

EQUITY COMPASS



“ I like that you are calling it the EDI ‘compass’ because it gives us who are responsible for the system...we know we are aligned with SFU’s EDI vision and actions. The compass analogy helps us know if we are in the right direction.”

– anonymous

INDIGENOUS TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Simon Fraser University (SFU) and its Equity Office respectfully acknowledge that we are privileged to do the work of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion as newcomers and settlers to the lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səliłwətaʔi (Tsleil-Waututh), qíćəy̓ (Katzie), kʷikʷəłəm (Kwikwetlem), Qayqayt, Kwantlen, Semiahmoo and Tsawwassen peoples, on whose unceded territories SFU's three campuses reside. We understand that these First Nations are the rights holders of these territories, and SFU is currently working on Truth and Reconciliation to restore right relationships with the Host Nations, working in partnership with Indigenous members of the SFU community.



SFU SURREY



SFU VANCOUVER



SFU BURNABY

We thank the Indigenous Elders, leaders, faculty, staff and students past and present, the Host Nations and the members, authors and contributors of all the SFU Aboriginal Reconciliation Council (SFU-ARC) and Pathways reports, as well as all Indigenous Advisors, Office for Aboriginal Peoples and Indigenous members of the SFU community who have welcomed and supported us in this work. Your work and contributions have guided us on this journey, to ensure we centre SFU's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation in developing this Equity Compass. We take your sovereign direction and honour your self-determination to advance the SFU-ARC and Pathways reports separately and uniquely, while addressing those calls to action most relevant to progress within the Equity Compass as we simultaneously answer the call to walk the path of truth and reconciliation with you. You have been our guide and compass and we raise our hands to you in thanks.

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REPORT ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We stand on the shoulders of many in reaching this milestone of developing an [Equity Compass](#)—a strategic framework to guide our equity work at Simon Fraser University (SFU) from 2023-2028. We acknowledge all who have made this possible and thank in particular:

- SFU students, faculty and staff, past and present, who have advocated for equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) advancements.
- All staff and faculty, past and present, who have formally or informally held equity leadership roles and taken on the difficult emotional labour of calling and working for change and transformation at SFU.
- All who participated in the Equity Compass discussions and gave us verbal and written feedback. All critical and appreciative feedback has been constructive, and we hope has led to a final Equity Compass that will be transformative for us all.
- Our three campus communities for their input and feedback on their unique community needs.
- All socially marginalized community members for not giving up hope and continuing to share your lived experiences, despite the retraumatizing impact on you, to ensure more equitable outcomes and future for all.
- All active allies for walking alongside and/or appropriately stepping back to support decolonized ways of being, doing and acting.
- The President's EDI Advisory Council, who have been a touchstone and source of guidance for SFU and whose counsel on the initial framework directly shaped how we structured the open roundtables to maximize hearing as many perspectives and voices as possible.
- The SFU Equity Office, Communications team members, Special Advisors, internal and external subject matter experts, whose work in unique and collaborative ways brought this report to fruition.
- President Joy Johnson for setting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion as an institutional priority and continuing to provide the leadership required to make it possible and the Senior Leadership team for their advice and counsel throughout.
- The SFU Board of Governors for continually championing and requesting progress updates throughout the development of this Equity Compass.
- All SFU community members for leaning into the discomforts, critical conversations, challenges and opportunities that we must step into together to move the focus areas in this Equity Compass forward.

With Deepest Gratitude,

Yabome Gilpin-Jackson, PhD.

Vice-President,
People, Equity and Inclusion

Samir Traoré, PhD.

Executive Director,
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

When I became president, I established equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) as one of my main priorities—and I did so with the knowledge that SFU's EDI journey began long before me. The road towards creating a strong sense of belonging on our campuses has been a collaborative effort across many years by students, faculty and staff working together to create change.

The Equity Compass is the first plan of its kind to exist at SFU, bringing together the past and the present in order to show the way forward. And it does so by encouraging us to lean in together. The goals and objectives outlined in the Equity Compass are ambitious, and they call on each of us to stand up and consider our role in creating a more equitable and inclusive SFU.

During our consultation process for *What's Next: The SFU Strategy*, we heard strongly from our communities that Equity and Belonging are values we hold dear — informing our learning, research, teaching and work. The Equity Compass will ensure that we bring these values to life in everything we do at SFU.

Thank you to the Equity Office team for their hard work in putting this plan together, to everyone who contributed their thoughts and feedback, and to all those who have contributed to EDI at SFU over the years. As president, I feel optimistic and inspired about the future. And I look forward to working with you as we continue on this journey together.

Joy Johnson

President and Vice-Chancellor,
Simon Fraser University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SFU has had Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as a strategic goal since 2020, but has not had an equity strategic plan. To fill this gap, a thematic review was completed of 15 past equity-related reports and assessments and the resulting themes formed an Equity Compass framework as noted in Appendix 1. From September 2022 to January 2023 feedback was sought on the framework in over 30 roundtable discussions. Roundtables were open to students, staff and faculty, all employee groups, Academic Women, student association and student equity group leaders and committees and the SFU Retirees' Association. The Equity Compass framework was also made available for review and discussion to over 250 individual faculty, staff and students and generated over 800 lines of comments and feedback.

The resulting Equity Compass is a strategic framework outlining the focus for SFU's institutional EDI work over the next five years, 2023-2028. The Compass includes: core definitions for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at SFU; the values, purpose, vision and principles upholding the Equity Compass; five EDI strategic goals with 11 associated objectives and 34 calls to action. These will be worked on at the institutional level, led, supported or coordinated by SFU's inaugural Equity Office.

The Equity Compass upholds all of SFU's values as noted in our *What's Next: The SFU Strategy* (see page 16 below also) but in particular operationalizes the value of equity and belonging. It exists in the context of academic freedom as enshrined in our Canadian post-secondary context, as well as the legal frameworks which we uphold as Canadians, British Columbians and a post-secondary institution. It is complementary to our Strategic Research plan (2023-2028) priority of strengthening democracy, justice, equity and education. As we engage the world around this area of research and the related United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, it is imperative that we work to advance similar goals within SFU.

The Equity Compass upholds the international United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Rights (UNDRIP), which became law in Canada in June 2021 and is known as the "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, which is a roadmap for Indigenous human rights. In BC the province passed the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, known as the Declaration Act (2019)

and became the framework for reconciliation. In March 2022, the province issued a Declaration Act Action Plan to guide each ministry of the provincial government. The UNDRIP provides the context for any of the SFU Indigenous reports. It also upholds SFU's [Walk This Path With Us report](#) from the Aboriginal Reconciliation Council (SFU-ARC), which outlines 34 Calls to Action and commitments to improving education and the workplace experience for Indigenous Peoples. SFU will continue to take direction and guidance from Indigenous Communities to advance our Truth and Reconciliation commitments and the Equity Compass will in particular advance Call to Action #7: "Develop mandatory intervention programs teaching cultural safety and anti-racism for all SFU employees..." and the cluster of actions related to administration and hiring.

In upholding the UNDRIP and subsequent national and provincial laws, the Equity Compass recognizes the unique positioning of Indigenous Peoples in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion discourse because of Section 35 of Canada's constitution that recognizes and affirms the inherent rights and treaty rights of Aboriginal peoples.

The Equity Compass provides clarity to the university community about SFU's institutional foci and serves to provide guidance across the decentralized system of faculties and administrative units. We will seek partnership and foster accountability with senior leaders to advance these goals and objectives and hope that all will align their efforts as appropriate with the institutional goals. Hence, this document is called a compass (a guiding framework) as it is not intended to be prescriptive at the unit-level.

The Equity Compass applies to the SFU community, as defined in our governing policy of policies as "all students and employees of the University and all people who have a status at the University mandated by legislation or other University policies, including: research assistants, post-doctoral fellows, members of Senate and the Board of Governors, volunteers, visiting and emeritus faculty, and visiting researchers." It also applies and is used in this document in a broader frame to be inclusive of SFU constituents with past and/or ongoing affiliation to SFU where appropriate, such as retirees, alumni, contractors, community partners and the public accessing SFU premises.

¹ SFU (2020), Policy on University Policies and Procedures, B10. Accessed February 13, 2023 at: <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-00.html>

The equity goals and objectives that resulted from our consultation are below. Detailed action items are available on Pages 17-22.

Goals

Objectives

GOAL #1 RESPECT, INCLUSION AND BELONGING CULTURE & STRUCTURES

All SFU community and constituents experience respectful engagement and have a strong sense of belonging.

OBJECTIVE 1

Ensuring the effective implementation of processes to comply with EDI-related legislation and achieve institutional commitments for other equity-deserving groups.

OBJECTIVE 2

Fostering a culture of inclusive excellence.

GOAL #2 ACCOUNTABILITY, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

We implement clear coordination of EDI-related work across the institution, with appropriate allocation of resources. Our accountability measures move us beyond a benevolence/goodwill/performative approach to equity.

OBJECTIVE 1

Measuring, tracking, and reporting our progress on EDI goals via Equity Office reporting.

OBJECTIVE 2

Establishing clear leadership roles, responsibilities, and provide decentralized support to ensure institution-wide progress on EDI.

OBJECTIVE 3

Embedding an equity lens into governance, policy and leadership at SFU.

GOAL #3 EDUCATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

SFU community are provided with EDI education, capacity-building activities and access to resources so that EDI becomes an integral component of their learning, teaching, research and work. We are known as a Centre of Excellence for inclusive excellence research and education.

OBJECTIVE 1

Providing ongoing Inclusive Excellence training to all SFU leaders.

OBJECTIVE 2

Providing EDI learning and training that is responsive to the evolving needs of our community.

GOAL #4 EMPLOYMENT AND PAY EQUITY

We have equitable employment practices in place for all aspects of the employment relationship, including recruitment, hiring, succession-planning, promotion, performance management, retention and exit.

OBJECTIVE 1

Advancing Employment and Pay Equity commitments in partnership with Employee Groups and subject to Collective Agreements.

OBJECTIVE 2

Attracting and retaining employees from equity-deserving groups.

GOAL #5 EQUITY DATA

SFU regularly collects data to support equitable and accountable decision-making; and measure progress toward fulfilling institutional commitments to EDI.

OBJECTIVE 1

Establishing an equity data taskforce.

OBJECTIVE 2

Developing a data equity framework.

INTRODUCTION: WHY AN EQUITY COMPASS

Background

Simon Fraser University (SFU) is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive community where all feel welcome, safe, accepted and appreciated. For over a decade, the SFU community has emphasized the need for a concrete action plan that clarifies our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) vision and focus. The need to further move commitments into action has also been highlighted in EDI consultations, statements, reports and surveys.

Simultaneously, many at SFU have begun advancing equity, diversity and inclusion within their departments and faculties. To better support this work and accelerate a cohesive, aligned approach to equity, diversity and inclusion across the institution, the newly formed Office of the Vice-President, People, Equity and Inclusion led conversations with our community to develop a guiding framework for EDI at SFU.

This resulting Equity Compass reflects the aspirations and needs of our university community, defined as students, faculty, staff and all people who have a status at the University mandated by legislation or other University policies, including: research assistants, post-doctoral fellows, volunteers, visiting and emeritus faculty, and visiting researchers and our bicameral governance leadership (Board and Senate). Appropriate aspects of the Compass also extend to SFU constituents with past and/or ongoing affiliations such as retirees, alumni, contractors, community partners and the general public accessing SFU premises. The Compass provides guidance to all at SFU for the next 5 years, outlining our values, purpose, vision, principles and strategic focus areas for EDI action.

What is the Equity Compass?

The Equity Compass is a framework outlining the focus for SFU's institutional EDI work over the next 5 years, 2023-2028. The use of the word "compass" is intentional. It is a metaphor to highlight that this framework is direction-setting and an acknowledgement of the multiple directions into the work of EDI and *towards* a more equitable future at SFU. Taking inspiration from Indigenous knowledge systems, the Compass reminds us that we must collectively seek wisdom from all directions, to point us in the right way as we continually work towards achieving our objectives.

The Compass recognizes that effective EDI strategies depend on Inclusive Excellence—the understanding that EDI, academic and organizational excellence are intertwined. The term Inclusive Excellence, which was first introduced by Dr. Alma Clayton-Pedersen over two decades ago and adopted by Universities Canada in 2017, reinforces that diversity and quality are interdependent. A lack of inclusiveness in the institutional and academic settings can compromise organizational and academic excellence.

The Equity Compass is responsive to what equity means in a post-secondary learning institution where academic freedom is guaranteed, as well as makes room for context-specific equity considerations unique to various disciplines and areas in our complex, decentralized institution. It is also complementary to our Strategic Research plan (2023-2028) priority of Strengthening democracy, justice, equity and education. As we engage the world around this area of research and the related United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, it is imperative that we work to advance similar goals within SFU. The Equity Compass upholds SFU's commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, recognizing the sovereignty of Indigenous leaders and communities to guide the advancement of our Walk This Path With Us Calls to Action. The Equity Compass answers the call to walk alongside, in particular to advance the Call to Action #7 for cultural safety and anti-racism training for all SFU employees and the cluster of actions related to administration and hiring.

The Equity Compass includes themes collated from past SFU equity reports, commitments, and feedback gathered during one-on-one and group consultations in 2022-2023 with students, staff and faculty, all employee groups, Academic Women, student association and student equity group leaders and committees, the SFU Retirees' Association. Alumni focus groups will also be held to further sharpen understandings of past experiences and help shape our focus on the identified themes to improve on student experiences in the future. This Compass thus represents the collective feedback and aspirations of our SFU community and constituents. Together, our collective efforts, informed by broader social, political, geopolitical, environmental, technological and economic contexts, will support a cohesive, approach to building a safe, diverse, equitable and inclusive community where all feel welcome, safe, accepted and appreciated.

² NACE (2019, February 4). Making Excellence Inclusive. <https://www.naceweb.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/best-practices/inclusive-excellence/>
Clayton-Pedersen, A. & Clayton-Pedersen, S. (2008). "Making Excellence Inclusive" in *Education and Beyond*. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/plr/vol35/iss3/3>

It is important to know that the Equity Compass is an aspirational framework for our community. It is not a final destination, but rather a roadmap for this part of our ongoing journey.

What the Equity Compass is Not

The Equity Compass is neither a step-by-step nor a prescriptive manual on EDI. It does not reflect solely a top-down or bottom-up perspective. Rather, it represents the reciprocal collective responsibility shared by all members of the SFU community to strive towards a common destination.

This document is a guide for our decentralized institution, not a directive, and provides clarity about the overall institutional focus areas based on the collective aspirations of our community. We hope all who are making equity plans in their faculties, departments and units will look to this document for guidance and align efforts to create synergies that will help us move further faster towards a more diverse, equitable and inclusive SFU.

Lastly, the Equity Compass is not a comprehensive implementation or action plan for each of the identified strategic goals and objectives in this report. The Equity Office will develop annualized action plans to work on the strategic actions identified below and regularly report on our progress and outcomes to keep the institution informed and accountable. In the spirit of shared accountability, SFU community members will be invited to share progress and outcomes related to local initiatives that may be featured in such reports. The annual reports will also guide us in determining whether and how goals and objectives need to be changed or updated to contemplate and respond to the fluid and dynamic environment in which we live and work.

Key Definitions

The following outline the working definitions of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at SFU³.

Equity at SFU refers to all work we do to “identify and address systemic barriers, particularly those experienced by members of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups including, but not limited to, women, Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis), persons with (dis)abilities, members of visible minority/racialized groups and members of 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities. All individuals have multiple identities and the intersection of those identities should be considered wherever possible. Institutions should recognize circumstances wherein other groups may also face barriers.”⁴ The concept of equity acknowledges the need to redress the underlying structural barriers that have led to an unfair distribution of resources and opportunities in our society.

Diversity refers to the demographic make-up of SFU across the spectrum of identity dimensions and intersectionality⁵ including Indigenous Identities, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, political belief, marital status, family status, physical or mental (dis)ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age, as well as differences in perspectives, life experiences, education and skill set. In the context of EDI, diversity focuses specifically on ensuring the demographic representation of equity-deserving groups in organizations and decision-making bodies. For SFU, this would entail using equity data to identify where we have underrepresentation of equity groups in our faculty, staff (including senior administration levels) and governance bodies, relative to the British Columbia and/or Canadian population statistics and contextually, relative to our student body.

Inclusion is defined at SFU as a community where all are welcome, safe, accepted and appreciated in learning, teaching, researching and working. In inclusive spaces, an individual’s unique characteristics, gender, abilities and social/group-based characteristics are valued; they do not feel they have to sacrifice their social identities or individuality. They feel comfortable that there are safeguards in place for their physical and psychological safety. One critical outcome of inclusion is a sense of *belonging*, which is a fundamental human need.

³ We recognize there are many terms related to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion requiring careful definition. In the Equity Compass, we limit definitions to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and to the definitions of related terms included in the list of principles. As part of Objective 2 under Goal #3, we are contemplating a resource guide of further EDI terminology and language and/or a roster of reference resources for more in-depth explorations of the EDI knowledge base. From a decolonized stance, we also support all identity groups in self-determination of identity definitions.

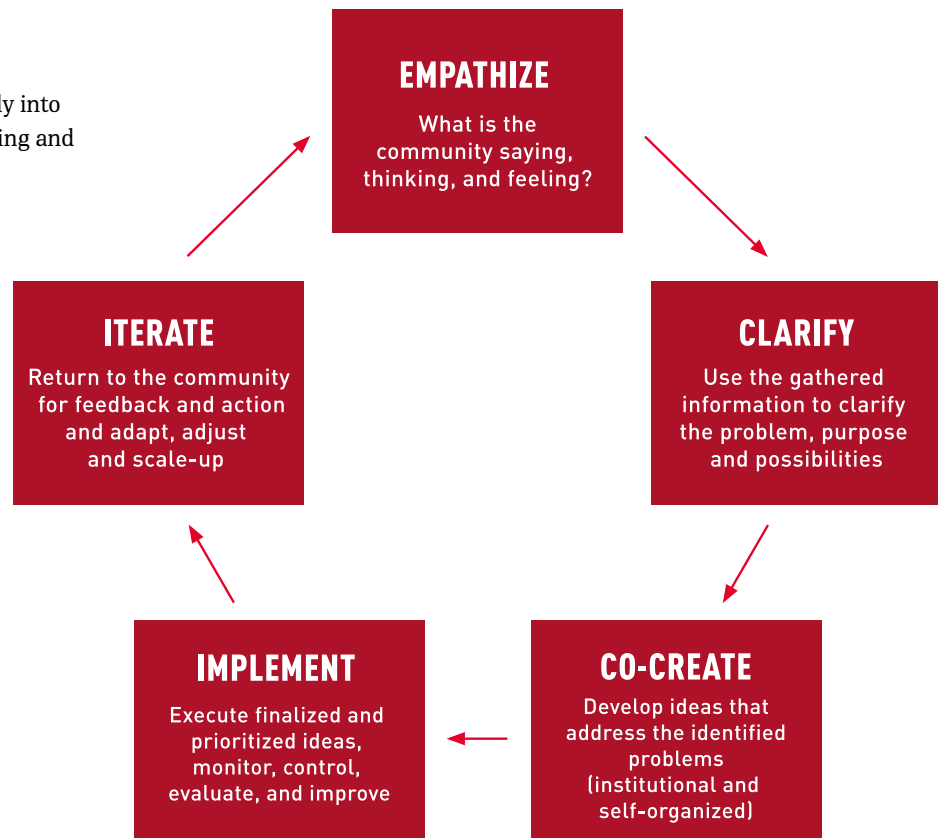
⁴ Government of Canada 2019, Dimensions: equity, diversity and inclusion Canada, accessed February 3, http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions-Charter_Dimensions-Charte_eng.asp

⁵ Identity dimensions taken from the [British Columbia Human Rights Act](#) as of March 29, 2023

Design Method: Co-Design and Iterative Approach

The Equity Compass was created through an iterative process with input from members of the SFU community gathered through various methods. Our design approach included reviewing past reports to identify the needs of the SFU community, engaging in townhalls, roundtables, and one-on-one conversations to clarify our understanding, and using the outcomes of these conversations to co-design the Compass. The illustration summarizes the stages involved in our approach.

With the launch of this strategic framework, we will move immediately into implementation, with detailed planning and action taking to advance each goal.



Method 1: Secondary Data Analysis

To set the institutional EDI goals and objects, we first had to find out what SFU constituents have said, thought, or felt about EDI at SFU. We reviewed reports that were:

- A.** institutional in scope⁶,
- B.** on or contain information related to EDI; and
- C.** on first-hand data (e.g., stemming from consultations, surveys, etc.) or second-hand data (e.g., stemming from an audit, review, quantitative data set, etc.)

⁶ with the exception of a Master's of Public Policy thesis on diversity policies at Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, and University of Victoria

This yielded a list of fifteen reports spanning the years 2007-2023:

	Author	Title
2007	SFU Human Rights Office	Employment Systems Review for Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)
2009	Raven Design Consultants	SFU Access Corridor: Physical Access Report
2016	SFU Salary Equity Recommendation	Final Report
2017	SFU Canada Research Chairs (CRC) Equity Advisory Committee	SFU Canada Research Chairs Program: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
2017	Ginny Victoria Van Pelt, Master's of Public Policy, SFU	Reflecting the Mosaic: An Investigation of Diversity at Academic Institutions
2017	SFU Aboriginal Research Council	Walk This Path With Us: Report of the SFU Aboriginal Reconciliation Council
2018	Kim Hart, previous Special Advisor to the Provost, EDI, SFU	Special Advisor's Final Report to SFU Executive: SFU EDI Initiative
2019	SFU Centre for Accessible Learning	Rick Hansen Assessment Draft: Key Areas to Improve Current Accessibility on Campus
2020	Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion	Diversity Meter Survey: Executive Summary and Insights Presentation Report
2020	Keeling Associates	Review of Student Programs and Services Final Report
2020	SFU EDI Advisory Council	Statement on Anti-Black Racism
2020	Academic Women of Simon Fraser University	Radical Inclusion: Equity and Diversity Among Female Faculty at Simon Fraser University
2021	SFU Steering Committee on Personal Safety	Personal Safety on Campus
2022	RADIUS SFU	SFU Surrey Campus Antiracism Engagement Initiative Summary Report
2022	Contract Workers Justice @ SFU	A Preliminary Report by Contract Worker Justice @SFU
2022	SFU	What's Next: The SFU Strategy

We reviewed these reports, created a spreadsheet of all recommendations, coded the recommendations, and categorized them into domains or areas of focus (e.g., hiring and recruitment, data, education and capacity-building, accountability, etc.). In total, there are approximately 212 recommendations. In addition, we cross-referenced with existing or emerging institutional strategic plans to highlight existing EDI-related commitments that needed to be upheld within the Equity Compass Framework.

This included cross-reference to *What's Next: The SFU Strategy*, national or provincial charters or programs SFU is accountable to implement and SFU's Walk This Path With Us report.

Additional details on the history and context of EDI at SFU can be found on our [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion website](#).

Method 2: Roundtable Discussions

From September 2022 to January 2023, we held over 30 roundtable discussions — the majority were online via zoom. There were two main purposes to the roundtables:

- A.** share the Equity Compass Framework, which includes six themes resulting from our preliminary thematic analysis of the above-mentioned reports (see Appendix A for the framework); and
- B.** gather feedback from attendees on the Equity Compass Framework.

The table below shows the types of constituents we engaged with:

Constituent type	Roundtables sessions
Senior leadership (administration, faculty and department)	3
Faculty	5
Staff	6
Student	5
Mixed (student, staff, and/or faculty)	8
Campus-based at Surrey and Vancouver	3
Employee Groups (Unions and Association)	6

The mixed groups of faculty, staff and students that we engaged included Indigenous attendees at a gathering in November 2022. Constituent-specific roundtables included all Employees Groups, the Retiree Association, Academic Women, student association and student equity group leaders and committees. Overall, 250+ individual faculty, staff and students were engaged, and 800+ lines of comments and feedback were received.

We collected written and verbal feedback during the roundtable discussions, prompted by five questions:

1. At this moment in time, what are your EDI highlights, what are you proud of pertaining to EDI at SFU?
2. What are your current EDI concerns?
3. What do you like about the Equity Compass Framework?
4. What is missing from the Equity Compass Framework?
5. Do you have additional considerations as we develop the Equity Compass?

Roundtable Discussions Preliminary Findings

Preliminary analysis of the resulting feedback shows the following sentiments:

PROUDS

Faculty and staff consistently expressed pride in the work done by their units to address equity issues locally. Many units provided specific examples of equity initiatives, ranging from increasing awareness to implementing structural changes. Both faculty and staff were proud of previous gender salary equity reports and their responses, as well as student-led efforts to advance equity and accessibility on campus. Faculty are proud of their efforts in the areas of indigenization, decolonization and anti-racism in curriculum development, research and teaching, as well as support to graduate students. Students are both cautiously optimistic and proud that SFU has started its journey towards EDI and of the work being done to advance anti-racism in faculty tenure and promotion processes plus to diversify the professoriate.

CONCERNS

The majority of the concerns raised mirrored the themes in the Equity Compass framework generated from the secondary data analysis. A recurring theme was the need for formalized structures and equitable distribution of workload for equity work to be sustained, as well as calls for accountability and action through allocation of time, resources, leadership and structures for the EDI work. Student groups and staff representing employee groups expressed worry about the current state of SFU's respect and belonging systems in that the processes are not trauma-informed and negatively impact those going through them. Employee groups urged for prompt action on commitments to employment and pay equity. Meanwhile, faculty members raised concerns about protecting academic freedom and being able to express constructive criticism in a post-secondary setting. They also warned against centralizing equity initiatives and urged for well-designed special programs that promote diverse hiring and retention, and meet B.C. Human Rights standards.

LIKES

Collectively, faculty, staff and students appreciated the co-design and consultation process and commitment to an iterative approach. They appreciated the clarity provided by the framework, including the definitions and a comprehensive list of principles that named important equity considerations that are not yet common practice at SFU. They also liked the metaphor of the Compass and that the framework demonstrated the progress made and ongoing efforts to showcase the current state of the institution. Lastly, they expressed relief that the Compass builds on previous work done.

MISSING

Participants in the consultation process highlighted the following as missing from the framework:

- The method SFU will use to measure progress and accountability at SFU,
- The provision of support for individuals across the institution to effectively incorporate EDI work into their daily work instead of carried out on the sides of their desks,
- The allocation of dedicated resources and leadership support beyond the Equity Office,
- The integration and representation of student-specific equity concerns, such as support for international students and accommodations; and
- The role of academic freedom amidst equity efforts.

CONSIDERATIONS

Overall, students requested that policies regarding respect and safety be updated to reflect their needs, and that a flowchart specifically designed for students be provided to show the support they will receive throughout the process. Faculty and staff provided suggestions focused on balancing centralization and decentralization and ensuring accountability in achieving outcomes. Despite a sense of urgency for results, some participants recognized that the work of advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as cultural transformation, takes time.

The Equity Compass was further refined and strengthened based on the feedback received from the roundtable discussions.

EQUITY COMPASS

The Equity Compass is a strategic framework outlining the focus for SFU's institutional equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) work over the next 5 years, 2023-2028. The Compass includes:

- The Purpose, Vision and Principles upholding the framework
- 5 Strategic Goals, 11 Objectives and a total of 34 Calls to Action for 2023-2028



PURPOSE

The purpose of the Equity Compass is to *provide direction for the realization of SFU's value of equity and belonging.*

VISION

At SFU, our equity work builds on our institutional commitment to advancing an inclusive and sustainable future. We therefore work towards an SFU that is a preferred research university known for practicing inclusive excellence and achieving equitable outcomes for members of its community.

PRINCIPLES⁷

We use the following principles to operationalize our work in the pursuit of both *equitable processes and outcomes*:

- 1. Truth and Reconciliation**
We center Indigenous knowledges into equity practices at the institution and respond to the calls to action in the SFU-ARC and Pathways reports.
- 2. Decolonization**
We integrate ways to unlearn and redress historical and current practices that have had deleterious effects on Indigenous Peoples and other people groups that have experienced colonization.
- 3. Trauma and Violence-Informed**
We recognize the correlation between past/historical violence and trauma on present psychological health, safety and wellbeing and will continually learn and embed practices that safeguard against further re-traumatization and/or violence.
- 4. Intersectional and Systemic**
We understand that individuals and groups with combinations of multiple identities protected under the British Columbia human rights code face compounded potential for systemic disadvantage and discrimination and consider that in our work.
- 5. Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive**
We critically examine institutional processes, systems, policies and structures to identify, decolonize and eliminate historical and enduring systems that perpetuate systemic racism and oppressions affecting groups identified in the British Columbia Human Rights Code.
- 6. Community Engagement and Dialogue**
We amplify SFU's successes as Canada's engaged university by ensuring we engage in dialogue with our First Nations Host Nations, local communities where our campuses reside, government, strategic partners and all connected to our post-secondary ecosystems to advance our equity goals and aspirations.
- 7. Critical and Developmental**
We collect and analyze evidence and data to critically evaluate outcomes, so we can make systemic changes where needed and otherwise develop new systems to achieved equity-centered outcomes.
- 8. Restorative and Transformative**
We understand that addressing systemic disadvantages is not enough. We need to transform systemic thinking and practices to create new equity-centered systems and structures.
- 9. Intercultural Competence and Cultural Humility**
We foster recognition of the knowledge and skills related to different cultures, experiences and social groups and maintain a focus on learning about and from all. We are courageous enough to learn and unlearn, work through conflict and apologize for our mistakes.
- 10. Safety and Care**
We create the conditions, through policies, practices and guidelines, that allow members of our community to feel cared for and confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, bullying and harassment or hate and that they will be provided with clear avenues for reporting any incidents and be supported.

⁷ All principles as defined here in summary form are taken from existing reports such as *What's Next: The SFU Strategy*, the Pathways report glossaries and key references such as, but not limited to the following: Public Health Agency of Canada's 'trauma and violence-informed' definition, *Intersectionality: An Intellectual History Book* by AngeMarie Hancock (2016), *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne maree brown (2017), *Leading for Equity and Social Justice: Systemic Transformation in Canadian Education* Edited by Andréanne Gélinas-Proulx and Carolyn M. Shields (2022); Reynolds, M. (2014). Equity-focused developmental evaluation using critical systems thinking. *Evaluation*, 20(1), 75–95. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356389013516054>



The following values as outlined in our *What's Next: The SFU Strategy* will guide how we approach our work on institutional equity priorities.

Values

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND CRITICAL THINKING

We honour the autonomy of intellectual enquiry and explore ideas with academic rigour.

EXCELLENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

We aspire to high standards and truth in information, accountable to one another and the public.

RESPECT AND RECIPROCITY

We build and sustain relationships with care and a desire for mutual growth.

EQUITY AND BELONGING

We create an inclusive, supportive and affirming community where all thrive.

ENGAGEMENT AND OPENNESS

We seek and include diverse perspectives and a wide circle of involvement.

RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

We steward resources effectively, with the needs of present and future generations in mind.

INNOVATION AND ADAPTABILITY

We learn, unlearn and embrace uncertainty through discovery and failure.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS 2023-2028

In Canada and the province of British Columbia, efforts toward equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are informed by and exist within a constellation of legal frameworks that aim to protect people from discrimination, bullying and harassment and promote equity. These frameworks include federal, provincial, and territorial laws that outline specific rights and protections for individuals and groups and this Compass exists within the context of these frameworks. Some examples include:

- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, s 7, Part 1 of the Constitution Act, 1982, being Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), 1982, c 11
- Canadian Human Rights Act, RSC 1985, c H-6
- Criminal Code, RSC 1985, c C-46, s 319 (1)
- Employment Equity Act, SC 1995, c 44
- Employment Standards Act, RSBC 1996, c 113
- Human Rights Code, RSBC 1996, c 210
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal People's Final Report (1996)
- Multiculturalism Act, RSBC 1996, c 321
- Public Sector Employers Act, RSBC 1996, c 384
- University Act, RSBC 1996, c 468
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, BC Reg 296/1997
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- The National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (2013)
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Reports (2015)
- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015)
- Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019)
- Workers Compensation Act, RSBC 2019, c 1
- The Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework (2019)
- The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2019) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Action Plan 2022-2027
- Accessible British Columbia Act, SBC 2021, c 19
- Anti-Racism Data Act, SBC 2022, c 18

The Compass also needs to be operationalized in the context of all SFU Collective Agreements and will be responsive to any new legal and institutional frameworks that emerge during the implementation period.

Over the next five years (fiscal years), SFU community and constituents have asked for a focus on five equity goals, 11 objectives and a total of 34 calls to action. These goals, objectives and calls to action will guide our priorities and actions for the next five years. The Equity Office will report annually on our institutional progress and recognizes many of the goals, objectives and actions may continue to evolve and/or roll forward. Working towards an equity-centered future is a transformative change journey and we are calling on all SFU to put their hands on the compass wheel and work together to steer us collectively forward.

GOAL #1:

RESPECT, INCLUSION AND BELONGING CULTURE & STRUCTURES

The Inclusion and Belonging Culture theme within the Equity Compass framework (refer to Appendix 1) received the most comments at the roundtable discussions, with 37% of the analyzed written responses dedicated to it. Of those responses, 48% expressed positive feedback, 37% expressed neutral sentiments, and 15% expressed critical feedback. The theme of Respect and Belonging Structure received a similar distribution of sentiment with 47% positive feedback, 35% neutral feedback, and 18% critical feedback. However, this theme only accounted for 8% of all analyzed comments. Therefore, in this report, both the Inclusion and Belonging Culture theme and the Respect and Belonging Structure theme are combined.

Goal

All SFU community and constituents experience respectful engagement and have a strong sense of belonging.

“This problem cannot be solved at the institutional level alone; it will require an evolution of the attitudes of the community (evolutionary not imposed).”

Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1

Ensuring the effective implementation of processes to comply with EDI-related legislation and institutional commitments for other equity-deserving groups.

OBJECTIVE 2

Fostering a culture of inclusive excellence.

Actions

- 1 Create Respect and Personal Safety principles and a framework to implement SFU's respectful environment requirements.
- 2 Create a pan-university accessibility committee to meet compliance requirements and address recommendations in the Accessible British Columbia Act.
- 3 Develop an implementation plan to execute SFU's response to the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education to which SFU is a signatory and member.
- 1 Work with key partners across SFU to advance safety and respectful environment preventative education and awareness campaigns, including developing a student safety and respect policy navigator.
- 2 Collate resources in partnership with First Nations Host Nations and SFU Indigenous faculty, staff and students for cultural safety and humility in engaging with Indigenous community members.
- 3 Create resource toolkits, guidelines and funding structures to foster inclusive cultures through various strategies such as conversation circles, affinity groups/circles of inclusion, forums, seminars, keynote events, ethical cultural tours, and other types of inclusivity activities.
- 4 Advance initiatives to address 2S/LGBTQIA+ equity and inclusion structural gaps, including but not limited to changing record systems to support name change and adding gender-affirming benefits.

GOAL #2

ACCOUNTABILITY, LEADERSHIP, AND GOVERNANCE

The theme had the second highest number of analyzed comments during the roundtable discussions, accounting for 30% of all comments provided. Interestingly, while 25% of the comments were positive, 58% were neutral/raised questions, and 17% were critical. The feedback provided for this theme indicates the need for action.

Goal

We implement clear coordination of EDI-related work across the institution, with appropriate allocation of resources. Our accountability measures move us beyond a benevolence/goodwill/performative approach to equity.

“How will the university make bold changes to dismantling harmful systems and workplace/learning cultures?... I still think there is a question of how those actually doing the work will be supported. Most of us do this in addition to our full-time jobs and experience burn out and not enough support.”

Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1

Measuring, tracking, and reporting our progress on EDI goals via Equity Office reporting.

OBJECTIVE 2

Establishing clear leadership roles, responsibilities, and provide decentralized support to ensure institution-wide progress on EDI.

Actions

- 1 Identify baselines, generate benchmarks, and create indicators, targets, and metrics in service of EDI.
 - 2 Develop a comprehensive toolkit to facilitate and standardize tracking, reviewing, and evaluating the university's performance on EDI recognizing that a range of methods from developmental evaluation to qualitative and quantitative assessment and even research studies may be used as appropriate.
 - 3 Develop and publish an EDI progress report annually that highlights the organization's efforts and achievements in the area of EDI.
-
- 1 Support Executives to develop 5-year EDI objectives that simultaneously align with the Equity Compass and respond to their unique needs; support Deans, faculty administrators and Chairs and Academic Directors with their EDI action plans and/or initiatives as needed.
 - 2 Integrate EDI-related criteria into leadership performance evaluations, SFU's performance and development program and SFU's core competencies framework.

Continued on following page...

Objectives

Actions

OBJECTIVE 3

Embedding an equity lens into governance, policy and leadership at SFU.

- 3 Develop a toolkit for academic departments and administrative units to assist in the implementation of the Equity Compass, including guidelines for appropriate time release and/or add pay considerations for those taking on equity work such as departmental equity committees.
 - 4 Coordinate and facilitate synergies across complementary institutional-level strategic plans and commitments, such as the SFU Pathways reports and Indigenous strategic plans, the Strategic Research Plan and the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan.
-
- 1 Review existing institutional policies as they come forward for community consultation from an equity lens and make systemic equity-centered recommendations.
 - 2 Support the board of governors, senate, senior leadership and faculties and staff units with EDI advice as requested for consideration in all governance and administrative activities.
 - 3 Partner with Provost Office and Student Services to provide advice on student equity concerns and collaborate on solutions.

GOAL #3

EDUCATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

This theme received the third highest number of analyzed comments, accounting for 15.5% of all comments. The sentiments of the feedback were largely positive, at 55%. Thirty-six (36%) were neutral or raised questions, and only 9% raised concerns and considerations.

Goal

SFU community are provided with EDI education, capacity-building activities and access to resources so that EDI becomes an integral component of their learning, teaching, research and work. We are known as a Centre of Excellence for inclusive excellence research and education.

We need: “Educational opportunities for all of SFU and find the spaces and opportunities for those who wish to learn.”

Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1

Providing ongoing Inclusive Excellence training to all SFU leaders.

- 1 Create and pilot an Inclusive Excellence Leadership Development program (IELDP) for SFU’s Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team, and Chairs and Academic Directors, specifically in relation to anti-racism, anti-oppression, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- 2 Collaborate on scaling out the RESPECT Indigenous education program to ensure cultural safety for all Indigenous Peoples.
- 3 Develop concept, proposal and framework for a Centre for Inclusive Leadership Excellence.

OBJECTIVE 2

Providing EDI learning and training that is responsive to the evolving needs of our community.

- 1 Develop and implement a cohesive EDI learning and training framework that is accessible, comprehensive, and addresses the diverse needs of the university community. This framework will collate resources and provide a range of learning pathways, from communications and awareness campaigns to foundational knowledge to deeper development to practical applications for integrating EDI lenses and practices into learning, teaching, research and work at SFU.
- 2 Develop a comprehensive inventory of current SFU EDI initiatives, resources, and specialists or experts to ensure effective coordination, collaboration, information sharing and access to EDI supports.
- 3 Support a community of practice of EDI leads/practitioners to develop their local area action plans and build their EDI knowledge and capacity.

GOAL #4

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY EQUITY

This theme accounts for 6% of all analyzed comments, with a split of about 54% positive and 46% neutral or critical comments.

Goal

We have equitable employment practices in place for all aspects of the employment relationship, including recruitment, hiring, succession-planning, promotion, performance management, retention and exit.

“ [We need] specific support ... to advance recruitment and promotion activities (policy and procedures in TPC criteria, job ads, search procedures) ”

Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1

Advancing Employment and Pay Equity commitments in partnership with Employee Groups and subject to Collective Agreements.

OBJECTIVE 2

Attracting and retaining employees from equity-deserving groups¹⁰.

Actions

- 1 Relaunch SFU's employment equity advisory committee and ensure comprehensive implementation of its Employment Equity Policy (GP 19).
 - 2 Review the staff and faculty employment life-cycle from an equity-lens, including periodic market benchmark and pay equity surveys in alignment with collective and basic agreements where applicable, to develop plans for improvement.
 - 3 Ensure SFU completes and maintains its certification as a Living Wage employer.
-
- 1 Establish a BC Human Rights Commission-approved special program and internal guidance and training to facilitate preferential, limited, and/or targeted hiring to address the systemic and institutional underrepresentation of Indigenous and Black staff and faculty.
 - 2 Develop recruitment and retention programs and supports for underrepresented and equity-deserving groups based on promising practices internally and across the sector.
 - 3 Share data benchmarks and assist units to create target goals at all levels of the institutions to increase diversity where needed to reflect the communities we serve, especially in leadership positions and university governance structures.

¹⁰ This objective inherently assumes recruitment of equity-deserving faculty and staff based on designated groups in the Employment Equity Act who meet and exceed merit-based criteria for roles but are still underrepresented due to systemic barriers. Suggested reading 1) Employment Equity Act; 2) Henry F. James C. E. Li P. S. Kobayashi A. L. Smith M. S. Ramos H. & Enakshi D. (2017). The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities. UBC Press; 3) McDonald, A. (2021). ["The Racism of the 'Hard-to-Find' Qualified Black Candidate Trope"](#); and 4) Wang, Y. (2020). ["Researchers Seek to Improve Representation with Canadian Black Scientists Network"](#).

GOAL #5

EQUITY DATA

While this theme only accounted for 4% of the analyzed comments provided during the roundtable discussions, it has frequently been cited as a stumbling block to evidence-informed policy, decision-making and strategy development for EDI initiatives at SFU. It is possible that many constituents were already aware that the data taskforce was operational and so considered this theme as already in-progress, thus already spoken-for. SFU recognizes the significant importance of equity data and will continue this critical work as follows.

Goal

SFU regularly collects data to support equitable and accountable decision-making; and measure progress toward fulfilling institutional commitments to EDI.

“Starting to look at data - this is a great start... SFU not collecting data - how do we address things like diversity without knowing what this looks like @ SFU.”

Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1

Establishing an equity data taskforce.

- 1 Establish an ongoing Equity Data Taskforce with individuals in functional roles relevant to data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- 2 Develop a Terms of Reference for the working group, including a clear purpose and roles and responsibilities and ensure all compliance considerations such as those outlined in the British Columbia Anti-Racism Data Act for post-secondary institutions are integrated.

OBJECTIVE 2

Developing a data equity framework.

- 1 Establish clear and ethical (do no harm)¹¹ data governance procedures, protocols, and guidelines for collecting, storing, accessing, analyzing, safe-guarding, reporting, and communicating on EDI data (e.g., demographic, representation, and campus climate data). Establish protocols to ensure data sovereignty and sharing between SFU and Indigenous Peoples and groups.
- 2 Launch equity surveys: a) job applicant self-identification/declaration survey, b) faculty and staff equity census, c) student diversity census, and d) campus climate survey.
- 3 Develop and implement a strategy to ethically and seamlessly integrate demographic data into relevant administrative and human resource data sets, in order to identify patterns, trends, and potential solutions to equity and inclusion issues¹²; support SFU constituents with the skills to access, interpret, and use data to create, sustain, and advance EDI efforts.

¹¹ British Columbia Human Rights Commissioner (2021). Disaggregated data: Summary of recommendations to prevent harm to communities. Accessed February 13, 2023 from: <https://bchumanrights.ca/publications/datacollection-harm/>

¹² e.g., financial, procurement, enrollment, degree completion, recruitment, service, compensation, and turnover data

APPENDIX 1: EQUITY COMPASS FRAMEWORK USED FOR COMMUNITY DIALOGUES

Themes	Examples
DATA AND REPORTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Data taskforce→ Workplace and campus experience survey→ Reporting and communication
RESPECT AND BELONGING STRUCTURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Respect and safety principles→ Bullying and Harassment Hub→ Human Rights Office→ EDI suggestion intake form
EDUCATION & CAPACITY BUILDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Education for Reconciliation (RESPECT)→ Equity learning pathways→ Support units with strategic planning for EDI→ Community of practice for equity leads→ EDI Center of Excellence
EMPLOYMENT EQUITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Special programs for preferential and cluster hiring→ Employment life cycle equity review for staff and faculty→ Pay-equity reviews→ Living-wage
INCLUSION AND BELONGING CULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Circles of inclusion (e.g. Indigenous, Black, People of Colour and equity group supports, affinity groups, topic-based equity groups, etc.)→ Scarborough Charter→ Accessibility Act→ Events and engagement
EQUITY GOVERNANCE, POLICY, AND LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Definitions→ Mission and vision statements→ Principles and values→ Shared responsibility, accountability, and collaboration on EDI across SFU→ Academic mission consultation and alignment with Provost/student services supports

