



**Canada Research Chairs Program (CRCP) Institutional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
Action Plan and EDI Stipend Progress Report for Western University**

December 2023

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 underrepresented groups {e.g. women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and racialized minorities 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 current 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

Attract and retain the best talent available in an increasingly diverse workforce to achieve and maintain an equitable and diverse representation of the four designated groups in our Canada Research Chairs Allocations.

Systemic barriers:

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

Historic under-representation of equity-seeking groups and historic academic recruitment practices are widely understood to be barriers to diversifying the academic workforce. The CRC Steering Committee recognized that recruiting individual Chairs in narrowly targeted fields was not allowing us to achieve our equity targets quickly enough.

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

Beginning in 2019, the majority of Western's unallocated Chairs were devoted to two cluster searches. In 2019-20 a Special Program "demographic" cluster hire, soliciting applications only from the three designated groups previously under-represented among Western's CRC holders (women, persons with disabilities and Indigenous peoples. This search was not limited by field and it attracted a diverse pool of qualified applicants and increased representation in these designated groups across Western. In the fall of 2020, a "research priorities" cluster hire by Tier level solicited applications in broadly defined strategic research priority areas across all three Agencies. The literature demonstrates that research priority cluster hires tend to attract more diverse applicant pools than narrowly focused searches. Successful appointments from this search contributed to Western's ability to fill CRC Chairs across all designated groups.

In addition to this research priority cluster hire, and to ensure new equity targets set by the 2021 Canadian Human Rights Settlement will be achieved, additional allocations of Chairs have been devoted to specific designated groups. Western initiated a cluster hire in 2022 as a Special Program for one Tier 1 and two Tier 2 CRCs, specifically to solicit applications from Indigenous Scholars. In addition, a search for a Tier 1 CRC as a Special Program across all Agencies, open to applicants identifying as a Scholar with a Disability, was initiated,

A search in English & Writing Studies for an Indigenous person (one Tier 2) was conducted, however the search was not successful.

We have continued to use some corridors of flexibility to increase the number of Tier 2 chairs during recruitment; this allows us to provide more Chairs to more junior scholars in innovative fields and build our talent pipeline.

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

The Canada Research Chairs Program provides information specifically on our CRCs. Data is also collected internally within Western through its Western Employment Equity Survey for CRC chairs

as well as the faculty complement as a whole. We track the gender balance among applicants and short-listed candidates as well as successful candidates to faculty positions, so that we can ensure that equity principles are being observed throughout the recruitment process. Preliminary data shows that while women represent approximately 30-40% of total applicants for positions, they represent half of the short-listed applicants, and half of the hires in three of the last five years. The Steering Committee continues to monitor the data received from the Canada Research Chairs Program closely to ensure Western's progress in meeting its equity & diversity goals with the CRCP are met.

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

Western met its December 2019 equity targets in the Canada Research Chairs Program in each of the four designated groups and exceeded the targets in three of the groups. As of June 2023, equity targets in three designated groups have exceeded the CRC National 2022 Targets. An additional cluster searches is being initiated for the designated group where the current target has not been met.

We continue to adhere to best practices in the use of inclusive language in job ads, in ensuring that individuals are not disadvantaged for legitimate career interruptions, and in providing opportunities for candidates to meet with a Recruitment and Retention Consultant during the recruitment process to obtain information about immigration, family and other supports available to them as they move to London.

In the fall of 2021, Western's updated equity census was launched. The census was developed by an EDI Data Working Group which was established in 2020-21 and facilitated through the President's Office. The updated equity census collects data on equity-seeking groups, with updated classifications to extend the historic Federal Designated Group system and updated methods to enhance participation rates. In March 2022, the Western Equity Census Report was published, which provides the data provided by students, faculty and staff from October 2021 to March 2022. The report is available at: https://www.president.uwo.ca/pdf/western_equity_census.pdf

The Western Research Office has made a commitment to review internal strategies, policies and procedures through an EDID lens and making improvement to foster a more inclusive research environment and continues to collaborate with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to proactively advance EDID efforts in research and related activities. The Knowledge Exchange & EDI Tool, which is intended to support the creation of knowledge mobilization translation plans with a focus on EDI initiatives is available for research, as well as an EDI Resource Guide: On-Campus and Off-Campus Organizations. A number of EDI Resources can be located at: https://uwo.ca/research/services/why_edid.html

The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion have identified a number of online modules, resources, toolkits and training opportunities relating to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for the campus community to incorporate EDI-related best practices throughout our employment, academic and research-related policies, practices and procedures, which can be found at: <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/resources/> and <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/trainings-and-certificates/>

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

Collection of timely, relevant data to monitor progress remains a challenge and the launch of the Equity and Census Survey received a low response rate. Because the data collected was during the pandemic, it is possible this may have impacted response rates

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

As noted above, additional Canada Research Chairs have been allocated to specific designated groups for recruitment in the 2023-24 academic year.

Increasing awareness of the new Equity Census will continue.

Key Objective 2

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

Continue Institutional monitoring of Employment Equity through the provisions of the Faculty Collective Agreement and annual reporting on Recruitment and Retention, Promotion and Tenure and Career Trajectory Analysis as required.

Systemic barriers:

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

While equity concerns have traditionally been focused on recruitment, a broader approach to equity has drawn attention to the fact that some kinds of academic work are more highly valued than others. For example, work in innovative and emerging fields, often published in less-established venues, may be evaluated less positively than more traditional outputs. Similarly, community outreach or service work is often less highly valued than traditional research work. This has obvious implications for the retention of a diverse group of faculty and for their successful career progression.

Our University of Western Ontario Faculty Association Collective Agreement, which was recently negotiated and ratified in summer 2023, has excellent provisions for Employment Equity. The most current agreement has expanded the definition of equity seeking groups to include persons of any sexual orientation or gender identity.. Following the launch of the campus-wide census, it was moved into the HR system to allow current and new employees to complete it or to update their records. Having the records integrated within the HR system enables better equity data reporting (subject to Western's new Demographic Data Governance Policy, October 2021). The census questions were further extended into our online application system for staff and part-time faculty. We are continuing with plans for a project that will enable applicants to full-time faculty appointments to complete the survey as part of their application process. During 2020 and 2021 COVID had a direct and uneven effect on the ability of many faculty members to carry out their academic responsibilities in research, teaching and service. This continued throughout the 2021/2022 academic year.

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

A Letter of Understanding (LU) – COVID-19 Pandemic Provisions has been incorporated in the 2022 - 2026 Faculty Collective Agreement. The Letter of Understanding addresses impacts the COVID-19 pandemic may have had on Member's ability to fulfill their Academic Responsibilities. The LU includes specific reference on how the impacts of COVID-19 may have exacerbated existing inequities in the academic system for members of equity seeking groups.

A new Letter of Understanding (LU) Members with Disabilities Joint Working Group was included in the 2022-2026 Faculty Collective Agreement. This LU recognizes the need to review and improve support for Members with Disabilities. A joint working group has been established and has a mandate to identify revisions required and any other relevant goals pertaining to the Teaching, Research or Scholarly Activity and Service activity of Members with Disabilities.

A Letter of Understanding: Indigenous Faculty Members was implemented in 2020-21. This Letter of Understanding (LU) explicitly recognized the diversity and the value of Indigenous research, teaching and mentoring and embeds that recognition in the relevant articles of our Collective Agreement. This includes the *Academic Responsibilities* article, the *Performance Evaluation* article, the *Promotion, Tenure and Continuing Status* article and the *Workload* article. Committee memberships were also modified to ensure that committees which evaluate Indigenous academic work will include Indigenous expertise.

Following the initial training provided to Deans, Chairs and Directors on the implementation of the LU in May and June 2022, additional training was provided. In April 2023, a session was provided specifically for Western's Indigenous Faculty Members to familiarize them with the opportunities available under the Letter of Understanding. In the summer of 2023, a training session relating to the LU requirements was offered to Deans, Chairs, Directors and Members of all Promotion, Tenure & Continuing Status Committees. Consideration of additional training relating to other academic requirements, such as Workload, is under consideration.

With the ratification of the 2022-2026 Collective Agreement, the Indigenous LU Working Group, comprised in 2019, continues its work on ensuring the LU is updated to reflect any changes or modifications required.

This work serves as a model for future work in broadening our descriptions to recognize, and benefit from, the rich and diverse scholarship paradigms represented by diverse faculty.

A Career Trajectory Analysis of salaries for all full-time UWOFA Faculty was conducted in accordance with the Collective Agreement in the final year of the 2018-2022 Collective Agreement. There was no indication of significant anomalies due to gender or gender interacting with other variables in most Faculties. In the two faculties where anomalies were identified, corrections were applied to the salary of 64 women. After the gender anomaly corrections were applied, the remainder of the funds were divided proportionally among Probationary, Tenured, and Limited Term faculty Members.

The 2022-2026 Collective Agreement includes a provision for a Career Trajectory Fund for Probationary, Tenured, Continuing Status and Limited Term Members that will be established in 2025-26. A requirement of the Career Trajectory Committee implementing the fund in 2025-26 is to investigate the feasibility of reviewing anomalies based on other equity-oriented demographic parameters, including Indigeneity, disability, membership in a racialized group, sexual orientation and gender identity.

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

Data gathered through our Human Resources system allows us to track recruitment, career progression through promotion and tenure, retention, workload, leaves, and gender information. Access to this data allows us to determine gender discrepancies in any of these processes and is

reported on our Recruitment and Retention report. It also allows us to determine if there are any gender-based anomalies as was determined in the recent career trajectory exercise.

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

In the 2021/22 academic year, data collected at Western for the entire faculty complement for our Recruitment and Retention Report demonstrates that in 2021, as reported by the U15 data exchange, women now make up 37.83% of the probationary and tenured faculty at Western, slightly ahead of U-15 average. Women make up 50.6% of new probationary assistant professors, maintaining a 50% threshold and slightly ahead of our peer group average. Women make up 49.3% of new probationary/tenured hires, which is an increase from the last two years. 2021/22 was the first year for appointments in the Teaching Scholar Track, and women represented 67% of these new appointments.

Women continue to be slightly more successful in gaining tenure than men, with a 96% success rate among those who entered the P&T cycle compared to a 92% success rate for men. Women in non-STEM fields generally achieve tenure in about the same time as men, but in STEM fields women generally take about a year longer to get to tenure. In 2022, the data indicate women in STEM fields are moving from tenure to full professorship slightly quicker than men, while those women in non-STEM fields are moving from tenure to full professorship on par with men. This shows a recent increase and we will continue to monitor this data. A copy of the most recent report can be accessed at: https://www.uwo.ca/facultyrelations/academic_planning/index.html

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

Suppression of data is imperative and required to ensure privacy concerns are met, as a result the collection and reporting of available data for applicant pool information remains a challenge.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

Starting January 2024, a new launch of our campus-wide equity survey (no longer called census) will occur. The questions have been updated with input from an EDI Data Governance Ad Hoc Committee with representatives from various units across campus, and a communication strategy will be put in place to encourage campus community participation. This will continue to provide better data to monitor outcomes.

Key Objective 3

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

Ensure equitable pay, workload and research supports for new CRCs.

Systemic barriers:

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

After a review of compensation, workloads and research supports for CRC holders, when initially developing Western's CRCP Action Plan, it was apparent that workloads and salary stipends for early Chairholders were inconsistent.

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

Standards were implemented for workloads and salary stipends to ensure equity among CRCs across all fields. Monitoring of those standards continues and administrative processes for CRCs were developed to ensure visibility and consistency. Research supports remain flexible in order to accommodate the range of research activities undertaken by CRCs in different fields.

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

Ongoing monitoring of: Workload distribution for all CRCs; salary stipend level for all CRCs.

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

CRCs appointed since 2019 and all future CRCs will receive the same salary stipend (differentiated by Tier) and CRC workload.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

None

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

Continued monitoring of the stipends, workload and supports for new CRCs.

All first-term CRC holders with an end-date before June 2023 were provided the opportunity initiated by the CRCP in the spring of 2021 to extend their term for one year as a result of COVID, in order to mitigate any likelihood that COVID delays would negatively affect the renewal of their Chairs. The CRCP provided the opportunity to provide extensions to CRC holders again and to support renewals. Western approved offering these extensions to all CRCs in their first term regardless of their end date or term.

Key Objective 4

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

Ensure Mentoring is Available for Tier 2 CRCs

Systemic barriers:

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

In the 2020-21 academic year, the Provost appointed a Special Advisor on Faculty Employment Equity and a project was undertaken which looked at equity in employment practices, including mentoring strategies for faculty. The scan revealed gaps rather than barriers including the absence of consistent mentoring plans for mid-career and senior faculty. Tier 2 CRCs specifically need targeted leadership development and planning for the next career stage post-CRC. This need for mentoring is felt most acutely by those externally recruited at the Associate Professor level.

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

To assist in addressing mentorship needs, a mentorship program in the Western Research Scholars Academy was co-developed and piloted in 2023 on recent Tier 2 CRCs with a focus on those who self-identify as part of an equity-deserving group (including Indigenous peoples, women, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities).

Each participant was provided the opportunity to be paired with an internationally renowned senior mentor with a proactive and intentional effort to recruit diverse mentors committed to equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (EDID). Mentors are top leaders in the mentee's field, with whom the mentee would have difficulty connecting through existing networks. The mentors work with their mentee in areas where the mentee would like to build new skills or gain new knowledge, such as a scholarly contribution or grant proposal over the program term and provide advice, feedback, and mentoring. Additional benefits for the mentees included access to the mentor's network of collaborators and trainees.

In addition to pairing participants with a mentor, the Western Research Scholars Academy will support researchers in their professional development through a monthly seminar series and opportunities to network with their peers and mentors. The seminar series, which began in August 2023, address topics identified by Tier 2 CRCs as being of interest and/or by Tier 1 CRCs as information that would have been beneficial at earlier stages of their career.

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

An initial cohort of 18 Tier 2 CRC participants in the Western Research Scholars Academy was identified, and of the 18, 9 Tier 2 CRCs have been paired with a leading mentor of their choice.

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

A total of 18 Tier 2 CRCs were recruited to participate in the inaugural cohort of the Western Research Academy and within that cohort, 9 Tier CRCs were paired with mentors.

A launch event of the Western Research Scholars Academy program was held in May 2023 and the program was featured in both [Western News](#) and [University Affairs](#). In addition, a list of workshop topics of interest was developed with program participants with sessions beginning to be offered in August 2023.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

Not all participants wanted to be paired with a mentor, although it is anticipated they will still gain benefits from the Academy through peer networking and workshops. Some participants did want to be paired with a mentor, however, the program has encountered challenges identifying a suitable mentor willing to participate.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

As identified above, a planned slate of bi-monthly workshops on topics co-developed with program participants began in August 2023. In addition, a number of other tools and resources, such as a pilot repository of successful grants, to support program participants is planned. A mid-point check in to gain feedback from the Tier 2 CRC program participants will be completed by the end of 2023 and used to inform the remainder of the pilot program delivery.

Key Objective 5

Brief description of S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely) Key Objective 5

Implement EDI awareness and practice as core leadership competencies, with accountabilities to ensure EDI is advanced throughout the institution.

Systemic barriers -

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

A significant amount of positive EDI-related work continues to occur on campus.

The President's Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG) was established in January of 2020. The ARWG was comprised of 20 students, faculty and staff. The group issued a comprehensive report in May of 2020, which included an examination of systemic barriers and twenty-four recommendations. The recommendations span the campus and includes recommendations on policy, training, hiring and development, curricula and research, student experience, to name a few, and have formed the basis of many of the following actions identified below. The full report of the Anti-Racism Working Group is available here: <https://president.uwo.ca/pdf/arwg-final-report-to-president-shepard-fnl.pdf>

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

Dr. Opiyo Oloya joined Western in August 2021 as Associate Vice President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The development of a senior administrative role at Western to continue to advance an EDI strategy across campus was a key recommendation of the Anti-Racism Task Force. Since joining Western, Dr. Oloya and the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion have developed and implemented a number of initiatives, including the development of an EDI Strategic Plan. <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/strategic-plan/>

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

The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion began a strategic planning process beginning in September 2022 with the creation of a steering committee. The committee has conducted a number of engagements and a campus wide survey as part of the development of the strategic plan. Additional information is available at: <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/strategic-plan/>

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

In addition to the development of the Office of EDI's strategic plan, the office has implemented a number of new initiatives as Western works toward further embedding our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion throughout our campus community at all levels.

These initiatives include:

- 1) Publication of the [2022-23 Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Progress Report](#)
- 2) Implementation of the campus wide Equity Survey
- 3) Development of multifaith spaces on campus

- 4) Creation of an EDI Data Governance Committee
- 5) Launched the Western Black Leadership University Experience (BLUE) to provide paid part-time leadership opportunities for Black students by pairing them with local organizations and dedicated mentors.
- 6) Offering [Online Modules, EDI Certificate Programs and Workshops](#)
- 7) Developed and launched [A Guide for Inclusive Language](#)
- 8) Worked with several partners across campus to develop and conduct training on Accessibility and Accommodations at Western
- 9) Hosted several events highlighting the diverse excellence within the Western community
- 10) Developed several Toolkits including an Anti-Racism Toolkit; Enhancing Department Climate - A Guide for Department Chairs; Getting Started, Diversity and Inclusion Toolkits; and Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students
- 11) Workshops for Faculty and Staff - including development of customized training

Additional information is available at <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/> .

Western Research continues to embed EDI through a number of initiatives including the following:

- appointed a Director, Knowledge Exchange Impact,
- appointed a dedicated EDID Research Officer
- appointed an Indigenous Research Officer.
- Developed an [EDID in Research Statement](#)
- Developed Resources related to [Definitions of EDID for Research](#)
- Developed a [Guide for Inclusive Language](#)
- Providing supports which include 1:1 consultations for scholars to develop EDID in research plans, review of grant applications, workshops, and trainings
- Developed a website specific to Indigenous Research

EDI has also been embedded in a variety of leadership training venues. During the 2022-23 Western Academic Leaders Conference, a session on Embedding EDI-D Online Modules in Academic Programs and Course was provided by Western's EDI Office. The Western Leader Academy and our Excellence in Leadership at Western Program (aimed at academic and research leaders as well as administrative leaders) continue to incorporate EDI awareness and accountabilities for human rights, equity and accessibility into various sessions.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

There is general agreement on the need to align all the existing EDI structures and the new initiatives in order to make best use of the resources available to achieve our objectives. This requires both broad consultation with equity-seeking groups and the strategic vision of the AVP-EDI.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

Work by the Associate Vice-President, Equity Diversity and Inclusion has already begun and the 2022-23 Annual Progress Report report is available at:
<https://www.edi.uwo.ca/resources/reports/>

Key Objective 6

Brief description of S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely) Key Objective 6

Equity Training for All Faculty

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 equity training required as part of the CRC program has done a great deal to raise awareness of equity issues more broadly on campus and to drive recognition that broader equity training would be beneficial. The main barrier to such training has been our capacity to scale it up to all faculty processes across campus, however progress is being made.

Corresponding actions undertaken to address the barriers:

The Joint Employment Equity Committee under our Collective Agreement created Western's 'Employment Equity Guide' for Committees many years ago. The guide has recently undergone an update to align best equity practices more closely with the processes of the Collective Agreement and to provide easily accessible EDI guidance for all faculty who engage with the Collective Agreement and will be made available for publication.

The employment equity article of the Collective Agreement requires a trained equity representative be a member of each Appointments, Promotion, Tenure and Continuing Status, Performance Evaluation, Search and Chair and Director Selection Committees. We provide the required training for those equity representatives and are pleased to note that some departments have chosen to require that all members of those committees receive equity training.

There are two required components of Western's equity training. Prior to attending the equity training, all attendees are directed to complete the online Unconscious Bias Training Module, which has been provided by the Canada Research Chairs Program. The second component is participation in a synchronous Equity Training Session delivered by the Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and/or Western's CRC Equity Representatives. The session reviews equity considerations related to employment matters, such as advertising positions, reviewing applications, interviewing candidates, accommodating human-rights related needs, and evaluating candidates' research, teaching and service using an equity lens.

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

To-date, over 274 faculty members have participated in the equity training for committees established under the UWOFA collective agreement and/or Canada Research Chair related Committees, and this participation continues to grow. In addition, specially trained CRC Equity Representatives who are faculty members provide training and participate on every CRC related

committee. A number of new CRC Equity Representatives are planned to be trained during 2023 to support the CRC recruitment activities that continue as Western works to achieving its Canada Research Chairs Equity targets

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

The CRC cluster hires have greatly expanded the number of trained equity representatives on campus and have made the expectations of that training broadly familiar. The success of the training can be seen in our success in our progress in meeting targets.

The CRC equity training in turn made the requirement for Collective Agreement equity reps broadly acceptable. As committee membership turns over the proportion of our faculty who have received the training continues to grow. A substantial number have received both the CRC training and the Collective Agreement training and this iteration has served to deepen the understanding of equity processes and principles.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period:

Prior to March 2020, the equity training was delivered in-person. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we transitioned to delivering the training in an online format using Zoom. While this initially presented a challenge, the online format was widely accepted and, in some cases, has assisted with more easily facilitating people's attendance (as there's no need to travel to participate in sessions). We will continue with this format to facilitate increased participation as it eliminates the need to travel.

Next Steps (indicate specific dates/timelines):

Currently, the Joint Employment Equity Committee continues in the process of reviewing, revising and updating Western's Employment Equity Guide, https://www.uwo.ca/hro/doc/fac_employ_equity_guide.pdf We expect it to be available online in the 2023-24 academic year.

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?

We have addressed challenges, opportunities and successes within the context of each of our objectives, including references to impacts of COVID-19.

Part D: Engagement with 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?

At Western, we recognize the need to consult with underrepresented groups and we acknowledge that additional time is often required to help build relationship and trust, as well as to ensure that our institutional processes are respectful of the various communities that comprise our campus. The EDI data collection project, which was funded in part through the CRC EDI stipend funds, is an example of how the University has actively engaged with underrepresented groups and/or related offices to help create and provide important feedback on Western's EDI demographic questionnaire and data governance practices.

Western's new strategic plan, [Towards Western at 150](#) was launched in the fall of 2021. Within the plan, one of the overarching themes is People, Community and Culture, which highlights Western's commitment to uniting community through a sense of belonging. During the fall of 2021 a voluntary equity census began to gather data on EDID matters at Western and to address its commitment to set goals for increased representation among members of equity-deserving groups, a voluntary equity census was distributed to all students, staff and faculty. The census focused on a range of topics, including Indigenous Identity, Racial Identity; Accessibility; Sexual Orientation; Gender Identity; Educational Attainment, Socio-Economic Status and Sense of Belonging and are summarized in the [The Western Equity Census](#) report. This report represents a step forward in ongoing work which will further identify where disparities and inequities are located and for whom, providing the opportunity to address these matters further in alignment with [Western's Strategic Plan](#), the [Indigenous Strategic Plan](#), the [https://www.edi.uwo.ca/resources/reports/EDI Annual Progress Report 2022 23.pdf](https://www.edi.uwo.ca/resources/reports/EDI%20Annual%20Progress%20Report%202022%2023.pdf), initiatives developed by [Western Research](#) and other objectives and initiatives making up our EDID Strategy.

Recognizing the need to build our talent pipeline and continue to diversify our faculty, and build on community engagement and leadership, Western has intentionally engaged in a number of searches that, although not designated as CRCs, have been developed for other equity seeking groups. This included a Provost Academic Recruitment Fund to recruit 5 Black Scholars and 5 Indigenous Scholars. As previously mentioned, several units have hired leadership positions focused on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and during a recent cluster hire not designated for CRCs or designated groups, search and appointments committee kept equity issues front and centre, further contributing to this diversification.

The Indigenous LU noted above was also a result of both in-depth discussion with Indigenous faculty members and community consultation.

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 possible. 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.

Western continues to undertake a number of campus EDI initiatives beyond the specific scope of the CRCP.

The most recent Faculty Collective Agreement for 2022-2024 includes a Letter of Understanding for a Members with Disabilities Joint Working Group with a mandate to review and improve support for Members for disabilities.

The [Office of Indigenous Initiatives](#), which leads the system-wide change required to advance Truth and Reconciliation efforts at Western and achieve equitable outcomes for Indigenous Peoples and implement [Western's Indigenous Strategic plan](#), provided a 2021 [Annual Progress Report](#) which outlines its 2021 Milestones on the Road to Indigenization. This includes the hiring of Indigenous faculty members and the hiring of new Indigenous faculty for Canada Research Chairs., Decolonizing and Indigenizing Western's Institutional practices and spaces, achieving excellence in Indigenous research and scholarship, achieving excellence in Indigenous teaching, learning and pedagogy and development of an Indigenous Research Subcommittee for Curriculum and Academics.

Biindigen: Indigenous Learning Circle is co-organized by Western Libraries, Research, Student Experience, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives. It provides Western staff and faculty, curious to learn with and from Indigenous Peoples, an

opportunity to explore the landscape of Indigenization and reconciliation through discussion and various mediums.

The Wampum Learning Lodge opened in November 2022. It is an intercultural teaching, learning and gathering space at Western. The Lodge facilitates and coordinates services and programming offered by Western's Office of Indigenous Initiatives in collaboration with University stakeholders and Indigenous organizations and communities in Deshkan Zibiing territory, with the aim of advancing Reconciliation, Indigenization and decolonization.

The 2021 Annual Report and [Report of the Indigenous Research Sub-Committee](#) provide additional information relating to the Office of Indigenous Initiatives activities

A current Letter of Understanding: Indigenous Faculty Members, which was implemented during the 2018-2022 Collective Agreement, was implemented and jointly agreed to between Western and UWOFA to support the goals of Western's Indigenous Strategic Plan including to increase representation of Indigenous faculty members working at Western and recognize and support the activities of Indigenous Scholars. The Letter of Understanding continues in the most recently ratified 2022-26 Collective Agreement.

A number of leadership development opportunities continue to provide Academic Leaders support of increased awareness of equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Inclusive Leadership workshop for Western Leaders, is offered by the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the Learning and Development Office as part of Western's Excellence in Leadership Program. This two-part workshop, offered several times a year, provides Western leaders an opportunity to increase EDI literacy, reflect on their own identities and build the sensitivity and skillfulness required to build an inclusive team and address challenges that may arise. The workshop increases skill in fostering and maintaining inclusive teams where everyone knows