



Towards Inclusive Excellence

A Report on McMaster University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

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Executive Summary

Towards Inclusive Excellence: A Report on McMaster University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy ("EDI Strategy Report") describes the strategic planning and management processes that were engaged, immediately following the April 2018 inaugural appointment of the Associate Vice-President Equity and Inclusion (AVPEI), leading to the launch of [McMaster's EDI Strategy](#) in 2019.

The EDI Strategy includes six Guiding Principles for Best Practice, a Four-Pillar EDI Framework for Strategic Action, and a 2019 - 2022 EDI Action Plan with identified strategic actions to achieve six broad Strategic Objectives.

The six guiding principles that will inform best practices in EDI planning and implementation are: cultural relevance, critical analysis, community ownership, collective responsibility, coordinated decentralization, and continuous improvement.

The four pillars and associated areas of focus and impact for strategic action are:

- Institutional Commitment and Capacity – related to leadership, governance, and accountability;
- Academic Content and Context – related to research, teaching and learning, and the broader learning experience;
- Interactional Capabilities and Climate – related to intrapersonal competencies (awareness, knowledge, and skills), interpersonal behaviours, and intergroup relations; and
- Community and Compositional Diversity – related to student access and success, employment equity, and community engagement.

The six thematic areas for strategic action towards six broad objectives detailed in the 2019 – 2022 EDI Action Plan are:

1. Communication and coordination of the EDI imperative
2. Data-informed and evidence-based EDI planning and decision-making
3. Inclusivity and interdisciplinarity in curricula and scholarship
4. Baseline EDI leadership training and development
5. Equity-seeking group consultation, engagement, and support
6. Recruitment and retention of equity-seeking groups (i) employees and (ii) students.

This Report is organized in four overarching sections: introduction and context, environmental assessment, strategy formulation, strategy execution and performance management. The case for EDI and the inclusive excellence imperative is provided in an evidentiary [Supplement](#) to this Report.

1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 The Inclusive Excellence Framework

Inclusive excellence envisions diversity and quality as ‘two sides of the same coin’. In the introduction to a series of three papers commissioned by the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AACU) as part of the AACU’s *Making Excellence Inclusive Initiative*, the authors write:

“Inclusive Excellence re-envisions both quality and diversity. It reflects a striving for excellence in higher education that has been made more inclusive by decades of work to infuse diversity into recruiting, admissions, and hiring; into the curriculum and co-curriculum; and into administrative structures and practices. It embraces newer forms of excellence, and has expanded ways to measure excellence, that takes into account research on learning and brain functioning, the assessment movement, and more nuanced accountability structures. Likewise, diversity and inclusion efforts move beyond numbers of student or numbers of programs as end goals. Instead, they are multilayered processes through which we achieve excellence in learning; research and teaching; student development; local and global community engagement; workforce development; and more.”¹

1.2 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (Defined)

To better understand the inclusive excellence framework, it is important to comprehend the concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and their relationship to excellence.

Diversity is a state or condition that reflects the broad ‘mix’ of differences in any community. In the university setting, *compositional diversity*² refers to the numeric and proportional representation of different peoples, across many intersecting dimensions of sociocultural group identities^{3,4}.

The inclusive excellence framework recognizes that meaningful inclusion of diverse peoples and perspectives is vital to stimulating the creativity and innovation needed to achieve the quality of research, teaching, service and governance that drives academic, educational and organizational excellence, distinguishing world-class institutions of higher learning.

¹ Williams, D.A., Berger, J.B., & McClendon, S.A. (2005). *Toward a model of inclusive excellence and change in postsecondary institutions*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

² Milem, J.F., Chang, M.J. & Antonio, A.L. (2005). *Making diversity work on campus: A research-based perspective*. Washington, DC: Association American Colleges and Universities

³ Jones, S.R. & McEwen, M.K. (2000). A conceptual model of multiple dimensions of identity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 41(1), 405 – 414.

⁴ Abes, E.S., Jones, S.R. & McEwen, M.K. (2007). Reconceptualizing the model of multiple dimensions of identity: The role of meaning-making capacity in the construction of multiple identities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(1), 1 – 22.

Inclusion is a sense of belonging and dignity, as well as experience of meaningful engagement and empowerment in any community.

A climate of inclusion is made possible through intentional and ongoing development of personal awareness, knowledge, and skills, and the active application of these individual competencies to enhancing interpersonal and intergroup relations, as well as removing institutional barriers to meaningful engagement of a diversity of community members.

Foundational to fostering inclusion in higher education is ensuring all community members experience equal opportunity to access, fully participate and thrive in the life and work of the university. However, pervasive personally mediated biases and persistent systemic structural and cultural inequities continue to reproduce and reinforce barriers to equal opportunity and inclusion for particular groups of peoples, collectively referred to as *equity-seeking groups*⁵. These groups are persistently underrepresented and underutilized in higher education^{6,7}.

Equity may be considered both an approach and a process that introduces actions to proactively reduce, if not remove, individual biases as well as institutional barriers to equal opportunity and inclusion.

1.3 Inclusive Excellence and Meritocracy

In higher education, many take the mistaken view that a *pure meritocracy* exists, irrespective of social identity and positionality and unrelated to educational and economic prospects, whereby people's capacity (intellectual aptitudes and qualities of character) and desire to learn and work in the academy are the only considerations in assessing the quality of or merit in their past accomplishments and their future potential for excellence.

This viewpoint has been labelled the *myth of meritocracy*. Stewart & Valian (2018) argue that, while a commitment to the *ideal* of meritocracy should remain a foundational higher educational virtue, in fact, not all peoples are on "equal footing" when it comes to access and inclusion in the academy⁸.

The inclusive excellence framework represents a paradigm shift away from the *myth of meritocracy*.

The framework recognizes that it is essential to apply an equity lens to all institutional policies and practices, in order to create equal opportunities for historically and contemporarily marginalized

⁵ For the purposes of this policy, the term "*equity-seeking groups*" will refer to groups of people who have historically faced, and continue to face, barriers to equal opportunity in higher education. The Federal Employment Equity Act designates the following four groups for particular equity and inclusion attention: Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples), persons who are members of racialized communities in accordance with the Act's definition of "visible minorities", women, and persons with disabilities. McMaster University also recognizes persons who identify as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and sexual orientation and gender identity minority identities) as *equity-seeking groups*.

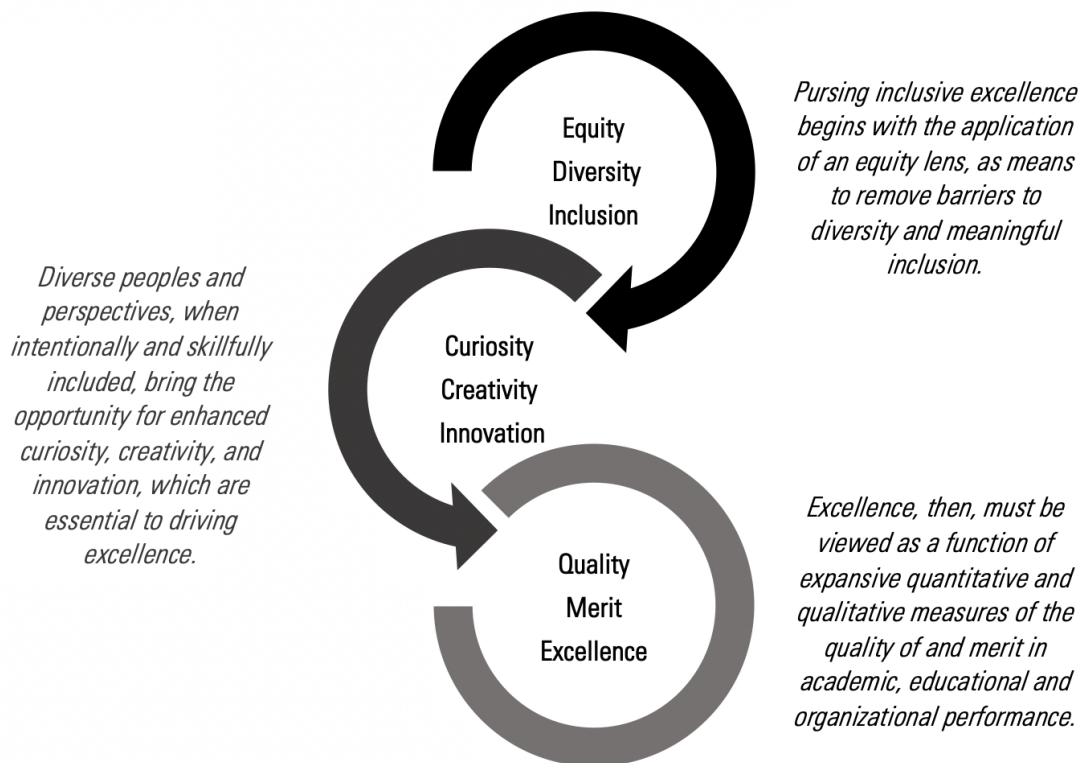
⁶ Bohnet, I. (2016). *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

⁷ Henry, F., Dua, E., James, C.E., Kobayashi, A., Li, P., Ramos, H. & Smith, M.S. (2017). *The equity myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian universities*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

⁸ Stewart, A.J. & Valian, V. (2018). *An inclusive academy: Achieving diversity and excellence*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

persons in higher education, so that they may have equal access to and meaningfully engage in the life and work of the university. In other words, to truly achieve educational, academic and organizational excellence, it is necessary to use the most expansive and inclusive lens to more successfully attract talent from but also to assess the merit of the diversity of peoples needed to enhance institutional creativity, innovation and excellence. Figure 1 depicts the integral relationship between diversity and quality within the inclusive excellence framework.

Figure 1. The Inclusive Excellence Framework: Relationship between Diversity and Quality



1.4 The Case for EDI and the Inclusive Excellence Imperative

Strongly and widely communicating the inclusive excellence imperative and making the case for EDI is critical to educational, academic, and organizational change efforts. An evidentiary [Supplement](#) to this [Report](#) discusses some of the seminal research and extant literature supporting three foundational assertions, which, taken together, convey the rationale for and urgency of embracing EDI and mobilizing institutional efforts towards inclusive excellence. The evidence in the Supplement discusses and demonstrates the evidence for (1) the benefits of diversity in higher education, (2) the barriers to equal opportunity and inclusion that persist in the academy; and (3) the best practices to advance inclusive excellence.

2.0 Environmental Assessment

The University's capacity to advance inclusive excellence priorities and goals will in large part be determined by its ability to identify and respond to enablers and barriers to EDI organizational change.

This section discusses external and internal factors, which act as enablers, strengthening and providing greater opportunities, or which act as barriers, frustrating and weakening institutional efforts to advance EDI and inclusive excellence priorities and goals.

2.1 SWOT Analysis

Figures 2 and 3 summarize the external opportunities and threats, as well as the internal strengths and weaknesses, which are further elaborated in the sections below.

Figure 2. External Forces: Institutional EDI Opportunities and Threats

Opportunities (external)	Threats (external)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Federal imperatives (EDI Dimensions Program, Tri-Agency EDI Requirements, GBV Framework, Anti-Racism Strategy)• Universities Canada EDI Principles and Action Plan• AODA Compliance Goals for 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• University budgetary constraints for the foreseeable future• Shifting Provincial priorities and expectations (SMA, Freedom of Speech, Financial Aid)• Labour Market Availability (Statistics Canada) data collection and reporting critiques as the employee categories are very broad and do not map well to some roles and contexts within the academy• Global and local issues that influence the experiences of McMaster community members and campus climate generally (e.g., the rise of xenophobia and white nationalism globally and in Canada, local hate motivated incidents reported, local community intergroup conflict – affecting LGBTQ+ and racialized communities)

Figure 3. Internal Factors: Organizational EDI Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths (internal)	Weaknesses (internal)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation for academic excellence (national and international) • Diverse student body across many dimensions of diversity, and new access programming to engage communities and attract the most underrepresented students (e.g., Indigenous, Black, Latinx) • Senior leadership (President and Vice-Presidents) engagement, sponsorship and support for the EDI Strategy • Several unit-level strategic EDI efforts emerging (e.g., champions, committees, advisory groups) • Pockets of unit-level EDI champions among Directors and Departments Chairs • Strong institutional Advisory Councils (Indigenous Education Council, Accessibility, Council, President's Committee on Building an Inclusive Community) • Expertise and trust in Equity and Inclusion Office growing staff complement • Established Office of Community Engagement • Codified Employment Equity Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of disaggregated student and employee demographic data for more accurate tracking of intersectional gaps in compositional diversity of community members • Lack of systematic demographic data collection on PhDs across disciplines to better under the representation and true market availability of prospective faculty members • Mediocre (almost 2/3) overall Employment Equity Workforce Census response rate among full-time/continuing employees • Significant gaps in racial diversity at the most senior leadership levels, and racialized communities report experiencing a lack of meaningful engagement in university decision-making and governance

2.2 McMaster's Profile and Reputation

McMaster University has a vision to achieve international distinction for creativity, innovation, and excellence as a student-centred, research-intensive university. The University distinguishes itself in its commitment to excellence through valuing and embodying integrity, inclusiveness, and teamwork alongside quality. McMaster's purpose is articulated as a dedication to advancing human and societal health and well-being locally and globally, by cultivating inclusive mindsets, collaborative learning, creativity, and innovative thinking.⁹ Implicit in McMaster's vision, values, and purpose is its aspiration towards *inclusive excellence* – a concept that recognizes the integral relationship between diversity and quality in research, teaching, service, and governance.¹⁰

⁹ Discover McMaster, <https://discover.mcmaster.ca/our-story/>

¹⁰ Williams, D.A., Berger, J.B., & McClendon, S.A. (2005). *Toward a model of inclusive excellence and change in postsecondary institutions*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

McMaster University is one of only four Canadian universities ranked among the top 75 in the world by the major global ranking systems. It has been named Canada's most research-intensive university by Research Infosource in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and it is home to more than 70 research centres and institutes.

McMaster is home to more than 31,000 students. In the fall of 2018, 13.3 per cent of all McMaster students were international students from 120 countries. It has more than 70 international exchange agreements. The McMaster Model, a problem-based, student-centred approach to learning, has been adopted worldwide. It is the winner of the [2018 Global Teaching Excellence Award](#) from the Higher Education Academy for our strengths in experiential learning and our commitment to global engagement.

McMaster is first in Canada and second in the world in Times Higher Education's [University Impact Rankings 2019](#) based on the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. It is the only university in Canada to serve as host to the United Nations University through the Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH). In 2019, and again in 2020, McMaster was named one of [Canada's Best Diversity Employers](#), in recognition of the university's ongoing work to advance EDI in the workplace, and to create a culture that reflects the richness of the McMaster community.

McMaster has articulated inclusive excellence as a priority, has adopted an EDI Strategy, and is committed to integrating inclusive excellence principles through its strategic documents. The University is in the process of developing an Indigenous Strategy.

2.3 University Equity and Inclusion Leadership and Accountability

2.3.1 Universities Canada Inclusive Excellence Imperative

In October of 2017, Universities Canada (UC) articulated a set of [Inclusive Excellences Principles](#) to guide universities in their efforts to advance EDI and inclusive excellence, and developed an [EDI Action Plan](#) to ensure accountability of the UC to deliver on its promise to support members universities in their efforts.

(a) Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion

In April of 2018, McMaster University hired its first Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion (AVPEI), reporting to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, and with an indirect (dotted line) reporting relationship to the President. The AVPEI works collaboratively with senior administrative and academic partners to lead the establishment of strategic equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) priorities and processes to advance inclusive excellence in teaching, research, service, and governance.

Within the U15 group of research-intensive institutions, McMaster is among six universities that have a senior administrative position dedicated to advancing EDI: British Columbia (Associate Vice-President), Calgary (Vice-Provost); Dalhousie (Vice-Provost), McMaster (Associate Vice-President), Queen's (Associate Vice-Principal), and Waterloo (Associate Vice-President). Five additional Canadian universities have established such roles: Guelph (Assistant Vice-President), Laurentian (Assistant Vice-President), Laurier (Associate Vice-President), Memorial (Vice-Provost), and Ryerson (Vice-President).

(b) Equity and Inclusion Office

Among forty-nine Canadian degree-granting publicly funded English-speaking universities, McMaster is one of thirty-five schools with institutional offices to address human rights, equity, diversity, and inclusion issues and mandates¹¹. The AVPEI oversees McMaster's [Equity and Inclusion Office](#) (EIO), which includes the [Human Rights & Dispute Resolution Program](#), the [Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office](#), the [AccessMAC Program](#); and the Equity and Inclusion Education Program. The EIO has a broad and proactive mandate to work with campus partners to develop, promote, and support initiatives which build McMaster's capacity to foster a culture of respect, equity, and inclusion. The EIO has nine staff members, in addition to the AVPEI, and an annual operating budget of \$1.3 million, 93% of which is allocated to salaries and benefits. In 2019, the President's Office contributed \$100,000 over two years, to support intersectional anti-racism educational programming needs, and the Provost's Office contributed \$100,000 in Strategic Alignment Funds to launch the EDI Strategy.

2.3.2 EDI-Related University Committees and Councils

(a) President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC)

The AVPEI is the co-chair of the [President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community](#) (PACBIC) – a body established in 2002 “to contribute to the third goal of the university's then new strategic plan: ‘to build an inclusive community with a shared purpose’ (*Refining Directions*, 2002). The PACBIC Priorities & Planning (P&P) Steering Committee coordinates work for and by the PACBIC, largely through liaison with several sub-committees established to focus attention on and/or mobilize efforts to address emergent and ongoing EDI issues and priorities. Currently, PACBIC has five such sub-committees: the First Nations, Métis & Inuit (FNMI) Priorities Group; the Inter-Faith (IF) Issues Working Group; the Disability Inclusion, Madness, Accessibility, Neurodiversity (DIMAND) Working Group; the Race Racialization & Racism (R3) Working Group; and the Gender and Sexualities (G&S) Working Group. The Equity and Inclusion Office receives and administers a \$25,000 annual allocation from the Provost's Office to support PACBIC priorities.

¹¹ Dua, E. & Bhanji, N. (2017). Shifting terrains: A picture of the institutionalization of equity in Canadian universities. In Henry, F., James, C., Li, P. S., Kobayashi, A. L., Smith, M., Ramos, H., & Enakshi, D., *The equity myth: Racialization and indigeneity at Canadian universities* (pp. 171 – 205). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

(b) McMaster's Accessibility Council (MAC)

The AVPEI is a member of the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC). The MAC reports to the President through the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Administration).

The Council is made up of senior officers of the University and it provides a mechanism for planning, reviewing, and evaluating the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) Standard within the University. It is responsible for ensuring not only the University's compliance with these minimum AODA Standards, but also identifying, promoting, and supporting aspirational accessibility and universal inclusion goals and priorities. In addition to the MAC, the University has established a Barrier-Free Standards Committee to meet and exceed barrier-free standards for accessibility and disability inclusion. As well, an Employee Accessibility Network has been established by the University, as a key constituency group for consultation with persons with disabilities.

(c) Indigenous Education Council (IEC)

McMaster's [Indigenous Education Council](#) (IEC) is the primary body with responsibility for promoting and advocating for the advancement of Indigenous education, championing the needs of Indigenous students, staff and faculty members, and providing advice and support on all Indigenous matters which relate to the University's mission.

The IEC includes representatives from the University's senior administration to ensure a direct link to the governing bodies. In keeping with the Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework 2011, developed by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the IEC works to "ensure that Aboriginal people are consistently and regularly engaged in decision making within the institution."

(d) Unit-Level EDI Councils and Committee

Some administrative and academic units at McMaster have identified dedicated EDI champions and established EDI bodies to advance inclusive excellence. Localized efforts, working within a "coordinated decentralization" framework, are being pursued in; the Libraries, University Technology Services, the Faculty of Health Sciences, the School of Medicine, and the Faculty of Engineering, for example.

2.3.3 University Initiatives Aligned with Government Imperatives

The Federal and Provincial governments have established legislation and various related initiatives to promote accessibility, equity, and inclusion in institutional living, teaching and learning, research and other working environments within universities. Below is a summary of the relevant legislation and initiatives, alongside McMaster University's policies, procedures, guidelines, statements, and frameworks that are foundational to fostering such environments.

(a) Fundamental Rights and Freedoms

The federal Human Rights Act (1977), the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982), and the Ontario Human Rights Code (1990) established University obligations to protect certain fundamental freedoms, including freedom from harassment and discrimination in living, learning, and working environments.

In 2018, the Provincial Government announced the expectation that all universities develop Free Speech policies, with accompanying university reporting requirements in relation to any complaints of campus freedom of expression violations.

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) has been identified by the Ontario Government as the organization responsible for monitoring the adherence of universities to the government's freedom of expression policy and reporting expectations.

In 2019, the Federal Government released an [Anti-Racism Strategy for 2019 – 2022](#).

McMaster's [Position on Freedom of Expression](#) articulates a fundamental commitment to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, while discussing the legal boundaries on free speech set out in both the Criminal Code of Canada and the Human Rights Code.

McMaster's [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#), recently updated in 2019, says:

The University upholds a fundamental commitment to freedom of expression and association for all its members and to academic freedom for faculty. In exercising those freedoms, all its members are required to respect the rights and freedoms of others, including the right to freedom from Discrimination and Harassment.

The University recognizes that supporting an environment free of Discrimination and Harassment is important for the well-being and dignity of individuals as well as for the overall climate and welfare of the University community. Accordingly, the University is committed to providing the policies, resources, and organizational structures required to support an environment free from Discrimination and Harassment. (p. 2)

In order of date of last revision, below is a list of related policies and guiding documents that serve to reinforce protected rights and freedoms as well as to foster inclusion:

- [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) (2020)
- [Workplace and Environmental Health and Safety Policy](#) (2020)
- [Freedom of Expression, Protest, and Dissent: Guidance Document for Event Organizers and Participants](#) (2018)

- [Hearing Procedure for the Board-Senate Hearing Panel for Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Violence](#), (2017)
- [Policy on] [Academic Accommodations of Student with Disabilities](#) (2017)
- [Guide and Procedures for Workplace Accommodation](#) (2015)
- [Policy on Workplace Accommodation](#) (2015)
- [Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances](#) (2015)
- Forward with Integrity: The Next Phase (2015)
- Forward with Integrity (2011)
- [Statement on Academic Freedom](#) (2011)
- [Code of Conduct for Faculty and Procedure for Taking Disciplinary Action](#) (1994)
- [Policy Statement on Inclusive Communications](#) (1990)
- [Human Rights and International Activities](#) (1990)
- [Statement on Building an Inclusive Community with a Shared Purpose](#) (2010)

McMaster's [Human Rights & Dispute Resolution Program](#) (HRDRP) is housed within the EIO. The HRDRP is the University Intake Office that is available for any campus community members wishing to consult about or make a harassment or discrimination report or complaint. There are three additional University Intake Offices: Student Support & Case Management Office (Student Affairs) for students, Employee and Labour Relations (Human Resources Services) for employees, and the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) Professionalism Office for FHS community members.

The EIO also houses an Equity and Inclusion Education Program, which offers training, professional development, and educational initiatives and events for students, faculty and staff, to build campus community capabilities and capacity to foster equitable and inclusive learning and working environments.

Statistics on campus harassment and discrimination consultations and complaints, as well as proactive equity and inclusion education initiatives are published in the [Equity and Inclusion Office Annual Report](#). With respect to hate/bias incidents, McMaster Security Services collects statistics on reported campus incidents suspected of being hate/bias-motivated crimes and reported campus incidents with hate/bias overtones.

Security Services investigates every reported campus incident, regardless of whether the incident meets the criminal bar. Security Services also collaborate with the Equity and Inclusion Office to enhance methods to collect disaggregated campus hate/bias incident data to inform proactive educational programming and safety planning, as well as responsive support services.

McMaster Security Services liaises with the Hamilton Police Service (HPS) on hate/bias incidents and submits campus year-end statistics for inclusion in the annual HPS Hate/Bias Statistical Report. The 2018 HPS Report indicated that the greatest number of reported incidents related to racial bias, followed by religion, and then sexual orientation.¹²

In April of 2018, the [Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre \(HARRC\)](#) – a pilot project involving the City of Hamilton, McMaster University, and the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI) – was launched to gather information regarding racism-related issues occurring in Hamilton, in order to better inform City Council on community issues and concerns so that it may strive to eliminate racism and racism related issues in our city. In February of 2019, the HARRC was paused to allow the partners to review and renew plans to achieve the Centre’s envisioned goals. The City of Hamilton has retained a consultant to engage with stakeholders and establish an independent Board of Directors for the operations of the HARRC.

The surfacing of alt-right ideologies and xenophobia across Canada¹³ in the last few years, along with ongoing geopolitical tensions and global intergroup conflict, has manifested in heightened backlash against equity and inclusion efforts from some corners of society, which has been affecting campus climates. While this uptick in xenophobia may be frustrating university EDI efforts, there is not yet evidence that this uptick has undermined the sector’s commitment and momentum to advancing inclusive excellence priorities. That said, Universities will have to continue to be diligent in presenting counternarratives and counteractions to any resistance which threatens to contribute to any slippage with respect to progress on institutional EDI-related priorities and goals.

(b) Accessibility

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) stipulates the duty to accommodate persons with disabilities and establishes imperatives for universal design in protected social areas, including housing, employment, and education.

In 2018, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released a Policy on [Accessible Education for Student with Disabilities](#), which replaces the 2004 OHRC [Guidelines on Accessible Education](#).

The University’s [Policy on Accessibility](#), last updated in 2010, commits McMaster to:

...fostering, creating and maintaining a barrier-free environment for all individuals providing equal rights and opportunities, including:

a) promoting a respectful attitude for persons with disabilities;

¹² Hamilton Police Services, 2018 Hate Bias Statistical Report:

https://hamiltonpolice.on.ca/sites/default/files/2018_annual_hate_bias_crime_report.pdf

¹³ Gonick, C., & Levy, A. (2017, Winter). BARBARA PERRY on the FAR RIGHT in CANADA. *Canadian Dimension*, 51, 13-21. Retrieved from <http://libaccess.mcmaster.ca/libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/docview/2049973188?accountid=12347>

- b) promoting awareness of the needs and abilities of persons with disabilities;
- c) informing the University community about the services available to persons with disabilities and seeking to ensure that such services are delivered in ways that promote equity; and
- d) providing support services, subject to certain limitations.

McMaster's [Accessibility Program](#) (branded AccessMac) is housed within the Equity and Inclusion Office. AccessMac is responsible for maintaining the online [Accessibility Hub](#), promoting university accessibility priorities and processes, and collaborating with campus partners to design and deliver educational programs to build campus community capabilities and capacity to foster accessible and inclusive learning and working environments for persons with disabilities.

Statistics on accessibility and disability inclusion initiatives are published in the [Equity and Inclusion Office Annual Report](#).

McMaster introduced its first Accessibility Plan in compliance with the Ontario Disabilities Act (ODA) in the 2003-2004 academic year. In 2012, McMaster drafted an expanded [Accessibility Plan, 2012 - 2025](#), with a set of progressive activities identified to forecast full implementation of the AODA standards by 2025.

The Accessibility Plan is updated annually to reflect progress made towards full compliance with the AODA. [McMaster University's AODA Compliance Scorecard](#) indicates the AODA regulations with which the University is currently in compliance, is approaching compliance, and is not yet in compliance.

(c) [Sexual Violence Prevention and Response](#)

In 2009, the Ontario government introduced Bill 168, the [Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act \(Violence and Harassment in the Workplace\)](#).

In 2016, the Provincial Government passed Bill 132, the [Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act \(Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment\)](#), with accompanying university reporting requirements in relation to campus sexual violence prevention and response.

In 2019, the Federal Government, Status of Women, released a [Framework to Address and Prevent Gender-Based Violence at Post-Secondary Institutions in Canada](#).

These pieces of government legislation and related initiatives establish University obligations and imperatives to prevent and respond to campus gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and intimate partners violence.

McMaster's [Sexual Violence Policy](#), last updated in 2020, says:

The University is committed to creating an environment in which Community Members feel able to disclose experiences of Sexual Violence and access support, accommodations and information on complaint and reporting options...[and]...to ensuring that all individuals making disclosures or who are parties to a complaint, be they Complainants or Respondents, will be treated with dignity and respect, will be guaranteed due process and procedural fairness, will be afforded privacy and confidentiality within its reasonable limits, and will have access to appropriate support and assistance throughout.

In order of date of last revision, below is a list of related policies and guiding documents that serve to reinforce commitments to sexual violence prevention and response:

- [Sexual Violence Response Protocol](#) (2020)
- [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (2020)
- [Workplace and Environmental Health and Safety Policy](#) (2020)
- [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) (2019)
- [Hearing Procedure for the Board-Senate Hearing Panel for Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Violence](#), (2017)
- [Policy on Violence in the Workplace](#) (2010)
- [Faculty General Grievance Procedure](#) (1999)
- [Code of Conduct for Faculty and Procedure for Taking Disciplinary Action](#) (1994)

McMaster has recently expanded its [Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office](#) (SVPRO) within the Equity and Inclusion Office. The SVPRO is the Central University Intake Office for any campus community members wishing to consult about or make a sexual violence report or complaint. Additional Intake Offices are available to support community members, working collaboratively with the SVPRO: the Human Rights & Dispute Resolution Program (Equity and Inclusion Office), the Student Support & Case Management Office (Student Affairs), Employee and Labour Relations (Human Resources Services), and the Faculty of Health Sciences Professionalism Office.

Statistics on campus sexual violence consultations, disclosures, and complaints, as well as proactive prevention education programs are published in the [Equity and Inclusion Office Annual Report](#).

(d) Employment Equity

The Employment Equity Act (1986/1995) and the Federal Contractors Program (1986) compel employers receiving federal contracts equal to or greater than \$1M to demonstrate progress on employment equity workforce gaps as a condition for receiving funds.

The University does not currently receive over \$1M in Federal contracts, and therefore is not obliged to comply with the Federal Contractors Program (FCP) requirements to collect and report on employment equity workforce data as well as to demonstrate efforts to close employment equity workforce representation gaps. However, given McMaster's commitment to EDI, the University operates *in the spirit of* the Federal Contract Program (FCP), guided by employment equity best practices. McMaster's approach to employment equity supports inclusive excellence priorities and goals, while ensuring "compliance-readiness" if or when the University may be in a position to bid for a Federal contract and be subject, as a consequence of receiving funds, to periodic FCP audits.

McMaster's [Employment Equity Policy](#), last updated in 2017, says:

McMaster University is committed to building a diverse and inclusive community, where the rights of all individuals and groups are protected and all members feel safe, valued, empowered and respected for their contributions to the shared purposes of the University: research and education excellence. Inclusion occurs when systems and structures facilitate full participation by all community members and where members are treated equitably for their contributions. Employment Equity is a key part of our progress towards inclusivity in the employment relationship, and is an ongoing process that identifies, addresses and mitigates barriers in employment policies, practices and procedures.

McMaster's [Employment Equity Program](#) is housed within the Human Resource Services.

With respect to building capacity to advance employment equity, in 2019, the University invested funds in its Human Resource Services (HRS) to expand the talent acquisition and employment equity team within the Organizational Development unit. Three Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff members were added to meet increasing administrative and operational needs associated with enhancing workforce recruitment and retention efforts, including the integration of EDI and inclusive excellence principles and practices.

The AVPEI works very closely and collaborative with the Assistant Vice-President/Chief Human Resources Officer to develop and implement plans to advance McMaster's [Employment Equity Framework](#) established in 2016. As part of this Framework, McMaster administered its first [Employment Equity Census](#) that same year, with a commitment to publish its [Diversity Counts: Employment Equity Census Report](#) every two years. In order of date of last revision, below is a list of related policies and guiding documents that serve to reinforce commitments to employment equity and inclusion in the workforce:

- Policy on Recruitment and Selection of Faculty (2020)
- Handbook on Recruitment and Selection of Faculty (2020)
- [Staff Hiring Guidelines](#) (2016)

- [Guide to Employment Equity](#) (2016)
- [Recommendations of the Task Force on the Integration of Female Faculty](#) (1992)

Across the sector, universities have highlighted the limitations of demographic data and employment equity labour market availability data collected by Statistics Canada, as well as the limitations of voluntary self-identification workforce census data collected by Universities. For example, the national occupational code (NOC) and employment equity occupational group (EEOG) categories do not align perfectly with the roles within the university, making it difficult to make direct comparisons between the University workforce data and the Canadian population and workforce data. Furthermore, the workforce data collected does not sufficiently disaggregate equity-seeking groups to account for within-group differences in employment outcomes.

There remain questions about whether and how the labour market availability data accounts for already existing social inequities that affect employment-related data. There are also concerns about the appropriateness of aiming for representational parity with labour market availability of equity-seeking groups when the availability appears to be low, whether correctly so or not – this does not inspire aspirational goal setting to establish critical masses of equity-seeking groups, but rather incentivizes behaviour that, at best, meets minimum standards for compliance purposes.

University surveys also face challenges in ensuring strong census response rates, in engendering trust among employees to disclose such sensitive self-identification information, and in accounting for intersectionality of identity, for example. With respect to self-identification workplace census and applicant survey data used for recruitment purposes, any hiring efforts that appear to superficially aim for meeting numeric “targets” have been contested by members of equity-seeking groups who report experiencing these approaches as dehumanizing in their reference to individuals as ‘targets’, in their neglect of considering the unique self-identification challenges facing different equity-seeking groups, and in their perceived contradiction with a climate of marginalization that is often experienced by these equity-seeking groups if hired.

Notwithstanding these limitations, collecting self-identification data is critically important to supporting data-informed decision making, with the caveat that employment equity efforts must take into consideration the unique challenges and complexities which may face the various equity-seeking populations when implementing these surveys.

McMaster recognizes the importance of moving beyond legislative compliance, audit objectives, and minimum numeric representational ‘targets’ determined on the basis of labour market and organizational census self-identification data. To that end, the university is committed to exploring and establishing more aspirational accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion goals, which take into consideration disaggregated and intersectional qualitative and quantitative data collected over time.

In 2018, the University undertook to improve the format of the Employment Equity Census Report, as well as data visualization and reporting methods. Additionally, McMaster has developed resources and tools to enhance self-identification data collection and analysis to inform employee search processes.

(e) Student Access

The Province has earmarked differing levels of funding to support initiatives that advance access and retention for these populations year over year. It should be noted that these initiatives exist in the context of decades of diminishing provincial funding for Ontario post-secondary education, more recent Provincial Government tuition freezes, and the lowering of financial aid thresholds.

Through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, the Provincial Government has continued to identify student access and retention as priorities for the following under-represented learners: Indigenous students, first generation/first in family to attend post-secondary education, and students with disabilities. HEQCO has long established a Student Access and Retention Consortium, which incentivizes the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs to enhance student access and retention through the provision of research funding and a community of practice for researchers and practitioners.

With respect to its capacity to advance student access, McMaster invested funds in 2019 to add one FTE Access Strategy Program Manager within the Office of Community Engagement (OCE). The AVPEI also works in consultation and collaboratively with the Associate Vice-President/Dean of Students and alongside leaders in the OCE to support McMaster's [2019 Access Framework and Strategy](#).

2.4 Inclusive Excellence Priorities for the Research Ecosystem

In 2017/18, the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat (TIPS) codified its EDI Action Plan Requirements for all universities seeking Tri-agency funding for Canada Research Chairs Program (CRCP). [McMaster's CRC EDI Action Plan](#) outlines the efforts that the University continues to undertake, as well as planned initiatives, to build a diverse and inclusive community, and to enhance the participation of members of underrepresented equity-seeking groups in CRCP.

In 2018, the Federal Government spearheaded consultations on a Made-in-Canada Athena Swan Initiative, culminating in the launch of a newly branded EDI Dimensions Program, which is administered by the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). Coinciding with the launch, the EDI Dimensions Program distributed a limited number of EDI Capacity Building Grants, primarily to small institutions seeking to develop their EDI infrastructure and capacity to meet Tri-agency goals. Although the size of McMaster precluded it from being eligible to apply for this grant, the University signaled its commitment to advancing EDI by being one of the first universities to endorse the Federal Government's [EDI Dimensions Charter](#).

In 2019, following the announcement of the EDI Dimensions Charter, the Federal Government initiated an accompanying [EDI Dimensions Pilot Program](#) to “publicly recognize post-secondary institutions seeking to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in their environments and across the research ecosystem.” The EDI Dimensions Pilot Program cohort includes seventeen participating institutions and many more affiliate institutions. McMaster was accepted as an Affiliate Member to the EDI Dimensions Pilot Program, making it eligible to access repository of EDI tools and resources, as well as to participate in a cross-institution EDI community of practice.

In 2019, the [Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Programs](#) (ACEDIP) for the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat (TIPS) was tasked with providing advice on the development, implementation, and evaluation of the new EDI Dimensions Pilot Program, thereby expanding the Committee’s mandate to broadly advise on [Tri-agency EDI Requirements and Practices](#) for the CRCP.

In 2019, McMaster’s AVPEI began a three year term as one of the advisory members of the ACEDIP, positioning the AVPEI to both provide input to help shape the TIPS EDI requirements as well as to receive and disseminate timely and detailed information, resources and tools to support researches to meet emerging EDI-related requirements.

While the Tri-agency Council has rolled out across-the-board EDI expectations for all of its programs, the information and resources needed to support researchers to develop the knowledge and skills to meet the EDI expectations are not yet as robust as is needed to build capacity. Challenges also persist in relation to establishing appropriate quantitative demographic representational goals, to accounting for the intersectionality of representation by collecting and analyzing the disaggregated, and to moving beyond the numbers to identify qualitative information which may reflect progress on advancing broader EDI and inclusive excellence processes and outcomes.

2.5 University Indigenous and Global Engagement Priorities

While the work of decolonizing and internationalizing the academy is in many ways distinct from the work of advancing broad EDI principles and priorities, there are complementarities across these efforts and, therefore, inclusive excellence synergies to be gained by ensuring alignment across McMaster’s Indigenous Strategy, Global Engagement Strategy, and EDI Strategy.

(a) Indigenous Priorities and Strategy

In its nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, the Government of Canada has, in the last decade, renewed its commitment to recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership, “rooted in the principles of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNDRIP)”¹⁴.

¹⁴ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1309374407406/1309374458958>

In June of 2015, Universities Canada articulated a statement of [Principles on Indigenous Education](#), encouraging universities to enact education-related recommendations emergent from the [Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#) (2012/2015) and aligned with UNDRIP principles.

McMaster is located on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Mississauga Nations and, within the lands protected by the Dish with One Spoon wampum agreement. The University's main campus is situated near Six Nations of the Grand River, the most populated Indigenous reserve in Canada. McMaster is the only research-intensive university in Canada located in such close proximity to an Indigenous reserve and the university has built trusted relationships that date back more than 25 years. The University has been enriched by the skills, knowledge, and wisdom of Indigenous partners, scholars, students, and staff, and the university is committed to continuing to work in relationship with Indigenous communities to create meaningful pathways for Indigenous learners and advance Indigenous priorities identified for the institution.

One example of the campus-wide commitment to Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation is McMaster's Indigenous Research Institute, which is the only institute at the university that is fully supported by all six Faculties. McMaster's Indigenous Education Council is developing an Indigenous Strategy to specifically highlight and advance Indigenous priorities across the university.

(b) [Global Engagement Priorities and Strategy](#)

In 2019, the Federal Government introduced an [International Education Strategy](#) to promote Canadian education for inbound international students and work/study abroad opportunities for Canadian students through a new outbound mobility pilot program.

The pilot program aims to: increase the participation of underrepresented students in international learning opportunities; diversify the destination countries students choose to visit; and test innovative approaches to reduce barriers to study/work abroad. Universities Canada and Colleges and Institutes Canada were selected to administer the funds to support the new International Education Strategy Outbound Mobility Pilot Program.

McMaster's most recent Vision and [Model for Global Engagement](#) was developed in 2016. Its framework for strategic planning identifies five key strategic focus areas:

- Integration of international, intercultural and global dimensions of the student experience;
- Support for international research and scholarship;
- Creation of a global identity;
- Strategic approach to international collaboration; and
- Enhancement of internal coordination and communication.

2.6 A Retrospective of McMaster's EDI Plans

Talking stock of McMaster's past planning efforts and progress on EDI is an important consideration when thinking about the University's organizational capacity for EDI change.

In 2006, the PACBIC commissioned a review of past EDI efforts, which resulted in a report with recommendations to inform the development of an Inclusion Plan. The report, entitled *Towards a comprehensive inclusion plan for McMaster University: Translating McMaster's institutional commitment to inclusion into organizational practices and policies*, was released in January of 2008.

The 2008 PACBIC report catalogued and reviewed historical reports commissioned or undertaken to guide EDI-related institutional planning.

The following is a list of EDI-related McMaster reports from 1990 to 2008:

- Report of the Task Force on Integration of Female Faculty at McMaster University, 1990 (Yates Pay Equity Report Recommendations and Remediation)
- Recommendations of the Task Force on the Integration of Female Faculty, 1992
- Recognizing Sexual Diversity at McMaster, 2001
- The Report from Indigenous Studies
- The Racial Inclusion Report, 2005, prepared by Winston Tinglin
- The Inclusion Report, 2006, prepared by Ibis Consulting
- The Racial Inclusion Retreat Recommendations, 2007
- The Ibis Report Response and Recommendations, 2007
- Report on the Challenging Islamophobia on Campus Initiative, 2016
- McMaster's annual Accessibility Reports and Plans, annual Human Rights and Equity Services reports, and regular PACBIC reports to the President

The 2008 PACBIC report proposed three broad recommendations in relation to planning a comprehensive institutional "inclusion plan":

- The integration of inclusion into ongoing institutional planning and reporting emphasizes: meaningful accountability and governance structures; communication of, education on, and support for inclusion goals for leaders; systematic data collection on inclusion and effectiveness of efforts; and regular reporting on progress.
- Proactivity in enhancing inclusion, emphasizing: a proactive and purposeful approach in the form of an action committee; support from a network of offices and services; and support from senior leadership to effect change.

- Action on significant current issues, emphasizing: attention to all equity-seeking groups; improvement of recruitment and selection processes; implementation of an employment equity program; addressing emergent climate issues and trends in harassment and bullying; and work with key offices to enhance response to requests for accommodations for persons with disabilities.

In the decade between 2008 and 2018, there is no doubt there were many accomplishments in relation to advancing some institutional and departmental EDI-related interests, many of which were aligned with the recommendations proposed in the PACBIC report.

In 2011 and again in 2015, McMaster's then President reinforced and reinvigorated an emphasis on "building an inclusive community, promoting equity and fairness, and celebrating [McMaster's] rich diversity" (*Forward with Integrity: The Next Phase*, 2015).

The President's *Forward with Integrity* letters to the community clearly reinforced a vision for McMaster that sees value for diversity and inclusion as core to the mission of the University. The anchoring of these values in the *Forward with Integrity* letters guided McMaster's commitment to EDI in the last decade.

Moving forward, the work of enacting McMaster's EDI commitments in a more systematic fashion than it has been to this point will be facilitated by the introduction of an intentional, integrated, and institution-wide strategy to move the institution from its strong commitment to EDI to demonstrable action and progress towards inclusive excellence.

3.0 EDI Strategy Formulation

3.1 Principles of Best Practice

McMaster's ongoing strategic EDI planning, implementation and evaluation efforts to advance inclusive excellence will be guided by the following principles:

- Cultural relevance – by responding to: (a) the distinct Indigenous rights, entitlements and issues, and recognizing the primacy of education, relationship-building, and reconciliation in advancing Indigenous priorities, as well as (b) the unique lived experiences and barriers faced by different equity-seeking groups, and recognizing the importance of considering both intersectional and disaggregated issues and needs of these differently marginalized groups;
- Critical analysis – by acknowledging the role of power relations and systemic inequities, and working simultaneously to address individual, structural and cultural barriers to change;
- Community ownership – by promoting transparent communication, regular consultation, and meaningful opportunities for campus-wide engagement;

- Collective responsibility – by developing individual and organizational capacity building, as well as urging senior level accountability and distributed unit-level leadership;
- Coordinated de-centralization – by facilitating cross-campus collaborations and partnerships to elevate institutional and unit-level priorities; and
- Continuous improvement – by undertaking research, assessment, and evaluation to inform evidence-based planning and decision-making.

3.2 A Framework for Strategic Action

McMaster's Strategy is underpinned by a Four-Pillar Framework for Strategic Action (Figure 4) that is informed by current scholarship and promising practices for the design, implementation and assessment of comprehensive system-wide equity, diversity and inclusion strategies and action plans in higher education¹⁵.



Figure 4. McMaster's EDI Framework for Strategic Action

¹⁵ Scholarship advancing models for advancing EDI-related priorities and goals in the academy:

Bauman, E.M. (2004). The Diversity Scorecard: A learning approach to institutional change. *Change* (January/February), 44-52.

Bensimon, E.M. (2012). The equity scorecard: Theory of change. In E.M. Bensimon & L. Malcom (Eds.), *Confronting equity issues on campus: Implementing the equity scorecard in theory and practice*, (pp. 17 – 44). Sterling, VA: Stylus

Hurtado, S., Alvarez, C.L., Guillermo-Wann, C., Cuellar, M., & Arellano, L. (2012). A model for diverse learning environments: The scholarship on creating and assessing conditions for student success. In J.C. Smart, & M.B. Paulsen (Eds.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 26, pp. 41 - 122). Netherlands: Springer Science + Business Media B.V.

Smith, D.G. (2015). *Diversity's promise for higher education: Making it work, 2nd ed.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Williams, D.A., Berger, J.B., & McClendon, S.A. (2005). *Toward a model of inclusive excellence and change in postsecondary institutions*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

McMaster's EDI Framework for Strategic Action articulates a broad aspirational goal or vision for what successful impact might look like across each of four strategic pillars.

For the Organizational Commitment and Capacity pillar, the broad goal is:

- to establish and enact organizational systems, structures, policies, and processes that mobilize and sustain EDI commitments and resources through leadership, governance, and accountability. The Institutional Commitment and Capacity pillar is a foundational driver and enabler of the other pillars.

For the Academic Content and Context pillar, the broad goal is:

- to enhance and innovate: research and academic programs; teaching and learning practices; and broader educational opportunities, in a manner that exemplifies inclusive excellence, societal relevance, and impact in diverse local, regional, national, and global communities.

For the Interactional Capabilities and Climate pillar, the broad goal is:

- to build and support a community continuously developing attitudes, knowledge, and skills to foster positive interpersonal and intergroup relations, a culture of respect and inclusion, and a climate where all members of the community experience dignity and belonging.

For the Community and Compositional Diversity pillar, the broad goal is:

- to attract and engage a campus community of learners, scholars, practitioners, and leaders that reflects local and national demographic diversity, including groups historically and contemporarily underrepresented, underutilized, and underserved in higher education

3.3 Objectives for Strategic Action Planning

Six themes emerged from the 2019 campus-wide EDI Strategy consultation process (Appendix I), and these themes informed the development of six strategic objectives to span a three-year time horizon from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2022.

The six objectives are to enhance:

1. campus community understanding of inclusive excellence as an institutional imperative, and campus-wide EDI efficacy;
2. systems and resources to support data-informed and evidence-based EDI-related planning, decision-making and practice;
3. inclusivity and opportunities for interdisciplinarity in curricula and scholarship across departments and faculties;
4. inclusive leadership capabilities by establishing baseline EDI training requirements and offering ongoing professional development;

5. opportunities for meaningful consultation with, engagement of, and provision of support to equity-seeking groups; and
6. recruitment and retention of equity-seeking (i) employees and (ii) students.

Figures 5 – 11 depict the strategic actions planned under each of the six objectives.

Short-term actions are expected to be completed within 6 – 12 months of the launch of the EDI Strategy. Medium term actions are expected to be completed within 12 – 24 months, and long-term action between 24 – 36 months.

More detailed descriptions of the strategic actions under each objective are provided in Figures 14 – 26, which list the strategic actions tasked to each of the EDI Action Plan Implementation Teams.

Figure 5. Strategic Actions Towards Objective 1

To enhance campus community understanding of inclusive excellence as an institutional imperative, and campus-wide efficacy

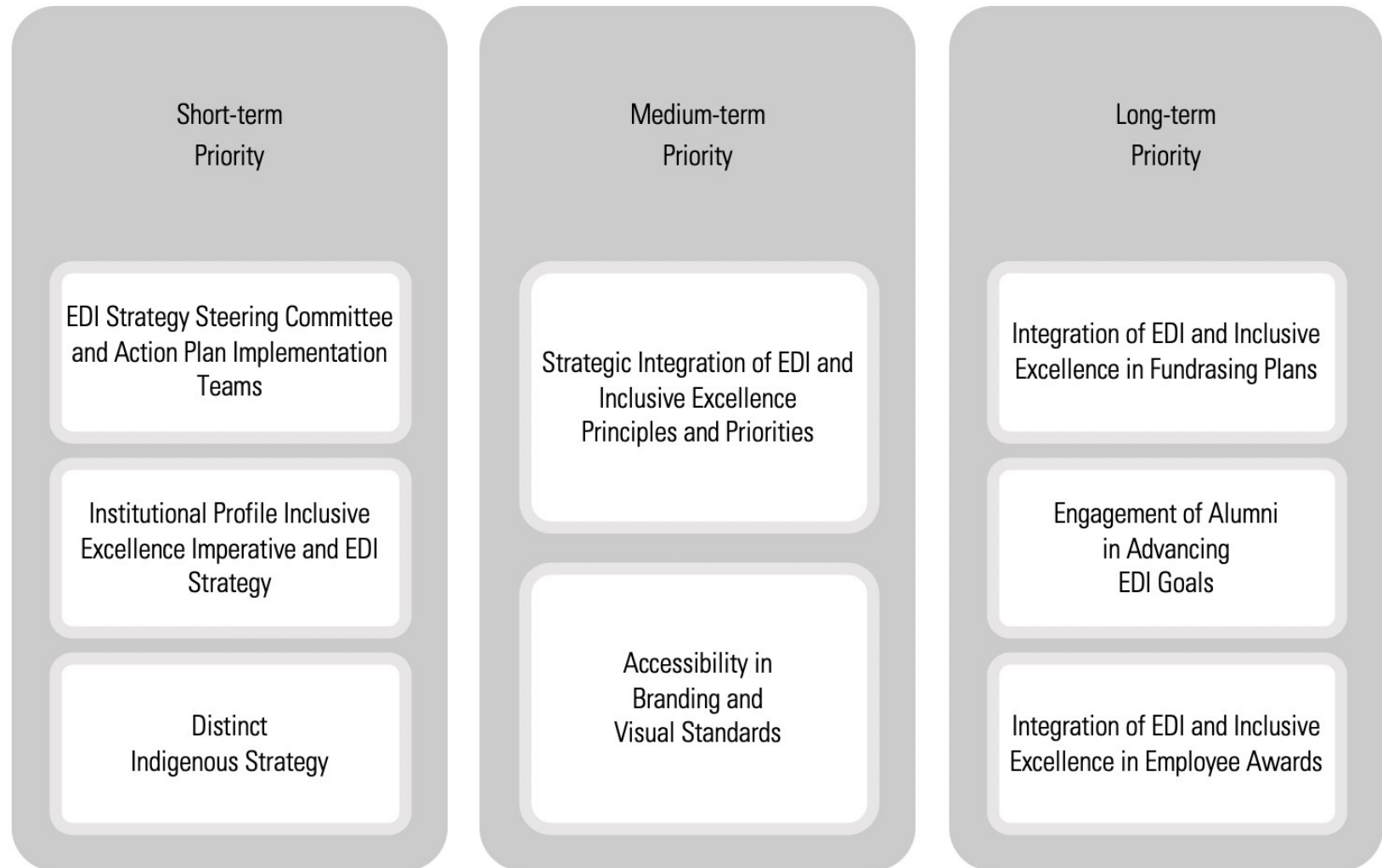


Figure 6. Strategic Actions Towards Objective 2

To enhance systems and resources to support data-informed and evidence-based EDI-related planning, decision-making and practice

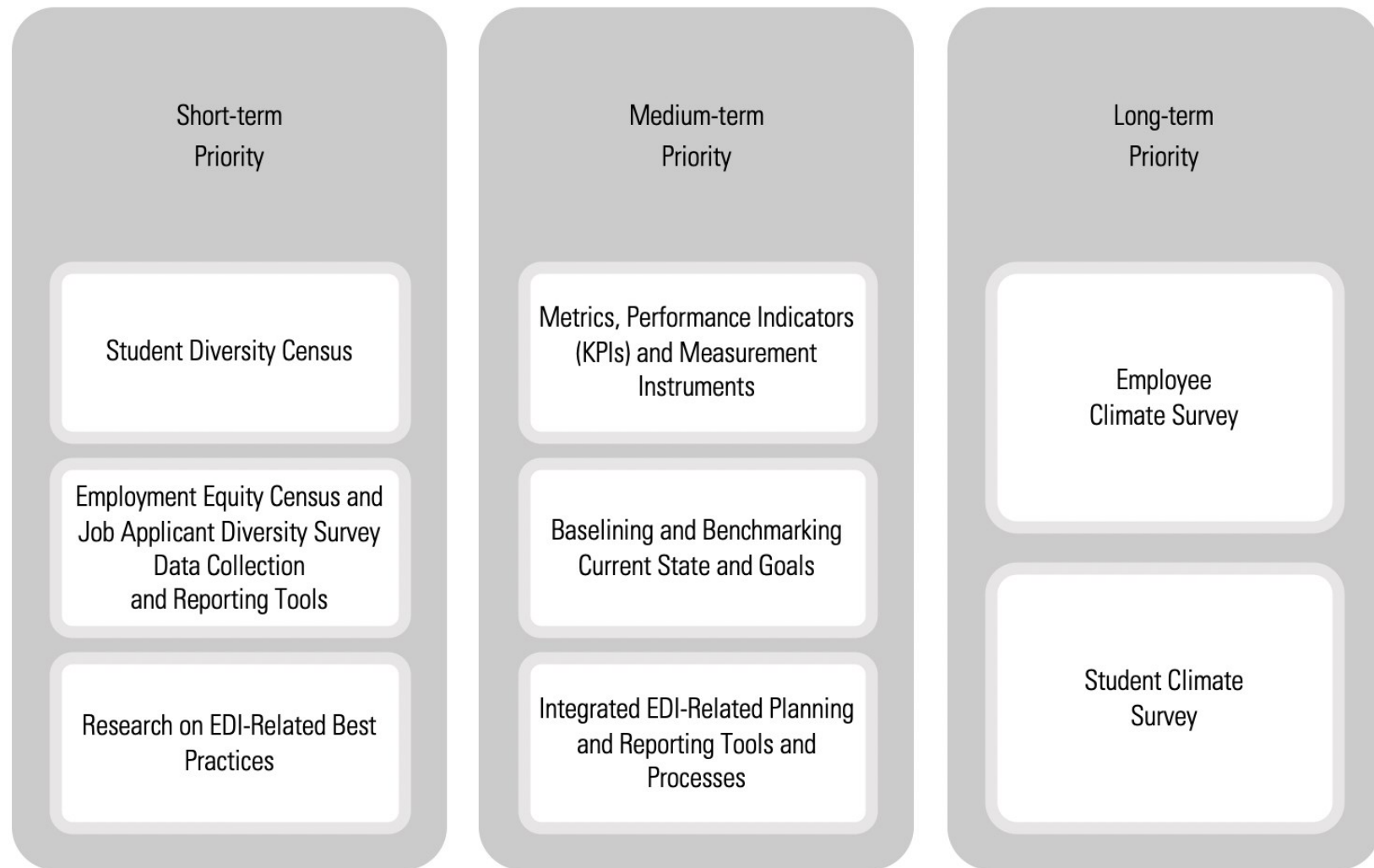


Figure 7. Strategic Actions Towards Objective 3

To enhance inclusivity and opportunities for interdisciplinarity in curricula and scholarship across Departments and Faculties

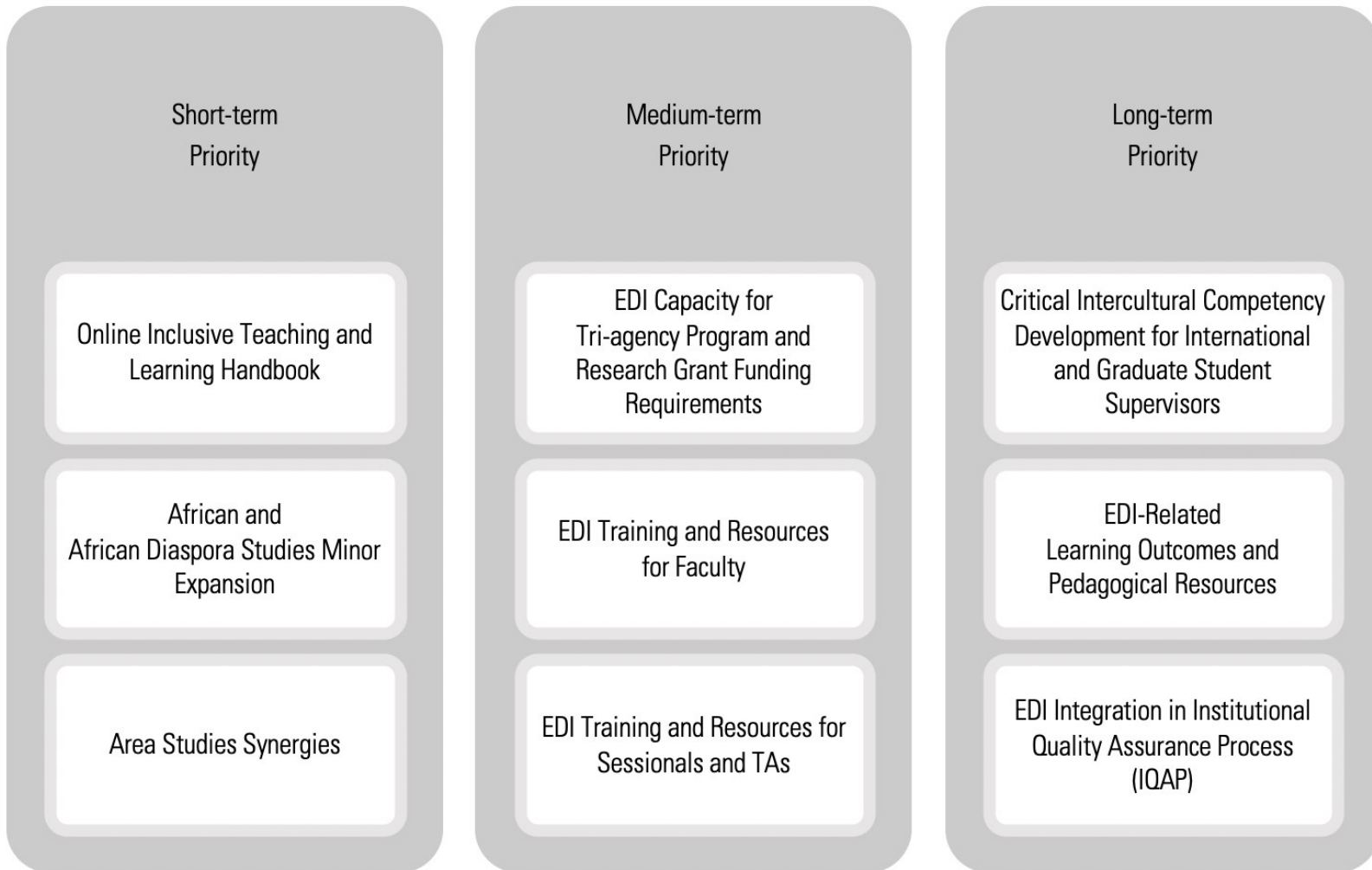


Figure 8. Strategic Actions Towards Objective 4

To enhance inclusive leadership capabilities by establishing baseline EDI training requirements and offering ongoing professional development

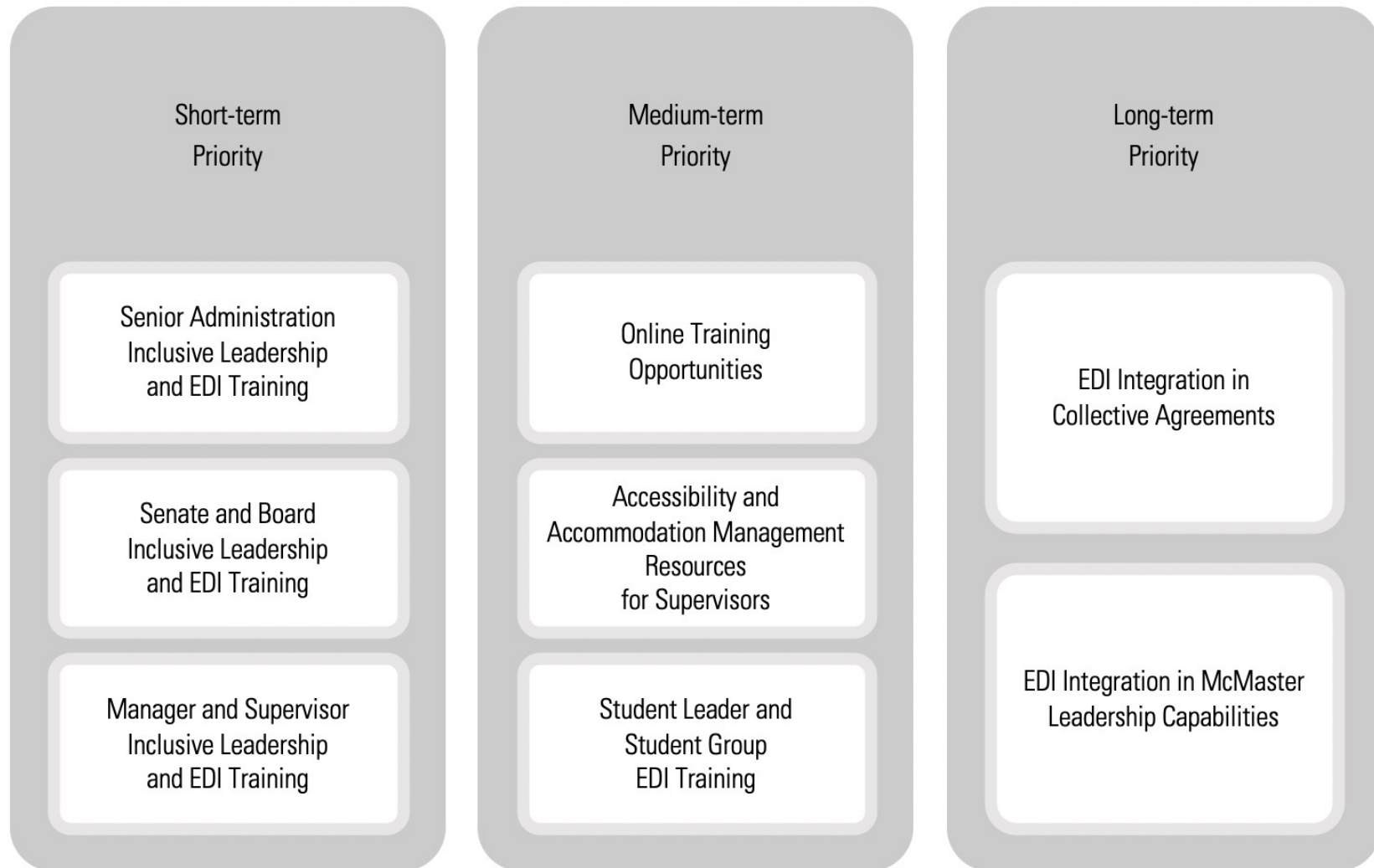


Figure 9. Strategic Actions Towards Objective 5

To enhance opportunities for meaningful consultation with, engagement of, and provision of support to equity-seeking groups

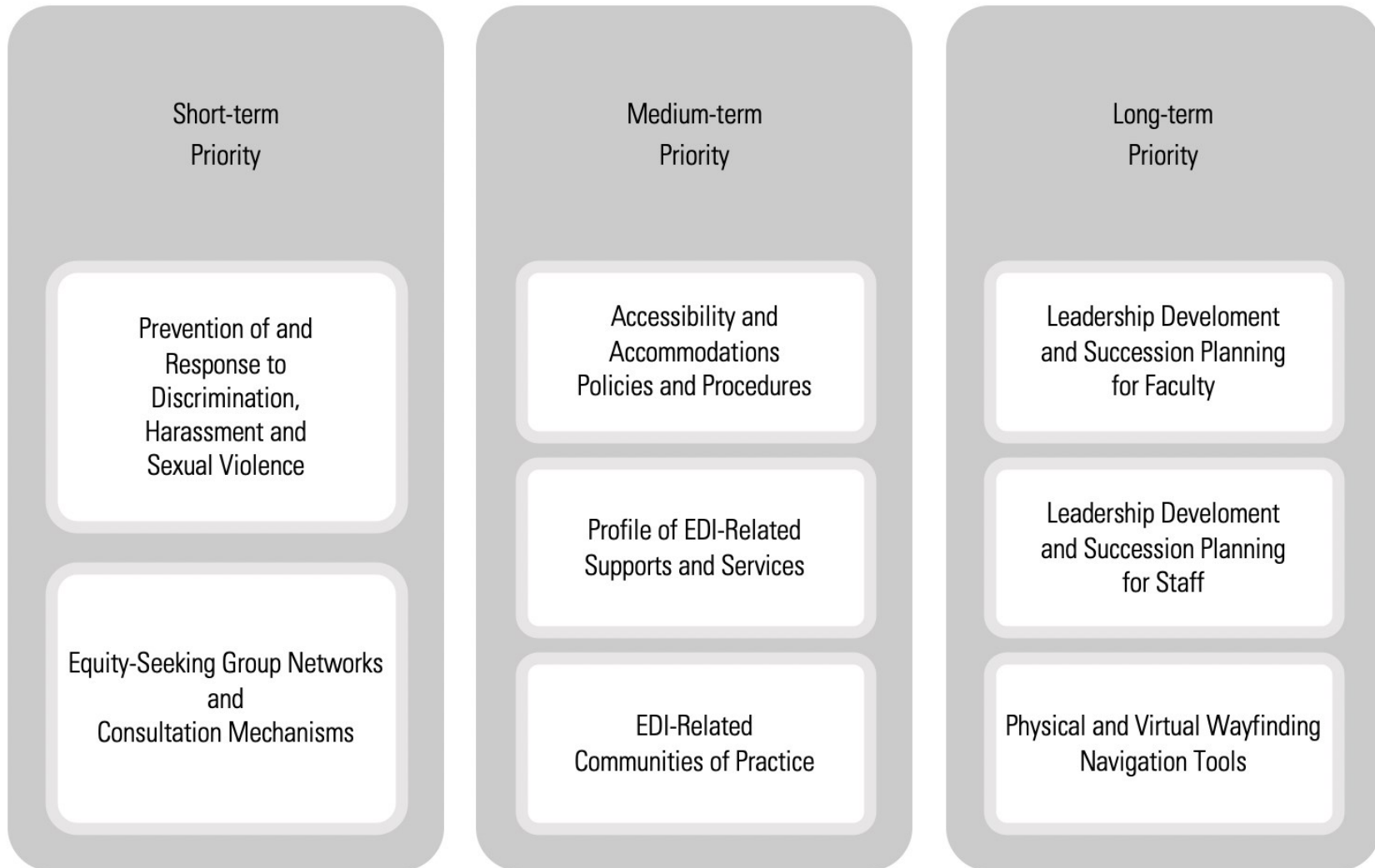


Figure 10. Strategic Actions Towards Objective 6 (i)

To enhance the recruitment and retention of equity-seeking employees

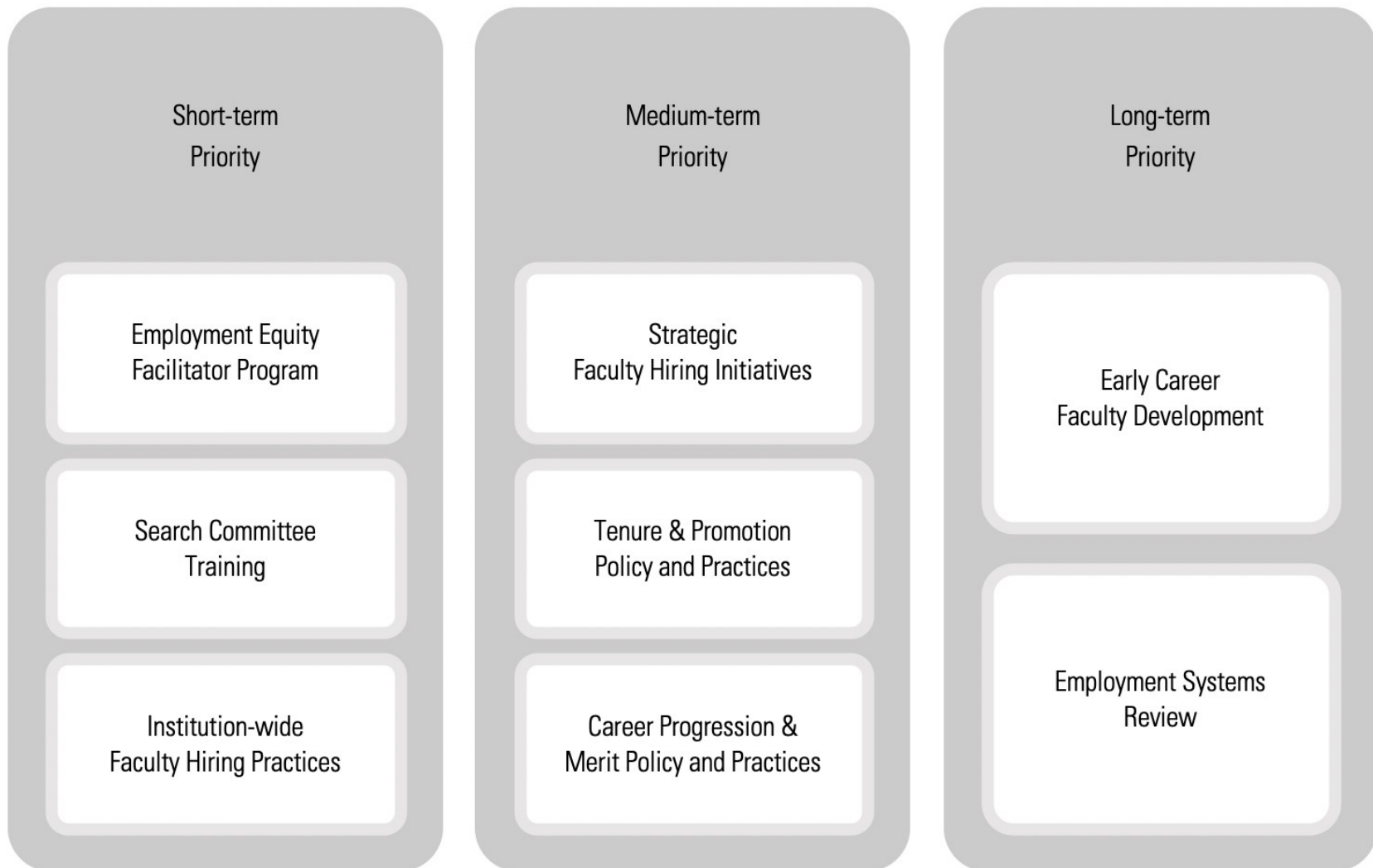
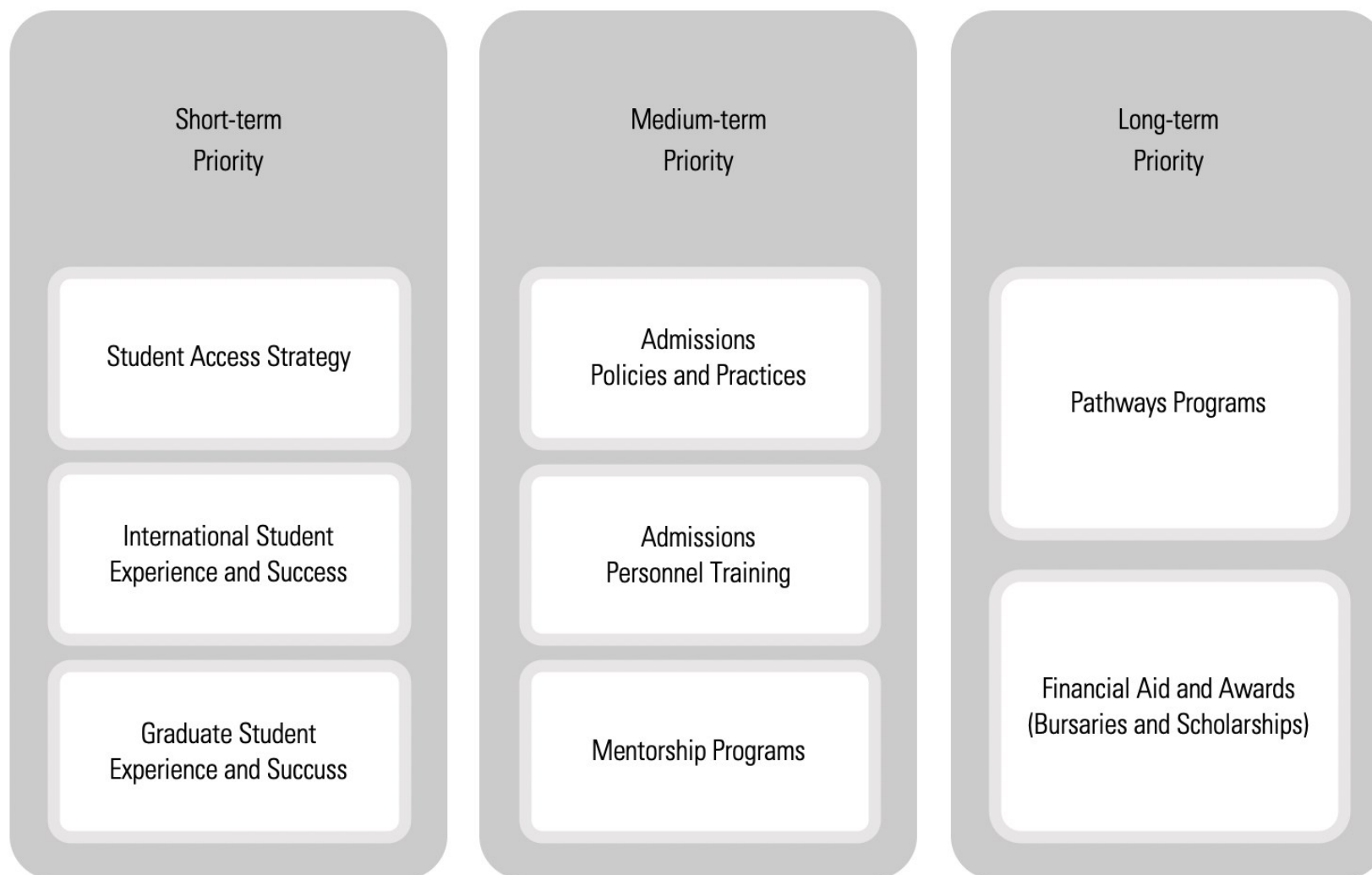


Figure 11. Strategic Actions Towards Objective 6 (ii)

To enhance the recruitment and retention of equity-seeking students



4.0 Strategy Execution

4.1 EDI Strategy Steering Committee

In December of 2019, the EDI Strategy Steering Committee was launched. The mandate and responsibilities, membership and operation, and accountabilities and governance structure are described below.

Mandate and Responsibilities

The Steering Committee is a diverse pan-institutional body comprising senior leaders and campus partners with influence and a vested interest to advance McMaster's inclusive excellence aspirations through its EDI Strategy. The purpose of the Steering Committee is:

- To partner with and actively support the Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion to mobilize and sustain EDI change and continuous improvement;
- To inform strategic directions related to ongoing institutional EDI priorities and goals articulated in McMaster's [*EDI Strategy: Towards Inclusive Excellence*](#);
- To drive the implementation and evaluation of McMaster's EDI Action Plan; and
- To act as a conduit to facilitate a "coordinated decentralization" model (Figure 12) of information flow, efficiencies, and synergies between unit-level EDI planning and advisory bodies, as well as institutional planning and advisory bodies working on EDI-related priorities.

The Steering Committee members will:

- champion the imperative to advance inclusive excellence;
- advise on communications about strategic EDI priorities and goals;
- participate in planning processes to inform strategic directions and actions;
- identify key performance indicators to measure progress towards goals;
- advise on the development of tools to evaluate and report progress;
- receive reports on EDI initiatives from cross-campus EDI leads and champions;
- support implementation and continuous improvement;
- recommend resource acquisition or allocation to support implementation; and
- engage and consult with stakeholder groups through change efforts; and
- endorse the annual progress report to be submitted to the President and Vice-President's group (PVP).

Membership and Operation

The Steering Committee will be Chaired by the Associate Vice-President, Equity & Inclusion. The Committee will meet three times a year or at the call of the Chair. Implementation Teams will be established depending on identified strategic priorities on an annual basis. The Leads assigned to each Implementation Team will manage responsibilities for convening the Teams, setting agendas, facilitating productive meetings, and providing perioding reports on progress to the Chair of the Steering Committee.

The membership of the Steering Committee is listed below:

Chair

- Associate Vice-President, Equity & Inclusion

Advisors

- Associate Vice-President, Institutional Research and Analysis
- Assistant Vice-President, Communications & Public Affairs

Champions

- Vice-Provost, Faculty
- Vice-Provost/Dean of Graduate Studies
- Vice-Dean, Faculty Affairs (FHS)
- Associate Vice-President & Dean of Students
- Assistant Vice-President/Chief Human Resources Officer
- Assistant Vice-President, Research

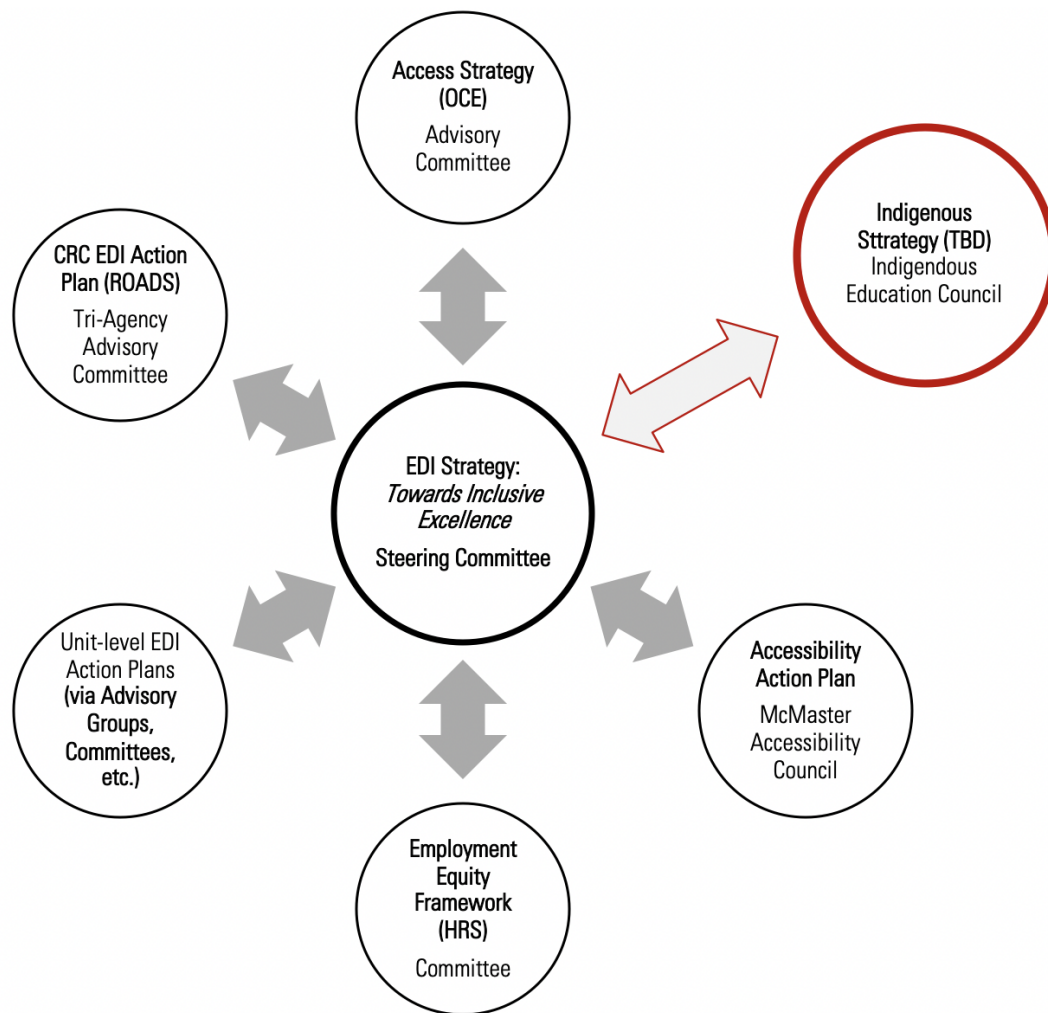
Constituency Representatives and Influencers

- Decanal Representative
- MUFA President or delegate
- Clinical Faculty Association President or delegate
- University Librarian or delegate
- PACBIC Faculty Co-Chair
- African and Caribbean Faculty Association of McMaster, Chair
- Director, Indigenous Student Services or delegate
- President, McMaster Student Union or delegate
- President, Graduate Student Association or delegate
- At-large Community Members as is appropriate

Liaisons for Complementary Institutional Frameworks, Strategies and Plans

- Indigenous Priorities and Strategy (via Chair, Indigenous Education Council)
- Accessibility Strategy and Plan (via Chair, McMaster Accessibility Council)
- Access Strategy (via Access Program Manager/Chair, Access Strategy Council)
- Employment Equity Framework (via Chair, Employment Equity Council)
- Tri-Agency EDI Requirements and Action Plan (via Director, ROADS)

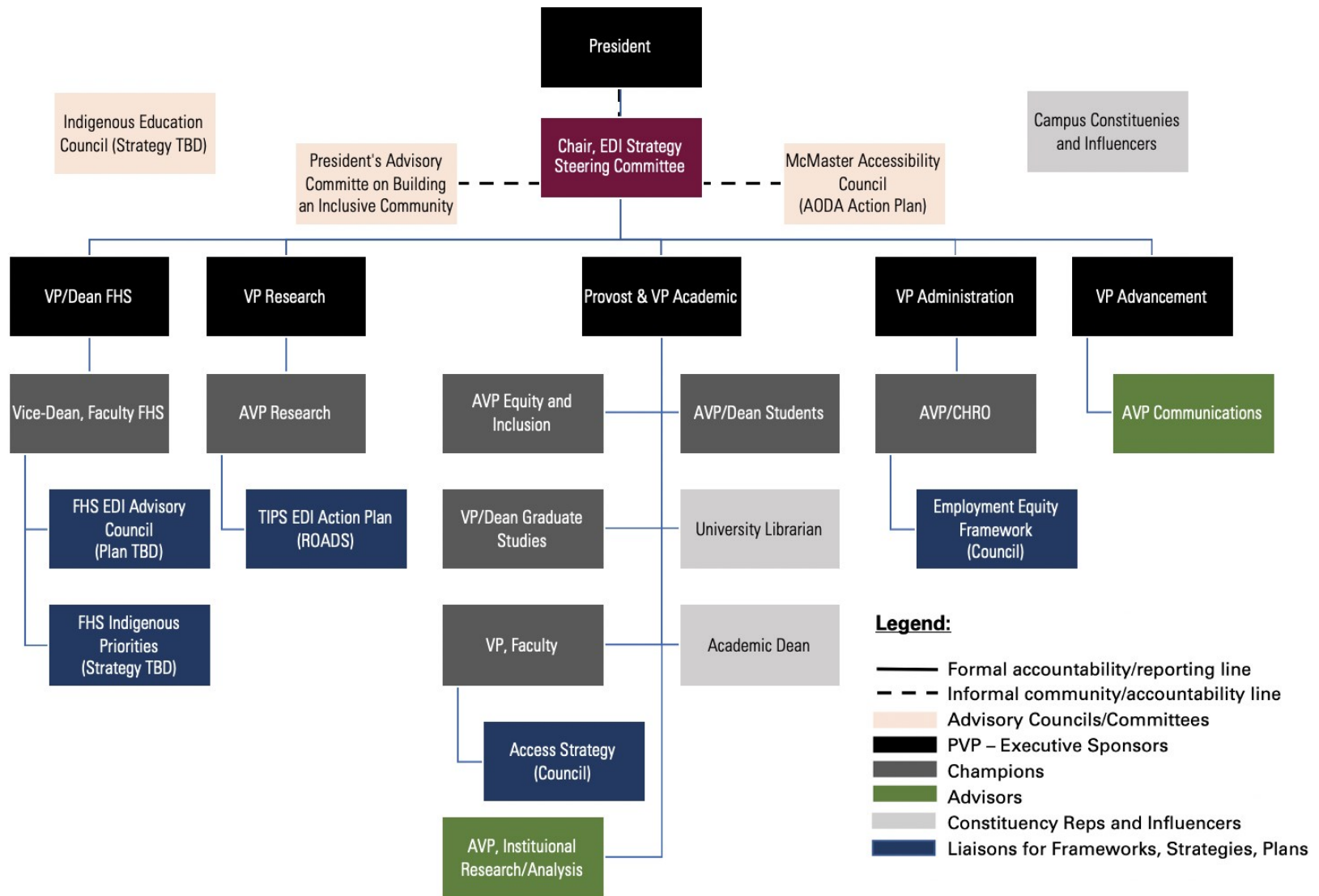
Figure 12. EDI Strategy Steering Committee: Coordinated Decentralization Model



Governance and Accountability

The President is responsible for championing institution-wide EDI priorities and aspirations towards inclusive excellence. The President and Vice-Presidents (PVP) are executive sponsors, and, both as individuals and collectively, they are responsible for mobilizing leaders across the institution to influence the integration of EDI principles into academic and administrative policies and practices, in order to advance inclusive excellence in research, teaching, service, and governance. The Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion is responsible for providing leadership and working in close collaboration with colleagues on the development, implementation and evaluation of strategic EDI actions. The Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion is also responsible for regularly reporting on the status of strategic actions to the PVP, and drafting an annual EDI Strategy progress report (July 1 – June 30) for endorsement by the Steering Committee in the fall term of the preceding reporting year, and presenting a final report to the PVP group and subsequently to Senate and Board (in the winter term following the reporting year). Figure 13 depicts the Steering Committee categories of membership and lines of accountability to operationalize the EDI Strategy.

Figure 13. EDI Strategy – Executive Sponsorship and Networked Leadership



4.2 EDI Action Plan Implementation

The implementation of strategic actions will be mobilized through a networked, distributed leadership approach. The task of advancing a constellation of related strategic actions will be assigned to either an existing responsibility centre or to a newly created ad hoc implementation team.

4.2.1 Responsibility Centres or Bodies

i. Strategic EDI Leadership

The Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion (AVPEI) will work and through the President to inspire and develop capacity among the Executive Leadership Team to advance strategic priorities that aim to enhance campus community understanding of and commitment to inclusive excellence as an institutional priority and imperative. Figure 14 lists the strategic actions which the AVPEI will champion in partnership with Executive leaders and/or their delegates.

Figure 14. Strategic Actions - Institutional Leadership

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objective 1
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch the EDI Strategy: <i>Towards Inclusive Excellence</i>• Develop institutional web presence articulating EDI and inclusive excellence imperatives (primarily via President's Office and the Equity and Inclusion Office).• Establish an EDI Strategy Steering Committee and convene Implementation Teams to action 2019 – 2022 priorities
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate aspirational accessibility priorities into the EDI Strategy, beyond AODA compliance expectations in the 2012 – 2025 Accessibility Action Plan• Support Indigenous-led process to identify Indigenous priorities and establish an Indigenous Strategy.• Integrate EDI and inclusive excellence principles and priorities across institutional strategies and community imperative from senior leadership
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate EDI and inclusive excellence principles and priorities in fundraising plans• Engage alumni and friends in imagining and realizing institutional EDI and inclusive excellence goals

ii. Employment Equity

A number of strategic actions intersect with priorities articulated in McMaster's Employment Equity Framework. Accordingly, these strategic actions are being advanced under the leadership of the Assistant Vice-President & Chief Human Resource Officer in partnership with the Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion.

In advancing these strategic actions, the leads will collaborate with a team of cross-campus partners and consult with the Employment Equity Council.

Figure 15 lists the strategic actions tasked to the leads and partners advancing the Employment Equity Framework. The Lead of the Employment Equity Framework sits on the EDI Strategy Steering Committee is tasked with reporting progress on these strategic actions.

Figure 15. Strategic Actions - Employment Equity

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 (i)
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance Workforce Employment Equity Census and Applicant Self-ID Survey tools, systems to support disaggregated data collection and reporting, and processes to leverage the ethical use of the data.• Enhance networks for and mechanisms to consult with equity-seeking group (e.g. employee resources groups).• Launch and build the Employment Equity Facilitator Program to support Search Committees in their application of inclusive excellence in hiring processes.• Develop and deliver standardized (and, where necessary, tailored) Search Committee training sessions to be engaged by all Committee members, including "train-the-trainer" opportunities for Employment Equity Facilitators.
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop integrated EDI planning and reporting tools for unit leaders.
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit and enhance the profile of EDI and inclusive excellence in institutional employee awards criteria.• Conduct periodic employee climate surveys to better understand the experiences of faculty and staff in relation to equity, inclusion, engagement, wellness, and career development.• Incorporate EDI principles in Collective Agreements.• Enhance leadership development and succession planning for equity-seeking (faculty and) staff.• Initiate an Employment Systems Review.

iii. Student Access

A number of strategic actions intersect with priorities articulated in McMaster's Student Access Strategy. As such, these strategic actions are being advanced under the leadership of the Manager of Student Access in the Office of Community Engagement, in partnership with the Associate Vice-President & Dean of Students and the Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion.

In advancing these strategic actions, the leads will collaborate with campus and community partners and consult with the Student Access Council.

Figure 16 lists the strategic actions tasked to the leads and partners advancing the Student Access Strategy. The Lead of the Student Access Strategy sits on the EDI Strategy Steering Committee is tasked with reporting progress on these strategic actions.

Figure 16. Strategic Actions - Student Access

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objectives 2.6 (ii)
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance Student Census, incorporating disaggregated self-ID questionnaire and opt-in for student access and success programs and supports.• Launch the Student Access Strategy.
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review admissions policies and practices using an EDI lens and improve, where appropriate, to support access and success for under-represented learners.• Enhance and/or explore new mentorship programs for identified under-represented learners.
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct periodic student climate surveys to better understand the experience of students in relation to access, inclusion, wellness, and success.• Enhance and explore pathways programs for under-represented learners.• Review financial aid, awards, bursary and scholarship models and improve, where appropriate, to support access and success for under-represented learners.

iv. Human Rights, Accessibility, Inclusion and Personal Safety

A number of strategic actions intersect with priorities articulated in the mandate of the Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO). These strategies not only aim to meet minimum compliance measures required by Provincial legislation to ensure freedom from discrimination, harassment and sexual violence, but also aim to meet aspirational accessibility, inclusion and personal safety goals.

A subset of these goals is enabled by the mandate of McMaster's Security Service, who will be responsible for working collaboratively with the EIO and other relevant offices to understand, raise awareness about, prevent and respond to possible criminal behaviour, including incidents motivated by hate/bias or with hate/bias overtones, as well as incidents of sexual assault and intimate partner violence for example.

These strategic actions are being advanced under the leadership of the Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion (AVPEI), in partnership with colleagues jointly responsible for fostering an environment that is free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence, and in which proactive universal design principles and responsive duties to accommodate are vigorously promoted.

In advancing these strategic actions, the leads will consult with the President's Advisory on Building and Inclusive Community (PACBIC) and the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC). The AVPEI, the Co-Chair of PACBIC, and the Chair of MAC sit on the EDI Strategy Steering Committee and will report progress on their strategic tasks. Figure 17 lists the strategic actions aligned with the mandates of the EIO, the PACBIC, and the MAC.

Figure 17. Strategic Actions - Human Rights, Accessibility, Inclusion and Personal Safety

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objectives 2, 4, 5
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance institutional capacity (via policies, programs and individual competencies) for prevention of and response to incidents related to human rights, accessibility, inclusion and personal safety (e.g., harassment, discrimination, hate/bias incidents, sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, other forms of gender-based violence) Enhance networks for and mechanisms to consult with equity-seeking groups (e.g., Employee Accessibility Network, BIPOC Employee Resource Group, PACBIC subgroups and fora) Enhance profile and reach of accessibility and EDI-related services and resources
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance content and format of student leaders and student group EDI and accessibility training, and broader reach of training opportunities. Enhance capacity to respond to academic and workplace accessibility needs and accommodations requests (e.g. Accessibility, Accommodations, and other related institutional policies) Explore accessibility features for branding and visual standards
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Communities of Practice focused on EDI-related activities, including those focused on Accessibility. Enhance navigation of real and virtual campus, through wayfinding and other strategies.

4.2.2 Implementation Teams

There are eight Implementation Teams focused on:

- EDI Assessment and Evaluation;
- Interdisciplinary Area Studies;
- EDI in Research Capacity-Building;
- Inclusive Teaching and Learning;
- Strategic Faculty Hiring;
- Faculty Retention and Promotion;
- Inclusive Leadership Development; and
- Graduate and International Student Experience.

Each Team will consist of a lead or co-leads and a small group of faculty, staff, and/or students selected on the basis of their interest and ability to contribute to strategic thinking, planning, and management of the priorities tasked to the Team.

Figures 18 – 25 provide detailed descriptions of the strategic actions that are tasked to each of the EDI Action Plan Implementation Teams.

Figure 18. Strategic Actions - Assessment and Evaluation Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objective 2
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify metrics, select Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and develop mechanisms to track and report on progress towards desirable goals.• Benchmark institutional status in relation to desirable goals• Develop integrated EDI planning and reporting tools for unit leaders

Figure 19. Strategic Actions - Interdisciplinary Area and Critical Studies Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objective 3
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen African and African Diaspora Studies administrative infrastructure and capacity for teaching and research• Explore opportunities for synergies across and/or expansion of Area Studies

Figure 20. Strategic Actions - Research Capacity-Building Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objectives 3
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen capacity to meet Tri-agency and other research funding EDI requirements

Figure 21. Strategic Actions - Inclusive Teaching and Learning Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objective 3
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop web-based Inclusive Teaching and Learning Handbook
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance and promote instructor (faculty and TA) EDI training and resources
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop EDI-related student learning outcomes and pedagogies resource Incorporate EDI in Institutional Quality Assurance Process and Self-Study Guidebook

Figure 22. Strategic Actions - Strategic Faculty Hiring Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objective 6 (i)
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the feasibility of developing McMaster models for Strategic Faculty Hiring (e.g., Cluster Hiring, Accelerated Diversity Hiring, Partner/Spousal Hiring)

Figure 23. Strategic Actions - Faculty Retention and Promotion Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objectives 5, 6 (i)
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and improve the Tenure & Promotion Policy and practices Review and improve the Career Progression & Merit Policy and practices
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance leadership development and succession planning for equity-seeking faculty (and staff) Enhance and explore new program to support and develop early career faculty from equity-seeking groups

Figure 24. Strategic Actions - Inclusive Leadership Development Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objective 4
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase uptake of baseline EDI and inclusive leadership training among all managers and supervisors
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an online baseline EDI educational module and a program of stepped in-person training opportunities with associated resources • Enhance resources to support managers and supervisors to improve workplace accessibility and effectively discharge their duty to accommodate.
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate EDI in the assessment of leadership capabilities

Figure 25. Strategic Actions - Graduate and International Student Experience Implementation Team

Time Horizon	Strategic Actions Associated with Objectives 3, 6(ii)
Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and enhance graduate student experience and supports for success • Assess and enhance international student experience and supports for success
Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and promote instructor (faculty and TA) EDI training and resources • Review admissions policies and practices using an EDI lens and improve, where appropriate, to support access and success for under-represented learners (through further studies). • Enhance and/or explore new mentorship programs for identified under-represented learners (including post-docs). • Explore opportunities to enhance critical intercultural competencies among instructors and graduate supervisors
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct periodic student climate surveys to better understand the experience of students in relation to access, inclusion, wellness, and success. • Conduct periodic student climate surveys to better understand the experience of students in relation to access, inclusion, wellness, and success.

5.0 Performance Management

5.1 Metrics and Measurement

McMaster's EDI Strategy identifies continuous improvement as a fundamental principle for EDI performance management. This is to be accomplished by undertaking research, assessment, and evaluation to inform evidence-based planning and decision-making, and by committing to a systematic logic model (Figure 26) approach to identifying and securing the inputs needed to sustain our efforts, as well as identifying and tracking the outputs and outcomes that will serve as indicators of progress and impact.

Recognizing the opportunity to enhance data analytics and analysis systems and resources at McMaster, the second objective in McMaster's 2019 – 2022 EDI Action Plan is devoted to promoting strategic actions that will enable data-informed and evidence-based EDI practice.

To advance this objective, the Assessment and Evaluation Implementation Team will advise on EDI metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs), as well as EDI self-assessment scorecards and planning tools. Specifically, the Team will:

- Review and expand on a comprehensive list of possible output and outcomes metrics (Figure 27) to measure progress in advancing the four broad institutional EDI goals described under each of the four pillars in the Strategic EDI Framework;
- Recommend a select number of qualitative and quantitative Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the list of metrics for each of the four pillars in the Strategic EDI Framework, to enable the institution to benchmark its current state and track its progress over time;
- Review and explore the value in adopting or adapting, with permission, existing institutional EDI assessment tools and scorecards, like the New England Resource Centre for Higher Education Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (NERCHE, 2011), to enable a periodic institutional audit of high-level descriptive indicators or organizational progress across the four pillars for strategic EDI change;
- Identify existing mechanisms and, where necessary recommend new or enhanced systems or tools, for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the quantitative and qualitative data needed for effective EDI planning and performance management; and
- Ensure any deliberations regarding demographic data, to assess quantitative compositional diversity or qualitative experiences of inclusion, are aligned with the work of the AVPEI and the AVP/CHRO on the Workforce Employment Equity Census and the Student Diversity Census, which incorporate best practices for the collection, analysis and reporting of self-identification information.

Figure 26. EDI Strategy Visualized as a Logic Model

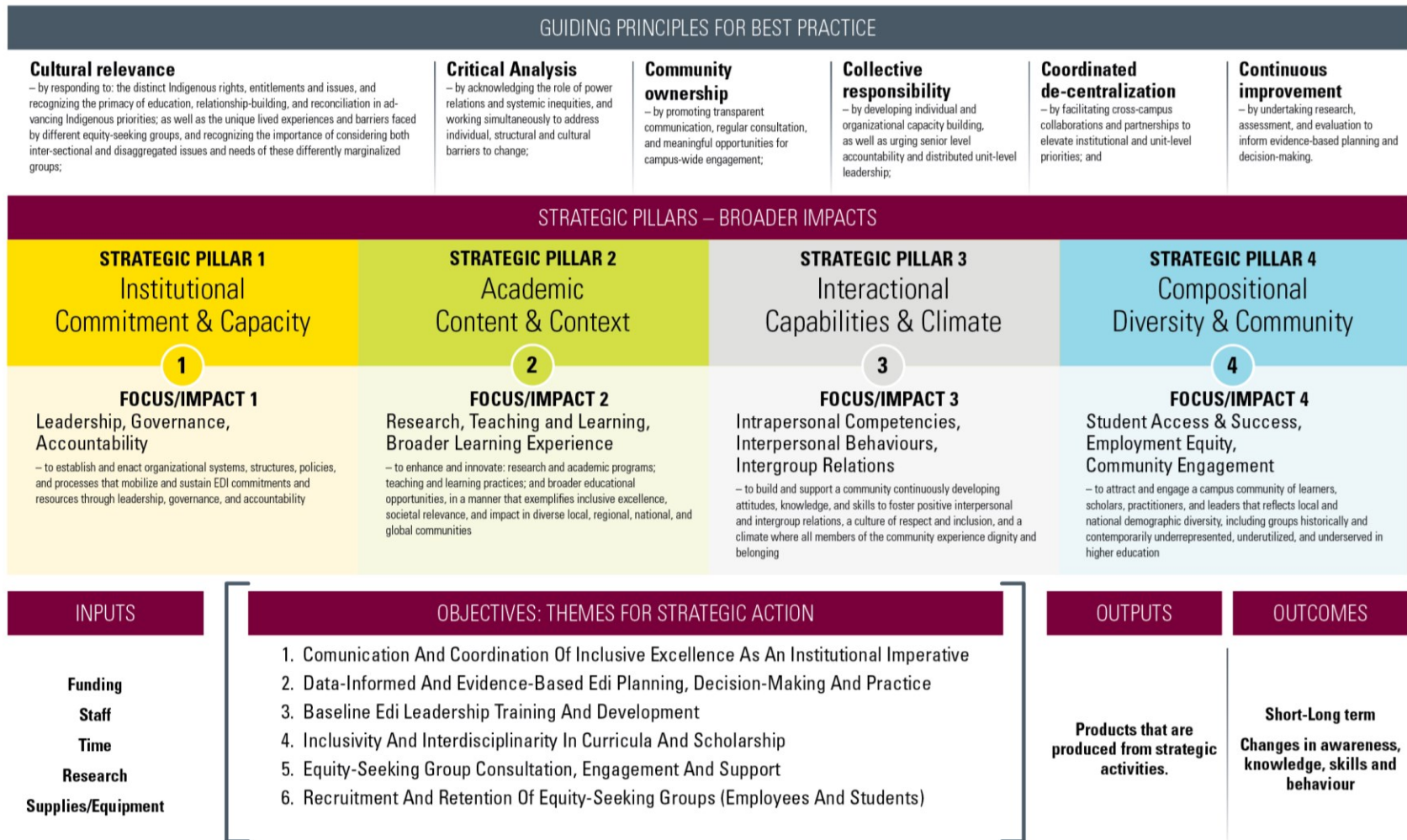


Figure 27. Sample Key Performance Indicators: Output and Outcome Measures of Success

Outputs (Products, Deliverable, Conditions)	Outcomes (Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, Behaviour)
INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT AND CAPACITY Pillar Impacts (Aspirational Goals): McMaster's systems, structures, policies, and processes enable and sustain EDI priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of unit EDI plans submitted annually • # and % policies and processes reviewed using EDI analysis • % strategic documents articulating EDI priorities • % senior leaders and members of governing bodies EDI trained • % self-identified equity-seeking groups among senior leadership and governing bodies • # and engagement of alumni in EDI priorities • # donors and \$ value of funds supporting EDI priorities • # recognition awards with EDI criteria • # and % of \$ dedicated to EDI related initiatives to support teaching, research, service and governance • \$ value and proportion of funds allocated for EDI priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • campus understanding of EDI/inclusive excellence • # EDI pilot initiatives seeded with soft/one-time funds • # EDI initiatives sustained with hard/base funds • Senior leadership visibility driving inclusive excellence • Extent of EDI analysis in strategic decision-making, policy development, and resource allocation
ACADEMIC CONTENT AND CONTEXT Pillar Impacts (Aspirational Goals): McMaster's educational and academic programs and practices exemplify inclusive excellence as well as societal impact on a global scale.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated EDI benchmarks in Institutional Quality Assurance Program process • # of courses with EDI related Learning Outcomes • % of academic programs integrating EDI in curriculum • % of faculty employing inclusive teaching strategies • # of students pursuing African and African Diaspora Minor Program • % equity-seeking research chairs • % of research chair committees receiving EDI training • # and breadth of interdisciplinary academic and research programs • # research grants accepted/rejected on basis EDI considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of EDI integration in academic programs • Self-reported EDI learning among students • top-box or top-2-box* student experience (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement, Canadian University Survey Consortium, etc.) • Extent of EDI integration in research and scholarship • Extent of interdisciplinarity in teaching and research • Self-reported faculty and TA EDI capabilities <p>* "Boxes" refer to a score and the number of people who chose the number score (or box) on a Likert scale. Top-Box or Top-2-Box refer to the number of people choosing the highest or the highest and second highest scores/boxes.</p>

Outputs (Products, Deliverable, Conditions)	Outcomes (Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, Behaviour)
INTERACTIONAL CAPABILITIES AND CLIMATE Pillar Impacts (Aspirational Goals): McMaster's community members demonstrate interpersonal competencies, positive and respectful interpersonal behaviour and both intergroup relations and climate are experienced as inclusive, resulting in members feeling a sense of dignity and belonging.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of training/education opportunities • # of participants in training/education opportunities • completion rates of required online training modules: AODA (Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act), SVPR (Sexual Violence Prevention and Response), HR&E (Human Rights & Equity), etc. • # of formal/informal complaints related to EDI (including official harassment, discrimination, sexual violence statistics) • # of reported incidents of campus hate/bias • # of complaints resolved using voluntary alternate dispute resolution • # TMG** staff participating in EDI training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive change in attitudes, knowledge, skills • "top box" report positive climate and intergroup relations • EDI profile/reputation in the public eye • Self-reported TMG staff EDI capabilities • Timeliness of complaint resolution • % of TMG positions incorporating EDI capabilities
COMMUNITY AND COMPOSITIONAL DIVERSITY Pillar Impacts (Aspirational Goals): McMaster's community reflects local and national demographic diversity, including proportionate representation of groups historically and contemporarily marginalized in higher education.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and % self-identified equity-seeking job applicants, finalists interviewed, and hires/appointments • # and % of search committee members EDI trained • # and % equity-seeking Managers, Directors, Chairs, Deans • # and % tenure-track and tenured equity-seeking faculty • % of tenure and promotion committee members trained • % of research chair committees receiving EDI training • # and breadth of employment equity facilitators • # and % self-identified student applicants, offers, admits • \$ and % of financial aid/awards to under-represented students • # and % of under-represented students admits from community outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which hiring practices perceived as transparent, equitable, fair and meritocratic) • Efficacy of search, appointment, and nomination processes • Progress to close workforce gaps • equity-seeking employees hired, retained, promoted • "top-box" employee inclusion, engagement • "top-box" student belonging, flourishing, experience, engagement (e.g., National College Health Assessment, National Survey of Student Engagement, Canadian University Student Consortium, etc.) • Census response rates for student and employee self-identification • EDI principles integrated into admissions policies and processes • Student retention, persistence, progression • Equity-seeking student enrolment, completion, further study

5.2 Self-Identification Data

5.2.1 [Workforce Employment Equity Census](#)

McMaster has developed robust data collection and governance processes associated with the Workforce Employment Equity Census. In the spirit of continuous improvement, further refinements to the Workforce Census questionnaire are currently being explored, as are new data visualization tools for reporting results to the community, to include, among other things, the reporting of intersectional data for example. The section below describes the Census data collection and governance process, as well as the efforts take to encourage self-identification.

i. [Collecting, Protecting, Accessing and Using Workforce Diversity Data](#)

All employees are invited to complete McMaster's [Employment Equity Census](#) by logging into Mosaic, McMaster's PeopleSoft-based administrative information system.

The Census is voluntary. If employees choose to complete the census, they will have the option to answer or decline to answer any of the questions inquiring whether individuals self-identify as Indigenous peoples, members of racialized communities ("visible minority"), persons with disabilities, women, and/or members of LGBTQ2S+ communities.

Every new employee is invited to complete the Census through their letter of appointment. While the Census may be completed or updated at any time during an employee's tenure, McMaster launches a biennial campaign to increase participation rates. During these campaigns, the community is reminded of the importance of the Census data in providing a better picture of the diversity at McMaster, and to informing institutional efforts to meet equity, diversity and inclusion goals and priorities.

All information is confidential, and responses are stored in an isolated table in Mosaic that is separate from other personal employee information. Responses are anonymized when they are analyzed by Institutional Research and Analysis, and the [Analysis of the Workforce Data](#) is reported in aggregate form.

McMaster articulates to the community that Census data supports evidence-based decision-making to advance equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Specifically, McMaster communicates three main reasons for collected self-identification data:

- to understand the current compositional diversity of the workforce;
- to identify the areas of the university with the greatest gaps in representation among designated equity-seeking groups; and
- to track progress on efforts to remove barriers to equal opportunity in the workplace.

ii. Encouraging Self-Identification

McMaster has implemented various communication methods and policy tools to encourage self-identification from as many community members as possible:

- a video recording of the President talking about the importance of employment equity;
- an Employment Equity Census [website](#) clearly and thoroughly describing the Census, why it is important, how it will be administered, and the privacy and confidentiality measures undertaken to protect self-identification data in compliance with the university's [Statement on Collection of Personal Information and Protection of Privacy](#) and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of Ontario;
- an Employment Equity Census Report made publicly available to ensure transparency and to encourage community engagement;
- an Employment Equity Policy referencing the collection of self-identification data through the Census;
- email reminders to encourage Census participation and paper form Census completion options for those with less access to computers;
- Meetings with employee groups and their representatives to encourage Census participation; and
- Annual employment equity forums and best practice sharing for administrators.

To specifically encourage members of underrepresented groups to self-identify, the following strategies continue to be pursued:

- developing relationships with, earning trust from, and consulting underrepresented community groups (e.g., Indigenous Education Council, President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community, Employee Accessibility Network, African and Caribbean Faculty Association of McMaster, Women in Science and Engineering);
- listening and responding to concerns of underrepresented groups, and demonstrating the institution's commitment to enhancing equitable and inclusive experiences in addition to increasing representational or compositional diversity of underrepresented groups (e.g., implementation of institution's Strategic EDI Action Plan); and
- meeting personally with leaders of all employee groups to discuss any challenges and opportunities with respect to enhancing engagement and increasing response rates (e.g., AVP and Chief Human Resources Officer and AVP, Equity and Inclusion have been meeting with unit leaders and their management teams to discuss employment equity priorities, answer any questions and strategize about enhancing engagement and response rate).

5.2.2 Job Applicant Self-ID Survey

McMaster is establishing the infrastructure to systematically collect and analyze voluntary self-identification information from all job applicants, to support efforts to broaden the diversity of the applicant pool and to promote fair, equitable, inclusive and meritocratic talent acquisition practices, through the recruitment, assessment and selection stages of all search processes.

Job Applicant Self-ID data will be collected through the candidate application portal, with a statement of privacy and transparency imbedded in the application process.

Privacy protocols will be implemented to enable the Search Committee Employment Equity Facilitator to share data with the Search Committee Chair on a need to know basis.

5.2.3 Student Diversity Census

McMaster has undertaken to expand its Student Diversity Census, by designing a new questionnaire that accounts for a wider range of demographic data.

The new Student Diversity Census creates an opportunity to improve:

- Data-informed student access and success decision making by collecting, analysing, and reporting on more robust data in relation to historically and contemporarily underrepresented, under-utilized, and under-served students (Indigenous students, students belonging to racialized communities – with particular attention to Black and Latinx learners – female-identified students in particular STEM disciplines, student with disabilities, and students belonging to marginalized sexual orientation and gender identity groups);
- Understanding of the diversity profile of the entering class and student body as a whole, to identify differential educational access and inform recruitment and outreach activities;
- Student retention and success differences across demographics by better triangulating institutional data (from the Census and other survey instruments) and analyzing outcome measures related to student engagement, learning experience, health & wellness, inclusion, and academic success
- Student connections to programs and services for marginalized learners by enabling more proactive outreach to learners who consent to receiving information from units that specialized in supports for marginalized students

Appendix: Feedback from Campus Consultation

Through the 2018/2019 academic year, the AVPEI engaged senior leaders, key stakeholders, and campus community members in an iterative consultation process to contribute to the development of the EDI Strategy. A series of closed group presentations and consultation sessions were conducted with the following senior leaders and campus stakeholders:

- President/Vice-President Group
- Provost's Council
- Individual Senior Academic and Administrative Leaders (emic and administrative)
- The Senate and Board of Governors
- Indigenous Education Council and McMaster Accessibility Council
- President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community
- McMaster Student Union and Student Representative Assembly
- Graduate Student Association
- McMaster University Faculty Association and Employee Groups

While groups of influential leaders and stakeholders were being engaged, a news story was prepared announcing the inaugural AVPEI, university plans for the development of an institution-wide EDI Strategy, and an invitation to campus community members to attend upcoming feedback sessions. Several communication modes were utilized to promote the feedback sessions to students, faculty, and staff.

A series of ten open campus consultation sessions were organized, with over 150 student, faculty, and staff participants attending. All sessions began with brief remarks about the benefits of an EDI Strategy and a description of the draft Four-Pillar Framework for Strategic Action. Students, faculty and staff were then asked to share their perceptions, experiences, and ideas guided by the following questions:

- Is there anything missing from this Four-Pillar Framework?
- What initiatives should McMaster focus on across the pillars?
- What does success look (feel, sound) like?
- How will we know if we've achieved success?
- What will enable or has enabled progress on EDI initiatives?
- What will or has hindered progress on EDI initiatives?
- Do you have any other thoughts or questions?

The feedback was categorized according to alignment with each of the four pillars.

In each of the four pillars, examples were provided of strategic actions in progress.

Feedback related to **Institutional Commitment and Capacity**

- ✓ Define equity, diversity, inclusion
- ✓ Articulate imperative and benefits to all
- ✓ Top to communicate EDI values, drive priorities
- ✓ Clarify complaint policies and protocols
- ✓ Increase representation on Board and senior leadership
- ✓ Establish baseline training for leaders and managers
- ✓ Apply EDI lens to all policies, procedures
- ✓ Benchmark and account for progress
- ✓ Determine accountability layers/roles across campus
- ✓ Invest in new initiatives using pilot model
- ✓ resource and sustain effective initiatives
- ✓ Clarify Tenure & Promotion policy (yellow document)
- ✓ Take up accessibility (AODA) obligations strategically
- ✓ Engage student leaders (union and faculty societies)

Strategic Actions in Progress:

- ✓ Examining Board and Senate nominating policies/procedures
- ✓ Renewing McMaster Accessibility Council Terms of Reference to strengthen accountabilities for and advancement of university accessibility principles and priorities, strengthening communication between the network of partners and establishing mechanisms for more coordinated and integrated investment of resources to advance accessibility compliance goals and aspirational priorities.

Feedback related to Academic and Educational Content and Context

- ✓ Develop inclusive teaching/learning resources/tools
- ✓ Require and resource baseline training for Tas
- ✓ Offer baseline training for faculty linked to CPM
- ✓ Apply EDI principles/practices for CRC process
- ✓ Promote consistency in EDI service expectations
- ✓ Provide meaningful recognition of EDI service
- ✓ Clarify purpose and efficacy of teaching evaluations
- ✓ Enhance interdisciplinarity, leverage “area”/critical studies
- ✓ Incorporate EDI-related LOs in programs/courses
- ✓ Use EDI lens for program/course design
- ✓ Identify EDI-related core program/course requirements
- ✓ Incentivize/integrate faculty development via CPM
- ✓ Leverage IQAP, CPM and T&P to engage EDI
- ✓ Examine CPM and T&P criteria/rubrics
- ✓ Employ universal learning design
- ✓ Identify EDI intersections in/to research profile
- ✓ Identify relevance of/links with EDI across disciplines
- ✓ Teaching critical content by balance/collaboration of agents and allies

Strategic Actions in Progress:

- ✓ Developing Inclusive Teaching and Learning Handbook

Feedback related to **Interactional Capabilities and Climate**

- ✓ Articulate McMaster EDI values in student, faculty, staff orientation activities
- ✓ Develop user-friendly resources to improve referral and usage of EDI-related supports and services
- ✓ Imbed EDI competencies in job descriptions for all unit leaders and people managers, deliver baseline EDI training and maintain EDI on professional development plans through performance dialogue
- ✓ Require baseline PD for wellness, advising personnel + ADs
- ✓ Incentives ongoing PD for faculty and staff
- ✓ Identify effective educational/training programs
- ✓ Enhance behavioural policies, clarify complaint procedures
- ✓ Create spaces for dialogue, learning across difference
- ✓ Periodically assess climate (lived experience)
- ✓ Engage student clubs in education/community-building
- ✓ Engage and leverage PACBIC
- ✓ Report on complaint data

Strategic Actions in Progress:

- ✓ Expanding offerings of training/education programs
- ✓ Launching Indigenous Education program for leaders
- ✓ Finalizing FHS Professionalism Guidelines
- ✓ Revising Faculty Code of Conduct

Feedback related to **Community and Compositional Diversity**

- ✓ Collect and report demographic data
- ✓ Improve hiring policies, procedures, practices
- ✓ Train all search committee chairs, members
- ✓ Engage equity groups (incl. students) in decision-making
- ✓ Consult/seek advice from/engage community groups
- ✓ Conduct needs assessment
- ✓ increase equity group representation in faculty body
- ✓ Provide greater support for marginalized groups to enhance retention and success
- ✓ Outreach and enhance student access pre-University

Strategic Actions in Progress:

- ✓ Designed, delivered search committee training
- ✓ Piloting EE best practices in Science+ faculty searches
- ✓ Expanding Student Census questionnaire
- ✓ Developing more user-friendly workforce Census reports
- ✓ Launching Employee Applicant Self-ID Survey in MOSAIC
- ✓ Finalizing Faculty R&S Policy and Procedures
- ✓ Developing Faculty R&S Handbook/Guidelines
- ✓ Launching EE Facilitator program

The six salient themes which emerged related to: (1) communication and coordination of EDI imperative; (2) evidence-based EDI planning and decision-making; (3) inclusivity and interdisciplinarity in curricula and scholarship; (4) baseline EDI leadership training and development; (5) equity-seeking group consultation, engagement and support; and (6) recruitment and retention of equity-seeking groups among (i) employees and (ii) students.

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**BRIGHTER
WORLD**

Equity and
Inclusion Office

