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Executive Summary

“The BSI isn’t just an idea—it’s a promise to center Black voices and create spaces where we can all flourish.” (Student)

This report presents findings from a comprehensive three-month public consultation with Black faculty, staff, students, and alumni at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), aimed at gathering feedback on the mandate and future direction of the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI). Conducted from February to April 2024, this consultation engaged key university stakeholders, offering insights on BSI’s role within academia, its strategic priorities, guiding principles, and its significance to the Black community at TMU. The insights obtained will inform the development of the BSI’s Terms of Reference and its three-to-five-year action plan, establishing a roadmap for advancing Black scholarship and fostering community empowerment.

Methodology

The consultation employed an integrated approach, combining content analysis and a thematic approach to systematically capture and interpret feedback. Approximately 4,191 online surveys were distributed to Black faculty, students, staff, and alumni at TMU. The survey explored key areas, including the rationale for BSI’s existence, strategic priorities, visibility, partnership opportunities, and mechanisms for accountability. Due to a limited response rate, attributed to the survey timing, competing academic and institutional demands among other things, the BSI will be enhancing its engagement strategies to ensure transparency and a greater involvement of the Black community at TMU. Several strategies will be employed to increase participation by the Black community as well as ascertain new insights, validate the report, share additional insights, and co-create strategies for the BSI initiatives.

Findings

Key findings are organized according to the five guiding questions. Participants highlighted the BSI’s vital role in promoting Black flourishing by addressing anti-Black racism, advancing Black research, scholarship and expertise, and fostering a supportive community at TMU. Initial findings from the consultation highlighted five key themes as well as recommendations:

1. Rationale:

Participants emphasized the need for the BSI to serve as a nexus for Afro-Diasporic scholarship, addressing systemic inequities in representation, access, and resources. Many stressed the importance of embedding the BSI’s initiatives across all faculties to ensure widespread impact.

2. Strategic Priorities:

Top priorities identified include:

- Developing mentorship and funding pathways for Black students.
- Establishing research chairs and fellowships focused on Black scholarship.
- Offering professional development opportunities for Black faculty and staff.

3. Visibility and Representation:

Participants called for:

- Curated events celebrating Afro-Diasporic heritage (e.g., cultural showcases, speaker series).
 - Increased hiring of Black faculty across disciplines.
 - Permanent installations honoring Black contributions to academia.
4. **Relationship Building:**
Suggestions included:
- Deepening ties with off-campus Black organizations through joint initiatives.
 - Strengthening intra-university networks among Black students, faculty, and staff.
5. **Community Responsiveness:**
The need for transparent governance structures and regular community updates was emphasized. Participants recommended forming advisory committees to ensure continued alignment with community needs.

Recommendations

The following recommendations, informed by consultation feedback, aim to guide the BSI's next steps:

1. **Develop Specific Goals and KPIs:**
Align feedback with measurable objectives in the ToR and action plan. Examples include increasing Black faculty representation by a specified percentage over five years and hosting annual events showcasing Afro-Diasporic culture.
2. **Establish Dedicated Resources:**
Champion the establishment of sustainable funding streams to support groundbreaking research, transformative programming, and scholarships that empower the next generation of Black scholars.
3. **Enhance Visibility Through Public Engagement:**
Launch campaigns and events that celebrate Black contributions to academia and culture. Incorporate Afro-Diasporic art and research into TMU's public spaces.
4. **Foster Transparent Governance:**
Form a community advisory board to oversee the implementation of BSI initiatives and regularly publish progress reports.
5. **Expand Stakeholder Engagement:**
Build stronger connections with external Black organizations, leveraging these partnerships for mentorship opportunities and collaborative research projects.

Through this community-informed process, the BSI aims to build a foundation for ongoing engagement and feedback, ensuring that its initiatives are responsive to both current and long-term goals. These findings will be presented to the TMU community in a scheduled gathering for additional validation and input. This report serves as a foundational resource in guiding BSI's mission to promote Black flourishing within TMU and the broader community.

Organization of the Report

The consultation report is organized into five sections: i) rationale, ii) strategic priorities, iii) visibility and representation, iv) relationship building and collaboration, and v) community responsiveness and accountability. Each section synthesizes feedback from participants, emphasizing the importance of

centering Afro-Diasporic knowledge, amplifying representation, and fostering meaningful partnerships to enhance the contributions of Black scholars within and beyond TMU.

Section I Setting the Context

Extensive research highlights persistent anti-Black racism, under-representation, and marginalization faced by Black scholars in Canadian higher education. In 2019, TMU's Office of the Vice President for Equity and Community Inclusion conducted a campus climate review prompted by Black student activism. Consistent with the significant body of existing research on anti-Blackness in higher education, [The Anti-Black Racism Climate Review Report \(2020\)](#) revealed a pervasive hostile environment affecting all aspects of university life and the scope of under-representation, especially among faculty.

In 2021, following the release of the [Anti-Black Racism Climate Review \(2020\)](#), President Lachemi established the [Presidential Implementation Committee to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#). This committee was tasked with enacting the fourteen recommendations outlined in the review. Since then, TMU has made notable progress in addressing systemic inequities affecting Black staff, students, and faculty. A significant milestone was achieved in 2023 with the establishment of the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI), a pan-university initiative rooted in the Faculty of Community Services. The BSI emerged as a response to the urgent need for greater representation and visibility of Black intellectual traditions, research innovation, scholarship, and ways of being.

Aligned with [TMU's Vision 2030](#), the [Strategic Research Plan \(2025-2030\)](#), and the [Academic Plan \(2025-2030\)](#), the BSI exemplifies the university's commitment to promoting Black flourishing by addressing systemic barriers. Its mandate is to collaborate across departments and units to advance Afro-Diasporic knowledge and epistemologies through interdisciplinary and innovative research, transformative pedagogy, and inspiring programming. Furthermore, the BSI is dedicated to creating academic pathways for Black students at all levels while fostering a sense of belonging through flourishing community connections that inform, inspire and uplift. In doing so, in partnership with the university, the Black Scholarship Institute is directly supporting the university achieve its global mission and become its best self.

Purpose

This report presents findings from a three-month public online consultation with Black faculty, staff, students, and alumni at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). Conducted between February 2024 and April 2024, the consultation gathered insights on the mandate, vision, and strategic priorities of the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI). The feedback emphasizes the significance of the BSI to the Black community at TMU and provides actionable recommendations to enhance its impact. Additionally, the report outlines the consultation methodology and provides a snapshot of preliminary insights, reflecting the diverse experiences and priorities of participants.

The consultation aimed to engage Black faculty, staff, students, and alumni in a meaningful dialogue to identify critical needs and priorities. In accordance with [Senate Policy 144](#), insights gathered will shape the BSI's Terms of Reference and a five-year action plan, ensuring its initiatives address systemic barriers and amplify Afro-Diasporic knowledge and representation at TMU.

The report is organized into five sections, each addressing critical aspects of the BSI's mandate:

1. **Rationale:** Exploring the need for the BSI within TMU and the broader academic landscape.
2. **Strategic Priorities:** Identifying actionable goals to support Black flourishing.
3. **Visibility and Representation:** Amplifying Afro-Diasporic heritage and presence in academia.
4. **Relationship Building, Partnerships, and Collaboration:** Strengthening intra- and inter-community connections.
5. **Community Responsiveness and Institutional Accountability:** Fostering trust, transparency, and sustained engagement.

Section II Methodology & Approach

The online consultation conducted for the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) employed a structured approach to gather valuable insights from the Black faculty, students, staff, and alumni at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). A total of approximately 4,191 online surveys were distributed from February 2024 to April 2024. However, the response rate was notably low, with only 100 participants completing the survey. The low participation rate may reflect some of the challenging issues within an institutional setting, such as the timing of the survey which may have coincided with academic and institutional pressures. Recognizing these limitations, the BSI is committed to refining its engagement methods through future focus groups and direct dialogue with stakeholders.

The guiding questions are outlined below:

1. Rationale

- What is the rationale for the existence of the Black Scholarship Institute?

2. Strategic Priorities

- What key strategic priorities should the BSI focus on to ensure meaningful and sustainable change for Black students and the broader community at TMU?

3. Visibility and Representation

- What initiatives can the BSI implement to enhance the visibility and representation of Black faculty, students, and staff and amplify Afro-Diasporic culture and heritage within the institution?

4. Relationship Building, Partnerships and Collaboration

- What strategies and collaborative partnerships can the BSI implement to deepen relationships within the Black community at TMU and strengthen connections with off-campus Black organizations and communities?

5. Community Responsiveness & Institutional Accountability

- What mechanisms, processes, and practices should the BSI implement to ensure it and the university remains responsive to the evolving needs and concerns of the Black community, while simultaneously promoting transparency, accountability, and trust-building with the community it serves?

Approach

The study employed a combination of qualitative methods to analyze the feedback, incorporating content analysis and a thematic approach to derive meaningful insights. The initial phase of the analysis focused on content analysis to identify and categorize patterns within the data, as well as provided insights into foundational understanding of the prominent topics and trends present in the data.

Building on the insights from content analysis, a thematic approach was applied to deepen the analysis and capture the underlying meanings within the data. This method involved reviewing the coded information to identify themes that reflected shared values, experiences, and perspectives. The thematic analysis organized findings into coherent themes and highlighted nuanced insights and a more holistic understanding of the feedback. It allowed for a deeper exploration of the data, highlighting complexities and interconnections that might not have been evident through content analysis alone.

Finally, these two methods were iteratively integrated to ensure a multidimensional analysis of the data. Content analysis informed the thematic exploration, and the thematic findings, in turn, refined the content coding process. This iterative approach facilitated a transition from surface-level observations to a richer, more interpretive understanding of the data, capturing its full complexity and depth. Through this synthesis, the study was able to uncover insights that reflect the diverse experiences and priorities of the respondents.

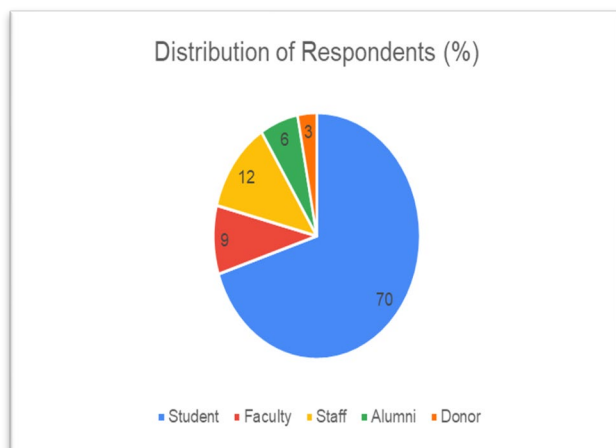
Section III: Findings

Approximately 4,191 online surveys were disseminated to Black faculty, students, staff, and alumni at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) as part of a comprehensive consultation effort for the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI). However, the survey yielded a limited number of responses, resulting in a low overall response rate. This response rate not only reflects the challenges of engaging marginalized communities but also highlights the critical need for our institution to build trust and sustainably invest in these relationships.

The limited engagement may be partially attributed to the timing of the survey administration, which may have further compounded the circumstances faced by a community that is often marginalized. To address these methodological limitations and enhance participation, future efforts will incorporate more targeted outreach strategies and culturally responsive engagement methods to ensure broader participation. These strategies aim to foster direct dialogue, build rapport, and encourage deeper engagement within the community.

This section is organized around key guiding questions, with each part presenting the feedback and insights gathered from Black faculty, students, and staff. We will share the findings of this consultation with the community at a gathering scheduled for later in the new academic year, providing an opportunity for community members to validate the results and offer additional feedback.

Profile of Participants

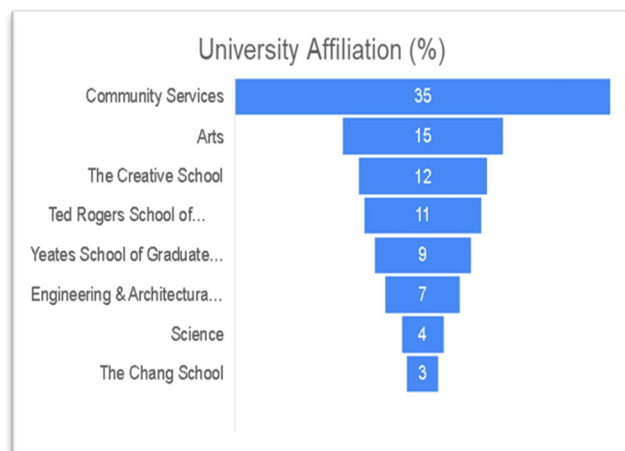


A total of 100 participants contributed to the consultation, with students representing the largest group at 70%, followed by staff (12%), faculty (9%), alumni (6%) and donors (3%). See figure 1.

The affiliations of respondents in the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) consultation report illustrate a diverse representation across various

faculties and schools at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). See figure 2.

Despite the low response rate, the feedback collected thus far has proven to be both rich and informative.



SECTION III: Rationale of the Black Scholarship Institute

“The BSI isn’t just an idea—it’s a promise to center Black voices and create spaces where we can all flourish.” (Student)

In this section, the report presents the participant feedback featuring the rationale of the Black Scholarship Institute, as well as the suggested mandate of the Black Scholarship Institute, including mission, vision, and strategic objectives.

Respondents were asked to share their perception of the Black Scholarship Institute by identifying key words that came to mind. Respondents listed 222 words. Presented here are the top 10 words reflecting the community’s reflection of the Black Scholarship Institute.

The feedback reveals a powerful and nuanced perception of the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) as a catalyst for change at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). The prominence of terms such as **“community,”** (24 mentions) **“support,”** (21 mentions) and **“Black”** (18 mentions) highlights the BSI’s role as a hub for fostering belonging, solidarity, and collective empowerment among Black students, staff, faculty, and alumni. According to a respondent, **“community, connection, excellence, inclusion, and belongingness should be at the heart of the BSI.” (Staff).** Another respondent noted that the **“university is such a hard place to fit in, and I think having a place that strives for inclusion and community can be very helpful.” (Student).**

The Mandate of the Black Scholarship Institute

“The BSI is a space where Black voices and experiences are centered, creating a sense of belonging and shared purpose.”

The following quote demonstrate a vision of the Black Scholarship Institute. Further analysis of the themes was helpful in defining the mandate and distinguishing features of the Black Scholarship Institute. The following are recommendations summarized the content analysis.

1.2 Suggested Vision

A vibrant university community where Black faculty, students and staff thrive, Afrocentric perspectives and traditions are celebrated, and meaningful connections with the wider community drive transformative impact.

1.3 Suggested Mission

The pan-university initiative, based in the Faculty of Community Services, aims to: i) celebrate and amplify Black scholars while centering Afro-centric knowledge and wisdom; ii) nurture the career pursuits of Black scholars; iii) support Black students at all levels in their academic and professional journeys; and iv) collaborate with the community to empower and inspire Black communities through transformative research that explores and reimagines Black futures and addresses the complex challenges they face.

1.4 Suggested Values & Value Statement

The Black Scholarship Institute aims to be a good steward of its mandate. For this reason, the entity will draw on shared values rooted in an Afro-centric world-view to guide its mandate. From the feedback gathered, ten key words emerged to guide the BSI values. Using a thematic approach, frequency and centrality analysis, and synthesis, three overarching themes were highlighted, namely “empowerment and representation”, “community and belonging”, and “innovation and academic excellence”. Below is a sample of the BSI value statement.

Proposed Value

The Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) is guided by three foundational values that shape our mission, vision, and daily operations:

1. **We Commit to Empowerment and Representation**

We advocate for equity and amplify African ancestry and Black voices, to ensure that all members of the community are represented and empowered to contribute to the academic landscape at TMU.

2. **We Foster Community and Belonging**

We create a supportive and inclusive environment that nurtures belonging and solidarity among Black students, faculty, staff, and alumni, fostering meaningful connections and collaboration.

3. **We Drive Innovation and Academic Excellence**

We strive to champion innovation and promote Afrocentric knowledge, ensuring that academic excellence is achieved while challenging conventional norms and providing opportunities for the growth and success of Black scholars.

Proposed Value Statement

"The Black Scholarship Institute celebrates African ancestry and Afro-Diasporic heritage as essential to Black scholarship. We cultivate a space at TMU where Black research flourishes through interdisciplinary collaboration, community partnerships, and advocacy, fostering innovation and uplifting Black communities."

1.5 Distinguishing Features of the Black Scholarship Institute

Respondents identified several distinguishing features for the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) at TMU, centering on cultivating the environment and conditions necessary for Black scholars, students and staff to flourish. For instance, one respondent suggested that ***"the BSI can bridge gaps, champion equality, and create spaces where all Black voices are uplifted."*** (Student). While another respondent noted, ***"intersectionality should be central, ensuring all voices are represented."*** (Faculty). According to two other respondent the Black Scholarship Institute should ***"highlight Black excellence in academia is important."*** (Faculty) and ***"encourage Afrocentric innovation, [which] has the potential to cement TMU as a recognized hub for Black scholarship."*** (Faculty).

From the analysis, the following defining features of the Black Scholarship Institute were suggested:

1. Equity and Access:

The BSI should be committed to ensuring equal opportunities for Black students by addressing systemic barriers that hinder academic success. This includes creating equitable access to essential resources, scholarships, and support services. The focus on equity is crucial for overcoming historical disparities in accessing higher education, thereby enabling Black students to thrive academically.

2. Community Support and Engagement:

The establishment of a welcoming and inclusive community is essential to the BSI's mission. By valuing diverse Black identities and experiences, the Institute can foster relationships among students, faculty, staff, and the broader Black community.

3. Empowerment and Academic Excellence:

Empowerment through mentorship, career guidance, and holistic support services should be a core objective of the BSI. The institute should prioritize enhancing students' educational experiences by collaborating with the relevant departments and units. Additionally, a focus on programming that celebrates Black scholarship and promotes academic achievement plays a critical role in empowering students.

4. Advocacy and Representation:

The BSI should be tasked with championing policies and practices that promote diversity and social justice. This involves amplifying the voices of Black scholars and identifying priorities for systemic change within the university and beyond. Actively addressing anti-Black racism and raising awareness of the challenges faced by Black students is paramount to the Institute's advocacy work.

5. Research and Scholarship:

Serving as a focal point for advancing Black scholarship and Afro-centric research, the BSI is expected to, in collaboration with the relevant departments and units, transform the

academic canon by recognizing, centering and valuing Black thinkers and Afro-Diasporic knowledge. The institute should prioritize interdisciplinary collaborations and innovative research initiatives across the various faculties and the wider Black communities to drive positive change and empower the next generation of Black leaders.

6. **Bridging the Academic and Community Divide:**

A key feature of the BSI is its dedication to bridging academia and the community through collaborative, community-based research. This initiative strengthens ties between the university and the broader Black community while aligning research priorities with identified needs and experiences. By involving community members in the research process, the BSI fosters mutual learning, enhances the relevance of academic work, and empowers the community through shared knowledge and resources.

Section V Strategic Priorities and Outcomes

“The BSI should foster innovative research, advocacy, and community engagement, creating a legacy for future generations.” (Alumni)

Respondents provided valuable feedback regarding the strategic priorities and outcomes of the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), outlining a comprehensive plan focused on empowering Black scholars, driving institutional change, promoting inclusion and representation, and engaging the broader community.

At the core of the BSI's mission is a commitment to **academic empowerment**. Respondents emphasized the need for holistic support through interdisciplinary collaborations, mentorship, and career development opportunities. As one student noted, **“holistic support—from financial aid to mentorship—will make the BSI a pillar for Black flourishing.”** Additionally, the BSI should establish comprehensive pathways for Black high school students to ensure equitable access to education. **“Guiding, supporting, and recognizing Black students—not just to survive, but thrive in spaces where they are underrepresented—must be a priority,”** emphasized another student.

Institutional change and **advocacy** emerged as crucial components of the BSI's strategic focus. Respondents asserted that **“the BSI must work to dismantle anti-Black racism and bring awareness to the pervasive nature of inequities in academia.”** A faculty member remarked, **“policy change is where real transformation begins. The BSI must push for systemic reforms.”** Collaborating with the Office of the Vice President, Equity, Community and Inequality (OVPECI) and other relevant departments will be essential to prioritize policy changes that address inequalities and integrate Black scholarship into institutional decision-making. These advocacy partnerships must be supported by a long-term strategy, as collective action is vital for meaningful change.

Furthermore, the BSI should prioritize **inclusion and representation** across disciplines. A faculty member stated, **“The BSI represents a space to shed light on the impactful contributions of Black scholars at TMU, bringing their work to the forefront.”** This can be achieved by collaborating with academic departments to incorporate Afrocentric knowledge into the curriculum. One faculty member highlighted the potential for advancing Afrocentric forms of knowing, calling for support for Black knowledge

keepers and the creation of communities focused on amplifying Black scholarship through platforms like seminars and publications.

Community engagement is also paramount to the BSI's mandate. Respondents affirmed that *"community engagement should define the BSI's work—not just within TMU but with external networks as well."* Another emphasized the importance of establishing *"a strong alumni network to showcase the BSI's lasting impact."* Additionally, the BSI should focus on celebrating African ancestry, culture, and heritage as a vital platform for exploring and advancing the rich tapestry of Black scholarship. Hosting signature events and innovative programs will foster a sense of pride among Black students and faculty while promoting intergenerational relationships to support cultural continuity. Strengthening collaborative opportunities with global Black scholars and local communities is crucial for amplifying the BSI's impact, as one alumnus stated: *"the BSI should foster relationships with global Black scholars and local communities to amplify its impact."*

Anticipated Outcomes

The strategic priorities and anticipated outcomes identified by respondents encompass a comprehensive approach to achieving the BSI's goals. These include:

1. Advocating for curriculum reforms and institutional policy changes
2. Amplifying the visibility and impact of the BSI's work
3. Advancing Afrocentric education
4. Expanding scholarship and financial support opportunities for Black students
Developing comprehensive student support and mentorship programs,
5. Engaging high school students through outreach and career networking opportunities.
6. Increasing the representation of Black faculty, staff, and leadership within the university
7. Building strong partnerships with local Black organizations and community groups
8. Establishing a dedicated physical presence on the TMU campus, and
9. Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Section VI Visibility and Representation

"Representation is about more than numbers. It's about showing that Black scholarship is essential to this institution." (Faculty)

Respondents were asked to suggest ways to promote visibility, representation, and leadership opportunities for Black faculty, students, and staff, the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI), as well as opportunities to celebrate Afro-Diasporic culture and heritage. Several initiatives were recommended.

The Black Scholarship Institute will partner with faculties, affinity groups, and community organizations to host signature events.

Respondents suggested key initiatives focused on increasing the visibility of **Black faculty**. For example, Faculty Spotlight Series, which amplify their research and achievements. Mentorship programs pairing junior faculty with experienced colleagues to support career development and leadership. Additionally, respondents suggested organizing networking events that create opportunities for faculty to connect with students, peers, and community organization, as well as professional development workshops, and annual conferences to further enhance skills and leadership training. Finally, the BSI should establish recognition programs and awards to honor Black faculty contributions.

Respondents highlighted that for **Black students**, the BSI, in collaboration with university partners, should implement initiatives such as workshops, internships, and tailored networking events to support the career readiness of Black students. Cultural engagement activities, such as community events and speaker series, should celebrate Black heritage, inspire pride, and foster connections between students, faculty, and the broader community. Through dedicated partnerships with University Advancement, the BSI should also aim to offer financial support through scholarships, while developing mentorship programs connecting students with professionals. Involving Black student groups in decision-making ensures representation and amplifies student voices in institutional matters.

To enhance visibility and representation of **Black staff**, respondents suggested that the BSI, should, in collaboration with the relevant departments and units, implement leadership development programs and recognition initiatives to celebrate their contributions. Additional, feedback also suggested committing to supporting employee resource groups like the Black Staff and Faculty Community Network that provide networking opportunities and support.

Finally, the survey reveals strong support for initiatives aimed at promoting Afro-centric education, history, and culture on campus through events, courses, and awareness campaigns. The proposed initiatives offer a rich foundation for expanding the Black Scholarship Institute's signature event series aimed at inspiring and uplifting the community.

Table 1: Summary of Key Initiatives

Category	Initiatives
1. Policy and Curriculum Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for Afrocentric perspectives in curriculum, especially in programs like Law and Engineering • Integration of Afrocentric viewpoints in university policies and academic plans

2. Academic Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Afrocentric Lecture Series and Conference • Interdisciplinary courses with Afrocentric perspectives • Promotion of Black Studies Minor • Support for Afrocentric research methodologies
3. Student and Faculty Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholar talks featuring Black academics • Study abroad programs focused on Afrocentric studies • Cross-faculty collaborations on Afrocentric themes
4. Cultural Celebrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afro-themed festivals (art, music, food) • Campus-wide multimedia campaigns showcasing Afrocentric stories • Integration of Afrocentric elements in various campus events
5. Awareness and Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital and physical media campaigns highlighting Afrocentric history and achievements • Prominent display of Sankofa symbols and quotes from Black heroes to create a visually affirming and empowering environment.

SECTION VII
Deepening Relationships, Partnerships and Collaborations On and Off-Campus

*“Community, connection, excellence, inclusion, and belongingness should be at the heart of the BSI.”
 (Staff).*

Respondents were asked to share how the BSI should go about deepening relationships, partnerships and collaborations on and off campus. The feedback outlines a multi-faceted approach for the Black Scholarship Institute to build a robust network of partnerships and collaborations that enhance its impact both on campus and in the community. Key themes emerging from the responses include collaboration with educational institutions, community organizations, and other partners, all centered on shared goals and mutual benefits.

Firstly, there is a strong call for **collaboration with educational institutions**. Many participants suggested that BSI should establish partnerships with higher education institutions, particularly with Black institutes in both Canada and the Diaspora. A faculty suggested that *“collaborations with academic departments, research centers, and alumni networks offer valuable opportunities to embed Afrocentric perspectives in the curriculum and expand resources for students ”*.

Another important insight is the need for **engagement with community organizations and local businesses**. Participants frequently highlighted the benefits of building alliances with local Black-owned businesses and community groups, which could provide internships, volunteer opportunities, and support for various community initiatives. Partnering with influential community leaders and organizations will enhance BSI's visibility and broaden its reach."

The involvement of student organizations emerged as a pivotal theme in the feedback. **Collaborating with Black student organizations** on campus has been emphasized as an effective strategy to amplify the voices and initiatives of Black students. Co-hosting events, workshops, and engagement activities not only fosters a sense of belonging but also encourages active participation among students.

Furthermore, the feedback points to the value of **partnerships focused on cultural and professional development**. Establishing connections with cultural institutions, arts organizations, and local media outlets can help showcase Black artists and performers while promoting cultural events and discussions. This exposure can significantly enhance community engagement and raise awareness of BSI's mission and accomplishments.

Lastly, there is a strong emphasis on **interdisciplinary research and advocacy**. Participants indicated the importance of forming research collaborations and engaging in advocacy initiatives that address systemic issues affecting Black communities. By leveraging existing networks and collaborating on research projects, BSI can contribute to meaningful change and promote a more inclusive educational environment

SECTION VIII Community Responsiveness and Institutional Accountability

“Accountability mechanisms must reflect the diversity of Black voices across campus.” (Faculty)

Respondents emphasized the need to implement mechanisms, processes, and practices that keep both the BSI and TMU responsive to the evolving needs and concerns of the Black community. The respondents underscore that the BSI is uniquely positioned to achieve this goal, but without shared commitment, accountability risks becoming one-sided. To ensure the sustainability of the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI), a long-term commitment from TMU and other relevant departments/units is essential. Establishing strategies that prioritize transparency, accountability, and trust-building is vital to fulfilling the shared mission of the BSI and TMU in advancing Black flourishing.

Here are suggested strategies to ensure the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) and by extension TMU, remain agile and responsive to the evolving needs of the Black community:

- 1. Establish a Dynamic Advisory Board**

BSI should create an advisory board composed of community leaders, students, faculty, and alumni to continuously evaluate and prioritize the institute's initiatives. This board will provide insights into emerging community needs and guide the BSI's strategic direction, ensuring its work aligns closely with the needs of the Black community.

- 2. Demonstrate Value and Adaptability**

BSI should regularly assess the effectiveness of its programs, remaining flexible and open to change as needed. By involving student advisory boards and conducting community impact surveys, BSI can gauge the value of its initiatives and remain responsive to the evolving priorities of the Black community.

- 3. Implement Culturally Responsive Practices**

BSI should ensure that its staff undergoes cultural competence training, equipping them with the knowledge and sensitivity required to foster an inclusive and respectful environment.

Additionally, a commitment to diversity and representation within the institute’s leadership will promote a culturally responsive approach in its operations and programming.

4. Foster Community Partnerships

Recognizing the importance of collaboration, BSI should actively partner with local Black organizations and community groups. These partnerships will deepen BSI's understanding of community needs and provide diverse resources and perspectives to address them effectively

5. Implement Continuous Feedback Mechanisms

The institute should develop structured, regular feedback channels—including surveys, focus groups, town hall meetings, and listening sessions—to capture the voices of Black students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members.

6. Maintain Open Communication

To keep the community informed and engaged, BSI should ensure consistent communication through multiple channels, including newsletters, social media, email updates, and a dedicated website. Transparent updates on programming, events, and initiatives will build trust and ensure stakeholders feel included in the institute's ongoing journey.

7. Engage the Next Generation

BSI should inspire and empower future generations of Black students by forming partnerships with local schools and creating BSI chapters. These connections will introduce students to higher education pathways, fostering a strong foundation for their academic and professional journeys.

**Section IX:
Challenges & Resource Mobilization**

12.1 Challenges

Establishing the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) at TMU brings both challenges and opportunities for resource mobilization. Respondent feedback highlights systemic barriers, such as the challenge of securing sustainable funding for scholarships, programs, and operations. A diversified funding strategy is needed, involving partnerships with philanthropic organizations, businesses, and government grants. Another significant challenge is overcoming institutional resistance and biases that may hinder support for BSI’s mission.

Second, respondents suggested that raising BSI’s visibility and ensuring inclusivity within the Black community at TMU are also vital. A strong communication and branding strategy, inclusive representation, and a dynamic advisory board will ensure diverse Black experiences and identities are reflected. Additionally, clear messaging about BSI’s purpose and benefits to the broader TMU community will address external misconceptions. Regular consultations and feedback sessions with the Black community will further sustain engagement and relevance.

12.2 Resource Mobilization

Priorities for resource mobilization should include securing financial support through scholarships and research grants for Black students and faculty. Mentorship and networking programs with dedicated and equipped physical spaces, and staffing for BSI should foster growth and belonging. Tailored professional development, culturally competent mental health support, and research opportunities centered on Afro-centric scholarship should elevate Black voices in academia. Campus-wide diversity initiatives, equitable access to technology, and external partnerships with Black organizations will extend BSI’s impact beyond TMU.

Section X: Conclusions

“The BSI is where I see my experiences and aspirations reflected—it’s a place of belonging and empowerment.”

This report encapsulates the insights and recommendations gathered during a three-month public consultation with Black faculty, staff, students, and alumni at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). The consultation highlighted the profound significance of the Black Scholarship Institute (BSI) as a transformative initiative for advancing Black flourishing at TMU. Grounded in themes such as strategic priorities, visibility, relationship building, and community responsiveness, the feedback underscores the vital role of the BSI in addressing systemic inequities and fostering a supportive academic and community environment for Black excellence.

The recommendations articulated in this report emphasize the necessity for sustainable institutional commitment, collaborative partnerships, and robust mechanisms for transparency and accountability. These elements are essential to ensuring the BSI’s long-term impact and responsiveness to the evolving needs of the Black community. Integrating these insights position the BSI to craft a comprehensive Terms of Reference and a strategic action plan that is aligned to TMU’s vision of addressing systemic barriers and amplifying Afro-Diasporic scholarship, innovation, and culture. The feedback received through this consultation serves as a critical foundation for co-creating a future where Black flourishing is not just a goal, but a reality deeply embedded within TMU’s academic and community framework.