



Inclusion Toolkit

for small businesses

September 2024



Land Acknowledgement

The City of Kingston acknowledges that we are on the traditional homeland of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat, and thanks these nations for their care and stewardship over this shared land.

Acknowledgements

The City of Kingston would like to express sincere gratitude to everyone who participated in creating this Toolkit. To all who reviewed the draft documents or spent time discussing what should be included; your willingness to give your time so generously has been very much appreciated and was instrumental in developing this toolkit. Thank you.

This is a living document. We understand the area of equity, diversity and inclusion is rapidly changing and ever evolving. We are committed to updating this Toolkit as our thinking evolves and will note any time we make changes to it.

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Introduction

The City of Kingston is pleased to present this Inclusion Toolkit for small businesses in our community to use. We hope that this document can be used by a variety of businesses to either start or further their Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IIDEA) initiatives. This toolkit is designed for any small business at any stage of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This toolkit came about because business owners (like you) indicated that you need a resource of this type. We looked for a comprehensive, readily available resource as a reference guide for small businesses looking to implement IIDEA initiatives and couldn't find one – so we decided to create one. What was developed is a toolkit that introduces IIDEA topics, includes tips, and provides many additional resources to show how you can incorporate IIDEA strategies into practice in your business.

This toolkit is also meant to be as user-friendly as possible, with checklists and fill-in-the-blank templates to help guide your development of IIDEA strategies that are relevant to you and your business operations. But of course, there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach to IIDEA initiatives so the additional resources referenced are there to help you find the best information for your business.

This toolkit is also created in a way that it can be used in conjunction with other resources that have been created locally such as the Workplace Inclusion Charter, which is an incredible resource to receive support throughout your IIDEA journey. Interested businesses are encouraged to contact inclusion@keys.ca or visit the [Possible Made Here website](#).

The City of Kingston recognizes that diversity across our organization is critical to our success. We are committed to building an inclusive workplace where all City of Kingston employees can be themselves and feel welcomed and accepted. We also wish for the same for all organizations across our community.

We truly hope that this document is useful to you and that it inspires you to either start or continue the inclusion of IIDEA efforts for your business. By doing so we can work to create a community where all citizens feel safe and welcomed.

Regards,

Strategy, Innovation & Partnership Team
IIDEA Team



Topic #1: Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

For most small businesses, the first question that comes to mind when considering equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) efforts is: “Where do we start?” Recently, we’ve seen many examples of larger companies undertaking EDI initiatives. While this is incredible, these tactics aren’t necessarily feasible for small businesses that simply don’t have the resources, budget, brand name or staff.

The strategies highlighted in this Toolkit aim to provide small business owners, leaders and managers with realistic and actionable tactics to advance EDI in the workplace. Whether you are an EDI veteran, or just starting your journey, we hope these best practices inspire you to create an atmosphere where everyone feels valued, welcomed and respected.

What is Equity, Diversity and Inclusion?

To ensure your small business is effectively addressing equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, it is integral that you first understand what each of these terms mean. Building a strong foundation of EDI knowledge will allow you to foster an environment where everyone – regardless of their gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation or identity – feels supported and respected.

- **Diversity** is about ensuring that your small business has people of different backgrounds, qualities, attributes and experiences represented in the workplace.
- **Equity** is the fair and respectful treatment of all people that recognizes disparities in opportunities and outcomes. Equity acknowledges different needs and expectations, and that equal treatment does not always yield equal results.
- **Inclusion** takes it a step further by creating an environment where people’s differences of thought and experience are appreciated and viewed as a business advantage. Individuals can grow and develop their potential in an environment where they will be valued and celebrated.

While each of these concepts is interconnected, it is important to understand that diversity itself does not create inclusion – an inclusive environment must be intentionally designed, nurtured and supported.

Why Does EDI Matter?

Workplaces with equitable, diverse and inclusive environments are not just ethical – they possess significant business advantages. People feel secure and valued in these businesses, supported by policies that promote acceptance and positivity. For employees, this means increased loyalty and productivity, which contributes to overall greater efficiency and higher profits. **For customers, this means creating a welcoming and supportive environment that people want to visit and support.** For employers, this means a diverse talent pool, enhanced customer relationship, employee satisfaction and retention and a positive brand reputation.

Industry research from BCG, McKinsey and Deloitte shared the following about the importance of EDI in the workplace:

- [BCG](#): Companies with diverse management see a 19% increase in revenue compared to less diverse management teams
- [McKinsey](#): Companies that include more racially and ethnically diverse workers are 35% more likely to perform better, and companies with gender diversity are 15% more likely to have higher financial returns
- [Deloitte](#): Inclusive teams outperform their peers by 80%

Ten Strategies to Promote EDI

Create a clear and comprehensive action plan to serve as a dynamic road map to advance equity, diversity and inclusion in your organization. For each of the following strategies, we have outlined important considerations, tips and resources. We encourage you to use the provided template, located at the end of this Guide, to record your answers to each of these considerations. This way, you can set explicit goals to hold your small business accountable and review your EDI progress!



#1: Identify Your Business's Values and Commitments

Revisit your small business's values and commitments to ensure they align with the organization you strive to be. You can define your values and commitments by thoughtfully reviewing the considerations below.

Considerations

- What do you stand for? What are the macro-level issues that are most important to your business?
- What do you stand up for? Are you willing to take action as an organization for specific areas of these issues? For example, are you willing to “stand up” for a specific issue by creating a safe, diverse and inclusive culture for your employees and customers?
- Whom do you stand for? What people and populations are you willing to actively advocate for and support?

Inclusion Tips!

- Gather your team of employees and brainstorm a list of values and commitments. Remain open-minded and encourage everyone to speak with candor. Next, review and iterate this list until everyone is proud of the result.
- An incredible way to reinforce your business's values and commitments is by using a [recognition strategy](#). Publicly recognizing employees who embody your business' values ensures that you take tangible steps toward reinforcing equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Resources

- The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) provides a [Diversity & Inclusion Self-Assessment](#) to gauge your business's current status on EDI initiatives. This serves as a helpful starting point before determining your business' values and commitments.
- This article from [Forbes](#) provides six helpful tips to consider when setting goals for your small business.

#2: Put it in Writing!

A diversity statement is a written explanation of your business's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion for your employees and customers. Diversity statements translate your EDI values and commitments into a simple statement, acting as your business's EDI guidepost. Overall, this shows that your small business takes EDI seriously and has given it the proper consideration it deserves.

Considerations

- Does your diversity statement illustrate your business's commitment to fostering a welcoming workplace that celebrates differences?
- Have you effectively addressed all populations, including race, gender, sexual orientation, ability and age?

Inclusion Tips!

- It is important to consider where your business's diversity statement will "live." A smart choice is to create an easy-to-find landing page on your website for anyone who has questions about your business's stance on EDI. Another option is to include your diversity statement in your business's "About Us" page.
- Diversity statements are especially helpful throughout your hiring and recruiting efforts. Throughout the application process, include your diversity statement on all hiring materials and/or direct job seekers to the relevant page on your business's website.
- Don't restrict your diversity statement to online channels! Prominently display it in your physical space as well to remind employees and customers that EDI is a central part of your small business.

Resources

- There are many online resources to support you in writing your business's diversity statement. This resource from [G2 Learning Hub](#) includes helpful examples of successful diversity statements.



#3: Create Formal Policies

To hold your small business accountable and demonstrate your commitment to EDI, it is strongly encouraged that you create a formal policy. This document should clearly outline your anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies, EDI commitments and expectations for employee behavior.

Considerations

- How can you incorporate your values and commitments into your organizational structure and policies?
- Do your policies contribute to a work environment that is safe, equitable and inclusive to a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives?

Inclusion Tips!

- Your policies must reflect all prohibited grounds of discrimination, including but not limited to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. For a full list of protected grounds, consult the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#).
- Policies should be made easily accessible to all staff and employees. You can post physical and digital copies via your staff communication channels, including your bulletin board, website or staff portal.
- Organizational policies are living documents that should be reviewed regularly (at least every three to five years). Ensure that policy language remains current, reflects your business's values and commitments and meets human rights legislative requirements.

Resources

- The Ontario Human Rights Commission provides a helpful resource for creating your own [anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies](#).
- The Government of Canada provides various resources on their [Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Learning Path](#). Some notable offerings include:
 - A sample [Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy](#). This resource identifies the steps and best practices to create an internal policy.
 - A [Guide on Applying the Harassment Resolution Process](#).

#4: Offer Training and Education

To ensure your small business's EDI action plan is effectively implemented, it is important to provide related training to all employees. This training ensures all your staff members understand your business's EDI values and commitments, embedding your initiatives into day-to-day functioning.

Considerations

- How can your small business provide education for employees on systemic racism, unconscious bias and other EDI topics?
- Do your employees fully understand their EDI responsibilities and roles in promoting an inclusive workplace?

Inclusion Tips!

- Training and education must be reinforced with appropriate behaviours modeled by all members of your small business – including you! As the leader of your business, it is your responsibility to set the standard for fostering an inclusive workplace. For more information on inclusive leadership, consult the section beginning on [page 28](#) of this Toolkit titled, “How to Be an Inclusive Leader.”
- Potential topics for employee education and training include:
 - Anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies
 - Anti-discrimination response training
 - Unconscious biases
 - Active allyship
 - Power and privilege
 - Microaggressions in the workplace
 - Inclusive language
 - LGBTQ2S+



Resources

- The [Workplace Inclusion Charter](#) is a Kingston initiative designed to support businesses in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. For more information, refer to Strategy on [page 22](#).
- The [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion](#) is an incredible resource for EDI information:
 - Inclusion and education guides covering various aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion in the Canadian workplace.
 - Helpful “toolkits” on various topics. Each toolkit includes professional development learning resources, a facilitator manual, handouts and a corresponding presentation.
- [Pride at Work Canada](#) offers LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion 101, a paid introductory course that provides foundational training on LGBTQ2S+ terms, identities and history.
- The Government of Canada offers an [Anti-Racism Learning Series](#), which is designed to provide information on racism and systemic barriers that exist for marginalized and racialized groups. The series provides access to tools, job aids, courses and workshops on various topics. One notable offering includes:
 - An online self-paced course, [Call It Out: Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Human Rights](#). This module provides introductory information on intergenerational trauma, the ongoing impacts of racial discrimination and the human rights protections under Ontario’s Human Rights Code.

#5: Improve Hiring Processes

A diverse workforce begins with hiring. As a small business, you can demonstrate your commitment to EDI by consciously reducing biases in your hiring process. To do this, small businesses can implement relatively simple adjustments to existing systems and engage in thoughtful self-reflection.

Considerations

- Are your job postings written to appeal to a diverse group of jobseekers? Do they use inclusive, unbiased and non-gendered language?
- Where are your job postings advertised? Are they reaching a diverse range of communities and people?
- Does your selection committee and hiring manager know about EDI best practices? Are they comfortable positively and respectfully interacting with all prospective employees?

Inclusion Tips!

- Review your job descriptions to ensure they are as inclusive as possible. Eliminate gendered pronouns, evaluate whether the listed requirements are necessary for success, and focus on performance objectives.
- Consider levelling the playing field by removing names and other identifying factors when you review resumes and applications. This allows you to focus on each candidate's qualifications and talents. Phone interviews are also a great way to reduce bias by eliminating visual cues.
- Research shows that unstructured interviews lacking defined questions are poor indicators of job success. Instead, standardize your interviews by asking the same set of defined questions and grading responses according to a predetermined scorecard.

Resources

- This resource on LinkedIn provides [10 simple strategies to reduce interview bias](#), and even displays the information in a digestible graphic!
 - This video resource from the Government of Canada highlights [five quick tips to create inclusive hiring processes](#) that diversify your workforce.



#6: Align Language and Communication with Your EDI Goals

Ensure that your small business's policies and communication use inclusive language that reflects diverse identities and populations. Becoming conscious of how language impacts others can prevent feelings of exclusion and reinforce inclusion and diversity efforts in your workplace.

Considerations

- Is the reference to a person's gender, culture, ethnicity or age relevant and necessary?
- Does the language reflect the diversity of the intended audience?
- Would you feel more comfortable if you consulted a formal style guide such as A [Progressive's Style Guide](#) or the [Conscious Style Guide](#)?

Inclusion Tips!

- Instead of dominant gendered pronouns, such as she/her/hers and he/him/his, using gender-neutral "they" can be helpful. "They" is an acceptable singular-use pronoun and ensures that all individuals feel properly represented. This change recognizes that there are people who do not identify within the gender binary as either a woman or a man.
- Proactively increase self-awareness when speaking and writing. Consider your intentions for using a phrase, whether it has any concerning origins and whether there is a more inclusive way to state what you are trying to say.
- Invest time to learn what words, phrases or perspectives may be offensive or less inclusive. The following resources are helpful educational tools to build your inclusive language toolkit.

Resources

- The [Progressive's Style Guide](#) is an excellent resource for combatting discriminatory language. The guide includes language and terms to avoid, as well as suggested alternatives and recommendations.
- The [Conscious Style Guide](#) is another helpful resource for understanding conscious language, with the latest news, observations and style guides. You can bookmark this guide as a reference document or distribute it to your team members as an educational resource.
- For more information on inclusive language, consult the section of this Toolkit titled, [Inclusive Language and Communications](#).



7: Foster an Inclusive Organizational Culture

Your small business's culture is instrumental to its success, so embracing diversity and forming a welcoming, inclusive culture should be a priority. Ultimately, developing a culture of inclusion requires a multi-pronged approach that ensures everyone feels represented in their workplace environment. Establishing these safe spaces can preserve psychological safety and allow different voices to be heard, acknowledged and valued.

Considerations

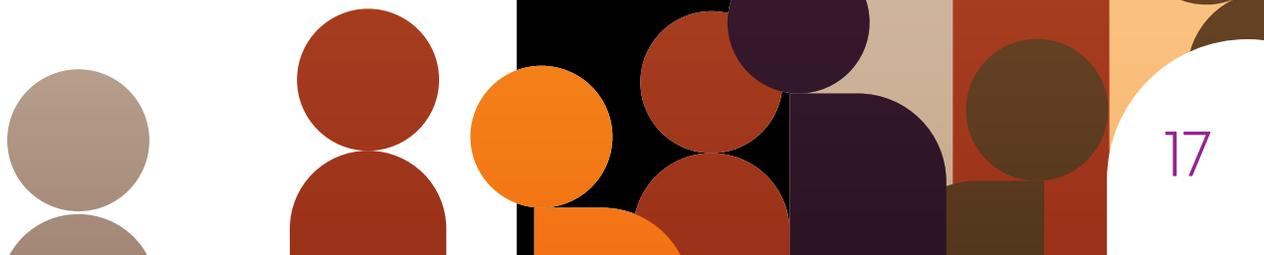
- Does your small business have an organizational culture that is inclusive to all people?
- Do your policies and norms cultivate inclusion and align with your EDI commitments?
- Are you communicating your EDI goals and progress with your team?

Inclusion Tips!

- Support employees and encourage engagement. You can learn from team members by sharing perceptions, experiences and understandings. Use these conversations to gather and enact suggestions for creating a more inclusive workplace.
- Ensure your business's policies support an inclusive culture and align with your EDI commitments. For example, review your business's dress code to ensure you are not reinforcing gender stereotypes by dictating appropriate types of clothing. Rather than stating what is appropriate for men (e.g., suits, pants, button-up shirts, ties) and women (e.g., blouses, skirts, dresses), state that all employees must dress to meet professional standards.
- Build transparency by clearly communicating your EDI goals and progress with your team. This ensures that every team member is working towards the same goals and understands how their efforts are directly impacting success. Consider sharing your business' progress at team meetings or posting your goals on your staff bulletin board.

Resources

- [QMUNITY](#) has created a set of community guidelines to foster spaces that are safe for all individuals to feel fully engaged and valued. These guidelines are by no means exhaustive but consider using this Qmunity.ca resource as a starting point.
- The Government of Canada offers a virtual course called [Positive Space Initiative: 2SLGBTQIA+ Awareness](#). This module explains the importance of Positive Space and how to become an ally to contribute to safer, more inclusive environments.
- For more information on creating safe spaces and navigating EDI dialogue, consult the section of this toolkit labeled, [Navigating Conversations Through an EDI Lens](#).



#8: Community Activism and Leadership

In today's increasingly contested and political environment, consumers are becoming more vocal in their views of the world – and they are expecting businesses to do the same. When your small business engages in brand activism, you are expressing your ideas, establishing customer loyalty, and contributing to an inclusive society.

Considerations

- Can your small business impact positive social change in your community through volunteering, donating, mentoring, offering pro bono services or engaging in activism?
- Are you actively supporting a cause that aligns with your business's core values, vision and commitments?

Inclusion Tips!

- Understand the risks of performative activism and ensure your business is acting out of a commitment to a cause - not to improve social capital. The following tips will help you determine an appropriate cause to endorse and mitigate the risk of performative activism:
 - Make sure your personal beliefs align with your chosen cause. If you are interested in supporting a specific movement or cause, ensure your business's decisions, claims, products and services support this position.
 - Do your research! As a business, you have a platform and therefore, it is your responsibility to conduct the necessary research to share educated, informed and reliable messaging.

Resources

- This article from [Just Digital Inc.](#) provides helpful information on brand activism, including risks, strategies and examples.
- Learn about consumer activism and the growing demand for ethical, sustainable and empowering brands. According to this article from [BeTheChange.com](#), shoppers are voting with their wallets by choosing brands that align with their values.



#9: Engage in Self-Reflection

Our family structures, life experience and societal influences form our sense of identity - the lens through which we view the world. With different opportunities and interactions, our identities evolve and require self-reflection. This involves deliberately paying attention to our experiences and behaviours and noticing the role these play in fostering an inclusive workplace.

Considerations

- What steps can you take to ensure that you, and others, are represented in your business?
- Whose identity is underrepresented, and whose voices are not heard? What steps can you take to amplify these voices?
- How knowledgeable and comfortable are you with the historical and current experiences of equity-seeking groups? What steps can you take to increase your awareness, and how can this information support you in everyday life?

Inclusion Tips!

- Self-reflection leads to cultural humility, which involves listening without judgment and being open to learning from – and about – others. Cultural humility requires us to learn about our own culture and our biases and is the building block to cultural safety.
- Challenge yourself to understand how your positionality and privilege in areas of race, culture and social class shape your thinking, learning and understanding. This process of self-reflection and learning of one's own biases can be challenging and uncomfortable, but increasing awareness is integral to self-growth.
- Practice humble listening by setting aside preconceived notions and truly hearing another person's experience of the world. Consider how you can use these conversations to further your education and continue to question your positionality.

Resources

- [Project Implicit](#) is a non-profit organization committed to advancing scientific knowledge of stereotypes, prejudice and other group-based biases. You can test your own biases using Project Implicit's interactive [Implicit Association Tests \(IAT\)](#) on various topics, including disability, age, sexuality, race and weight.
- The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion offers an educational toolkit called, [Exploring My Power and Privilege](#). This toolkit provides materials and resources that encourage individuals to explore how their identity is informed by experiences of power and privilege.
- Being an ally requires us to be honest about our relationship with oppression, and actively resist oppressive forces. For more information on allyship, refer to these helpful resources:
 - [Guide to Allyship](#)
 - [5 Tips for Being an Ally](#) (Video)
 - [3 Ways to Be a Better Ally in the Workplace](#) (TED Talk)
 - [The Danger of a Single Story](#) (TED Talk)



#10: Use the Workplace Inclusion Charter

If your business is looking to receive increased support throughout your EDI journey, the Workplace Inclusive Charter is an incredible resource. The Inclusion Charter project team can work with your business to design a unique action plan, set achievable goals, and recommend resources that will help you succeed.

What is the Charter?

[The Workplace Inclusion Charter](#) is a Kingston initiative designed to support businesses in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. By signing the [Charter Declaration](#), organizations can take the first step towards implementing an EDI action plan, with support from Inclusion Coaches. All signatories commit to developing and implementing an action plan that will improve inclusion for a particular population over one year.

Charter members will have access to the following supports:

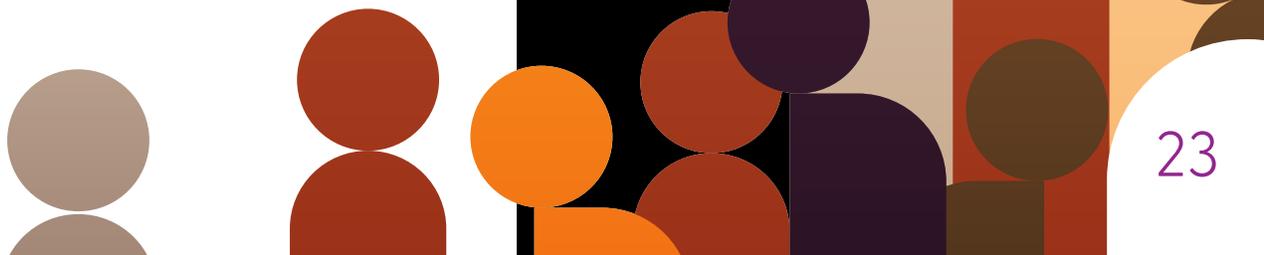
- An assessment process that helps identify key opportunities and areas for improvement
- An action plan, developed with organizational priorities in mind and with tangible benchmarks that the organization can work towards
- Access to trained Inclusion Coaches to implement meaningful workplaces changes to improve inclusion
- Public recognition

Next Steps

- Interested businesses are encouraged to contact inclusion@keys.ca to begin their journey toward achieving a more inclusive workplace!

Keep Showing Up!

There is no “right way” to support equity, diversity and inclusion in your small business, but there are pillars of thinking that can lead to improved approaches. EDI is a holistic endeavour that involves education, expansion of perspectives and constantly assessing ways to support inclusive thinking. It is impossible to do this perfectly, but your small business can commit to continual learning, improvement, and action. If you keep showing up and putting in the work, you will contribute to meaningful change!



Strategic EDI Considerations

These pages are provided to serve as a dynamic EDI road map. For each of the following considerations, record your answers, notes or ideas to hold your business accountable and easily track your progress.

#1: Identify Your Business's Values and Commitments	Notes
<p>What do you stand for? What are the macro-level issues that are most important to your business?</p> <p>What do you stand up for? Are you willing to take action as an organization for specific areas of these issues?</p> <p>Whom do you stand for? What people and populations are you willing to actively advocate for and support?</p>	
#2: Put it in Writing!	
<p>Does your diversity statement illustrate your business's commitment to fostering a welcoming workplace that celebrates differences?</p> <p>Have you effectively addressed all populations, including race, gender, sexual orientation and age?</p>	
#3: Create Formal Policies	
<p>How can you incorporate your values and commitments into your organizational structure and policies?</p> <p>Do your policies contribute to a work environment that is safe, equitable and inclusive to a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives?</p>	
#4: Offer Training and Education	
<p>How can your small business provide education on systemic racism, unconscious bias and other EDI topics?</p> <p>Do your employees fully understand their EDI responsibilities and their roles in promoting an inclusive workplace?</p>	

#5: Improve Hiring Processes	Notes
<p>Are your job postings written to appeal to a diverse group of jobseekers? Do they use inclusive, unbiased, non-gendered language?</p> <p>Where are your job postings advertised? Are they reaching a diverse range of communities and people?</p> <p>Is your selection committee and hiring manager knowledgeable about EDI best practices? Are they comfortable positively and respectfully interacting with all prospective employees?</p>	
#6: Align Language and Communication with Your EDI Goals	
<p>Is reference to a person's gender, culture, ethnicity or age relevant and necessary?</p> <p>Does the language reflect the diversity of the intended audience?</p> <p>Would you feel more comfortable if you consulted a formal style guide such as the Progressive's Style Guide or the Conscious Style Guide?</p>	
#7: Foster an Inclusive Organizational Culture	
<p>Does your small business have an organizational culture that is inclusive to all people?</p> <p>Do your policies and norms cultivate inclusion and align with your EDI commitments?</p> <p>Are you communicating your EDI goals and progress with your team?</p>	



#8: Community Activism and Leadership	Notes
<p>Can your small business impact positive social change in your community through volunteering, donating, mentoring, offering pro bono services or engaging in activism?</p> <p>Are you actively supporting a cause that aligns with your business's core values, vision and commitments?</p>	
#9: Engage in Self-Reflection	
<p>What steps can you take to ensure that you, and others, are represented in your business?</p> <p>Whose identity is underrepresented, and whose voices are not heard? What steps can you take to amplify these voices?</p> <p>How knowledgeable and comfortable are you with the historical and current experiences of equity-seeking groups? What steps can you take to increase your own awareness, and how can this information support you in everyday life?</p>	
#10: Use the Workplace Inclusion Charter	
<p>The Workplace Inclusion Charter is an incredible resource to receive support throughout your EDI journey. Interested businesses are encouraged to contact inclusion@keys.ca or review the Inclusion Charter Resources.</p>	





Topic #2:

How to Be an Inclusive Leader

As a business owner, you are the leader of your organization. You not only deliver a product or service, but you execute a vision, lead your team members and inspire success. You are a small business leader. So, take a moment and consider: What does it mean to be a great leader?

What is Inclusive Leadership?

The traditional notion of leadership is rapidly evolving to adapt to an increasingly diverse environment. Nowadays, leaders must consider how they can effectively address and embrace diversity of markets, customers, ideas and talent. There is no such thing as an inclusive workplace without an inclusive leadership team!

An inclusive leader goes one step beyond traditional leadership, adding an EDI lens to combat discrimination and drive transformational change. Demonstrating inclusive leadership – and building the respectful relationships that drive true inclusion – contributes to an empowering environment. When leaders create an empowering workplace, show accountability and demonstrate humility, all individuals feel safer.

The Elements of Inclusive Leadership

Ultimately, inclusive leadership is about upholding three main pillars:

- 1. Fairness and respect:** Inclusive leaders treat individuals and groups fairly, regardless of their unique characteristics and identities. They acknowledge differences in experiences and opportunities and understand that equal treatment does not always yield equal results.
- 2. Value and belonging:** Inclusive leaders understand and value the uniqueness of their team members. They convey a sense of social connectedness and group membership that demonstrates an appreciation of diversity.
- 3. Confidence and inspiration:** Inclusive leaders foster an environment where individuals are encouraged and inspired to do their best work. They create conditions for high team performance by leveraging diverse thinking and ideation.

Inclusion Tip!

Building Inclusion for Indigenous Peoples

A long history of colonialism, genocide and racism has created inequities for Indigenous Peoples living on the land now called Canada. In the workplace, Indigenous Peoples are underrepresented, suffer a wage gap, and are regularly surrounded by those who do not truly understand their history, culture or burdens. According to a [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion research report](#), Indigenous Peoples consciously protect against bias and experience low levels of psychological safety.

To combat these inequities, managers, leaders and team members can consciously take steps towards creating inclusive workplaces. The strategies and guiding pillars provided in this section of the Toolkit can be used to help Indigenous Peoples belong, contribute and thrive in a safe workplace.

For more information on Indigenous history and culture, we recommend consulting the following resources:

- This [CCDI research report](#) provides a comprehensive list of resources to expand your awareness of Indigenous history, including the injuries and scars that Indigenous communities bear. This is an incredible place to begin or continue your education!
- [Native Land Digital](#) provides an interactive world map to learn which Indigenous territories, languages, and treaties are associated with your location.
- The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion's educational guide titled, [Indigenous Inclusion](#). This provides readers with various articles, toolkits and other resources to further your education.



Signature Traits of an Inclusive Leader: Checklist

The following checklist is provided to support business owners, leaders and managers throughout their journey towards becoming inclusive leaders. The considerations outlined within this checklist will allow leaders to cultivate a workplace environment that embraces all aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion.

#1: Commitment

Verbalize your commitment to building an inclusive culture where everyone belongs – and employ actions to support your words.

Approach equity, diversity and inclusion wholeheartedly. Clearly and authentically articulate the value of equity, diversity and inclusion – and treat EDI as a business priority.

Challenge entrenched workplace attitudes and practices and hold others accountable for non-inclusive behaviors.

#2: Humility

Do not be afraid of vulnerability. Admit mistakes and hold yourself accountable to continual learning, self-reflection and betterment.

Learn from criticism and different points of view. Acknowledge and seek contributions from others to overcome your own limitations.

Lead your team by example. Set aside your perception of authority to invest in people, build shared aspiration and inspire commitment to the common goal.

#3: Collaboration

Treat all individuals, including team members and customers, with fairness and respect. Ensure that everyone feels respected, appreciated and valued for their unique identity and characteristics.

Recognize and celebrate the contributions of diverse employees and customers in your workplace. This reinforces your business' values and commitment to inclusion.

Provide opportunities for employees to remain engaged and share their ideas, opinions and perspectives. This is especially important for employees from equity-seeking groups, who are often overshadowed.

#4: Curiosity

Listen attentively when another person is sharing their point of view and ask respectful questions to improve your understanding.

Seek opportunities to connect with a diverse range of people and expand the boundaries of your thinking.

Remain flexible and withhold initial judgment when considering divergent ideas and perspectives.

#5: Aware of bias

Engage in self-reflection to identify your personal biases and intercultural competencies. Strive to recognize how your own culture impacts your personal worldview and can influence your expectations of others.

Seek to understand the factors and situations which amplify your personal biases, so you can attempt to self-regulate and develop corrective strategies. For example, pressure, stress and fatigue can increase vulnerability to biases' pull.

Assess your current level of understanding of racism and strategies that advance EDI in the workplace. Seek opportunities to deepen your understanding by consuming content from trusted sources and practicing a growth mindset.



Navigating Conversations Through an EDI Lens

An integral aspect of inclusive leadership is creating a safe space for productive and respectful conversations. This means fostering an environment that prioritizes psychological well-being and allows different voices to be heard, acknowledged and valued.

The following guiding principles apply to both group discussions and individual conversations, and can be used to create more equitable, diverse and inclusive environments.

Inclusion Tip!

What is a 'Safe Space'?

A safe space is focused on psychological safety, allowing everyone to comfortably express their honest impressions, thoughts and attitudes without fear or ridicule. A safe space can be between two people or expanded to include groups of many individuals. On a larger scale, a safe space can also be the expectation of your organizational culture.

Conversations and Discussions: Checklist

These pages are provided to serve as a checklist to help navigate individual conversations and group discussions through an EDI lens. Read the following considerations and try to incorporate as many as possible into your next conversation!

During the Conversation

#1: Define Your Space and Rules of Engagement

Welcome and acknowledge people as they arrive.

Share your name and pronouns and encourage others to do the same.

At the beginning of your conversation, outline your commitment to creating a safe space.

If you are leading a group discussion, share your set of guidelines and expectations for group behaviour. Review sample community guidelines from [Qmunity](#).

#2: Be Curious

Ask open-ended questions that invite the individual to share more or less information, depending on their comfort level.

- “How did you feel about...”
- “What was it like to...”

Encourage yourself and others to ask permission before making comments. This ensures your comments are non-threatening and received thoughtfully.

- “May I ask/tell you something?”
- “May I offer some feedback?”
- “Would you like to hear my opinion?”

State your commitment to learning more and continuing your education.

#3: Be an Active Listener

Devote your full attention to each person who speaks and fully concentrate on what they are sharing.

Listen to understand, not to respond and ask follow-up questions for clarity.

Use people’s names and refer to comments they have previously made to cite their contributions.

#4: Be Flexible

Adopt an open mindset and be prepared to accept new ideas, interpretations and experiences without judgement.

Thoughtfully listen and avoid the urge to immediately agree or disagree with what you hear.

Be willing to admit you made a mistake, or miscommunicated.

#5: Be Aware

Consciously consider the individual's unique situation, circumstances, and experiences.

Try to remain up-to-date and educated on current and relevant topics, so you can comfortably enter conversations.

#6: Be Supportive

Acknowledge that you are hearing what the individual is saying.

- “I hear you; that must be really challenging.”
- “If I am hearing you correctly, you are saying that...”
- “I can see this has really impacted you...”

Allow each person to take their time and complete their thoughts.

Share what is valuable about someone's question or comment.

Do not convince others that your experience is the “right” experience. We all have different views, opinions and perspectives.

After the Conversation

Important Considerations

Acknowledge and thank the individuals and/or group for the quality of conversation.

Respect privacy and do not share details of the conversation without permission.

Follow up with individuals to ensure their comments were addressed to their satisfaction, to offer support, or to provide additional opportunities for check-ins.

If you promised anything, ensure you follow up on what you agreed to do in a timely fashion.



Inclusion Tip!

Active Listening Techniques

- **Mirroring:** Repeat the speaker's words back to them to confirm they've been heard.
- **Reflecting:** Use mirroring (above) to clarify the speaker's intent and feelings.
- **Paraphrasing:** Restate, in your own words, the speaker's ideas and feelings to verify whether you understood them correctly.
- **Linking:** Highlight similarities between what different speakers have shared to connect ideas.
- **Redirecting:** Invite others to respond to a question or comment to reinforce the wisdom of the participants and encourage self-reflection.
- **Summarizing:** Highlight key comments and topics to provide clarity and emphasize that individuals have been understood. This also provides an opportunity to check assumptions and correct any misunderstandings.

Resources

It's important to remember that becoming an inclusive leader is a continuous journey, rooted in a commitment to self-reflection, learning and education. The following resources can be used to supplement the above strategies and considerations.

Helpful Information and Guides

- The [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion](#) provides helpful resources related to inclusive leadership. Some of these resources include:
 - The [Inclusive Workplace Guide](#) provides guidance on creating safe spaces to engage in EDI-related dialogue.
 - This [Inclusive Leadership Guide](#) shares six signature traits of inclusive leaders and provides actionable strategies for each trait.
 - This [Inclusive Leadership Guide](#) suggests guiding principles to support women employees, especially while working from home during/after the pandemic.

- In 2016, Deloitte University Press published [The Six Signature Traits of Inclusive Leadership: Thriving in a Diverse New World](#). This report identifies six main attributes of leaders who embrace EDI in their workplace: commitment, courage, cognizance of bias, curiosity, cultural intelligence and collaboration.
- This [Harvard Business Review](#) article shares how you can increase the freedom, candor and quality of conversation by focusing on two key areas: giving permission and creating safety.

Training and Education

- The Government of Canada provides various resources as part of its [Anti-Racism Learning Series](#), which is designed to provide information on racism and systemic barriers that exist for marginalized and racialized groups. Some notable offerings include:
 - A panel discussion called [Black Careers Matter](#), which addresses the challenges, opportunities and realities of Black employees for career advancement.
 - A video called [Understanding Anti-Black Racism and How to Be an Ally: Allyship](#), which relies on various experts to discuss the importance of allyship.



Topic #3: Inclusive Language and Communications

Inclusive language is free from words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of people or groups. Language is not always intended for exclusion, but it may unintentionally have this effect. Becoming conscious of how language impacts others can prevent feelings of exclusion and discomfort in the workplace – and contribute to a positive and inclusive atmosphere.

Language Considerations

As language is continuously evolving, the considerations outlined within this section of the Toolkit are not meant to be comprehensive or definitive. The intention is to provide readers with the necessary resources to engage in self-reflection, thoughtfully consider other's experiences, and consciously work towards using mindful language.

#1: Pronouns

Pronouns are more than linguistic tools used to refer to people; they are integral to our identity. For many people, commonly used pronouns (he/she) may not fit, and can create discomfort, causing stress and anxiety. By properly using pronouns, we can avoid making any harmful assumptions, and ensure we are affirming everyone's identity.

More Inclusive	Less Inclusive
<p>Introduce yourself with your pronouns in all situations. This will become a routine!</p> <p>“Hi! My name is Jane, and my pronouns are she/her/hers.”</p> <p>Ask for an individual’s preferred pronouns after you have introduced yourself using yours.</p> <p>“Are you comfortable sharing your pronouns?”</p> <p>“May I ask what pronouns you would like me to use?”</p> <p>“When I refer to you, what pronouns should I use?”</p> <p>Consider adding your pronouns to your email signature.</p> <p>Respect an individual’s identity, even if you don’t understand it.</p> <p>Educate yourself on gender identity, so you can confidently navigate conversations and foster safe dialogue.</p>	<p>Avoid making assumptions about a person’s gender or identity.</p> <p>Avoid uses the phrases “preferred pronouns” or “preferred name.” These suggest an element of flexibility and that someone’s identity is not inherent.</p> <p>If you misgender someone or use the wrong pronouns, avoid over-apologizing and drawing unneeded attention to the situation. It is best to apologize, correct yourself, and move on.</p> <p>“She – I’m sorry, I meant to say, ‘They got the files from the office.’”</p>



Inclusion Tip!

Why are Pronouns Important?

In short, pronouns are important. In fact, a [recent study](#) shows that using an individual's correct pronouns can reduce depression and suicide among transgender youths.

- This video on [Gender Identity and Pronouns](#) explains the importance of pronouns, as well as how to use them in an easy and digestible manner.
- The LGBTQIA Resource Center provides various resources to better understand pronouns, including [Pronouns](#).

#2: Gender-Neutral Language

One way to be considerate of different gender identities is by using gender-neutral language, such as “they” and “folks.” By changing our habits, we can avoid making assumptions about someone's gender or pronouns. This takes time and effort but is an important way to ensure everyone feels comfortable.

More Inclusive	Less Inclusive
They/them/theirs	He/him/his
Friends	Guys
Folks	Ladies
Everyone	Gentlemen
Y'all	Cleaning Lady
Cleaner	Policeman
Police Officer	Chairman
Chair/Chairperson	

Inclusion Tip!

What is Gender Identity?

The following resources are incredibly helpful to further your education on gender identity and sexual orientation, and better understand how these concepts influence the use of pronouns.

Learning Tools:

- [The Genderbread Person](#) is a teaching tool to understand the complicated concept of gender. The tool breaks down gender into the following bite-sized pieces: identity, expression, attraction and sex.

Helpful Websites:

- [Pride at Work Canada](#)
- [Gender and Sexual Alliance Network](#)
- [National Centre for Transgender Equality](#)



#3: Disability Awareness

When communicating with people with disabilities, people are often concerned they will say or do the “wrong thing.” This wariness and hesitation only further segregates people with disabilities! To avoid this, we can become familiar with etiquette and best practices to communicate based on respect and courtesy.

- The Canadian Transportation Agency offers [Best Practices for Interacting with Persons with Disabilities: A Guide](#). This is an incredible resource that outlines best practices for various types of disabilities.
- This [Disability Sensitivity Training Video](#) by the D.C. Office of Disability Rights discusses general rules of etiquette for interacting with people with disabilities.

More Inclusive	Less Inclusive
<p>Only refer to a person’s disability if it is pertinent to the conversation. Disability is a condition of life and should only be used when salient, like a person’s gender, ethnicity, age or occupation.</p> <p>Remember that some disabilities may not be visible – this does not make them any less significant!</p> <p>Recognize that people with disabilities have diverse needs. Be respectful and adaptable to different situations and needs.</p>	<p>Avoid speaking to a person’s companion, interpreter or aide. Speak directly to the person, even if someone else is present.</p> <p>Do not assume that an individual requires assistance. Always ask before offering your help and respect their response.</p> <p>Avoid using euphemistic language that might have negative connotations, such as “differently-abled,” “handicap,” or “abnormal.”</p> <p>Avoid references that cause guilt, pity or insult, such as “stricken with,” “afflicted by,” “patient,” “disease,” or “sick.”</p> <p>Avoid using adjectives that categorize people with disabilities as super-achievers, such as “brave,” “courageous,” or “inspirational.”</p>

Inclusion Tip!

The Golden Rule...

Remember that preferences vary! The best place to start is by listening to how each person talks about their own disability and taking your cue from them. If you are ever unsure how to interact with a person with a disability, simply ask!



#4: Idioms, Jargon, and Acronyms

Jargon and acronyms can exclude people who may not have specialized knowledge of a particular subject – this can impede effective communication. Moreover, many idioms don't translate well from country to country, and some are rooted in negative connotations, cultural appropriation, gender assumptions and stereotypes.

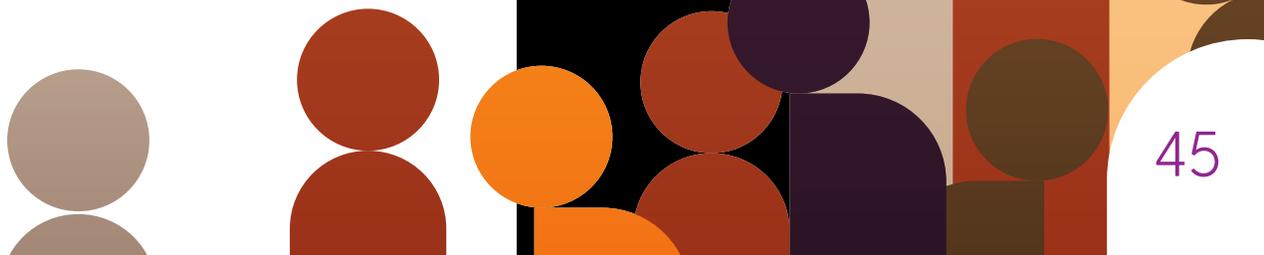
More Inclusive	Less Inclusive
Be mindful of terms and phrases that may be considered cultural appropriation. Cultural objects and ceremonies have sacred meanings and should only be used in that context.	Low man on the totem pole [to indicate hierarchy]
Always consider whether your language is promoting a stereotype or negative view of an identifiable group. If so, replace these terms with more inclusive language.	Pow-wow [to indicate a gathering]
	Welshing on a bet [to indicate not paying a debt or wager]
	Being gypped [to indicate being cheated or swindled]

#5: Continued Learning

Challenge yourself to incorporate these considerations when communicating in the workplace and commit to continued learning. It is important to remember that no one is perfect, and it is likely that we will make mistakes throughout this learning process. If you are unsure what to say in a given situation or there is a misunderstanding, simply apologize and exhibit a commitment to learning. Through a collective effort to use mindful language, business owners, leaders and employees can reinforce inclusive language to support EDI in the workplace.

Resources

- The [Progressive's Style Guide](#) is an excellent resource for combatting discriminatory language. The guide includes language and terms to avoid, as well as suggested alternatives and recommendations.
- The [Conscious Style Guide](#) is another helpful resource for understanding conscious language, with the latest news, observations and style guides. You can bookmark this guide as a reference document or distribute it to your team members as an educational resource.
- This [Inclusive Language in Media](#) guide is an excellent resource for understanding the background of various EDI-related words and phrases. Compiled from various media language guides, the glossary provides information on why some terms are harmful and provides inclusive alternatives.



Topic #4: Inclusive Marketing

As a small business owner, you are responsible for relaying your brand's messaging to resonate with your consumers. Your marketing undoubtedly has a powerful impact on your community, so what if we began to see more inclusive images all around us?

The guiding principles and strategies highlighted in this section of the Toolkit are intended to support small businesses in using inclusive marketing to reinforce equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

What is Inclusive Marketing?

Customers from different cultures have varying values, experiences, expectations and ways of interacting. Even within a particular culture, such differences are apparent between different subgroups - think differences in age, gender, profession, religion, family size, physical environment and more.

Businesses have the responsibility to create and promote messaging that truly reflects these diverse communities. However, inclusive marketing goes one step further by not only acknowledging these differences but leveraging strategies to elevate diverse stories, amplify underrepresented voices and lead positive social change.

Marketing Techniques and Best Practices

#1: Understand Inclusive Language

When creating diversity-focused marketing campaigns, it is important to know the audience you are speaking to, but it's also critical that your messaging does not exclude others. To avoid this, use inclusive language that is both target-specific and welcoming to others.

Two helpful resources for understanding conscious language are the [Conscious Style Guide](#) and the [Progressive's Style Guide](#). For more information on inclusive language, consult the section of this toolkit labelled, [Inclusive Language and Communications](#).

#2: Ensure Representation

Representation is the visible presence of a variety of identities in your marketing materials. People want to see themselves reflected in media – it helps us feel inspired, empowered and heard. In your marketing materials, ask yourself: Does this reflect society? Am I elevating diverse voices?

Local Example

A local hospitality company has developed inclusive recruitment and retention practices to attract and retain diverse talent. One of their initiatives supports newcomer team members working towards permanent residency. Qualified team members can advance into full-time positions, receiving both management training and support with their permanent residency applications.

Team members have successfully advanced into various management positions, including Team Lead, Supervisor, Junior Assistant Manager, Assistant Manager, and Restaurant Manager. This program is a win-win for everyone involved, providing invaluable opportunities for newcomers while helping the employer attract and retain new talent.

The company has noted that increasing the diversity of their employee teams and incorporating intercultural and language learning into the workplace has enhanced their ability to attract and retain a diverse workforce in an industry known for high turnover. Additionally, it has resulted in positive press and recognition, further boosting the company's profile and profits.

#3: Counter Stereotypes

As a small business, you can use your marketing to counter stereotypes. This means being conscious of standardized images that represent oversimplified opinions, prejudiced attitudes, or critical judgments, and choosing not to use them in your campaigns. For example, your business can challenge standardized ideas by portraying women in leadership positions or illustrating that love can come in many forms.



Local Example

This local company is a pioneer in sustainable and inclusive wellness, operating as a social enterprise with a strong social, cultural, and environmental mission. Their inclusive marketing approach emphasizes that “inclusion is not a trend.” They recognize the link between body image and marketing, showcasing diverse cultures, body shapes, and sizes to foster an inclusive business profile. They create marketing spaces by and with diverse community members, avoiding stereotypes. Their marketing materials use person-first and gender-inclusive language, reflecting their commitment to intentional and respectful communication.

#4: Adopt an Inclusive Review Process

An inclusive review process can help identify any concerns before launching your marketing campaign. First, thoughtfully review your content while being conscious of equity, diversity and inclusion principles. Next, seek additional perspectives – this can be as simple as asking a trusted friend or colleague to review your marketing materials. You could also consider creating the opportunity for anonymous feedback from your customers.

Local Example

A local destination marketing agency has been recognized multiple times for its inclusive marketing efforts.

One of their showcase events brought together Indigenous and non-Indigenous chefs and beverage purveyors for a culinary collaboration. This event invited guests to learn about Indigenous foodways, linking the food and drink consumed with its history, heritage, culture, and geography. To ensure cultural relevance, the organization worked with numerous partners and integrated their diverse voices into the event’s execution.

The organization is also committed to fostering inclusive economic growth by supporting LGBTQ+ businesses and travellers. They actively work with local businesses to help them become more inclusive, both internally with team members who identify as LGBTQ+ and externally with potential LGBTQ+ customers, through the use of inclusive language, imagery, and welcoming messaging.

#5: Raise Awareness

Show social responsibility by acknowledging the struggles of marginalized groups. You may choose to use your business as a platform for raising awareness of important matters and advocating for social change. As a small business, you have the opportunity to lead with inclusive marketing to deepen connections with customers, elevate diverse voices and positively influence your community!

Real-world Example

For a multinational consumer goods corporation, including individuals from diverse backgrounds in their advertisements is only the first step. The company also uses their platform to spread powerful messages about equality, tackle controversial issues and discuss topics related to diversity and identity. One example is an Emmy-winning commercial, which depicted African Americans engaging in difficult conversations with their children about racism.



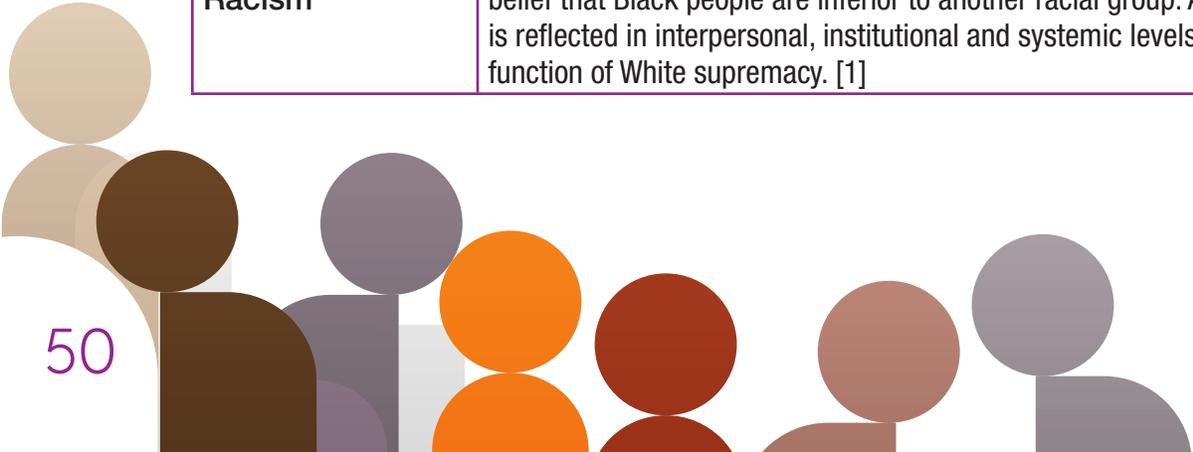
Topic #5: Key EDI Terms and Concepts

The following definitions are provided to assist the reader as they review this Toolkit. These are not intended to be comprehensive or absolute; they are generalized and open to interpretation. Many of the terms in this glossary have evolved over time and therefore, this is a “living document” and will be updated accordingly as thinking evolves.

Acknowledgements

The following glossary was compiled using reliable sources within the field of equity, diversity and inclusion, including but not limited to The Center for the Study of Social Policy’s [Glossary for Shared Understanding](#) and the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion’s [Glossary of IIDEA terms](#). Citation information for all terms and concepts can be found at the end of this section of the Toolkit.

Term / Concept	Definition
Ableism	A set of beliefs or practices at the individual, community or systemic level that devalue and discriminate against people with physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities. Ableism often rests on the assumption that disabled people need to be ‘fixed’ in one form or another. [2]
Accessibility	The extent to which a space is readily approachable and usable by people with disabilities. A space can be described as a physical or literal space, such as a facility, website, conference room, office, or bathroom, or a figurative space, such as a conversation or activity. [1]
Affirm	To acknowledge, respect, value and support someone’s full identity and self—including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, experiences, ideas, beliefs, etc.—and to encourage the development and exploration of who they are.
Ally/Allies	Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups for justice. Allies commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of these groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression. [1]
Anti-Black Racism	Any attitude, behaviour, practice or policy that explicitly or implicitly reflects the belief that Black people are inferior to another racial group. Anti-Black racism is reflected in interpersonal, institutional and systemic levels of racism and is a function of White supremacy. [1]

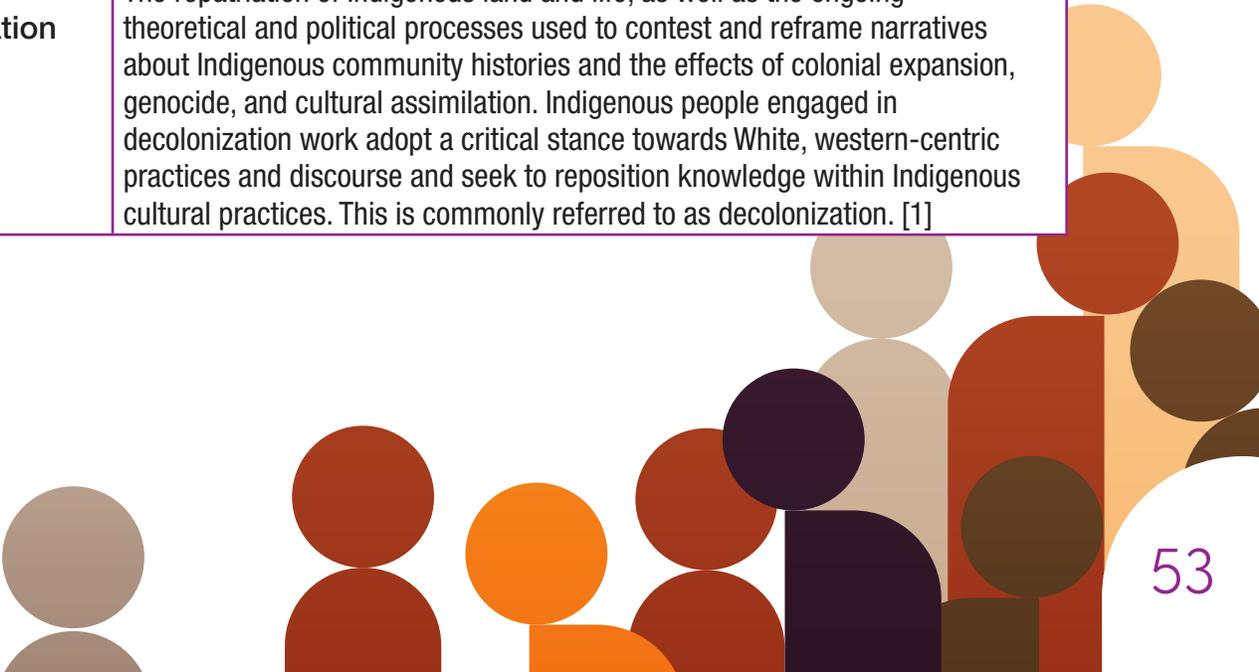


Term / Concept	Definition
Anti-Racism	Active process of identifying and challenging racism, by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices, and attitudes, to redistribute power in an equitable manner. [1]
Asexual	A broad spectrum of sexual orientations generally characterized by feeling varying degrees of sexual attraction or desire. Asexuality is distinct from celibacy, which is the deliberate abstention from sexual activity, despite sexual desire. It is possible for a person who does not experience sexual attraction to experience other forms of attraction, such as physical attraction, emotional attraction, and romantic attraction. [1]
Bisexual/Bi	An adjective to describe a person who is emotionally, romantically, and/or physically attracted to people of the same and other genders. An individual does not need to have had sexual experiences with both men and women to identify as bisexual. [1]
Cisgender	A term used as the counterpart to transgender to highlight the privilege of people who are not transgender. A gender identity, or performance in a gender role, that deems to match the person's assigned sex at birth. [1]
Classism	The institutional, cultural and individual set of practices and beliefs that assign differential value to people according to their socioeconomic status. Classism also refers to the systematic oppression of poor and working-class people by those who control resources. [1]
Colourism	Using White skin colour as the standard, colourism is the allocation of privilege and favor to lighter skin colours and disadvantage to darker skin colours. Colourism operates both within and across racial and ethnic groups. [2]
Cultural Competence	The ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures. Grounded in the respect and appreciation of cultural differences, cultural competence is demonstrated in the attitudes, behaviours, practices and policies of people, organizations and systems. [1]
Cultural Humility	When one maintains an interpersonal stance that is open to individuals and communities of varying cultures, in relation to aspects of the cultural identity most important to the person. Cultural humility can include a life-long commitment to self-critique about differences in culture and a commitment to be aware of and actively mitigate power imbalances between cultures.[1]



Term / Concept	Definition
Culture	The languages, customs, beliefs, rules, arts, knowledge and collective identities and memories developed by members of all social groups that make their social environments meaningful. [2]
Discrimination	The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, religion, citizenship status, a combination of those identified, and/or other categories. See Racism. [1]
Diversity	Diversity includes all the ways in which individuals differ. A broad definition includes individual differences (ability, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations). Diversity is not equivalent to equity, racial justice, or inclusion. It is possible to name, acknowledge, and celebrate diversity without doing anything to transform the institutional or structural systems that produce and maintain racialized injustices. [1]
Dominant Group	Not necessarily the majority, but the group within a society with the power, privilege, and social status to control and define societal resources and social, political and economic systems and norms. [1]
Equality	The effort to treat everyone the same or to ensure that everyone has access to the same opportunities. However, only working to achieve equality ignores historical and structural factors that benefit some social groups and disadvantages other social groups in ways that create differential starting points. [1]
Equity	The effort to provide different levels of support based on an individual's or group's needs to achieve fair outcomes. Working to achieve equity acknowledges unequal starting places and the need to correct the imbalance. [1]
Ethnicity	Denotes groups that share a common identity-based ancestry, language, or culture. It is often based on religion, beliefs and customs as well as memories of migration or colonization. [2]
Gay	Someone whose emotional, romantic, and/or physical attraction is to people of the same sex or gender. More commonly used to describe male attraction to other males, but men, women, and non-binary people may also use the term. [1]

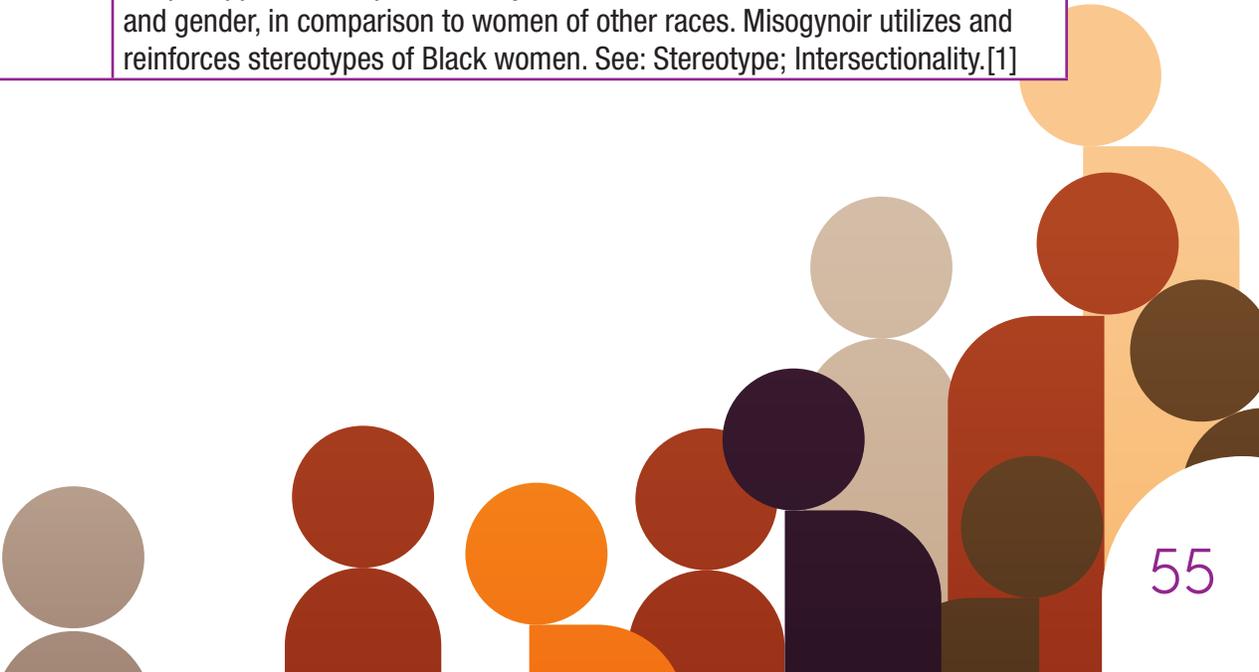
Term / Concept	Definition
Gender Expression	A person's public presentation of their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, makeup, body language, and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender. [1]
Gender Identity	Each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, or neither. This may or may not correspond with sex and gender one is assigned at birth. Gender identity is fundamentally different from an individual's sexual orientation. [1]
Gender Pronoun	Linguistic tools used to refer to someone in the third person, in place of a proper noun. Examples include ze/hir/hirs, ey/em/eirs, they/them/theirs, she/her/hers, he/him/his. In English, pronouns have been tied to gender and are a common site of misgendering (attributing a gender to someone that is not correct) and can create discomfort and can cause stress and anxiety. [2]
Homophobia	The fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who are attracted to members of the same gender. Homophobia occurs in a broader heterosexist social context that systematically disadvantages LGBTQ+ people and promotes and rewards anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment. [1]
Implicit Bias	A belief or attitude that affects our understanding, decision, and actions, and that exists without our conscious awareness. [2]
Inclusion	A state of belonging, when persons of different backgrounds and identities are valued, integrated, and welcomed equitably as decision-makers and collaborators. Inclusion involves people being given the opportunity to grow and feel/know they belong. Diversity efforts alone do not create inclusive environments. Inclusion involves a sense of coming as you are and being accepted, rather than feeling the need to assimilate. [1]
Indigenous Decolonization	The repatriation of Indigenous land and life, as well as the ongoing theoretical and political processes used to contest and reframe narratives about Indigenous community histories and the effects of colonial expansion, genocide, and cultural assimilation. Indigenous people engaged in decolonization work adopt a critical stance towards White, western-centric practices and discourse and seek to reposition knowledge within Indigenous cultural practices. This is commonly referred to as decolonization. [1]



Term / Concept	Definition
Individual/ Personal Racism	An internalized bias that takes place when a person's beliefs, attitudes, fears, behaviors and actions are both based on and driven by racial biases/ prejudices. Individual/personal racism are the conscious and unconscious beliefs we have that Whiteness is superior. [1]
Institutional/ Systemic Racism	The practices that perpetuate racial disparities, uphold White supremacy, and serve to the detriment and harm of persons of colour. Institutional/systemic racism also refers to policies that generate different outcomes for persons of different races. These laws, policies and practices are not necessarily explicit in mentioning any racial group but work to create advantages for White persons and disadvantages for People of Colour. [1]
Internalized Racism	The conscious and unconscious development of ideas, beliefs, actions and behaviours that demonstrate one's acceptance of the dominant society's racist tropes and stereotypes about their own race. Internalized racism is the simultaneous hating of oneself and/or one's own race and valuing of the dominant race. Internalized racism is an individual's system of oppression in response to any and all forms of racism. [1]
Interpersonal Racism	The racism that occurs between individuals. It is when someone consciously or unconsciously employs or acts upon on racist thoughts, in ways that perpetuate stereotypes and harms people of colour. See: Individual/ Personal Racism; Implicit Bias. [2]
Intersectionality	Coined by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, this term describes the ways in which race, class, gender, and other aspects of our identity "intersect", overlap and interact with one another, informing the way in which individuals simultaneously experience oppression and privilege in their daily lives interpersonally and systemically. Intersectionality promotes the idea that aspects of our identity do not work in a silo. Intersectionality, then, provides a basis for understanding how these individual identity markers work with one another. [1]
Intersex	An umbrella term to describe a wide range of natural body variations that do not fit neatly into conventional definitions of male or female. Intersex variations may include, but are not limited to, variations in chromosome compositions, hormone concentrations, and external and internal characteristics. [1]

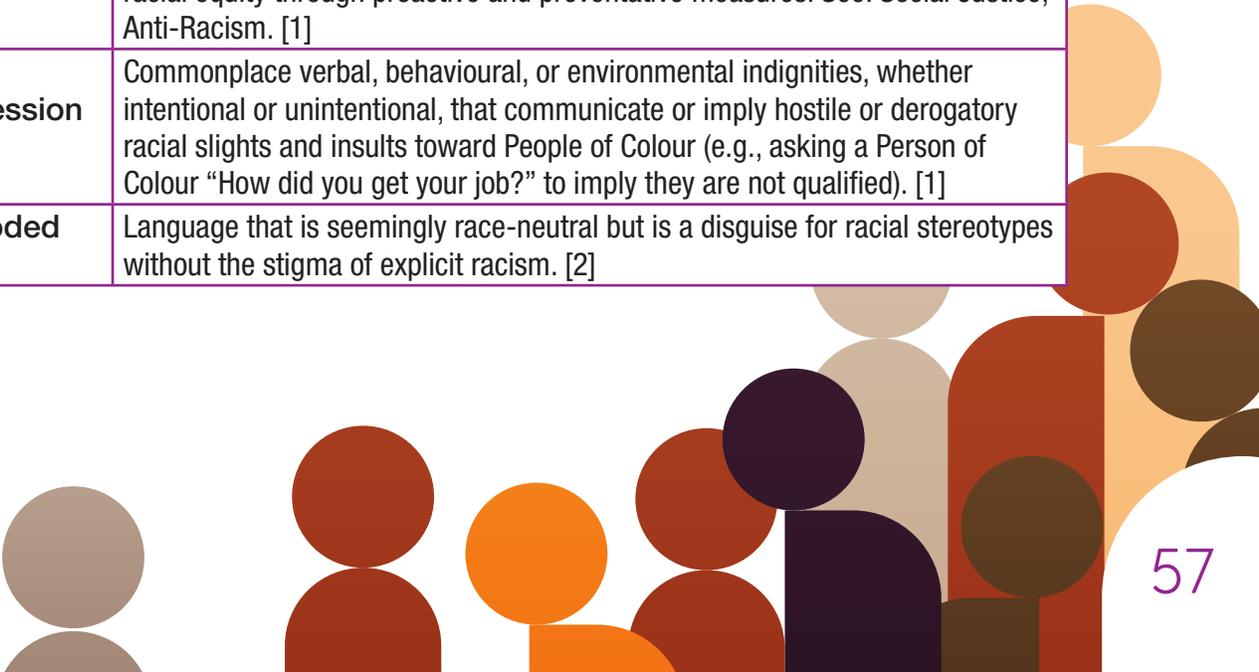


Term / Concept	Definition
Justice	The process required to move us from an unfair, unequal, or inequitable state to one which is fair, equal, or equitable, depending on the specific content. Justice is a transformative practice that relies on the entire community to respond to past and current harm when it occurs in society. Through justice, we seek a proactive enforcement of policies, practices and attitudes that produce equitable access, opportunities, treatment, and outcomes for all regardless of the various identities that one holds. [2]
LGBTQ+	An acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer.” The plus (+) is inclusive of all other expressions of gender identity and sexual orientation. It is significant to note that there is debate within the wider LGBTQ+ communities about labels and terminology. For this reason, variations of LGBTQ+ are often used interchangeably. [2]
Liberation	The progression toward or the conscious or unconscious state of being in which one can freely exist, think, dream, and thrive in a way which operates outside of traditional systems of oppression. Liberation acknowledges history but does not bind any person to disparate systems or outcomes. Liberation is a culture of solidarity, respect and dignity. [2]
Marginalization	The process that occurs when members of a dominant group relegate a particular group to the edge of society by not allowing them an active voice, identity, or place for the purpose of maintaining power. [2]
Misgender	To intentionally or unintentionally refer to a person, relate to a person, or use language to describe a person that does not align with their gender identity. This often occurs when people make assumptions about a person’s gender. [1]
Misogynoir	Coined by Dr. Moya Bailey, this term describes contempt for or ingrained prejudice toward Black women. The term can also be understood as the unique oppression experienced by Black women at the intersection of race and gender, in comparison to women of other races. Misogynoir utilizes and reinforces stereotypes of Black women. See: Stereotype; Intersectionality.[1]

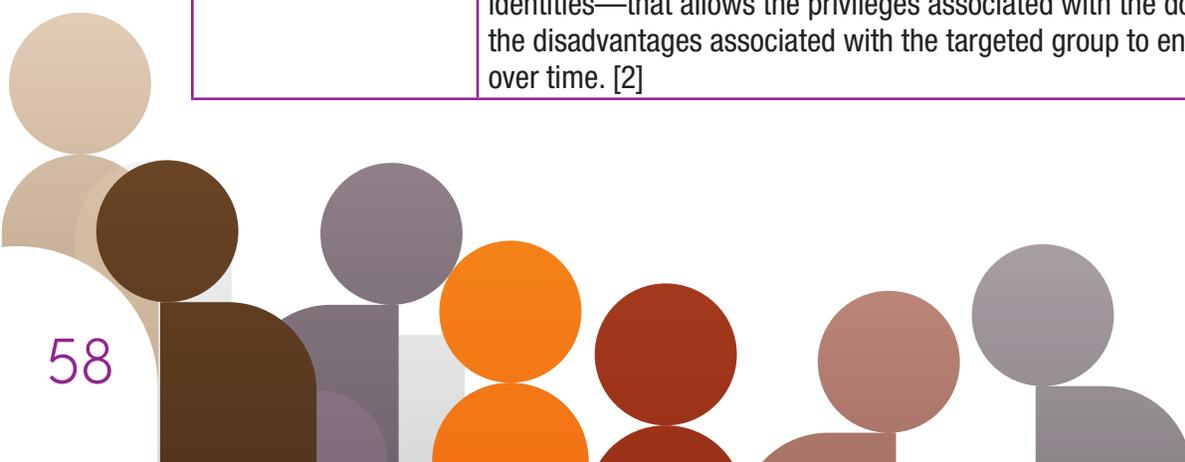


Term / Concept	Definition
Oppression	A system of superiority and discrimination that benefits a small, dominant group while harming others. This system keeps itself going through unfair treatment, controlling ideas and institutional power. Oppression shows how power and resources are unequally shared, in the past and present, with a dominant group hoarding power, wealth and resources at the expense of everyone else. This creates a lack of access to safety, security, opportunities and resources for many.
Othering	The perception or placing of a person or a group outside and/or in opposition to what is the norm. Othering is based on a conscious or unconscious assumption that a certain identified group poses a threat to the favoured or dominant group. See: Marginalization. [1]
Patriarchy	The manifestation and institutionalization of men and/or masculinity as dominant over women and/or femininity in both the private and public spheres, such as the home, political, religious, and social institutions, sports, etc. Patriarchy is deeply connected with cissexism and heterosexism through perpetuating and enforcing the gender binary.[1]
People of Colour	Political or social (not biological) identity among and across groups of people that are racialized as non-White. The term “People of colour” is used to acknowledge that many races experience racism in the U.S, and the term includes, but is not synonymous with, Black people. [1]
Power	The ability to define, set or change situations. Power can manifest as personal or collective self-determination. Power is the ability to influence others to believe, behave or adopt values as those in power desire. [1]
Prejudice	A preconceived opinion or assumption about something or someone rooted in stereotypes, rather than reason or fact, leading to unfavorable bias or hostility toward another person or group of people[1].
Queer	An umbrella term used by some to speak broadly about people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. Originally used exclusively in a pejorative sense, to describe LGBTQ2S+ people, it has been reappropriated by some to establish a political identity. It is important to note that not all people who identify as LGBTQ2S+ use “queer” to describe themselves. The term is often considered hateful when used by those who do not identify as LGBTQ2S+. [1]

Term / Concept	Definition
Questioning	The process of exploring one's own gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation. Some people may also use this term to name their identity within the LGBTQ2S+ community. [1]
Race	A social and political construction—with no inherent genetic or biological basis—used by social institutions to arbitrarily categorize and divide groups of individuals based on physical appearance (particularly skin color), ancestry, cultural history, and ethnic classification. The concept has been, and still is, used to justify the domination, exploitation and violence against people who are racialized as non-White. See: Racism. [1]
Racial Anxiety	The fear of being judged, based on an individual's race, when interacting with people of other races. White people fear assumptions of being racist, while people of colour fear being the victim of discriminatory behaviour and violence. [2]
Racial Disparity	An unequal outcome one racial group experiences as compared to the outcome for another racial group. [2]
Racial Disproportionality	The underrepresentation or overrepresentation of a racial or ethnic group at a particular decision point, event, or circumstance, in comparison to the group's percentage in the total population. [2]
Racial Equity	Race is no longer a predictor of outcomes, leading to more just outcomes in policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages. [2]
Racial Justice	The proactive process of reinforcing and establishing a set of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all individuals and groups impacted by racism. The goal, however, is not only the eradication of racism, but also the presence of deliberate social systems and structures that sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures. See: Social Justice; Anti-Racism. [1]
Racial Microaggression	Commonplace verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate or imply hostile or derogatory racial slights and insults toward People of Colour (e.g., asking a Person of Colour “How did you get your job?” to imply they are not qualified). [1]
Racially Coded Language	Language that is seemingly race-neutral but is a disguise for racial stereotypes without the stigma of explicit racism. [2]



Term / Concept	Definition
Racism	The systematic subjugation of members of targeted racial groups, who hold less socio-political power and/or are racialized as non-White, as means to uphold White supremacy. Racism differs from prejudice, hatred, or discrimination because it requires one racial group to have systematic power and superiority over other groups in society. Often, racism is supported and maintained, both implicitly and explicitly, by institutional structures and policies, cultural norms and values, and individual behaviours. [1]
Sexual Orientation	Sexual orientation is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction or non-attraction to other people. Sexual orientation can be fluid and one's sexual behaviour or sexual history does not define their orientation. Sexual orientation is fundamentally different from an individual's gender identity or expression. [1]
Social Justice	A process, not an outcome, which (1) seeks fair (re)distribution of resources, opportunities, and responsibilities; (2) challenges the roots of oppression and injustice; (3) empowers all people to exercise self-determination and realize their full potential; and (4) builds social solidarity and community capacity for collaborative action. [1]
Stereotype	Exaggerated or distorted beliefs about the characteristics, attributes and behaviours of individuals and communities that categorize individuals and communities into singular, pejorative terms. [1]
Stereotype Threat	The threat of being stereotyped or the fear of doing something that would inadvertently confirm that stereotype. The resulting apprehension often causes the individual to behave in ways that reinforce that stereotype. [1]
Structural Racism	Historical, social, political, institutional and cultural factors that contribute to, legitimize and maintain racial inequities. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice, it is the confluence of racist concepts and theories that control our economic, political and social systems.[1]
Systems of Oppression	The ways in which history, culture, ideology, public policies, institutional practices, and personal behaviors and beliefs interact to maintain a hierarchy—based on race, class, gender, sexuality, and/or other group identities—that allows the privileges associated with the dominant group and the disadvantages associated with the targeted group to endure and adapt over time. [2]



Term / Concept	Definition
Systems Reform or Systems Change	A process designed to address the root causes of social problems and fundamentally alter the components and structures that perpetuate them in public systems (i.e., education system, child welfare system, etc.). [2]
Targeted Universalism	Setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all groups concerned. The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted based on how different groups are situated within structures, cultures, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal. Targeted universalism is goal oriented, and the processes are directed in service of the explicit, universal goal. [2]
Trans-Identified/ Transgender/ Trans	An adjective used most often as an umbrella term and frequently abbreviated to “trans.” Identifying as transgender, or trans, means that one’s internal knowledge of gender is different from conventional or cultural expectations based on the sex that person was assigned at birth. It includes, but is not limited to, people who identify as transgender, trans woman, trans man, transsexual, cross-dresser, gender nonconforming, gender variant, or gender queer. [1]
Transition	Transitioning is the process of taking steps to live as one’s true gender identity. Transitioning is different for each individual and may or may not involve medical interventions, taking hormones, having surgeries, or going through therapy. Some people may not choose to transition in certain ways for a variety of reasons. The extent of someone’s transition does not make that person’s gender identity any less or more valid. [1]
Transphobia	The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, transgender people. Transphobia occurs in a broader cis-genderist social context that systematically disadvantages trans people and promotes and rewards anti-trans sentiment. [1]
Violence	A primary tool of oppression used to acquire and/or maintain power at the expense of the physical, psychological, social, cultural, political, and/ or economic safety of others. [1]

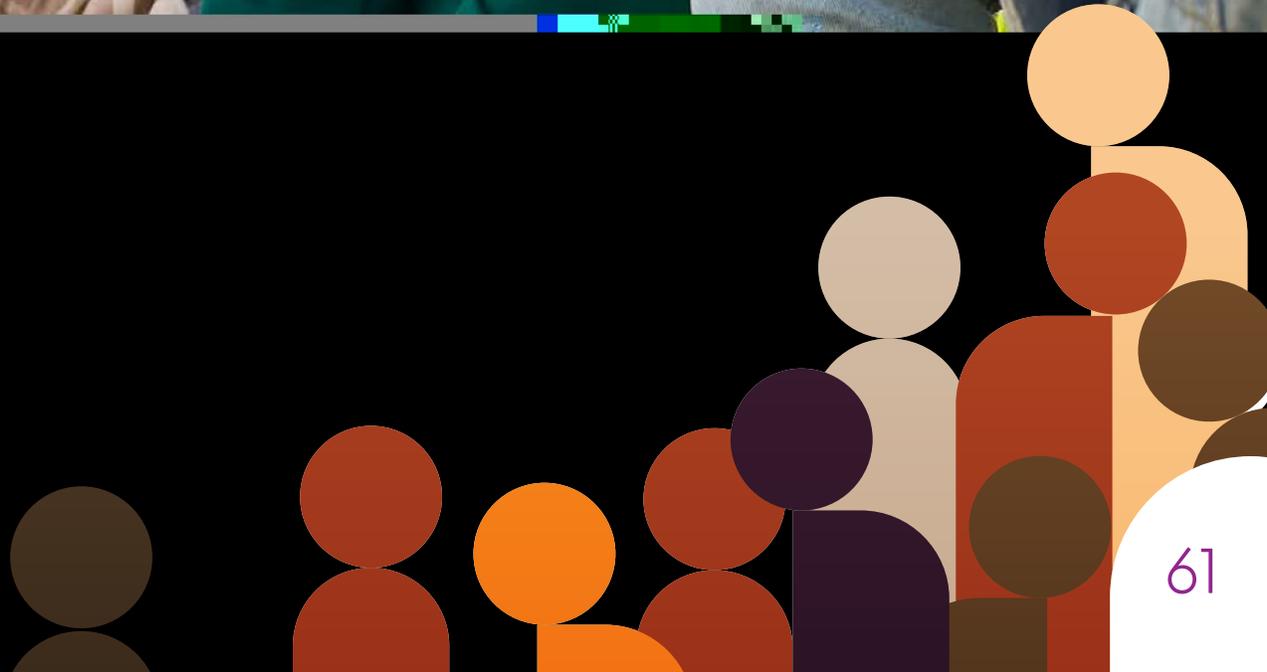


Term / Concept	Definition
White Fragility	A range of defensive (and centering) emotions and behaviours that White people exhibit when confronted with uncomfortable truths about race. This may include outward displays of emotions such as anger, fear and guilt, and behaviours such as arguing, silence and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviours, in turn, function to reinstate White racial equilibrium. [1]
White Privilege	The unearned power and advantages that benefit people just by virtue of being White or being perceived as White. See: White Fragility; White Supremacy. [1]
White Supremacy	An institutionally perpetuated and ever-evolving system of exploitation and domination that consolidates and maintains power and resources among White people. This system promotes the ideology of Whiteness as the standard and the belief that White people are superior to other races. [1]
Xenophobia	Any attitude, behaviour, practice, or policy that explicitly or implicitly reflects the belief that immigrants are inferior to the dominant group of people. Xenophobia is reflected in interpersonal, institutional and systemic levels of oppression and is a function of White supremacy. [1]

Sources

Term / Concept	Definition
1.	“Glossary of IDEA terms”. Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion. Available at: https://portal.ccdi.ca/kbarticle/4029-Glossary-of-IDEA-Terms?act=download
2.	“A Glossary for Shared Understanding”. Center for the Study of Social Policy. Available at: https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Key-Equity-Terms-and-Concepts-vol1.pdf





Resources for Further Education

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[Pride at Work Canada](#) empowers employers to build workplaces that celebrate all employees – regardless of gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

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The [Government of Canada](#) provides tools, trainings, and resources to combat racism and discrimination in the workplace.



