

**St. Francis Xavier University
CRC Equity Diversity and Inclusion 2024-25 Progress Report**

Part 1

Share up to three key EDI actions related to the CRCP that were undertaken during the reporting period as well as their impact.

Describe the key action that was undertaken.

The EDICap Grant has been managed primarily by the Director, Human Rights and Equity in consultation with the Director, People and Culture at StFX. StFX's Equity Advisory Committee (made up of faculty and staff) was also consulted in the key priorities of this EDICap funding, one of which was the development of an Employment Equity Plan. We have now launched this key action internally and as publicly described in our university's CRC EDIA progress reports posted on our CRC information website. With the additional resources provided by the EDICap initiatives, we developed and approved this plan during the reporting period and launched it in June 2025. StFX's Employment Equity Plan shall be assessed regularly to ascertain the progress made in achieving employment equity.

Did this action relate to an objective named in your CRCP EDI Action Plan?

Yes

Briefly describe the related objective.

The purpose of StFX's Employment Equity Plan is to identify institutional commitments to recognize and redress historical and current-day inequities in relation to employment at StFX. It is also to identify institutional accountabilities and procedures for enacting and sustaining campus-wide strategic initiatives to achieve employment equity goals. More specifically, StFX will seek to:

- 1) Remove barriers to and in employment by eliminating or modifying policies, practices, and systems that are not authorized by law;
- 2) Introduce positive practices, as well as establish internal goals and timetables to achieve employment equity through hiring, training, promotion, and retention of members of current and historically excluded groups;
- 3) Improve the meaningful participation and engagement of current and historically excluded groups throughout StFX; and,
- 4) Improve workplace environments and climate for current and historically excluded groups through individual and organizational capacity building and ensuring timely responses to complaints of inequitable systems and practices.

As an addition step in this plan, we are currently using EDICap funds to hire an EDIA consultant to review of hiring and evaluation processes for faculty with the goal of improving inclusion and accessibility for underrepresented groups in this employment category.

Describe outcomes and impacts this action supported during the reporting period.

The outcomes and impacts of this action include implementing the following Principles of Fair Consideration during all university hiring:

- 1) Members of Hiring Committees will undergo equitable hiring training. This training shall be valid for a period of two years;
- 2) Hiring Committees will use their best efforts to attract applicants from all current and historically excluded groups;
- 3) Hiring Committees will give preference to qualified self-identified candidate(s) from current and historically excluded groups; make all appointments on the basis of merit and where the qualifications of two candidates for appointment are demonstrably equal and where one candidate is a member of an under-represented designated group in the unit, to offer the position to the candidate from the under-represented group;

In the event that:

a) there are qualified self-identified candidates from more than one current and historically excluded group and b) some self-identified current and historically excluded group are less well-represented in the applicable unit than others, a candidate from the less well-represented Group shall be given preference unless other candidate(s) are substantially better qualified for the position; and

6) In applying principles (1) to (4), special consideration will be given to qualified candidates who self-identified as Mi'kmaq and/or African Nova Scotian.

Describe any challenges encountered in undertaking this action, and any mitigation strategies that were employed.

One challenge in implementing the Employment Equity Plan was navigating collective agreement distinctions between employee, managerial, and faculty association groups. The mitigation strategy that we used was to strike a joint faculty association and university administration committee to develop a targeted hiring equity implementation strategy for the faculty group, which we are now in the process of launching with an external consultant. The consultant will work with our campus community to use the CRCP Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention as a guiding document for our entire faculty group. This consultant will:

- 1) Review current practices at Canadian universities related to EDIA in hiring, tenure and promotion processes for faculty from historically underrepresented groups (including Indigenous persons, racialized persons, persons with disabilities and those who identify as women and/or 2SLGBTQ+)
- 2) Consult with historically underrepresented faculty at StFX through surveys, interviews and/or focus groups on:
 - a. Experience with campus culture and working environment;
 - b. Reasons why they may have considered leaving StFX; and
 - c. Barriers in hiring, tenure and promotion processes.

- 3) Consult, if possible, with former StFX faculty from underrepresented groups to understand their experience as it relates to EDIA; &
- 4) Prepare recommendations and protocols on ways to improve access to hiring, tenure, and promotion processes for underrepresented groups.

Was funding from the CRCP EDI stipend used for this action?

Yes

Part 2

CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Rate the importance the CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion has had on your institution in making progress in implementing measures to address systemic barriers

Very Important

Other EDI initiatives

Provide an example of an EDI initiative underway at the institution – that is broader than those tied to the CRCP that is 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 relevant in the box below. URLs should include https://. Note that collecting this information is a requirement of the 2019 Addendum to the 2006 Canadian Human Rights Settlement Agreement (clause 39.e) and provides context for the work the institution is doing in addressing barriers for the CRCP.

To address the crucial issue of racism in all its forms within our community, StFX President Dr. Andy Hakin established the President's Action Committee on Anti-Racism (PACAR) in May 2021. Since then, PACAR has worked to move beyond identifying problems to crafting a solution-focused action plan that advances equity and anti-racism across our campus. This comprehensive plan, known as the PACAR Anti-Racism Action Plan, was released in April 2023 (<https://www.stfx.ca/sites/default/files/documents/PACAR-ACTION-PLAN.pdf>). The PACAR Report comprises 43 recommendations across four key environments: Inclusive Teaching, Learning, and Research; Working and Organizational Environment; Living and Social Environment; and Community Environment.

To ensure accountability, we have developed a robust framework to monitor progress toward these shared goals and initiatives, including a community consultation strategy meeting held during the reporting period in May 2024 (<https://www.stfx.ca/about/vice-president-students/presidents-action-committee-anti-racism/updates>). Furthermore, we are leveraging our integrated planning framework to facilitate collaborative work across the university. PACAR is committed to transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in all its actions. Our mission is

clear: to foster a sense of belonging, safety, and well-being for all faculty, staff, and students from historically and currently excluded and marginalized groups. To achieve this mission, we have formed Working Groups to focus on transition experiences, including our launch during the reporting period of the Dr. Agnes Calliste Academic and Cultural Centre for Black Student Success (<https://www.stfx.ca/news/Dr-Agnes-Calliste-Academic-Cultural-Centre>), and a PACAR working group on religious inclusion (<https://www.stfx.ca/about/vice-president-students/presidents-action-committee-anti-racism/working-groups/religious-inclusion>).