



ANTI-RACISM FRAMEWORK



About the Anti-Racism Framework

This Framework was written by the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue [thereafter referred to as the Centre] as the first deliverable in a contract with BCIT's Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion (RDI) Office. This Framework was drafted by the Centre's team, consisting of Dr. Robert Daum, Lindsay Heller, Nicole Armos, Elodie Jacquet, and Zaria Alibhai. Reviews were made by the BCIT RDI Office team and editing was provided by the Centre's Communications Manager, Kareen Wong.

About the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue

The Centre fosters shared understanding and positive action through dialogue and engagement. As a trusted convener and hub for community initiatives, the Centre has engaged hundreds of thousands of citizens and stakeholders to create solutions for critical issues such as climate change, democracy and civic engagement, peace and security, intercultural dialogue, urban sustainability, and health.

BCIT is located on the unceded territory of the Skw̓w̓w̓mesh [Squamish], sə̓ilwətaʔ [Tsleil-Waututh], and xw̓məθkwəy̓əm [Musqueam] First Nations.

BCIT has been educating and inspiring students for over half a century on their traditional lands and for that, we are grateful. We acknowledge that the relationship with Indigenous peoples must be reconciled; we are deeply committed to doing our part.



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Background

The British Columbia Institute of Technology® [BCIT®] acknowledges that racism exists within our community, just as it does within the broader community—both on an individual level and systemically. BCIT recognizes that removing barriers to inclusion for Indigenous and racialized staff and students is imperative to acknowledging and supporting their voice, empowerment, and agency.

While BCIT has already taken proactive steps to reduce and address discrimination, the Institute recognizes there is much more work to be done. We are committed to actively working and committing resources towards the ultimate goal of eliminating all forms of racism within our community. To further this goal, in July 2020, BCIT President, Kathy Kinloch, requested BCIT’s RDI Office take steps to develop an Anti-Racism Framework.



Anti-Racism Working Group: August–September 2020

In July 2020, the RDI Office formed an Anti-Racism Working Group (hereafter referred to as the Working Group) of diverse BCIT stakeholders to provide leadership and advice on the development of an Anti-Racism Framework, particularly from the perspective of racialized groups. The Working Group collaborated with the RDI Office, initially with the support of diversity and inclusion consultants from the Centre.

Between August 10 and September 16, 2020, the Centre's consultants facilitated six online dialogues with members of the RDI Office and the Working Group. The initial series of meetings aimed to:

- Foster a culture of trust and collaboration within the Working Group, and between the Working Group members and the RDI Office;
- Identify areas of strength and existing resources for addressing racism at BCIT; and
- Identify key priority actions to advance anti-racism, including short-term goals as well as longer-term aspirations.

Activities included brainstorming core values, discussing visions and aspirations for BCIT's campus culture, mapping existing resources and planned activities for the coming year, and discussing challenges and priority actions to advance anti-racism work.

The following Framework summarizes guiding values and priority actions proposed by members of the Working Group in their initial six meetings. The priority actions are organized within four areas: [1] Education and Raising Awareness, [2] Data Collection, Analysis, and Utilization, [3] Human Resources and Policies, and [4] Inclusive Learning Environments. RDI will be working with Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships, the BCIT Student Association, unions, and various departments to collaborate and actualize the Framework.



Values Statement

The following values statement was drafted by a sub-committee from the Anti-Racism Working Group to represent core values that surfaced in Working Group meetings¹.

Local and global events have compelled us as an Institute to acknowledge our role in perpetuating systemic racism, and to examine and take action against the multifaceted nature of racism. We aspire and commit to creating a learning and working environment that is actively engaged in the elimination of racism and discrimination. BCIT recognizes that Indigenous people, Black and African Diaspora communities, and all other racialized groups, continue to face racism and discrimination which devalues their humanity. All forms of racism, including systemic racism, constitute barriers for people reaching their full potential and, therefore, racism is a barrier for our Institute to create a sense of belonging. We recognize that the responsibility of this work is ours and that it is overdue. Failing to acknowledge this equates to willfully ignoring the fundamental realities of Canadian society and makes it impossible to meaningfully address the consequences.

The changes we commit to in this Framework aim to address racism against Indigenous people, Black and African Diaspora communities, and all other racialized groups, as well as intolerance based on the intersecting identities of ethnicity, country of origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and neurodiversity.



¹ This version of the Values Statement was edited lightly for consistency of style.

PRIORITY ACTION 1

Education and Raising Awareness

An important first step to addressing racism is to acknowledge and build awareness that racism of different forms exists everywhere, including in the BCIT community, both on an individual and systemic level. Educating the BCIT community about the various forms that racism can take [e.g., microaggressions and unconscious bias] and exemplary approaches to preventing or addressing racism, can help reduce racist incidents. It is also important to foster deeper cross-cultural understanding, open space for dialogue, and knowledge sharing between members of the BCIT community as well as raise awareness of existing and emerging anti-racism policies, strategies, and initiatives to support our actions in all four priority areas.

EXISTING STRATEGIES, INITIATIVES, AND RESOURCES

- ✓ **A curated list of educational tools and resources** is available on the RDI Office website², including resources related to discrimination, harassment and unconscious bias, a checklist for designing respectful and inclusive events, and a guide to policies and procedures for responding to instances of harassment or discrimination.
- ✓ **Several training programs and workshops** are currently offered or being developed by the RDI Office, Diversity Circles, Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships, and other departments that foster cross-cultural understanding, respectful interactions, and anti-racism, including:
 - Respectful Workplace Training
 - Indigenous 101
 - Indigenous Awareness Modules
 - Racism 101
 - Unconscious Bias Training
 - Dealing with Microaggressions
 - Anti-Oppression Training
 - BCIT Communication Department's credit courses at diploma and degree levels in Intercultural Communication Competency and Diversity Awareness (based on faculty availability).
- ✓ **An inclusive calendar** is available on BCIT's RDI Loop page (intranet), marking significant dates for diverse faith, ethno-cultural, and other identity-based groups.
- ✓ **The RDI Monthly Newsletter** features tools, learning opportunities, and suggested readings as well as contributions from the BCIT community about bias, racism, LGBTQ2S+ communities, and cultural appropriation.
- ✓ **BCIT's Diversity Circles**³ is an initiative co-founded by Shannon Kelly and Zaa Joseph in partnership with BCIT FSA and BCIT Research and sponsored by the RDI Office. Diversity Circles holds panels, workshops, focus groups, and other events for the BCIT community to support engaging in safe, productive conversations about diversity.

² See bcit.ca/respect

³ See diversitycircles.com

CHALLENGES, BARRIERS, AND RISKS

An effective diversity initiative should be supported by evidence. In an award-winning article published in the *Harvard Business Review*, “Why Diversity Programs Fail”, Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev shared the results of their longitudinal study of diversity initiatives in 800 U.S. enterprises over a 30-year period⁴. They describe counter-productive approaches:

“Despite a few new bells and whistles, courtesy of big data, companies are basically doubling down on the same approaches they’ve used since the 1960s—which often make things worse, not better. Firms have long relied on diversity training to reduce bias on the job, hiring tests, and performance ratings to limit it in recruitment and promotions, and grievance systems to give employees a way to challenge managers. Those tools are designed to preempt lawsuits by policing managers’ thoughts and actions. Yet laboratory studies show that this kind of force-feeding can activate bias rather than stamp it out. As social scientists have found, people often rebel against rules to assert their autonomy.”

According to Dobbin and Kalev’s research, this is what works better:

“In analyzing three decades’ worth of data from more than 800 U.S. firms and interviewing hundreds of line managers and executives at length, we’ve seen that companies get better results when they ease up on the control tactics. It’s more effective to engage managers in solving the problem, increase their on-the-job contact with female and minority workers, and promote social accountability—the desire to look fair-minded. That’s why interventions such as targeted college recruitment, mentoring programs, self-managed teams, and task forces have boosted diversity in businesses. Some of the most effective solutions aren’t even designed with diversity in mind.”



⁴ Dobbin & Kalev’s 2016 *Harvard Business Review* article, “Why Diversity Programs Fail,” hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail

The Working Group identified the following challenges, barriers, and risks to an effective Anti-Racism Framework at BCIT:

- **Time constraints.** BCIT’s signature short and intensive programs can create a challenge for delivering educational material to support equity and inclusion, as students often have limited time to participate in co-curricular and capacity-building workshops and other learning opportunities. Limited time and capacity amongst staff can also pose a challenge to participation.

Strategies for education and raising awareness around anti-racism must adapt to this context, for instance by offering small “bits” of information in areas of high visibility, such as library displays, incorporating key information within curriculum [see more below], and offering flexible educational opportunities such as online modules.

- **Gradual learning journey.** The challenge of time constraints is further compounded because anti-racism education entails a transformative—not transactional—form of education. Learning about racism can surface complex emotions such as shame, guilt, defensiveness, and even anger as longstanding beliefs and views are challenged. Participants require time and support to process these uncomfortable emotions. Adopting anti-racism and anti-oppression practices also involves the transformation of subtle, and often unconscious habits, and therefore cannot be expected to occur after a single workshop. In addition, ineffective diversity programs can discourage participation in new initiatives.

Successful anti-racist education requires long-term, collaborative, iterative engagement to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to transform one’s practices and worldviews. While BCIT’s community has already developed diverse workshops and other learning opportunities, a lack of awareness of existing initiatives can hamper the learning journey. A key priority is to strengthen pathways of Institute-wide communication, coordination, and collaboration in support of education and advocacy.

- **Mandatory vs. voluntary learning.** There was strong support amongst members of the Working Group for prioritizing anti-racism learning, and many members believe that such learning should be mandatory. If anti-racism educational initiatives are purely voluntary, there is a risk of not reaching those who need it the most. However, research also indicates that voluntary, incentivized learning and other collaborative, relationship-based approaches, are more effective than compulsory training at transforming deep-seated biases. Particularly when this learning is not a one-off, is designed collaboratively, and is part of an integrated, multi-faceted approach conducive to transformation. Dobbin and Kalev’s research demonstrates the strengths of such an approach⁵.



⁵ Dobbin & Kalev’s 2016 *Harvard Business Review* article, “Why Diversity Programs Fail,” noted that “people often respond to compulsory courses with anger and resistance—and many participants actually report more animosity toward other groups afterward.” hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail

Currently, BCIT staff undergo mandatory Respectful Workplace Training and Occupational Health and Safety Training (OHS). However, several Working Group members noted that this training does not sufficiently broach key topics specific to anti-racism and racial equity. Many Working Group members suggested associating learning modules with new employee probation periods, promotion, and advancement plans, and assigning specific learning requirements depending on the position. Suggestions for mandatory learning for students included either incorporating anti-racism modules within core courses (e.g., ethics courses in each program) or developing a centralized online module that students would be required to complete prior to graduation.

Establishing mandatory learning for staff and altering program curricula for students are complex tasks that may require, for instance, approval and buy-in from other stakeholders, including in some cases unions and faculty. Additionally, facilitating anti-racism education requires particular skillsets—not all faculty can be expected to facilitate difficult and delicate conversations around racism. Poorly designed and executed actions can compound harm and impede progress in this work within an organization.

The question of mandatory training requires further discussion on these and other logistical challenges. However, even if it is a longer-term aspiration, it can be advanced in the shorter term by engaging relevant stakeholders—such as employee unions and the Student Association—for discussion and encouraging management to take a leadership role in promoting voluntary educational opportunities amongst their staff.⁶



⁶ Dobbin & Kalev's 2016 *Harvard Business Review* article, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," highlight the success of engaging managers as "diversity champions" in their organizations. hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail

PROPOSED ACTIONS: 2021–2022

- ➔ **Continue offering existing training and workshops.** Transition these online to accommodate COVID-19 health guidelines and to facilitate access in the future.
- ➔ **Develop a free, public, online Human Rights 101 course.**
- ➔ **Develop a Lunch & Learn series** [e.g., “Cultural Conversations”] to create an informal, voluntary space for the BCIT community to talk about their cultural traditions or religious beliefs. Use the series to foster cross-cultural awareness and understanding across the diverse groups of people that make up BCIT’s community.
- ➔ **Explore possibilities of expanding Diversity Circles** events to run on different days of the week—the events are typically held on Thursdays.
- ➔ **Activate a more inclusive calendar** by developing new activities [e.g., workshops, talks, and presentations] in relation to significant dates observed by diverse faith, cultural, identity-based, and ethnic groups.
- ➔ **Develop a calendar compiling all activities and initiatives that support anti-racism** hosted by different departments and offices, including the RDI Office, the BCIT Student Association [BCITSA], International Student Services, and Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships.
- ➔ **Develop a robust communications strategy** to raise awareness about racism and promote learning, workshops, and other initiatives including:
 - Promote the existing monthly newsletter from the RDI Office.
 - Collaborate with Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships.
 - Collaborate with the library to curate related displays and resources, promote BCIT book clubs.
 - Collaborate with BCIT’s campus radio and the BCITSA magazine, involving BCIT journalism students.
 - Collaborate with other campus departments and groups such as the Program Advisory Committees, Student Association, the Student Executive Council, and BCIT International to raise awareness and encourage support.
 - All mandatory or major events should be planned with a diversity and inclusion lens.
 - Leverage areas of high visibility for promotions [e.g., digital screens on campus].
- ➔ **Begin conversations with various stakeholders [e.g., employee unions] about what role mandatory staff training might play** as one component within a multi-faceted strategy, including collaborative development of such training and plans for evaluation.
- ➔ **Engage managers as champions** for participation in anti-racism education by modeling participation themselves, encouraging their teams to take trainings together, and dedicating time for staff to participate in training.
- ➔ **Engage BCIT faculty and staff expertise** relevant to this work, e.g., Management, Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships, Human Resources, Wellness, Occupational Workplace Safety, and Marketing and Communications. Building on the knowledge that is held by faculty, staff, and students in related areas, such as ethics, intercultural approaches to healthcare, and human resources skills. The research points to the advantages of collaborative approaches insofar as possible.
- ➔ **Ensure that language is not a barrier to access of important information** about BCIT’s priorities and key resources.

PRIORITY ACTION 2

Data Collection, Analysis, and Utilization

Data collection can help increase understanding of the impacts of race on student and staff recruitment, retention and advancement, as well as the broader experiences of racialized staff at BCIT. Data can also help evaluate the impacts of a range of anti-racism strategies.

EXISTING STRATEGIES, INITIATIVES, AND RESOURCES

- ✓ Various departments and centres within BCIT currently collect different kinds of qualitative and quantitative data. This includes Human Resources, academic departments, unions, the Student Association, the RDI Office, Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships, Diversity Circles, Student Services, and other departments.
- ✓ Annual reports require the collection, analysis, and sharing of different kinds of data.
- ✓ Government reports require the collection, analysis, and sharing of different kinds of data.
- ✓ BCIT’s Strategic Plan, the Indigenous Vision, and the Ministerial Mandate Letter⁷ provide a coherent framework for the importance of disaggregated data collection and analysis in support of key objectives.
- ✓ The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (TRC), and *Reclaiming Power and Place: National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* provide specific guidance on actions with special relevance for the post-secondary sector. Several of these actions are relevant in the context of addressing anti-racism.⁸ It is important not to conflate or collapse all actions related to Reconciliation within an expansive anti-racism umbrella or even a broader equity framework, in view of the distinct constitutional status—individual and collective—of Indigenous peoples. Effective and appropriate data collection, analysis, and dissemination are essential tools in supporting BCIT’s commitment to these calls for action.

CHALLENGES, BARRIERS, AND RISKS

- **Response rate.** Staff and student participation in data collection initiatives can be hampered by a number of factors, including lack of awareness, privacy concerns, accessibility of data collection methods, as well as fear of personal or professional repercussions if data gathered contains directly or indirectly identifiable information. For instance, staff or students leaving BCIT may not wish to disclose if their departure is motivated by experiences of racism if they fear this could impact professional references or letters of recommendation, future professional opportunities, or working relationships. It will be important to establish and clearly communicate protocols and limitations for anonymity and confidentiality when gathering data to ensure that the experiences of those most vulnerable can be safely collected.

⁷ www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/mandate-letters/20-21/mandate-british_columbia_institute_of_technology.pdf

⁸ The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. [2019-2020]. Literature Review: Indigenous Rights and Calls for Action and Justice in Education. Unpublished report.

- **Data collection vs. reporting.** Collecting data on experiences of racism can provoke the disclosure of specific instances of harassment or discrimination. It is important to clearly indicate alternative pathways that exist for reporting racist incidents to facilitate just action. Allegations of racism are investigated by the RDI Office, but the sharing of outcomes is constrained by privacy considerations, legal obligations, and other factors.
- **Feedback strategy to incentivize participation in reporting and data collection.** As research on the phenomenon of underreporting of alleged hate incidents demonstrates, people who report such cases are less likely to report future cases if their initial experiences are unsatisfactory or harmful. With due regard for important differences between these contexts, the research suggests that organizations can foster more confidence in the efficacy of reporting and collecting data by identifying and reducing barriers to reporting. This makes a case for the importance of reporting and collecting data with appropriate safeguards for privacy and other important considerations—and sharing the benefits of effective reporting, collection, and analysis in guiding improvements in policies, procedures, and other benchmarks.
- **Ethics of data disaggregation.** As stated by the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) in a recent publication, the collection of disaggregated data can make visible systemic inequalities in society in order to advance equity, however “the same data, used or collected poorly, can reinforce stigmatization of communities, leading to individual and community harm”⁹. It is vital that plans for data collection, analysis, and utilization follow the principles outlined in the BCOHRC report or other resources on disaggregated data to mitigate risks of exacerbating harm.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: 2021–2022

- ➔ **Review relevant student, faculty, and staff data** currently housed in the Research Office.
- ➔ **Complete intersectional assessment** of faculty and staff diversity and inclusion guided by the RDI Office, Student Association, and the Diversity & Inclusion Committee.
- ➔ **Complete intersectional assessment** of student diversity and inclusion guided by the RDI Office, Student Association, and the Diversity & Inclusion Committee.



⁹ BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner. (2020). *Disaggregated demographic data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective*. bchumanrights.ca/datacollection/

PRIORITY ACTION 3

Human Resources and Policy

To address racism at a systemic level, it is important to enact strategies that will result in greater racial diversity in hiring, especially with respect to leadership positions and faculty. It is also important to review and adjust policies to enable racial equity for staff and students. A lens of anti-racism, and equity, diversity, and inclusion should be foundational to all new endeavours at BCIT, including curriculum development, long-term strategic planning, hiring and retention, campus development, the design of space, and event planning.

EXISTING STRATEGIES, INITIATIVES, AND RESOURCES

- ✓ **Existing Human Resources frameworks** that support BCIT's commitment to be an equal opportunity employer.
- ✓ **Unconscious bias training** was made available online to all employees in March 2021 with anyone sitting on a hiring committee strongly encouraged to take it. We recognize that Human Resources staff cannot always attend recruitment interviews.
- ✓ **Analysis of existing policies** in coordination with the Institute-wide Policy Review Committee to identify gaps and other areas for improvement, and to initiate steps to address these issues.
- ✓ **2020–21 \$50k award to Diversity Circles from the Canada Research Chairs (CRC) Program** is currently funding a series of focus groups and training sessions, with the RDI Office, on addressing systemic bias through looking at BCIT's hiring and retention practices.

CHALLENGES, BARRIERS, AND RISKS

- **Data gaps and risk aversion.** As discussed in the section on Data Collection [see p. 10], concerns around personal or professional repercussions, privacy protections, and legal risks can constrain individuals from identifying racism-related motivations for vacating positions. Related concerns can constrain individual and departments within organizations from collecting and sharing this data.
- **Information gaps.** The constraints on investigating allegations of race-related discrimination, and the process followed by the RDI Office might not be widely understood by the BCIT community¹⁰.
- **Unconscious bias and systemic barriers.** Racial biases in recruitment can be subtle or difficult to identify and acknowledge. Racial imbalances in recruitment can also be affected by systemic barriers leading to fewer Indigenous people, Black or African Diaspora individuals, or all other racialized minorities applying for positions, staying at BCIT, or advancing to leadership positions. It is important to establish specific policies and practices that help to eliminate structural barriers and mitigate the risk of subjective biases in hiring processes.
- **Inequitable and potentially harmful burdens that may fall on Indigenous people, Black and African Diaspora individuals, and all other racialized groups** to explain, justify, advocate for or support anti-racism work while simultaneously doing their other work.

¹⁰ Much of the work in organizations like BCIT to protect workplace safety and rights happens, of necessity, behind closed doors. This is because investigations, mediation and, where required, other actions, are confidential during the investigative phase and sometimes long after the file is closed. This is unavoidable. At the same time, victims of discrimination, who might be reluctant to report their experiences in the first place, in part because of previous experiences, might not be aware of the serious efforts made by the RDI Office at BCIT to investigate and adjudicate these alleged incidents. Knowing that reports are taken very seriously at BCIT—and that there are consequences—can increase confidence by all in the efficacy of these systems. Protecting privacy and human-centred, culturally safe approaches are not mutually exclusive.

- **Risks of compounding harms** with insufficiently planned, resourced, implemented, or evaluated actions.
- **Risks of inadvertently or unconsciously replicating colonial approaches** to address racism e.g., simplistically conflating anti-racism work with BCIT’s commitments to Reconciliation.
- **Risks of inadvertently or unconsciously compounding harms** by sparking lateral aggression, gaslighting, or competition for scarce resources and attention amongst diverse equity-deserving groups¹¹.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: 2021–2022

- ➔ **Identify and review existing Human Resources frameworks, procedures, and policies** that support BCIT’s commitment to be an equal opportunity employer.
- ➔ **Include the RDI Advisor on the BCIT Policy Review Team**, to ensure an inclusive lens is provided to the renewal or development of Administrative Policies.
- ➔ **Develop a guide of best practices for diversity hiring** in relation to job descriptions, job postings, and interview processes and circulate amongst all departments. Research emerging practices such as removing identifying information from curriculum vitae.
- ➔ **Periodic training for the recruitment team and people on hiring committees** to mitigate the tendency to fall into old habits or to rely on unexamined, problematic, or harmful practices.
- ➔ **Increase diversity on hiring committees** and introduce the mandatory inclusion of a designated member on all hiring committees who has received specialized training in respect, diversity, and inclusion—especially for the recruitment of management or senior management positions.
- ➔ **Determine how to collect and review relevant data on recruitment and retention through exit interviews**, such as reports of racism-related motivations for vacating positions, vacancy rates, and racially disaggregated data on recruitment, retention, and promotion. Track recruitment and retention data over time to evaluate the success and weakness of established and new policies and procedures.
- ➔ **Establish a “No Wrong Door” policy** whereby reports related to racism received by any BCIT school or department from faculty, staff, and students would be reported and channeled appropriately.

¹¹A common definition of equity is a condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without consideration for individual differences. In BC it means not depriving individuals or classes of persons of opportunities that are “customarily available to the public”. www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96210_01 “Equity-seeking groups” is a commonplace term used to refer to groups or classes of persons that have been relatively deprived of equity. The BC Human Rights Code protects individuals or classes of persons from discriminatory treatment on the basis of “race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age of that person or class of persons.” In addition, Indigenous individuals and communities have distinct constitutional status in Canada. As in any area of human knowledge, terminology is neither static nor universally accepted. Some critics of the term “equity-seeking groups” contend that “equity-deserving” is preferable, arguing that “equity-seeking” implies that historically excluded, marginalized, or under-supported individuals or groups are not necessarily deserving of the equitable opportunities that they are seeking, or that others are seeking on their behalf. Although this is not the commonplace understanding of the term “equity-seeking” by equity advocates, there is a lively discussion of the utility of the term, accompanied by growing currency of the alternative: “equity-deserving”. It is important to recognize that using “deserving” in place of “seeking” could risk inadvertently erasing the historical and current struggle of equity-deserving groups to obtain fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment. As well, “equity-deserving groups” could be misunderstood to mean that only some groups deserve equity. That is not at all what we mean here. We have used “equity-deserving” in order to underscore the ideas that [1] everyone deserves to be treated fairly, inclusively, and respectfully, [2] currently, equity is not yet available to all groups, and [3] no one should have to seek the equity to which all persons and classes of persons are already entitled.

PRIORITY ACTION 4

Inclusive Learning Environments

Faculty and staff—through their interactions with students—are integral to creating an environment where students feel a sense of belonging and respect at BCIT. It is important to enact strategies within programs, co-curricular activities, and services that contribute to a more racially inclusive and aware environment.

EXISTING STRATEGIES, INITIATIVES, AND RESOURCES

- ✓ **Infrastructure.** The design process for new buildings has begun taking in consideration accessibility and inclusion, e.g., incorporating prayer spaces, gender-inclusive washrooms, Indigenous ways of knowing and being.
- ✓ **Training and workshops** for staff in Student Services and the Learning Commons as well as faculty.

CHALLENGES, BARRIERS, AND RISKS

- **Time constraints.** As discussed in the section on Education and Raising Awareness [see p. 5], BCIT's short and intensive program model can limit students' time and capacity to engage in co-curricular activities. However, it is important to ensure that services and activities are offered in ways that are culturally responsive and inclusive, as well as being accessible for students with diverse time needs [e.g., working students, students with dependents, or students with particular disabilities that might have an impact on their time navigating campus spaces or systems].



- **Anti-racist curriculum content.** As discussed on p. 5, there are barriers to quickly and effectively incorporating anti-racism education within curriculum content. It may be easier to incorporate changes when new courses are developed or when courses are reviewed every 3–4 years by the Education Council. Faculty will also need support to facilitate anti-racism curriculum content and to offer such modules through a centralized, online platform.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: 2021–2022

- ➔ **Collaborate with Student Services** to develop and offer, where possible, additional culturally responsive services.
- ➔ **Develop a checklist to support curriculum revision** for use when new courses are developed, when programs undergo periodic review by the Education Council, or by individual faculty interested in strengthening their course through an anti-racism lens.
- ➔ **Explore the possibility of offering a centralized, online, anti-racism learning module**, possibly mandatory or for credit.
- ➔ **Collaborate with the Learning and Teaching Centre** to offer tools, workshops, or consultations to support faculty in applying an anti-racism lens to their teaching practice and curriculum.
- ➔ **Increase opportunities to weave in Indigenous ways of knowing and being across BCIT.**
- ➔ **Increase opportunities for diverse cultural representation throughout campus.**
- ➔ **Incentivize anti-racist or broadly inclusive curricular innovation** by identifying and recognizing faculty, staff, and student champions in this work.
- ➔ **Support collaborative task groups** and other opportunities for faculty to co-create and share with colleagues exemplary or promising approaches.
- ➔ In collaboration with faculty, staff, and students, invite industry champions of anti-racist human resources, training, and collaboration to present successful initiatives or share stories of such work in their industries¹².
- ➔ Ensure Institute-wide panels and committees represent a diverse range of faculty and staff, e.g., Valedictorian Committee, Engagement Committee.

¹² Many future employers of BCIT students are leaders in equity work. The idea is to inspire and incentivize faculty, staff, and student support for—and appreciation of—the importance of equity and anti-racism by including voices from industry, where this work is increasingly seen as integral to doing business.

Conclusion and Next Steps

It's a long-term journey, and we'll have to challenge ourselves to make sure we are getting it right in the evolving context. Where are we going to be in 10 years? What are we going to know then?

What would it take for BCIT to become a leading innovator in incorporating anti-racism as an integral dimension of its organizational culture at every level? The initial six Anti-Racism Working Group meetings helped to establish relationships, surface key challenges and tensions in advancing anti-racism at BCIT, and develop the provisional action plan presented in this document. There are further discussions to be had, and, as one Working Group member described: "We don't know what we don't know. It's a journey." Advancing anti-racism at BCIT in the months and years to come will require flexibility. Plans should be developed as "living documents", with periodic opportunities to evaluate progress, make changes, and identify emerging gaps and needs.

Next Steps for this process: 2021–2022

In addition to the next steps proposed within each section above:

- The RDI Office will engage relevant BCIT leaders, including vice presidents, committees, and department heads to undertake work to complete the identified actions.
- BCIT's leadership commits to devoting the necessary human resources and time to complete the identified priorities, including providing staff in various departments with adequate paid time to work on these initiatives.



- ➔ The RDI Office will report to Senior Leadership bi-annually about progress on identified initiatives.
- ➔ The RDI Office will provide an annual report to the BCIT community and will engage with them on these issues in an ongoing way, including periodic updates on the website.
- ➔ The RDI Office will meet with the Anti-Racism Working Group semi-annually to solicit input on strategies and priorities.
- ➔ The RDI Office will share this Framework with the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and other stakeholders across the Institute.
- ➔ The assessments of faculty, staff, and student diversity and inclusion planned for the 2021–2022 academic year, under the leadership of the RDI Office and the Diversity & Inclusion Committee, will be aligned in support of the objectives identified in this Framework.

Successful initiatives to advance equity and inclusion include elements such as targeted recruitment, mentoring, self-managed teams, and task forces. This is a key reason that BCIT convened an Anti-Racism Working Group to collaborate in a series of facilitated dialogues for the purpose of developing the priorities and key content within this Framework. The Institute has acknowledged that racism exists within the BCIT community, just as it does within the broader community, both on an individual level, as well as systemically. There is much work to be done to eliminate all forms of racism within our community. This work will require transparency, accountability, and a framework with specific actions. Effective implementation of this Framework during 2021–2022 and subsequently will require the support and collaboration of faculty, staff, and students throughout the Institute. Ideas generated by faculty, staff, and students about what is working well and what needs improvement, will contribute to removing systemic barriers and harms rooted in racism. This work is integral to what it means to be the British Columbia Institute of Technology at this time in our history.





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