

# York University's CRC Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

## What YoU need to know

### Understanding the challenge and finding solutions

The Canada Research Chairs (CRC) program stands at the centre of a federal strategy to make Canada one of the world's top countries in research and development.

Since its inception, the CRC program has been facing major equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) challenges. In response, on May 4, 2017, the CRC Secretariat launched its [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#). While the program has always had hiring targets for the four designated groups (FDG) – women, Indigenous persons, racialized persons and persons with disabilities – now all institutions with an allocation of five or more Chairs needed to develop their own Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. In cases where universities were not yet meeting these targets, they were asked to articulate objectives, indicators and actions to achieve their equity targets within 18 to 24 months. If this were not accomplished, the CRC Secretariat would suspend funding.



### Community comes together in a 'made for York' plan

York University embraced the opportunity to meet these equity goals and established a committee to create the Plan between June and December 2017. The Plan (submitted December 15, 2017) will be subject to York's regular governance processes, after York hears back from the CRC Secretariat. Over 80 faculty and staff members across the York community invested time in committee meetings, interviews, review of draft Plans, workshop pilots and feedback consultation meetings.

"Our committee and working group went beyond what the CRC Secretariat requested because the committee wanted to do more than simply acknowledge the demonstrated economic and cultural benefits of upholding excellence through diversity. We wanted York to be a global exemplar of this juxtaposition and see how this process could benefit all academic hiring across the university," said CRC EDI Committee Chair, Rebecca Pillai Riddell.



### Highlights of York's Action Plan

- **MEETING OUR CRC TARGETS:** York should work towards exceeding the CRC Secretariat's equity targets for York (8 women, 4 racialized persons, 1 persons with disability and ~0.5 indigenous persons before December 2019).
- **FACILITATING BROAD UNDERSTANDING:** Informed by what was learned in response to the CRC Secretariat's request, a working group developed a new unconscious bias training workshop. New research evidence was used to build a workshop that raises awareness about the many ways that FDG candidates are systematically disadvantaged and how these disadvantages compound over time.
- **UNDERSTANDING OUR CHALLENGES WITH CURRENT EQUITY TARGETS:**
  - Significant Science and Engineering 'pipeline' concerns.
  - Racial disaggregation within racialized scholars group (i.e. looking at what is the diversity within the racialized group itself) is not being done and may uncover another layer of bias.
  - The lack of attention at FDG intersections (i.e. scholars who identify with more than one of the FDGs) may be a problem because they may comprise one of the most marginalized groups.
- **AREA TO IMPROVE:** An important area of improvement for York is retention and inclusion programs that support CRCs (and all faculty members). Over 33 other specific recommendations were generated by the committee to support equity targets by December 2019.
- **ENSURING EQUITY FOR ALL:** There is need for York to work towards finding creative solutions to balance the needs of community members that are afforded protections by the CRC Secretariat with the needs of community members who may be adversely impacted.

To read the full CRC EDI Action Plan and Appendices including our new unconscious bias training workshop materials, visit the [website](#).

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