



Resource Guide for GCRC Applicants: Addressing EDI Requirements

Background

Inclusive Excellence is a cross-cutting priority in UBC's current strategic plan, [Shaping the Next Century \(2018-2028\)](#). UBC believes that sustained excellence in research, education and engagement depends on the integration of diverse perspectives and approaches, including those who have been historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized or underrepresented. UBC has affirmed its commitment to embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in research by endorsing the Government of Canada's [Dimensions charter](#), which outlines principles that post-secondary institutions commit to, to foster increased research excellence, innovation and creativity within the post-secondary sector across all disciplines, through greater EDI.

In addition, as part of its [StEAR framework](#), UBC is committed to responding to and reporting out on the actions of its [Dimensions Action Plan for EDI in Research](#), which helps guide the University to further incorporate principles and practices that support EDI to mitigate against obstacles and inequities experienced by historically, persistently or systemically marginalized people within the research ecosystem.

As such, in accordance with these commitments, the VPRI Office has integrated principles of EDI into all aspects of its internal research funding competitions, including application components, evaluation criteria, peer review, and end-of-grant reporting.

GCRC Competition

Applicants for the **Grants for Catalyzing Research Clusters (GCRC) competition** are required to “*describe the cluster's commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion as it applies to cluster membership, proposed activities and research themes.*” EDI is a fundamental component of the GCRC application and applicants should embed EDI considerations *throughout* their proposals. Proposals will be evaluated on how well they address and incorporate EDI considerations.

What do we mean by equity, diversity and inclusions?

- **Equity** refers to achieving parity in policy, process and outcomes. It also considers *power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes* through representational equity, resource equity, and equity-mindedness.
- **Diversity** refers to the lived experiences and perspectives of people that may include race, ethnicity, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, class, and/or socio-economic situations.
- **Inclusion** refers to an active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege, build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces, and opportunities to flourish for all.

Below are suggestions to help clusters begin addressing EDI within their GCRC applications:

Cluster Leadership and Team Composition:

Representational diversity, in addition to diversity in education, expertise and lived experiences, are fundamental to achieving research and training excellence. Therefore, clusters should reflect upon the composition of their teams with respect to the representation of individuals with diverse identities. While clusters should pay particular attention to the representation of members from historically



underserved, marginalized or excluded populations (e.g., women, Indigenous Peoples, visible minorities/racialized groups, persons with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ2+ community), they are also encouraged to think broadly about diversity to incorporate a range of self-identities, for instance, people of different ages, career stages, ethno-cultural backgrounds, and countries of origins. Applicants should consider their process for identifying, recruiting and selecting team members and where diversity is lacking, and describe strategies for ensuring greater diversity, such as targeted outreach or recruitment plans.

In addressing team composition, clusters are cautioned to avoid “tokenistic inclusion” by carefully examining how EDI is being incorporated into their plans for cluster leadership and organization to ensure that all team members are appropriately integrated and have equal access to leadership opportunities and resources, and are able to fully participate in and contribute to the direction of cluster activities. This is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence, as studies suggest more diverse research labs have greater productivity than those that are homogeneous¹ and that more gender-diverse groups produce higher quality research publications².

Furthermore, clusters are encouraged to reflect upon the existence of any barriers or obstacles that may prevent or inhibit the meaningful engagement of team members and describe appropriate mechanisms to address them. Similarly, in recruiting team members, clusters should consider the disproportionate unseen service burden placed on faculty and/or trainees from underrepresented groups.

Cluster Activities:

Advancing EDI is a shared responsibility. Clusters should consider strategies for developing their team’s EDI capacity to help ensure that EDI is incorporated into their activities in an appropriate manner. To help build this capacity, clusters are encouraged to review and explore EDI-focused resources, training, and events available at UBC through faculties/departments and units such as the [Equity & Inclusion Office](#), the [Indigenous Research Support Initiative](#), the [Learning Exchange](#), [Community Engagement Office](#), and the [VPRI’s EDI in Research resource page](#). Clusters are also encouraged to look beyond UBC to explore the wealth of online resources developed by Canadian universities and funding agencies such as:

- [CRC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Best Practices for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention](#)
- [WWEST Gender Diversity 101 White Papers](#)
- [Gender Summit Report: Toward a New Normal](#)
- [SFU Library EDI Resource Guide](#)
- [Unconscious Bias – Additional Resources \(Status of Women Canada\)](#)

EDI considerations should inform the design of the proposed cluster activities (e.g., cluster building, knowledge exchange events, training/mentorship) to ensure that team members/collaborators/partners have equal opportunities and access to resources, and feel they belong, are supported and integrated into the team. Strategies for ensuring inclusion and equitable treatment will vary depending on the nature of the proposed activities. Below are some examples:

- Targeted leadership or professional development opportunities for graduate students or early career researchers from underrepresented groups;
- Following [best practices](#) in [inclusive and accessible event planning](#) and avoid scheduling cluster activities and knowledge exchange events on [days of significance and religious](#)

¹ AlShebli, B.K., Rahwan, T. & Woon, W.L. The preeminence of ethnic diversity in scientific collaboration. *Nat Commun* 9, 5163 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-018-07634-8>.

² Campbell LG, Mehtani S, Dozier ME, Rinehart J (2013) Gender-Heterogeneous Working Groups Produce Higher Quality Science. *PLoS ONE* 8(10): e79147. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0079147>.



[holidays](#);

- Address scheduling barriers by eliminating team meetings/events before 9 am and after 4 pm to allow for the full participation of team members with childcare/family responsibilities;
- Open events with a [land acknowledgment](#) which recognizes that our cluster activities are taking place on the territory of the [Indigenous people](#) who call the land home or called the land home before the arrival of settlers.

Depending on their proposed activities, clusters may also find it useful to consult with the Associate Deans of Equity, the Senior Advisor to the Provost on Racialized Faculty, the Senior Advisor to the Provost on Women Faculty, and/or the Senior Advisor to the President on Indigenous Affairs.

Research Resources:

A growing body of literature demonstrates that considering diversity has the potential to make research more innovative, rigorous, ethically sound and societally relevant. It is therefore recommended that clusters consider whether and how EDI considerations are relevant to their research. In doing so, clusters may find it helpful to review the following online resources:

- **Gender-based analysis plus (GBA+)** is an analytical process that uses critical questions and engagement to determine how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary people may experience research outcomes (i.e., policies, programs and initiatives); “+” indicates going beyond gender.
 - [What is GBA+](#) (Status of Women Canada)
 - [Introduction to GBA+ Online Course](#) (Status of Women Canada)
- **Sex and gender-based analysis plus (SGBA+)**
 - [Gender Innovations in Science, Health & medicine, Engineering and Environment](#) (Stanford University)
 - [How to integrate sex and gender into research](#) (CIHR)
- **Intersectionality** is an approach used by researchers to better understand and address the multiple barriers and disadvantages that individuals with intersecting social identities, such as race, gender, sexuality and class.
 - [Intersectionality-informed Qualitative Research: A Primer](#) (The Institute for Intersectionality Research & Policy, SFU)
 - [Intersectionality-informed Quantitative Research: A Primer](#) (The Institute for Intersectionality Research & Policy, SFU)
 - [Intersectionality: From Theory to Practice](#). Hajer Al-Faham, Angelique M. Davis, Rose Ernst. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* (2019) 15:1, 247-265.
- **Indigenous Research**
Engaging with Indigenous Peoples with respect and dignity will lead to relationship-driven partnerships. Note however that Indigeneity is unique and cannot always be incorporated into EDI activities in general.
 - [TCPS 2 \(2018\) – Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#)
 - [CIHR Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal People](#)
 - [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#)
 - [Diversity, Equity and Indigenous Lens](#) (2019) Confederation College.
 - [The First Nations Information Governance Centre / Le Centre de gouvernance de l’information des Premières Nations](#)