

The Dimensions Charter



Dimensions Equity, diversity and inclusion Canada

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are principles to which Acadia is committed wholeheartedly. Acadia was founded in 1838 as an institution without barriers at a time when institutions of higher learning regularly restricted access based on race, religion, and gender. Acadia was one of the earliest institutions in the British Commonwealth to admit and graduate women, and persons of African descent, two historical achievements of which we are proud.

In 2019, The Government of Canada, through a tri-agency initiative, supported by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), launched the Dimensions Charter and invited post-secondary institutions across Canada to sign it as a means of demonstrating their commitment to recognizing that “equity, diversity, and inclusion strengthen the research community, the quality, relevance and impact of research and the opportunities for the full pool of potential participants.”

On October 22, 2019, Acadia signed the Dimensions Charter, thereby committing to its principles and actions that will address systemic barriers in research faced by women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minority and racialized groups, and members of the LGBTQ2+ communities.

These principles are:

1. The post-secondary research community has the greatest potential to thrive when members experience equitable, inclusive, and unbiased systems and practices.
2. To advance institutional equity, diversity, and inclusion, specific measurable and sustainable actions are needed to counter systemic barriers, explicit and unconscious biases, and inequities. This includes addressing obstacles faced by, but not limited to, women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities or racialized groups, and members of LGBTQ2+ communities.
3. Institutions require qualitative and quantitative data to measure, monitor, understand, and publicly report on challenges and progress made. 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 post-secondary community members.

4. When equity, diversity, and inclusion considerations and practices are integral to research participation, to the research itself, and research training and learning environments, research excellence, innovation, and creativity are heightened across all disciplines, fields of study and stages of career development.
5. To contribute to reconciliation, 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.
6. Advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion is a shared responsibility that requires dedicated resources and strong leadership at all levels. Senior leadership demonstrates commitment through public endorsement, by ensuring the work involved is resourced and distributed fairly, and by embedding changes in institutional governance and accountability structures.
7. Issues of institutional and individual safety, trust, belonging, privacy, and power differentials must be recognized and pro-actively addressed; this will be most successful when those impacted are directly engaged in defining the actions.
8. Achieving the overall objective of the Dimensions program—to foster increased research excellence, innovation and creativity within the post-secondary sector across all disciplines through increased equity, diversity and inclusion—involves institutional collaboration, transparency, and the sharing of challenges, successes, and promising practices.

[Acadia's Dimensions Charter \(PDF\)](#)

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