



**Canada Research Chairs Program (CRCP) Institutional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)  
Action Plan and EDI Stipend Progress Report for Western University**

**June 20, 2022**

In developing their action plans, institutions were required to conduct: 1) an employment systems review; 2) a comparative review; and 3) an environmental scan (see program requirements here). These assessments were required in order to identify the specific systemic barriers and/or challenges that are faced by underrepresented groups (e.g. women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and racialized minorities at the respective institution; Institutions were then required to develop key S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely) objectives and actions to address them.

Indicate what your institution's key EDI objectives are (up to six) as outlined in the most recent version of your action plan (either the one approved by TIPS or the one current under review by TIPS), as well as the systemic barriers/challenges identified that these objectives must address. Please note that objectives should be S.M.A.R.T. and include a measurement strategy. List the corresponding actions and Indicators (as Indicated In your institutional EDI action plan) for each objective, and outline: a) what progress has been made during the reporting period; b) what actions were undertaken; c) the data gathered; and d) indicators used to assess the outcomes and Impacts of the actions. Please note that indicators can be both quantitative and qualitative and should be specific. Outline next steps and use the contextual information box to provide any additional information (e.g. course correction, obstacles, lessons learned, etc.) for each objective.

## **Key Objective 1**

### **Brief description of S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely) Key Objective 1**

Attract and retain the best talent available in an increasingly diverse workforce to achieve and maintain an equitable and diverse representation of the four designated groups in our Canada Research Chairs Allocations.

#### **Systemic barriers:**

Please provide a high level description of the systemic barriers (e.g. summarize what the barriers are and how they were identified):

Historic under-representation of equity-seeking groups and historic academic recruitment practices are widely understood to be barriers to diversifying the academic workforce. The CRC Steering Committee recognized that recruiting individual Chairs in narrowly targeted fields was not allowing us to achieve our equity targets quickly enough.

#### **Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:**

The majority of our unallocated Chairs over the past two years have been devoted to two cluster searches. A Special Program “demographic” cluster hire, soliciting applications only from the three designated groups previously underrepresented among Western’s CRC holders (women, persons with disabilities and Indigenous peoples), was held in 2019-20. This search was not limited by field and it attracted a diverse pool of qualified applicants and increased representation in these designated groups across Western. A currently ongoing “research priorities” cluster hire solicited applications in broadly defined strategic research priority areas across all three Agencies. The literature demonstrates that research priority cluster hires tend to attract more diverse applicant pools than narrowly focused searches.

We have also used some corridors of flexibility to increase the number of Tier 2 chairs during recruitment; this allows us to provide more Chairs to more junior scholars in innovative fields and build our talent pipeline.

In addition, to ensure new equity targets set by the 2021 Canadian Human Rights Settlement will be achieved, additional allocations of Chairs have been devoted to specific designated groups. This includes a search in all disciplines for Indigenous peoples (one Tier 1 and two Tier 2 Chairs); a search in all disciplines for a Person with a Disability (one Tier 1). A search in English & Writing Studies for an Indigenous person (one Tier 2) was conducted however the search was not successful.

**Data gathered and Indicator(s) - ow seC atiRsfrch wCh gon.001 Tc -0.001 Tw -2911 1.2(sp)0.6 (P)-0.3 (s)-2.7**

**Progress and/or Outcomes and Impacts made during the reporting period:**

Western met its December 2019 equity targets in the Canada Research Chairs Program in each of the four designated groups and exceeded the targets in three of the groups

We continue to adhere to best practices in the use of inclusive language in job ads, ensuring that individuals are not disadvantaged for legitimate career interruptions, and providing opportunities for candidates to meet with a Recruitment and Retention Consultant during the recruitment process to obtain information about immigration, family and other supports available to them as they move to London.

In the spring of 2022, Western's updated equity census was launched. The census was developed by an EDI Data Working Group which was established in 2020-21 and facilitated through the President's Office. The updated equity census collects data on equity-seeking groups, with updated classifications to extend the historic Federal Designated Groups system and updated methods to enhance participation rates. Student assistants were hired using the CRC EDI Stipend and collaborated with members of the Working Group on research and development of the demographic panel, as well as developing a communications strategy for the launch of the campus

## **Key Objective 2**

### **Brief description of S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely) Key Objective 2**

Continue Institutional monitoring of Employment Equity through the provisions of the Faculty Collective Agreement and annual reporting on Recruitment and Retention, Promotion and Tenure and Career Trajectory Analysis as required.

#### **Systemic barriers:**

Please provide a high level description of the systemic barriers (essentially summarize what the barriers are and how they were identified):

While equity concerns have traditionally been focused on recruitment, a broader approach to equity has drawn attention to the fact that some kinds of academic work are more highly valued than others. For example, work in innovative and emerging fields, often published in less established venues, may be evaluated less positively than more traditional outputs. Similarly, community outreach or service work is often less highly valued than traditional research work. This has obvious implications for the retention of a diverse group of faculty and for their successful career progression.

Our Collective Agreement has excellent provisions for Employment Equity, and we have a good system for tracking our equity provisions around gender. Tracking of equity provisions regarding other equity-seeking groups is hampered by I

developed to ensure they are familiar with the opportunities available under the Letter of Understanding. Additional training for UWOFA Members, participating on Annual Performance Evaluation, Promotion, Tenure and Continuing Status and Workload committees will also be conducted.

A Career Trajectory Analysis of salaries for all full-time UWOFA Faculty is currently being conducted in accordance with the Collective Agreement in the final year of the current 2018-2022 agreement. This analysis will first identify and correct salaries which may be anomalously low based on gender. If there are no gender anomalies, or if there are remaining funds after gender anomaly corrections, the fund will identify and address faculty salary adjustments anomalously low based on career stage and accomplishment.

In 2020, we negotiated a number of L6



All first-term CRC holders with an end-date before June 2023 were provided the opportunity initiated by the CRCP in the spring of 2021 to extend their term for one year as a result of COVID, in order to mitigate any likelihood that COVID delays would negatively affect the renewal of their Chairs. The CRCP provided the opportunity to provide extensions to CRC holders again and to support renewals. Western approved offering these extensions to all CRCs in their first term regardless of their end date or term.











The equity training required as part of the CRC program has done a great deal to raise awareness of equity issues more broadly on campus and to drive recognition that broader equity training would be beneficial. The main barrier to such training has been our capacity to scale it up to all faculty processes across campus.

**Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:**

The Joint Employment Equity Committee under our Collective Agreement created Western's 'Employment Equity Guide' for Committees many years ago. The guide is currently being updated to align best equity practices more closely with the processes of the Collective Agreement and to provide easily accessible EDI guidance for all faculty who engage with the Collective Agreement

The employment equity article of the most recent Collective Agreement requires a trained equity representative be a member of each Appointments, Promotion, Tenure and Continuing Status and Annual Performance Evaluation Committees. A recent LU has extended that requirement to Chair and Director Selection Committees and search committees. We provide the required training for those equity representatives and are pleased to note that some departments have chosen to require that all members of those committees receive equity training.

n o There are two required components of Western's equity 4 (1) (3) (t) - in 0 7 (1) (6) (7) (b) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17) (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26) (27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35) (36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53) (54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62) (63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71) (72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80) (81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89) (90) (91) (92) (93) (94) (95) (96) (97) (98) (99) (100)

Prior to March 2020, the equity training was delivered in person. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we transitioned to delivering the training in an online format using Zoom. While this initially presented a challenge, the online format has been widely accepted and, in some cases, has assisted with more easily facilitating people's attendance (as those who need to travel to participate in sessions). It is expected we will continue with this format in 2022 to facilitate increased participation as it eliminates the need to travel.

**Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):**

Currently, the Joint Employment Equity Committee continues in the process of reviewing, revising and updating Western's Employment Equity Guide [https://www.uwo.ca/hro/doc/fac\\_employ\\_equity\\_guide.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/hro/doc/fac_employ_equity_guide.pdf). We expect it to be available online in the 2022-23 academic year.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

Other than what has been outlined in the section above, outline any challenges and opportunities or successes regarding the implementation of the EDI action plan, as well as best practices that have been discovered to date. If COVID has had an impact on the implementation of the institution's action plan, please outline how below. How has or will the institution address these challenges and opportunities?

We have addressed challenges, opportunities and successes within the context of each of our objectives



A Letter of Understanding: Indigenous Faculty Members was implemented and jointly agreed to between Western and UWOFA to support the goals of Western's Indigenous Strategic Plan including to increase representation of Indigenous faculty members working at Western and recognize and support the activities of Indigenous Scholars.

In the summer of 2021, Western's first Associate Vice President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion joined Western leading the [Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#). This office's creation comes from the recommendations of the final report of the [Anti-Racism Working Group \(ARWG\)](#) struck in 2019 that made a series of recommendations accepted by Western in 2020.

A priority of the Office is to create a strategic plan that instructs, directs, formalizes, and implements four broad EDI commitments outlined in Towards Western at 150. A number of initiatives have already been undertaken, including the development and launch of the Equity Census; the development of Western's Central EDI Working Group; the introduction of new scholarships for Black and Indigenous students; and participation in the Scarborough Charter.

The Office of Equity and Human Rights Services also launched an EDI Resources website resource for the Western Campus community. This resource includes links to workshops, online training, as well as educational tools and resources. <https://www.uwo.ca/equity/resources/index.html>

Western's Research office has developed a number of resources supporting researchers to incorporate EDI principles throughout all research programs and funding applications. <https://www.uwo.ca/research/services/resources/edi.html>

A number of leadership development opportunities continue to provide Academic Leaders support of increased awareness of equity, diversity and inclusion. They include: Accessibility, Accommodation and Inclusion at Western; More than Words: Land Acknowledgements; Indigenous the University: Transformative Leadership.

Western's Student Experience's Learning Development & Success, Writing Support Centre and Accessible Education underwent an external review process as part of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). The reviewers recommended Student Experience commit to adopting equity lenses in the design, implementation, and assessment of co-curricular learning experiences. In the past year, we have made significant strides, including hiring several positions that will support the inclusion of equitable approaches in our work with undergraduate and graduate students, creating equity-centred content for employers looking to hire diverse Western talent, and the development of new initiatives.