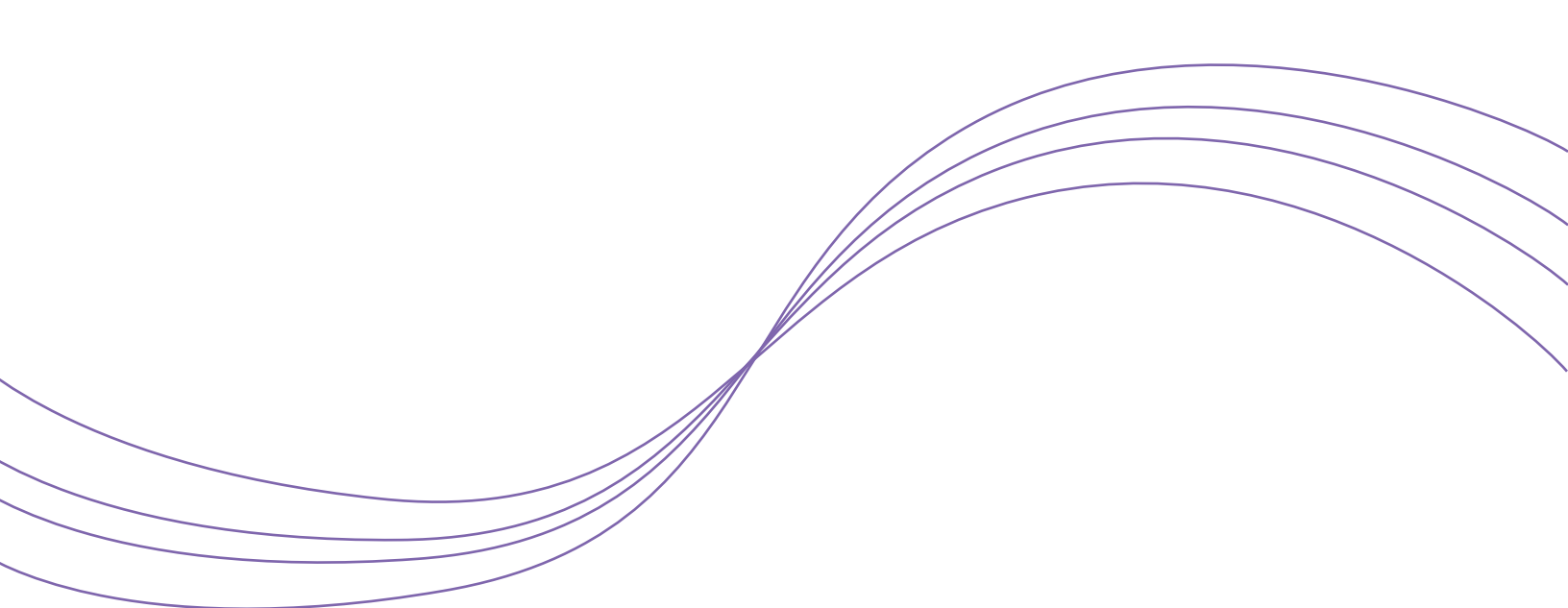




# EDIDA Strategic Plan

## Advancing Inclusive Excellence

2024



**ADVANCING INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE**

Strategic Plan Linkages:

[Towards Western At 150](#)

[Western University Indigenous Strategic Plan](#)

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility (EDIDA) Strategic Plan is the culmination of a robust consultation with and contribution from the Western community.

Beginning with the launch of the EDIDA Strategic Survey in January 2023, which invited participation from the community to inform us on 'where we are' and 'where we would like to go', including many townhalls and group feedback, the plan embodies Western's commitments to creating an inclusive, diverse and welcoming community for all.

## The community clearly expressed actions in five strategic priority areas toward building an inclusive campus:

- Diverse representation and engagement
- Inclusive excellence in learning and teaching
- Inclusive excellence in research and innovation
- Safe, accessible and inclusive spaces, places and experiences
- System-wide capacity building and cultural change

Each priority includes clearly articulated strategies and objectives that call the community to action and purpose.

Recognizing that units, departments and faculties are at different stages in implementing inclusivity, the EDIDA strategic plan offers flexibility, allowing each to select, engage with and advance one to two strategies from each strategic priority area during the initial three-year implementation period.

To invite action and promote accountability, the initial implementation for the EDIDA strategic plan envisions a [timeframe running from November 2024 to June 2027](#). The timeframe embeds specific dates for action including opportunities to share progress with the community. At the end of the initial implementation timeframe, the community has the opportunity to celebrate successes, reflect on the best practices and engage conversation on areas that require further focus and new choices of action.

Share your thoughts.



# THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION CALLS TO ACTION

One of Western's key strategic priorities in the *Towards Western at 150* strategic plan is "advancing Reconciliation with Indigenous communities" under Theme 2 — People, Community and Culture.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was formed in 2008 after the Indian Residential Schools (IRS) Settlement. The survivors requested part of their settlement be used to create the commission and record what happened so no Canadian could claim ignorance of the IRS system.

In 2015, the TRC released their Final Report including 94 Calls to Action after several years of travelling across Canada to document and listen to survivor and family stories.

## Education for Reconciliation, Calls 62-65

- 62.** We call upon the federal, provincial and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples and educators, to:
- Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
  - Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
  - Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
  - Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.
- 63.** We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
  - Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
  - Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect.
  - Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.
- 64.** We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.
- 65.** We call upon the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.



#PURPLE



Western

Equity,  
& Inclusion

Chapter 1

Introduction



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

At Western, we encourage Land Acknowledgements that strive to rise above mere words and instead communicate actions and commitments toward reconciliation and building relationships with Indigenous communities.

Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay-wuk) and Chonnonton (Chun-ongk-ton) Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. In addition to a local urban Indigenous community, the three local Indigenous communities which are located 30 – 45 minutes southwest of Western University include: [Chippewas of the Thames First Nation](#), [Oneida Nation of the Thames](#) and [Munsee Delaware First Nation](#). Each community is distinct in its culture, history, ceremonies, stories and languages.

With this, we respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to help identify and meaningfully address these injustices while also cultivating respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

*Adapted from More Than Words, A Guide to Land Acknowledgements at Western University*

As Western University embarks on setting goals and implementing the new EDIDA Strategic Plan, we recognize the importance of the Two-Eyed Seeing principle introduced by Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall. This guiding principle emphasizes that more effective outcomes are achieved when we integrate multiple perspectives, encouraging a collaborative approach to learning and understanding.

“As such, Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing can be understood as the gift of multiple perspectives, which is treasured by the Mi'kmaw people and other Indigenous Peoples. Our world today has many arenas where this principle, this gift, is exceedingly relevant including, especially, education, health and the environment. I've often described Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing this way:

I, you and we need to learn to see from one eye with the best or the strengths in the Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing... and learn to see from the other eye with the best or the strengths in the mainstream (Western or Eurocentric) knowledges and ways of knowing... but most importantly, I, you and we need to learn to see with both these eyes together, for the benefit of all.” (Elder Albert Marshall, 2018)

*Adapted by Dr. Ana Boller for 'A Guide for Courageous and Respectful Conversations' at Western University*



## MESSAGES FROM WESTERN LEADERS



When we developed *Towards Western at 150*, Western's strategic plan, community voices were clear: an inclusive and equitable Western is foundational to our success.

It underpins all our other achievements – from research to teaching to student experiences.

An equitable, inclusive, diverse and respectful community generates the perspectives, learning and collaborative magic that help create solutions to global challenges and develop strong leaders.

Thanks to the work of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and the contributions of our campus partners, we have an opportunity to strengthen the Western community.

This plan is a call to action for all of us to think differently, to continue to combat discrimination, to raise up diverse voices and to challenge ourselves to participate in critical conversations.

By joining together in our commitment to these strategic priorities, we will continue to build a diverse, caring and successful Western.

**Alan Shepard**

President & Vice-Chancellor



Together, we can build an inclusive community where we all feel welcome.

Since the inception of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, our guiding vision has been to build a more equitable, diverse and inclusive campus. Alongside our Western community, we are taking action to realize this vision with the new Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility (EDIDA) Strategic Plan: Advancing Inclusive Excellence.

Input and support for the plan has been overwhelming and has informed our process every step of the way. This community involvement gives me confidence that implementing the plan will be a collaborative effort and will contribute to making a tangible, positive difference across campus.

We invite you to engage with this plan to continue building the inclusive campus we deserve and to continue learning from one another. We also invite ongoing feedback and reflections as we strive to represent the ideas and experiences of the Western community.

I extend my thanks to everyone who shared their voice. I am filled with hope and optimism that we will forge a future at Western that is more equitable, diverse and inclusive for everyone.

Thank you,

**Opiyo Oloya**

Associate Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



I am deeply honoured to collaborate with colleagues in the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, together with many allies, in noble work to create and safeguard at Western a healthy and safe community where every individual matters, is respected and is heard.

Similar to the goals of Western's Indigenous Strategic Plan and the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the new Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility (EDIDA) Strategic Plan will help to advance work towards the creation of a more just society for the benefit of everyone today and those still ahead in the future.

With an eye toward creating a better tomorrow – where we can all live together in peace and harmony - everyone at Western and beyond is charged with seeking out and actioning opportunities to implement the EDIDA strategic plan, therein taking up an active role in making the necessary shift to make the world a better place.

Kindest regards and Miigwech,

**Christy R. Bressette (Neta Noo-Ke Kwe : Hard-working Woman)**

Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President, Indigenous Initiatives

# CHARTING WESTERN'S EDIDA STRATEGIC COURSE

Western's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility (EDIDA) Strategic Plan, Advancing Inclusive Excellence, is a call to action, charting our course forward to an inclusive and brighter future for all. At the centre of the plan is the vision and the desired outcomes we want to achieve. The vision and outcomes are driven by five priority strategic areas of focus, cascaded into 23 strategies. Progress is already underway in establishing performance indicators for each of these priority areas.

Over the past 19 months, the Western community has been on a journey of introspection, analysis and exploration to envision a more inclusive, diverse and equitable university where everyone can thrive. Guided by a multidisciplinary Strategic Planning Steering Committee, we engaged over 3,500 students, staff, faculty, librarians, archivists and leaders in EDIDA community conversations, think tanks, consultations and a campus-wide survey. Their voices shaped the planning process and their ideas, experiences and aspirations are imprinted in the plan's vision, strategic priorities and goals. During this planning process, we also established common definitions for important terms related to EDIDA, which form a solid basis for shared understanding across Western's communities.

## Western's Vision for EDIDA

Fostering safe, accessible and equitable places, spaces and experiences where every person belongs and feels empowered to achieve their full potential.

**Advancing Inclusive Excellence** signifies our pledge to work together toward creating a more equitable and inclusive Western. It also signals our commitment to learn from our past and combat all forms of discrimination and oppression. The plan recognizes the need for meaningful change and motivates each of us to think and act in new and diverse ways.

## Priority Areas of Strategic Focus

- Diverse Representation and Engagement
- Inclusive Excellence in Learning and Teaching
- Inclusive Excellence in Research and Innovation
- Safe, Accessible and Inclusive Spaces, Places and Experiences
- System-wide Capacity Building and Cultural Change



## What we learned from our engagement processes

In the fall of 2022, the EDIDA Strategic Planning Steering Committee launched the EDIDA Strategic Planning Survey to gain input from the Western community about barriers to EDIDA and opportunities for improvement. The survey included both qualitative (open-ended) and quantitative (closed-ended) questions.

**Topics included:** demographic characteristics, sense of community, perceptions of EDIDA and equality, sense of belonging, inclusion, psychological

safety, perceptions of educators and leaders, comfort and Western's commitment to advancing EDI.

In total, 3,191 individuals participated in the survey, which was subsequently analyzed quantitatively to identify differences in perceptions across groups (e.g., racial/ethnic identity categories, gender identity categories) and qualitatively to uncover common themes that could inform the strategic plan.

# 3,191

Individuals participated in the survey.

## Quantitative Analyses

We used inferential statistics (i.e., used data from the survey to make inferences about the Western community as a whole) to compare various perceptions as they relate to the identities of the individuals. This information helped to shape the broad themes and strategic priorities within this document.

Through these analyses, it became evident that the Western community has a relatively strong sense of belonging, inclusion and community. However, several equity-deserving groups, including people with disabilities, racialized individuals and individuals with minoritized identities of sexuality and/or gender had significantly lower ratings in various indicators of EDIDA at Western.

For example, white students felt a significantly greater sense of inclusion compared to Asian-East, Asian-South, Black and Middle Eastern students and students with disabilities had significantly lower perceptions of inclusion compared to students without disabilities. Furthermore, students who identified with a minoritized identity of gender had significantly lower perceptions of inclusion compared to students who identified as men or women. Students who identified as part of the 2SLGBTQ+ community had significantly lower perceptions of inclusion than heterosexual students. These patterns were similar, though not identical, among employees.

For more details, please request to see the EDIDA Strategic Plan Supplemental Data Analysis document.

## Qualitative Analyses

The open-ended survey responses were analyzed using thematic analyses, which involved both inductive and deductive processes. This involved reading all of the written responses, categorizing information based on the questions themselves and ultimately coding into themes based on the content of the responses.

Categories for the thematic analyses included: belonging, campus climate, comfortability, sense of community, Western's current action on EDI and EDIDA action priorities. Several themes emerged in each category and, together with the quantitative data, these themes set the foundation for the strategic priorities, strategies and objectives.

For example, many of the themes identified in the Western's Current Action on EDIDA category were directly translated into the strategic plan. These themes included leadership opportunities, clarity in reporting processes, transparent communication, genuine action and accountable engagement. Additional information regarding categories and the themes that emerged can also be found in the Supplemental Data Analysis document upon request.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EDIDA AT WESTERN

*Towards Western at 150* (Theme 2 – People, Community and Culture) outlines Western’s commitment to improving the diversity and equity of our community and creating a more welcoming and inclusive experience, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and all equity-deserving (ED) groups.

This strategic plan represents our response to that call for action and reflects the voices, expectations and aspirations of over 3,500 participants in the strategic planning process. As we move forward in bringing the strategic plan to life, the following set of principles will guide and inform Western’s journey and work.

## We, the collective Western community, recognize and understand that:

**1.** Large, intentional and sustained cultural change, grounded in human rights, takes commitment, time, effort, perseverance, dedicated resources, capacity building and leadership.

**5.** EDIDA work is complex, and EDIDA strategies and action plans must evolve in alignment to emerging data, insights and changing circumstances.

**2.** No single community can embark on this EDIDA endeavor in isolation. While Western leaders are tasked with leading and championing EDIDA, each Western community bears the responsibility of actively engaging in this essential work to achieve the university’s EDIDA vision and goals. Accordingly, specific examples of potential supportive communities are delineated under each strategic priority.

**6.** A diverse range of voices and perspectives must continue to inform and shape EDIDA planning and decision-making, as well as the development and implementation of all EDIDA action plans.

**3.** It is critical for all members of Western’s community to engage in leading and participating in collaborative, and courageous EDIDA conversations, training, learning, unlearning and change making.

**7.** Relevant and robust data on Western demographics, representation and inclusion must be collected, analyzed, actively shared across units and used to identify evidence-based disparities and under-representation, informing strategic and equitable approaches and action plans.

**4.** Ongoing, intentional, open and transparent communication and reporting about EDIDA is essential to our shared progress and success.

**8.** Western fosters an environment in which academic freedom exists and debate, challenges and disagreement should be expected.



## WESTERN’S EDIDA VISION

The vision for EDIDA is crafted from the vibrant tapestry of Western voices: thousands of students, staff, faculty and leaders. With passion and optimism, they shared their dreams of Western in the coming years.

**Their vision? A place where every individual is valued and respected and feels they belong.**

They envisioned a community steeped in dignity, kindness and compassion. Their aspirations painted a picture of a university that celebrates diversity, embraces diverse ways of knowing and being and uplifts one another so everyone can thrive.

### Vision:

Fostering safe, accessible and equitable places, spaces and experiences where every person belongs and feels empowered to achieve their full potential.





## Chapter 2

# Strategic Priorities

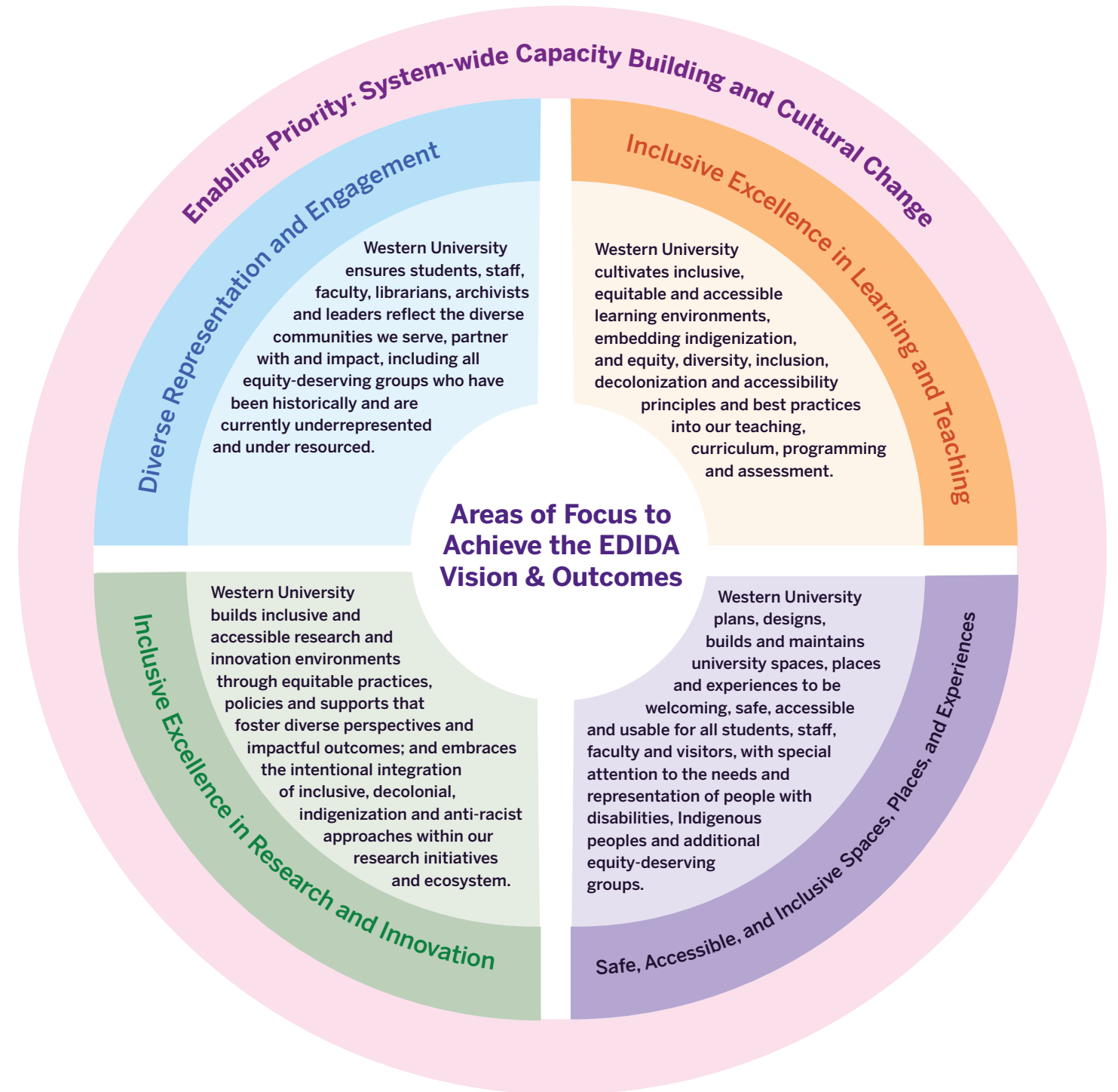
# EDIDA OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Looking to the future, the outcome statements answer the question ‘what impact will this strategic plan have on the students, staff, faculty, alumni, and Western communities serves and partners with?’

The following five outcome statements emerged directly from the thoughtful and comprehensive input provided by Western communities during our engagement processes.

Western students, staff, faculty, leaders, alumni, and visitors will feel safe and have a strong sense of belonging.	
Students, staff, faculty, and leaders with disabilities will experience barrier free, accessible environments and services at Western.	
Equity deserving groups will be represented in Western’s students, staff, faculty, librarians, archivists, and leaders.	
Western’s community, culture, policies, and curriculum will reflect the values of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and demonstrate our collective commitment to responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action and the Western Indigenous Strategic plan.	
Western leaders will be active EDIDA practitioners and passionate champions for actively building a culture of inclusion and addressing inequality.	

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



## Strategic Priority: Diverse Representation & Engagement

Western ensures students, staff, faculty, librarians, archivists and leaders reflect the diverse communities we serve, partner with and impact, including all equity-deserving groups who have been historically and are currently underrepresented and under-resourced.

**Examples of Support Communities to implement this strategic priority:** Senior Leadership team, Deans, Registrar's Office, Admissions, University and Unit Human Resources, Employee Groups, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Western Libraries, Faculty Relations, Student Experience, Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement, Student Groups, Western Alumni, etc.

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Advance equitable recruitment and hiring, retention, development and promotion of staff, faculty, librarians, archivists and leaders from equity-deserving (ED) communities.</b></p>	<p><b>Based on feedback provided, we, the Western community, will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continually innovate and strengthen recruitment, hiring, selection and promotion processes to reflect best EDIDA practices (i.e., EDIDA-related behavioural interviewing process; interviewing innovation, job descriptions, etc.).</li> <li>Regularly explore and implement evolving strategies to reduce bias in the recruitment and selection process of hiring committees and individual interviewers.</li> <li>Actively strive for all recruitment committees to be diverse champions of accessibility and under-represented groups and to be aware of gaps in representation within their areas.</li> <li>Enhance access to equitable career development pathways for faculty, staff and leaders to progress and thrive.</li> <li>Support staff and faculty to develop and demonstrate EDIDA competencies and capabilities when recruiting for leadership roles and during career progression.</li> <li>Advocate for opportunities to integrate EDIDA principles into performance review and compensation systems, processes and practices.</li> <li>Continually enhance onboarding processes for newly hired employees, weaving EDIDA into all training content, resources and supports.</li> <li>Provide intentional supports to newly hired ED employees.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Diverse Representation & Engagement

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Regularly review and strengthen the student admissions, enrolment and retention practices to reflect EDIDA principles and cultivate successful student outcomes.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and implement robust strategies to address biases and dismantle barriers to equitable student admissions.</li> <li>Develop intentional pathways and programming to support diverse student learning styles and needs.</li> <li>Provide students with access to mental health and wellness supports at all transition points across the academic journey.</li> <li>Expand promotion and usage of equity-focused admissions tools including, but not limited to, tuition assistance, EDIDA training for admissions committees and supervisors and transition/bridging programs.</li> <li>Increase access to scholarships, grants and bursaries for ED student groups.</li> <li>Continue to amplify engagement and outreach to attract prospective ED student populations, particularly Indigenous, Black and Racialized communities.</li> <li>Use census, the Ontario University Application Centre and EDIDA data to inform and strengthen decisions and actions related to ED student admissions and retention.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Develop an environment of inclusion and belonging at Western, where ED groups are fully valued and engaged.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop tools, resources and supports to enable Employee Resource Groups (ERGs); staff and faculty committees; student clubs, hubs and networks that reflect diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds; and interdisciplinary forums across campus to exchange EDIDA ideas and best practices.</li> <li>Expand mentorship, sponsorship<sup>1</sup> and networking opportunities for ED students, staff and faculty.</li> <li>Endeavour to close the structural disparities in equity and inclusion for ED groups, integrating approaches that affirm diverse gender identities.</li> <li>Facilitate and promote events and forums to bring multi/intercultural groups together to engage connect, learn and promote belonging.</li> <li>Expand student access to an evolving catalogue of EDIDA and intercultural training and implementation resources.</li> <li>Facilitate regular EDIDA community conversations with students, faculty, staff and allies.</li> <li>Continually evaluate and upgrade all EDIDA training programs and resources.</li> <li>Support members of ED groups to learn about their rights and responsibilities and feel empowered to express their ideas and needs.</li> <li>Regularly monitor policies and procedures to ensure the optimization of campus safety for all students, staff, faculty, leaders and alumni.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> In the context of EDIDA, sponsorship refers to a relationship in which an individual with influence and power advocates for and supports the career advancement and development of someone from a marginalized or underrepresented group. A sponsor moves beyond being a mentor by actively promoting the individual's visibility, providing them with opportunities and working hard to support them to achieve their goals and thrive.

## Strategic Priority: Inclusive Excellence in Learning & Teaching

Western cultivates inclusive, equitable and accessible learning environments, embedding indigenization and equity, diversity, inclusion, decolonization and accessibility (EDIDA) principles and best practices into our teaching, curriculum, programming and assessment.

**Examples of Support Communities include but are not limited to:** Academic Programs, Centre for Teaching and Learning, Faculty Groups, Deans, Western Libraries, Student Experience, Human Resources, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Western Alumni, etc.

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Prepare and support faculty to incorporate EDIDA more fully into the classroom to enhance the learning experience of students.</b></p>	<p><b>Based on feedback provided, we, the Western community, will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase access to self-directed and self-reflective learning opportunities on EDIDA and anti-racism principles in teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Facilitate workshops to prepare faculty and staff to incorporate EDIDA into pedagogy and curriculum design.</li> <li>• Develop and facilitate cultural competency training, programs and toolkits for academic leaders, staff, instructors, and student leaders.</li> <li>• Support faculty to co-create accessible classrooms of inclusion and belonging, utilizing students-as-partners approaches where appropriate, in collaboration with ED students and Western partners, such as the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Student Wellness and Well-being, Accessible Education, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives.</li> <li>• Equip instructors with the pedagogical tools, resources and strategies to teach, engage and accommodate students with disabilities and diverse needs.</li> <li>• Prepare and support instructors to create the conditions to incorporate critical thinking and discussions that challenge stereotypes, biases and system inequities, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of social justice.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Inclusive Excellence in Learning & Teaching

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Apply equity, diversity, inclusion, decolonization, accessibility and anti-racism principles in undergraduate and graduate education.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentionally update/design curriculum and learning experiences to address the diverse needs, backgrounds and identities of all students, particularly ED groups.</li> <li>• Embed dedicated reflections about how academic programs are integrating EDIDA in program operations, curriculum and outcomes as part of Western's Institution Quality Assurance Processes (IQAP).</li> <li>• Provide faculty and instructors with the knowledge and skills to understand access needs of a diverse student population and reduce barriers to access and participation.</li> <li>• Expand opportunities for ED students, staff, faculty and communities to actively contribute to program and curriculum creation, renewal and innovation.</li> <li>• Expand the number of courses and programs focused on the study of, and scholarship by ED groups (e.g., Black studies, Indigenous studies, Jewish studies, Islamic studies, transgender studies, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build university-side culture that values EDIDA in teaching and learning at the level of policy and governance.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build campus-wide understanding about the value and benefits that diversity brings to the classroom.</li> <li>• Revise existing and develop new policies and governance procedures to embed EDIDA in teaching and learning at Western.</li> <li>• Recognize EDIDA teaching excellence at Western in recruitment, hiring, promotion and tenure practices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support multiple pathways to and beyond the university.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help ED students successfully navigate the transitions throughout their journey at Western, from undergraduate to graduate programs to the work environment.</li> <li>• Expand access to self-directed and experiential local and global learning opportunities, community placements and internships for ED students.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Inclusive Excellence In Research & Innovation

Western builds inclusive and accessible research and innovation environments through equitable practices, policies and supports that foster diverse perspectives and impactful outcomes; and embrace the intentional integration of inclusive, decolonial, Indigenization and anti-racist approaches within our research initiatives and ecosystem.

Examples of Support Communities include but are not limited to: Western Research, Deans/ Research Chairs, School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Training and Development, Western Libraries, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Western Alumni, etc.

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Advance equity in internal and external research funding and awards.</b></p>	<p><b>Based on feedback provided, we, the Western community, will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and mitigate barriers to research funding for Indigenous and ED scholars.</li> <li>Promote and support Indigenous, diverse, non-traditional and EDIDA-related research endeavours.</li> <li>Elevate, profile and recognize Indigenous research and EDIDA in research through the creation of specialized awards and prizes.</li> <li>Stimulate and support more nominations of ED individuals for internal and external awards and prizes.</li> <li>Strive for equitable representation on nomination and selection committees and provide EDIDA training for all members.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expand mentorship opportunities tailored specifically to ED students, and undergraduate, graduate, postdoctoral and ECR training.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen and actively support mentorship, networking and career development programs for Indigenous and ED researchers.</li> <li>Facilitate student connections to experiential research collaborations and exchanges within Canada and around the world.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Inclusive Excellence in Research & Innovation

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Cultivate inclusive and accessible research environments where students, researchers and staff feel welcomed, supported, valued and celebrated.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase training and resources to promote EDIDA intersectionality and anti-racist approaches to research design and practice.</li> <li>Work collaboratively with all faculties and offices to implement inclusive knowledge mobilization and research assessment practices.</li> <li>Promote/incentivize the development of interdisciplinary, collaborative research teams, representative of diverse expertise, cultures, identities, lived experiences and backgrounds.</li> <li>Expand the utilization of the <a href="#">Own your Future</a> Programs and other research support programs to empower ED career researchers.</li> <li>Build a community of practice for staff involved in EDIDA-in-research work.</li> <li>Continue to build EDIDA capacity across the entire research ecosystem.</li> <li>Continue to fund EDIDA library resources, such as books, electronic resources, Scholarship@Western, GIS and statistical data.</li> <li>Promote the profile of Indigenous and ED scholars within and external to Western alongside Western Communications.</li> <li>Expand impact metrics to better reflect the impact on society, London and beyond, re-balancing to focus on metrics that are reflective of sustainable impact and advancement of EDIDA in society.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Develop partnerships with ED groups, both internal and external to Western, to promote research that benefits their communities.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create programming that advances anti-racism, equity and inclusion across disciplines (i.e., provide seed research funding, conference funding to ED members, etc.).</li> <li>Sustain and scale research partnership programming to develop pathways for connecting researchers and diverse communities, helping researchers to build reciprocal working relationships.</li> <li>Expand opportunities to connect with other researchers and engage in disciplinary, interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary research focused on topics / issues that impact ED communities.</li> <li>Advocate for and support the meaningful integration of diverse populations, perspectives and methodologies into study design and research opportunities, when appropriate.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Safe And Inclusive Spaces, Places & Experiences

Western plans, designs, builds and maintains university spaces, places and experiences to be welcoming, safe, accessible and usable for all students, staff, faculty and visitors, with special attention to the needs and representation of people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and additional equity-deserving groups.

**Examples of Support Communities include but are not limited to:** Deans, Facilities Management, Housing and Hospitality Services, Campus Safety, Health and Wellness, Office of Accessible Education, Western Libraries, Student Experience, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Western Alumni, etc.

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<b>Optimize accessibility across Western's campus for people with disabilities.</b>	<p><b>Based on feedback provided, we, the Western community, will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Western fully complies with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).</li> <li>Implement best practices for universal design and inclusive campus planning.</li> <li>Proactively remove barriers to participation for people with disabilities in all classrooms, workplaces, housing, facilities, outdoor spaces and Western communities.</li> <li>Continue to review accessibility audits of campus spaces and mobility systems to find ways to improve access, safety and security to ensure compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Enhance accessibility, safety and ease of use of indoor and outdoor spaces, facilities and environments.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate the voices, input and values of Indigenous and ED communities into the design, renewal and construction of Western places and spaces.</li> <li>Strengthen and communicate the processes for reporting and dealing with complex accessibility concerns.</li> <li>Create barrier-free access to participation at Western by ensuring physical, hybrid and virtual classrooms, facilities, residences and other spaces accommodate all needs and abilities.</li> <li>In alignment with Western's long-range space plan, upgrade, renew and retrofit older buildings and physical spaces to make the campus safer and more universally accessible.</li> <li>Regularly review and refine campus security, space utilization, wayfinding and mobility to enhance safety, movement and accessibility across campus.</li> <li>Be aware of and respond to evolving legislation (i.e., Ontario Postsecondary Education Standards under AODA) and other accessibility standards and codes, implementing improvements as required.</li> <li>Evolve services and supports to reflect the diversity of community members with unique family care responsibilities.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Safe And Inclusive Spaces, Places & Experiences

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<b>Embed accessibility principles across Western.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work together to embed and prioritize accessibility in academic and work plans, strategic plans and budgets across campus.</li> <li>Maximize accessibility and understanding of print and online content and messaging.</li> <li>Embed and continually refine the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Inclusive Language Guide, which provides practical tools for using inclusive language in written and verbal communication, promoting inclusivity and respect for diverse identities, cultures and experiences.</li> </ul>
<b>Reflect diverse identities, cultures, histories, traditions and ways of being across campus indoor and outdoor spaces and programming.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and create meaningful gathering spaces for members of ED communities to connect, share and support one another.</li> <li>Represent Indigenous and diverse identities in naming opportunities, artwork, photography, signage and other visual symbols.</li> <li>Revitalize Western's 21st-century housing strategy to meet the diverse scope of student backgrounds, needs, circumstances and expectations across the entire learning journey.</li> <li>Create high-quality, affordable culinary experiences that celebrate diverse foods and menus in safe, welcoming and accessible spaces.</li> <li>Design and offer university services and programs, in areas such as sports and recreation, career services, counseling and retail services that reflect a wide range of cultures, backgrounds, abilities and identities.</li> </ul>
<b>Support and nurture ED student, staff and faculty wellness and success.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build staff capacity to provide culturally relevant, gender affirming services that effectively meet the unique concerns and needs of ED groups.</li> <li>Continually evaluate and fine-tune student academic accommodation policies and practices that consider lived experiences to ensure equitable assessment and outcomes.</li> <li>Increase circulation of information resources and training to assist faculty and staff in better understanding the academic accommodation process and how to liaise with the Office of Accessible Education to support students.</li> <li>Support GBSV-prevention at Western through commitments to training, survivor-focused and trauma and violence-informed support, policies and reporting for students, staff and faculty.</li> <li>Communicate regularly with students, staff and faculty about the resources and services that are available to support them and how to access them.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: System-wide Capacity Building and Cultural Change

This priority outlines the strategic enablers which are the drivers of success for the first four priorities. Without fully acting on this enabling priority, it will be very difficult to achieve the previous four priorities.

Western builds system-wide capacity and capabilities to lead and ignite bold and meaningful EDIDA cultural and operational change.

**Examples of Support Communities include but are not limited to:** Leaders and Deans, Western Communications, Western Research, Human Resources, Faculty Relations, Centre for Teaching and Learning, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Data Office, Western Libraries, Institutional Planning and Budgeting, Facilities Management, Student Experience, Housing and Hospitality, Western Alumni, etc.

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Embed equity, diversity, inclusion, decolonization and accessibility into Western's culture and climate.</b></p>	<p><b>Based on feedback provided, we, the Western community, will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and commit to a Western University EDIDA statement that recognizes Western's history of institutionalized racism and discrimination. This statement will acknowledge wrongdoings and stipulate commitments to weaving decolonization, reconciliation and EDIDA into all university actions.</li> <li>Incorporate Western's EDIDA commitments into the institution's policy review processes to ensure they are informed by and when pertinent, reflect Western's EDIDA commitments, supporting all pertinent regulations and legislation.</li> <li>Provide tools and mechanisms to enforce policies and processes for addressing human rights, social justice and EDIDA-related concerns and complaints.</li> <li>Continue to advance the implementation work of the <a href="#">President's Anti-Racism Working Group Report</a>, <a href="#">Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Post-Secondary Institution Recommendations</a>, <a href="#">Post-Secondary Education for AODA Calls to Action</a>, <a href="#">Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education Report Recommendations</a>, and the <a href="#">Report of the Action Committee on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence</a>.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: System-wide Capacity Building and Cultural Change

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Strengthen and widen the EDIDA governance and leadership net.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an EDIDA Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, co-chaired by the AVP, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and the Vice Provost &amp; AVP, Indigenous Initiatives, committed to championing and advancing successful implementation of the EDIDA strategic plan.</li> <li>Establish an implementation accountability framework that identifies leads for each strategic plan priority and objective, defines roles and assigns accountabilities.</li> <li>Appropriately fund and staff EDIDA units to facilitate the implementation of the strategic and operational EDIDA plans.</li> <li>Establish an EDIDA Community of Practice for Western Deans.</li> <li>Actively support all Western leaders to cascade the EDIDA strategic plan into EDIDA action plans for their areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collect, analyze and use data to guide our way forward and advance accountability for EDIDA change.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a centrally accessible EDIDA Performance Dashboard to track in-time data, measure performance and track progress against goals, across Western and by faculty and department.</li> <li>Collaborate with Western community members, especially members from ED groups, to co-develop data usage terms, data policies and data procedures to ensure transparent and consistent collection of demographic information.</li> <li>Utilize demographic data collected through the WIDE Survey to advance EDIDA and drive purposeful action, in partnership with Western students, staff and faculty.</li> <li>Review and revise institutional data infrastructure to ensure demographic data can be accessed and linked to administrative data in an appropriate and transparent manner.</li> <li>Advance the mandate and impact of the EDIDA Data Working Group and ensure data is collected centrally by the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.</li> <li>Support units to acquire the necessary data to understand and appreciate the status of their EDIDA progress and variances that need to be addressed.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: System-wide Capacity Building and Cultural Change

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Expand understanding of, and commitment to, EDIDA across students, staff and faculty.</b></p>	<p><b>We, the collective Western community, will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and facilitate access to EDIDA-related training and resources through a centralized channel.</li> <li>Deliver and assess EDIDA-related education and support programs for students, staff and faculty and ensure they are well-known and easily accessible.</li> <li>Support the coordination and delivery of an evolving gender-based sexual violence training program for all leaders, faculty, staff and students throughout their academic life cycle.</li> <li>Share, promote and integrate EDIDA best practices across Western.</li> <li>Foster university-wide forums to facilitate courageous conversations; question, learn, unlearn and discuss system challenges; share resources, and provide updates on progress.</li> <li>Recognize and thank ED students, staff, faculty, allies and communities for engaging in and advancing the EDIDA change efforts across research, teaching, leadership and university systems.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build and sustain EDIDA capacity across Western.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break down EDIDA silos across campus by forming an EDIDA Community of Practice that includes ED representatives from Western departments and faculties, focused on partnering to develop and deliver synergistic EDIDA programs, solutions and initiatives.</li> <li>Continue to harness the expertise of the EDIDA Central Working Group.</li> <li>Expand and wisely invest university funds and grant funding to achieve Western's EDIDA vision and goals, aligning resources to the highest priorities on an annual basis.</li> <li>Develop strategies for recognition of faculty and staff who participate and contribute to EDIDA focused change efforts.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: System-wide Capacity Building and Cultural Change

Strategies	Strategic Objectives
<p><b>Develop and bolster sustainable partnerships with external ED communities, associations, networks and organizations.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop reciprocal partnerships with campus and local/regional ED communities and groups to advance shared EDIDA goals.</li> <li>Proactively establish connections with external communities to involve them in change initiatives, while also learning from and collaborating with them to address disparities and underrepresentation.</li> <li>Strengthen service and collaboration pathways between Western and ED community agencies that work with and support students, staff, faculty and leaders.</li> <li>Support local, community-based companies and vendors from ED and cultural groups.</li> <li>Embed EDIDA practices into procurement processes and ensure all Western vendors and contractors are familiar with them.</li> <li>Conduct regular benchmarking and best practice reviews of EDIDA practices at other universities and corporations to stimulate innovation and foster continuous improvement in EDIDA processes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prioritize communication and storytelling.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance transparent, coordinated and proactive communication and outreach messaging and programs that aim to support, educate and engage with ED students, staff and faculty.</li> <li>Utilize the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Communications toolkit that addresses communications strategies related to storytelling, content development, photography, social media and event planning and management.</li> <li>Deliver annual and quarterly EDIDA reports to campus communities related to success stories, actions taken, results achieved and upcoming plans to address opportunities for positive change.</li> </ul>





### Chapter 3

# Framework

# IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

**The most vital component of the strategic planning process is implementation; it is essential for realizing Western University's EDIDA vision, strategic priorities, objectives and sustainable impact.**

As we move forward, we will deliver on the following implementation commitments.

1. Western will establish an **EDIDA Strategic Plan Implementation Committee**, co-led by the AVP, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and the Vice Provost & AVP, Indigenous Initiatives, and comprised of senior leaders from across Western to guide and oversee implementation of the EDIDA strategic plan. The committee will:
  - a. Identify Accountability Leads to oversee critical system-wide EDIDA priorities (i.e., an Accountability Lead for Culture Change, an Accountability Lead for Learning and Teaching).
  - b. Define clear and achievable annual implementation goals and targets in alignment with the strategic plan's priorities and strategic objectives.
  - c. Ensure systems (i.e., implementation toolkit, project management methodologies, etc.) are in place to support Western faculties, schools and administration departments to develop and operationalize annual EDIDA Action Plans for their areas.
  - d. Allocate resources such as budget, human resources and technology to support the implementation efforts.
  - e. Quarterly, track and assess the progress of implementation plans and activities against established milestones and performance indicators.
  - f. Identify obstacles or challenges that arise during implementation and develop solutions to effectively resolve issues.
2. Pursuant to the initial launch of the EDIDA Strategic Plan, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will lead a university-wide awareness campaign, with support from partners from various Western communities, to educate Western students, staff, faculty and alumni about the EDIDA strategic plan, including how they can contribute to implementing the plan and realizing the strategic outcomes.
3. Western will develop a user-friendly action planning/implementation toolkit and provide ongoing support to university faculties and administration areas to develop and implement annual EDIDA Action Plans. Action plans will include tasks, timelines, responsibilities and budgets. Please see our EDIDA Strategic Plan Companion Guide and Action Planning Tool on our [website](#).
4. Western will establish an **Advancing Inclusive Excellence** Performance Dashboard to monitor, evaluate and report on the university's progress related to strategic outcomes, priorities and objectives. Routine assessments will compare actual performance against stated outcomes and performance indicators.
5. In response to negative performance discrepancies, Western will implement performance improvement programs and monitor progress.
6. Performance data will be utilized to inform decisions and guide change initiatives, ensuring alignment with strategic goals.
7. Western will annually disseminate an EDIDA Strategic Plan Annual Report to all university communities. The Annual Report will include performance dashboard results, action plans that are being worked on and stories of impact.

# ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

To engage with the EDIDA Strategic Plan, please utilize the EDIDA Strategic Plan Companion Guide and Action Planning Tool on our [website](#). Once the plan is in place, the Inclusive Impact Performance Scorecard below, which encompasses strategic performance indicators (PIs), will be crucial for assessing success in advancing toward Western's EDIDA priorities and goals.

Following are some examples of potential PIs to measure Western's progress.

## Strategic Priority: Diverse Representation And Engagement

- Faculty and staff diversity targets, recruitment committee targets, candidate targets.
- Participation rates in EDIDA training for hiring committees, Human Resources staff, hiring staff and faculty, newly hired employees, etc.
- Demonstration of EDIDA competencies included in role descriptions, HR tools and assessments.
- Succession rates and retention rates for ED staff and faculty.
- Student admission rates.
- Participation rates in EDIDA and bias training for domestic and international students.
- % increase in ED student financial assistance.
- % increase in ED students receiving scholarships, grants and bursaries.
- Graduation rates by ED group (annual cohort, per department and faculty).
- # of information sessions for severely underrepresented groups including participation rates in information sessions.
- # of internship and experiential learning opportunities experienced by ED student groups.
- % increase in the number of ED student clubs, Employee Resource Groups ERG and networks.
- Satisfaction rates with participant experience in clubs and ERGs.
- % increase of mentorship and sponsorship relationships.
- Target number of events and forums that advance EDIDA.
- Increase in training programs related to harassment and discrimination, sexual violence, etc.

# ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

To engage with the EDIDA Strategic Plan, please utilize the EDIDA Strategic Plan Companion Guide and Action Planning Tool on our [website](#). Once the plan is in place, the Inclusive Impact Performance Scorecard below, which encompasses strategic performance indicators (PIs), will be crucial for assessing success in advancing toward Western's EDIDA priorities and goals.

Following are some examples of potential PIs to measure Western's progress.

## Strategic Priority: Inclusive Excellence In Learning And Teaching

- Evidence that EDIDA is incorporated into Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP).
- # of courses that reflect EDIDA across each faculty.
- Student satisfaction rate with faculty weaving EDIDA into course content and classroom.
- # of EDIDA teaching awards.
- Course review processes, audited for enhancements.
- Participation rates in training programs/workshops by community.
- Faculty engagement rates with learning bundles; EDIDA learning modules and certificates.
- Rates of EDIDA modules being incorporated into class syllabi.

# ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

To engage with the EDIDA Strategic Plan, please utilize the EDIDA Strategic Plan Companion Guide and Action Planning Tool on our [website](#). Once the plan is in place, the Inclusive Impact Performance Scorecard below, which encompasses strategic performance indicators (PIs), will be crucial for assessing success in advancing toward Western's EDIDA priorities and goals.

Following are some examples of potential PIs to measure Western's progress.

## Strategic Priority: Inclusive Excellence In Research And Innovation

- # of internal awards and prizes for ED scholars.
- Demographics of nomination and selection committees.
- EDIDA training for nomination/selection committees: participant counts, session counts.
- External grant applications: demographics, number of value of grants.
- Evidence of establishing and supporting the creation of mentorship networks across Western campus.
- Growth in mentorship programs to ED students.
- Increase in number of interdisciplinary research teams that demonstrate diversity.
- Participation rates in EDIDA research-related training: inventory of programs available and delivered.
- Utilization rate of Own Your Future programs.
- # of staff supporting EDIDA research and Indigenous research.
- Diverse research interests and use of differing methodologies by faculty members to promote heterogeneity of focus areas and specialties within faculties.
- Growth in # of researcher-community partnerships.
- Increase in Western hosted events, inviting community members to actively participate.

# ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

To engage with the EDIDA Strategic Plan, please utilize the EDIDA Strategic Plan Companion Guide and Action Planning Tool on our [website](#). Once the plan is in place, the Inclusive Impact Performance Scorecard below, which encompasses strategic performance indicators (PIs), will be crucial for assessing success in advancing toward Western's EDIDA priorities and goals.

Following are some examples of potential PIs to measure Western's progress.

## Strategic Priority: Safe And Inclusive Spaces, Places, And Experiences

- Annual AODA reporting of key metrics.
- Accessibility audits related to strategic plan accessibility metrics.
- % increase in number of gender-neutral and fully accessible washrooms.
- Rate of community participation in design of newly built and outdoor university spaces.
- Space/place audit results related to compliance with accessibility standards and diversity goals.
- Annual accessibility audit results and action plans by unit.
- % increase in number of new naming opportunities that are representative of diverse cultures and identities.
- % of diverse culinary choices provided at Western.

# ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

To engage with the EDIDA Strategic Plan, please utilize the EDIDA Strategic Plan Companion Guide and Action Planning Tool on our [website](#). Once the plan is in place, the Inclusive Impact Performance Scorecard below, which encompasses strategic performance indicators (PIs), will be crucial for assessing success in advancing toward Western's EDIDA priorities and goals.

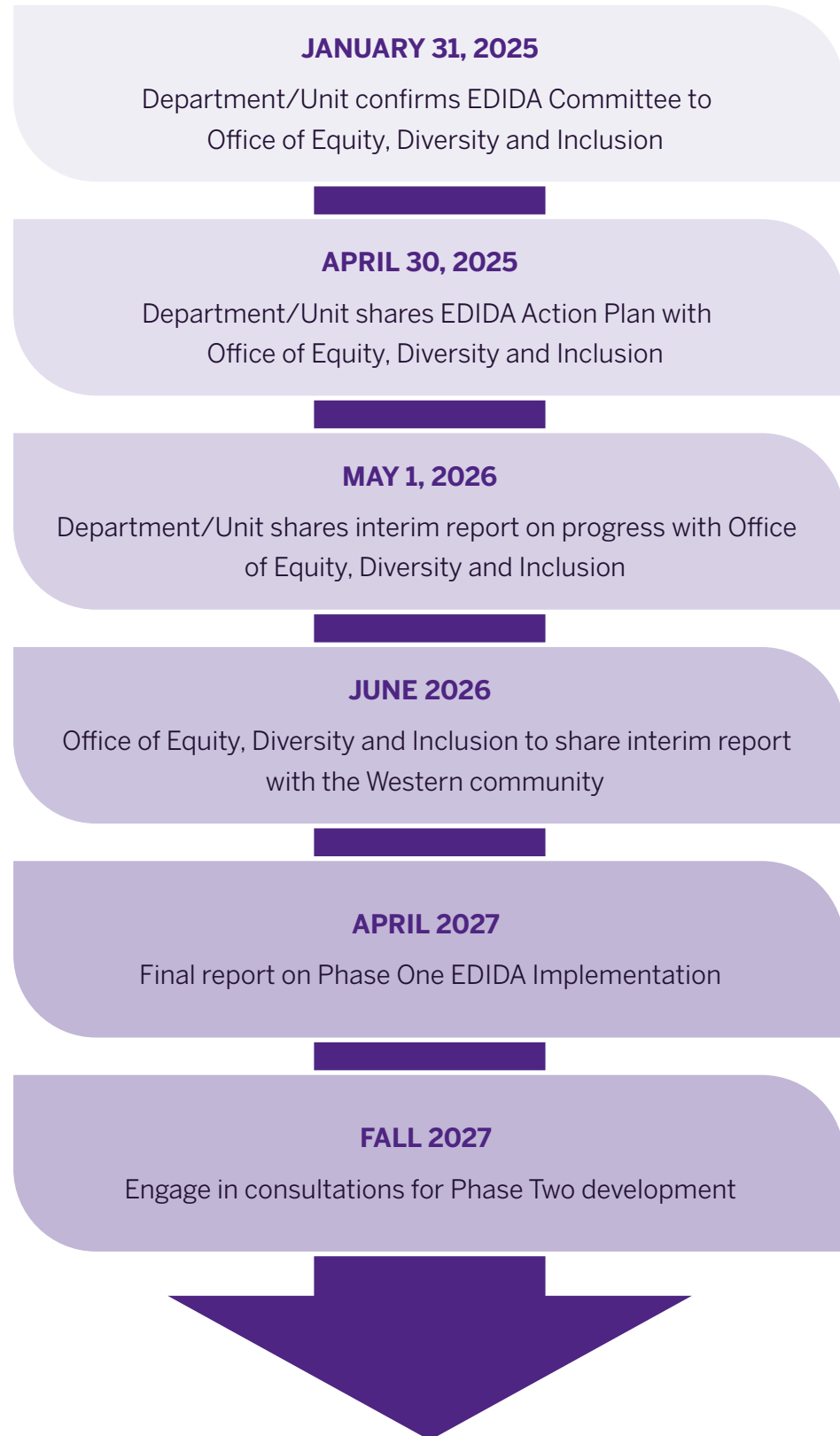
Following are some examples of potential PIs to measure Western's progress.

## Enabling Priority - Critical Strategic Enablers: System-Wide Capacity Building And Cultural Change

- Established investment targets (i.e., increase in EDIDA funding both centrally and in a decentralized manner).
- % of leaders, faculty, staff and students who complete the Anti-racism Foundation Certificate Program and Inclusive Leadership Program.
- Completion rate of quarterly Implementation Steering Committee meetings.
- Participation rates in EDIDA learning opportunities provided by the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Office of Indigenous Initiatives.
- # of recognition events to support and advance EDIDA engagement.

# TIMELINE

The following graphic displays the Phase One Implementation timeline of the Strategic Plan.



# DEFINITIONS

## Academic Excellence in Teaching and Research

Academic excellence refers to the outstanding quality and achievement in educational endeavours, typically characterized by high standards of scholarship, intellectual rigour, innovation, critical thinking, mastery of subject matter and a thirst for knowledge. Academic excellence is often demonstrated through a combination of factors such as academic performance, research contributions, leadership and the ability to apply knowledge effectively in real-world contexts.

## Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the inclusive design of products, services, curriculum or environments for Western students, staff, faculty and visitors who experience disabilities (examples include but are not limited to physical, mental health, cognitive, addictions and environmental sensitivities). Disabilities can be visible, non-visible, episodic and may have been present from birth, caused by an accident or developed over time.

## Anti-Racism<sup>2</sup>

The active process of combatting racial inequality and dismantling racist systems that involves unlearning and challenging organizational structures, policies, practices and attitudes to ensure access and power are shared equitably.

<sup>2</sup> Murray-Lichtman, A., Aldana, A., Izaksonas, E., Williams, T., Naseh, M., Deepak, A. C., & Rountree, M. A. (2022). *Dual pandemics awaken urgent call to advance anti-racism education in social work: pedagogical illustrations*. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 31(3–5), 139–150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2022.2070899>

<sup>3</sup> Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, *Decolonization is not a metaphor*, (*Decolonization Indigeneity, Education & Society Archives*, 2012-09-08)

<sup>4</sup> Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, *Decolonization is not a metaphor*, (*Decolonization Indigeneity, Education & Society Archives*, 2012-09-08)

<sup>5</sup> Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, *Decolonization is not a metaphor*, (*Decolonization Indigeneity, Education & Society Archives*, 2012-09-08)

## Decolonization

Decolonization involves the dismantling of colonial power structures, be they political, epistemic or social, with the goal of “repatriat[ing] ... Indigenous land and life.”<sup>3</sup> Decolonizing a university requires a rigorous dismantling of the ways that “the invisibilized dynamics of settler colonialism mark the organization, governance, curricula and assessment of compulsory learning.”<sup>4</sup> It also requires a deeper understanding of “how settler perspectives and worldviews get to count as knowledge and research and how these perspectives—repackaged as data and findings—are activated in order to rationalize and maintain unfair social structures.”<sup>5</sup>

## Diversity

Diversity is the presence of a wide variety of backgrounds, perspectives, experiences, abilities and spaces within the Western community. It includes characteristics such as age, education, sexuality, Indigenous status, religion, ability, race, ethnicity and socio-economic status.

## Equity

Equity refers to the process of redistributing resources and restructuring access to systems in order to create more equal opportunities for success. Equity requires eliminating all forms of discrimination and oppression to strive for reconciliation and promote anti-racism and other forms of anti-oppression, such as anti-ableism, anti-transphobia and anti-classism.

## Equity-Deserving (ED) Groups

Refers to groups that have historically faced and continue to face systemic disadvantages, discrimination and unequal treatment in society. These groups are often marginalized or underrepresented and may experience barriers that limit their full participation, contributions and access to opportunities. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Indigenous Peoples
- People with disabilities
- Black communities
- Racialized communities
- 2SLGBTQIA+ communities
- Women and gender minorities
- Individuals who face socioeconomic barriers
- Religious/faith-based communities as well as Refugees and New Canadians

## Human Rights

Human rights are the fundamental entitlements and freedoms that are protected by law and are inherent to all individuals regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or other characteristics. These rights include but are not limited to the right to equal treatment, freedom from discrimination and harassment, the right to fair housing, employment opportunities and access to goods and services. In Ontario, the Ontario Human Rights Code is the primary legislation that safeguards these rights and promotes equality and inclusion throughout the province.

## Inclusion

Inclusion is an active, intentional and consistent practice of creating a welcoming environment that nurtures a strong sense of belonging and distinctiveness while implementing equitable policies and processes. By practicing inclusivity, every individual is supported to reach their fullest potential and feels respected and valued at Western.

## Indigenization

Indigenization involves actively incorporating Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, practices and values into all aspects of Western’s operations, including curriculum development, research initiatives, policies and community engagement. It aims to foster greater understanding, respect and partnership with Indigenous peoples while addressing historical injustices and supporting Indigenous students, faculty, staff and communities. Indigenization is a commitment to reconciliation, decolonization and the promotion of Indigenous ways of knowing and being within the university environment.

## Western Communities

Western University Communities refers to the diverse groups of individuals who comprise the ecosystem of Western. This includes students, faculty, staff, alumni, administrators, equity-deserving groups and other stakeholders who interact within the university environment. These communities contribute to the academic, social and cultural fabric of the institution, each bringing unique perspectives, experiences and expertise.



## RESOURCES

1. [Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action](#)
2. [AODA Postsecondary Education Standards Final Recommendations](#)
3. [Indigenous Strategic Plan](#)
4. [Towards Western at 150 - Western University Strategic Plan](#)
5. [Western In The World Global Engagement Plan](#)
6. [Postsecondary Course Accessibility Guide](#)
7. [Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Online Learning Modules and Certificates](#)
8. [Maatookiiying gaa-miinigoowiziying \(Sharing Our Gifts\) Indigenous Learning Bundles](#)

# THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to the EDIDA Strategic Plan Steering Committee, to Anne Becker from Climb Consulting and to the students, alumni, staff, faculty and leaders in the Western community who made their voices heard – your continued guidance and support will help make Western a more inclusive place for all.

## Steering Committee Members

- Opiyo Oloya, Chair of Steering Committee (Office of EDI)
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- AnnaLise Trudell (Student Experience – Wellness Education Team)
- Chris Alleyne (Housing & Ancillary Services)
- Christy Bressette (Office of Indigenous Initiatives)
- Danica Facca and Cherin Chung (SOGS Presidents)
- Erica Lawson (Faculty)
- Erin Huner (Ivey Business School)
- Emilie Kalaydjian and Sunday Ajak (USC Presidents)
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- Nancy Stewart (Office of the President)
- W.G. Pearson (Faculty)

Thank you to the additional team members from the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Andreen Jackson-Ellis, Ana Boller, Jessica Ouko, Kathryn Fraser, Maharus Noorani, Michael Godfrey and Neisa Long.





