# INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN: PROGRESS REPORT

**Institution:** York University

**Contact name and information:** Dr. Robert Haché, Vice-President Research & Innovation

**Instructions**

Filling out all four sections of this report is mandatory. Institutions must email a PDF of this completed report and, if applicable, a revised copy of the institution's equity, diversity and inclusion action plan by December 15, 2018, to edi-edi@chairs-chaires.gc.ca. If an institution chooses to revise its action plan in anticipation of the assessment process, it must post an updated version of the plan on its public accountability web page.

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Recognition**

Each year, the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat recognizes an institution with exemplary recruitment, nomination and/or appointment practices that promote equity and diversity. Indicate below whether your institution would like to be considered for the program's recognition. The evaluation process for the recognition will be based on the committee's assessment of this progress report and the institution's corresponding action plan.

Yes: x _____ No: _____

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**PART A: Equity and Diversity Targets and Gaps**

A.1) Provide the current targets and gaps for your institution in the table below (using the target-setting tool).

| Designated group | Target (percentage) | Target (actual number) | Representation (actual number) | Gap(actual number) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Women | 35% | 9 | 7 | 2 |
| Indigenous peoples | 1% | N/A | - | - |
| Persons with disabilities | 4% | 1 | - | - |
| Visible minorities | 15% | 4 | - | - |

Number of currently active chairs: 27

Number of empty chairs: 8

Number of chairs currently under peer review: 5

A.2) Provide any contextual details, such as empty chairs for which recruitment processes have started (limit 200 words):

The following empty chairs are in various stages of recruitment:

- Tier 1 SSHRC Chair in Management Science
- Tier 1 SSHRC Chair in Indigenous History of North America
- Tier 2 SSHRC Chair in Innovation, Law & Society
- Tier 2 SSHRC Chair in Politics of Democracy and Artificial Intelligence
- Tier 2 NSERC Chair in Engineering
- Tier 2 NSERC Chair in Electric Power Engineering
- Tier 2 NSERC Chair in Social Computing
- Tier 2 NSERC Chair in Media & Cultural/Creative Industries

## PART B: Results of the institution's Employment Systems Review, Comparative Review and Environmental Scan

In developing their action plans, institutions were required to develop objectives that were S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely), and include a measurement strategy for monitoring, reporting on progress, and course correcting if necessary, based on: 1) an employment systems review; 2) a comparative review; and 3) an environmental scan (see Appendix A for the requirements that the program stipulated to develop the action plans).

B.1) Outline the key findings of the employment systems review that was undertaken when drafting the action plan limit 250 words:

1) We had a major gap to fill in the unconscious bias training of our selection committees, and felt that existing federal options were not sufficient. Consequently we created an innovative 2-hour training program to enhance our existing Affirmative Action training. This has now been successfully launched for all full-time faculty hires across the university.

2) Central supports (i.e. from Office of Vice-President Research & Innovation and Provost Office) for CRCs are completely standardized. Variability exists between Faculties on start-up packages, which are provided in addition to centrally allocated resources. Fulsome group analysis of data reveals that Faculty-based resources cannot be easily compared or synthesized due to variability across five domains: Chair tier, Chair discipline (e.g. STEM vs liberal arts), number of years post-PhD, previous central policies in place during hiring period, and FDG status (FDG vs. non-FDG). Statistical analysis across the five areas was not possible due to small sample size, and informal comparison did not reveal systematic bias in any of the five areas.

3) As listed on our CRC EDI webpage, we have four primary staff and faculty champions that are available to provide support for our CRC program from three different executive divisions: President's Office, VP Finance and Administration, and the Provost's Office.

B.2) Outline the key findings of the comparative review that was undertaken when drafting the action plan (limit 250 words):

1) Our geographic location (Toronto) is particularly favourable in terms of desirability, diversity, and external availability (applicant pool) to meet our CRC equity targets.

2) Federal external availability statistics are not nuanced enough to be relevant to all fields (e.g. no disaggregation between different subfields within engineering). Consequently they must be used with caution.

3) Overall as a university we are meeting or exceeding external availability in all of the four designated groups. However, an analysis by Faculty (which is the context within which CRCs are hired) revealed areas of the University that require supports in specifically increasing the numbers of women and racialized scholars.

4) Disaggregation of the FDGs was highlighted as another issue that has not been addressed in federal or local efforts (e.g. bias against specific ethnic/cultural groups within the racialized scholar category; intersectionality of individuals who are members of more than one FDG).

B.3) Outline the key findings of the environmental scan that was undertaken when drafting the action plan (limit 250 words):

1) Only one notable difference arose between FDG and non-FDG interviews: most of the non-FDG Chairholders reported having an individual from within York reach out to encourage them to apply for the CRC. However, none of the non-FDG Chairholders reported hearing about the CRC position from someone at York. They were most often electronically forwarded a job ad from a colleague who was not at York.
2) Aside from all CRCs having to do a job talk, significant variability existed in how university visits were conducted for shortlisted candidates.
3) Self-Identification before hiring was challenging. Many expressed strong distaste at the idea that their hire was tokenistic.
4) York hiring committees are not trained to understand foreign applications.
5) The two-body problem for recruitment is a serious challenge.
6) Challenges with the equity practices of the CRC Secretariat were discussed.
7) More communication between Deans and Units are needed to ensure CRCs are allocated to a broad enough field to reasonably expect a diverse applicant pool.
8) York does not have a formal mentoring and research support program. CRC's would like this.

B.4) Provide an overview of who was consulted in the drafting of the action plan. What form did the consultation/engagement with members of the four designated groups (i.e. women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and visible minorities) and other underrepresented faculty take? What equity diversity and inclusion (EDI) experts were consulted? Note: Do not to disclose any third party personal information (limit 250 words):

The initiative was led by Dr. Rebecca Pillai Riddell and the executive co-sponsors were York's Vice-President Research and Innovation and Vice-President Academic-Provost (Dr. Robert Haché and Professor Lisa Philipps).
• The core committee who participated in the data collection and synthesis consisted of 14 people (79% of whom identify in at least one of the four designated groups [FDG]).
• 16 people helped create an unconscious bias workshop for the Canadian university context (88% FDG).
• 11 CRCs (55% FDG) and 21 University leaders were interviewed (43% FDG).
• The preliminary report was reviewed by 10 Canada Research Chairs (50% FDG) and 11 York Research Chairs (81%FDG).
Thus, approximately 80 people were involved in the creation of York's EDI Action Plan, including 5 expert/expert groups: Tana Turner Consulting (www.turnerconsultinggroup.ca), York's Centre for Human Rights Equity and Inclusion (Michael Charles, Josephine Tcheng), Marisa Sterling (Assistant Dean, Inclusivity and Diversity, Lassonde School of Engineering), Annette Boodram (Diversity and Inclusion Consultant, Human Resources) and Carl James, who co-authored the book The Equity Myth. The Equity Myth is the first comprehensive, data-based study of racialized and Indigenous faculty members' experiences in Canadian universities. All of our experts self-identified within one or more of the FDG.

## PART C: Objectives, Indicators and Actions

Indicate what your institution's top six key EDI objectives are, as well as the corresponding indicators and actions (as indicated in the action plan). For each objective, outline what progress has been made, with reference to the indicators. Use the contextual information box to communicate any progress made to date for each objective.

| **Key Objective 1:** |
|---|
| Improve training in unconscious bias across the university |
| Corresponding actions: |
| Implement a training workshop that integrates smoothly into York's existing Affirmative Action framework. |
| Indicator(s): |
| Implementation across the university. |
| Progress: |
| York now has this training standard across all tenure-stream faculty hiring committees. |
| Next steps: |
| Place materials online and make them available to other academic institutions. |
| Contextual information (e.g., course correction, obstacles, early wins, etc.) (limit 80 words): |
| We made minor changes over Summer 2018 but overall the new training is reported to be well-received by faculty members. We think there is great potential for developing a national resource. |

| **Key Objective 2:** |
|---|
| Improve recruitment process through enhanced collaboration of Faculties, VP Research, Provost, Departmental Hiring Committees, Human Resources, Centre for Human Rights, Equity & Inclusion, and the new division of Equity, Peoples, and Culture. |
| Corresponding actions: |
| This is a major ongoing initiative of the Office of the VP Research and Innovation (OVPRI). CRC hiring, for the purpose of EDI targets, is considered one hiring unit by union and employer. OVPRI now works collaboratively across the university with all the aforementioned groups. |
| Indicator(s): |
| The primary indicator is our EDI target acquisition in December 2019. |
| Progress: |
| OVPRI is working towards this goals and streamlining procedures for CRC hiring committees to scaffold their success in helping York achieve its equity targets. All CRC Search Committees are now offered the option of a professional search firm. |
| Next Steps: |
| AVP Pillai Riddell (lead author of EDI report) and Mark Roseman (internal CRC Director) are meeting face-to-face with each search committee to provide specific tools and encouragement to support our goal of meeting our CRC equity targets. We have established 5 OVPRI touch-base points for hiring committees to ensure ongoing communication and support. |
| Contextual information (e.g., course correction, obstacles, early wins, etc.) (limit 80 words): |
| Over the course of a year, we have built a new, integrated hiring process framework involving widespread internal collaboration across numerous stakeholders. |

**Key Objective 3:**

Enhance Chairholder resources, allowing for unique needs of FDG candidates

Corresponding actions:

Building better supports and practices in both hiring and post-award.

Indicator(s):

When we have an integrated process that allows OVPRI to better understand the unique needs of potential applicants and those who have been successful.

Progress:

We hosted our first research chairs luncheon to solicit ideas and responses to proposed action plan items about equity issues. We have involved our Centre for Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusion to help us with disability accommodation planning for potential CRC applicants during the hiring stage. We have increased expectations for hiring committees relating to creating a diverse applicant pool.

Next Steps:

Upon discussion, an important step will be to provide more feedback and support from the OVPRI and the opportunity to meet with the VP or an AVP about mentorship needs. We are collecting information directly from hiring committees about their equity practices and will use this to create university guidelines for good practice.

Contextual information (e.g., course correction, obstacles, early wins, etc.) (limit 80 words):

Our year 1 focus has been heavily oriented towards revamping internal systems to meet federal targets. This has been complex but our university culture is extremely enthusiastic and collaborative.

**Key Objective 4:**

Improve leadership of equity, diversity and inclusion at the university i.e. the leadership context of York's CRC program

Corresponding actions:

Create an Executive Division of Equity, People and Culture, headed by a Vice-President and reporting directly to our President. Improve profile of our Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion (REI) by integrating resources into hiring and inclusion processes.

Indicator(s):

Concrete evidence of REI's integration and promotion in the CRC context. The establishment of a new Executive Division.

Progress:

• We are working collaboratively with REI.
• We are advertising THREE new equity leaders: Vice-President Equity, Peoples and Cultures; AVP of labour relations, and AVP of Human Resources (to report to VP Equity, Peoples and Cultures).

Next Steps:

Once the new Executive Division is in place, arrange a meeting with leaders from OVPRI and Provost's Office to orient them to York's EDI Action Plan and discuss how ongoing monitoring of our program should incorporate the new Division.

Contextual information (e.g., course correction, obstacles, early wins, etc.) (limit 80 words):

This objective is heavily dependent on our ability to recruit three new leaders to create the new Executive Division.

**Key Objective 5:**

Revisiting York's policy of hiring internal candidates for CRCs to ensure retention of our own FDG research leaders.

Corresponding actions:

Upon consultation with the President, Provost and Vice-President Research & Innovation, we have created a two-step plan for the CRC 2018-19 hiring season.

Indicator(s):

The primary indicator is our EDI target acquisition in December 2019.

Progress:

Hiring committees have been informed that an FDG internal candidate may be considered for short-listing and interviewing, with committee justification about the limited FDG availability in the external applicant pool.

Next Steps:

In April 2019, we will examine our CRC hiring unit success on equity targets and discuss the possibility of an internal applicant competition at that time.

Contextual information (e.g., course correction, obstacles, early wins, etc.) (limit 80 words):

We are just at the job ad stage of this year's hires, and will not know if any internal faculty members will be considered until January-February 2019.

**Key Objective 6:**

Create inclusive practices for new junior CRCs to support research skill-building, including EDI practices

Corresponding actions:

OVPRI is building the proposal for an exciting new hub of research training called "The Research Commons". This will initially involve small group mentorship of all York hires, including CRCs, on topics geared towards research success through a formal course with senior research leaders. We will expand to provide support to different career stages over time.

Indicator(s):

Upon completion of our first course, we will seek formal evaluation of our offerings.

Progress:

We have a proposal drafted and are consulting internally, and considering options for resourcing the project. We have also started soliciting mentors from our current Research Chairs complement.

Next Steps:

We plan to have an academic director in February 2019, our confirmed academic mentors (i.e. Tier 1 research chairs) in place by April 2019, course development between May and August 2019, and course launch September 2019 through April 2020.

Contextual information (e.g., course correction, obstacles, early wins, etc.) (limit 80 words):

## PART D: Challenges and Opportunities

Other than what has been outlined in the section above, outline any challenges and opportunities/successes, as well as best practices that have been discovered to date in developing and implementing the institutional equity, diversity and inclusion action plan (limit: 500 words):

This process initiated by the CRC has been seen as a major opportunity for York University. It has provided an impetus for cross-university collaboration and widespread dissemination of challenges that Canadian universities are facing in terms of building an academe that reflects the diversity of Canada. We have also served as a resource for other universities in the CRC EDI process. Two universities directly reached out for consultation and we were told by a member of the CRC Secretariat that our plan is serving as one of the exemplars for this program.

While our efforts were first mustered to meet the requirements of the CRC Secretariat, we note that these requirements have inspired change in other York programs. The federal mandate forced us to create efficient and powerful ways to manage equity, and as a result we have built a level of co-operation for hiring amongst groups within the OVPRI, the Provost's Office, the President's Office and the Office of the VP Finance and Administration. This 'central' collaboration has helped us build inclusive processes from within the leadership structure of the university that has been well-received by our Deans, and thus carried through to our Faculties and faculty members.

We have since taken this new framework and applied it beyond the CRC program, to our York Research Chairs (YRC) program (our internal analog to the CRC program). Ten Faculties have the opportunity to nominate 2-4 of their strongest candidates for an allocation of ~10 YRCs. We created a process to co-operate with Human Resources so Faculty-based YRC committee chairs can easily get de-identified FDG composition for their adjudication committee and asked all Faculty committees to submit a one-page report about how they ensured an EDI lens at every stage of their process, including a diverse applicant pool. As a preliminary benchmark, pre-intervention (over the past three years), 31%, 19%, 8% and 0% of our YRC nomination pool self-identified as a female, visible minority, person with a disability and/or as Indigenous, respectively. Post-intervention (i.e. after adopting CRC requirements in 2018), the nomination pool consisted of 52%, 22%, 4% and 4% self-identifying as female, visible minority, person with a disability and/or Indigenous, respectively. We will track actual success rate post-intervention in 2019. We will be synergizing the one-page YRC EDI reports with the equity reports of our CRC hiring committee to build a tailored manual of EDI best practices for York University.

Another opportunity, inspired by the CRC requirement, that we would like to build on involves launching a national on-line version of our two-hour workshop for unconscious bias training. Our workshop is based on Canadian data and specifically tailored to the Canadian academic hiring context. We believe that current Tri-council offerings for unconscious bias can be improved upon. In 2019, we will be looking for funding opportunities to help actualize the potential of this workshop for other Canadian universities, which will include a national pilot program to ensure generalizability.

## Appendix A - Institutional Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Action Plan Requirements

To remain eligible for the program, all institutions with five or more chair allocations must develop and implement an equity, diversity and inclusion action plan. This plan must guide their efforts for sustaining the participation of and/or addressing the underrepresentation of individuals (based on the institution's equity gaps) from the four designated groups (FDGs)—women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and visible minorities—among their chair allocations. Institutions are expected to develop the plan in collaboration with individuals from each of the FDGs, chairholders, faculty and administrators responsible for implementing the program at the institution.

It is important to note that institutions can only address their gaps once chair positions become available (i.e., when their current chairholders' terms end). However, it is expected that institutions will manage their chair allocations carefully in order to meet their equity and diversity targets, which includes choosing not to renew Tier 2 or Tier 1 chairholders as necessary.

Institutions must have action plans posted on their websites as of December 15, 2017. They must also email a copy of their action plan by email to the program at edi-edi@chairs-chaires.gc.ca. If an institution fails to meet these requirements by the deadlines stipulated, **the program will withhold peer review and payments for nominations submitted to the fall 2017 intake cycle, and to future cycles as necessary, until the requirements are fulfilled**.

Institutions must inform the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat when they revise or update their action plans by emailing edi-edi@chairs-chaires.gc.ca.

On December 15, 2018, institutions will be required to report to the program using the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Progress Report, and publicly on their public accountability and transparency web pages, on the progress made in implementing their action plans and meeting their objectives.

The action plan must include, at a minimum, the following components:

### 1) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives and Measurement Strategies

- impactful equity, diversity and inclusion objectives, indicators, and actions that will enable swift progress towards:
    - addressing disadvantages currently experienced by individuals of the FDGs; and
    - meeting the institution's equity targets and goals by December 2019—aggressive objectives must be set using this timeline based on the number of chair allocations that are (or will become) available in the institution within the next 18 to 24 months (the 18 months starts as of December 15, 2017, when the action plan is implemented).

- objectives should be S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely), and include a measurement strategy for monitoring, reporting on progress, and course correcting if necessary, based on:
    - an employment systems review to identify the extent to which the institution's current recruitment practices are open and transparent; barriers or practices that could be having an adverse effect on the employment of individuals from the FDGs; and corrective measures that will be taken to address systematic inequities (an example of corrective measures that could be taken by institutions in Ontario is provided on the Ontario Human Rights Commission website);
    - a comparative review—by gender, designated group, and field of research—of the level of institutional support (e.g., protected time for research, salary and benefits, additional research funds, office space, mentoring, administrative support, equipment, etc.) provided to all current chairholders, including measures to address systemic inequities;
    - an environmental scan to gauge the health of the institution's current workplace environment and the impact that this may be having (either positive or negative) on the institution's ability to meet its equity, diversity, and inclusion objectives, and measures that will be taken to address any issues raised; and
    - the institution's unique challenges based on its characteristics (e.g., size, language requirements, geographic location, etc.) in meeting its equity targets, and how these will be managed and mitigated.
- institutions will be required to report to the program and publicly on the progress made in meeting their objectives on a yearly basis.

**2) Management of Canada Research Chair Allocations**

Provide a description of:

- the institution's policies and processes for recruiting Canada Research chairholders, and all safeguards that are in place to ensure that these practices are open and transparent;
- how the institution manages its allocation of chairs and who is involved in these decisions (e.g., committee(s), vice-president level administrators, deans / department heads);
- the institution's decision-making process for determining in which faculty, department, research area to allocate its chair positions, and who approves these decisions;
- the decision-making process for how the institution chooses to use the corridor of flexibility in managing its allocation of chairs, and who approves these decisions;
- the decision-making process and criteria for determining whether Tier 2 and Tier 1 chairholders will be submitted for renewal and who is involved in these decisions;
- the process and criteria for deciding whether to advance individuals from a Tier 2 chair to a Tier 1 chair, and who is involved in these decisions;
- the process and criteria for deciding which chairholder(s) will be phased-out in the case where the institution loses a chair due to the re-allocation process, and who is involved in these decisions;

- the decision-making process for determining what level of support is provided to chairholders (e.g., protected time for research, salary and benefits, additional research funds, office space, mentoring, administrative support, equipment, etc.), and who within the institution is involved in these decisions;
- safeguards taken to ensure that individuals from the FDGs are not disadvantaged in negotiations related to the level of institutional support provided to them (e.g., protected time for research, salary and benefits, additional research funds, office space, mentoring, administrative support, equipment, etc.);
- measures to ensure that individuals from the FDGs are not disadvantaged when applying to a chair position in cases where they have career gaps due to parental or health related leaves or for the care and nurturing of family members; and
- training and development activities related to unconscious bias, equity, diversity and inclusion for administrators and faculty involved in the recruitment and nomination processes for chair positions (acknowledging that research has shown unconscious bias can have adverse, unintended and negative impacts on the overall success/career of individuals, especially those from the FDGs).

**3) Collection of Equity and Diversity Data**

Provide a description of:

- the institution's processes and strategies for collecting and protecting data on the FDGs (both applicants to chair positions and successful candidates);
- the institution's strategies for encouraging individuals to self-identify as a member of the FDGs; and
- an example of the institution's self-identification form as an appendix.

**4) Retention and Inclusivity**

Provide a description of:

- how the institution provides a supportive and inclusive workplace for all chairholders (including those from the FDGs) and how this is monitored (e.g., survey of chairholders, monitoring why chairholders leave the institution);
- the procedures, policies and supports in place that enable the retention of individuals from the FDGs;
- the process by which the institution manages complaints from its chairholders/faculty related to equity within the program;
- the contact information of an individual or individuals at the institution responsible for addressing any equity concerns/complaints regarding the management of the institution's chair allocations; and
- a mechanism for how concerns/complaints are monitored and addressed, and reported to senior management.