainly accessible websites or computer files that can be read by screen readers;
- Making an active offer of accommodation and ensuring that meetings are accessible, which may include providing American Sign Language, Langue des signes du Québec or communication access real-time translation (CART or captioning) services during live engagement;
- Striving to avoid the use of ableist language, which can alienate persons with disabilities from discussions and perpetuates cultures of ableism;*
- Ensuring adequate time for engagement;
- Noting that designing accessible engagement takes both time and resources (particularly financial), and this should be factored into plans/timelines.
- Taking an accessible-by-default approach, since disabilities are not always obvious ("invisible" disabilities, see below) and many people without disabilities also benefit from processes that are designed to be more accessible.

Finally, not all disabilities are visible; "invisible disabilities," which include "debilitating pain, fatigue, dizziness, cognitive dysfunctions, brain injuries, learning differences, and mental health disorders, as well as hearing and vision impairments," must be included in the understanding

* For examples of terms to consider see: Ades, Rachel. "An End to 'Blind Review' | Blog of the American Philosophy Association (APA)." Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://blog.apaonline.org/2020/02/20/an-end-to-blind-review/>; Ravishankar, Rakshitha Arni. "Why You Need to Stop Using These Words and Phrases." Harvard Business Review Home, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/12/why-you-need-to-stop-using-these-words-and-phrases>.

of disability.* Individuals should not be asked to prove their disability to participate in engagement, and accommodations should be provided on the basis of stated need alone.

Engaging with racialized groups

Racism at postsecondary institutions is a pervasive and significant problem.⁹² Racism is any individual, internalized, interpersonal, institutional or systemic action, practice or policy that results in different beliefs about or treatment of people based on their race or ethnicity. Examples include racially insensitive remarks and microaggressions,⁹³ racist roots of institution/team names and racial profiling.⁹⁴ Research also suggests that incidents of racism are underreported.⁹⁵ As a result, engagement with members of racialized groups will require strong efforts toward establishing a safe and caring environment where members feel comfortable enough to both make their voices heard and to report racial and discriminatory incidents when they occur.

Analysis found inequity deeply rooted in Canadian academia: “All of the racialized minority university presidents, both female and male, emerged from engineering and the sciences, in which minorities constitute a critical mass. While more women, overwhelmingly White, have broken through the glass ceiling to hold mid-level and top university leadership positions, progress is slow and, by most accounts, has stalled.”⁹⁶

The experiences of racialized groups and Indigenous Peoples with racism is not homogenous. It takes many specific forms and manifests in different ways, including as anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, and anti-Asian racism, and as harms rooted in racism, such as Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. It is vital to name and acknowledge these different forms of racism to address their unique historical and contemporary manifestations.

As is the case with engaging with all equity-deserving groups, it is important to show awareness and sensitivity to language and terminology. The section here refers to “racialized groups” rather than “visible minorities,” a term commonly used in Canada because of its legal significance in employment equity legislation. Several terms are used as a replacement for “visible minority,” some of which include “racialized,” “BIPOC [black, Indigenous, person of colour],” and “person of colour.” Institutions may want to follow promising practices that let racialized groups and individuals lead and self-determine language to be used (for more on terms relating to race and ethnicity, see use of language in the introduction).

Global events related to racism should be kept at the forefront of engagement efforts, especially with members of racialized groups. Systems and structures in place support colonial and paternalistic harms, which specifically hinder and create barriers for racialized groups.

Engagement with members of racialized groups should be aimed not only at uncovering the individual experiences of racism at the institution, but also at understanding its foundations, in order to address root causes and to take action.

* See for example: “How Do You Define Invisible Disability? | Invisible Disability Definition” Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://invisibledisabilities.org/what-is-an-invisible-disability/>; Finesilver, Carla, Jennifer Leigh, and Nicole Brown. “Invisible Disability, Unacknowledged Diversity.” *Ableism in Academia*, October 3, 2020, 143–60. <https://doi.org/10.2307/J.CTV13XPRJR.14>; Mullins, Laura, and Michèle Preyde. “The Lived Experience of Students with an Invisible Disability at a Canadian University.” <http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.1080/09687599.2012.752127>, no. 2 (March 2013): 147–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2012.752127>.

Privacy and confidentiality information collected is paramount; for many racial groups, there are histories of their data being used inappropriately. Institutions should be mindful of these considerations when engaging.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for integrating the issues faced by racialized groups into policies. The specific experiences of local communities could play a particularly large role in engagement. Recognition of the history of state-sanctioned racial discrimination in Canada — for example, the experiences of Black Nova Scotians — has led to measures to better understand this history and bring about change. A firm understanding of contextual history in which an institution is based will be necessary for full and informed engagement with members of racialized groups.

Some general resources for consideration:

- [Scarborough charter](#)⁹⁷
- [Building a foundation for change: Canada's Anti-Racism strategy 2019–2022](#)⁹⁸
- [UN Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice](#)⁹⁹
- [UN International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination](#)¹⁰⁰
- [UN International Decade for People of African Descent](#)¹⁰¹

Engaging with LGBTQ2+ people

It is important to begin engagement with people who identify as LGBTQ2+ by recognizing the diversity of identities and experiences of marginalization and oppression faced by LGBTQ2+ people. The connection implied by the acronym can hide substantial differences in experience. Although there can be overlap in the patterns of experience for LGBTQ2+ people, there can also be significant differences. Considering these differences and foregrounding intersectional considerations can help to ensure inclusive engagement activities. An understanding of relevant terminology and inclusive language, beginning with the distinction between sex, gender, sexual orientation and cis- and trans- is important. It is also important to begin engagement by learning about the experiences of LGBTQ2+ people in academia.¹⁰²

In general, one way to help LGBTQ2+ people feel welcome in an institution and encourage engagement is to publish a document summarizing all of the relevant available resources (such as support groups and medical assistance) that describe how to change a name, sex or gender designation; find gender-neutral washrooms; and report incidents of sexual harassment. Having all this information in one location makes it easy for people to find the information they need and to feel welcome. A good example of such a resource is [Memorial University's Trans & Gender Diverse Students' Guide](#)¹⁰³ or [Wilfred Laurier University's Gender Inclusivity resource page](#)¹⁰⁴. In creating such a resource, it is important to engage with the community to identify needs, provide the needed information, and make the resource public. This type of resource could also be adapted to serve other equity-deserving groups in a similar manner. It is also important to consult available research about increasing inclusion for LGBTQ2+ people in academic settings.¹⁰⁵

Another promising practice is the creation of a dedicated resource centre. For example, in 2018, the University of New Brunswick opened The 203 Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity.¹⁰⁶ The Centre offers LGBTQ2+ students, faculty and staff a safe space for gathering and socializing. It is run by an advisory board made up of students, faculty and staff and aims to improve the mental and physical health of LGBTQ2+ people at the university.¹⁰⁷ In Quebec, the Groupe régional d'intervention social du québec (GRIS),¹⁰⁸ provides useful resources, including group-based training modules.

A significant issue to consider is the prevalence of targeted harassment and violence experienced by members of LGBTQ2+ people in society, and how this may be manifested in postsecondary institutions.

LGBTQ2+ identities are not always visible or known, and not all members of the community are out or wish to be out in all contexts. Sensitivity and care need to be given to this consideration when organizing and carrying out engagement with LGBTQ2+ people.

A recent and growing measure is to introduce oneself with one's preferred pronouns at the start of meetings and inviting others to share theirs. Researchers can contribute to encouraging and welcoming engagement by including non-binary genders as categories in their research.

Institutions could also actively engage with the LGBTQ2+ people by:

- Participating in, and advertising, local events such as Pride parades;
- Building partnerships with national, provincial or local organizations such as Pride at Work.

Engaging with women

Although there has been significant progress on the representation of women in academia in the past few decades, the progress has been uneven. Representation varies across disciplines, levels of management and intersectional identities.¹⁰⁹ Women continue to be especially underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).¹¹⁰

Many historic and ongoing efforts to address discrimination, inequity and exclusion faced by women in the research ecosystem do not take an explicitly intersectional approach. Initiatives and efforts generally have tended to focus on issues experienced by White, cisgender women. Given this history, applying an intersectional lens can help reveal that, although there are likely commonalities in women's experiences, there are also significant differences that need to be understood and addressed.

A significant issue to consider is the ongoing prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) and harassment experienced by women and members of LGBTQ2+ communities in society, and how this may be manifested in postsecondary institutions.

Women and Gender Equality Canada¹¹¹ funded the project Courage to Act,¹¹² a multi-year national initiative to address and prevent GBV at postsecondary institutions in Canada. The Courage to Act report captures promising practices, key policy areas and prevention plans as a framework to address and prevent GBV at postsecondary institutions. Several recommendations are related to engagement:

- Using a trauma-informed approach to support services, education and reporting;
- Supporting the leadership of student survivors, researchers and activists; and
- Working with broader movements to end GBV.

Resiliency-oriented approaches are also a good way to provide support. Creating safe and caring mechanisms for the reporting of such violence could help ensure that people affected by GBV feel understood and able to engage. In work related to Dimensions, any reports of GBV should go through the appropriate institutional channels, rather than being handled by the SAT.

In addition to GBV, harassment, particularly verbal, also significantly affects women's experience of the workplace. Harassment can include unwanted and unsolicited sexual attention, sexually oriented remarks, and implied or expressed promises of reward for sexual favours.¹¹³ Given that power dynamics in the research environment can impact or worsen these behaviours, SAT members and moderators should be aware of any hierarchical relationships between engagement participants in focus groups, townhalls, and other public or semi-public engagement sessions.

There are many ways in which gender-based discrimination emerges in the context of the research ecosystem. For example, social science research has observed and described patterns in reference letters for hiring, funding or promotion purposes written for women, which tend to include more "doubt-raisers," "phrases or statements that question an applicant's aptness for a job."¹¹⁴ These biases are exacerbated when analyzed with an intersectional approach. For example, many immigrant women with STEM expertise are unable to find employment in their fields when they move to Canada.¹¹⁵ Women also tend to face barriers related to childcare responsibilities and the need for family leave (see Caring Responsibilities in Chapter 4 – Environmental scan). Research and expertise on how gender-based discrimination is manifested in the research ecosystem could be consulted as part of engagement and Dimensions-related work.

Some practical approaches to encourage more gender-diverse and accessible engagement include ensuring that engagement-related events (panels, townhalls, workshops, etc.) include women speakers and moderators and that material for engagement, such as invitations and communications, are written using gender-inclusive language.

Chapter 4

Environmental scan



This chapter is intended to guide institutions in producing an environmental scan, contributing to their self-understanding and to the evidence base, including evidence of gaps and needs, that informs the development of an action plan, which is required for a Dimensions application. The scan is intended primarily to cover the research structures and systems that inform day-to-day life in the community, and to evaluate them as either addressing or upholding structural, systemic, discriminatory and harmful practices. It should examine existing and past policies, practices and procedures that impact EDI at the institution, keeping in mind that they can have lasting legacies even after they have formally changed. In some cases, it might be necessary to scan past policies to reveal contributing factors to inequity and exclusion.

Institutions do not need to do another environmental scan if they have done one recently for another purpose. Many institutions have prepared and submitted EDI action plans and evaluations as part of requirements for various other federal programs, such as the CRC Program (for institutions holding five or more chairs), or for the Federal Contractor's Program. Institutions might also be required to submit plans for various provincial programs. They may have conducted scans and/or employment systems reviews to address specific issues that have arisen within their communities. Those exercises and analyses can be used to inform the Dimensions work. Institutions can also use Dimensions as an opportunity to expand their analysis in new directions.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, institutions should have robust engagement strategies with their internal and external communities to facilitate the work of the environmental scan. An important component of conducting the scan honestly and with authenticity is to ensure that the voices of equity-deserving groups are prioritized and listened to. Although being honest and transparent about inequities and exclusion within the institution can carry some risks, the risk may be greater if institutions choose to avoid acknowledging existing challenges.

Since the Dimensions program is intended to address inequity and exclusion in the postsecondary research ecosystem, it is flexible to accommodate the differences among CEGEPs, colleges, polytechnics and universities. Although there are many similarities, there are also important differences with respect to their research ecosystems, which are relevant for the environmental scan. For example, promotion in universities is generally focused on research, while in colleges research is often less relevant to promotion. Although industry actors collaborate on research with both universities and colleges, such collaborations play a more significant role in the college research ecosystem and can take a different form.

The assessment of applications for recognition is designed to account for different institution types and research ecosystems, without privileging some types over others. Some sections and sub-sections of this chapter apply to all types of institutions, but some may not; it is up to each institution to determine whether and how each section applies to its context. There may be aspects of institutional policies and procedure that could form part of the scan that are not included here, or some that may be different from how they are described here. Institutions should feel free to include such policies and procedures in their scan and application. A key principle of the Dimensions program and of the assessment of applications for recognition is the “context-specific” component, giving institutions the flexibility to adapt the program to their realities.

One aim of the program is to help institutions develop a critical consciousness about lived experience and social interactions within their communities, to build strategies and actions for change.¹¹⁶ Although the environmental scan will be focused on documents and policies, its findings should be connected to those from engagement and other qualitative activities and to analysis of quantitative data. For example, findings about policies related to disability, medical and sick leave could be linked and compared to qualitative and quantitative findings. Such a comparison might help to confirm findings gathered through different means and might help identify areas that were missed.

Dimensions focuses on the research ecosystem, but the full experience of students and staff does not start and stop there. Institutions are encouraged to look at the many other aspects that make up the full experience of a postsecondary institution. If students do not feel welcome or experience episodes of harassment throughout their studies, there is a high probability that they will not want to stay in that institution or even in postsecondary studies.

Where to start

The SAT or any established sub-committees will be the main organizing group(s) overseeing and carrying out the environmental scan.

The initial stage is to put the necessary resources in place to perform the scan. The scan should be carried out in parallel with engagement activities. Findings from these activities, in combination with decisions about which roles will be prioritized, should be the primary evidence base to decide which other aspects of the institution to scan.

Internal departments and stakeholder groups could be involved in the scanning process. These include the human resources department (which is often a hub for policies, practices and institutional data), faculty associations and labour unions. Collective agreements and labour negotiations are good opportunities for addressing policies, practices and procedures that impact EDI. It is important for local unions to be kept informed of, or to be directly involved in, the environmental scan and overall Dimensions work.

Aligning the environmental scan with the assessment and recognition stages

The recognition stages and inclusive assessment approach recognize that institutions have limited resources and may not be able to address all identified issues at the same time. Institutions are asked to prioritize and organize efforts around the roles of community members in the research ecosystem (see The Dimensions program in the introduction).

The inclusive assessment and recognition stages include a provision for recognizing institutional initiatives and actions aimed at these roles. As institutions move along the recognition continuum, their efforts to address issues faced by those in specific roles will grow in breadth, depth and complexity. Taking a longer-term view, institutions can return to, and build upon, findings from successive environmental scans, expanding EDI efforts to address issues confronted by community members in each of the roles.

It will be up to the individual institution to decide which approach will work best, and to explain the approach taken in its application. The environmental scan, like data collection and analysis and community engagement, should not be one-time activities.

Scope of the scan

The scope of the scan is determined from fact-finding about the institution, from the engagement process, and by the recognition stage for which the institution is applying. A key difference among recognition stages involves the scope of the environmental scan. Each recognition stage asks institutions to focus on a minimum number of roles in the research community, and they can be the focus of the scan. The recognition stages also determine the minimum number of sub-items to be included in the scan. To help with designing the scan, this chapter is divided into three main sections reflecting elements of the environmental scan, each of which contains sub-items that could be included. The choice of which items to include in the scan is up to the applicant institution, but a rationale should be provided (see Recognition stages in Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment, Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages, and the application forms for detailed discussion of the seven roles and the minimum requirements for each recognition stage).

The scan should focus on:

- The research community;
- Research excellence; and
- The institutional administration that supports the research community and its activities.

The questions provided throughout the chapter are intended to help institutions link findings with the evidence categories found in the Dimensions application. For example, findings generated about recruitment, onboarding and retention could function as “evidence of gaps and needs.” Of the issues and questions listed below, institutions should focus on those most aligned with challenges confronted by members of the prioritized role. Engagement, the environmental scan, and data collection and analysis are intended to enable institutions to triangulate and identify issues to prioritize and address in the action plan.

When determining what to include in the scan, institutions should keep in mind that some policies, procedures, practices and strategic documents are more clearly related to EDI than others. But they should also recognize that all policies can have EDI implications. EDI considerations may be missing in some areas, which may not be easily observed. Engagement activities will help address this challenge. An SAT that has a breadth of EDI expertise and adopts an intersectional lens will be valuable here.

Elements of the environmental scan: the research community

Building the research ecosystem

Engagement with members of equity-deserving groups, and analysis of equity-focused scholarship, suggest that recruitment, onboarding, and retention are key areas of concern in promoting EDI in academic institutions. These areas apply to faculty but also to staff and students in the research ecosystem. Specific strategies need to be applied if recruitment committees want to ensure equitable and inclusive search and hiring processes, as well as recruitment and support of students. For example, members of the research community may not apply to open positions if they cannot see themselves or their work represented in the job call, or if they perceive other indicators that the institution may not be welcoming to them. Institutions should consider how applicants are solicited and recruited. Evidence related to application rates, position offers, retention and program completion, and funding distribution, is likely not systematically kept or available. Institutions should consider patterns of inequity in these domains documented in previous research, and reflect on how and where to increase efforts for evidence-gathering.

Addressing concerns about representation and exclusion in the research ecosystem requires thinking about how institutions and their departments build their research talent and faculties. Success stories from institutions about increasing diversity and inclusion often include a component about the planning phase — for example, identifying institutional and departmental faculty needs and crafting job calls. Institutions could explore how formal or informal workforce planning processes have worked in the past, highlighting whether such processes are formalized, and what their main objectives/priorities have been in recent years.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — building the research ecosystem

- How are institutional and departmental needs for research talent identified, and how are upcoming changes addressed?
- Are there policies or efforts to address EDI during faculty planning?
 - For example, how are planning committees created?
- How does the institution communicate goals and priorities for personnel capacity planning to build the research ecosystem?
- Are search committees encouraged to reflect on EDI while developing written job calls?
- Members of equity-deserving groups may not have educational and research trajectories that fit expected norms. Are deviations from the norm of degree and career progression addressed to ensure other progression and barriers scaled are given due consideration?
- Are hiring criteria reviewed to eliminate unnecessarily restrictive criteria that limit qualified candidates. How is this being done?

Recruitment

Recruitment of research personnel is a key process in which to address representation and inequity in the research ecosystem and in pathways to full-time positions. Institutions should describe the various activities and processes to promote available positions across the research ecosystem, not just for faculty. Consider where the institution advertises faculty, student and research-related vacancies, and how applicants from equity-deserving groups progress through the process. Institutions could explicitly consider the candidate experience throughout the interview and recruitment processes. For example, in addition to meeting with other faculty, perhaps meeting with Elders or incorporating ceremony into the process may be appropriate.

The language in job postings must reflect best practices for maximizing inclusion. How a job description is written for a job advertisement impacts who applies, whether applicants feel they could fulfill the required qualifications, and whether search committee members identify the applicant as qualified. Job descriptions can be biased, for example, by including language that makes candidates from certain groups feel excluded or offended. At the institution level or within departments, the institution could reflect on how to expand qualifications to include experiences and forms of education beyond doctorates and academic research. It is also crucial to ensure the postings are presented in an accessible way. Institutions should consider making job postings available through non-traditional platforms to attract more diverse applicants. Institutions should review how they evaluate the success of outreach activities and recruitment efforts.

Some institutions now use automated decision-making software to screen applications for job postings. Such tools can be helpful because they reduce human labour, but they can also be subject to “algorithmic bias.”¹¹⁷ Automated decision-making software used for hiring purposes is trained to recognize desirable markers present in applications (e.g., desirable language, education), and thus perform an initial screening. The algorithms used in this software, however, can be implicitly trained to have the same biases human screeners would have. If institutions use this type of software in their hiring procedures, they could consider how such bias can be prevented.

Many aspects enter into the recruitment process: job posting, the selection process for candidates to invite for the interview, interviews, selection of the candidates, and negotiations of employment conditions. Institutions should review their strategies and recruitment approaches and reflect on key aspects of the process.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — recruitment

- How are members of equity-deserving groups encouraged to apply to positions?
- What does the screening process of applications look like?
 - How is the composition of the search committee that carries out recruitment and hiring established?
 - Are there specific practices in place to prevent bias, implicit and otherwise?
 - Are automated screening systems used? Are mechanisms used to prevent algorithmic bias?
- Are awareness of and training on implicit bias fostered and actively addressed in the process?
 - If yes, how?
 - If training is available, for whom is it required?
- What is the process to select candidates for interviews, interview them and choose one?
- At the interview stage, is the institution's commitment to EDI presented to candidates?
- Engagement with equity-deserving groups consistently finds that applicants are interested in speaking with existing faculty who are members of the same equity-deserving group. Is such an opportunity considered when planning a candidate's interview/ campus visit?
- What is the process of negotiation after a job offer is made? Does the institution have a general policy and procedure, or does it vary by department?
 - How is compensation determined, negotiated, approved and evaluated for equity?
 - Are policies underlying this process in place? How, and how often, are they reviewed?
- Is there follow-up with candidates who refuse an offer?

Onboarding

The onboarding experience can help a new staff member feel welcome and included. Onboarding policies and practices should be reviewed to ensure they do so.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — onboarding

- What is in place to specifically address the needs of new staff who are members of equity-deserving groups?
 - What onboarding activities are provided, and what resources are available?
 - How are new staff introduced to their workplace and colleagues? Are there any considerations specifically for new staff who are members of equity-deserving groups?
- Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that faculty are supported when they start their position, especially as early-career faculty?
 - How are service/administrative requirements handled?
 - How are course releases handled?
- How are research start-up funds determined and distributed?

- Are policies in place to address inequities in salary and start-up funds, recognizing that there may be different norms for different disciplines and differences based on the nature of the research?
- Are any policies in place to address dual-career issues? Spousal hires, for example?
- Are there any differences in onboarding practices related to gender, race, indigeneity, disability or LGBTQ2+ status?

Retention

Recruiting a diverse workforce is an important and necessary start, but ensuring faculty members from equity-deserving groups stay at the institution can be a major challenge. If institutions do not provide an inclusive workplace, individuals may move on, and the efforts taken to create a diverse workforce will provide no concrete results.

Mentoring can be an important aspect of onboarding and retention. Consideration should be given to mentoring practices, formal or informal, in the institution. Some institutions might oversee mentoring support through research offices, and others through the human resources department.

Establishing formal mentorship programs or arrangements can also encourage members of equity-deserving groups to feel engaged and can contribute to their sense of belonging. Mentors should strive to engage mentees as much as possible and help them feel included. Mentees, on the other hand, should be encouraged to identify and communicate issues that affect their ability to succeed or to feel included. When establishing mentoring programs, institutions should ensure that they are “developed and framed carefully and thoughtfully with involvement from faculty, staff, and students from equity-deserving groups. The focus might be on supporting individuals in overcoming the barriers that are in their way and/or building and maintaining resilience while change is implemented, rather than how they can change to fit in.”¹¹⁸ As well, mentoring programs may need to be adapted for different groups, and mentors should be trained or provided with resources to help them consider the possibly multiple identities of mentees.¹¹⁹

Sensitivity should be exercised to ensure opportunities are offered appropriately but that such offers do not make assumptions (explicit or implicit) about members of equity-deserving groups needing additional assistance.

Institutions could conduct exit surveys as part of their collection of qualitative data to understand why individuals decide to leave the institution. Lessons can be learned through this process.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — retention

- Is there a mentoring program for faculty?
- Is there a system to collect feedback from faculty about the collegial atmosphere and the work environment?

Managing the research ecosystem

Promotion and career progression

Research reveals that, even in fields where groups that have been historically underrepresented and experience inequity have made representational gains, significant disparities remain up the ranks and on the seniority ladder. Promotion and progress through the ranks have proven to be key barriers for the equity-deserving groups. Therefore, it is important to pay particular attention to this aspect of career progression. Institutions in the postsecondary sector have different forms of promotion. Universities commonly have a progress-through-the-ranks system, involving tenure and promotion, but many colleges or teaching-focused institutions have promotion systems with, for example, one pay scale, or with separate pay scales for teaching-focused and research-focused faculty or staff.

Furthermore, addressing promotion issues can be challenging because the requirements for academic promotion, for example, are governed by collective agreements that have been negotiated between unions representing faculty and staff, on the one hand, and the institutional administration, on the other. Collective agreement negotiations can be opportunities for administration and unions to work together to ensure EDI is considered in progress through the ranks. Sensitivity and consideration need to be given to the different forms of collective agreements. For example, faculty at colleges in Ontario collectively bargain through a single union, whereas many universities have collective agreements with individual institutional faculty associations and different unions that represent other roles in the research ecosystem, such as staff, research and teaching assistants, and part-time contract faculty. There is no one-size-fits-all approach here.

In assessing merit in promotion processes, institutions should ensure that such processes do not disadvantage scholars working in areas where non-traditional indicators of success are more appropriate, for example, Indigenous or community-oriented scholarship. Standards used to assess merit should incorporate and support differing approaches, and training for community members who play a role in assessment is key.

Caution should be exercised when student-based teaching evaluations are used, given the growing evidence that such evaluations show significant bias against teachers from equity-deserving groups.¹²⁰ Consideration should be given to the weight of student evaluations in performance assessment, especially when used for promotion and career advancement. Some institutions have already implemented measures to address this concern.*

Institutions should reflect on support given to academic staff (including full-time, part-time, student, postdoctoral and other researchers, and research associates) in their career progression.

* See the faculty collective agreement at Simon Fraser University, for example, which states: " Student comments will not be available to TPCs and will not be used in summative teaching evaluation... The role of student experience surveys in summative processes of evaluation is restricted to assessing faculty engagement with the student experience as described in this Article. Where a unit considers student experience survey data, it must demonstrate that steps have been taken to consider factors impacting the validity of the data, including but not limited to response rate and empirically-proven bias": https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/faculty-relations/collective-agreement/CA2019_2022.pdf

Questions to ask during the environmental scan – promotion and career progression

- What are the policies affecting promotion and progress through the ranks?
- Are there discernable patterns in how students complete course evaluations when considering teaching performance as part of work evaluation?
- Are there initiatives or policies to assist members of equity-deserving groups with the progress-through-the-ranks process?
- Is there support for those in contract faculty positions?
- Is the institution tracking and monitoring career progression for staff and faculty?

Training

The research community should have access to EDI training to help understand, prevent and address systemic discrimination, and to better understand and respond to the realities of the equity-deserving groups. EDI training should be encouraged and valued by the institution. Such training could include discussion of implicit bias, how bias impacts decision-making processes in the academy (such as in the hiring process), or accounts of the experiences of members of equity-deserving groups in academic institutions. The training could be offered internally or by outside organizations. Further discussion about training to incorporate EDI in research and research practices is included in the section below on research excellence.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — training

- Is EDI training available to faculty and staff at all levels?
- Which training is taken up by faculty?
- Are existing faculty and staff kept up to date through continuing training?
- How is the effectiveness of training monitored? Are levels of uptake recorded and analyzed and do participants evaluate training?

Performance assessment and feedback

Institutions could demonstrate that EDI work is valued by considering this work in performance assessments and feedback sessions, especially in promotion and progress through the ranks.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan – performance assessment and feedback

- Is EDI work by faculty and staff valued and included in performance evaluations?
- Describe current appraisal and development reviews for academic faculty at all levels, across the whole institution.
- Provide details of any training in appraisal and development review offered.
 - Is the training is taken up?
 - What is the faculty feedback on the training?

Career breaks and other forms of leave

Career breaks can have a significant impact on career development, a point that has become more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, but has nevertheless been understood for quite some time. Interruptions in research productivity and output put a researcher at a disadvantage when competing for research funding and jobs. It is now widely recognized that career breaks and their consequences on lifetime career opportunity, success and pay disproportionately affect some groups more than others, often because of social and cultural norms that, for example, disregard disability or illness as legitimate career interruptions, or that unevenly distribute care and domestic labour.

Institutions should work to address disadvantages brought about by career breaks, through an EDI lens. They should reflect on policies and practices related to leaves and on accommodations to make when evaluating performance, considering to whom they are available and under what circumstances, and whether they are used and by whom.

To improve their career-break policies, institutions could consider how other institutions and organizations have revised theirs to ensure consistency for members of the research community. For example, the Tri-Agency has recently revised its policies related to career breaks, expanding them to reflect greater concern for EDI.

The COVID-19 pandemic has and will put many institutional policies related to managing career breaks to the test, which gives institutions opportunities to reflect on whether their policies are, in fact, sufficient and adaptable. Reflection on the impacts of COVID-19 on career breaks could help improve the longer-term response and recovery. Disability, medical and sick leaves can significantly disrupt time available for work, in both the long and short term. Institutions must ensure that those taking leaves due to disability, medical reasons or illness, are not punished for the impacts such situations may have on work time and productivity.

Institutions could also look into policies and practices to support and enable staff who work part-time to transition back to full-time roles if the conflicting demands that led them to work part-time are lessened.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — career breaks and other forms of leave

- Are career breaks taken into consideration when evaluating applicants for positions and promotion?
- Are supports provided to those in the research ecosystem who have been affected by interruptions in their career?
- Are the impacts of events such as COVID-19 considered when assessing research productivity, especially for equity-deserving groups?
- Does the institution provide disability, medical or sick leave? Does it offer guidance?
 - If yes, investigate whether such leaves are taken up, and, if not, why not?
 - How are career interruptions due to disability, medical condition or sick leave accounted for in assessment and evaluation?
- How are requests for documentation for medical leave and associated privacy of medical information handled?
- Do policies regarding medical leave explicitly include gender-affirming medical care and gender transition?

Caring responsibilities

Institutions should describe and reflect on their parental leave policies, and whether the parental leave is accounted for when evaluating applicants for hire or promotion.

Many institutions now have parental leave policies that recognize more equitable distributions of parental labour and parental arrangements. In many countries, responsibilities for childcare have historically been assigned to women. It is now recognized that, for women to achieve equity in the workplace, it is essential that workplaces support parental leaves that allow for any workers raising children to take leave and to share equitably in childcare.

Institutions should also look at support for caregiving responsibilities beyond childcare responsibilities. Some examples include caring for elderly parents or other family members, for children with disabilities, and for friends.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — caring responsibilities

- What policies are in place to cover caring responsibilities?
 - Describe the policies in some detail if they exist.
 - To what extent are these policies taken up?
 - How are these policies communicated to staff?
 - Do employees believe there might be negative career repercussions for taking caring-related leaves?
- Reflect on the uptake of maternity, paternity, parental and other forms of leave (caregiving, compassionate).
 - Investigate whether faculty or other employees who have had or adopted children have taken full advantage of leave available.
 - Investigate whether faculty or other employees have had or adopted children but have not taken leave, or not taken the full leave available.
 - If possible, disaggregate maternity, paternity and parental leave data by rank and position within the institution, and reflect on the findings.
- Provide data on return rates after maternity, paternity or parental leave, including any contracts that are not renewed while the person is on such leave.
- Are maternity, paternity and parental leave policies inclusive of trans and gender non-binary people?
- What is the list of coverage and supports provided for specific types of leave?
- Define the coverage and supports provided for maternity, paternity and parental leave, before, during and after the leave. Institutions should also comment on any funding provided to support returning staff.

Mental health

The COVID-19 pandemic has also brought renewed attention to concerns about mental health for those in the postsecondary research ecosystem. Preliminary research suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the mental health of many in the postsecondary sector.¹²¹ Although most institutions provide access to mental health services, demand seems to outstrip available resources, with services operating at capacity, long waitlists, or services unavailable altogether. Some resources for thinking about a systematic approach to mental health in the research ecosystem include the following:

- *Post-Secondary Student Mental Health: Guide to a Systematic Approach*
- Canadian Association for Mental Health (CAMH), *Mental Health in Canada: COVID-19 and Beyond, CAMH Policy Advice 2020*
- *Graduate Student Mental Health Toolkit*, by the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health
- *National Tool-kit for Mental Health and Well-being for Post-secondary Students* in the COVID-19 context and beyond, prepared by the Mental Health Commission of Canada

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — mental health

- What mental health resources and services are available to members of the institution's communities?
- How long do community members generally have to wait to receive mental health services?

Flexible hours/work week

Institutions should consider policies to address flexibility at work and expected working hours. This is especially true of disruptions to work life and location in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. Jurisdiction for establishing expected working hours and work flexibility may not be clear. Part of the environmental scan could include sorting out how this issue is handled on campus. If work flexibility and expected work hours are established by departments, institutions should indicate how many faculties have flexible work arrangements. Depending on the institution, principal investigators or other research team leaders may have flexibility in how they manage the hours for research assistants and other team members; if this is the case, it will be important to know how the institution manages complaints and concerns about work schedules.

Institutions should also pay attention to how domestic labour and caring responsibilities may impact the need for flexible hours. Members of equity-deserving groups may take on more responsibility for domestic labour and caring.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — flexible hours/work week

- What is in place to ensure equitable access to remote/flexible working arrangements?
- What are the expected working hours?
 - Are meetings scheduled outside typical working hours?

Elements of the environmental scan: research excellence

One of the main objectives of the Dimensions program, as articulated in the Dimensions charter, is “to foster increased research excellence through increased EDI.”¹²² This is also a main objective of the Tri-Agency overall.¹²³ Increased EDI in the research ecosystem promotes research excellence in several respects:

- Expanding conceptions of excellence to be more equitable and inclusive
- Expanding the pool of future research leaders
- Promoting more equitable, diverse and inclusive research teams and cultures
- Promoting EDI training and development opportunities
- Incorporating EDI considerations into research

Considering EDI in research

The rationale to address EDI in the research ecosystem often begins with ethical/moral concerns but also includes, importantly, epistemic concerns about knowledge and research content, with the two often inter-linked. Integrating EDI considerations and analysis into research promotes research excellence by:¹²⁴

- Ensuring broad applicability of findings across a wide segment of society;
- Increasing the likelihood that unacknowledged assumptions will be noted and subjected to critical review;
- Preventing overgeneralization of research findings; and
- Improving the reproducibility of research findings.

EDI considerations may not be applicable in all research contexts; however, they are applicable more often than is commonly assumed.

When providing guidance to members of the research community on how to incorporate EDI in their research, NSERC divides the process into five stages, and suggests EDI reflection in each:

- Research questions
- Design of the study
- Methodology and data collection
- Analysis and interpretation
- Dissemination of results

While the independence and academic freedom of the research community are vital, institutions might consider various means to encourage EDI considerations. NSERC, for example, requires evidence that EDI considerations are integrated in research (where appropriate) as part of research proposals, to meet review criteria. If institutions provide internal funding opportunities, they might consider requiring applicants to include documentation that EDI has been considered. With added requirements for funding, institutions could provide support to researchers to help them consider EDI as part of proposals, as well as to help them embed EDI in research more generally.

Compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2) is a condition of funding for researchers and institutions conducting research under the auspices of the Tri-Agency. The SAT should familiarize itself with the principles contained in the statement and adhere to them, in addition to any relevant institutional, provincial or federal laws and guidance. Where applicable and feasible, plans for collecting evidence should be reviewed by the appropriate institutional research ethics board. This is particularly important for collection of evidence that engages with Indigenous communities, staff and students (see Reconciliation and research, below).

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — considering EDI in research

- When assessing which applicants the institution will put forward to the funding agencies (e.g., Canada Research Chair, Master's and PhD applicants) do review committees consider whether applicants have integrated EDI considerations in their research?
- Does the institution ask for evidence that EDI is integrated in research when putting out calls for internal research funding?
- Does the institution provide training and/or support on how to integrate EDI considerations in research for researchers applying for Tri-Agency funding?
- What institutional support is there for researchers implementing EDI-related considerations in their research projects?

EDI in research teams

Addressing EDI concerns related to research teams and relationships is a key aspect in ensuring equitable access and inclusion in research activities. In many areas of scholarship, teams, rather than individuals, conduct and produce research; in those that are less team-oriented, training nevertheless depends on relationship and dynamics between mentor and mentee. Successful training for students and early career researchers often depends on their experiences as members of a team. Research teams and the research environment can be a significant site of oppression.¹²⁵

Research teams are often composed of members at different points along the career pipeline, from undergraduate student assistants, graduate students and postdoctoral researchers, to research team staff, senior team leaders and principal investigators. Research teams that are more diverse, that incorporate a range of diverse perspectives, and that address power imbalances due to privilege and rank in the institutional hierarchy can promote research excellence.¹²⁶ Implementing proactive measures to address barriers faced by historically underrepresented groups and power asymmetries at each of these points in the pathway to attaining full-time work in the research ecosystem can benefit research overall.¹²⁷

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — EDI in research teams

- Do institution-wide policies encourage faculty and staff in charge of establishing research teams to incorporate EDI considerations?
- What initiatives has the institution undertaken to address experiences of racism, sexism, gender discrimination, ableism, trans- and homo-phobia, and other forms of oppression within team dynamics in research?
- Are the methods to file complaints or raise concerns that arise in the research setting publicly available and circulated?

EDI training and development opportunities

EDI training for community members in the research ecosystem is important for at least two reasons. First, it can contribute to building an inclusive and equitable research team as well as work and learning environments. Second, it can foster the skills necessary for applying an EDI lens to research design.

Under the first category, training might include an overview of the basics of EDI: what each of the letters in the “EDI” acronym means; how to create and participate in — either as a senior principal investigator or as a trainee — a research team and community that is inclusive and equitable; and implicit bias training.

Under the second category, EDI training might consist of skills development to assist researchers to apply an EDI lens to their research.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — EDI training and development opportunities

- Does the institution provide or support EDI training focused on building equitable and inclusive research teams and communities?
- Does the institution provide or support EDI training to assist research community members with efforts to incorporate EDI considerations in their research?

Assessing excellence

Dominant notions and metrics of excellence used to assess members of the research community and scholarly output, such as journal impact factor and publication prestige, can miss and de-value many other forms of output, including mentoring and training developing researchers, inter-disciplinary and collaborative research, participation in advisory committees, and other outputs that are not oriented toward academic publication.*

There is growing attention to this concern, including the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), which is being adopted by many research funding agencies and research institutions, including the [Tri-Agency](#). A more inclusive concept of research excellence can address skewed reward and incentive systems, contribute to creating more equitable notions of what it means to be an excellent researcher, and address inequitable views of what counts as research worth doing. It can also contribute to broader and more transparent conceptions of who benefits from, and uses, research outputs.

* See for example efforts taken by Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) during a cluster hire for Black design scholars. The call for applications mentioned issues that are significant to the Black community, and they adopted criteria for qualifications that extended beyond publications and presentations. Criteria applicants had to meet included experience gained through community involvement, and non-academic publications such as community reports: Redden, Elizabeth. “A Long Time Coming.” *Inside Higher ED*, 2020. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/06/15/ontario-design-college-embarks-black-faculty-hiring-initiative>.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — assessing excellence

- Has the institution signed DORA? If yes, how has signing DORA impacted research assessment within the institution?
- What criteria are used to assess research excellence and scholarly output for the purposes of hiring to full-time positions, tenure and promotion?
- What criteria are used to assess research excellence and scholarly output or potential of graduate students (Master's and PhD), as applicants to programs at the institution or as part of funding competitions?

Reconciliation and research

To contribute to reconciliation, the Dimensions charter states that research with, by or impacting Indigenous Peoples must align with the research policies and best practices identified through ongoing engagement with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples and their organizations.¹²⁸ It is important for institutions to reflect on whether and how they are meeting this core principle of the Dimensions charter.

Resources for reflecting on and implementing change related to reconciliation and research include the following:

- Chapter 9 — Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada of the TCPS 2
- Towards reconciliation: 10 Calls to Action to natural scientists working in Canada which includes, for example, recommendations for engagement with Indigenous communities when doing research on Indigenous lands, for understanding the social and political landscape around research sites, and for providing opportunities for members of the Indigenous community to experience and participate in research;¹²⁹ and
- Research 101: A Manifesto for Ethical Research in the Downtown Eastside, which lays out guidelines for conducting ethical and responsible research with people who experience oppression and marginalization.¹³⁰

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action also offer insight into ways that postsecondary institutions are called to embed reconciliation in their work, including the creation of diploma programs in Indigenous languages; the requirement for coursework on Indigenous history and rights for medical and nursing, law, and journalism students; and "skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism."¹³¹ The SAT should incorporate these Calls to Action in its assessment of research policies and practices at the institution.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — reconciliation and research

- What is the institution doing to meet the Dimensions charter principle in relation to Indigenous Peoples?
- When researchers propose research involving Indigenous Peoples, does the institution provide support or guidance during the ethics review process?
- How are Indigenous ways of knowing and engaging supported in the institution?
- How does the institution define “indigenization”?
- What is the institution doing to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples?

Awards

Research activities on campus are sometimes supported by institutional awards, which may contribute significantly to the advancement of research activities. Processes for giving out awards for research activities should be examined with an equity lens.

Equity-deserving groups tend to be underrepresented as nominees for, and winners of, academic and research-related awards or prizes.¹³² Attention and reflection can be given to the various aspects of how such accolades are given out, including practices for nominating candidates for both internal and external awards and prizes; and the composition and practices of committees that make decisions on awards and prizes. Universities Canada provides a helpful overview of this issue in [Implicit Bias and Selection: The Facts and Best Practices](#).

Questions to ask during the environmental scan

- Does the institution take diversity in consideration when giving out awards?

Elements of the environmental scan: institutional administration that supports the research community and its activities

Committee workload and distribution of EDI-related work

Successful EDI-oriented initiatives are the product of diverse groups working together in institutions to make change. As previously mentioned, it is important to ensure that such work is distributed fairly among the faculty and staff. Many individuals of an equity-deserving community, are subject to “committee overload,” or an “equity tax,” when they are members of numerous committees/groups.¹³³ This pressure to represent their communities’ interests may result in less time and capacity for other duties that are seen as more valuable, such as research. Institutions should analyze how committee overload is addressed, including how EDI-related committee work is valued and compensated. Such reflection will then feed into future actions plans to distribute workloads more fairly.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — committee workload and distribution of EDI-related work

- How is EDI-related work compensated?
 - What compensation/recognition is provided?
- How do promotion and performance assessment committees and processes recognize EDI-related activities?

Governance

Institutions must reflect thoughtfully and honestly on their structures and cultures of governance. Successful EDI interventions include clear commitment and involvement from all levels of leadership in the governance of the institution. Governance structures of postsecondary institutions vary, with many universities using a bicameral governance structure, dividing administrative and financial responsibilities (under a board of governors) from academic responsibilities (led by senates, education councils and faculty councils). A clear picture of the institution’s governance structure should be presented, including, for example, an overview of the senior management team and their commitments to EDI, membership of boards and councils as well as influential institutional committees.

Surveys of Canadian postsecondary institutions¹³⁴ show that there is exclusion from leadership positions. The SAT should look into how leadership candidates and governance committee members are identified, whether any considerations are given to equity-deserving groups in the selection of such positions, and what institutions are doing to address any imbalances. Institutions should review whether training is offered to all participants in the governance structure of the institution

to increase awareness and understanding of the EDI landscape and should monitor who takes the training.

An overview of the governance structure and culture should be provided and should reflect on findings from the environmental scan and data collection and analysis.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — governance

- Institutions should reflect on representation of the equity-deserving groups in governance and leadership, both past and present, on boards of governors, education councils, senates and other governance bodies.
 - How are people appointed to the institution's governing bodies and leadership committees?
- Are initiatives underway to address underrepresentation on, and exclusion from, leadership positions?
- What are the positions at the institution that commonly serve as pools of candidates for leadership positions?
 - Is access to, and representation in, those positions equitable, diverse and inclusive?

Leadership

Individuals in leadership positions play an important role in encouraging and practising a culture of respect, trust and belonging in an institution. EDI leadership starts from the top, and leaders should strive to be role models in this area. The SAT can review how the institution ensures that its leaders actively exemplify both diversity and EDI allyship, not only at top leadership levels, but also across all levels of management.

Leaders in the institution are uniquely positioned to influence and determine how past inequitable practices are addressed. At many institutions, this currently includes addressing memorials to people who contributed to oppressive practices in the past. The scan could include discussion about how leadership has handled issues around institutional names, symbols and statues that memorialize those who contributed to inequity and exclusion in Canada.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — leadership

- What is the leadership's commitment to EDI?
- What is the accountability mechanism for monitoring progress and adherence to this commitment?
- Are EDI considerations included in the evaluation of those in leadership positions?
 - Are such considerations enforced?
- Is EDI embedded in leadership mandates?

Training for leadership

Institutions should review whether there are programs to embed EDI in leadership and management skills. If programs exist, institutions should determine how their implementation is monitored.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — training for leadership

- Does training for leadership positions include attention to EDI?
 - What sort of training? Is it a one-off training session, or is it ongoing?

Leadership engagement with the internal and external community

Institutions should review whether regular institutional reports on EDI are provided to the senior leadership and governing board; how community input is taken into consideration during decision-making; and whether there are processes to consider the impact of decisions on employees from equity-deserving groups. Institutions should also determine whether there is a clear process for the leadership team to monitor and be kept informed about the impact of EDI-related changes in the community.

Finally, institutions should review how change is communicated to staff and students; whether this kind of communication takes the realities of certain equity-deserving groups into account; and how impacts on the local community's well-being are measured.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — leadership engagement with the internal and external community

- Describe interactions of leaders with the community.
- How do leaders communicate change to the internal and external community?

Accommodation requests and solutions

Institutions have a duty to accommodate a disability. That duty should be informed by three principles:¹³⁵

- Respect for dignity;
- Individualization; and
- Integration and full participation.

It is highly recommended that accommodation solutions be centrally funded and that individuals' confidentiality be carefully guarded. Centrally funding accommodations means that the institution must create a central office for employment accommodations, staffed appropriately to manage those requests. More precisely, it means that funds never come out of unit budgets; thus, faculty and staff never have to disclose to anyone within their units, and the cost of accommodations does not ever become an issue.

A central office or officer means that accommodation is outside of the human resources department. It keeps chairs, deans and other managers who have power and control over people's careers out of the equation. Also, in many cases until recently, leaders have had no training in accommodation. The central office or officer should function as a neutral party with the needed expertise and a mandate to carefully safeguard privacy.

As part of the third principle, full participation means that employees should be fully involved in any decisions concerning them and have the power to halt the process at any point.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — accommodation requests and solutions

- What is the institution doing to accommodate disabilities?

Existing and ongoing EDI-related initiatives, campaigns and campus-wide programs

The environmental scan should include an overview of current efforts to address social justice and EDI in the institution's community. Many institutions in Canada have carried out initiatives to address inequity, exclusion and marginalization on their campuses, led by institutional leadership, student or faculty groups. There have recently been more such initiatives in response to COVID-19 or the Black Lives Matter movement, for example.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — existing and ongoing EDI-related initiatives, campaigns and campus-wide programs

- What initiatives, campaigns and campus-wide programs related to social justice and EDI have been undertaken or are planned?
 - Look at whether some equity-deserving groups have received less focus than others.
- Are there performance indicators to show that EDI initiatives have had any impact?
- How does the institution organize EDI efforts? Does the institution have a central EDI office? Are mechanisms in place to ensure coordination between EDI efforts in the community?

Communications materials and websites

The environmental scan should examine how EDI considerations have been included when preparing public documents, materials and institutional websites. Are EDI considerations included in documentation such as the strategic plan, annual report, etc.? Institutions should ensure EDI considerations cover a range of perspectives and reflect participation by a broad diversity of individuals.

When institutions are planning communications to reach a targeted audience, that group needs to be consulted.

Institutions need to define how objectives are being reached and have methods to track progress on those objectives. They should also track the effectiveness of the media chosen to publish those institutional messages. They should consider whether the platforms and materials take accessibility into account by adopting principles of universal design or making other accommodations for various impairments (hearing, visual, physical, etc.).

Is there communication, such as webpages, that addresses the needs and concerns of equity-deserving groups? For a positive example, see the [Gender diversity](#) web page created by the University of British Columbia.

The scan may also consider whether the institution acknowledges and promotes the accomplishments of individuals from equity-deserving groups. The institution should devote some thought to how to emphasize those accomplishments.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — communications materials and websites

- Is the institution conducting awareness campaigns? Are the campaigns inclusive?
- Is the institution communicating policies, practices and procedures related to EDI?
- Are there ways to measure whether EDI is understood by all members of the organization?
- Does the SAT encourage employees to take steps and champion initiatives to support inclusivity and well-being?
- How does the institution ensure internal communications reach the targeted audience?
- Does the institution offer activities that encourage open discussion on sensitive or difficult topics?

Events/conferences

Efforts to draw attention to underrepresentation and inequity in academia have included pointing out the lack of diversity in conference and event participation. The environmental scan should investigate how this issue is considered on campus. If there is no institutional policy on conference or event diversity and inclusion, consider the importance of developing policies for events organized by the institution and for other events in which staff participate. If there is a policy, evaluate whether it varies by department or is institution-wide. EDI concerns should go beyond representation and should consider the location of the event (is it accessible?); Date of the event (is it a religious holiday/day of obligation?); Time of day (is it after the workday, and could it conflict with family obligations?).

Examine whether all equity-deserving groups have been asked to provide input into the planning and implementation of events.¹³⁶ Finally, when promoting events, EDI considerations should be taken into account in the messages and media used.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — events/conferences

- Does the institution use an EDI and intersectionality lens in conference planning and organizing?
- Does the institution have a policy on panel and participant diversity for events organized in-house?
 - Is this policy institution-wide? Does it vary by faculty or department?
- Does the institution have a policy on panel and participant diversity for events attended by the institution's community members?

Built environment and infrastructure

Built physical spaces are an important part of creating an inclusive and supportive campus community. The environmental scan should consider how the institution's built environment provides spaces for members of the equity-deserving groups to use as safe, brave or courageous spaces. Institutions should consider implementing inclusive spaces, such as gender-inclusive washrooms, childcare for staff and students, modified lab spaces, etc. In an accessible way to reinforce the EDI commitment. The built environment can also be understood to include symbols, signage and, where appropriate, community and ceremonial space. Naming and memorializing practices, including sculptures, statues and campus and building names should be included. Many names and historical symbols celebrate histories and people that contributed to oppressive structures, practices and institutions that have lasting legacies today. Many places around the world, including Canadian institutions, are discussing how to respond to such histories and legacies.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — built environment and infrastructure

- To what extent is the built environment of the institution accessible to persons with disabilities?
- Does the institution provide gender-inclusive washrooms throughout campus?
 - Are the locations reasonably accessible from all locations on campus?
- Does the institution memorialize, in the form of names, symbols and statues, historical figures whose legacy has been contested?
 - How has the institution responded?
 - What are the views of members from equity-deserving groups on such memorials?

Childcare infrastructure

It is important to describe the institution's childcare provisions and methods of communicating the available supports to the whole research community. Institutions should also comment on how any shortfalls in childcare are addressed. Since childcare is often provided by a third party, the institution should take steps during procurement and contracting to ensure that providers meet standards for sufficient, high-quality childcare, at an affordable cost, during the hours and days when it is needed.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — childcare infrastructure

- Does the institution provide or host adequate childcare services on campus?
- Are there sufficient spaces to meet the need?
- Who has access to the spaces?
- Are hours of operation sufficiently broad to meet the needs those who might need flexibility to accommodate their work hours?

Harassment and complaints

Institutions must have clear policies and procedures for harassment and harassment complaints. Such procedures should include clear guidance on definitions of harassment, where harassment should be reported, support for those making complaints, and procedures for investigating and adjudicating harassment complaints.

Institutions should review whether there are services available to those affected by harassment and assault and those accused of sexual and other types of harassment and assault.* Institutions should look into protective measures in place to avoid re-traumatization of victims and the recurrence of harm. A description of counselling services, designated offices such as sexual assault centres, or other resources to support those harmed by incidents of hate and hostility based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, sex or gender, ability and/or status should be provided.

Institutions should detail the harassment prevention training available; what format it is provided in; and what bystander and ally intervention training is supported. Institutions should reflect whether anti-harassment training seeks to change conduct or to communicate and further the understanding of the institutional commitment to EDI, beyond compliance and avoidance of legal liability. Finally, institutions should provide information on how the effectiveness of such training is measured.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — harassment and complaints

- What is in place to address complaints of harassment?
- Are the harassment policies and procedures communicated to, and known by, the community?
 - Are results of investigations communicated to the community?
- Are harassment policies and procedures monitored for effectiveness and impact?
 - How often?
 - Who does the reviewing?
- Does the institution report, annually or otherwise, on types and frequencies of sexual, racial or other harassment incidents?

* 'Complainant' and 'respondent' are common terms used to those involved in harassment complaints.

Campus security and policing

The role of campus security in racial and other forms of profiling and harassment is a concern. Some institutions have had cases of campus security staff harassing, in particular, Black and Indigenous students and community members. The scan should include a review of campus security and policing generally, with an emphasis on the experiences of equity-deserving groups in interactions with campus security.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — campus security and policing

- Are mechanisms and supports in place for reporting and addressing instances of harassment and discrimination (particularly racism) within the institution?
- Does the security service that provides campus security address all forms of racism, as well as other forms of discrimination, in its training programs for employees?

Pay equity

Over the last several decades, several investigations have found significant pay equity gaps for equity-deserving groups in postsecondary institutions.¹³⁷ Most recently, findings from Statistic Canada in 2020 and a special investigation by the Globe and Mail¹³⁸ have confirmed the persistence of pay gaps. Many postsecondary institutions have conducted internal analyses of pay equity gaps and “anomalous salary gaps.”¹³⁹ These have found significant gaps for equity-deserving groups, and some institutions have implemented pay equity adjustments.* In many instances, such analyses have focused on gender pay equity, with less attention being paid to pay equity for all equity-deserving groups. In many cases, the institution’s unions and collective agreements address pay equity and could be consulted on this issue. Also, depending on the province where an institution is located, pay equity may be mandatory by law (see, for example, Quebec’s *Pay Equity Act* of 1996 addressing salary discrimination in job classes predominantly held by women). While the findings of legally mandated pay equity evaluations provide an excellent starting point for this component of the environmental scan, further analysis will likely be needed to assess policies and practices that lead to pay inequity and to address pay equity issues across the research community.¹⁴⁰

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — pay equity

- Has the institution conducted an internal analysis of pay equity? Has it carried out analyses for faculty and the other identified roles that participate in the research ecosystem?
 - If yes, have the analyses included pay equity for all equity-deserving groups or just some?
- Has the institution adjusted pay to address persistent pay equity gaps?
- How does the institution plan to ensure pay equity, or compliance with pay-equity policies, going forward?

* For example, in 2018 the university of Guelph implemented a gender focused pay adjustment of \$2,050 to all faculty who identify “...as women or as non-male...”: <https://news.uoguelph.ca/2018/06/salary-anomaly-review-complete/>

External community

Institutions are connected in many ways to the external communities in which they are embedded. In some instances, issues in the external community can impact the institution's EDI objectives. It can be helpful for institutions to be aware of those issues as they may impact faculty, staff and students. For example, whether faculty, staff or students choose to attend or leave the institution may be influenced by their experiences, or the experiences of their friends or families, in the wider community.

Connecting and developing relationships with the external community is important for establishing networks of support and partnerships to address EDI challenges the institution faces.

Questions to ask during the environmental scan — external community

- What are the policies related to communicating or engaging with the external community(ies)?
- Does the institution encourage faculty, staff or student participation in local events?

Chapter 5

Data collection and analysis

An abstract graphic consisting of several overlapping yellow and white rectangular shapes. The shapes are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and perspective, with some shapes appearing to be in front of others. The overall effect is a modern, minimalist design.

This chapter elaborates on how to collect and use data to build evidence for EDI work in the Dimensions context. Here again, the recognition stage to which institutions apply will influence the level of data gathering. The data that is collected, both qualitative and quantitative, should be gathered with an eye toward demonstrating the five categories of evidence of the inclusive assessment process. Evidence should be accompanied by a clear description of the reasoning behind its collection and how it is being used to illustrate these criteria and inform the action plan. Data collection and analysis, when done regularly and thoughtfully, can provide an impetus for changes to institutional culture.

The goal of Dimensions is to lead institutions to investigate and understand the roots of inequities and systemic barriers in their campuses and communities. Quantitative and qualitative data, including the analysis of policies and documents, as part of the environmental scan, will support the evidence-based strategy to address improvement in each institution.

Gathering and analyzing data are essential for identifying trends, dismissing assumptions, demonstrating evidence supporting proactive action, and adapting institutional policies. Giving members of the research community an opportunity to engage in the Dimensions process, to self-identify, and to have their voices heard are crucial components of the inclusive development process. As stated in the Dimensions charter, “institutions require qualitative and quantitative data to measure, monitor, understand and publicly report on challenges and progress made.” This assessment, in conjunction with the environmental scan, will need to provide not only a picture of an institution’s demographic makeup, but also of the experiences of equity-deserving groups in its community. This is essential to understanding the current state of an organization’s culture and readiness to implement the systemic and cultural changes needed to support EDI. Institutions will need to demonstrate that they understand the meaning of the information gathered and will be expected to use this data to provide evidence-based approaches to EDI actions.

Data collection is essential to measure the effectiveness of interventions and provides several benefits in EDI work. Without data, institutions do not have a benchmark to know whether the realities of the groups have changed over the years. Good data can help to identify issues and solutions, measure changes and progress, and provide impetus for trust and support from decision-makers and stakeholders.

The SAT should collect the demographic and experiential data outlined in this chapter. It will be up to the SAT to determine which information is relevant to present in its Dimensions application. It does not have to present evidence collected visually or at a granular level in the application. However, it should be clear that the application is informed by the data that was collected. It should also be evident from the information presented that the SAT engaged with its institution's research community in a holistic and comprehensive way. The application should provide not only evidence that speaks to the EDI successes of an institution, but should also demonstrate that the institution is conducting an honest and thorough assessment of its barriers, gaps, and areas for improvement, and that this information is being used to generate a plan for change that is appropriate, contextually grounded and self-aware.

Some equity-deserving communities have historically experienced particularly egregious privacy violations in data collection and data sharing by government and academic institutions, which may lead to reluctance to participate in data collection. Involvement from community stakeholders from the initial planning phase to the data use or release will help to mitigate this.

In general, the collection of personal data should be limited to information needed to provide evidence for the questions that are being asked or the issues that are being addressed. If institutions have previously gathered data as part of other engagement efforts, they can also choose to use that evidence in applying for Dimensions (see existing internal evidence, below).

The scope of data collection will vary based on institutional context; at a bare minimum, data should include demographic and experiential data from individuals at the institution who engage in research. However, the research community at its broadest entails a much wider scope. The SAT is responsible for ensuring that its work encompasses its own research community and for providing justification for the inclusion and exclusion criteria used to make this assessment.

To avoid survey fatigue, institutions need to be strategic when collecting data. Good communication is important at all stages of the evidence-gathering process. Communicating how results were obtained and used to effect change helps to show the institution's community how participants' time and comments were valued and encourages trust and collaboration in future.

See Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages for requirements for data collection and analysis for each stage.

Existing internal evidence

The SAT should first identify existing data, the staff familiar with that data, and the policies affecting access to the data. Where applicable, this can be done in co-operation with an institution's analytics office or an institutional analyst who can provide expertise in data collection, reporting, management and analysis for institutional data. The Canadian institutional research and planning association (CIRPA) is a national association designed to promote and advance the study and practice of institutional research and planning across Canada. Its membership includes universities and colleges, and it can provide an excellent starting place for engagement.

Using existing data may prove challenging, as data may have been collected for various purposes (faculty-specific, student recruitment, human resource planning, etc.) And using different metrics over time, making the collection and comparison of internal data difficult. Moreover, there may be challenges in accessing the data or in receiving permission to use it in the self-assessment context, depending on the participants' consent for usage of the data at the time of collection. It is important to collaborate with the privacy office at your institution or with privacy experts knowledgeable about provincial and relevant federal regulations on access and use of existing data.

When an institution examines new internal data, it should use historical institutional data collected in a similar format as a comparator. Ideally, internal data should be benchmarked against data from two or more preceding years to allow the analysis of trends.

An institution may have difficulty providing historical internal data, especially if it has only recently become involved in EDI. While some data gaps are expected in Dimensions applications, the SAT should identify these data/information gaps and explain how they will be addressed going forward. Quantitative and qualitative information that are considered critical are those needed to clarify, adjust and guide the development of current or future policies, initiatives, missions and long-term goals. Beyond the collection of self-identification and demographic information and the inclusion of the five identified groups, other aspects of this data will vary by institution and institutional goals.

Researchers may have collected some internal data in the context of academic research. When this is the case, policies and guidance for the secondary use of research data will need to be followed. The Research Ethics Board* could provide guidance.

Some data is already collected by institutions participating in the CRC program, the Federal Contractors Program (FCP) or the university and College Academic Staff System (UCASS) to fulfill EDI reporting requirements. The CRC requirements were established after a complaint by eight female researchers¹⁴¹ to the Canadian Human Rights Commission regarding the underrepresentation of individuals from equity-deserving groups.

* If data has been collected at or by the institution in the past in the context of academic research projects, its secondary use as part of the Dimensions project may require approval by the relevant Research Ethics Board. Be sure to obtain the appropriate approvals for any secondary use of existing data.

Collecting evidence

The Dimensions application requires institutions to investigate the demographic diversity of their institution's research community. Depending on the stage of recognition, institutions could include data disaggregated by the five identified groups. When possible, the SAT should consider and address the granularity of experiences in these groups and may also investigate the experiences of other groups, where appropriate to an institution's given context. This could include linguistic diversity, religious affiliation or immigration status.

Disaggregation is the practice of dividing a category into its component parts. In the context of the data collection and analysis involved in Dimensions, we refer to disaggregation as taking a more granular look at both demographic aspects and lived experience at an institution. For example, knowing how many individuals in an institution self-identify as racialized does little to shed light on how the individual and collective experiences of racism facing one racialized group differ from those faced by another. As other examples, individuals with cognitive or learning disabilities will face different barriers than individuals with physical disabilities, and cisgender women will experience sexism differently from their transgender and non-binary colleagues.

Beyond the importance of gathering evidence, Dimensions values how this evidence is used. An effective institutional action plan will establish early how data will be operationalized to inform key institutional metrics and shape activities and programs. A wide range of evidence should be used for further self-reflection and for identification of EDI issues.

If such institutional data-collection processes do not already exist, or if these data are not available, the SAT will need to work with the appropriate offices and personnel to develop a data-collection plan. A strong engagement strategy and a detailed communications plan will facilitate the data-collection work. The trust built throughout the process should encourage individuals to self-identify. Institutions should clearly indicate that any data obtained will not be used in another way in the future without consent. For example, institutions should ensure that any collected data will not be used for secondary research purposes unless consent has been explicitly obtained for such use.

Many faculty and students do not feel comfortable self-identifying when asked to provide data to postsecondary institutions; for example, when applying for a position or for admission to a university or college. Some communities fear that disclosing their self-identification data may impact professional or academic opportunities or advancement. The establishment of trust requires that the data be both collected and used in a transparent and respectful way.

For a successful self-assessment, an institution needs to determine where targeted action is necessary, as well as how the success of this action will be measured. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data is crucial in attaining a picture of the institution, both in terms of understanding *what the situation is* (quantitative) and *how it is experienced* (qualitative). In line with calls to diversify and Indigenize research methodologies in Canada, institutions are encouraged to collect and present a wide range of evidence that recognizes the plurality of methods for information-gathering, and to find ways to collaborate with experts in these methodologies drawn from their own communities, where appropriate. A successful Dimensions application will show how the methodologies used and the evidence gathered are commensurate with the goals of the program overall, and how this evidence supports the action plan. Although there is no specific order in which the data must be collected, quantitative data, and in particular self-identification data, will be indispensable in understanding key target areas for the qualitative component.

It will be important to frame a narrative for data collection and to provide this narrative to the community upfront, including a transparent discussion of questions like:

- Why is data collected?
- How will it be used?
- Whom will it benefit, and more specifically, how will it benefit the people who provide the data?

A data governance and ethics plan should be developed for the application process and should subsequently be made available to institutional community members as transparently as possible. Participants in data collection should be made aware of what data is being collected and why, how it is being protected and shared, and what the risks are. Surveys or data-collection forms should be accompanied by a notice of collection, vetted by institutional privacy officers and experts, that outlines this information. Communications about data collection should also explain how data will be reported in both its aggregated and/or disaggregated forms. Governance, ethics and communications should account not only for risk of disclosure but also for the harms that may come from disclosure. Special attention should be paid to the fact that certain groups will be more stigmatized (e.g., Those with mental health disabilities). Therefore, information about those groups carries higher risks to participants if disclosed.

One of the main challenges of collecting data is the low response rate to surveys, which could lead to inaccurate results and mask equity-related gaps rather than reveal them. The use of champions or specially chosen advocates across the campus could help promote participation in surveys.

Bias in evidence collection

SATs should be aware that bias and discrimination can arise at any stage of data collection and analysis, from design to reporting. “Data bias” can be generally understood as the conscious or unconscious embedding of individual or systemic bias in the various aspects of building and using a data set. Common data biases include:

- **confirmation bias**, in which the data gatherers privilege evidence that supports their own initial theories;
- **interpretation bias**, in which asking the same question in multiple ways or looking at the same data from multiple perspectives can lead to inconsistent responses; and
- **information bias**, in which the data is misidentified or misclassified.

All of these analytic errors, which can occur as a result of human or computer intervention, may be generated or compounded by conscious or unconscious bias regarding race, gender, disability and other aspects of identity.

When looking at internal data, SATs should bear in mind that administrative data may be affected by data bias. In using existing data, be aware of the history of its collection, especially the social context in which it was collected. The question of whose data is or is not collected and retained reflects the values and historical and cultural context of an institution. While marginalized individuals are frequently *excluded* from data collection in the research context, in some cases they may be *overrepresented* in administrative data, as their marginality renders them the targets of increased surveillance and scrutiny.¹⁴²

Consider, for example, the collection of racial and ethnographic information used to apply an enrolment “threshold” in Canadian universities limiting the number of Jewish students who could attend in the first half of the 20th century. There have been concerns in recent years that institutions would attempt to similarly limit the enrolment of Asian students.¹⁴³ When using historical datasets, institutions must avoid taking at face value that the methodology used was sound or that the data integrity is intact. In using this data, it is critical to be aware of and identify its limitations.

To prevent data bias, institutions may consider how they could involve the communities being asked to provide data in the process of developing data-collection plans. Furthermore, institutions could consider establishing partnerships with third parties who specialize in data collection. This might involve establishing connections between academia and the private sector.

Key points to consider

- Involve the communities in developing the methodology and content from start to finish.
- Be upfront about potential privacy considerations.
- Consider establishing partnerships with third parties; connections between academia and the private sector may be beneficial to data collection.

Data governance and privacy considerations

Most institutions already have internal measures to ensure the privacy and prevent the disclosure of identifying characteristics. The risk of privacy issues is a serious concern and may be exacerbated in small institutions. In communities with low numbers of people who identify as a member of an equity-deserving group, it may be possible to identify individuals even when data sets have been de-identified this may complicate providing necessary data and information for some institutions.

All data must be collected using appropriate mechanisms for obtaining consent and providing information on how the data will be collected, protected, stored, retained and used. As regulations governing the collection and use of data vary by province and territory, the SAT is responsible for collaborating with the institution's privacy or information office to determine which standards to apply.

Who has access?

It is important to balance the needs for transparency in data collection and publication of findings with the need to protect the privacy and confidentiality of those participating in the self-assessment research. Access to identifiable raw data should be limited to those who need access. If an institution has a data access or data management office or officer, this person or team should be included in the SAT's work to determine this issue.

Consent to use of previously collected data

For the use of existing data (such as previously collected data used for benchmark purposes), the team will need to verify that the data is appropriate for secondary use under the law, and, where applicable, to obtain the necessary permissions for use.

Note that data collected as part of academic research and data collected for institutional information are often governed under different laws, policies and practices. SATs should be aware of the context in which the data was collected.

Infrastructure

As part of the application, the team should indicate what infrastructure currently exists at the institution to support data collection, what further infrastructure is needed, and how they intend to ensure the necessary supports are put in place. This includes digital and physical space for storage, personnel and budget.

Storage

The SAT should provide a clear plan for data storage that is commensurate with the necessary privacy and confidentiality considerations. This should include, at a minimum, storage policies for both physical and digital data that protect both privacy and data integrity, and data retention policies.

Suppression of small numbers

In the presentation of findings, any data falling below an n of 10 (or an n determined by the institution) should be suppressed. This can include situations in which data about an individual is not identifiable on its own but may become identifiable when combined with other data to perform an intersectional analysis. Alternatively, in some cases, suppression of small numbers may be avoided by presenting data in terms of percentages, rather than raw numbers.

On a case-by-case basis, the SAT may choose to suppress even larger numbers, based on factors such as the sensitivity of the data, the potential harm that could result from identification, and the granularity of the data. For more recommendations on reporting on small cell sizes, consider the guidelines *Privacy Implementation Notice 2020-03: Protecting privacy when releasing information about a small number of individuals* by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat for organizations complying with the *Privacy Act*.¹⁴⁴

Methodologies

Every methodology used for data collection and analysis entails particular expertise, technical requirements, and privacy and confidentiality considerations. If the SAT is using a methodology that is unfamiliar to its members, it should reach out to someone with expertise to advise on or run this portion of the data collection and analysis. This may include researchers in the institution, external consultants, or institutional data officers or analysts. Qualitative data presents its own challenges with regard to privacy, as individual stories disclosed in interviews, focus groups or other settings may be identifying. Privacy, confidentiality and access to data will need to be taken into account in study design.

In all cases, it will be important to be aware of the power differentials between those conducting the data collection and participants. Evidence collection should never be conducted by someone with power over the participants, such as hiring, promotion or grading. Participation in these processes should never be tied in any way to academic or professional performance review. Appropriate mechanisms should be put in place to provide follow-up support for anyone who experiences trauma or difficult emotions resulting from participation in these exercises.

The appropriate methodologies will vary based on institutional context, SAT size and capacity, targeted participants and the categories of evidence being sought. Some qualitative methodologies that are often used in EDI work include interviews and focus groups, case studies, exit interviews and climate assessments.

Climate assessments or climate surveys are studies of employees' perceptions of and perspectives on an organization. The surveys address attitudes and concerns, and their findings can help the organization work with employees to make positive changes. Climate assessments can be generated by surveys tailored to the community and resources of a given institution and presented as a broad starting point. Areas that can be explored via climate assessments include experiences of work-life balance, perceived respect and value, workload, career satisfaction, exclusion, harassment and discrimination.¹⁴⁵ The results

of a climate assessment can then be used to identify areas for further, more targeted engagement. For example, if a climate assessment finds that faculty members with disabilities report a higher workload and lower satisfaction with work-life balance, a focus group could then be established to examine this disparity in more depth.

The SAT should also look to engage respectfully and collaboratively with methodologies and scholarship that emerge concerning equity-deserving groups, including queer theory and gender studies, disability theory, critical race theory, and Indigenous epistemologies.* The SAT should be mindful of the fact that one form of oppression faced by individuals from equity-deserving communities is the suppression of research methodologies and outputs that are informed by their marginalization. For more information on how to approach your community of experts to start this discussion, see Chapter 3 — Engagement strategy.

Quantitative evidence

Collecting quantitative data allows the institution to get a clear picture of its population and to analyze gaps in EDI in the research ecosystem. This data can be fed into a decision-making dashboard and used to make standalone assessments and evidence-based decisions. It can also better inform which qualitative data should be collected to understand the real experience of employees and students. The core quantitative data that must be collected is self-identification data, which will allow an institution to understand the demographic aspects of its research community. Other types of quantitative data collection and analysis, including surveys using Likert scales and other types of rating scales, can be tailored to the types of questions the institution wants to address.

Quantitative data can include not only personal information about identity, but also information on items such as the number of hours spent by researchers on specific tasks, involvement in committees and working groups, salary and tenure.¹⁴⁶ Reaching adequate response rates for statistically relevant data may be difficult, particularly for surveys. It will be important to weigh this in considering survey design and frequency.

While much of this analysis will emerge in the qualitative component of the work, it will be crucial to present an intersectional analysis of the quantitative data, to the extent possible. This can include not only an intersection of identities, but also roles, examining, for instance, the barriers to career progression for women who are support staff versus men in support staff positions, as well as women in academic positions.¹⁴⁷

For the Dimensions application, the requirements for each recognition stage are listed in the corresponding application forms. In general, however, the principle of contextuality that is core to the program encourages institutions to include the quantitative data that best reflects their context issues. Where appropriate in the institution's application, choices about which data to include and exclude should be explained and a rationale provided.

* For more discussion of using diverse and culturally appropriate methodologies in EDI research and data collection, consider the *Handbook of Research Methods in Diversity Management, Equality and Inclusion at Work* (2018), in particular chapters five (“Queered methodologies for equality, diversity and inclusion researchers”), eight (“Theorizing Diversity and (In) equality Through the Lens of Critical Discourse Analysis”), nine (“Feminist methods and the study of gendering of organizations over time”), and ten (“Indigenous research: ontologies, axiologies, epistemologies and methodologies”). Elsewhere, as a starting place, see “Understanding Disability Frameworks in Higher Education Research” (Brown et al, 2019), “QuantCrit: rectifying quantitative methods through critical race theory” (Garcia et al, 2017), and “Anti-Black Racism in Education: School Leaders’ Journey of Resistance and Hope” (Lopez) in the *Handbook on Promoting Social Justice in Education* (2020).

Researchers (faculty and staff)

Data that is disaggregated by faculty, department or discipline (where feasible) can also help to provide a clear snapshot of areas of challenge within an institution. Depending on the size of the faculties, demographic data may need to be either suppressed or presented only in terms of percentage to protect faculty privacy. Another way to protect privacy is to disaggregate the data into broad areas, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and business, humanities, health, arts, social science and education (BHASE).

Postdoctoral researchers are generally classified as academic and/or research staff. However, they may face specific challenges or present a different demographic breakdown. Wherever possible, data related to postdoctoral students should be disaggregated from data on other academic staff.

More generally, data related to job classification should be included where possible. Disaggregating by job classification could be a helpful tool for uncovering EDI-related patterns for people in different roles in the research ecosystem. Other data relevant to an EDI analysis would include salary differentials, information on tenure track positions and time required to obtain tenure, and teaching and committee loads.

Research trainees

Information collected on student researchers and research assistants could be disaggregated by education level and faculty or program, where applicable and feasible. Students who are employed by the institution are frequently in precarious, part-time contract positions. Graduate students, in particular, experience significant power imbalances in their current research and teaching positions. As well, power imbalances during graduate work can affect a student's entire career, given the competitive nature of academic job searches and how academic reputation acquired during graduate work impacts career trajectory. The brief tenure of these contracts can also mean a rapidly shifting population, making it difficult to track demographic information. This should be taken into account in the frequency of data collection and in the analysis. For students under the age of 18, a different approach to consent to research participation may be required, depending on the risks and type of participation.

Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire

One source that may be useful for institutions that have not yet collected demographic data is the Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire, which was developed as a central piece of the Tri-Agency's commitment to EDI (see Appendix 3 – Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire for full text). The data collected via this questionnaire provides information on the diversity of the population and increases capacity to monitor EDI progress, to recognize and remove barriers, and to design new measures to achieve greater EDI in the research enterprise.¹⁴⁸ If the institution does not have a current survey instrument, it could consider using this questionnaire or adapting it to the needs of the institution for its initial survey. Based on survey responses that provide a snapshot of the institution's demographic aspects, the institution can then develop further quantitative methodologies to address the priorities set by the institution.

The questionnaire is required for applicants and co-applicants to all Tri-Agency programs. The questions are primarily based on the current standard used by Statistics Canada in the Census, and originally captured the four designated groups named under the 1995 *Employment Equity Act* — women, Aboriginal Peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

The questionnaire was revised in 2020, in light of legal requirements, new legislation, and feedback from the research community. The revised questionnaire asks about eight Dimensions of identity, adding sexual orientation and language to the previous questions

Key points to consider

- Granularity of analysis will depend on several institutional factors, including resources, size and priorities.
- Disaggregating the data as much as feasible will allow a more accurate picture of the institution to emerge.
- Choices of which data to include or exclude should be justified in the application.

Qualitative evidence

The SAT will need to conduct a thorough review of qualitative information on the experiences of members of the research community. Understanding qualitative experience is critical, as having a *diverse* institution in terms of numbers is not the same as having an *inclusive* institution in terms of member experience.¹⁴⁹ Qualitative data will be particularly important to demonstrate to reviewers how institutional priorities were set. This data can also be used to provide evidence of engagement with staff and to better explain the structures, systems and culture in the institution.

Qualitative data collection takes a wide variety of forms, and Dimensions is not prescriptive as to what forms are used, as the most appropriate approaches vary widely based on institutional context. The SAT should determine the best method(s) for assessing the climate for each focus population. In addition to more traditional forms of qualitative data collection, such as interviews and focus groups, applicants are encouraged to use creative methodologies, including approaches based on art and story-telling, which can help to improve accessibility of the research to a wider diversity of participants.¹⁵⁰ In accordance with the principle of “nothing about us without us,” stakeholders from the community’s equity-deserving groups should be consulted at each step of the data-collection process, from study design to presentation and use of findings.

Key points to consider

- The SAT should conduct a thorough review to understand qualitative experiences of members of the institution.
- Qualitative data should inform the way that institutional priorities are set.
- Dimensions is not prescriptive on the data collection and analysis approaches to use. The SAT will need to be mindful of using the most appropriate data-collection and analysis methods and tools, based on their institutional context.

Guidance and practices

OCAP principles and Indigenous-led engagement

When engaging with First Nations, it is important to understand the OCAP principles, a tool for engagement with First Nations data, information and cultural knowledge. OCAP stands for the Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession of such information, which must rest with the First Nations involved. The First Nations Information Governance Centre provides additional guidance and expertise in respectful and culturally appropriate research and engagement with First Nations communities. While the OCAP principles apply specifically to First Nations' jurisdiction over their own communities and members' data and knowledge, they do not apply broadly to all Indigenous communities. For a broader perspective on developing appropriate Indigenous-led engagement and knowledge-collection, *Building Indigenous-led Engagement Frameworks* provides an excellent starting place in addition to pointing to further resources.¹⁵¹

Accessibility

The accessibility of the research design and processes needs to be taken into account and outlined in the research plan. Accessibility factors include the times at which events are held, the accessibility of physical or virtual spaces where research takes place, the availability of childcare to participants (where relevant), the ability to provide captioning, American Sign Language, Langue des signes du Québec and/or CART or captioning services or translation services, as needed, and the design of any recruitment materials. Images should have alternative text screenreaders, video material should have captioning, and all documents should be readily available in multiple formats as needed and appropriate. Documents and webpages should meet accessibility standards for users who use screenreaders. These accessibility needs should be taken into consideration well in advance of data collection, and the plan for accessibility should be proactive rather than responsive. What makes an event or process accessible is not only a matter of access to physical space and documentation, but also a matter of creating a process that is emotionally and culturally “safe,” a space that enables people to express themselves vulnerably to the degree to which they choose. Providing pronoun badges, making thoughtful and honest land acknowledgements, and recognizing and embracing not only different communication needs but also preferences, all contribute as well to the accessibility of this process.

Evidence and harm

In collecting new evidence and analyzing existing evidence, it is crucial to remember that the communities being engaged have faced and continue to face egregious harms at the hands of research communities, leading to both trauma and broken trust. Evidence collection for EDI work requires a collaborative process that takes these factors into account and uses study designs developed to help mitigate harmful impacts. It should follow the principle of “nothing about us without us,” meaning that this work requires the full and direct participation of those facing inequities throughout the process.

Both the individuals undertaking data collection designed to uncover oppressive or harmful experiences and practices¹⁵² and the participants can suffer from burnout.¹⁵³ It is important for protocols to include appropriate stopping rules and access to mental health services or ways to debrief from the process when it risks bringing up difficult emotions or traumatic experiences. It is also important to note the toll that emotionally taxing data collection can take on moderators and facilitators. “Vicarious traumatization, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma all refer to the potentially negative impact of working with trauma survivors, including survivors of interpersonal violence, on caregivers, including therapists, counselors, advocates, and volunteers.”¹⁵⁴ The SAT’s plan should include mitigation strategies to protect participants and facilitators from the emotional toll of conversations about oppression.¹⁵⁵

In the case of participatory research, particularly when participation is time-consuming, best practices include compensation for everyone involved, commensurate with the labour output. For research participants, this may mean a small honorarium or gift, of a scale that recognizes the value of the work but is not coercive. When research facilitators are recruited from outside the SAT, it is important these services be compensated. For facilitators from inside the institution but outside of the SAT, a reduction in course load could also be considered appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

Benchmarking and comparing data

An institution should seek to benchmark itself with a comparator, whenever possible. A benchmark is a standard or a point of reference that can be used for comparison or assessment. For example, demographic data at the national, provincial/territorial or local level can be used as a benchmark to assess whether an institution’s population is representative of its broader community. Similarly, an institution could use its own historical demographic data as a benchmark to compare current data and assess whether there has been growth or where more work is needed. Identifying benchmarks in and outside the organization can drive self-reflection and identify gaps, strengths and weaknesses. Most of all, it will facilitate the creation of a baseline to measure success of implemented initiatives. Commitment to EDI requires evidence that not only provides a snapshot in time of an institution but also tracks the changes in demographics and experiences over time.

Dimensions is not prescriptive as to what data is used for benchmarking, as it will depend upon the institutional context and the group in question. If the institution has existing internal data, this should be incorporated into the analysis.

There are several challenges to the use of internal and external comparator data in the self-assessment process. First, there may be a paucity of available comparator data. Second, internal data that does exist may be scattered throughout the institution. Third, the metrics used for the data collection may be dated or have evolved since a particular set of benchmark data was collected, making comparison to newly collected data difficult. Finally, even if the data exists, is findable and provides a useful comparison, integrating it into an existing assessment will depend on the consent process used when it was initially collected. Recognizing all of this, it will be up to the SAT to determine which sources help to provide the most useful comparator data, and to justify these decisions in the application.

Alternatively, or in addition to existing data, several external data sources can be used to benchmark institutional progress. While some institutions (universities) may wish to benchmark their populations against national data (the census, for example) since they draw faculty and students from across Canada, others, such as colleges, CEGEPs and polytechnics, may wish to benchmark their student population against municipal or regional data. For larger institutions, data collected for the FCP, the UCASS and the CRC program would present a good place to start looking at externally collected information.

Many data collection systems, internal and external, have not historically collected data on all five identified groups; in particular, LGBTQ2+ populations have been under-identified. Groups may not be disaggregated in a way that provides a full picture (for instance, the category of racialized persons may not be further disaggregated). Given likely discrepancies between newer versus older data collection systems, institutions should be cautious when making comparisons for benchmarking and comparing purposes — be careful to not compare data sets that do not contain the same equity-deserving group parameters and definitions.

For a further list of tools for benchmarking, including examples, see Appendix 4 – Suggested datasets and tools for benchmarking.

Key points to consider

- The appropriate source of benchmark data will depend on institutional context.
- In addition to federal data such as the Census, benchmark data can come from municipal or provincial governments, professional associations, or any other relevant source that can help to provide a snapshot of the broader context in which an institution is situated.
- Internally collected data will provide the best opportunity to note trends in the institution, while external benchmark data will help to provide a comparator to the broader research ecosystem.

Analyzing and presenting the evidence

The analysis of the data should inform a comprehensive, in-depth, intersectional understanding of the contexts, manifestations and experiences that result from inequities, underrepresentation and exclusion among all postsecondary community members.

Dimensions is not prescriptive as to how institutions analyze data. Appropriate methodologies and tools for data analysis will vary based on institutional context, SAT size and capacity, targeted participants and the categories of evidence being used.

Disaggregation of data is a critical component to understand the unique and specific experiences of equity-deserving groups.

In analyzing data, it will be important to look at who is involved in this process and how findings are being interpreted. There should not be a singular view or lens in the analysis, and institutions may wish to interpret findings working with those consulted, to ensure the findings presented are an accurate representation of the data collected.

Meaningful analysis of data should not be the end point. Institutions should share findings and use the information to develop actions.

Numbers, tables and graphs should be used to support claims and actions, including the development of institutional priorities, and to highlight trends. Institutions should provide a broad picture of the research community as a whole, as well as more focused observations. The final application will need to showcase both institutional successes and gaps, and to demonstrate a deep understanding of the institutional context.

Tables and graphs alone tell only part of the story, and too many tables and graphs can be overwhelming. Make use of data visualizations as a way to highlight key points, not as a replacement for *interpreting* the data.

When an SAT uses data to inform a particular point in the action plan, the rationale and the actual action point should be embedded in the narrative, with a cross-reference to the full action plan. Institutions should demonstrate how effectively data, evaluation and action plans have been linked. Since the data needs of an institution will change over time as a clearer picture emerges, the team should also provide a plan for how data-collection processes will be improved over time, including community feedback on the process and expanded infrastructure, where possible.

Accessibility is an important consideration in the presentation of findings. Accessibility is a broad subject, beyond the scope of this handbook, but there are many good resources to help institutions produce materials that comply with current standards.*

* For further guidance on creating accessible data visualizations, consider guidance such as that offered here: <https://accessibility.digital.gov/visual-design/data-visualizations/>; here: <https://medium.com/nightingale/data-visualization-accessibility-where-are-we-now-and-whats-next-b2c9eeac4e8b>; and here: <https://www.microsoft.com/design/inclusive/>

Resources on accessibility for presentation of data:

- [Accessibility Fundamentals Overview | Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\) | W3C](#)
- [Design And Develop Overview | Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\) | W3C](#)
- [Dos and don'ts on designing for accessibility - Accessibility in government \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Canadian Website Accessibility Guidelines in 2022 - hostingcanada.org](#)
- [Blogue - GTI Canada](#)
- [How to make websites accessible | ontario.ca](#)
- [Accessible Documents | Accessibility Hub \(queensu.ca\)](#)
- [Creating Accessible Documents - Education Commons \(utoronto.ca\)](#)
- [Making Documents Accessible - CSPS \(csps-efpc.gc.ca\)](#)

Chapter 6

Action plan



This section of the handbook provides practical information to develop the Dimensions action plan. Regardless of which recognition stage an institution applies for, it must submit an action plan as part of the application.

- | Initiatives and programs identified in the action plan should link to the evidence gathered from engagement strategy, environmental scan, data collection and intersectional analysis of the data gathered. It will be important for the SAT to communicate the action plan across the institution and for senior leadership to support the initiatives elaborated. As actions are implemented, they should be linked to the five evidence categories of the Dimensions assessment (see Chapter 1 – Inclusive assessment).

Action plans will vary from one institution to the other, since they should be based on context-specific realities facing an institution. Although details will differ, in all action plans, the *voices* of the institution's research community should resonate throughout the plan.

Action plans should cover initiatives and aspirations for the next five years. Throughout the five years, institutions should monitor and assess the impact of actions. To move through the Dimensions recognition stages, institutions should carry out their action plan, remaining flexible to adapt and evolve to changing contexts and political/institutional realities.

Once an institution has received Dimensions recognition, following the application and review process, action plan must be published online.

Developing a Dimensions action plan

A Dimensions action plan should provide a roadmap of activities and interventions in an institution, which should bring about measurable changes to meet to an institution's identified gaps and needs (uncovered through the data collection and analysis, engagement, and/or environmental scan), and help contribute to changing the institution's research community and culture. The actions should be tied to what issues the voices have identified.

To develop targeted actions, institutions should be transparent about how they will respond to the findings from evidence collected. An effective action plan will set specific targets within the five-year cycle, provide clear measures for achieving objectives and respond to identified gaps and issues. A logical and structured approach to action planning involves introspection, reflection, analysis of the evidence (qualitative and quantitative data), and relevant and meaningful actions. A draft of the action plan should be started at the beginning of the Dimensions process and modified over time as findings emerge.

Action plans also act as accountability mechanisms to track progress and measure results. They help ensure that all members of an institution are on the same page regarding who is responsible for actions, the practical ways that they will complete actions, and the timeframe to achieve different actions within a Dimensions cycle. Institutions are encouraged to develop a communications strategy for the action plan so that there is a broader dissemination of the EDI work being undertaken across the research community.

When institutions apply for the subsequent stage of recognition, or for renewal of recognition already received, they must demonstrate progress made on the original action plan.

In developing their Dimensions action plan, institutions should ask themselves:

What do we want to achieve?	<p>A critical component of Dimensions is ensuring that the voices of equity-deserving groups in the research community are central to the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Who is the action aimed at?● How will it be implemented?
Why are we undertaking the action?	<p>The rationale for actions should link to the evidence gathered and respond to gaps identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Why is the action necessary?● How are the results of engagement and data collection and analysis being advanced through these actions?

<p>When will the action start and finish?</p>	<p>In the five-year cycle of the recognition stages, institutions should identify more specific dates for actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dates for milestones ● Dates for implementation, completion, review and evaluation
<p>Who will ensure the action is achieved?</p>	<p>As a part of the evidence of commitment, institutions must ensure that responsibility for actions is clearly outlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who is accountable for actions? ● Who is implementing actions?
<p>How will we know if we have achieved our goal(s)?</p>	<p>Institutions should continuously review and evaluate the impact of actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Was the action effective to achieve your overall goal? ● Have numerical or otherwise measurable targets been established?

The action plan can follow what is commonly known as a SMART¹⁵⁶ process (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound).

Defining the objectives

What does the institution want to achieve?

The self-assessment and quantitative and qualitative data will yield information that can demonstrate trends, areas for intervention, and strengths and weaknesses in current practices. Addressing all of the issues identified by the SAT may require significant time and resources. Institutions should critically examine what is feasible and what changes should be prioritized. Institutions should avoid trying to do too much too quickly, although they may still allow themselves some quick wins. It is better to have meaningful and concrete impact for a smaller number of initiatives rather than small advances in several broad initiatives that may not respond to the evidence gathered.

This does not mean that other gaps and inequities identified should be ignored. Institutions should still be transparent about their limitations and consider addressing these issues in the future.

Institutions should be open about the actions that are being prioritized and the rationale behind those priorities. For example:

- Is an action being prioritized because quantitative data shows a significant discrepancy between the rates of hiring for a specific group in a research department in comparison to the institution's population?
- Do comments from qualitative inquiry signal that there have been inequitable distributions of resources in a specific area?
- Are existing programs or policies now proving to have a detrimental or negative impact on certain members of the institution?

Institutions should articulate **what** they are responding to through their actions and **how** decisions were made to prioritize the action. The rationale presented should be connected to the qualitative and quantitative data, the environmental scan and the voices.

Institutions should be clear about whom in the institution they will be targeting in their five-year action plan. Institutions should provide a rationale for why a role involved in the research community (see Chapter 1 – inclusive assessment) has been chosen as the focus for actions and how the findings from their data analysis and engagement reflect the need to focus on the chosen role(s). For example, if an institution focuses on all the groups facing inequities within the research and teaching staff, the evidence provided in the application should clarify why actions are being targeted to this role in particular.

Outlining the rationale

Why is the action being undertaken?

Once institutions have identified the changes needed, specific initiatives, programs and tools should be established to achieve these changes. Institutions should be clear about how the actions result in desired outcomes. The data and analysis should be the backbone of developing actions.

Use an intersectional methodology to choose actions

From the self-assessment, institutions will have collected ample data. Disaggregation of data can help provide deeper insight into the realities faced by equity-deserving groups in the institution. It will be important to ensure that the experiences of those who have intersectional identities¹⁵⁷ are not overlooked.¹⁵⁸ Thus, institutions should avoid developing objectives that broadly consider communities as a singular group, and instead aim to further disaggregate data on equity-deserving groups to understand whether intersectional identities demonstrate significant challenges and barriers in that institution.

Although, in some instances, broader initiatives play an important role in creating cultural change, such initiatives are insufficient to truly provide the support that is needed to transform currently inequitable systems and practices.

Targeted actions will be required to tackle recurring biases and barriers faced by members of certain communities (e.g., Anti-Islamophobia initiatives, reconciliation initiatives and initiatives to rectify biases faced by persons with disabilities).

Institutions should also implement actions only if they have consulted with those targeted by the actions. Although SATs will have gathered feedback through engagement and data collection and analysis, this does not mean that they will automatically develop relevant and/or appropriate actions. The development of actions should involve participatory approaches to ensure that the groups' expectations and needs are adequately reflected in the actions.

Identify risks and threats associated with actions

SATs should think through the risks associated with each action and develop risk management and risk mitigation strategies.

Risk management is “the process of identifying, analyzing and responding to any risk that arises over the life cycle of a project to help the project remain on track and meet its goal.”¹⁵⁹ Such risks could involve institutional changes, such as a change in leadership or management, or outside changes such as a pandemic. In relation to action planning, risk management should be used to examine how an action may become an issue and how to mitigate any issues that arise.

It may be useful to create a log or tracker for the risks that are identified to help prioritize and keep track of them through the implementation of actions. A risk management plan which would involve:

- identifying the risk;
- analyzing its potential impact;
- prioritizing (is it a low-level risk that does not need immediate attention or a high-level risk that should urgently be tackled?);
- assigning ownership for who will oversee the risk and be responsible for resolving it;
- creating a response/mitigation plan for the risk; and
- continuing to monitor the risk throughout the action.

As the SAT will continue to meet regularly, an agenda item at meetings could involve monitoring of risks while actions are ongoing. If an action is not working as expected, the SAT may need to make course corrections identified in risk management plans.

Outline how the action will be undertaken

There should be an overview of what each action will look like. For more complex actions, this should include the steps needed under each action to lead to impact. Some factors to consider include:

- activities to carry out the action;
- resources needed (financial, human capacity, logistical, etc.);
- who is involved in implementing the action;
- who is accountable for the action; and
- risks and mitigation strategies.

Establishing timelines

When will the actions start and finish?

Action plans should span the next five years to show sustained institutional efforts toward Dimensions objectives. The majority of the action plan could probably be accomplished in the short term following the application. However, having too many “quick wins” may not actually result in meaningful impact, and rushing to get results could lead to more harm. Institutions should set up realistic timeframes for each action that will provide the time for meaningful impact. Actions should be scheduled across the five-year duration of the recognition stages rather than all in the initial months.

Each action should have a clear timeline for its implementation, with specific start and end dates. Institutions should consider establishing milestones to mark their progress and have mechanisms in place to hold themselves accountable to deadlines.

Identifying responsibilities

Who will ensure that the actions are achieved?

Organizational structures and supports should be in place to implement actions appropriately. Institutions should differentiate between those who will implement actions and those who will be accountable for those actions.

- Who is implementing — engaged in putting forward the initiatives and activities for the action.
- Who is accountable — oversight body that tracks actions and will take risk management measures and respond to questions on the action.

Human resources or EDI staff should not be tasked with most of the actions; rather, responsibility for actions should be distributed across members of an institution to truly represent a spirit of EDI across the institution.

Institutions should keep in mind that the SAT should not disband following the application process, because it is the team primarily responsible for ensuring that actions are implemented.

Evaluating the impact

How will we know whether we have achieved our goals?

Institutions should have strategies to assess whether an action has been appropriately implemented and the level of positive change that it has achieved. Institutions may consider using qualitative and quantitative methods to establish whether actions have had an impact. Some examples include focus groups to assess how new initiatives, policies and programs are perceived by those whom they are aimed at or conducting surveys to gather feedback on specific actions implemented.

Success measures are key

Institutions are encouraged to implement targets and performance indicators to track their progress. They should keep in mind that completing the action is not a success measure. Rather, success will be determined by whether the completed action resulted in the desired and meaningful impact.

Baseline data

Institutions should include the baseline data in the action plans. By including this data, institutions will be able to measure their progress against this data. They will also be better equipped to implement changes in the future. Acknowledging the areas where institutions can improve on their equity measures, as determined by the baseline data, is a significant aspect of Dimensions.

Key points to consider

- Developing targeted actions goes beyond collecting data to being transparent about the specific ways that an institution will respond to these findings.
- In action planning, institutions should ask themselves: **what** do we want to achieve? **Why** are we undertaking the action? **When** will the action start and finish? **Who** will ensure the action is achieved? **How** will we know if we have achieved our goal(s)?
- Institutions should focus their efforts on limited number of concrete and meaningful actions rather than too many actions or actions that are too broad.
- It is crucial to ensure that resources and support are in place to implement the action plan.
- Institutions should ensure they have strategies in place to mitigate risks and evaluate the impact of their actions.

Formulating actions

Scope of action plans

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to developing a Dimensions action plan. It is up to institutions to:

- Decide the number of actions needed;
- Develop single or multiple targeted action plans; and
- Choose the way to present their actions plans that will be most useful and intelligible to their communities.

Action plans should be considered living documents that institutions can continuously update to reflect changing political and institutional realities. Institutions should track significant revisions, both for their internal learning and so that they can speak to these changes when applying for the next stage of recognition.

As part of the application, all institutions are required to submit an action plan, but the scope of the action plan will differ depending on the stage of recognition being applied for. See Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages for requirements for action plans for each stage.

Adapting and building on existing EDI actions

Institutions are not expected to re-invent the wheel; they are also encouraged to demonstrate and celebrate their past initiatives. Many institutions may already be working on EDI initiatives and have actions in place or plans developed in response to specific calls for actions or socio-political events. These actions (insofar as they relate to the research ecosystem) will be relevant to the Dimensions action plan, and institutions should feel inclined to incorporate these existing actions in their application. The self-assessment process should be used as a tool to strengthen the EDI work already taking place.

Furthermore, the SAT should catalogue the existing EDI initiatives, programs and policies that are ongoing. Based on the issues identified during self-assessment, some of these initiatives may benefit from revisions or adaptation. Amplifying existing initiatives so that these can have a greater or more sustained impact may also be an effective action.

Mutuality and collaboration in choosing actions

An essential component of Dimensions is mutuality. Creating a community of practice in which knowledge of EDI good practices is shared is important. Institutions should take the opportunity to learn from peer institutions that have developed programs, initiatives and policies that address relevant EDI barriers and gaps.

Learning from others does not mean simply copying actions by other institutions but adapting a specific program to the institution's reality. This requires a good understanding of the context under which initiatives were implemented and an examination of whether this context would be appropriate for another institution.

Thus, reviewing evaluations of other institutions' actions and meeting with other institutions to discuss their actions and learn from them are recommended.

Key points to consider

- There is no one-size-fits-all approach for action plans. Institutions are encouraged to develop a plan that best responds to their needs.
- The scope of the action plan will differ, depending on which recognition stage the institution is applying to.
- Institutions should feel encouraged to adapt and strengthen existing initiatives and actions.
- Institutions can learn from and adapt the action and initiatives of their peer institutions.

Impact versus progress

Institutions should keep in mind the difference between progress and impact. An action may have been completed, but the impact that the activity has on the culture of the institution is what is important. Institutions need to evaluate the influence of their activities and not just their implementation. A few examples are outlined below.

Example 1:

An institution runs an annual EDI symposium. After the first year, there is 100% staff/faculty attendance. This is progress.

Due to the information provided through the symposia, hiring rates of equity-deserving groups increase. This is impact.

Feedback is collected to improve the symposium's content and the hiring process. Continued improvements lead to the elimination of inequities and improved hiring success rates for all staff and faculty. This is sustained progression and continued impact.

Example 2:

An institution retrofits all of its existing lab spaces and classrooms to provide more accessible spaces for those with mobility restrictions and ensures that all new buildings are constructed with this approach. This is progress.

Thanks to the campus making all spaces accessible, data shows an increase in rates of student and faculty with disabilities. This is impact.

Feedback is collected to improve the accessibility and functionality of buildings. Continued awareness of accessibility in construction and renovations further reduce barriers that may have prevented a person with a disability from equitable access to spaces. As a result, over the long term, there are increased hiring rates of persons with disabilities. This is sustained progression and continued impact.

There are many ways to create impact, but there are three simple actions for institutions to keep in mind.

- The **first action** is to change institutional **processes**. For example, how often should hiring considerations include EDI?
- The **second action** is to change institutional **criteria**. For example, institutions should consider how to include EDI criteria as part of hiring requirements.
- The **third action** is to change institutional **practices**. For example, institutions could consider targeted efforts to encourage candidates who are members of equity-deserving groups to apply for a position that they otherwise might not have considered.

Institutions need to be able to show the measurable impact of each action, assess improved equity, and demonstrate that the improvement is due to the action. Institutions should be looking to continuously improve. Therefore, institutions should analyze whether any new issues have arisen out of the implemented action. Institutions should also ask themselves how they will continue to improve on actions.

Example:

Issue

An institution's data indicated one crucial point at which women leave an academic career – the transition between postdoctoral fellow (68% women) and independent research group leader (36% women).

Initial action

To address this, around 2012, the institution changed the language in advertisements for faculty researchers to be more gender-neutral. For example, they avoided phrases such as that the institution was looking for a “world leader in the field,” which the institution believed may have discouraged women from applying. However, the proportion of women applying did not increase and remained at less than 30%.

New actions

The institution therefore chose to implement positive actions to identify and personally invite women to apply to group leader positions. Four women were invited who might not have applied otherwise. All were subsequently offered positions, of whom three accepted.

Impact

These changes directly resulted in the promotion of two women academics, one part-time, the other a statistician, both of whom had previously been unsuccessful.

There are numerous ways in which an institution may present impact. However, there are three simple steps that institutions should keep in mind when presenting impacts:

- Show how the situation has improved for members of its research community.
- Present a narrative that shows how activities have led directly to the impact.
- Illustrate a clear link among elements in the Dimensions process
Data collection > data analysis > actions > progress > impact

Key points to consider

- Impact and progress are not equivalent. Institutions should evaluate the impact of their activities and not just the fact that activities have been implemented.

Successful versus unsuccessful plans

Characteristics of a successful action plan	Characteristics of an unsuccessful action plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Has clear key objectives● Assigns responsibility● Reflects accountability● Establishes clear timeframes for actions● Considers data from the five groups● Clearly link results of the data collection and analysis to actions chosen● Conducts intersectional analysis and consults with those actions are aimed at● Can adapt and respond to new data or changing contexts● Sets key performance indicators (KPIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Copies other generic action plans● Uses vague language● Presents broad actions as one large activity● Shies away from setting targets● Does not represent findings from data collected● Lacks intersectional analysis● Lacks qualitative and/or quantitative data● Does not use research community engagement to inform analysis and actions

When reporting on previous actions, institutions could include their previous action plan. Institutions will then be able to report their progress against the plan to determine which actions have been completed. Institutions should then discuss activities and impacts in the narrative of the application, where appropriate.

Key points to consider

- Successful action plans will be clearly articulated, ensure accountability mechanisms, be representative of the findings from the self-assessment, incorporate an inclusive and intersectional analysis and be time-bound.
- Unsuccessful action plans will be generic, present broad actions and will not be time-bound. They will lack clear targets, fail to use findings from the data collected and lack an intersectional analysis.

Layout of action plan

Institutions may already have ongoing actions in existing institutional action plans. For the purposes of the Dimensions application, institutions should compile all the actions that are relevant and present them in a single combined and cohesive document.

Institutions may wish to organize their plan so that each action falls under an overarching goal or objective. They may also want to separate actions based on phases or short-term versus long-term objectives.

Examples of action plan templates are provided below. Institutions are welcome to use these templates, but they are optional, and institutions are encouraged to use alternative formats to represent and demonstrate the actions being carried out.

Template 1

Objective	Rationale	Specific actions	Timeframe	Position accountable and implementation

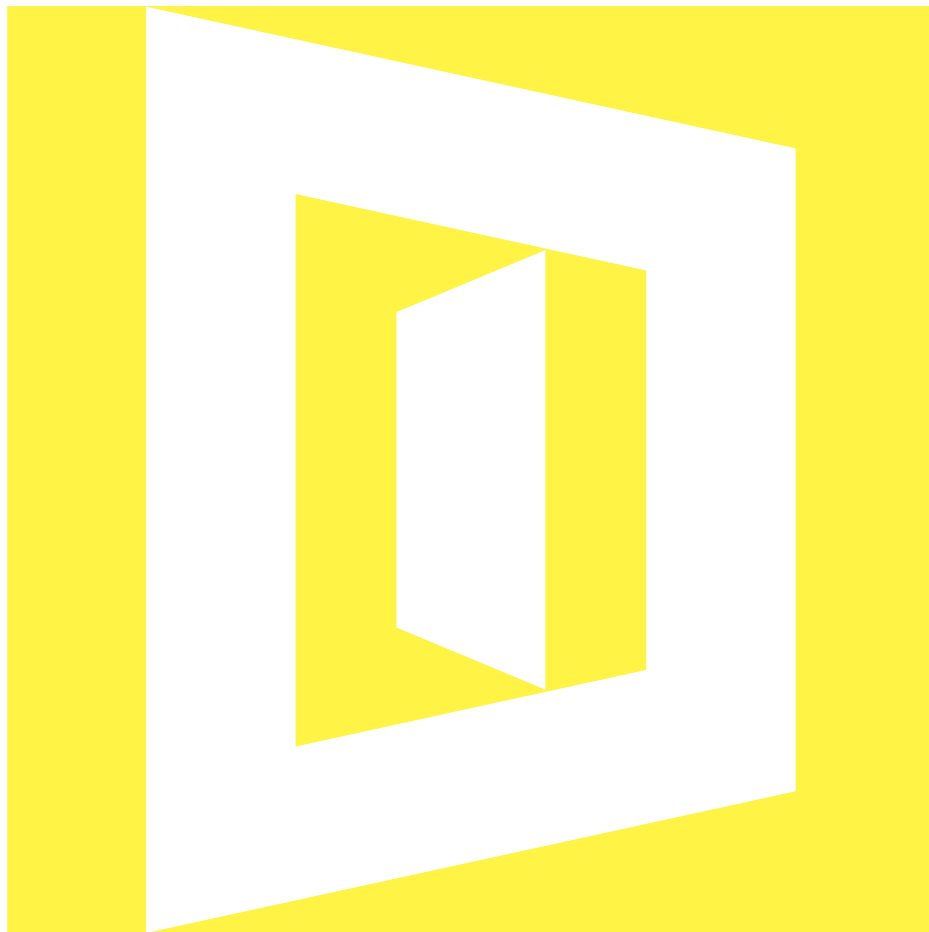
Template 2

WHAT are we going to do?	WHY are we doing it?	WHEN will the action happen?	WHO will ensure the action is achieved?	HOW will you know the action has been achieved?

Template 3

Planned action / objective	Rationale (evidence to justify the action)	Key outputs and milestones	Start date	End date	Action taken to date	Position responsible	Success criteria and outcome

Appendices



Appendix 1 – Detailed recognition stages

Recognition stages				
	Foundation	Construction	Consolidation	Transformation
Evidence of motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have demonstrated what motivates their EDI efforts, and does so with transparency ● Institutions have linked their motivation for participation in the Dimensions program to evidence-based issues raised by equity-deserving groups in their communities ● Institutions have identified the roles** (at least 1) broadly involved in the research ecosystem that they are currently prioritizing, if not addressing concerns related to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have demonstrated what motivates their EDI efforts and does so with transparency ● Institutions have linked their motivation for participation in the Dimensions program to evidence-based issues raised by equity-deserving groups in their communities ● Institutions have identified the roles (at least 2) broadly involved in the research ecosystem that they are currently prioritizing, if not addressing concerns related to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have demonstrated an understanding of the issues confronting members of equity-deserving groups in their community and have linked their motivation for specific actions taken in the past and present to significant events and incidents in their context ● Institutions have identified the roles (at least 3) broadly involved in the research ecosystem they are currently prioritizing, if not addressing concerns related to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have demonstrated a deep understanding of the issues confronting members of equity-deserving groups in their community and has linked their motivation for specific actions taken in the past and present to significant events and incidents in their context ● Institutions have identified the roles (at least 4) broadly involved in the research ecosystem they are currently prioritizing, if not addressing concerns related to all

* The Dimensions program describes seven (7) roles broadly involved in the research ecosystem: (1) students (undergraduate and graduate); (2) postdoctoral fellows; (3) Full-time faculty; (4) part-time/contract faculty (including research and teaching staff); (5) administrative staff; (6) research participants; and (7) external communities.

Recognition stages

Evidence of gaps and needs	Foundation	Construction	Consolidation	Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategic planning for engagement activities is underway ● Institutions demonstrate that they have collected preliminary representational data or have established a strategy to collect representational data on their research community ● The application provides evidence that a strategy is in place or in development to further analyze and present disaggregated data that generate insights into the <i>demographic diversity</i> of the institution's research community and the <i>experiences</i> of equity-deserving members of the institution's research ecosystem ● An environmental scan has started, including the analysis of at least 6 items identified in Chapter 3 of the handbook (institutions can include areas for the environmental scan outside of those listed in the chapter) ● Institutions have demonstrated awareness about what supports and systems need to be established in order to enable a detailed assessment of gaps and needs ● Key priorities have been identified and justified using the evidence available thus far and consideration of context ● Institutions have started but not necessarily completed a cycle of Dimensions work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement activities have been carefully considered, planned and carried out with, at a minimum, each of the identified equity-deserving groups (depending on context) ● A qualitative assessment[†] of individual experiences and institutional culture and climate has been conducted and evaluated ● Institutions demonstrate that they have collected representational data on their research community ● The application provides evidence of appropriate disaggregation of data that has been collected to date. The voices, experiences and feedback of equity-deserving groups should be emphasized in the application ● An environmental scan has been completed; at least 12 items identified in Chapter 3 of the handbook have been analyzed (institutions can include areas for the environmental scan outside of those listed in the chapter) ● An institutional action plan has been created and shared with the community ● Findings related to engagement, the environmental scan and qualitative and quantitative evidence have been reported/shared with the community ● Institutions have likely completed one cycle of Dimensions work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement is ongoing and has been sustained over multiple cycles of Dimensions work ● A more complex and in-depth qualitative assessment of individual experiences and institutional culture and climate has been conducted, evaluated and compared to previous assessments ● Institutions demonstrate that they have collected representational data on their research community. ● The application provides evidence of appropriate disaggregation and intersectional analysis of data that has been collected to date. The voices, experiences and feedback of equity-deserving groups should be emphasized in the application. ● Institutions demonstrate that they have clear plan for future impact assessments and comparisons using the data. This plan should show the metrics that the institution hopes to hit, how success will be measured, and what plans are in place to update or revise the action plan accordingly based on results ● An environmental scan and analysis has been completed; at least 18 items identified in Chapter 3 of the handbook have been analyzed (institutions can include areas for the environmental scan outside of those listed in the chapter) ● An institutional action plan has been created and shared with the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement with equity-deserving groups is part of regular institutional activities; findings are routinely used to inform institutional policy and to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of action plan initiatives ● Institutions embed systematic and complex EDI analysis and activities in their annual cycles and priorities (i.e., capacity for addressing EDI is growing and there is evidence of developing mutual trust between committees working to address EDI and community members) ● Integration and analysis of interdependencies are underway (i.e., student services may be further ahead than HR in an earlier recognition stage, but both are working together at the Transformation stage) ● Institutions demonstrate that they have collected significant representational data on their research community ● The application provides evidence of appropriate disaggregation and intersectional analysis of data that has been collected to date. The voices, experiences and feedback of the equity-deserving groups should be emphasized in the application ● Institutions demonstrate that impact assessments and comparisons were conducted using the data collected. Evidence should show the metrics that the institution hoped to hit, how success was to be measured, metrics that were achieved, and how the action plan is being updated or revised accordingly based on results 	

† A “qualitative assessment” includes many different tools and methods. Some examples include town halls, interviews of various formats and culture surveys. More information can be found in the Dimensions handbook: Chapter 3 – Engagement strategy, Chapter 4 – Environmental scan and Chapter 5 – Data collection and analysis sections.

Recognition stages

Evidence of gaps and needs

Foundation

Construction

Consolidation

Transformation

- Consideration and analysis is being given to past policies, procedures, practices and other aspects of the institution that contributed to creating inequities, exclusions and a lack of diversity
- Findings related to engagement, the environmental scan, and qualitative and quantitative evidence have been reported/shared with the community
- Institutions have likely completed two cycles of Dimensions work

- An advanced, complex and in-depth qualitative assessment of individual experiences and institutional culture and climate is part of regular institutional activities, and findings are woven into institutional policy and administrative structures
- An in-depth environmental scan and analysis has been completed, and EDI is now part of core considerations during policy development; all items identified in Chapter 3 of the handbook have been included in the scan (institutions can include areas for the environmental scan outside of those listed in the chapter)
- Past policies, procedures, practices and aspects of the institution that contributed to creating inequities, exclusions and a lack of diversity have been given broad and deep consideration
- Findings related to engagement, environmental scans and qualitative and quantitative evidence are communicated to members of the institution regularly
- Institutions have likely completed three cycles of Dimensions work, and demonstrate substantial progress on the issues identified in past and ongoing action plans

Recognition stages

Foundation	Construction	Consolidation	Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have begun an inventory identifying and taking stock of assets and obstacles for EDI ● Efforts are being made to establish priorities based on the assets and obstacles identified thus far 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is a clear link between qualitative and quantitative findings, the assessment of assets and available resources, and established priorities ● Evidence has been provided justifying why the issues and challenges identified during engagement and data collection are not addressed in the institution's latest action plan ● What <i>could</i> be done and what <i>is</i> being done has been explained, and the selection of specific components to be addressed by the institution has been justified ● Communication across divisions (e.g., HR and SATs) is more coordinated ● Evidence has been provided demonstrating that obstacles related to coordination and the fragmentation of assets are being investigated and identified, and that efforts have been taken to improve ● Capacity-building is growing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions can explain why they are prioritizing certain activities over others ● Clear links have been drawn between findings from the qualitative and quantitative data analysis and connected to the assets and obstacles; an explanation has been provided if the assets are not in place to address certain things ● Assets and obstacles are systematically incorporated into the analyses of all information and data gathered, as well as into the institutional action plan ● Communication across divisions (e.g., HR and SATs) is systematic and organized ● Planning capacity has been well integrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have mature processes in place for systematically assessing options to address issues ● Institutions consistently set specific and feasible targets in their five-year action plan that are directly linked to qualitative and quantitative evidence ● Institutions are sharing both obstacles and potential solutions with the community ● Discussions are being held about lessons learned in different cycles and how things can be refined in more detail with each iteration ● The utilization of assets and the tackling of obstacles are incorporated in a synchronized, organized and systematic way ● Communication across divisions (e.g., HR and SATs) is systematic and organized ● Planning capacity has been fully integrated

Evidence of assets and obstacles

Recognition stages

Evidence of commitment	Foundation	Construction	Consolidation	Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have signed the Dimensions charter ● Senior administration has demonstrated an institutional commitment to EDI ● A Dimensions SAT has been established ● Institutions have taken ownership of, and responsibility for, findings to date, recognizing that, at the Foundation stage, extensive findings may not yet be available ● Institutions are communicating about their participation in Dimensions ● A five-year action plan has been created and endorsed by senior management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have signed the Dimensions charter ● A governance structure has been established for the Dimensions program overall and SAT ● A SAT has been established, is diverse (i.e., includes members from across the institution, members from equity-deserving groups), and is well-supported ● The SAT has established a strategy to ensure safety from reprisal for those involved in engagement, with the goal of promoting trust and addressing concerns about power inequity in the institution ● A clear workload allocation management plan for the SAT that recognizes the value of EDI work and compensates members for such work has been implemented ● A five-year action plan has been created and endorsed by senior management ● The action plan has been communicated to the internal and external community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have signed the Dimensions charter ● A clear governance structure has been established for the Dimensions program overall and the SAT ● A SAT has been established, is diverse (i.e., includes members from across the institution, members from equity-deserving groups), and a well-developed, comprehensive, transparent and fixed system is in place for compensating the work of SAT members ● The SAT has established a strategy to ensure safety from reprisal for those involved in engagement, with the goal of promoting trust and addressing concerns about power inequity in the institution ● A clear workload allocation management plan that recognizes the value of EDI work and compensates members for such work has been established for the institution ● A five-year action plan has been created and endorsed by senior management ● The action plan has been communicated to the internal and external community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have signed the Dimensions charter ● EDI is not just a priority of senior management; it has also become embedded in various levels of the institution ● Evidence has been provided that all equity-deserving groups have a voice at all levels of the institution, from the student body to senior administration ● Institutional units and departments involved in the research ecosystem have their own EDI action plans; all individuals involved in the research ecosystem have their own EDI development plan ● EDI is embedded into performance evaluations for those involved in the research ecosystem ● A five-year action plan has been created and endorsed by senior management 	

Recognition stages

Evidence of change	Foundation	Construction	Consolidation	Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have started to put mechanisms in place to address the identified priorities ● EDI is being mentioned in strategic plans and appears on the institution's website ● Institutions have demonstrated awareness of actions that need to be taken to more fully understand their context and EDI needs ● Awareness about Dimensions and EDI in general is growing at the institution through active communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have put mechanisms in place to address priorities ● Institutions have put mechanisms in place to make EDI policies, practices and cultures adaptable to unpredictable circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic ● Voices of members of equity-deserving groups indicate that change is occurring ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions have put mechanisms in place to address priorities, and these are showing results ● EDI policies, practices and cultures are adaptable to unpredictable circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic ● Indicators show improvement in representation of members of equity-deserving groups in leadership positions at the institution ● Voices of members of equity-deserving groups indicate that change has occurred and is being experienced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Critical indicators showcase the impact and effectiveness of actions taken thus far ● Representation of equity-deserving groups in leadership positions at the institution has increased, approaching benchmarks for the institution established through transparent and engagement-based processes ● There is evidence of a culture in which members of equity-deserving groups have full access to all levels of the institution—from the student body to senior leadership ● There is evidence of an institutional research culture that is adopting an increasingly inclusive approach to research assessment. 	

Appendix 2 – Terms of reference template – self-assessment team

Note: this template should be Edited according to the realities of your institution. This document should be read in conjunction with Chapter 2 – Self-assessment team.

Context

Dimensions is a tri-agency initiative, led by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Council (NSERC), that invites postsecondary institutions in Canada to take part in a transformation to increase equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and help drive deeper cultural change in the research ecosystem. Dimensions addresses obstacles faced by equity-deserving groups, including women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities/racialized groups, and members of LGBTQ2+ communities.

Dimensions requires institutions to engage in critical self-reflection to identify issues and gaps in EDI in their research communities and to translate these findings into an action plan to increase EDI. The SAT plays a fundamental role in this process.

Responsibilities

The SAT as a whole will be responsible for the following actions, although it may coordinate or delegate to other bodies or individuals that carry out the actions on behalf of the SAT:

- Scan of institutional policies and practices (institutional scan)
- Through appropriate engagement with women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities/racialized groups, and members of LGBTQ2+ communities:
 - Defining areas of exploration and setting goals that are relevant to the institution
 - Developing plans to reach those goals (including data collection, as may be required)
- Establishing key performance indicators to measure the success of initiatives put in place
- Preparing the Dimensions application

Governance and authority

The SAT will have representation from senior management. It also will establish a reporting process that ensures active engagement across the institution's leadership. [Adjust according to your institution's plans; include reporting mechanism if possible.]

The SAT will have the authority to approve activities and will make recommendations to senior management for approval of activities. [You may wish to specify the activities or their scope in the foregoing.]

Membership and size

SAT membership will require senior management approval. [Adjust according to your institution's plans.] Membership will be diverse, with at least one representative from each of the five groups listed in the Dimensions program. Membership will be further supported by engagement with additional members of equity-deserving groups, such that SAT members are not expected to speak on behalf of an entire group of people.

Membership will also include members from various faculties, departments, management levels, academic ranks, roles, and types of expertise.

To maintain an effective balance of effectiveness and complexity, the SAT will consist of [number of] members. [Adjust according to the realities of your institution.]

[Add further description if the SAT will involve sub-committees or working groups.]

Recruitment

SAT members will be selected as follows: [insert description, which should include a combination of an open, advertised process and appointment based on experience. If necessary, external experts may be recruited to ensure desired diversity and expertise requirements are met.]

Training, in the form of [type of training or specific training program] will be provided for new members or as required to support the work of the SAT over time. [Insert training plans for your institution.]

Roles

Chair [amend if there are co-chairs]

The chair's responsibilities include the following:

- Setting respectful rules of engagement and approaches that enable the expression of diverse points of views (e.g., sharing circle approach);
- Seeking to foster a climate of trust and safety in meetings and ensuring all SAT members are supported and able to contribute and that hierarchies, or "louder voices," do not overpower discussions and decisions;
- Ensuring that members are assigned tasks equitably;
- Monitoring inclusion issues in the SAT;
- Interfacing with the campus community, leadership and administration to articulate responsibilities related to process and outcomes (i.e., fact-based assessment, broad engagement, etc.)
- Scheduling meetings and setting the agendas;
- Ensuring proper recording (i.e., minute-taking) of meetings;
- Securing administrative support for the SAT; and
- Establishing mechanisms to report to senior management, relevant SAT committees or sub-committees, and the rest of the institution.

Members

The committee members' responsibilities include the following:

- Attending meetings;
- Actively participating in planning and discussions;
- Contributing to fostering a climate of trust and safety in meetings to harness the benefits of a diverse team;
- Carrying out SAT activities and tasks;
- Engaging with the research community and equity-deserving groups; and
- Promoting the Dimensions EDI activities.

Principles of conduct

The chair or co-chairs and the SAT members are expected to protect the credibility and integrity of the group by adhering to the following principles of conduct:

- Encouraging and welcoming members' view and ideas;
- Respecting diversity of opinions;
- Being receptive to explore options in support of reaching beneficial outcomes;
- Acting to promote the interests of equity-deserving groups and individuals;
- Seeking to listen and learning from the experience of those who have encountered systemic barriers;
- Treating information with confidentiality and using it only for the purpose for which it is intended; and,
- Disclosing and managing conflicts of interest as well as dual loyalties.

Timeframe and expected workload

The SAT will remain intact for the duration of the Dimensions program. This includes submission of the Dimensions application and any required follow-up activities. Subsequent to the outcome of the Dimensions application process, the SAT will be adapted to pursue continued EDI work. [Add specific SAT expectations following application.]

SAT meetings will take place [monthly/bi-weekly, etc.] [Add details according to your institution's plans.]

The workload will be distributed equitably, taking into account personal and environmental factors and avoiding overburdening of members of equity-deserving groups. SAT members can expect to spend [number of] hours per week on SAT activities. [Adjust according to your institution's plans.]

Recognition

SAT members will be compensated for their participation with formal recognition in performance reviews, public acknowledgement, reduced teaching load or course credit, administrative support, travel grants for EDI conferences, stipends, and/or reimbursement of expenses (transportation, meals, childcare, etc.). [Adjust according to your institution's plans.]

Monitoring

The functioning and membership of the SAT will be assessed at regular intervals [insert frequency for your institution] and adjusted as necessary to ensure efficiency and efficacy.

Confidentiality

[Insert any confidentiality agreements to which committee members at your institution must adhere.]

Functions out of scope

The SAT is not expected to manage human rights or sexual harassment and assault complaints. These should be managed through the appropriate institutional channels.

Appendix 3 – Tri-Agency self-identification questionnaire

[Introduction spaceholder]

[Privacy notice spaceholder]

1. What is your date of birth?

I prefer not to answer

2. Select the option that best describes your current gender identity.

Gender-fluid

Man

Nonbinary

Trans man

Trans woman

Two-Spirit

Woman

I don't identify with any option provided.

I identify as:

I prefer not to answer

3. Select the sexual orientation that best describes how you currently think of yourself.

Asexual

Bisexual

Gay

Heterosexual

Lesbian

Pansexual

Queer

Two-spirit

I don't identify with any option provided.

I identify as: (option to specify)

I prefer not to answer

4a. Do you identify as Indigenous; that is First Nation (North American Indian), Métis, or Inuk (Inuit)?

Yes

No

I prefer not to answer

4b. If “Yes”, select the option(s) that you identify with:

First Nations
Inuk (Inuit)
Métis
I prefer not to answer

5. Note: the Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour”.

Do you identify as a member of a visible minority in Canada?

Yes
No
I prefer not to answer

6. Select the population group(s) you identify with (note: if you answered “Yes” to question 4a [i.e. You are an Indigenous person], select “Population group not listed above” for this question. You can also select from the list any other population group(s) that applies to you):

Arab
Black
Chinese
Filipino
Japanese
Korean
Latin American
South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)
Southeast Asian (including Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai, etc.)
West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.)
White
Population group not listed above.
I identify as (option to specify):

I prefer not to answer

7a. Note: the Accessible Canada Act defines disability as “any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society”.

Do you identify as a person with a disability as described in the Accessible Canada Act?

Yes
No
I prefer not to answer

**7b. If “Yes”, select the type(s) of disability that applies to you:
Communications***

Developmental
Dexterity
Flexibility
Hearing
Learning
Mental health-related
Memory
Mobility
Pain-related
Seeing
Disability not listed above.
Option to specify:

I prefer not to answer

* Using your customary language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood? Do you use sign language? (Washington Group on Disability Statistics)

8a. What language(s) did you first learn at home in childhood and still understand? (Select all that apply)

English
French
Another language
I prefer not to answer

8b. What language(s) do you speak most often at home? (Select all that apply)

English
French
Another language
I prefer not to answer

Comments or suggestions about the self-identification questionnaire

Appendix 4 – Suggested datasets and tools for benchmarking

Statistics Canada Census Data

Statistics Canada Census Data can be used to determine overall demographic trends Canada-wide. This data can be viewed at a nation-wide level, or broken down into smaller geographic regions, which may be helpful for colleges and smaller universities that wish to benchmark their data against community data. To date, the census has not collected information on LGBTQ2+ identities, but it does collect data on gender, including trans and non-binary identities. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm>

Further information from Statistics Canada on gender, diversity and inclusion can be found here: https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/topics-start/gender_diversity_and_inclusion

Full-time University and College Academic Staff System (UCASS)

With its first complete dataset released in November 2017 after a five-year gap, the revised UCASS data covers all 112 public degree-granting institutions (primarily universities). The purpose of this survey is to collect national data on selected socio-economic characteristics of full-time academic staff at Canadian universities. Because it is produced from administrative data rather than through voluntary participation, the UCASS data is not subject to sampling errors. While UCASS has not historically included metrics on members of the five identified groups outside of gender, it does include other relevant information, including rank and salary.

<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/blog/cs/ucass-revisited>

Survey of Postsecondary Faculty and Researchers (SPFR)

Statistics Canada's SPFR survey has as its primary objective to fill in data gaps on equity and diversity among teachers and researchers in Canada's postsecondary sector. It also provides data on career experiences and advancement, including data on tenure positions and workplace harassment. The most recent data from SPFR was released in September 2020. This data is collected voluntarily and cannot be provided on an institutional level; however, it can provide a good starting point for benchmarking against experiences at Canadian institutions in general.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200922/dq200922a-eng.htm>

Colleges & Institutes Canada

Colleges & Institutes Canada (CICan) is a national voluntary membership organization representing publicly supported colleges, institutes, CEGEPs and polytechnics in Canada and internationally. One of CICan's priorities is to showcase and expand research that is done on colleges and institutes, including research in both the organizational context, and research that explores teaching, learning and student success in the system.

Reports on federal consultations <https://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/resources/federal-consultations/>

College-related research <https://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/resources/research-on-colleges/>

Canada Research Chairs Program Data and Targets

The Canada Research Chairs Program requires that institutions establish equity and diversity targets to ensure participation from individuals from four designated groups (women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and “members of visible minorities”). As with the Census, the CRC program does not yet collect information on the LGBTQ2+ population. The program monitors the institutions' progress toward meeting their established targets. A broad overview of the resulting data is available on the Program Statistics section of the Canada Research Chairs website.

https://www.chairs-chaire.gc.ca/about_us-a_notre_sujet/statistics-statistiques-eng.aspx

Canada Research Coordinating Committee Annual Progress Report

The Canadian Research Coordinating Committee coordinates programs and policies for the federal research funding agencies and the Canadian Foundation for Innovation. The EDI Annex of its annual progress report provides data on research funding, disaggregated by funding opportunity and application rate versus award rate for women, Indigenous scholars, people with disabilities, and “visible minority” scholars.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/research-coordinating-committee/news/2021/02/2019-20-progress-report.html>

Employment Equity Act: Annual Report and the Federal Contractors Program

Under the *Employment Equity Act*, the Minister responsible for Labour must submit an annual report to Parliament on the status of employment equity in the federally regulated private sector. Canada's Federal Contractors Program (FCP) is part of the Labour Program managed by Employment and Social Development Canada and is intended to ensure that contractors who do business with the Government of Canada work toward establishing and maintaining a workforce that is representative of the broader overall workforce, including individuals belonging to the four groups designated under the *Employment Equity Act*. As part of this endeavour, the FCP collects and publishes a range of data that can be used for benchmarking in a business/industry context.

Universities Canada's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Canadian Universities: Report on the 2019 National Survey

Universities Canada advocates for Canadian universities at a federal level. In 2019, it launched a comprehensive national survey to make EDI data available for benchmarking and to better understand the current EDI institutional landscape, enable members to compare results and share promising practices, and to inform Universities Canada's advocacy and capacity-building activities. Notably, the categories used in this reporting can be mapped onto the self-identification questionnaire.

<https://www.univcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-at-canadian-universities-report-on-the-2019-national-survey-nov-2019-1.pdf>

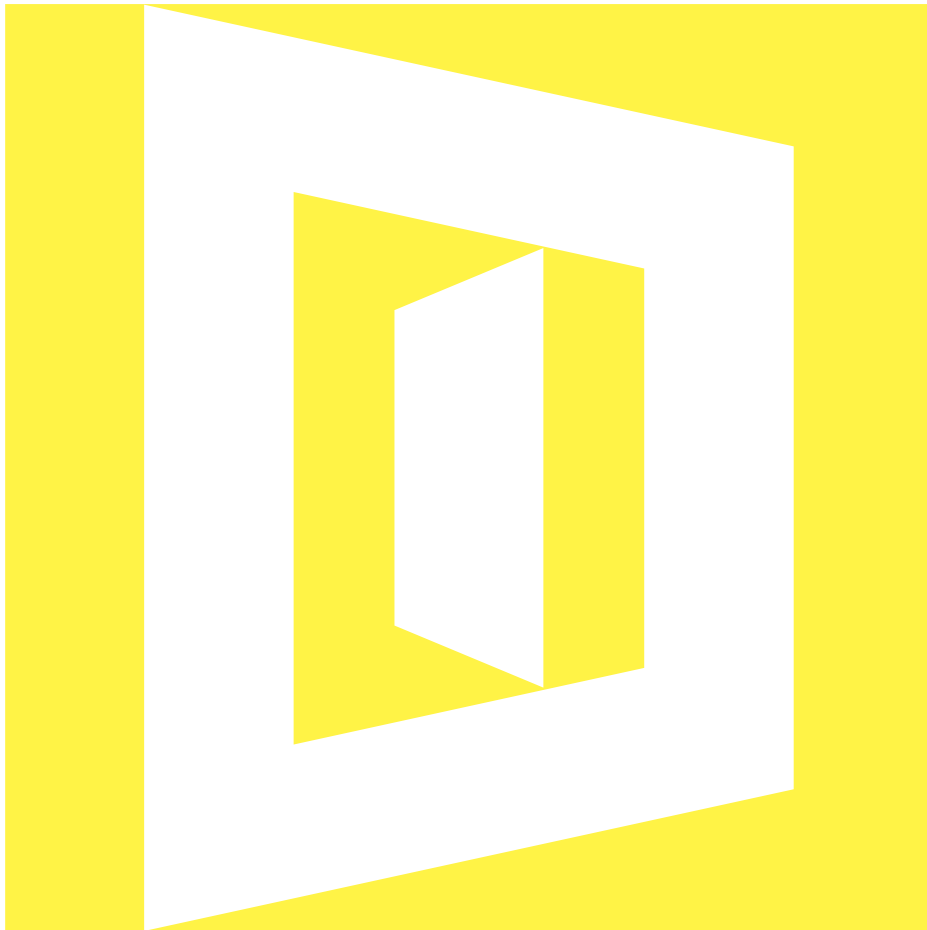
Centre for Global Inclusion

The Centre for Global Inclusion provides resources for individuals and organizations to improve their EDI practices, including through the development of the Global Diversity and inclusion benchmarks (<https://centreforglobalinclusion.org/downloads/>). This benchmarking tool includes categories on recruitment, advancement and retention, job design and classification, and work-life integration. Rather than being a resource for benchmarking demographics, it is a resource for identifying types of qualitative benchmarks for an organization, categorizing activities from "inaction" to "best practice."

Equity Indicators Framework

The Equity Indicators Framework, a collaborative creation of the [Anti-Racism Network](#), applies an anti-racist methodology to "expose unequal power dynamics between groups and the structures that sustain them," and to promote "sustainable, meaningful and authentic organizational change to root out institutionalized and systemic discrimination." This rubric is a "framework to assess structures, policies, and programs using equity indicators" and to provide a visual representation of how organizations can begin to locate where they lie on a spectrum from a completely colonially dominant organization to an equitable, culturally safe organization.

Extra tools



The resources here cover several topics that may help in Dimensions-related work. The list is not meant to be exhaustive and will be updated over time.

These resources focus on implicit bias, conflict management, difficult conversations and intercultural competence:

- [Bias in Peer Review module](#)
- [Unconscious Bias: from Awareness to Action](#)
- [Intercultural Development Inventory](#)
 - [The intercultural Development Inventory is a cross-cultural assessment of intercultural competence to build intercultural competence to achieve international and domestic diversity and inclusion goals and outcomes.](#)
- [Academic Impressions: Psychological safety in your team](#) (this course is free with membership)
- [Guide to Planning Inclusive Meetings](#)
- [Implicit association test](#)
- [Leading with effective communication \(Inclusive leadership training\)](#)
- [Leading for EDI in Higher Education](#)
 - This course is open to professionals interested in learning more about leadership in higher education for a changing demographic or interested in developing their own leadership skills.

These resources focus on awareness-building programs, tools, workshops around barriers to progress and drivers of oppressions (colonization, racism, misogyny, ableism, homophobia, etc.), Reconciliation and uncolonizing/decolonizing:

- [First Nations Health Authority: Cultural Safety and Humility](#)
- [Kairos Blanket Exercise](#)
- [Indigenous Canada – University of Alberta, Faculty of Native Studies](#)
- [OCAP Principles](#)
- [CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance](#)
- [CIHR Training module: Research Involving First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada – webinar](#)
- [Unpacking the invisible knapsack](#)
- [Gender-based Analysis Plus \(GBA+\) + Training and tools to apply GBA+](#)
- [Racial Equity Tools: Resources](#)
- [Dismantling Racism Works Workbook](#)
- [Capsules de l'Office des Personnes handicapées du Québec \(OPHQ\)](#)

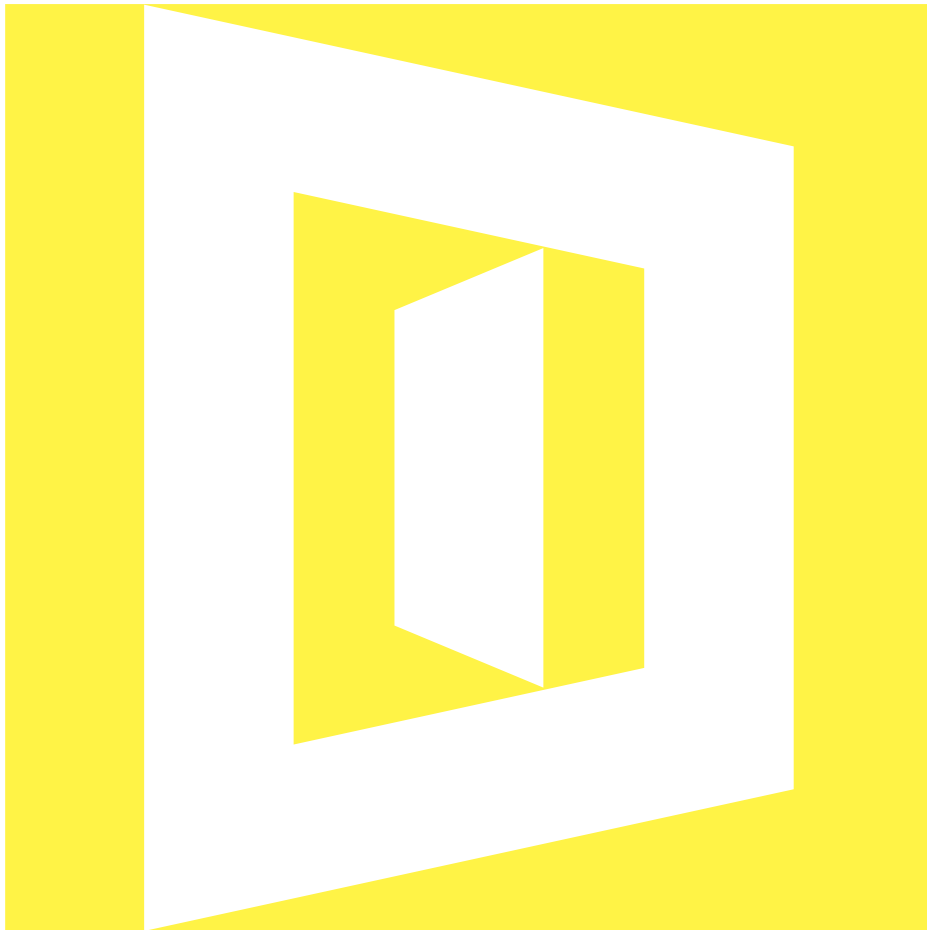
Professional memberships and networks may also be relevant resources for sats and the institution more broadly. Below are some suggested networks:

- [Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education \(CAPDHHE\)](#)
- [Canadian Black Scientists Network \(CBSN\)](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion \(CCDI\)](#)
- [Pride at Work Canada](#)
- [Quebec Equity Diversity Inclusion Network \(RQEDI\)](#)

Resources helpful in engaging with Indigenous Peoples:

- Carleton University's Kinàmàgawin (including the Strategic Indigenous Initiatives Committee's May 2020 report)
- The university of Otago's Maori Strategic Framework
- CIHR's Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal People
- Chelsea Vowel's Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Issues in Canada
- "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor" by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang
- Guide to Acknowledging First Peoples and Traditional Territory
- La reconnaissance territoriale en contexte universitaire québécois

End notes



- ¹ “NSERC - Dimensions - Charter.” Accessed May 2, 2022. https://www.nserc-crnsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/EDI-EDI/Dimensions-Charter_Dimensions-Charte_eng.asp.
- ² Campbell, L.G., S. Mehtani, M.E. Dozier, and J. Rinehart. “Gender-Heterogeneous Working Groups Produce Higher Quality Science.” *PLoS ONE* 8, no. 10 (2013): 1–6. <http://enterprise/enterprise/llisapi.dll/api/v1/nodes/52401789/content?action=open&token=53335833%2F52401789%2F159575%2F54714%2Fa34d13ae00e476ea5521f33bab1b22a14342865c;> Nielsen, Mathias Wullum, Sharla Alegria, Love Börjeson, Henry Etkowitz, Holly J. Falk-Krzesinski, Aparna Joshi, Erin Leahey, Laurel Smith-Doerr, Anita Williams Woolley, and Londa Schiebinger. “Opinion: Gender Diversity Leads to Better Science.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 114, no. 8 (February 21, 2017): 1740–42. <https://doi.org/10.1073/PNAS.1700616114>.
- ³ Henry, Frances, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith. *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.; Council of Canadian Academies Expert Panel on Women in University Research. “Strengthening Canada’s Research Capacity: The Gender Dimension,” 2013. <https://cca-reports.ca/reports/strengthening-Canadas-research-capacity-the-gender-dimension/>; Leslie, S.J., Andrei Cimpian, Meredith Meyer, & Edward Freeland. “Expectations of brilliance underlie gender distributions across academic disciplines.” *Science*, 347, no. 6219 (2015): 262–265. doi:10.1126/science.1261375.; Madera, J.M., Michelle R. Hebl, Heather Dial, Randi Martin, Virginia Valian. “Raising doubts in letters of recommendation for academia: Gender differences and their impact.” *Journal of Business and Psychology* (2018). Doi: 10.1007/s10869-018-9541-1.; Moss-Racusin, C.A., Jojanneke van der Toorn, John F. Dovidio, Victoria L. Brescoll, Mark J. Graham, and Jo Handelsman. “Scientific Diversity Interventions.” *Science* 343, no. 6171 (2014): 615–16.
- ⁴ Kaatz, A., B. Gutierrez, and M. Carnes. “Threats to Objectivity in Peer Review: The Case of Gender.” *Trends Pharmacol Sci* 35, no. 8 (2014): 371–73. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4552397/>; Van Der Lee, R., and Naomi Ellemers. “Gender Contributes to Personal Research Funding Success in the Netherlands.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112, no. 40 (2015): 12349–53.; Witteman, H.O., Michael Hendricks, Sharon Straus, and Cara Tannenbaum. “Female Grant Applicants are Equally Successful when Peer Reviewers Assess the Science, but not when they Assess the Scientist.” (2017).
- ⁵ Blau, Francine D., and et al. “Can Mentoring Help Female Assistant Professors? Interim Results From a Randomized Trial.” *American Economic Review* 100, no. 2 (2010): 348–52.; Porter, Catherine, and Danila Serra. “Gender Differences in the Choice of Major: The Importance of Female Role Models.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2019.; Welde, Kris De, and Sandra L. Laursen. “The Glass Obstacle Course: Informal and Formal Barriers for Women P.h.D. Students in STEM Fields.” *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology* 3, no. 3 (2011).
- ⁶ McDowell, John M., Larry D. Singell, and Mark Stater. “Two to Tango? Gender Differences in the Decisions to Publish and Coauthor.” *Economic Inquiry* 44, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 153–68.; Brewster, S., Neil Duncan, Mahmoud Emira, and Angela Clifford. “Personal Sacrifice and Corporate Cultures: Career Progression for Disabled Staff in Higher Education.” *Disability & Society* 32, no. 7 (2017): 1027–42.
- ⁷ Sensoy, Ö., and Robin Diangelo. “We are all for Diversity, but...’: How Faculty Hiring Committees Reproduce Whiteness and Practical Suggestions for how they can Change.” *Harvard Educational Review* 87, no. 4 (2017): 557–80.; Henry, et al.; Vescera, Zak. “The Unseen Labour of Racialized Faculty.” *The Ubysey* (2019).
- ⁸ “Is Science Only for the Rich?” Nature News. Nature Publishing Group.; Miller, C.C., and Kevin Quealy, “Where Boys Outperform Girls in Math: Rich, White and Suburban Districts.” *TheUpshot* (2018).
- ⁹ Munir, F., Carolynne Mason, and Hilary McDermott. “Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the Athena SWAN charter.” London: *Equality Challenge Unit* (2014).; Nishii, Lisa H. “The benefits of climate for inclusion for gender-diverse groups.” *Academy of Management Journal* 56.6 (2013): 1754–1774.; Schur, Lisa, Douglas Kruse, Joseph Blasi, and Peter Blanck. “Is Disability Disabling in All Workplaces? Workplace Disparities and Corporate Culture.” *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society* 48, no. 3 (July 1, 2009): 381–410.
- ¹⁰ Blau et al., Can mentoring help, 348–352; Munir and McDermott, Evaluating the effectiveness; Sherbin, L., and Ripa Rashid. “Diversity doesn’t stick without inclusion.” *Harvard Business Review* 1 (2017).
- ¹¹ Díaz-García, Cristina, Angela González-Moreno, and Francisco Jose Sáez-Martínez. “Gender Diversity within R & D Teams: Its Impact on Radicalness of Innovation.” *Innovation: Management, Policy and Practice* 15, no. 2 (2013): 149–60.
- ¹² Williams Woolley, A., C.F. Chabris, A. Pentland, N. Hashmi, and T.W. Malone. “Evidence for a Collective Intelligence Factor in the Performance of Human Groups.” *Science* 330 (2010): 686–88.
- ¹³ Freeman, Richard B., and Wei. Huang. “Collaborating with People Like Me: Ethnic Coauthorship within the United States.” *Journal of Labor Economics* 33, no. S1 (2015): S289–318.; AlShebli, Bedoor K., Talal Rahwan, and Wei Lee Woon. “The Preeminence of Ethnic Diversity in Scientific Collaboration.” *Nature Communications* 9, no. 1 (2018).
- ¹⁴ Nielsen, Mathias Wullum, Sharla Alegria, Love Börjeson, Henry Etkowitz, Holly J. Falk-Krzesinski, Aparna Joshi, Erin Leahey, Laurel Smith-Doerr, Anita Williams Woolley, and Londa Schiebinger. “Opinion: Gender Diversity Leads to Better Science.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 114, no. 8 (February 21, 2017): 1740–42.
- ¹⁵ Roberson, Quinetta, Oscar IV Holmes, and Jamie L. Perry. “Transforming Research on Diversity and Firm Performance: A Dynamic Capabilities Perspective.” *Academy of Management Annals* 11, no. 1 (2017): 189–216.; AlShebli et al., *The pre-eminence of ethnic diversity*, 5163; Diaz-Garcia et al., *Gender Diversity within R & D*, 149–160.
- ¹⁶ Nishi, *The benefits of climate*, 1754–1777.
- ¹⁷ Barnard, Sarah. “The Athena SWAN Charter: Promoting Commitment to Gender Equality in Higher Education Institutions in the UK.” *Gendered Success in Higher Education* (2017): 155–174.; Genova, Angela., Barbara De Micheli, Flavia Zucco, Claudia Grasso, and Benedetta Magri. “Achieving Gender Balance at the Top of Scientific Research: Guidelines and Tools for Institutional Change.” *Rome: Genis Lab Project, Fondazione Giacomo Brofolini*, 2014, 1–83.
- ¹⁸ “Statistics Canada ‘The Daily’ Study: Harassment and Discrimination among Faculty and Researchers in Canada’s Postsecondary Institutions.” Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210716/dq210716c-eng.htm>.
- ¹⁹ Witteman, Holly, Michael Hendricks, Sharon Straus, and Cara Tannenbaum. “Female Grant Applicants Are Equally Successful When Peer Reviewers Assess The Science, But Not When They Assess The Scientist.” *BioRxiv*, 2017, 232868
- ²⁰ “San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).” Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://sfedora.org/>.

- ²¹ Henry, Frances, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith. *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.
- ²² Council of Canadian Academies Expert Panel on Women in University Research. "Strengthening Canada's Research Capacity: The Gender Dimension," 2013.
- ²³ Ontario Human Rights Commission. "Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Sexual Orientation," 2006, 37: http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Policy_on_discrimination_and_harassment_because_of_sexual_orientation.pdf
- ²⁴ Burczycka, Marta. "Students' Experiences of Discrimination Based on Gender, Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation at Postsecondary Schools in the Canadian Provinces, 2019." Statistics Canada, 2020. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-005-x/2020001/article/00001-eng.htm>.
- ²⁵ Canadian Human Rights Commission. "For Persons with Disabilities in Canada, Education Is Not Always an Open Door: CHRC Report," 2017. <https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/resources/persons-disabilities-Canada-education-not-always-open-door>.
- ²⁶ Smith, Malinda S., Noreen Golfman, Marie Battiste, Wesley Crichlow, Jay Dolmage, Florence Glanfield, Claudia Malacrida, and Anne-José Villeneuve. "Igniting Change: Final Report and Recommendations," Report for the Federation of Humanities and Social sciences, 2021. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.30136.26889>.
- ²⁷ Smith, Christie, and Stephanie Turner. "The Radical Transformation of Diversity and Inclusion: The Millennial Influence." *Deloitte University The Leadership Center for Inclusion*, 2015. <http://www.bjkli.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/report.pdf>.
- ²⁸ Smith, Malinda S. "Gender, Whiteness, and the 'Other Others' in the Academy." In *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century*, Edited by Sherene Razack, Malinda Smith, and Sunera Thobani, 37–58. Between the Lines Press, 2010.
- ²⁹ Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 50th Anniv. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.
- ³⁰ The Anti-Opression Network. "What Is Anti-Opression?" Accessed May 3, 2022. <https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/what-is-anti-oppression/>.
- ³¹ Wagner, Anne, and June Ying Yee. "Anti-Opression in Higher Education: Implicating Neo-Liberalism." *Canadian Social Work Review* 28, no. 1 (2011): 89–105..
- ³² Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. "What We Have Learned : Principles of Truth and Reconciliation," 2015, 193.
- ³³ National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. "Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls," 2019. <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>.
- ³⁴ Gaudry, Adam, and Danielle Lorenz. "Indigenization as Inclusion, Reconciliation, and Decolonization: Navigating the Different Visions for Indigenizing the Canadian Academy." *AlterNative* 14, no. 3 (2018): 218–27.
- ³⁵ Gaudry and Lorenz, Indigenization as inclusion, 218–227.
- ³⁶ Gaudry and Lorenz, Indigenization as inclusion, 218–227.
- ³⁷ Gaudry and Lorenz, Indigenization as inclusion, 223.
- ³⁸ Zulu, Connie. "Gender Equity and Equality in Higher Education Leadership: 'What's Social Justice and Substantive Equality Got to Do with It?'" Inaugural Lecture, 2016. <http://www.nwu-ac-za.web.nwu.ac.za/sites/www.nwu.ac.za/files/files/mc/documents/ZULU>
- ³⁹ Crenshaw, Kimberlé. (1989). "Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum*. 1989 (1) 139-167. <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=ucf>
- ⁴⁰ See for example: Smith, *Gender, whiteness and 'other Others*, 37-58.
- ⁴¹ PanAmerican Health Organization. "Promoting Health Equity, Gender and Ethnic Equality, and Human Rights in COVID-19 Responses: Key Considerations," 2020. https://iris.paho.org/bitstream/handle/10665.2/52058/PAHOEGCLEGCOVID-19-0001_eng.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y.
- ⁴² Davis, Jennifer. "University Survey Shows How COVID-19 Pandemic Is Hampering Career Progress for Women and Racialized Faculty ." Canadian Association for University Teachers-(CAUT), April 2021. <https://www.caut.ca/bulletin/2021/04/commentary-university-survey-shows-how-covid-19-pandemic-hampering-career-progress>.
- ⁴³ See the guide created by Nova Scotia Community College: Provoe, Jill. "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion-Minded Practices in Virtual Learning Communities," 2020: <https://www.nsc.ca/docs/about-nsc/applied-research/equity-report-english.pdf>
- ⁴⁴ Corbet, Sylvie, and Nicolas Garriga. "Tensions Mar Paris Protest as Floyd Outrage Goes Global." CTV N, 2020. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/tensions-mar-paris-protest-as-floyd-outrage-goes-global-1.4964851>.
- ⁴⁵ Inter-Institutional Advisory Committee. "Scarborough Charter." *National Dialogues and Action*, 2021. <https://www.uts.utoronto.ca/principal/scarborough-charter>.
- ⁴⁶ "Tokenism: Definition of Tokenism by Lexico." Lexico Dictionaries | English. Lexico Dictionaries. Accessed December 13, 2019. <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/tokenism>
- ⁴⁷ "Ally." Merriam-Webster. Merriam-Webster. Accessed December 18, 2019. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ally>.
- ⁴⁸ Munir, F., Carolynne Mason, and Hilary McDermott. "Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the Athena SWAN charter." London: *Equality Challenge Unit* (2014).
- ⁴⁹ Athena Forum. "Work Allocation Models," no. January (2018). <https://Athenaforum.org.uk/media/1144/Athena-forum-wam-reportjanuary2018.pdf>.
- ⁵⁰ Athena Forum. "Work Allocation Models," no. January (2018). <https://Athenaforum.org.uk/media/1144/Athena-forum-wam-reportjanuary2018.pdf>.
- ⁵¹ Andrew Gravse, Andrew Rowell, and Eugenie Hunsicker. (2019). "An Impact Evaluation of the Athena SWAN Charter." *Advance HE*.
- ⁵² Wheeler, Ronald. "We All Do It: Unconscious Behavior, Bias, and Diversity." *Law Library Journal* 107, no. 2 (April 1, 2015). https://scholarship.law.bu.edu/faculty_scholarship/129.
- ⁵³ "Tools for Social Change: How to Develop a Liberatory Consciousness | Leadership for Educational Equity." Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://educationalequity.org/blog/tools-social-change-how-develop-liberatory-consciousness>.

- ⁵⁴ Ostrove, Joan M., and Kendrick T. Brown. "Are Allies Who We Think They Are?: A Comparative Analysis." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 48, no. 4 (April 1, 2018): 195–204. <https://doi.org/10.1111/JASP.12502>.
- ⁵⁵ "Ally Is Not a Noun | University of Missouri - Kansas City." Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://www.umkc.edu/insider/posts/2018/05/post.html>
- ⁵⁶ Stewart, Dafina Lazarus. "Promoting Moral Growth Through Pluralism and Social Justice Education." *New Directions for Student Services* 2012, no. 139 (September 1, 2012): 63–72. <https://doi.org/10.1002/SS.20023>.
- ⁵⁷ Bogan, Michelle. 2021. "How to challenge resistance to DEI change" in Forbes, Jun. 3: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ellevate/2021/06/03/how-to-challenge-resistance-to-dei-change/?sh=15d39d636331>; Equity, Philanthropic Initiative for Racial. "Respond to Internal Resistance to Racial Justice Lens." Accessed May 3, 2022. <https://racialequity.org/2020/04/respond-to-internal-resistance-to-racial-justice-lens/>.
- ⁵⁸ Ball, Jessica, and Pauline Janyst. "Enacting Research Ethics in Partnerships with Indigenous Communities in Canada: 'Do It in a Good Way.'" *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics* 3, no. 2 (2008): 33–51, page 49.
- ⁵⁹ Cunningham Erves, Jennifer, Tilicia L. Mayo-Gamble, Alecia Malin-Fair, Alaina Boyer, Yvonne Joosten, Yolanda C. Vaughn, Lisa Sherden, Patrick Luther, Stephania Miller, and Consuelo H. Wilkins. (2017). "Needs, Priorities, and Recommendations for Engaging Underrepresented Populations in Clinical Research: A Community Perspective." *Journal of Community Health*, 42: 472-480.
- ⁶⁰ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. "What We Have Learned : Principles of Truth and Reconciliation," 2015, 193.
- ⁶¹ "Setting New Directions to Support Indigenous Research and Research Training in Canada 2019 - 2022 - Canada.Ca." Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://www.Canada.ca/en/research-coordinating-committee/priorities/Indigenous-research/strategic-plan-2019-2022.html>.
- ⁶² "CSIRO Athena SWAN Bronze Award Application | SAGE." Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://sciencegenderequity.org.au/application/Athena-swan-bronze-award-application-csiro/>.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ Universities Canada. "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Canadian Universities: Report on the 2019 Survey." *Media Room Publications*, 2019. <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/publications/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-at-Canadian-universities-report-on-the-2019-survey/>.
- ⁶⁵ "Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research." Accessed April 29, 2022. <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/EDI-eng.aspx#1d>.
- ⁶⁶ Tuck, Eve. "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities." *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no. 3 (2009), page 417.
- ⁶⁷ "Setting New Directions to Support Indigenous Research and Research Training in Canada 2019 - 2022 - Canada.Ca." Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://www.Canada.ca/en/research-coordinating-committee/priorities/Indigenous-research/strategic-plan-2019-2022.html>.
- ⁶⁸ Stinson, Jane. "Learning Across Knowledge Systems 2: What Are Indigenous and Western Ways of Knowing?" Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women. 2019. <https://www.criaw-icref.ca/publications/learning-across-knowledge-systems-what-are-Indigenous-and-western-ways-of-knowing/>.
- ⁶⁹ National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. "Lexicon of Terminology: Preferred Terms - At a Glance," 2019.
- ⁷⁰ Colleges and Institutes of Canada. "Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes," 2014. <https://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/policyfocus/Indigenous-learners/protocol/>.
- ⁷¹ Canada, Universities. "Universities Canada Principles on Indigenous Education," 2015. <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-Canada-principles-on-Indigenous-education/>.
- ⁷² Grange, Hamilin, Maureen Brown, and Jessica C. Brown. "Diversity , Equity and Indigenous Lens," 2019. <https://www.confederationcollege.ca/human-resources-services/human-rights-decolonization/diversity-equity-and-Indigenous-lens>.
- ⁷³ United Nations. "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples : United Nations For Indigenous Peoples." United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/Indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-Indigenous-peoples.html>.
- ⁷⁴ Truth and Reconciliation Commission. "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action." *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 2015, 20.
- ⁷⁵ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. "What We Have Learned : Principles of Truth and Reconciliation," 2015, 193.
- ⁷⁶ First Nations Information Governance Center. "The First Nations Principles of OCAP® - The First Nations Information Governance Centre," 2016. <https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/>.
- ⁷⁷ "Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research." Accessed April 29, 2022. <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/EDI-eng.aspx#1d>.
- ⁷⁸ Government of Canada. "Setting New Directions to Support Indigenous Research and Research Training in Canada 2019 - 2022," 2020. https://www.Canada.ca/content/dam/crcc-ccrc/documents/strategic-plan-2019-2022/sirc_strategic_plan-eng.pdf.
- ⁷⁹ Grange, Hamilin, Maureen Brown, and Jessica C. Brown. "Diversity , Equity and Indigenous Lens," 2019. <https://www.confederationcollege.ca/human-resources-services/human-rights-decolonization/diversity-equity-and-Indigenous-lens>.
- ⁸⁰ Stinson, *Learning across*, 1-7.
- ⁸¹ "Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research." Accessed April 29, 2022. <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/EDI-eng.aspx#1d>.
- ⁸² Government of Canada. "Setting New Directions to Support Indigenous Research and Research Training in Canada 2019 - 2022," 2020. https://www.Canada.ca/content/dam/crcc-ccrc/documents/strategic-plan-2019-2022/sirc_strategic_plan-eng.pdf.
- ⁸³ Canadian Environmental Law Association. "Working with Indigenous Communities: A Webinar Series," 2020. <https://cela.ca/working-with-Indigenous-communities-a-3-part-webinar-series/>.
- ⁸⁴ Manternach, Brian. "Indigenous Ally Toolkit." *Journal of Singing* 72, no. 1 (2015): 83.
- ⁸⁵ Laurentian University. "How To Be An Ally To Indigenous Peoples," 2021. <https://laurentian.ca/Indigenous-programs/how-to-be-an-ally>.

- ⁸⁶ Michaud, Benny, and Kahente Horn-Miller. "Kinàmàgawin (Learning Together): Carleton University Strategic Indigenous Initiatives Committee Final Report." Ottawa, 2020. <https://carleton.ca/Indigenousinitiatives/wp-content/uploads/Kinamagwin.pdf>.
- ⁸⁷ National Indigenous University Senior Leaders' Association. "Indigenous VOICES ON Indigenous IDENTITY," 2022. https://www.fnuniv.ca/wp-content/uploads/Indigenous-Voices-on-Indigenous-Identity_National-Indigenous-Identity-Forum_Report_March-22_June-22-FINAL.pdf.
- ⁸⁸ Manternach, Brian. "Indigenous Ally Toolkit." *Journal of Singing* 72, no. 1 (2015): 83.
- ⁸⁹ Dolmage, Jay. "Academic Ableism." *Academic Ableism*, June 6, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.3998/MPUB.9708722>.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid, 5.
- ⁹¹ Hogan, Andrew J. "Social and Medical Models of Disability and Mental Health: Evolution and Renewal." *CMAJ* 191, no. 1 (January 7, 2019): E16–18. <https://doi.org/10.1503/CMAJ.181008>.
- ⁹² Mccorkindale, Deidre. "Race and Racism at Canadian Universities." 2018. Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://www.aaihs.org/race-and-racism-at-Canadian-universities/>.
- ⁹³ Houshmand, Sara, Lisa B. Spanierman, and Romin W. Tafarodi. "Excluded and Avoided: Racial Microaggressions Targeting Asian International Students in Canada." *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology* 20, no. 3 (2014): 377–88. <https://doi.org/10.1037/A0035404>.
- ⁹⁴ Shihpar, Abdullah. "Massey College and Insidious Racism on Canadian Campuses - Macleans.ca." *Macleans.ca*, 2017. <https://www.macleans.ca/opinion/massey-college-and-insidious-racism-on-Canadian-campuses/>; McDonald, Jeremy, and Lori Ward. "The Rose-Coloured Glasses Are off: Why Experts, Students Suspect Racism under-Reported on Campuses." *CBC News News*, 2017. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/Canada/race-complaints-Canadian-universities-1.3786176>
- ⁹⁵ McDonald and Ward, *The rose-coloured glasses*.
- ⁹⁶ Smith, Malinda S., Kimberley Gamarro, and Mansharn Toor. "A Dirty Dozen: Unconscious Race and Gender Biases in the Academy." In *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*, Edited by Frances Henry, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith, 263–96. UBC Press, 2017, page 292.
- ⁹⁷ Inter-Institutional Advisory Committee. "Scarborough Charter." *National Dialogues and Action*, 2021. <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/principal/scarborough-charter>.
- ⁹⁸ Canada, Government of. "Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019–2022 - Canada. Ca," 2019. <https://www.Canada.ca/en/Canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html>.
- ⁹⁹ United Nations. "Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice 27 November 1978." In *Standard-Setting at UNESCO*, 681–86, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004164543.1-760.73>.
- ¹⁰⁰ Nations, United. "International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination | OHCHR," 1965. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-elimination-all-forms-racial>.
- ¹⁰¹ United Nations. "International Decade for People of African Descent - 2015-2024," 2015. <https://www.un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent>.
- ¹⁰² Johnston, Julie. "What It's like to Be a Trans Scientist with Imposter Syndrome." *Lady Science*, 2019. <https://www.ladyscience.com/essays/what-its-like-to-be-a-trans-scientist-with-imposter-syndrome>; Cech, Erin A., and William R. Rothwell. "LGBTQ Inequality in Engineering Education." *Journal of Engineering Education* 107, no. 4 (October 1, 2018): 583–610. <https://doi.org/10.1002/JEE.20239>; Garvey, Jason C., Steve D. Mobley, Kiara S. Summerville, and Gretchen T. Moore. "Queer and Trans* Students of Color: Navigating Identity Disclosure and College Contexts." <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2018.1449081> 90, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 150–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2018.1449081>; Brinkworth, Carolyn. "From Chilly Climate to Warm Reception : Experiences and Good Practices for Supporting LGBTQ Students in STEM." *CGU Theses & Dissertations*, January 1, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.5642/cguetd/97>.
- ¹⁰³ Memorial University of Newfoundland. "Trans & Gender Diverse Students' Guide | Student Life." Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.mun.ca/student/student-supports-and-services/respectful-campus-community/sexual-and-gender-diversity/trans-and-gender-diverse-students-guide/>.
- ¹⁰⁴ Wilfred Laurier University. "Diversity and Equity | Gender Inclusivity | Students." Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://students.wlu.ca/student-life/diversity-and-equity/gender-inclusivity.html>.
- ¹⁰⁵ Cooper, Katelyn M., Anna Jo J. Auerbach, Jordan D. Bader, Amy S. Beadles-Bohling, Jacqueline A. Brashears, Erica Cline, Sarah L. Eddy, et al. "Fourteen Recommendations to Create a More Inclusive Environment for Lgbtq+ Individuals in Academic Biology." *CBE Life Sciences Education* 19, no. 3 (September 1, 2020): 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1187/CBE.20-04-0062/ASSET/IMAGES/LARGE/CBE-19-ES6-G001.JPEG>; Colella, Tony. "Inclusion of LGBTQ+ People in University Bioscience." University of Arizona, 2020. <https://repository.arizona.edu/handle/10150/641690>; Mattheis, Allison, Daniel Cruz Ramírez De Arellano, and Jeremy B. Yoder. "A Model of Queer STEM Identity in the Workplace." *Journal of Homosexuality* 67, no. 13 (November 9, 2020): 1839–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2019.1610632>; Ackerman, Nicole, Timothy Atherton, Adrian Ray Avalani, Christine A. Berven, Tanmoy Laskar, Ansel Neunzert, Diana S. Parno, and Michael; Ramsey-Musolf. *LGBT+ Inclusivity in Physics and Astronomy: A Best Practices Guide*, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.1804.08406>; Riley, Donna M. "LGBT-Friendly Workplaces in Engineering." *Leadership and Management in Engineering* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2008): 19–23. [https://doi.org/10.1061/\(ASCE\)1532-6748\(2008\)8:1\(19\)](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:1(19)).
- ¹⁰⁶ Student Union, University of New Brunswick. "The 203 Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity." Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.unbsu.ca/the-203-centre-for-gender-and-sexual-diversity>.
- ¹⁰⁷ Universities Canada. "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Canadian Universities: Report on the 2019 Survey." *Media Room Publications*, 2019. <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/publications/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-at-Canadian-universities-report-on-the-2019-survey/>.
- ¹⁰⁸ GRIS Quebec. "Ateliers de Sensibilisation." Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://grisquebec.org/ateliers-sensibilisation/>.
- ¹⁰⁹ Council of Canadian Academies Expert Panel on Women in University Research. "Strengthening Canada's Research Capacity: The Gender Dimension," 2013. <https://cca-reports.ca/reports/strengthening-Canadas-research-capacity-the-gender-dimension/>; Wang, Chen, and Robyn Doolittle. "Locked Out of the Ivory Tower: How Universities Keep Women from Rising to the Top." *The Globe and Mail*, 2021. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/Canada/article-locked-out-of-the-ivory-tower-how-universities-keep-women-from-rising/>.
- ¹¹⁰ Harvey, James A. *Cracking The Code: Girls' and Women's Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)*. UNESCO. Vol. 68, 2016. <https://en.unesco.org/events/cracking-code-girls-and-women->

s-education-science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics-stem.; Joan C. Williams. "The 5 Biases Pushing Women out of STEM." *Harvard Business Review*, 2015. <https://hbr.org/2015/03/the-5-biases-pushing-women-out-of-stem>.

¹¹¹ Government of Canada. "Women and Gender Equality Canada," 2021. <https://women-gender-equality.Canada.ca/en.html>.

¹¹² Reynolds, Vikki. "Courage to Act," 2021. <https://www.couragetoact.ca/>.

¹¹³ Osborne, Rachel L. "Sexual Harassment in Universities: A Critical View of the Institutional Response." *Canadian Woman Studies* 12, no. 3 (April 1, 1992). <https://cws.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cws/article/view/10495>.

¹¹⁴ Madera, Juan M., Michelle R. Hebl, Heather Dial, Randi Martin, and Virginia Valian. "Raising Doubt in Letters of Recommendation for Academia: Gender Differences and Their Impact." *Journal of Business and Psychology* 34, no. 3 (2019): 287–303. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-018-9541-1>.

¹¹⁵ Dixit, Prajwala. "These Immigrant Women Are Experts in Their Fields of Science. Why Aren't They Working in Them?" *CBC News*, 2020. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/Canada/newfoundland-labrador/immigrant-women-science-1.5576724>.

¹¹⁶ Smith, *Gender, whiteness, and 'other Others.'*

¹¹⁷ See for example: O'Neil, Cathy, and Gideon Mann. "Hiring Algorithms Are Not Neutral." *Harvard Business Review*, 2016, 2016–19.

¹¹⁸ Henry et al., *Equity Myth*.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*.

¹²⁰ See for example: Adams, Sophie, Sheree Bekker, Yanan Fan, Tess Gordon, Laura J. Shepherd, Eve Slavich, and David Waters. "Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching: 'Punish[Ing] Those Who Fail To Do Their Gender Right.'" *Higher Education* 2021 83:4 83, no. 4 (March 16, 2021): 787–807. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10734-021-00704-9>; Heffernan, Troy. "Sexism, Racism, Prejudice, and Bias: A Literature Review and Synthesis of Research Surrounding Student Evaluations of Courses and Teaching." <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2021.1888075>, no. 1 (2021): 144–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2021.1888075>.

¹²¹ "New Study Examines Students' Mental Health and COVID-19 – Brighter World." Accessed May 2, 2022. <https://brighterworld>.

[mcmaster.ca/articles/new-study-examines-students-mental-health-and-covid-19/](https://www.mcmaster.ca/articles/new-study-examines-students-mental-health-and-covid-19/).

¹²² See the Dimensions charter: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions-Charter_Dimensions-Charte_eng.asp

¹²³ For example: see the EDI component required in for applications to the interdisciplinary and Tri-Agency New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF) grants: "Best practices in Equity, Diversity and inclusion in research": <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/EDI-eng.aspx>

¹²⁴ Tannenbaum, Cara, Robert P. Ellis, Friederike Eyssel, James Zou, and Londa Schiebinger. "Sex and Gender Analysis Improves Science and Engineering." *Nature* 575, no. 7781 (November 7, 2019): 137–46. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1657-6>.

¹²⁵ For example, on the graduate experience of Latinx and Black students, see: Gildersleeve, Ryan Evelyn, Natasha N. Croom, and Philip L. Vasquez. "Am I Going Crazy?!: A Critical Race Analysis of Doctoral Education." *https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2011.539472* 44, no. 1 (January 2011): 93–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2011.539472>.

For example, in field research, see: Viglione, Giuliana. "Scientists Speak up about Harassment in Field Research." *Nature* 585 (2020): 15–16. <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202008.0021.v1>; Woodgate, Rebecca, Ben Fitzhugh, Stephanie Harrington, Trina Litchendorf, Hope St John, Roger Buick, Carolyn Friedman, et al. "Preventing Harassment in Fieldwork Situations Report from the University of Washington's Respect and Equality in Fieldwork (REIF) 2017 Committee Addressing Harassment during Fieldwork-REIF-Respect and Equality in the Field," 2017.

¹²⁶ Gibbs, Kenneth. "Diversity in STEM: What It Is and Why It Matters - Scientific American Blog Network." *Scientific American*, 2014, 1–5. <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/voices/diversity-in-stem-what-it-is-and-why-it-matters/>; Díaz-García, Cristina, Angela González-Moreno, and Francisco José Sáez-Martínez. "Gender Diversity within R & D Teams: Its Impact on Radicalness of Innovation." *Innovation: Management, Policy and Practice* 15, no. 2 (2013): 149–60. <https://doi.org/10.5172/impp.2013.15.2.149>.

¹²⁷ See for example guidance and documentation regarding incorporating EDI in applications for the New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF): <https://www>.

[sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/EDI-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/EDI-eng.aspx); Forrester, Nikki. "Diversity in Science: Next Steps for Research Group Leaders." *Nature* 585, no. 7826 (September 24, 2020): S65–67. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-020-02681-y>.

¹²⁸ See the Dimensions charter: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions-Charter_Dimensions-Charte_eng.asp

¹²⁹ Wong, Carmen, Kate Ballegooyen, Lawrence Ignace, Mary Jane Johnson, and Heidi Swanson. "Towards Reconciliation: 10 Calls to Action to Natural Scientists Working in Canada." *Facets* 5, no. 1 (October 1, 2020): 769–83. <https://doi.org/10.1139/FACETS-2020-0005>.

¹³⁰ Boilevin, Louise; Chapman, Jules; Deane, Lindsay; Doerksen, Caroline; Fresz, Greg; Joe, Du; Leech-Crier, Nicolas; Marsh, Samona; McLeod, Jim; Neufeld, Scott; Pham, Steven; Shaver, Laura; Smith, Patrick; Steward, Martin; Wilson, Dean; Winter, Phoenix. "Research 101: A Manifesto for Ethical Research in the Downtown Eastside," 2019, 15. <https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubccommunityandpartnerspublicati/52387/items/1.0377565>

¹³¹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission. "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action." *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 2015, page 3.

¹³² Watson, Clare. "Women Less Likely to Win Major Research Awards." *Nature*, September 13, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1038/D41586-021-02497-4>.

¹³³ Gewin, Virginia. "The Time Tax Put on Scientists of Colour." *Nature* 583, no. 7816 (July 1, 2020): 479–81. <https://doi.org/10.1038/D41586-020-01920-6>; Braun, Yvonne A, Patricia Gwartney, Jocelyn Hollander, Eileen Otis, Aliya Saperstein, and Ellen K Scott. "The Burden of Invisible Work in Academia: Social Inequalities and Time Use in Five University Departments." *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 1, no. 39 (May 18, 2017): 228–45. <https://doi.org/10.55671/0160-4341.1016>.

¹³⁴ Johnson, Genevieve Fuji, Robert Howsam, Malinda Smith, and Nancy Bray. "The Diversity Gap in 2020: Leadership Pipelines at Five Canadian Universities « Academic Women's Association." Edmonton, 2020. <https://uofaawa.wordpress.com/awa-diversity-gap-campaign/the-diversity-gap-in-2020-leadership-pipelines-at-five-canadian-universities/>.

- ¹³⁵ Saltes, Natasha. "Disability Barriers in Academia: An Analysis of Disability Accommodation Policies for Faculty at Canadian Universities." *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies* 9, no. 1 (February 27, 2020): 53–90. <https://doi.org/10.15353/CJDS.V9I1.596>.
- ¹³⁶ See for example: Barrows, Ana Sofia, Mahadeo A. Sukhai, and Imogen R. Coe. "So, You Want to Host an Inclusive and Accessible Conference?" *Facets* 6, no. 1 (February 4, 2021): 131–38. <https://doi.org/10.1139/FACETS-2020-0017>.
- ¹³⁷ See for example: Ramos, Howard, and Peter S. Li. "Differences in Representation and Employment Income of Racialized University Professors in Canada." In *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*, Edited by Frances Henry, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith, 46–64. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.; Canadian Association of University Teachers. "The Persistent Gap." *CAUT Equity Review* 5 (2011): <https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/the-persistent-gap-mdash-understanding-male-female-salary-differentials-amongst-Canadian-academic-staff-mar-2011.pdf>
- ¹³⁸ Statistics Canada. "Number and Salaries of Full-Time Teaching Staff at Canadian Universities." Accessed May 2, 2022. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tb1/en/tv.action?pid=3710010801&fbclid=IwAR0Wih6nSxAgkixzvUI3CH3QrBWSuXQsSgw2UY2VN2Hlb8T_oG49V1zBsg8.
- ¹³⁹ University of Guelph News. "Salary Anomaly Review Complete - U of G News." U of G News, 2018. <https://news.uoguelph.ca/2018/06/salary-anomaly-review-complete/>.
- ¹⁴⁰ Government of Quebec. *LégisQuebec - Pay Equity Act (1996)*. <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/E-12.001>.
- ¹⁴¹ Dr. Marjorie Griffin Cohen, Dr. Louise Forsyth, Dr. Glenis Joyce, Dr. Audrey Kobayashi, Dr. Shree Mulay, Dr. Michele Ollivier, Dr. Susan Prentice, and Dr. Wendy Robbins
- ¹⁴² Narui, K A Truong, and T L McMickens. "Independent Study: How Three Doctoral Students Tackled Issues Recruiting Participants and Collecting Data with Historically Underrepresented Populations." *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis* 4, no. 3 (2015).; Kim, Pauline. "Data-Driven Discrimination at Work." *William & Mary Law Review* 58, no. 3 (February 1, 2017). <https://scholarship.law.wm.edu/wmlr/vol58/iss3/4>.
- ¹⁴³ Tulchinsky, Gerald, Gerald Tulchinsky, and Gerald Tulchinsky. "Canada's Jews : A People's Journey," 2008, 630.
- ¹⁴⁴ Government of Canada. "Privacy Implementation Notice 2020-03 Protecting Privacy When Releasing Information about a Small Number of Individuals - Canada," 2020. <https://www.Canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/access-information-privacy/access-information-privacy-notices/2020-03-protecting-privacy-releasing-information-about-small-number-individuals.html>.
- ¹⁴⁵ Dengage, Jennifer, Annemieke Farenhorst, Tracey Peter, Tamara Franz-Odenaal, Danielle Saj, Sally Marchand, and Mahalia Lepage. "Canadian Natural Sciences & Engineering (NSE) Faculty Workplace Climate Survey Results - Atlantic Canada," 2020.
- ¹⁴⁶ Wijesingha, Rochelle, and Howard Ramos. "Human Capital or Cultural Taxation: What Accounts for Differences in Tenure and Promotion of Racialized and Female Faculty?" *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 47, no. 3 (December 20, 2017): 54–75. <https://doi.org/10.47678/CUHE.V47I3.187902>.; Dhmoon, Rita Kaur. "Racism as a Workload and Bargaining Issue." *Socialist Studies/Études Socialistes* 14, no. 1 (February 24, 2020). <https://doi.org/10.18740/SS27273>.
- ¹⁴⁷ For more information on employing an intersectional lens in EDI work, see Chapter 7 of the Handbook of Research Methods in Diversity Management, Equality and Inclusion at Work, "Intersectionality as a methodological tool in qualitative equality, diversity and inclusion research".
- ¹⁴⁸ Government of Canada. "Frequently Asked Questions about the Self-Identification Questionnaire." Accessed May 3, 2022. https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_97737.html.
- ¹⁴⁹ Tienda, Marta. "Diversity ≠ Inclusion: Promoting Integration in Higher Education." *Educational Researcher (Washington, D.C. : 1972)* 42, no. 9 (December 2013): 467. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X13516164>.
- ¹⁵⁰ Bell, L. A., Desai, D., & Irani, K. "Storytelling for social justice: Creating arts-based counterstories to resist racism." In *Culturally Relevant Arts Education for Social Justice: A Way Out of No Way*, 15-24. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- ¹⁵¹ Turpel-Lafond (Aki-kwe), Mary Ellen, and Lerato Chondoma. "Building Indigenous-Led Engagement Frameworks - Report on the Dialogue on Indigenous Data, Information and Records," 2019. https://irsi.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/SSHRC_PositionPaper_Report_SUMMARY.pdf.
- ¹⁵² Dickson-Swift, Virginia, Erica L. James, Sandra Kippen, and Pranee Liamputtong. "Researching Sensitive Topics: Qualitative Research as Emotion Work." *Qualitative Research* 9, no. 1 (2009): 61–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794108098031>.
- ¹⁵³ Anthym, Myntha, and Franklin Tuitt. "When the Levees Break: The Cost of Vicarious Trauma, Microaggressions and Emotional Labor for Black Administrators and Faculty Engaging in Race Work at Traditionally White Institutions." 32, no. 9 (October 21, 2019): 1072–93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1645907>.
- ¹⁵⁴ Bell, Holly. "Vicarious Traumatization." In *Encyclopedia of Interpersonal Violence*, Edited by Claire M. Renzetti and Jeffrey L. Edleson, 732. SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012, page 732. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963923.n488>.
- ¹⁵⁵ Dickson-Swift, Virginia, Erica L. James, Sandra Kippen, and Pranee Liamputtong. "Researching Sensitive Topics: Qualitative Research as Emotion Work." *Qualitative Research* 9, no. 1 (2009): 61–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794108098031>.
- ¹⁵⁶ Bjerke, May Britt, and Ralph Renger. "Being Smart about Writing SMART Objectives." *Evaluation and Program Planning* 61 (April 1, 2017): 125–27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2016.12.009>.; Ogbeiw, Osahon. "Why Written Objectives Need to Be Really SMART." *British Journal of Health Care Management* 23, no. 7 (2017): 324–36. <https://doi.org/10.12968/BJHC.2017.23.7.324>.
- ¹⁵⁷ Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241–99.
- ¹⁵⁸ "What Is Intersectionality and Why Is It Important? | AAUP." Accessed May 2, 2022. https://www.aaup.org/article/what-intersectionality-and-why-it-important#.Ym_wMi8r1UN.
- ¹⁵⁹ The Project Management. "The Risk Management Process — The Project Management Blueprint.Com," 2019. <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/risk-management-process-steps>.