Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Post-Secondary Research System

## Expert Panel on EDI Practices for Impactful Change

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EDI initiatives have led to transformative changes at institutions across Canada. But building a sustained culture that supports all students, staff, and faculty members requires a deeper understanding of what measures are effective and why.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Post-Secondary Research System examines measures that can enhance EDI in the post-secondary ecosystem in Canada, the benefits and challenges of implementing them, and their potential impacts on individuals and institutions.

In the post-secondary research system, EDI measures extend to:

- students, staff and faculty members
- institutions
- the research process
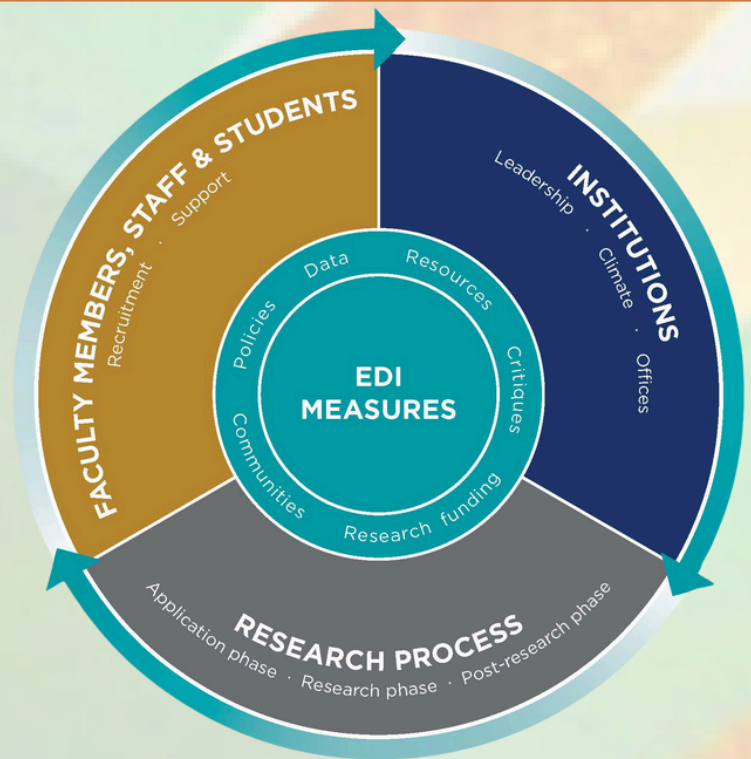
Inclusive excellence: a systems-wide approach to EDI that recognizes diversity and inclusion are fundamental to excellence.

EDI MEASURES

FACULTY MEMBERS, STAFF & STUDENTS · Recruitment · Support

INSTITUTIONS · Leadership · Climate · Offices

RESEARCH PROCESS · Application phase · Research phase · Post-research phase

Policies · Data · Resources · Critiques · Research funding · Communities

Equity

Recognizes the importance of achieving and maintaining human rights and dignity in processes and outcomes, and that people have differential access to resources and opportunities due to historical and systemic barriers.

Diversity

Relates to heterogeneity, recognizing people are unique and their characteristics and intersecting identities can contribute to different experiences.

Inclusion

Feeling valued, supported and respected in an environment upheld by all members of a community and reinforced through equitable policies and programs.

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Characteristics of successful EDI approaches

- Are interconnected and mutually reinforcing
- Consider the complex and overlapping ways people experience exclusion
- Include transparent and flexible compensation systems
- Involve leadership in key roles
- Are implemented throughout the research process
- Include built-in accountability, transparency and enforcement mechanisms
- Are multi-level and their implementation is coordinated
- Provide consistent and long-term support

To bring about lasting and meaningful culture change, EDI initiatives must be resilient to evolving pressures, situations, and environments.

Actions that can support sustained EDI work in the face of challenges:

Acknowledging the interconnectedness of EDI, and implementing not just measures that increase diversity, but those that also explicitly seek equity and inclusion.

Fostering broad engagement across the research system and support for EDI initiatives among students, staff, and faculty members.

Embedding EDI offices, positions, and responsibilities in the institutional structure.

Developing metrics and accountabilities to ensure compliance among individuals, institutions, funders, and agencies.

Going forward

There is growing evidence of success of EDI initiatives in the post-secondary system. However, the state of knowledge on EDI measures is limited by gaps in qualitative and quantitative data. More data are needed to full assess their effectiveness and impacts.

There are opportunities to improve data collection practices by investing in community-based and community-led research, tracking and sharing data across institutions, and disaggregating data to better reflect the diversity of people in Canada.