

Wilfrid Laurier University 2025/26 CRC EDI Public Report

Reporting period: April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

Equity and Diversity and Inclusion 1

Research demonstrates that achieving an equitable, diverse, and inclusive work environment leads to increased excellence, innovation, and impact. A diversity of experiences, perspectives and voices is fundamental to achieving excellent research.

Key institutional actions in support of EDI in the CRCP:

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

Key EDI Action 1

Describe the key action that was undertaken.

(Action 1 a) Create and roll-out toolkit tailored to researchers (including CRCs) on how to better embed EDI-informed practices into their research teams and research practices.

Briefly describe related objective.

Objective 1: To increase support systems, tools and education related to EDI. The analysis of the employee engagement survey revealed that Laurier employees perceive EDI as one of three key drivers of positive employee engagement. A large number of Laurier employees also identified that the diversity of the Laurier community does not reflect the diversity of communities within which the campuses are located. There is therefore a recognized need to increase education and support around the experiences of individuals from equity deserving groups.

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

During the reporting period, the Office of the AVP: EDI, in collaboration with Employment Equity and Campus Accessibility and Faculty Relations in Human Resources are in the process of updating the mandatory training for faculty serving on hiring, tenure, and promotion committees. This work includes developing distinct components for hiring and for tenure and promotion (in line with the WLUFA Collective Agreement) drawing on recent scholarship and practical guidance to strengthen how EDI is considered in the evaluation of research, teaching, and service. CRC EDI Stipend funds are supporting research assistants who are helping to advance this work, contributing to more consistent, transparent, and equitable evaluation practices across the institution.

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

The primary challenge has been capacity related in terms of the Offices named above having time and people resources to do the initial literature and other media sources review to gather current information on best practices. This has been mitigated through the hiring of a Research Student, as well as via the work of a Bachelor of Social Work placement student working with the AVP: EDI on this project.

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

Yes.

Key EDI Action 2

Describe the key action that was undertaken.

(Action 2 d) Develop metrics as outlined in the Dimensions Pilot Program to understand barriers to inclusion experienced by CRCs from equity deserving groups and the larger Laurier community.

This includes the development of:

- A. Reporting Incidents to Support Equity (RISE) Form: a climate data gathering tool that allows members of the Laurier community to disclose incidents of bias or harm they experience or witness, with the option to disclose anonymously.
- B. Preparation of the Diversity and Equity Assessment and Planning (DEAP) tool for launch: a self-assessment interface that assists administrative, academic, and governance units to better understand the climate relating to equity and diversity in their unit.
- C. Increase response rate to the Student Self-Identification Form (SSIDF): Laurier's first voluntary student demographic survey, open to graduate and undergraduate students.

Briefly describe related objective.

Objective 2: Improved data collection and analysis to make EDI-informed decisions. To better understand what changes will have the most impact, Laurier needs to better understand its environment and systemic barriers to inclusion. This also includes embedding more contemporary data analysis approaches such as intersectional analysis and data disaggregation to deepen our understanding of unique experiences among individual clusters of Laurier's population and equity deserving groups.

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

A) De-identified data from the RISE form is used to develop aggregate summaries that highlight overall patterns and trends, helping Laurier better understand where bias and harm are occurring in the research ecosystem. The AVP: EDI released the first report based on this data in January 2026. The form was accessed 264 times, and the findings are informing the work of the AVP: EDI Advisory Council as it supports efforts to embed EDI across the institution.

B) The Office of the AVP: EDI piloted the DEAP tool with three Laurier units during the reporting period, and feedback from these pilots will be incorporated into the tool over Summer 2026. The tool is expected to launch to the broader Laurier community in January 2026 and will support strategic planning at both the unit and institutional levels by providing a consistent approach to assessment across units.

C) SSIDF responses can be cross-referenced with Banner data to help identify areas of underrepresentation and better understand how student experiences differ across demographic groups. During the reporting period, the Office of the AVP: EDI hired a research assistant to support outreach efforts, including boothing and social media campaigns across Laurier's campuses, to help maintain a 40% response rate.

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

Challenges across all three EDI data initiatives continue to stem from limited capacity within the Office of the AVP: EDI, which has contributed to some delays. The EDI Data Specialist is continuing to work with research assistants, as funding allows, to move these important data collection and analysis initiatives forward.

Was funding from the CRC EDI Stipend used for this action?

Yes.

Key EDI Action 3

Describe the key action that was undertaken.

(Action 3a) Evaluate and recommend improvements to Laurier's procedures and policies, including Collective Agreement equity articles and identify systemic barriers to the recruitment and promotion of faculty (including CRCs). This action includes the development of the AVP: EDI Advisory Council (AC).

Briefly describe related objective.

Objective 3: Policies and Procedures Built with an Inclusive Lens. As a university, policies and procedures guide Laurier's operations, its everyday decisions and informal interactions. They inform, and are created by institutional culture and they can simultaneously create both opportunities and barriers to inclusion. The reviews highlighted opportunities to make Laurier's policies and procedures, even informal ones, more inclusive. Laurier and its faculty association are both committed to working together to reimagine its policies and procedures through an inclusive lens.

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

The EDI-AC has now completed its first year. During the reporting period, it developed its terms of reference and guiding principles and established working groups made up of students, staff, faculty, and alumni. These groups reviewed relevant recommendations from Laurier's EDI strategic plan and identified priority areas for 2026–2027. The AVP: EDI is now working to move these priorities forward over the summer.

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

There were no significant challenges to report beyond those typically associated with the first year of a new advisory council.

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

Yes.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion 2

Research demonstrates that achieving an equitable, diverse, and inclusive work environment leads to increased excellence, innovation, and impact. A diversity of experiences, perspectives and voices is fundamental to achieving excellent research.

CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

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

- Very important

Other EDI initiatives

Provide an example of an EDI initiative underway at the institution – that is broader than those tied to the CRCP that is expected to address systemic barriers and foster an equitable, diverse and inclusive research environment.

For example, are there projects underway that underscore the importance of EDI to research excellence? Is there additional training being offered to the faculty at large? Are there initiatives to improve the campus climate? Please provide hyperlinks where relevant in the box below. URLs should include https://. Note that collecting this information is a requirement of the 2019 Addendum to the 2006 Canadian Human Rights Settlement Agreement (clause 39.e) and provides context for the work the institution is doing in addressing barriers for the CRCP.

Laurier has been awarded a \$100,000 Dimensions Canada grant from NSERC to develop EDI accountability frameworks in research. The project, co-led by the Office of the Associate Vice-President: EDI and the Office of Research Services, aims to address the gap between proposed EDI commitments in grant applications and their actual implementation. Currently, while researchers are expected to include EDI considerations in proposals, there is little requirement to report on outcomes, contributing to concerns about performative commitments. In partnership with Royal Roads University, Université Laval, the University of Winnipeg, the EDI in Research Community of Practice, and the Quebec Inter-University Network for EDI, Laurier will develop tools and recommendations to strengthen accountability across the research ecosystem. The project will share best practices through open-access guidance frameworks to help researchers design, assess, and report on EDI outcomes, while supporting research administrators in post-award oversight. Building on Laurier's previous Dimensions work, including the creation of its EDI office and strategy, the initiative reflects the university's continued commitment to advancing inclusive research practices nationally.

<https://www.wlu.ca/news/spotlights/2026/may/laurier-awarded-100,000-from-canadian-government-to-bolster-edi-in-research.html>