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CRCP Institutional EDI Action Plan - Key Objective(s)

Important Note

(Once you have read the statement below, click the radio button beside it.)

Please note that the information you enter in your report is only saved when clicking on the “Save and Next” button at the bottom of the page. Using the browser navigation buttons or the “Continue Later” button at the bottom of the page will not save the information entered on the page. If after clicking “Save and Next” you see a “Page has errors” message in red, near the top of the page, it means that at least one field is missing information. In such an instance, the empty field will have the words “Answer is incomplete” underneath it, in red.

This report includes mandatory reporting on 1) the CRCP institutional equity, diversity, and inclusion action plan (IEDIAP) and 2) the \$50,000 EDI Stipend. Your institution must submit the report by the deadline date indicated by the program, and must cover the reporting period identified by the program.

Institutions are required to post the most up to date version of their EDI action plan on their [public accountability web pages](#). Ensure to remove all numbers less than 5 prior to posting on your website in cases where your report includes the representation of individuals from underrepresented groups among your chairholders. This is a requirement of the *Privacy Act*.

Each year, institutions must also publicly post a copy of this report to their public accountability web pages within 7 working days after the deadline for submitting the report to TIPS. TIPS will review the report each year; in addition, the annual report(s) will be provided to the external EDI Review Committee, when it is convened every few years, to evaluate the progress made in bolstering EDI at the respective institution and to provide context for future iterations of the EDI action plan.

All sections of the form are mandatory (unless otherwise noted).

Contact information

Please complete the fields below.

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Acadia University

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Does your institution have an EDI Action Plan for the CRCP?
Yes

PART A: EDI Action Plan - Reporting on Key Objectives Analyses, Systemic Barriers, Objectives and Indicators

Date of most recent plan (e.g. latest revision of the public plan):
June 5, 2021 (Updated, based on minor requested edits)

Rating given action plan in most recent review process:
Satisfies

Name of vice-president level representative responsible for ensuring the implementation of the plan:
Kate Ashley, Provost and VP Academic (Interim)

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 individuals from underrepresented groups (e.g. women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and racialized minorities, LGBTQ2+ individuals) 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 currently 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:

Objective 1: Establish an EDI Action Coordinating Committee to Oversee Institutional EDI Actions

Systemic barriers

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

Barriers to institutional EDI coordination and oversight were identified in the environmental scan in preparation for the 2021 CRCP EDI Action Plan. EDI initiatives were being conducted without a coordinated campus-wide approach which limited both effective communication and reduced synergies in EDI efforts by various groups. Acadia had not yet conducted an institution-wide EDI “audit” that would aid planning to enhance EDI efforts within Acadia. EDI goals were also not sufficiently articulated in institution-wide plans like the Strategic Research Plan (2015-2020), although they are included in the more recent Acadia 2025 Strategic Plan. The Acadia website lacked sufficient communication of EDI activity and promotion which can be a barrier to attracting diverse faculty (including CRCs), staff and students. The environmental scan showed low representation by the four designation diversity groups (FDGs) among both faculty and students and few EDI related courses or graduate programs that would serve to attract greater diversity in faculty and students.

Corresponding actions proposed / undertaken to address the barriers:

- 1) Establish a decision-making and coordinating body for overseeing campus-wide EDI initiatives, policies and practices, initiating activities of approved EDI Plans (CRC, Anti-Racism, other), and monitoring their progress and success.
- 2) Establish an EDI Audit Framework and undertake an Acadia-wide EDI Audit.
- 3) Develop EDI goals for Acadia’s Strategic Research Plan and Acadia Academic Plan.
- 4) Develop Acadia’s website content to clearly demonstrate EDI commitments and to highlight EDI supports, events and successes.
- 5) Identify and grow opportunities to develop new courses and graduate programs (most likely course-based) in areas of high demand and which are likely to generate more diverse faculty hires and a more diverse student pool.

Data gathered and Indicator(s) - can be both qualitative and quantitative:

The environmental scan and work conducted for the EDI Audit Framework involved review of existing structures, programs and courses, policies and documents, and surveys of faculty, staff, and students and well as focus group sessions and research on other equity audit frameworks that could serve as a guide to conducting a university EDI audit. Interns were employed to assist with research, including reviews of websites and structures at other institutions in Canada and the USA.

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

- 1) The President’s Anti-Racism Task Force (PART), established in 2020, was a large and highly diverse committee with both internal and external membership, tasked with providing recommendations for an institutional action plan to address racism. A primary recommendation

of the PART Report, released in 2021, was the establishment of an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Council that would oversee EDI efforts and serve as a coordinating body for EDI initiatives and activities across the campus.

The Mandate of the PART is as follows: 1. Define the nature of systemic racism at Acadia (focus on anti-Black & anti-Indigenous racism). 2. Identify the causes and the barriers that prevent us from eliminating systemic racism at Acadia. 3. Identify ways to promote removing the causes and dismantling the barriers. 4. Address how Acadia's educational and research mission can contribute more effectively to the broader societal advancement of anti-racism, inclusion, and diversity. See the [PART report](#) and the [President's response to the PART report](#).

The recommended EDIAR Council is expected to be established in 2022 following development of the Terms of Reference and the appointment of senior leader (Vice-Provost level) for EDIAR at Acadia. The appointee to that lead position will serve to co-chair the EDIAR Council.

Note that Acadia signed the Scarborough National Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education in November 2021. The principles-based commitments to action apply to four areas of activity, namely governance, research, teaching and learning, and community engagement.

- 2) The EDI Audit Subcommittee of the Senate EDI Committee developed and presented to Senate a "framework" document for conducting an Equity Audit at Acadia. The framework included a series of exercises and key questions for surveying senior administrators, faculty, staff, and students. It presents a phased approach with three main themes: Representation, Recruitment and Retention, and Academic Climate, and with a number of resource materials recommended for the audit when conducted. The aim of the proposed institutional audit is to generate actionable recommendations for amending/modifying university policies, strategies, culture, and climate, under the institution's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

As the Senate is not a body that is mandated to make institution-wide changes, the EDI Audit Framework will need to be considered by the EDIAR Council as soon as it is formed (expected in 2022).

The membership of Senate was broadened to include two new ex-officio (non-voting) members: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs.

- 3) The Senate Research Committee discussed broad research-related EDI goals that will be included in the next iteration of the Strategic Research Plan (currently on hold during the pandemic). Acadia's Academic Plan is updated more regularly and features actions to address Truth and Reconciliation and other EDI goals.
- 4) Acadia's website was reviewed and further developed. By end of 2021, it featured EDI related events, policies and activities associated with the Research Office, Indigenous Affairs Office, Equity Office, and the President's Office which included a page devoted to Acadia's alignment with the Scarborough Charter, which Acadia signed in November 2021. Various academic unit webpages also now showcase EDI focused activities of faculty, staff, and students.
- 5) During the year, discussions were held by Deans and Heads & Directors about potential new courses (with an EDI lens) and new program offerings that would help attract diverse faculty and students (e.g. coursework Masters in Computer Science). The School of Education had a

successful soft launch of the revised M.Ed. in Inclusive Education (Social Justice and Equity). And many academic units across campus are enhancing existing courses that address aspects of EDI and/or proposing and creating new courses. Several courses were updated to better address EDI issues (e.g. Equity and Inclusive Schooling; Curriculum Practices for Diverse Learners), and several new Indigenous courses were planned or developed, including materials in Biology developed by an Indigenous graduate student, Leah Creaser. She is a member of Acadia First Nation and won a 3M National Student Fellowship following creation of [a lab about traditional knowledge](#). This lab is now a requirement for all first-year biology students at Acadia. Leah also created a pilot Indigenous course for the Nova Scotia Community College on how to incorporate Mi'kmaw traditional knowledge into fieldwork projects and other activities.

Additional actions:

Research Office staff participated in EDI training sessions (CARA, NSERC) and commenced a focus on integrating EDI components into various internal funding programs for both faculty and students, and in working with faculty on addressing EDI (research design, recruitment, and training, etc) in their funding applications to Tri-Council.

A new voluntary and confidential self-ID form was prepared by the Research Office, in collaboration with the EDI Officer, for use in the student summer research award programs. It was a means to better support promising students from the FDGs, including those representing multiple DGs. This was a very well received EDI initiative and increased the diversity of students receiving awards and undertaking research with faculty at Acadia.

Updates on progress with Acadia's 2025 Strategic Plan were made regularly to senior leadership and the Board of Governors. The Plan features three Working Groups that address EDI – Inclusive and supportive Campus Community Culture, Professionalism, Inclusion, Service Excellence and Leadership, and Advancing Acadia's Contribution to Truth, Reconciliation and Decolonization.

Signage in a new centre on campus features both English and Mi'kmaq languages. More signage of this type is in discussion with Facilities Management.

New Indigenous faculty positions were advertised for Biology (focus on Biodiversity) and Community Development.

A faculty member in the Department of Politics and the Indigenous Student Advisor secured two CEWIL grants to focus on educational activities aimed at reconciliation on campus.

1) I-WIL Commit to Truth and Reconciliation: Elders and Youth in Mi'kma'ki Collaborate to Advance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Canada.

2) I-WIL Make a Difference Upholding Human Rights: Canadian Youth Examine the Social Determinants of Health in Nunavut, A Community-Based Participatory Virtual Policy Initiative.

Several indigenous events took place throughout the Fall - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Sept 30th), Treaty Day (Oct 1st) and the Sisters in Spirit Vigil (Oct 4th). These initiatives were coordinated in conjunction with the Town of Wolfville and Glooscap First Nation and served as excellent examples of allyship. The final Indigenous gala event occurred on Nov 25th. The CEWIL grants demonstrated the need for and importance of working with community as well as with the Indigenous Student Society at Acadia. The Mi'kmaw Nation and Indigenous students are key drivers in Acadia's programs on Indigenous issues.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

The establishment of the EDIAR Council (initially expected in 2021) was delayed until the terms of reference could be established (following much consultation across the campus). A Vice Provost EDI was also needed to chair or co-chair the EDIAR Council. Hence, there was no action stemming from the EDI Audit Framework developed by the Senate EDI Audit Subcommittee. Any future audit will need oversight and coordination by the new Council.

There were very few applicants in 2021 for the targeted Indigenous faculty hires, possibly due to limited reach of ads and the paucity of tenure track/tenured Indigenous faculty and associated cultural supports on campus. Cluster hires were proposed by the Administration in the 2021 negotiations with the Faculty Association. The 16th Collective Agreement, which features a Cluster Hire MOU was not ratified until 2022.

While concerns related to Indigenous self-identity were raised, university policy and guidelines on confirming identity were lacking. This is an area that requires attention in 2022 and will involve Acadia's Indigenous Affairs Coordinator.

Acadia operates on a very tight budget and resources are limited, including funding for EDI hires and other human resources to support EDI efforts. Regardless, there is much goodwill and meaningful efforts are being made, both within the institution and in collaboration with our external partners.

COVID continued to restrict activities and led to much fatigue for students and all employee groups. Working from home, and sick leaves due to COVID illness, impacted many employees engaged in EDI initiatives.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

The primary activity needed (in 2022) is the development of the Terms of Reference for the EDIAR Council (following consultation) and the appointment of a Vice-Provost EDI to help coordinate EDI initiatives across the institution. This EDIAR Council will consider the Senate's request (and framework document) for an Equity Audit.

Based on the outcomes of the Collective Agreement negotiations with AUFA (Faculty), and the model selected for addressing the need to diversify faculty hires, new searches will commence asap for faculty that represent two groups - Indigenous and Black Canadians.

Was funding from the CRCP EDI stipend used for this key objective?

NO

If the answer to the previous question was 'yes', indicate how much of the funding was spent on this key objective and specifically what the funds were spent on.

Do you have other key objectives to add?

Yes

Key Objective 2

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

Objective 2: Increase campus-wide EDI awareness and training in EDI best practices

Systemic barriers

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

The environmental scan conducted during 2019-2021 identified the importance of the university Library for hosting and sharing EDI education and training materials. This will need a dedicated staff member to ensure its growth and ongoing maintenance as the demand for quick and easy online access to EDI-related material is growing. There needs to be greater awareness of conscious and unconscious bias in relation to the FDGs and other marginalized groups as these biases create uncomfortable and/or unsafe work environments and reduce opportunities for members of these groups and for Acadia generally. Faculty and administrators commonly lack the training and tools required to objectively assess non-traditional CVs and career paths, and diverse research methods and associated impact/outcomes. Lack of awareness can lead to long-term, low diversity in faculty representation (FDGs) and career advancement. Faculty need greater equity training. And faculty review meetings (with academic unit leads) and career development letters should address any identified EDI barriers for both regular faculty hires and CRCs. Members of the FDGs may experience that their research activities, especially if non-traditional, are undervalued by faculty peers, academic leaders, and students. Indigenous research conducted by faculty and students at Acadia would benefit from education and training in Indigenous research ethics, noting that all research involving collective Mi'kmaw knowledge, culture, arts, spirituality, or traditions, or having the potential to impact treaty or Aboriginal rights must be reviewed by the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW).

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

The Vaughan Memorial Library oversees the hosting of and access to EDI resources (documents, audio-visual materials, etc) to further develop EDI awareness and education. These resources are located in the EDI LibGuide toolkit. During 2021, summer student interns (diverse hires) were employed to assist the Equity Officer with the development of additional EDI materials. The Equity Office is being considered as the most appropriate host for shared EDI resources.

The Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic hosted two cultural competency training sessions for academic leaders, including deans, vice-provost, heads, directors, and program coordinators. The sessions were conducted by VANSDA (<https://vansda.ca>) and focused on anti-racism awareness: "Overcoming History" and "Transition to Employment Equity".

The EEC is further developing its Equity Training Workshops to include effective modules on unconscious and conscious bias and anti-racism in relation to the FDGs and other marginalized groups. These are mandatory equity workshops for all faculty and academic administrators who sit on faculty search committees.

The Dean of Research & Graduate Studies ensured that academic units and committee members for advertised CRC themes are aware of the CRCP expectations, EDI goals and requirements, and best practices in recruitment and retention processes. Such communications are made in person when CRC Search Committees are formed and throughout the recruitment and hiring process. The CRC search in 2021

involved all committee members undertaking the CRCP's unconscious bias training module, as required by the CRCP. Faculty across the campus now better understand the importance of protecting the time of CRCs (regardless of unit teaching needs). The CRCP's Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention has been recommended as a useful tool for academic units as they seek to enhance diversity of regular faculty hires.

The Faculty Deans ensured academic unit Heads and Directors understand the importance of EDI considerations in their leadership roles, including when they conduct Career Development Meetings of faculty.

In the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science, an Indigenizing Science Working Group was established and identified the following needs: Indigenizing approaches to facilities; strengthening connections between faculty and Mi'kmaq; and course development in the sciences.

Acadia celebrated Black History Month (February) with a national theme of "The Future is Now" to celebrate and acknowledge the transformative work that Black Canadians and their communities are doing now, while the Nova Scotia focus on "Black History Matters: Listen, Learn, Share and Act" recognizes the important legacy of people of African descent and the long-standing history in the development of Canada. Numerous campus educational events were held to celebrate Black History Month. They were well-attended and the feedback was positive.

The Indigenous Affairs Office coordinated a highly successful and well attended 1st person Indigenous voice seminar series (4 events in Jan 2021) that involved seven Indigenous scholars and elders (held via Teams due to Covid). Sessions included: Netukulimk and Two-Eyed Seeing, Pow Wow Protocol and Regalia, Landscape and Place Names, and the Glooscap and Annapolis Valley First Nations.

Mi'kmaw Elder Dr. Joe Michael was appointed as Elder in Residence at Acadia in 2021. In this role, he provides support and resources, primarily to Indigenous students and Indigenous staff, from a holistic Mi'kmaw perspective. This support addresses mental, spiritual, cultural, emotional, and physical health needs.

Land acknowledgements are made at all university hosted events and are features of e-signatures of faculty and administrators.

The Acadia University Faculty Association held a Roundtable Discussion with the Indigenous Affairs Coordinator on Indigenization Considerations.

The Research Office and the Office of Indigenous Affairs commenced planning for a webinar focused on Indigenous (especially Mi'kmaq) research methodology and ethics.

Data gathered and Indicator(s) - can be both qualitative and quantitative:

Reports and webpages featuring EDI initiatives, new EDI resources, # and type of educational events, webinars and invited speakers.

Faculty and Senate communications on EDI in teaching, research, and training

Reports of ongoing developments in EEC training, # events, # attendees, evaluation feedback

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

Data analytics was used to track use of the library hosted EDI resources (tracked via). All links are functional and feedback by users was positive.

The content of EEC Equity Workshops demonstrated inclusion of unconscious and implicit bias and anti-racism training for faculty and academic administrators. The EEC requests and receives feedback on their training events.

All CRCs now have near equivalent teaching and service workloads. There has been greater education of faculty on the CRC Program goals and requirements, and the need to protect CRC time for research, as intended by the CRCP.

The diversity of faculty hires is growing, albeit slowly. There was 100% success in renewal, tenure, and promotion of members of the FDGs.

The Indigenous Seminar Series with 1st person voice speakers, and Black History month events were well attended, and feedback was positive. Such events serve to develop cultural awareness and understanding and reduce unconscious and conscious bias.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

The Librarian responsible for the EDI Lib Guide toolkit was on sabbatical (mid 2021-mid 2022). This EDI resource stewardship gap was filled by Equity Office staff and aided by student interns supported by a CRCP EDI Stipend.

COVID impacted some employees (illness/absence) in their EDI planning and often created constraints due to working remotely.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

Connect with staff of Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW) for advice on their Indigenous research ethics approval process. Discussions will be initiated with the MEW coordinator, with a request for a MEW webinar.

The Employment Equity Committee will continue to meet regularly and build on their work and training modules to advance EDI efforts in recruitment and hires at Acadia.

The Equity Office will continue to develop and post EDI educational material and assist with various EDI initiatives on campus.

Was funding from the CRCP EDI stipend used for this key objective?

Yes

\$16,089 on student intern and staff hires for assistance with developing and promoting EDI educational and training materials.

Key Objective 3

Brief description of S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely) Key Objective 3:

Objective 3: Improve existing policies, practices, data collection and reporting related to the recruitment, retention and advancement of CRCs & faculty who are members of the FDGs

Systemic barriers

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

Some of Acadia's policies and forms need updating in relation to EDI language and best practices. There is also some lack of consistency in messaging between the AUFA Collective Agreement and HR Policies and Processes.

The diversity of qualified applicants for CRC and faculty positions is often low, potentially due to limited reach with advertisements. In addition, CRC theme areas and position descriptions in ads do not always attract a diverse pool of candidates.

There has been limited support for on-site interviewees, especially persons with disabilities (visible and invisible) and candidates with newborns/young children. This may result in low interest from these groups. Relevant policy on accessibility for faculty and staff is lacking.

The employment systems review identified barriers to accessing self-ID data of applicants for CRCs and regular faculty positions. Members of under-represented groups do not always self-ID when applying for CRC and regular faculty positions at Acadia.

CRCs and others who are members of the FDG need a clear mechanism for reporting on EDI-related issues and needs. HR exit interviews (CRCs and regular faculty) do not specifically seek feedback on EDI experiences of faculty (and staff).

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers

Updates to text in Acadia's CRC theme calls, including the addition of evaluation criteria that ensures the proposed theme attracts diverse candidates. Themes selected need to be strategic and consistent with the supports and opportunities (esp. internal research collaborators) that Acadia can offer.

EEC advice was sought on how to extend the reach of ads to targeted, diverse scholars. This was effective.

Ads for positions now indicate information on campus supports. Assistance is offered to interviewees.

Accessibility planning for the campus is underway following an extensive campus-wide audit of buildings.

The form and process for Self-ID has been modified. Self-ID is now a requirement of all applicants for faculty

positions.

HR has been made aware of various policies that require updating by staff, some in consultation with other units. Advice to HR also includes exit interviews with faculty that include questions related to EDI concerns. CRCs are encouraged to report to the Research Office lead on matters of concern, including EDI-related issues and needs.

Data gathered and Indicator(s) - can be both qualitative and quantitative:

Review of past calls for CRC theme proposals.

Review of sites where CRC ads are placed.

Review of self-ID form and support offered to applicants/interviewees.

Data on % of applicants that self-ID. Tracking of the number of applicants from under-represented groups is needed for both regular faculty and CRC hires.

Review of the structure and content of CRC Search Committee reports to senior leadership.

Progress with the Acadia Accessibility Plan (in development) and the work of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Track progress with updating and creating new policies, especially in relation to EDI.

Survey CRCs on their understanding of who to approach regarding needs, including EDI concerns or issues.

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

Acadia developed two new CRC position descriptions in 2020 and 2021 for theme areas known to attract diverse scholars. They were widely distributed. These searches targeted prospective applicants from one or more of the FDGs and thus ensured the institution could meet its equity targets for its 4 allocated CRCs. A nomination for the 4th CRC was submitted to the CRCP in 2021 following review of a highly diverse pool of applicants, three of which were interviewed (remotely due to COVID restrictions).

The EEC has worked closely with Human Resources and Equity Office staff and continues to make progress in Equity Training in areas identified for action. This includes update to the self-ID form for CRC and faculty applicants.

With the campus accessibility audits now completed, the university is now poised for significant work to increase its work on improving on-campus accessibility.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

The selection of a CRC theme (by the academic leadership team) among many strong themes proposed can be challenging when there is only 1 CRC position available. Considerable efforts by faculty are put into preparing CRC theme proposals that are not selected, and inevitably generate disappointment. Ultimately, the decision is a strategic one, and in line with both the CRC Program requirements and the various supports and opportunities Acadia can offer to CRC appointees.

The 2021 CRC Search Committee had no members with prior experience on a CRC Search Committee. Much advice was provided to ensure that the CRC Program requirements were fully met as CRC search requirements exceed the requirements of regular faculty hires at Acadia.

The Human Resources Office has been a very busy and understaffed unit, especially during Covid when campus staff turnover, and associated recruitment efforts to fill staff vacancies, was unusually high. There were challenges in dealing with both pandemic impacts on employees and recruitment requests and the upkeep of employment related policies. Attention to many policies will be addressed post-pandemic.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

Continue to promote and use best practices in recruitment, hiring and retention, and further develop training tools for Equity Workshops, especially in relation to anticipated targeted EDI faculty hires in 2022.

Commence hiring diverse faculty following ratification of the 16th Collective Agreement with the Faculty Association (AUFA).

Was funding from the CRCP EDI stipend used for this key objective?

No

If the answer to the previous question was 'yes', indicate how much of the funding was spent on this key objective and specifically what the funds were spent on.

Key Objective 4

Brief description of S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely) Key Objective 4:

Objective 4: Enhance the mentoring and networking of CRCs and the promotion and research celebration of members of the FDGs more broadly

Systemic barriers

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

Acadia's CRCs have expertise in very different disciplines and tend to be housed in separate buildings on the campus. This creates physical isolation which is likely to be of greater concern for members of the FDG. In these cases, mentoring support is particularly important, especially in the first term of a CRC appointment. Teaching and service loads are reduced to aid research activity and productivity but can have the effect of isolating CRCs from their faculty colleagues. Interviews of CRCs at Acadia were conducted in preparation for the CRC EDIAP. CRCs who were not collaborating in research with other faculty at Acadia reported isolation effects. Incoming CRCs (not initially at Acadia) are likely to require additional assistance with meeting others within and outside of Acadia, with university systems and processes, and with both regional and national research grant programs and related opportunities. Some CRCs will also require CFI funding and additional supports from the Research Office / University to successfully undertake an intensive program of research.

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

Home departments of CRCs are made aware of the workload expectations and are encouraged to establish strong supports for their CRCs to reduce feelings of isolation that may come with much focused time for research and networking elsewhere and associated reduced teaching and service

loads. No new CRCs commenced in 2021 and the most recent CRC appointed was already a faculty member, well networked at Acadia and in the region, and did not require CFI funding support. The timing was fortunate in some respects as 2020 and 2021 were Covid years and thus reduced opportunities for in-person meetings to establish strong working relationships with other faculty, and both staff and administrators, including Research Office personnel.

Acadia seeks to ensure that all its chairholders feel supported and valued in their leadership roles. To support the focus on research activity and outcomes, Acadia's CRCs are offered a generous annual research grant, reduced committee service expectations, and a generous annual 4-course release (faculty normally have a 5 x 3-credit course load).

CRCs are invited to meet regularly with the Research Office Dean and staff and are encouraged to network widely within and outside of Acadia, including with CRCs at other Maple League Universities (Bishops, StFX and Mt Allison). The recently established Maple League Network of CRCs provides a unique opportunity among similarly sized sister institutions to discuss and share strategies on how to navigate the CRC role for a successful term at a small, primarily undergraduate university. The first meeting of the ML Network of CRCs was held in mid-May 2021, and organized by the Acadia Research Office. The response to this initiative was very positive and multiple CRC meetings a year were proposed as a forum to share ideas, and to discuss challenges, solutions, and collaborative opportunities. We note that the CRC peer network is most beneficial for new CRCs and CRCs who are members of under-represented groups.

To highlight the work of the CRCs (esp. the Tier 2 CRCs) their research programs and successes are promoted on the Research Office website and celebrated via communications (formal and social media). In a non-Covid year, the CRCs would be invited to speak in an annual CRC Research Symposium and also meet together at least once per term, but this did not happen in 2021. During the pandemic, Microsoft TEAMS (online meetings) were used to address the needs of the current CRCs, usually on an individual basis.

In 2021, support was committed to one recently appointed CRC seeking to establish a Research Centre in an existing space on campus. And a CFI funding commitment for infrastructure and equipment was made to an incoming CRC Tier 2 who commenced their appointment in early 2022.

Data gathered and Indicator(s) - can be both qualitative and quantitative:

Qualitative data was gathered from regular meetings with the Research Office and from a search consultant who was hired to conduct interviews with Acadia's current and past CRCs.

A success indicator for the CRCs at Acadia is retention! During the last 15+ years, no CRC has left Acadia except via retirement. Strong research collaborations (internally and externally), success in competitive external research funding competitions, and knowledge mobilization are hallmarks of CRC success at Acadia.

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

Networking of CRCs (esp. Tier 2 CRCs) for mentoring purposes was enhanced via the establishment of the Maple League CRC Network. The first meeting was held in 2021 and hosted by Acadia. This initiative was well received and particularly beneficial during Covid.

Our CRCs have been promoted internally and externally via Acadia's communication channels and website and are well known as leaders in their respective disciplines. They communicate regularly with the Research Office about their activities, awards, etc.

Acadia is now very aware that CRCs at a small institution in a rural environment need to be well integrated with and supported by their faculty peers and academic administrators. CRC hires at Acadia over the last decade have been very active researchers and collaborate broadly within their disciplines and within the region/Canada. They have been successful in securing external research grants, publishing, supervising/training both students and postdoctoral fellows, and mentoring many of their faculty colleagues.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

All current CRCs are having successful terms. Apart from Covid impacts that affect most employees, no challenges have been identified.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

Onboard the two incoming CRCs in 2022. Continue to support all CRCs at Acadia and find ways to bring them together to develop strong peer relationships and to receive mentorship as desired and needed.

The Research Office Dean and support staff are in regular contact with CRCs about their needs, but it is recommended that CRCs (current and recent) be interviewed by an independent 3rd party every 2-3 years to collect feedback on their experience at Acadia and to identify any areas for improvement in Acadia's processes and supports.

Was funding from the CRCP EDI stipend used for this key objective?

No

If the answer to the previous question was 'yes', indicate how much of the funding was spent on this key objective and specifically what the funds were spent on.

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-19 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? (limit: 5100 characters):

In the 2020 reallocation of Chairs, Acadia lost one Tier 2 CRC (SSHRC) due to a period of declining SSHRC grant application success. This loss was met with a strategic decision to secure a Research Grants Manager with experience in SSHRC related research and prior success with SSHRC partnership funding. This appointment offers greater support to faculty in the SSHRC disciplines than previously offered and we expect to see higher numbers of SSHRC applications and greater award success in the years to come, and hopefully the return of the lost CRC Tier 2 (SSHRC).

The most common barrier to increasing faculty (and staff and student) diversity at Acadia is its small size

and location in a rural town that is nearly racially homogenous. There are few new faculty hires in a given year which limits the opportunities to enhance diversity among faculty. Regardless, over the last 3 years, there has been a significant focus on increasing EDI awareness and education across the entire campus, including educational talks/webinars and panel discussions, and creation of EDI related educational materials. Most faculty have received equity training and are aware of the effect of conscious and unconscious bias in hiring practices and in recruiting and supervising HQP.

The biggest challenge faced in implementing Acadia's EDI Action Plan continues to be limited human resources across multiple units of the university. These constraints were further impacted by Covid-19 (in both 2020 and 2021) which presented additional workload for those units responsible for developing protocols and new processes/responses for managing the impact of the pandemic. Employee departures and absences (due to illness), and delays in new staff hires, have slowed progress in some areas. Regardless, the university has made significant efforts in EDI awareness and adoption, and it is a topic now commonly discussed (and with interest) in all sectors across the campus. With some recent staff hires in key positions, and a focus on anti-racism, Indigenous programming, and support for under-represented students, the campus is embracing EDI at many levels. Many actions underway were not part of the EDI Action Plan.

Not surprisingly, a number of EDI initiatives have been undertaken but not necessarily in a coordinated way. Some concerns have been expressed about duplication of effort with limited human resources. Quantifying the effort and impact of EDI actions has been a challenge and some oversight and human resources need to go into data collection and tracking of progress and success. To ensure better coordination of activities, the university will establish in 2022 an EDI Anti-Racism (EDIAR) Council, led by a Vice Provost Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, to provide oversight of campus-wide EDI initiatives, policies and practices, initiate activities of approved EDI Plans (CRC, Anti-Racism, other), and monitor their progress and success to ensure that EDI initiatives are adequately tracked and celebrated.

All members of faculty search committees are required to undertake equity training. Each year, ~1/3 of faculty are trained by the EEC, so there is some delay in training with the most recent training materials. In contrast, CRC Search Committees are required to undertake CRCP unconscious bias training at the beginning of each search. The Research Office Dean attends all CRC Search Committee meetings to provide guidance on required EDI best practices in recruitment and hiring process.

The low diversity among CRCs at Acadia in the last 20 years resulted from a number of factors, including the theme areas advertised (often in male dominated fields), and how these positions were advertised. Prior to 2017, calls for CRC research theme areas from the campus community did not consider how the proposed theme area might attract a diverse pool of candidates. The reach of ads was also viewed as too limited to attract diverse applicants. Ads also lacked messages that offered accommodations for persons with disabilities and women with newborns/young children, potentially limiting interest from these groups. In addition, the institution has had limited preparedness for persons with physical (visible and invisible) disabilities. This is being addressed to some extent by the developing Acadia Accessibility Plan, which follows an extensive Accessibility Audit of the campus.

Acadia experienced some challenges regarding the implementation of the EDI Action Plan due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. There was a necessary redistribution of efforts and resources to deal with the pandemic's effects on the core business of the university. Covid also impacted the health and wellness of both students and employees, and many experienced COVID fatigue. Regardless, progress continued in large part due to technological advances and effective communication platforms (e.g. Teams) that assist in working remotely. Like other institutions, we have adapted. And the commitment to progress in meeting institutional EDI goals remains strong.

Part D: Engagement with individuals from underrepresented groups

Outline how the institution has engaged with underrepresented groups: e.g., racialized minorities, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, women, LGBTQ2+ individuals, during the implementation of the action plan (during the reporting period), including how they have been involved in identifying and implementing any course corrections/adjustments, if applicable. For example, how was feedback gathered on whether the measures being implemented are resulting in a more inclusive research environment for chairholders of underrepresented groups? How has intersectionality been considered in developing and implementing the plan (if applicable)? Have new gaps been identified? How will members of underrepresented groups continue to be engaged? (limit: 10 200 characters)

An updated CRC EDI Action Plan was submitted for CRCP review in April 2021 following a more thorough environmental scan, employment systems review and comparative review. The CRC EDIAP Steering Committee included the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, an academic Dean, Acadia's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer (in an advisory capacity), the Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs (in an advisory capacity), the former Co-Chair of the Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the former Chair of the Senate Ad Hoc Diversity and Inclusion Committee, staff and faculty members with expertise in EDI, a representative from Acadia's Accessible Learning Department, the Coordinator of Acadia's Women's Center, and students with EDI lived experience. All FDGs were represented on the Steering Committee. Several members belonged to two of the FDGs and were able to offer insight and analysis from an intersectional perspective. Committee members had significant experience and knowledge of EDI issues and related challenges and barriers in academia and society more broadly. During 2021, engagement was ongoing with members of the campus community, including those from the four designed groups (i.e., women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities) and members of the LGBTQ2+ community.

Apart from undertaking a search and nomination process for Acadia's remaining unfilled CRC, most of the efforts in implementing CRC EDIAP actions at Acadia during 2021 were focused on raising EDI awareness and addressing policies and procedures for the broader academic community. Several student interns (all members of the FDGs) were hired to assist faculty and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer in developing materials for use in EDI training and awareness, and in assisting with a proposal (framework) for an Equity Audit.

The Senate EDI Committee created an Equity Audit Subcommittee which was asked to provide guidance on conducting a campus-wide equity audit. This work commenced in 2020 and was finalized in 2021. The Audit Subcommittee was represented by EDI experts and faculty, staff, and students with lived experience as members of one or more underrepresented groups.

The Indigenous Affairs Office has advised that activities and research related to Indigenous issues must follow appropriate engagement processes and recommends a full course on Indigenous methodologies. Mi'kmaq representatives and students have been consulted and they are requesting more Indigenous-led programming related to Indigenous peoples (e.g. Mi'kmaw language and cultural courses).

The President's Anti-Racism Task Force (PART), established in 2020, was a large and highly diverse committee with both internal and external membership. It was tasked with providing recommendations for an action plan to address racism. Working groups were created to focus on

Curricula and Course Creation, Student Services and Student Experience, Hiring and Training, Community Relations and Engagement, Policy and Administration, Athletics, and Youth Activities. Reports from the various working groups and a group of Black advocates were presented to the Task Force. Draft recommendations for short-term, medium-term, and long-term actions to be taken by Acadia were compiled from the Working Group and Black Advocates reports in 2021. Acadia is still in the early phases of fully identifying the barriers for under-represented groups. The various initiatives and actions currently underway and forthcoming will serve to better address EDI for racialized minorities, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, women, LGBTQ2+ individuals, and others. And what will be required is a plan to monitor the short-to-long term success of the various action plans (including the CRC EDIAP) and course correct where needed. This will require ongoing engagement across the campus and regular surveys to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

PART E: Efforts to Address Systemic Barriers More Broadly within the Institution

Briefly outline other EDI initiatives underway at the institution (that are broader than those tied to the CRCP) that are 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, using the hyperlink boxes provided below (URLs should include https://). Note that collecting this information from institutions is a requirement of the 2019 Addendum to the 2006 Canadian Human Rights Settlement Agreement and provides context for the work the institution is doing in addressing barriers for the CRCP. (limit: 4080 characters)

The following is a list of EDI initiatives other than those previously described:

- 1) Environmental scan of Indigenous content on campus, with a focus on Mi'kmaq language course, Indigenous Art, and Indigenous language signage (e.g. now featured for our on-campus Languages Centre).
- 2) Ongoing active WISE program involving a large number of faculty and student volunteers (many of which are members of underrepresented groups) working with girls in grades 6 and 7.
- 3) Inclusive Gym Time initiative in partnership with the Athletics Department and the Sexualized Violence Response and Education Coordinator. Related training and campaigns to support the implementation of safer spaces at the Athletics Complex, as well as across campus. This includes the creation of a dedicated time for members of the Acadia community who identify as women, trans, and non-binary to access the Fitness Centre.
- 4) Ongoing activities of Acadia's Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC)
- 5) Acadia Accessibility 2030 Built Environment Working Group is seeking to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in the built environment at Acadia University ensuring meaningful access for all intended users.
- 6) The Maple League International Offices (Acadia, Bishops, Mt Allison and StFX) were collectively awarded \$800,000 to collaborate on Decolonizing Education Abroad, with events for students scheduled in 2022-2024 in Belize.
- 7) High School Transition Program work is ongoing with Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey to advise Acadia and create a program model for a transition program.
- 8) Mi'kmaq 101 project in development with the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaw (CMM).
- 9) Edwin Borden Awards established to support Black students at Acadia. These awards will recognize community engagement and leadership among Black Acadia students.
- 10) Black Student Navigator position role revised in consultation with VANSDA, to better support the needs of Black students at Acadia. The role was revised in response to feedback from the PART

and the Black student community.

- 11) Acadia commemorated the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with the start of a multi-day Mawio'mi at the Clock Park in Wolfville. Attendees heard of experiences shared from survivors of residential and day schools, including Acadia's Elder in Residence, and current day experiences shared by Acadia Indigenous students. Events continued on Treaty Day and over the following days as we recognized the start of Mi'kmaq History Month.
- 12) The Recruitment Office and Indigenous Affairs have been developing an informal Mi'kmaq recruitment strategy that will build trust and relationships (e.g. Indigenous student recruitment during events held within Mi'kmaq communities).
- 13) A unique activity was the Devour Food Film Festival 2021 which was a collaborative effort in programming, held within the town, and focused on Indigenous food and film. One of the fundraising events during the festival was the creation of an Indigenous scholarship at Acadia.

Before submitting your report, please ensure that your responses are complete. You will not be able to edit the information after it is submitted.

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