INSTITUTIONAL REPORT - CANADA RESEARCH CHAIRS PROGRAM

Toronto Metropolitan University
Canada Research Chair (CRC) Program Institutional Report
April 1, 2024-March 31, 2025

3. EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Key EDI action #1

- **Describe the key action that was undertaken.**

Feedback was needed from CRCs in order to inform the training and tools outlined in this report. We also needed to gain a better understanding of their needs as it relates to advancing EDI, e.g. in their SRC, the recruitment and supervision of their research teams, etc.

The Office of the Vice-President, Faculty Affairs (VPFA) led a consultation with CRCs to inform the development of new training and tools, such as the ones mentioned in EDI Actions #2 and #3, and to gain a better understanding of the CRCs' needs as it relates to advancing EDI.

The VPFA administered the survey using Qualtrics, received responses from 18 out of the 19 CRCs/CERCs, and reviewed the results, many of which have been captured in the three new training modules developed (The Inclusive Excellence Advantage, Equity Advocacy and Better Practices Towards Inclusive Excellence), as described in Actions #2 and #3. Further analysis of the feedback will be undertaken to identify improvements that could be made to the recruitment and evaluation processes.

- **Did this action relate to an objective named in your CRCP EDI Action Plan?**

Yes. Briefly describe the related objective. (Maximum 500 characters)

No

- **Describe outcomes and impacts this action supported during the reporting period. (Maximum 1500 characters)**

The action supported the collection of data that is informative, relevant and useful towards the design and delivery of effective tools and training to support the recruitment and retention of diverse CRCs. The data allowed us to prioritize and design the most relevant tools and training, and will be further analysed for potential improvements to the recruitment and evaluation processes.

- **Describe any challenges encountered in undertaking this action, and any mitigation strategies that were employed. (Maximum 1500 characters)**

The development and implementation of the survey took longer than expected and the initial response rate was lower, requiring us to extend the deadline a couple of different times, eventually leading to 18/19 CRC and CERCs completing the survey.

- **Was funding from the CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion used for this action?**

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Yes

No

Key EDI action #2

- **Describe the key action that was undertaken.**

Hiring committees need to incorporate more best practices for inclusive hiring in order to attract and recruit diverse candidates, particularly those who are Indigenous, Black and/or have intersecting identities. Evaluation committees (e.g. Department Evaluation Committees) need to incorporate more best practices for inclusive evaluation of diverse CRCs being reviewed, e.g. year-end reviews, intermediate reviews, tenure review, particularly for those who are Black, Indigenous and those with intersecting identities.

The VPFA delivered, via a faculty working group, training and tools for hiring and evaluation committees for CRCs. Three new training modules, using the Articulate software, have been developed on inclusive hiring practices (The Inclusive Excellence Advantage, Equity Advocacy and Better Practices Towards Inclusive Excellence). These modules are available on D2L to all Equity Advocates and hiring and evaluation committee members.

- **Did this action relate to an objective named in your CRCP EDI Action Plan?**

Yes. Briefly describe the related objective. (Maximum 500 characters)

☐ No

- **Describe outcomes and impacts this action supported during the reporting period. (Maximum 1500 characters)**

EDI Action #2 outcomes supported hiring and evaluation committees with training modules and tools to better apply EDI best practices.

The impacts for those engaged in the hiring process include: better tools and training to make more effective and inclusive decisions during the recruitment process, e.g. where to advertise, where to source candidates from, how to engage in better outreach, how to recognize potential in unconventional career paths/CVs, etc.

 The impacts for those engaged in the evaluation process include: making more inclusive decisions; a better sense of how and what to communicate to CRCs in terms of feedback in evaluation letters and improving their understanding and recognition of diverse forms of scholarship.

- **Describe any challenges encountered in undertaking this action, and any mitigation strategies that were employed. (Maximum 1500 characters)**

There were no significant challenges, but we had established quite ambitious timelines and the work to design and implement the content generally took longer than expected.

- **Was funding from the CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion used for this action?**

Yes

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No

Key EDI action #3

- **Describe the key action that was undertaken.**

OVPECI advanced the development of new *Inclusion and Belonging* training for Canada Research Chairs. The initiative, led by the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion, focused on designing content and facilitation approaches that will strengthen inclusive leadership and cultivate a deeper sense of belonging within CRCs' research teams and academic environments.

OVPECI completed the needs assessment, training framework, and instructional design for the sessions. The sessions will offer practical tools and insights to support CRCs in advancing equity and inclusion as leaders within a changing postsecondary context.

- **Did this action relate to an objective named in your CRCP EDI Action Plan?**

Yes. Briefly describe the related objective. (Maximum 500 characters)

This action aligns with the objectives and strategies outlined under "Ongoing awareness building and training" and "Retention" in TMU's CRC EDI Action Plan (2017). The plan commits the university to "ongoing discussion and exploration of the institution's climate" and to integrating "equity, diversity and inclusion into ongoing training programs for hiring, promotion, and tenure committees". It also highlights the importance of "establishing and maintaining a supportive and inclusive workplace".

The Inclusion and Belonging training initiative directly advances "ongoing awareness building and training" and "Retention" in TMU's CRC EDI Action Plan (2017) objectives by developing targeted learning opportunities to help CRCs and their teams build inclusive research environments, strengthen equitable leadership practices, and foster belonging, which are key conditions for retention and success of CRCs.

No

- **Describe outcomes and impacts this action supported during the reporting period. (Maximum 1500 characters)**

This initiative strengthened TMU's capacity to foster inclusive and equitable research environments by laying the groundwork for targeted professional development for Canada Research Chairs. Through the design and development phase, OVPECI established a structured and evidence-informed framework for training that integrates principles of inclusive leadership, psychological safety, and belonging.

It also deepened understanding of the specific challenges CRCs face in leading diverse research teams and navigating equity-related dynamics in academic settings. These outcomes have built internal readiness and momentum for the program's delivery phase, positioning CRCs to model inclusive practices and foster belonging within their research environments once the sessions launch.

- **Describe any challenges encountered in undertaking this action, and any mitigation strategies that were employed. (Maximum 1500 characters)**

Balancing the design and consultation phases alongside other institutional EDI priorities, given limited capacity,

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was slightly challenging. OVPECI addressed this by phasing the work strategically, focusing first on needs assessment and training design to ensure high-quality, relevant content before delivery.

- **Was funding from the CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion used for this action?**

<mark>Yes</mark>

No

3. b) CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Rate the importance the CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion has had on your institution in making progress in implementing measures to address systemic barriers:

[One selection possible]

- ☐   Not important

- ☐   Somewhat important

- ☐   Important

- <mark>☐   Very important</mark>

- ☐   Do not know

- ☐   Not applicable

3. c) Other EDI initiatives

Provide an example of an EDI initiative underway at the institution – that is broader than those tied to the CRCP that is expected to address systemic barriers and foster an equitable, diverse and inclusive research environment.

For example, are there projects underway that underscore the importance of EDI to research excellence? Is there additional training being offered to the faculty at large? Are there initiatives to improve the campus climate? Please provide hyperlinks where relevant in the box below. URLs should include https://. Note that collecting this information is a requirement of the 2019 Addendum to the 2006 Canadian Human Rights Settlement Agreement (clause 39.e) and provides context for the work the institution is doing in addressing barriers for the CRCP.
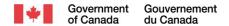
(Maximum 2000 characters)

VPFA and OVPECI undertook other activities to accomplish broader institutional EDI goals. These include:

1)   VPFA's upgrades to the applicant tracking system in the Recruitment Portal will allow for the generation of reports on important recruitment metrics, such as: diversity of applicant pools; diversity among shortlisted candidates; diversity among successful candidates. vacancy sources, i.e. where the diverse candidates found information about the vacancy, e.g. CAUT, UA, TMU careers page, word of mouth, etc. This will apply to not only CRC Faculty Hires but to all faculty, librarian, counsellor and staff hires at TMU, and support the Department Hiring Committees by giving Committee members more detailed analytics to help support EDI and FDG representation goals in recruitment.

2) OVPECI implemented new Training on Effective Communication and Conflict Resolution to strengthen inclusive practices and collegial engagement. The training program, delivered by internal EDI Officers, was designed to help faculty and staff, including Department Hiring Committee members for all faculty hires, including CRCs, navigate respectful discussions as well as manage tensions that may arise when advancing EDI principles in recruitment, hiring, and everyday academic collaboration.

The initiative promotes a more respectful, empathetic, and inclusive campus climate, supporting TMU's commitments under the institutional EDI Strategy and reinforcing inclusive excellence in both CRC and non-CRC environments

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