

# Research Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Guide

Lambton College Research and Innovation



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# 1. Introduction – About This Guide

## 1.1 Lambton College and Research and Innovation Commitment to EDI

Lambton College is strongly committed to ensuring that it is reflective of the community, region, and world in which it operates, and its practices are focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). The College is premised on the recognition of the diversity within the College’s student and research body as well as the research environment, resulting from its vibrant character. Core to the commitment is bolstering and celebrating diversity, striving to provide equitable support and access to opportunities, and promoting a respectful and inclusive learning experience for all.

Since 2018, Lambton College’s Executive Management Team (EMT) has been actively working to increase resources and awareness and improve policies and practices for EDI. In 2021, Lambton College conducted an EDI Assessment to obtain insights into the gaps and reasons for the gaps in inclusivity and assess compliance with equity-related legislation, understand the strengths on which Lambton College can build, set a roadmap for improvement, and continue to build momentum on Indigenization, EDI, and accessibility. The Assessment was conducted by a third-party consultant, Turner Consulting Group Inc., and focused on the experiences of Indigenous Peoples, international students, LGBTQ2S+, persons with disabilities, racialized people, and women. The findings from the EDI Assessment have supported the development of “seven priority” areas for Lambton College’s multi-year “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy”. (Visit Lambton’s Equity, Diversity & Inclusion web page to learn more about Lambton’s EDI Strategy, seven strategic pillars and to obtain updates on Lambton’s EDI journey.) This information has helped Lambton College and the department strategically improve and build on current practices to close the gaps and eliminate the barriers to equity, diversity, and exclusion.

Lambton is proud to be a community leader in EDI and as such, recognize the significant responsibility to continue building on the important work that has already been done to create a college community in which everyone has the opportunity to live a full and authentic life. While also advancing the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in our region and across the country. In support of this leadership, the Research & Innovation department has its own priority action items to strengthen research excellence through embedding indigeneity, inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility considerations through the research process. The success of EDI initiatives largely rests on the ability to create an environment of trust between all members, researchers, partners, and trainees. Researchers and Research Administration individually contribute to creating and maintaining an environment where diverse individuals feel empowered to do their best work to collaborate without judgement. To date, a range of EDI initiatives and action items have been put in place to address priority seven of Lambton College’s Strategic Plan and are as follows:

- ▶ Formed EDI group to take responsibility for EDI activities,
- ▶ Incorporating equity-related principles into current projects and proposals,
- ▶ Implemented range of initiatives to promote the participation of diverse groups of students,
  - ▶ Promotion strategies to reach diverse student pools,
  - ▶ Determining equitable representation among researchers,
  - ▶ Implementing measures to prefer candidates from underrepresented groups, where equivalent,
- ▶ Incorporating practices for inclusion on research teams, including the use of self identification, ground rules for interaction, accommodations for people with disabilities, and the use of inclusive language.
- ▶ Made EDI principles core components of the Research Student Training Plan
  - ▶ This includes Research 101, which features EDI training modules.

The work being done in support of Lambton’s EDI strategy is essential and ongoing. Biannual reporting is completed on Lambton’s EDI strategy to measure progress and ensure that meaningful change is occurring with an impact on the lived experience of our community members.

## 1.2 Commitment to Funder Requirements

The Tri-Agency members (Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) are committed to excellence in research and research training. Thus, achieving a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive Canadian research enterprise is essential to creating the excellent, innovative, and impactful research necessary to advance knowledge and understanding, and to respond to local, national, and global challenges (New Frontiers in Research Fund, 2021; Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, 2022).

As part of their commitment, the Tri-Agency members integrate EDI considerations into their policies, processes, excellence indicators, and evaluation criteria. In addition, the competitive funding programs offered by not only Tri-Agency members but also other funders such as the Ontario Centre of Innovation (OCI), Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI), and various federal and provincial funding grants are formally embedding EDI requirements into their program design as a best practice. This shift has already begun for various competitive grant programming with EDI criteria focusing on the research environment and its impact on the researchers' experience. To remain in high standing, Research & Innovation at Lambton College are strengthening our commitment to EDI-related policies and practices, while ensuring that the design of our research programs and projects are informed by best practices that will support our researchers, students, and staff. This guide will provide an overview of EDI and best practices. The Research & Innovation department is committed to developing and executing strong EDI practices. The Research & Innovation EDI team have reviewed various EDI guidelines from NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR, and NFRF, which has been helpful to the development of this guide.

## 2. What is Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)?

**Equity** “is defined as” the removal of systemic barriers and biases enabling all individuals to have equal opportunities to access and benefit from the program” (New Frontiers in Research Fund, 2021; Social Science and Humanities Research Council, 2021).

**Diversity** “is defined as” differences in race, colour, place of origin, religion, immigrant and newcomer status, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age” (New Frontiers in Research Fund, 2021, Social Science and Humanities Research Council, 2021).

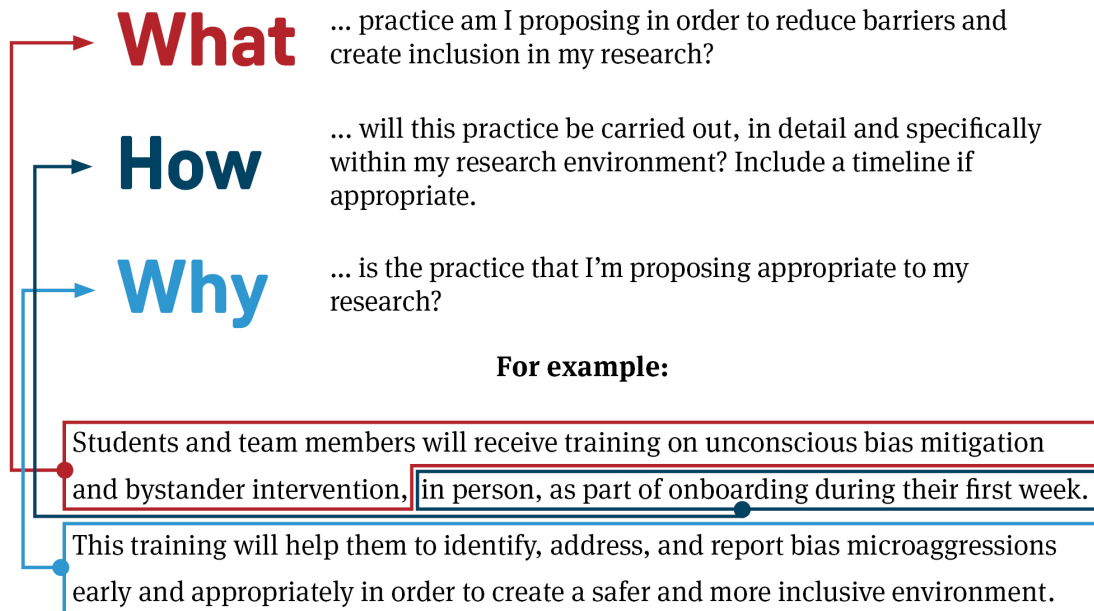
**Inclusion** “is defined as” the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are equally supported” (New Frontiers in Research Fund, 2021; Social Science and Humanities Research Council, 2021).

### 2.1 What Constitutes Meaningful Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Comprehensive and quality research emphasizes the significance of equity, diversity, and inclusion. EDI in research encompasses not only considerations within the research process, but also extends to the broader research context. This includes considerations like the makeup of the research team and the training provided to participating students and/or early career researchers.

To attain research of global standard, it's imperative to confront systemic barriers within our research environments. The integration of EDI practices should extend beyond simply checking a box and infuse genuine EDI into your research process, team, and grant applications. It is important to move beyond simply stating that our institution has an EDI policy and is complete or diverse. We must strive to dig deeper and verify initiatives that align with the characteristics of our environment, field of study, and specifics of the research that is being undertaken. When considering EDI practices in research and practically, grant applications, it is essential to provide detailed and specific explanations as well as be able to demonstrate how you are intentionally and proactively considering EDI as it relates to the process, team, trainees, and the proposed project.

NSERC is in the process of developing a guide focused on integrating equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) into grant applications for the College and Community Innovation program. This guide, currently under preparation, will offer valuable insights into ensuring that both institutions and research teams effectively outline their strategies for EDI initiatives. The illustrative “What, How, Why” process (Figure 1), is adapted from NSERC’s forthcoming College and Community Innovation Program EDI guide. This diagram serves as a practical model for researchers, showcasing an exemplary approach to incorporation of impactful EDI measures and tacking tangible EDI practices.



**Figure 1. What, How, Why**

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. (2023). *Guide to addressing equity, diversity and inclusion in College and Community Innovation program grant applications. Forthcoming.*

### 3. What is EDI in Research Process?

EDI encompasses two approaches in research: EDI in research process and EDI in research teams. These are defined further below.

**EDI in Research Process:** Considering EDI in the research process means embedding EDI considerations relevant to each stage of the research process, including initial framing of research questions, design of the study, methodology and data collection, analysis and interpretation, and dissemination of results. This “promotes research excellence by making it more relevant to society as a whole, ethically sound, rigorous, reproducible, and useful” (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, 2022 as cited in Tannenbaum et al., 2019). It will also further support innovation through scientific discovery and opening new avenues for research. When not incorporating EDI into the research process research results may be impacted, including being of lower quality or leading to harmful outcomes.

EDI in the research process encourages greater reflection of integrating EDI where relevant and applying an EDI lens to systemically examine how diversity factors (e.g., sex (biological), gender (socio cultural), race, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, geographic location, among others) and their intersections may affect the research questions, the research design, methodology and data collection adopted, analysis and interpretation, and dissemination of the results. Researchers should thoroughly reflect on the type of data that is being collected and how it might impact the research findings before concluding if EDI considerations are not relevant to their research. Researchers ought to take into account both the subject matter of their research and the individuals who might encounter significant effects, whether positive or negative, as either participants in the research or as eventual

beneficiaries. Moreover, they should recognize the potential for certain groups or communities to be left out of the research initiatives encompassed by the study and should actively strive to involve such groups or communities in collaborative design endeavors (College and Community Innovation Program EDI Guide, Forthcoming).

### 3.1 EDI Considerations for the Research Process

The Research & Innovation department has adapted EDI considerations for the Research Process into three main categories, outlining key elements where EDI needs to be considered and are outlined below. For assistance, refer to and follow the ‘What, How, Why’ process mentioned earlier in the guide when considering the practices detailed below.

#### Process for Design:

- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted with community/industry partners on project design and considered EDI in specific regional or local contexts,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted R&I department on the design and conduction of the project,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered members of the population and community for the project under study, and has the diversity of these populations been considered,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team taken into consideration sex (biological), gender (sociocultural), race and ethnicity, accessibility, and other identities in the research design, methods, analysis, interpretation, and knowledge mobilization of research findings/results,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered what EDI challenges are present in their field(s) or areas of work (e.g., systemic barriers, underrepresented or disadvantaged group),
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered research team member positions/personal bias,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted with community/industry partner on best practices and research protocol based on population/community/market under study,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered the research site and reciprocity between the research team members and partners in design of the study,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted community/industry partner on data ownership, control and possession as well as the different forms of support required (i.e., financial, logistical, etc.),
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered all relevant methodology for the purpose of the study including data collection and analysis and determined the most appropriate in consultation with community/industry partner,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted R&I on data management, including, security, protection, and privacy,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted R&I on access to necessary resources, infrastructure, and equipment and how to address emergent access needs. This can relate to the access needs of the research team and participants involved in the research,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered who benefits from the research, including which populations might experience unintended impacts, whether positive or negative,

#### Process for Execution:

- ▶ Is the researcher/research team carrying out the established research plan including identified research objectives/questions, methodology/methods, data collection, and analysis practices,
- ▶ If changes to established research plan/timelines are required, has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner and R&I department about changes,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team acquiring the appropriate resources, infrastructure, and equipment prior to executing the project,

- ▶ Is the researcher/research team including diverse perspectives in the sources consulted and referenced for the project (e.g., authors from underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, and/or who employ critical theories (e.g., feminist, race, disability) or Indigenous knowledge systems),
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team incorporating research data management practices for project,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team implementing tests and re-tests to optimize process or product,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team implementing established process for knowledge dissemination and transfer to community/industry partner and relevant stakeholders.

#### Process for Dissemination:

- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner on best practices for disseminating and transferring all knowledge to partner,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team and community/industry partner determined the most effective ways to reach those who will use/benefit from the research results,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the R&I department to determine accessible formats to share research results/findings to wider audiences,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered R&I outreach activities to share project results/findings,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team engaged in the promotion and presentation of project results/findings,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team identified and consulted with community/industry partners on research limitations and future next steps or future projects.

## 4. What is EDI in Research Team?

**EDI in Research Team:** Refers to a group of researchers including, but not limited to applicants, co-applicants, collaborators, partners, and trainees/students involved in the research project or program. These members share collective competence, expertise, goals, and objectives. Members of the research team have defined roles and responsibilities, leadership, and other contributions related to the research.

It is important to consider the research team's composition through an EDI lens including from the initial building of the team to their roles throughout each stage of the research process. Researchers should reflect on how the research and the team could be strengthened by taking steps to create an equitable and inclusive environment with diverse team members. This is also including equitable and inclusive participation in decision-making (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, 2022). In addition, EDI in the research team should also consider promoting diversity in the composition of teams and recruitment of trainees such as students, emerging scholars, and HQP.

Adapted from the College and Community Innovation Program EDI Guide (Forthcoming), action items to support EDI should contribute to the following aims:

1. Eliminating systemic barriers that hinder the recruitment and complete engagement of individuals belonging to marginalized communities, encompassing women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, racially diverse populations, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities,
2. Implementing equitable and inclusive recruitment practices,
3. Implementing equitable and inclusive practices in mentoring, training, and access to development opportunities,
4. Creating a research environment that is equitable, inclusive, and accessible.



Refer to section **4.1 Recruitment and Selection** for additional information about Lambton’s EDI practices during the recruitment and selection process. The research work environment for the team members and trainees is important when considering EDI to foster an equitable, inclusive, and accessible research work environment. Finally, diversity and equity should be considered in mentoring, training, and access to development opportunities for research team members.

## 4.1 Recruitment and Selection

Lambton’s Research & Innovation department has implemented the below practices for equity, diversity and inclusion during the recruitment and selection process.

**Recruitment:** Measures are implemented to ensure there is focus on diversity in the pool of candidates, including publicly and widely posting job positions to ensure they are widely circulated and attract a diverse pool of candidates. This will be for all postings related to the project. In support of a diverse and inclusive college community, Lambton College intentionally includes applications from all qualified candidates, including aboriginal persons, members of sexual minority groups, persons with disabilities and visible minorities, and is committed to an inclusive, barrier-free selection process.

**Selection:** A common set of interview questions and evaluation rubric will be consistently applied to all candidates. Both the questions and rubric will be developed prior to evaluating the applications. In the case of experienced researcher fellow hiring, the evaluation of applicants’ scientific contributions (publications, awards, etc.) and transcripts will be conducted in a blind manner. The research team will also ensure that they draw from academic programs that are best suited to research activities when recruiting and selecting students. Promotion and strategy efforts will be developed and maintained to provide students with advance notice of available student research positions, including posting student positions through the Lambton College job portal and notifying appropriate programs of open student positions, and asking for the positions to be shared with all the students and classes in the program. The job posting will use non-gendered, inclusive, and unbiased language. In the selection process, based on the College’s internal and external environment, it will be determined what an equitable representation should be among researchers and implementing measures to prefer candidates from underrepresented groups, where equivalent.

## 4.2 EDI Considerations for the Research Team

The Research & Innovation department has adapted EDI considerations for the Research Team into three main categories, outlining key elements where EDI needs to be considered and are outlined below. For assistance, refer to and follow the ‘What, How, Why’ process mentioned earlier in the guide as you consider the practices detailed below.

### Project Development:

- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner to understand the scope and objectives of the project,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team conducted a literature review on the topic area under study,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered relevant and important contextual factors within the research,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the R&I team and community/industry partner on the project work plan and project application (e.g., internal vs. external) to gather feedback,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team determined each member of the research team, their roles and responsibilities throughout the research project (i.e., project development, project launch, data collection/methods, analysis and interpretation, dissemination of results),



- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the R&I department on the process for recruitment and selection of research team members including, mitigating potential bias, establishing selection committee, and developing interview questions and assessment process,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team considered training and mentorship opportunities throughout the project,
- ▶ Has the research/research team considered the steps needed to ensure that individuals with family, care, cultural, or community responsibilities are not disadvantaged within the team (e.g., adjusted or flexible work schedules, not meetings over meals, etc.),
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner on how best to involve collaborators throughout the research project including training and mentorship opportunities for students,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team examined the methods for ensuring fair allocation of mentorship, training, and development opportunities to both mentors and mentees, while also ensuring transparent communication of these opportunities to all team members,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the R&I department on the process for the management of complaints and conflict,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the R&I department on how to access key infrastructure and equipment for their project,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consult the Research Ethics Board, if applicable.

### Project Execution:

- ▶ Is the researcher/research team utilizing the R&I department to support with recruitment and selection to hire additional team members including graduates and students (See Section 4.1 recruitment and selection),
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team following each team member's determined roles and responsibilities based on their qualifications and expertise,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team identified what types of EDI training should the team receive, based on team members level of EDI competencies and the team's work environment (e.g., unconscious bias, antiracism, etc.)
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team providing opportunities for research team members to obtain necessary and ongoing training/mentorship throughout the project,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team following process for the management of complaints and conflict,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team following the equitable process for access to infrastructure and equipment (i.e., using the scheduling and booking system in place for labs and equipment to ensure that all researchers from all centres can access the necessary infrastructure for their collaborative research projects),
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team providing opportunities for ongoing and regular meetings to review and obtain feedback from community/industry partner, stakeholders, and other diverse groups,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team implementing the appropriate steps to ensure that team members feel comfortable discussing diverse experiences, ways of knowing, research methods into the research. For instance, Indigenous ways of knowing and being,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team following EDI practices during meetings, including self identification, ground rules for interaction, accommodations for students with disabilities, and utilizing inclusive language,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team providing opportunities for all researchers to contribute to analysis and interpretation/review of research results/findings,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team engaging all researchers and community/industry partners in the publication and promotion of results,
- ▶ Is the researcher/research team incorporating fair and equitable networking opportunities for research members, such as attending conferences and events during the project.

### Partner Development:

- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner on each phase of the proposed project,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner regarding financial support for the project,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner on their level of involvement throughout the proposed project including project development, execution, and dissemination of results,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner on potential networking, events, and conference attendance,
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner and relevant stakeholders on how best to disseminate and transfer knowledge.
- ▶ Has the researcher/research team consulted the community/industry partner and relevant stakeholders on future project considerations and directions.

## 5. Moving Forward

With any EDI strategy and guide, the work must continuously be ongoing to be responsive to the identified issues and to position Lambton College and the Research & Innovation Department to be responsive in real-time to issues that evolve in our community. As an innovative leader, EDI is a priority of Lambton College and requires the collective efforts of every member of the college community to make EDI a reality. Therefore, the Lambton College EDI Strategy will be reassessed frequently to ensure that it meets its objectives; alongside these recurrent assessments, the R&I department will continually review and update this EDI guide to ensure it remains aligned with the College's overall strategy and funder requirements. Furthermore, as Lambton and the R&I department continue this journey toward advancing the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, the R&I EDI team will make every effort to provide additional resources and guidelines that are relevant and helpful are included in this document and shared across the department and college community.

## 6. Definitions

These definitions are taken from “Guide to Addressing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations in Partnership Grant Applications” and “NSERC Guide on Integrating Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations in Research.”

**Accessibility:** The combination of aspects that influence a person’s ability to function within an environment.

**Diversity:** Encompasses acceptance and respect of individual identities, which include, but are not limited to, the dimensions of race, language, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, disability, neurodivergence, physical appearance, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies, ancestry, culture, geographic background within a group, organization, or society. A diversity of perspectives and lived experiences is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence.

**Equity:** The principle of considering people’s unique experiences and differing situations, and ensuring they have access to the resources and opportunities that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes. Equity means fairness and that all people of all identities are treated fairly. This includes ensuring that processes for allocating resources and decision-making are fair to all and do not discriminate based on identity. Measures are needed to be put in place to eliminate discrimination and inequalities to ensure to the best degree possible, equal opportunities. It can involve challenging systemic barriers and biases, and providing different levels of support to individuals so they can fully access or participate in, and benefit from, a program or research project. Equity is necessary to achieve equality. Treating people as equals in an environment in which historical and systemic disadvantages prevent people from operating as equals can be inequitable – it lacks the fairness of a truly equitable situation.

- ▶ All individuals who participate in the research ecosystem must develop a strong understanding of historical and systemic barriers faced by individuals from underrepresented or disadvantaged groups (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, racialized minorities, the LGBTQ2+ community) and put in place measures to address these barriers.

**Ethnicity:** The variety of beliefs, behaviours and traditions held in common by a group of people bound by linguistic, historical, geographical, religious and/or racial homogeneity. Ethnic diversity is the variation of such groups and the presence of a number of ethnic groups within one society or nation.

**Gender:** refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men and people with diverse gender identities. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. Gender is often conceptualized as binary (girl/woman and boy/man) but there is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience, and express it, including gender-fluid, non-binary, transgender and Two-Spirit.

**Gender-based analysis plus (GBA+):** is an analytical process used to assess the potential impacts of policies, programs, services, and other initiatives (such as research design) on diverse groups of women, men, and people with diverse gender identities, taking into account multiple diversity and identity factors. The “plus” highlights that GBA+ goes beyond gender and includes the examination of a range of intersecting diversity and identity factors (such as age, culture, disability, education, ethnicity, gender expression and gender identity, immigration and newcomer status, Indigenous identity, language, neurodiversity, parental status/responsibility, place of origin, religion, race, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status).

**Inclusion:** The practice of using proactive measures to create an environment where people feel welcomed, respected, and valued, and to foster a sense of belonging and engagement. Ensuring that all individuals in the research team are supported is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Indigenous means “native to the area” and applies to peoples who have occupied a territory since time immemorial. In Canada, Indigenous peoples include First Nations, Inuit, and Metis.

**Indigenous Research:** is an approach to enquiry that engages Indigenous persons as investigators or partners to extend knowledge that is significant to Indigenous Peoples and communities. It is essential that researchers commit to respected relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities when conducting research.

**Intersectionality:** The term was coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989 and built upon by other black feminist scholars to explain how African American women face overlapping disadvantages and discrimination related to sexism and racism. It acknowledges the ways in which people's experiences are shaped by their multiple and overlapping identities and social locations, as well as intersecting processes of discrimination, oppression, power and privilege. Together, these interlocking identities and processes can produce a unique and distinct experience for an individual or group such as the creation of additional barriers or opportunities. This approach or lens assists researchers to better understand and address the multiple barriers and disadvantages faced by individuals with intersecting social identities – such as race, gender, sexuality, and class. Using an intersectional approach to develop policies and research projects helps to better identify and address systemic barriers.

**Microaggression:** Refers to brief and common verbal, behavioural or institutional actions that play into stereotypes or discrimination against a group of people (i.e., underrepresented, or disadvantaged groups). First coined by Dr. Chester M. Pierce in his 1970s research with Black Americans. Examples of microaggression include implying a member of an underrepresented or disadvantage group is an “equity hire”; asking where someone is “really from”; downplaying the effects of race, gender, ability, etc., on lived experiences; or implying that someone's reaction is due to sensitivity, not the nature of the situation they are in.

**Race:** A group of people who are arbitrarily categorized according to common physical characteristics, regardless of language, culture, or nationality.

**Sex:** A defined set of anatomical and physiological characteristics including chromosomes, gene expression, hormones, and reproductive or sexual anatomy.

**Systemic Barriers:** Defined as systems, policies or practices that result in some individuals from underrepresented or disadvantaged groups receiving inequitable access to or being excluded from participation within employment, services, or programs. These barriers result from institutional level practices, policies, traditions and/or values that could be “unintended” or “unseen” but have serious and long-lasting impacts on the lives of those affected (e.g., career trajectories).

**Tokenism:** The practice of doing something (such as hiring a person who belongs to a minority group) only to prevent criticism and give the appearance that people are being treated fairly.

**Unconscious Bias:** Is an implicit attitude, stereotype, motivation, or assumption that can occur without one's knowledge, control or intention, Unconscious bias is a result of one's life experiences and affects all types of people. Everyone carries implicit and unconscious biases. Examples include gender bias, cultural bias, race/ethnic bias, age bias, language bias, and institutional bias. Decisions made based on unconscious bias can compound over time to significantly impact the lives and opportunities of others who are affected by the decisions one makes.

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