VIU's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

2021 - 2026

VANCOUVER ISLAND
UNIVERSITY

Table of Contents

ANNEXES 19

Introduction

Vancouver Island University (VIU) is firmly committed to advancing equity, celebrating diversity, and practicing inclusion for all.

As a small multi-campus university serving Vancouver Island and the adjacent BC coast, VIU is known for the strength of personal connections we create with learners from around the corner and from around the world. Our success is based on the inclusive and supportive relationships our faculty form with diverse learners as well as the broad range of wrap-around support programs for learners, many of whom face obstacles in succeeding in their studies. This commitment to people is why we work to enhance equity, diversity and inclusion for faculty and students. This same commitment is evident in our work to implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We are a university that strives to build a welcoming and inspiring community of learning for all.

That commitment is central to VIU's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan: People, Place, Potential. One of VIU's six priorities is to **become a more inclusive and healthier place for work and study:** "We believe that well-being in all its aspects depends on how we treat each other. We will therefore prioritize our work to advance equity, celebrate diversity, and practice inclusion." Moreover, the Strategic Plan not only makes EDI a stand-alone commitment, but it also pledges to weave equity, diversity, and inclusion measures across all of the university's planning.

To act on that commitment, VIU led an extensive review process over the course of 2019-2021 to understand our strengths and identify steps going forward. This Action Plan is the outcome. It articulates clear objectives and specific actions that will expand our historic equity, diversity, and inclusion commitments, identify and address existing gaps, to create open, transparent reporting going forward.

The Process

As a first step to developing the plan, VIU assembled a diverse institutional team to undertake a self-assessment. Team members included:

- **Working Group.** A working group of 16 members, including both academic and administrative leaders from equity-deserving groups, sought to ensure inclusion of a broad spectrum of perspectives and experience in formulating and strategizing Action Plan components.

- **Leadership Team.** The leadership team was comprised of VIU's Provost and Vice-President Academic, Associate Vice-President for Human Resources, Associate Vice-President for Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity, and the Director of the Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office.

- **Core EDI Team.** The core EDI team, responsible for the day-to-day management of the work, included the EDI Advisor, a Policy Analyst, a Post-Doctoral Researcher, and additional student support.

Throughout the two-year process, the Leadership Team and Working Group advised the Core EDI Team, guiding the identification of best practice, policy and procedure review, design and implementation of the environmental scan, data analysis, and the development of an evidence-based and concrete plan to move forward. The Team consulted in turn with many stakeholders, including the President's Committee on Diversity Equity and Human Rights whose membership includes the VIU Student Union and representation from across all employee groups.[1] The VIU President's Council, made up of all senior leaders across VIU, was also instrumental in strengthening the commitments shared here.

VIU Today

VIU is home to a diverse group of learners, employees, and supporting members of our many communities. In turn, the university has put in place policies and other supports that aim to advance EDI, a foundation on which to further diversify and ensure equity and inclusion for all members of the VIU community. This section describes that starting point.

WHO WE ARE

Community Profile

VIU has three campuses as well as four additional learning sites. The largest campus, with more than three-quarters of VIU's 13,000+ students, is in Nanaimo on the traditional lands of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.[2] The second largest campus, with approximately 11% percent of students, is located in Duncan on the traditional lands of the Quw'utsun Tribes territory. The third campus, with 4% percent, is located in Powell River on the traditional lands of the Tla'amin First Nation. VIU's other sites provide experiential learning opportunities: the Parksville-Qualicum Centre in Parksville (Snaw-naw-as territory); Milner Gardens & Woodland (Kwalikum territory); the G.R. Paine Horticultural Training Centre in Nanaimo (Snuneymuxw territory); and the Deep Bay Marine Field Station just north of Bowser (Homalco territory).

The diversity profile of our region reflects the long history of Indigenous people and the pattern of immigrant settlement. Non-Indigenous people are primarily of European or North American origin (Figure 1) and the proportion of people from racialized minorities is smaller than elsewhere in the province (Figure 2). Nearly 8% of people in this region identify as Indigenous, and nearly 9% identify as Asian (primarily Chinese and South Asian).

---

[1] A similar Self-Assessment Team configuration will be re-instituted for completing the application to the Dimensions Program beginning in 2021.

[2] These numbers reflect enrolment in 2019-20. For updated data, please visit VIU's Office of University Planning and Analysis webpages.

Figure 1: Ethnic Origin [3]
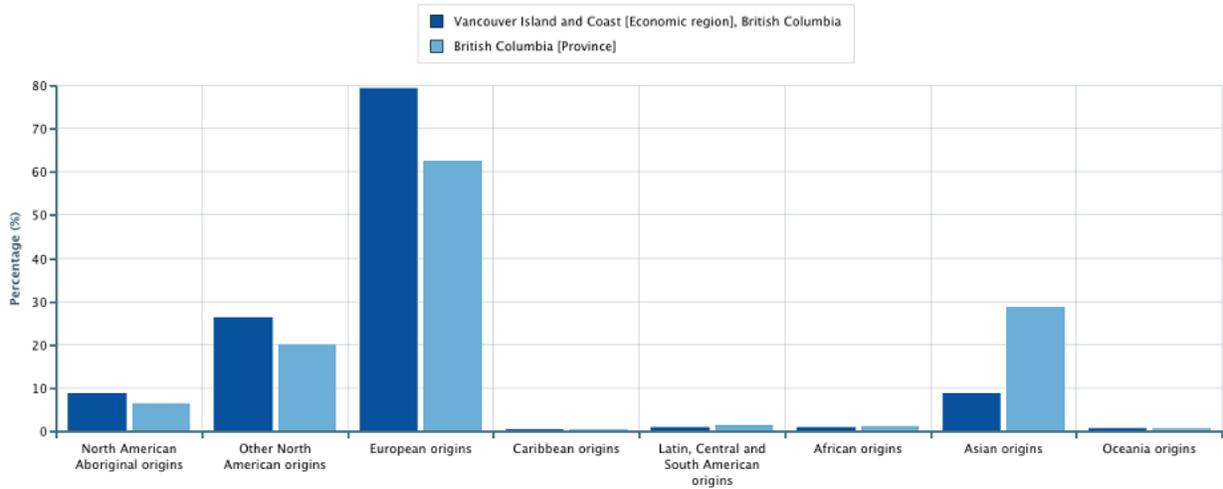
Figure 2: Racialized Minorities [4]
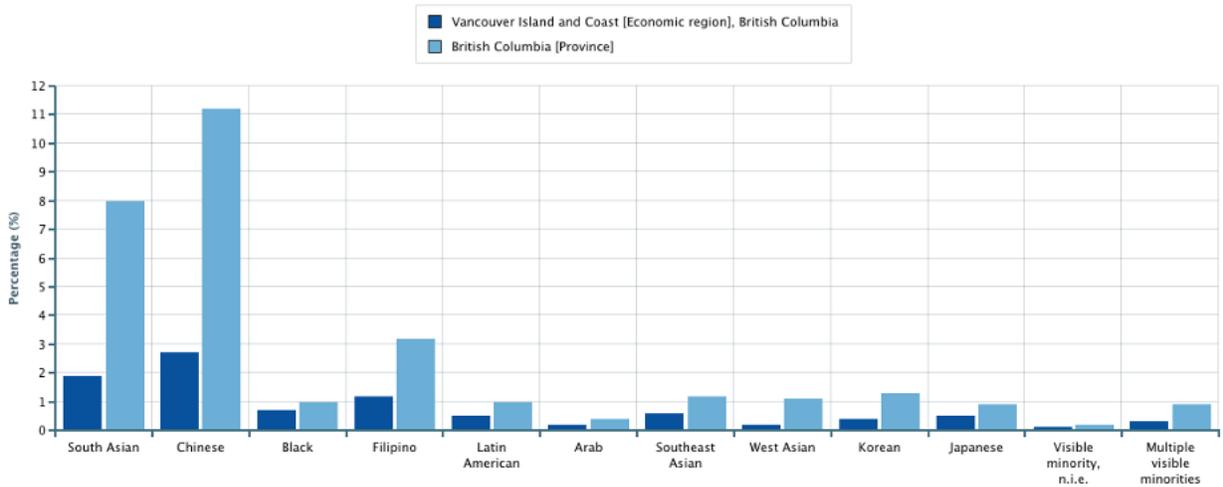
Data on the proportion of people living with a disability is available only at the provincial level. The latest Statistics Canada survey information reports that 24.7% of BC residents over the age of 15 have a disability.[5] Local data for gender and sexual minorities is not available, but Canada-wide statistics show that some 4% of the population aged 15 and over identify as 2SLGBTQI+ (Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and other gender or sexual minority identities).

[3] Statistics Canada. 2017. Vancouver Island and Coast [Economic region], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa.

[4] Statistics Canada. 2017. Vancouver Island and Coast [Economic region], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa.

[5] Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0374-01 Persons with and without disabilities aged 15 years and over, by age group and sex, Canada, provinces and territories. The site defines "disability" for the purposes of the survey.

In contrast, VIU's student body is strikingly more diverse than our surrounding communities. Existing data sources show that 11% of students identify as Indigenous,[6] one of the highest percentages among post-secondary institutions in Canada, and 58% of VIU students are women.[7] Additional data collected in VIU's first-ever EDI survey in 2020 showed that some 12% of student respondents identified as members of racialized minorities, 16% reported living with a disability, 15.7% identified as 2SLGBTQI+, and 10.6% indicated they were Indigenous.

VIU's employee community, as expected, is more representative of the local community. While VIU does not yet collect full EDI information from employees,[8] one- third of our workforce responded to the EDI survey in 2020. Some 6.3% of employee respondents identified as Indigenous; 6.7% identified as members of racialized/visible minorities, 6.6% reported living with a disability, and 6.3% identified as 2SLGBTQI+. Existing employee data show that 63% of all VIU's employees are women – and 54% of members of the instructional unions are women – a close match to the student composition.[9]

WHAT WE DO

Recognizing the diversity of our community and our campuses, today VIU has in place a suite of policies, procedures, practices and services designed to advance equity, celebrate diversity, and practice inclusion. Those tools are meant to improve the experience at VIU for all, including our students, employees and community members, inside and outside the classroom.

Policies and Procedures

A policy scan of current policies and procedures was undertaken in 2019 (see summary in Annex A). Overall, the scan showed that most of VIU's EDI-focused policies and procedures focused on human resource management. Our review found those guidance documents to be transparent, well documented, and focused on eliminating barriers and promoting diversity. However, they do not yet prescribe specific actions, such as clear measures to consider or promote diversity in recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, and in working and learning environments. As our Action Plan shows, we intend to fill those gaps, including through a detailed Employment Systems Review.

Practices and Services

Supporting those governance documents are a myriad practices and services intended to deepen EDI at VIU. Examples include:

Recruitment

- **Active recruitment of Indigenous learners.** In 2017 VIU announced a new $13.5M partnership with the MasterCard Foundation to improve supports for Indigenous learners. This eleV partnership was intended to double the number of sponsored First Nations and Metis students at VIU over five years, supported by dedicated navigators to assist youth with applying and navigating the post-secondary system. The intent of the partnership is to identify and change systemic barriers for Indigenous students. VIU also sets a quota of priority seats offered to Indigenous applicants who meet the requirements for admission in most programs.

---

[6] VIU, Office of University Planning and Analysis, Facts Online: Enrolment.
[7] VIU, Office of University Planning and Analysis, Facts Online: Enrolment.
[8] VIU does not currently have data on the diversity profile of VIU employees; that gap is addressed in this plan.
[9] VIU, Office of University Planning and Analysis, Facts Online: Faculty and Staff.

- **Active recruitment of Indigenous employees**. VIU actively encourages or requires the hiring of Indigenous persons for counsellors, Indigenous area-research chairs, and faculty teaching courses with Indigenous content; and has 11 Indigenous faculty members who are Elders in Residence. VIU has further received Human Rights Commission approval to designate specific faculty positions to be filled by Indigenous faculty, for example in Social Work.

- **Unbiased hiring practices.** Unconscious/implicit bias training has been offered to VIU employees over recent years, and in 2019 VIU began more targeted and concerted unconscious bias training for hiring committees for senior administrators and research chairs with a plan to offer this for all hiring committees as we go forward.

Awareness-Raising

- **Intercultural Communication and Diversity Training Workshops** are offered by VIU's Department of International Education to VIU employees.[10] Further, all employees are required to take the mandatory human rights and diversity workshop at the time of hire. Workshops include cultural difference, cross-cultural understanding, difficult conversations, intercultural conflict, intercultural development and effectiveness.

- **Knowledge Building Activities regarding Indigenous Peoples and Truth and Reconciliation.** The Office of Indigenous Education and Engagement (OIEE) offers a suite of training opportunities. Regular offerings include the Kairos Blanket Exercise (offered to classes, community groups, and employee divisions); Protocol seminars; and workshops on culture and Indigenous people's experience co-facilitated by Elders and students. In 2018-19 (pre-COVID), OIEE organized and facilitated 260 hours in professional development offerings, including 80 KAIROS Blanket Exercises to more than 1,000 individuals.

- **Building a Community of Practice within Canadian Institutions.** A key objective of our EDI development work has been to identify best practices from across Canada and learn from them. To that end, VIU applied for and received additional funding from the Tri-agencies to host an EDI symposium in March 2021 with 219 Webinar registrants; including 163 participants from 20 universities. VIU created an EDI community of practice at this event to continue to share best practices.

Accessibility

- **Improvements in Physical Accessibility.** In 2018, VIU completed a full audit of all our buildings with the help of grant from the Rick Hansen Foundation. As a result, VIU is investing in upgrades to create an accessible Nanaimo campus, including an interactive map that will guide those with mobility challenges through the complexities of the steep terrain. These upgrades include universal access, gender neutral washrooms, accessible desks and study spaces, wayfinding and enhanced ramps.

- **Services for students with disabilities.** Like other universities, VIU's Accessibility Services offer accommodations such as modifications to exam timing or formats, alternate form text books, assistive technology and software, and more.

These pieces form a strong foundation for VIU, but more can be done.

---

[10] VIU, International Education, Intercultural Professional Development.

Where VIU needs to be

The EDI Environmental Scan – a mixed methods research project that included a survey and interview data as well as community conversations on the research results – created significant discussion and heightened energy across all community constituencies. The scan, summarized here and detailed in Annex B and C, identified VIU's successes and challenges in moving forward and generated suggestions for action.

Successes

A majority of the environmental scan participants reported feeling included and supported by the campus community and all equity-deserving group members expressed an overall high sense of inclusion and happiness at VIU. Of particular note were the personal relationships cited by participants as their main source of support. Participants appreciated institutional support mechanisms such as Accessibility Services for students and the Office of Indigenous Education and Engagement. Spaces such as the *Shq'apthut: A Gathering Place* and accessible/gender-neutral washrooms made many participants (even those who identify as part of other groups) feel welcome and included at VIU.

Challenges

Participants in the Environmental Scan also provided clear and consistent insight into barriers, biases, and discrimination experienced across all constituencies. A summary of the most salient experiences identified in the Environmental Scan, by designated group, included the following:

Persons living with disabilities. Respondents identified barriers in the shape of physical/architectural obstacles, lack of support (feeling ignored by VIU employees, particularly in relation to invisible disabilities), condescension (by VIU faculty and/or staff), bureaucratic barriers, and exclusion from social activities.

Women. Employee survey participants identifying as women rated their sense of inclusion lower than employees identifying as men. Participants pointed to systemic "silos" and power hierarchies between/ within departments/faculties (by other employees); condescension and lack of appreciation from supervisors; lack of communication and/or policy clarity from management/HR that create barriers to professional advancement for women and other marginalized groups; lack of employee empowerment; heavy workloads; lack of mentoring; unconscious biases; micro-aggressions; and inadequate support for both employee and student mothers.

Indigenous Community Members. Respondents spoke of unconscious bias demonstrated by others in regularly ignoring or downplaying Indigenous perspectives and culture; expecting or presuming assimilation; significant feelings of resentment by non-Aboriginal students towards *Shq'apthut: A Gathering Place,* reflecting a lack of understanding and communication; under-representation of Indigenous faculty members; and stereotyping, tokenizing and (usually subtle) discrimination.

Racialized People/Persons of Colour/Visible Minority. Participants in the survey and interviews spoke of feelings of exclusion and isolation, both among Canadian and International visible minorities; lack of acknowledgement and awareness of racial issues in the classroom; micro-aggressions; as well as stereotyping, tokenizing and (usually subtle) discrimination.

2SLGBTQI+ People. Survey respondents mentioned a dismissive attitude/microaggressions by employees and students regarding gender identity; unconscious bias in the lack of acknowledgment of 2SLGBTQI+ community/culture among some faculty; lack of support for the Positive Space Alliance, (the 2SLGBTQI+ organization, now dependent on volunteers); and a shortage of gender-neutral washrooms on-campus.

Addressing these challenges while building on existing strengths is the focus of the new plan.

The Action Plan builds on four guiding principles before setting out 6 goals, 17 measurable objectives, and a host of concrete strategies for putting them into action.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our action plan embraces the following guiding principles, consistent with best practices at universities across Canada that are making progress on expansion of EDI. In this plan, VIU seeks to be:

- **Deliberate.** This action plan is intentionally built to enhance and increase equity, diversity and inclusion at VIU.

- **Driven by Evidence.** The actions are based on evidence, including VIU-specific disaggregated data, and reflect wise practices drawn from accomplishments across Canada.

- **Accountable.** The actions were collaboratively developed with key stakeholders across VIU, and the accountabilities for implementing the plan are clearly described.

- **Transparent.** We will continue to share publicly the data we gather on our progress. This practice seeks to build trust among and between stakeholders, duty bearers, and rights-holders and to continue to facilitate understanding of and commitment to EDI.

Action Plan

Building on a review of best practice, VIU collected ideas throughout the survey and consultation phases. This Action Plan builds on the wealth of that expertise. It includes a proposal to survey employees' self-identification (see also Annex D) and discusses measures specific to VIU's Canada Research Chairs (see also Annex E).

GOAL 1:

ENSURE THAT VIU'S INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PROCESSES SUPPORT EDI

Objectives

- **Revised policies.** By June 2024, key policies, procedures, and processes will align with best practice in promoting EDI.
  - Measure: approval of new/revised policies reported annually
  - Measure: VIU's EDI Plan will receive a "fully satisfies" rating by the Canada Research Chairs Secretariat.

- **Improved representation.** By June 2026, VIU will demonstrate progress in the number of employees from equity-deserving groups who seek election in Senate and Faculty Councils, and the number of President's Council members who are representative of equity-deserving groups.
  - Measure: Baseline in December 2021, demonstrate annual increase.

Strategies

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office along with Human Resources and Student Affairs will develop these policies and procedures:
  - New Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
  - Updated Human Rights Policy and Procedures, including anti-racism
  - Updated Student Accommodation Policy and Procedures
  - Updated Employee Accommodation Policy and Procedures

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office along with Human Resources and Student Affairs will consult with committees and working groups such as the Universal Access Committee, the Anti-Racism group, the Positive Space Alliance, representatives from Indigenous learning and support teams, and student groups to recommend and develop any other needed policies, statements of commitment, or guidelines to specifically address anti-racism, gender expression/affirmation, or other key challenges.

- Human Resources will continue to implement a full Employment Systems Review.

- The Registrar (Chair of Elections Committee) and Faculty Deans will lead the effort to encourage more members of equity-deserving groups to seek election in Senate and Faculty Councils.

- The University Secretariat will seek to identify barriers for equity-deserving groups to seek, be elected, and participate in VIU governance bodies, and to suggest strategies to remediate.

- Human Resources will track the representation in VIU's senior ranks (Directors and above) from equity-deserving groups.

- The Provost will request that the new Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Commitments recommend options for decolonizing committee governance and propose revised rules of order for their operation.

- The EDI Director and University Secretariat will engage in a policy audit using GBA+.

GOAL 2:
SUPPORT VIU LEARNERS AND EMPLOYEES TO DEMONSTRATE EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Objectives

- **Enhanced learning opportunities.** Starting in September 2021, VIU learners and employees will have more opportunities to engage in meaningful learning opportunities about EDI.

  - Measure: Increase in the number or percentage of learners and employees who participate in learning opportunities.

  - Measure: Change in self-reported awareness in workshop evaluations.

- **Deepened Allyship:** VIU employees report additional actions taken to support equity-deserving groups.

  - Measure: Change in positive responses in employee survey.

  - Celebrated practices: On an ongoing basis, VIU learners and employees will regularly hear about the EDI contributions made by others in our community.

  - Measure: Report on number of stories annually.

Strategies

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office, with support of the Internal Communications Office, will report on the ongoing education programs and training, retreats, and events for learners and employees offered across the institution pertaining to equity/equality (noting that equity often requires differential treatment), implicit/unconscious bias, microaggressions, privilege, allyship, anti-racism, sexual misconduct, respect for Indigenous people and history, disability awareness, respectful communication skills.

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office will join the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion and invite VIU employees to participate in its extensive training resources.

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office will develop, in consultation with equity-deserving groups, online and other forms of information sharing and educational resources related to EDI

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office will develop an EDI Action Plan toolkit/guidebook on expected practice in serving learners and employees in all equity-deserving groups in cooperation with Accessibility Services, Communications, the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning, the Positive Space Alliance, the Universal Access Committee, representatives from Indigenous learning and support teams, and the Anti-Racism Working Group, among others.

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office and the University Secretariat will ensure VIU's existing policies on EDI reflect best practices for promotion of EDI on campus and that EDI and Gender-based Analysis + (GBA+) lenses are applied to all VIU policies and procedures in ongoing policy reviews and updates.

- Human Resources will ensure that the Employee Survey includes questions assessing the effect of actions taken to support equity-deserving groups.

- The Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office will continue the awards process to recognize contributions from employees and teams for EDI-related work.

- Communications will prepare special messages, statements, and videos to mark days/events of importance to raise awareness.

- Communications will ensure that success stories featuring diverse learners and employees are reflected in print and social media.

HELP MORE LEARNERS FROM EQUITY-DESERVING GROUPS ENROL AND THRIVE AT VIU

Objectives

- **Learner diversity.** Year-over-year, the diversity profile of learners will increasingly reflect the BC population.
  - Measure: overall and subsets of learner profile vs latest StatsCan data

- **Learner feelings of inclusion.** Year-over-year, an increasing percentage of learners will report feelings of inclusion at VIU.
  - Measure: Change in positive responses to questions about sense of inclusion in the student experience survey.

- **Increased learner success.** Year-over-year, retention and completion rates will increase for learners from equity-deserving groups.
  - Measure: retention and completion rates by equity-deserving groups, where data are available.

Strategies

- The Associate Registrar will ensure that the recruitment and retention strategy explicitly address diverse learners from equity-deserving groups.

- Recruiters and faculty will engage early with High Schools to share information about and promote EDI recruitment.

- The Office of University Planning and Analysis and Human Resources will incorporate questions about self-identification, experience of inclusion, and other EDI indicators into annual surveys for learners and employees.

- Student Affairs, in collaboration with VIUSU, will develop and support voluntary peer-led solidarity/affinity program(s) for learners in equity-deserving groups.

- Student Affairs will ensure sufficient supports for the success of learners from all equity-deserving groups.

- Working with Deans, the VIU Foundation will review and enhance in-program scholarships to encourage recruitment and retention of students from equity-deserving groups.

- Deans and Directors will encourage student or student union representation on all EDI-related committees and working groups.

SUPPORT MORE EMPLOYEES FROM EQUITY-DESERVING GROUPS TO APPLY, BE HIRED, AND THRIVE AT VIU

Objectives

- **Employee diversity.** By June 2024 and beyond, VIU will hire and retain more applicants from equity-deserving groups.

  - Measure: Based on self-identification data, changes in baseline numbers for hiring, retention, and promotion over time.

  - Measure: Yes/no: When allocated its fifth Canada Research Chair, VIU is able to successfully recruit and nominate a candidate from an equity-deserving group.

- **Employee feelings of inclusion.** Year-over-year, an increasing percentage of employees, including employees from equity-deserving groups, will report feelings of inclusion at VIU.

  - Measure: positive responses to EDI-specific questions in the biennial employee survey.

Strategies

- Human Resources, with the support of the Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Office, will:

  - Implement a process for collecting voluntary self-identification information to monitor the EDI composition of the workforce.

  - Offer implicit/unconscious bias training for hiring committees.

  - Explore ways to celebrate diversity, inclusion and practices that advance our EDI goals.

  - Include an EDI champion in Canada Research Chair recruitment processes.

  - Consider training EDI champions across VIU to support other recruitment efforts.

  - Lead the inclusion of EDI competencies within recruitment documentation for positions; educate search committees on EDI; and encourage the use of interview questions that measure EDI competencies.

  - Ensure that new employee orientation includes review of the EDI toolkit/guidebook.

  - Enhance orientation and onboarding in a manner that reflects and supports EDI.

  - Administer exit surveys to departing employees to understand reasons for departure.

  - Explore the feasibility of other best practices recommended by the Tri-Agencies.

- The Provost will develop and support a voluntary peer-led solidarity/affinity program for faculty in equity-deserving groups.

GOAL 5:

MAKE VIU'S FACILITIES, LEARNING DESIGN, AND TEACHING PRACTICES MORE ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE

Objectives

- **Accessible facilities.** Year-over-year, VIU's facilities will continue to be made more accessible.

  - Measure: New buildings and washrooms on VIU campuses will be accessible to people with mobility concerns.

  - Measure: New buildings on VIU campuses will include all-gender washrooms.

  - Measure: Change in number of all-gender washrooms in existing buildings.

  - Measure: Reduction in reported obstacles and barriers by members of (and visitors to) the VIU community who live with a physical disability.

- **Accessible teaching/learning methods.** Year-over-year, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices will be adopted more widely across VIU.

  - Measure: More faculty and instructors will report using UDL in course delivery (both classroom and VIULearn), including practices such as closed captioning of instructional videos.

  - Measure: Change in proportion of students who use available supports

  - Measure: Change in level of student satisfaction with available support

Strategies

- Facilities will increase the number of accessible meeting rooms, washrooms and classrooms, including implementation of additional recommendations from the Rick Hansen Foundation assessment.

- For new buildings and re-fits, Facilities will incorporate inclusive design principles.

- Facilities will convert more washrooms to all-gender wash rooms, through washroom upgrade planning, while maintaining sufficient gendered washroom to respect preferences and cultural norms.

- The Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning will continue to offer training in universal design for learning and provide periodic training (social and technological) to ensure classrooms are accommodating and inclusive to students with disabilities.

- Working with Deans, the VIU Foundation will recruit funding for scholarships and awards for learners with disabilities.

- Accessibility Services will update accessible event guidelines with support from Communications.

- Ancillary Services will work to improve the accessibility of the Nanaimo campus cafeteria (including addressing turn stiles, accessibility of shelving, ramp configuration, and traffic flow).

- The Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning and Accessibility Services will provide information, resources, and training opportunities for instructors to better support students with different learning needs, including training on unconscious bias in student assessment. A presentation will be made at all new faculty orientation and through professional development sessions.

- Accessibility Services will share links to VIU resources for each student.

- The Universal Access Committee will advise IT, Facilities and other areas on universal design principles. Work will include:

  - Ensuring VIU makes appropriate accessibility decisions in procurement (software and hardware), digital design and learning/service/access design and ensuring ongoing updating to new standards.

  - Gathering student feedback on use of existing software (such as Kurzweil) and technologies.

Objectives

Strategies (cont'd)

- The VIU Library will continue to provide access, and contribute content to, the growing human-narrated digital collections of the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) for eligible VIU community members.

- The VIU Library will continue to advocate for accessible digital content (A11Y) with the Canadian publishing industry, and library liaisons will continue to serve as a resource to community members and Accessibility Services with respect to the discoverability of accessible content within library collections.

- The VIU Library will continue to incorporate accessible design practices into its place-based service offering at Cowichan and Nanaimo, including accessible furnishings and service points.

- Accessibility Services will make recommendations to faculty for alternative exam formats (verbal, written etc.).

GOAL 6:

EMBRACE EDI BEST PRACTICES IN VIU'S SCHOLARSHIP, RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Objectives

- **Unbiased review.** By October 2021, all researchers will experience anonymous internal peer review processes by adjudicators trained in implicit/unconscious bias.

  - Measure: 100% of researchers have taken the implicit/unconscious bias training module from the Canada Research Chairs program.

- **EDI-informed research.** By May 2022, all VIU faculty will have access to training on incorporating EDI best practices into their research projects.

  - Measure: Percentage of faculty submitting a research project for funding and/or REB review that take the EDI training module.

  - Measure: Number of external grant submissions that reflect positive feedback on the EDI practices in VIU submissions.

  - Measure: Number of research training courses offered to VIU students that incorporate EDI best practices in research design.

- **Respectful research partnerships.** By December 2023, Indigenous community partners will report enhanced and respectful engagement between VIU researchers and community.

  - Measure: Percentage of external indigenous community partners reporting satisfaction with their experience of research engagement with VIU.

- **Diverse research teams**. By June 2027, VIU funded research projects will reflect greater diversity in the composition of research teams.

  - Measure: Change in the percentage of funded research projects that include members of an equity-deserving group.

- **Equitable access to resources.** By June 2022, all faculty engaged in research will have access to a process for obtaining space and equipment needed for their work that is equitable, transparent and fair.

  - Measure: Faculty members report a clear understanding of the process for obtaining research space.

Strategies

- SRCA will:

  - Deploy the Canada Research Chairs implicit/unconscious bias training module annually and require all members of faculty and student adjudication committees to complete the training.

  - Develop additional resources and training opportunities for faculty and students on EDI.

  - Develop guidelines for members of review committees who are assessing the performance of Research and Innovation Chairs to ensure implicit/unconscious bias does not negatively influence the renewal of chairs.

  - Work with Deans to encourage faculty to incorporate a module on EDI and research excellence teaching research methods courses in all departments.

  - Set up mentoring programs by pairing incoming researchers with senior researchers

  - Review and update the Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Strategic Plan to ensure that it supports and enables our equity, diversity, and inclusion goals by December 2022.

- With Indigenous partners, the Office of Indigenous Education and Engagement and SRCA will co-develop guidelines for respectful engagement with Indigenous communities in research and share with VIU faculty and students.

- VIU's Space Planning Committee will develop clear and equitable procedures to ensure that faculty, including those from equity-deserving groups can request access to space for their research and creative activity.

- SRCA will develop an inventory of research space by December 2022 and provide the inventory to the Space Planning Committee. As part of the SRCA strategic planning process, a needs assessment of research space will be completed by June 2022.

Conclusion

Vancouver Island University is proud of its history of welcoming diverse learners and employees and we are committed to doing more. The surveys, engagement conversations, workshops and outreach over two full years have pointed to our strengths and to the direction that we now need to take.

Over the course of the next five years, we will report back annually to the VIU community on progress in meeting these goals and objectives. As we discover what works and what does not, as new ideas arise, and as new people join VIU as learners and employees, we will adapt our strategies so that we can continue to make the difference we want to see. VIU is deeply committed to building a more inclusive and welcoming place of work and study for everyone. We invite you to help us make that vision a reality.

MAP TO CANADA RESEARCH CHAIRS PROGRAM INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

Requirements		Response
1.a, 1.b, 1.c	Equity, diversity, and inclusion objectives, indicators, actions	Please see the six **Commitments to Action** in the Action Plan.
1.d	Evidence of employment systems review	Please see commitment to continue the employment systems review in **Goal 1** of the Action Plan.
1.e	Evidence of comparative review	Please see **Assessment: Comparative Review** in Annex E to the Action Plan
1.f	Evidence of environmental scan	Please see the summary in the Action Plan and **details in the Annex** to the Action Plan 4
2.a.i	Recruitment Policies and Procedures	Please see **Recruitment** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.a.ii	Safeguards that are in place to ensure recruitment practices are open and transparent	Please see **Recruitment** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.b	Management of allocation and who is involved	Please see **Management of Positions** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.c	Process for allocating chairs to department/faculty	Please see **Management of Positions** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.d	When decisions are made to use the corridor of flexibility	Please see **Recruitment** in Annex E to the Action Plan.
2.e	Renewal criteria and who is involved in decision	Please see **Retention and Inclusion** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.f	Advancement criteria and who is involved in decision	Please see **Retention and Inclusion** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.g	Criteria for phase-outs and who is involved in decision	Please see **Retention and Inclusion** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.h	Process for determining level of support provided to chair holders and who is involved in decisions	Please see this section. Now added in annex on CRC's under **support**
2.i	Safeguards to ensure that members of FDGs are not disadvantaged in negotiations re: level of support	Please see this section. Now added in annex on CRC's under **support**
2.j	Measures to ensure career leaves do not disadvantage applicants to chair positions	Please see **Retention and Inclusion** in Annex E to the Action Plan
2.k	Training and development activities	Please see **Goals 1 and 2** of the six **Commitments to Action** in the Action Plan.
3.a	Processes and strategies for collecting and protecting self-identification data	Please see **Collecting and protecting self-identification data** in Annex D to the Action Plan.

3.b	Strategies for encouraging individuals to self-identify	Please see **Strategies for encouraging individuals to self-identify** in Annex D to the Action Plan.
3.c	Example of institution's self-identification form	Please see **Example of the self-identification** form in Annex D to the Action Plan.
4.a.i	How institution provides a supportive and inclusive workplace	Please see the six **Commitments to Action** in the Action Plan, especially **Goal 4**.
4.a.II	How support and inclusivity are monitored?	Please see the measures for **Goal 4** in the **Commitments to Action** in the Action Plan.
4.b	Procedures, policies and supports in place that enable the retention of individuals from the FDGs	Please see the six **Commitments to Action** in the Action Plan, especially **Goal 4.**
4.c	Process by which the institution manages complaints from its chair holders/faculty related to equity within the program	Please see **Retention and Inclusion** in Annex E to the Action Plan
4.d	Contact information of an individual or individuals at the institution responsible for addressing any equity concerns/complaints regarding the management of the institution's chair allocations?	Please see updated contact information here.
4.e.ii	Mechanism for how concerns/complaints are monitored and addressed/reported to senior management	Please see details on the concerns/complaint process here.

ANNEXES

Annex A: Policy Scan

VIU plans to build a more robust and modern policy framework in the coming years. This work will make all VIU policies more current and will included a specific focus on how policy making at VIU can support a more inclusive and diverse campus. The University Secretariat will be conducting extensive work to modernize and update all of VIU's policies and procedures. As part of this modernization effort, all policies and procedures will be reviewed through the lens of EDI/GBA+.

In 2019-20, VIU undertook a scan of its key policies and procedures; and work is already underway on revisions of key pieces. A summary of the findings is included:

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The formal policies at VIU that guide and direct suitable and appropriate actions, responses, and behaviours towards students and employees include:

- **Policy 21.02** Accommodation of Employees (2012). This policy guides accommodation within the workplace for individual differences that require the reasonable adjustment of a person's workplace or responsibilities to enhance their capacity to fully engage in work. These accommodations are related to human rights protected grounds such as permanent or temporary disability, religion, and gender.

- **Policy 21.03** Human Rights (2010). The policy commits VIU to educate members of the University about discrimination and its eradication; to prevent discrimination occurring at the University through diligent and proactive action; and to respond promptly and effectively to any complaints of discrimination.

  - **Procedure 21.03.001** Human Rights Education Initiatives & Complaint Resolution (2010). This procedure addresses the provision of education, training and consultation to administrators and other members of the University regarding ways to promote and maintain an environment free of discrimination and harassment; as well as training to members of the University that enhances awareness of racism, heterosexism, homophobia, sexism, and other manifestations of prejudice.

- **Policy 21.04** Diversity and Educational Equity. Statement committing VIU to the elimination of unnecessary barriers that prevent full participation by students, prospective students and employees, measures to support and promote the diversity of the university and the maintenance of healthy, supportive campus climates.

- **Policy 21.05** Personal Harassment. Guidance is provided in this document to respond to complaints of harassment, whether based on discrimination, disability or other factors.

  - **Procedure 21.05.001** Responding to Complaints of Personal Harassment

- **Policy 21.08** Accommodating the Observance of a Religious Holy Day (2009). Employees and students are permitted to be absent from work or a required academic event for the purpose of observing a religious holy day, provided that the appropriate procedures have been followed as outlined in the procedure for Student Leave Request for Observance of a Religious Holy Day or the procedure for Employee Leave Request for Observance of a Religious Holy Day.

- **Policy 32.02** Services Available to Students with a Documented Disability. The policy indicates: "Make every effort to remove barriers that prevent or inhibit full participation by students with a documented disability; Undertake to provide reasonable academic accommodation to all students who have a documented disability, unless there is a bona fide justification for denying such accommodation."

- **Policy 41.17** Sexual Misconduct. This policy and its associated procedure provide a framework for fostering a safe environment through ongoing awareness and prevention initiatives, and for enacting VIU's commitment to responding in a timely, supportive, and effective manner when a sexual misconduct disclosure or report is made.

- **Procedure 41.17.001** Sexual Misconduct. Other plans, procedures, and guidance documents are also designed to protect and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.

  In hiring, VIU is guided by these agreements and guides:

  - Search Committee Best Practices
  - Search Committee Procedural Guide
  - Employers Guide to Human Rights
  - Collective Agreement – BCGEU
  - Collective Agreement – CUPE
  - Collective Agreement – VIUFA

In its Strategic and Foundations Plans, VIU also seeks to integrate EDI:

- VIU's 2021-26 Strategic Plan, People, Place, Potential, includes a commitment to become a more inclusive and healthier place for work and study: "We believe that well-being in all its aspects depends on how we treat each other. We will therefore prioritize our work to advance equity, celebrate diversity, and practice inclusion."

- **People Plan** (2019). VIU's human resources strategy speaks to equity, diversity and inclusion throughout, and includes a commitment to "Engage directly with the newly formed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Project Steering Committee and complete institution-level responses including examining policies, procedures and systems that are in place or are missing at VIU that could constitute barriers to individuals in underrepresented groups."

- **Scholarship, Research & Creative Activity Strategic Plan** (2017). The plan includes equity, diversity and social justice as a research theme.

- **VIU Academic Plan** (2017) The plan recognises that diversity matters across the Institution: "VIU celebrates its diversity and recognizes that diversity of its people is a strength; While there exists supports for some diversity activity, more can be done." The plan will be updated in 2021 with an even strong stronger emphasis on EDI.

- **Aboriginal Education Plan Update** (January 2018). This plan, mostly geared towards student learning and supports, includes EDI principles.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the scan identified that VIU's EDI-focused policies and procedures are associated with human resource management, student affairs, diversity and human rights. The review found those documents to be transparent, well documented, with an emphasis on eliminating barriers and promoting diversity. However, the scan also indicated that they could be further enhanced by prescribing specific actions, such as clear measures to consider diversity during recruitment, hiring, retention, and in creating inclusive working and learning environments.

Similarly, the collective agreements in place for VIU's three unions do not include affirmative action measures or mention of the equity-seeking status of current employees or applicants. The review also noted that the CUPE Collective Agreement gives hiring priority to internal candidates, which may present an obstacle to hiring from more diverse pools of potential candidates. It is worthwhile to note that VIU's CUPE Job Evaluation process is based on a Gender-Neutral model, ensuring pay equity for CUPE employees. Additionally, the VIU Faculty Association (VIUFA) wage scale and model for faculty members ensures gender equity in faculty member pay.

As our Action Plan shows, we intend to strengthen existing policies, procedures and guidelines, and to implement additional policies, procedures and guidelines aligned with strong EDI practices. Additionally, the Action Plan commits VIU to complete a detailed Employment Systems Review. As VIU continues to revise its suite of policies, it will compare practices to wise approaches adopted elsewhere, including consulting with the CRC Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention.

Annex B: Environmental Scan

CONTEXT

During 2019 and early 2020, a comprehensive EDI Environmental Scan was carried out, the first project of this type at VIU. Online and paper survey instruments were administered in February and March of 2020, and virtual qualitative interviews conducted April through June, 2020 across all VIU campuses. Examples of the instruments and tools employed during the Scan are attached at the end of the annex.

The EDI Environmental Scan focused on the current four federally designated groups and also gathered data related to sexual and gender diversity. VIU community members from across all campus constituencies were engaged – including faculty and instructional employees, managerial, administrative, technical, operational and administrative employees, as well as students. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis was conducted to identify representation across the designated groups and to explore participants' subjective experiences around discrimination, bias, inclusion and belonging at VIU.

The Environmental Scan provided the university's first snapshot of VIU's equity, diversity and inclusion status, across all community populations, providing insight into the experience of the broader university community. Summary results from the VIU EDI Environmental Scan were published on the Equity Diversity and Inclusion Action webpage and shared with broader stakeholder groups, including the President's Committee for Diversity Equity and Human Rights, the Senior Management Team, and VIU's President's Council. Following publication, a series of open online consultations were held with the VIU community at large to explore the Scan results and provide additional insight for action planning.

OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS

The survey instrument was designed to elicit demographic information, as well as to get a sense of participants' inclusion with six Likert-scale items and three open-ended questions (please see survey instrument at the end of this annex). The survey was voluntary and strictly confidential, and received responses from 634 employees (34% of the total workforce), and 1391 students (12% of the student body) from across VIU campuses (see Figure 1).

Participants, where gender was indicated, were primarily women. Non-binary gender was indicated by 0.6% of employees and 2.2% of students (Figure 2). Where sexual orientation was indicated, a much greater percentage of students (16%) self-identified as 2SLGBTQI+ than did employees (less than 1%), although many (14% and 18% respectively) chose not to answer (Figure 3).

The six Likert-scale statements elicited a range of experiences about belonging at VIU. Figure 4 illustrates that more than 50% of employee respondents in all equity groups responded positively to each item, but some categories were statistically more significant for particular FDGs. Specifically, independent samples t-tests demonstrated that women employees rated their sense of inclusion lower than men on all Likert scale items except the opportunity to perform to their full potential and feeling appreciated in which there were no statistically significant difference between women and men. As well, employees living with disabilities, and employees identifying as 2SLGBTQI+ reported having less freedom to be able to be themselves on campus.

Figure 1: Survey Response Totals, by Designated Group and Campus
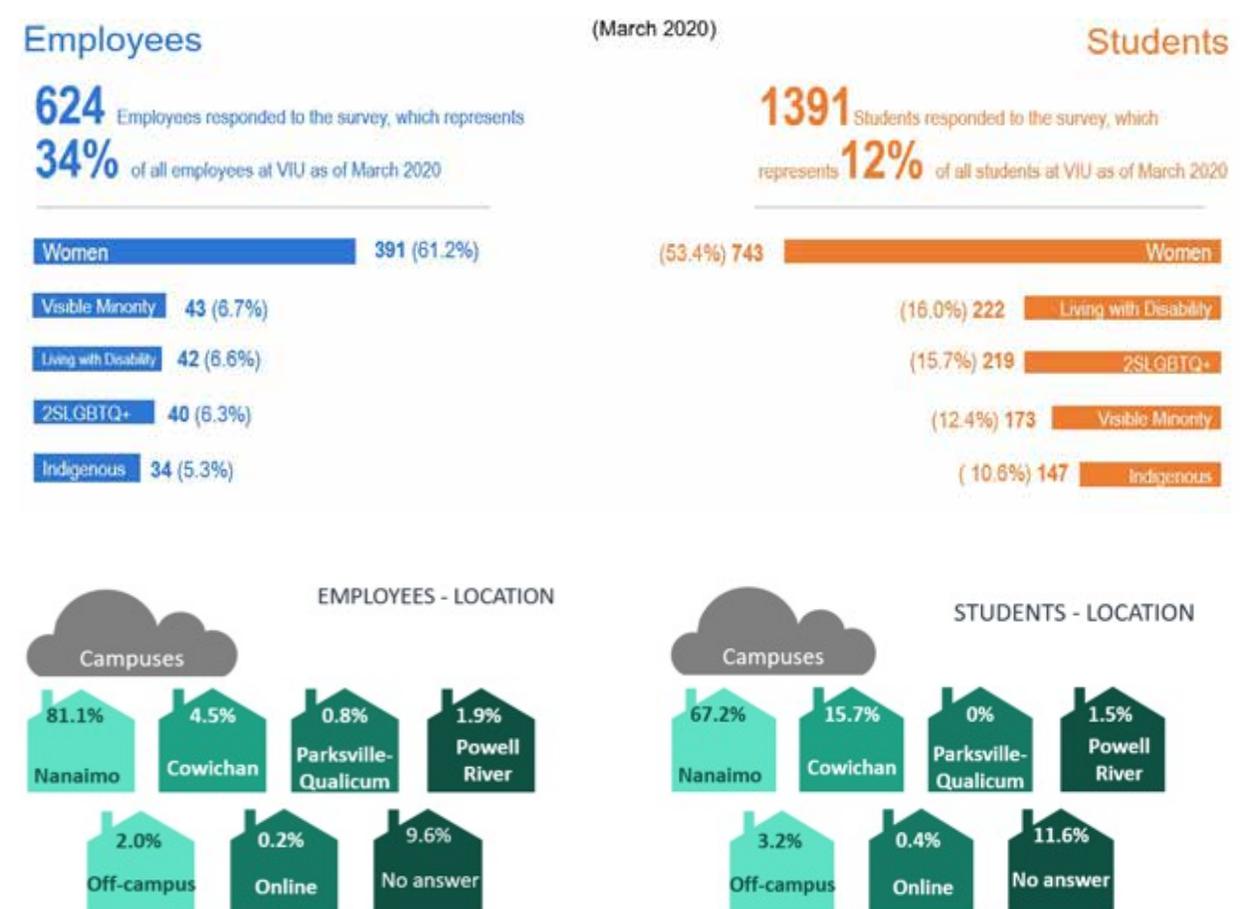
Figure 2: Respondents by Gender

Employees - Gender

0.6% 12.8%
25.4%
61.2%

■ Woman ■ Man ▪ Gender Fluid/Non-Binary ■ Not answered

Students - Gender

2.2% 16.20%
28.1%
53.4%

▪ Woman ▪ Man ▪ Gender Fluid/Non-Binary ▪ Not answered

Figure 3: 2SLGBTQI+ respondents

Students - 2SLGBTQI+

18.0%   15.7%
3.5%
62.8%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Questioning ■ Not answered

Employees - 2SLGBTQI+

0.8%   14.0%   6.3%
78.9%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Questioning ■ Not answered

Employee percentage who agree or strongly agree with statements
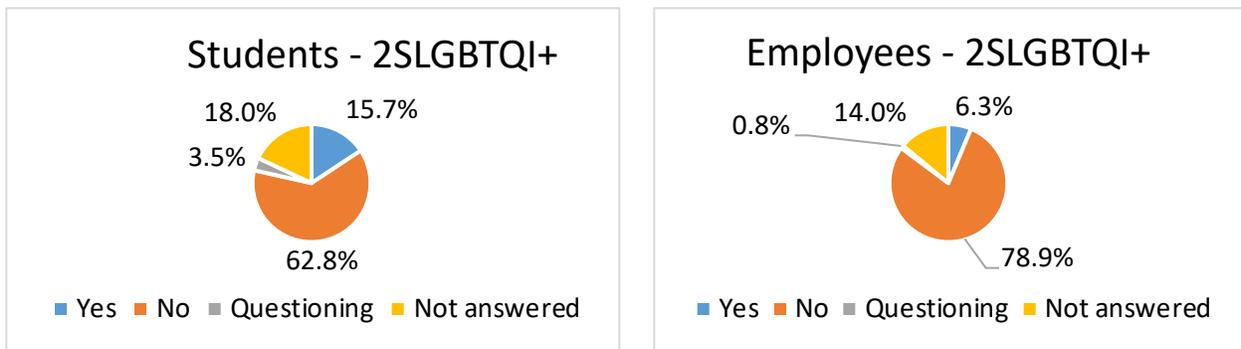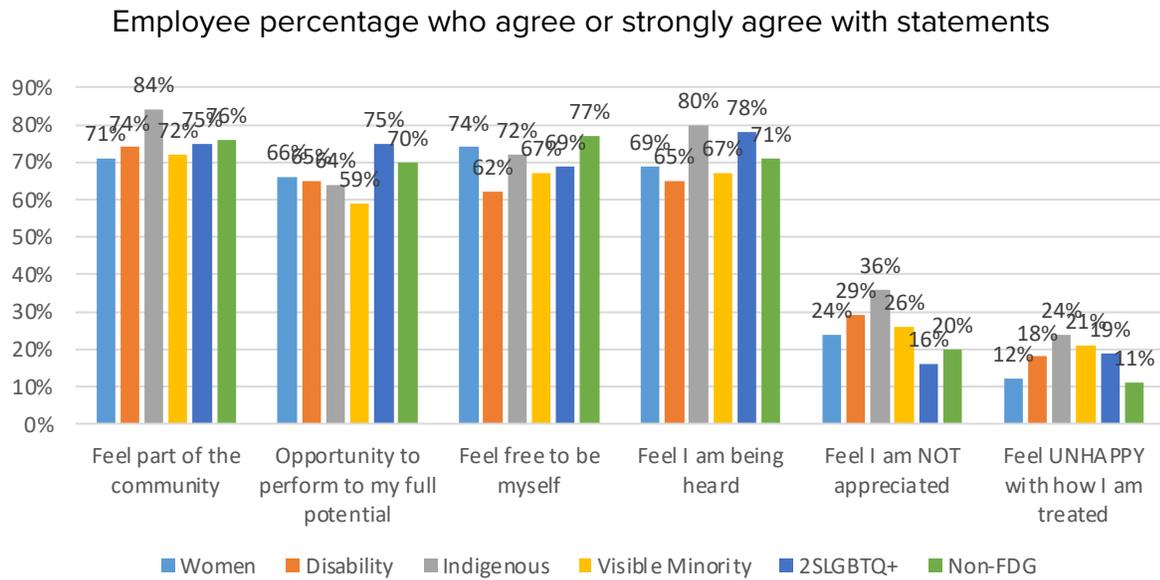
Answering the same set of questions, VIU students in equity-deserving groups reported a high sense of inclusion (Figure 5). However, once again independent samples t-tests revealed statistically significant differences between some equity-deserving groups and non-FDG participants. For example, students living with disabilities reported the highest level of exclusion when compared with the experiences of students not identifying as living with a disability. As well, students identifying as visible minorities, particularly women and Black students, rated their sense of inclusion as lower than students who do not have these intersectional identities.

Figure 5: Student Experience at VIU

Student percentage who agree or strongly agree with statements
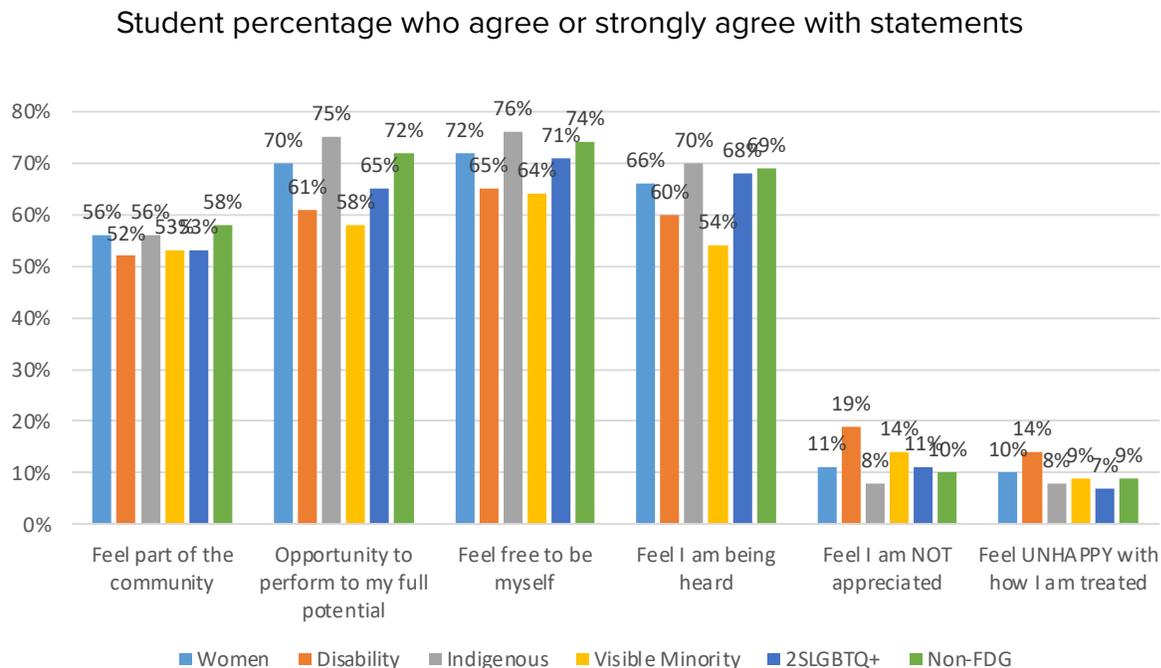
DETAILED RESPONSES

What drove those responses to questions about employee and student experiences at VIU? This section draws on qualitative data elicited by three open-ended survey questions and 20 interviews with students and employees to provide more detailed findings (please see the survey and interview questions provided at the end of this annex).

Persons Living with a Disability

Successes

Survey and interview participants self-identifying as living with a disability expressed a general sense of satisfaction with their experiences at VIU and many shared examples and stories of support. Particularly, the work of disability services was appreciated by students, whereas for employees, the support was more individual and largely from colleagues.

Challenges

Respondents identified barriers in the shape of lack of/uneven support (feeling ignored by VIU employees particularly in relation to "invisible" disabilities), condescension (by some VIU faculty and/or staff), bureaucratic (systemic) barriers such as unclear accommodation processes and unavailability of disability services for employees, and exclusion from social activities due to architectural barriers and organization of events without intentionality around accessibility.

Suggestions

Suggestions for addressing these barriers included integrating visible **and** invisible disability awareness and training, including in orientation; integrating Universal Design in Learning (UDL) in curriculum design and pedagogy; increasing accessible gathering/meeting places (ramps, reliable elevators); increasing the number of accessible washrooms; rrevising student attendance policies to provide exceptions for those with chronic medical and/or mental health conditions; and employing accessibility as a lens when planning spaces and events.

Sample quotes

- "Disability counsellor empathizes and shows compassion towards my struggles. Also encourages and motivates me to not give up."
- "VIU is very difficult to navigate for mobility-impaired people. The outside 'accessible' paths assume a wheelchair or scooter, and the inside 'accessible' routes depend on elevators that are often out of order"
- "Certain instructors have NO empathy for those that do not have obvious, physical disabilities, or have the appearance society associates with disabilities"
- "Right now we assume that everybody's able-bodied, we assume that everybody can hear, we assume everyone can see. But there are so many invisible disabilities, and invisible issues."
- "I think that if every single person on campus who is responsible for organizing any events approached it with the sense that they are booking for a wide variety of abilities, it would help."

Successes

VIU as a welcoming space is often appreciated by women in the context of relationships with colleagues and students. These relationships are at the core of employees feeling included at VIU. For women employees and students, inclusive spaces for other underrepresented groups such as the Gathering Place for Indigenous students and accessible/gender-neutral washrooms create a welcoming atmosphere. As opposed to women employees, for many women students, gender was not a salient identity, and they offered more critique for the treatment of their fellow gender diverse students.

Challenges

Survey and interview participants pointed to systemic "silos" and hierarchies between departments/ faculties (employees) that prevent women from feeling included; condescension, under appreciation of work performed; heavy workload for traditionally female-dominated faculties; lack of communication from management/HR hindering women employees (particularly in precarious positions) from advancing professionally; lack of mentoring opportunities; unconscious biases and microaggressions; and inadequate support for both employee and student mothers. A few students and employees mentioned harassment as a problem; however, no specifics were shared in our data regarding the nature of the harassment.

Suggestions

Ideas for addressing these barriers include improving communication and collaboration among colleagues with team building, between faculties and campuses with better information-sharing; clear communication with respect to hiring, promotion and workload; supporting VIU to be a family friendly environment; establishing a spousal hiring program; promotion of current employees through succession planning; mentoring opportunities and establishing an institutionally supported gender alliance group.

Sample quotes

- "I greatly appreciate the "safe space", friendship bench, and other outreach efforts by Student Services and other groups — they are aimed at students, but create a more welcoming space for all of us."
- "I do find some occasional condescension from members of campus…"
- "Not being acknowledged for my contribution"
- "[As a parent,] I deserve the same opportunity as anyone else to get hands on experience in my field so I am well equipped to start my career."
- "This university promotes inclusivity, yet, I can't think of anything that occurs on campus that is inclusive of families or parents."
- "Fire sexist, ableist, profs who harass students. There is way too much toxic masculinity on campus."
- "… there should be a spousal hire program at VIU to recruit and retain women in leadership roles, because we know that women are going to be the ones to leave most of the time."

Successes

As with other designated groups, Indigenous students and employees identified their relationships with others, particularly other Indigenous community members, and the integration of Indigenous culture on campus as enhancing their sense of inclusion. Specifically, the most important sources of support identified are the Gathering Place (Shq'apthut) on the Nanaimo campus and the presence of Elders-in-residence. Indigenous learning circles and the President's installation ceremony in the Longhouse were cited by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous employee participants as events that made them feel included.

Challenges

Respondents spoke of unconscious bias demonstrated by others in regularly ignoring or downplaying Indigenous epistemologies, perspectives and culture, expecting or presuming assimilation; significant feelings of resentment by non-Aboriginal students towards *Shq'apthut: A Gathering Place* (the Indigenous student centre on the Nanaimo campus), reflecting a lack of understanding and communication; under-representation of Indigenous faculty members; tokenizing, stereotyping and (usually subtle) discrimination.

Suggestions

Ideas for improved practice include increasing Indigenous representation among faculty, including Elders; expanding and improving awareness of Indigenous culture and language; incorporating Indigenous content in the curriculum (not just within Indigenous-specific classes/programs); better individualized support to improve student completion rates; more Indigenous events led by Indigenous people; and incorporating the Gathering Place into the general orientation, explaining its purpose, its funding source, and how to respect it.

Sample quotes

- "Providing safe places like Shq'apthut gathering place that gave us the comfort of being around First Nations descendants. Those who are all going through the same issues as one another makes it a comfortable place to be."

- "Many profs teach and talk like how mainstream white people do business is the right and best way of doing business. This is not true, and expecting me to conform, and deducting marks when I do not conform to how white people do business is a form of assimilation and is not acceptable."

- "Hearing students comment negatively about the gathering space at the Powell River campus. I'm sure it goes both ways, they feel left out on being able to use it and I've overheard comments like it's 'the brown student room.' Kinda turns a beautiful space into an ugly thing..."

Successes

In alignment with experiences shared by other under-represented groups, racialized persons reported feeling welcome because of their interactions with individuals, particularly faculty members and fellow students for racialized students, and department colleagues of racialized employees.

Challenges

Participants in the survey and interviews spoke of feelings of exclusion and isolation, both among Canadian and International visible minorities; lack of acknowledgement and awareness of racial issues in the classroom; as well as tokenizing, stereotyping and (usually subtle) discrimination, particularly experienced by Black employees and students.

Suggestions

Among the ideas suggested were formal representation of visible minorities, such as a committee for employees and students; greater ethnic diversity among faculty and counselors; increased mentorship opportunities for students and employees from visible minorities; culturally competent counselling services; more events for racialized groups; better HR support for employees relocating to the Island (since many racialized persons lack personal connections); better orientation for new employees to understand the systems, particularly related to promotion and regularization; and orientations for international students to learn about Canadian academic/research culture.

Sample quotes

- "…Based on my experience, I cannot say that I feel welcome at this place of learning"
- "Condescending attitude by peers" (employees)
- "Whenever race or sensitive issues are brought up in class, all of the white people get so uncomfortable that they don't even want to talk about it or discuss these topics, including most (white) professors."
- "Let people who are not white have a representative of their own race to whom they can address concerns to when needed"
- "I feel the African community is not well recognized as other minorities at VIU."

Successes

As with other respondents from equity-deserving groups, 2SLGBTQI+ participants felt welcomed and included because of their individual relationships. Participants generally felt safe and accepted for expressing their authentic identities. Some non-binary students expressed feeling a sense of inclusion when faculty and students make the effort to use preferred pronouns. For transgender and transitioning participants, the availability of gender-neutral washrooms made them feel welcome.

Challenges

Survey and interview respondents mentioned a dismissive attitude/microaggressions/ misgendering by both employees and students regarding gender identity; unconscious bias in the lack of acknowledgment of 2SLGBTQI+ community/culture among some faculty; use of gendered language in the classroom; lack of support for Positive Space, the 2SLGBTQI+ organization, now dependent on volunteers; inclusion as merely lip service; and a shortage of gender-neutral washrooms on-campus.

Suggestions

Suggestions from the survey included formal support and staffing of Positive Space alliance for students and creation of a similar committee to protect and support the rights of 2SLGBTQI+ employees; launch of a gender and sexuality alliance group [note: VIU does have a Positive Space Alliance]; education for employees on 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion and anti-discrimination; educating staff and faculty to ask students for preferred pronouns during classroom introductions; and an increase in the number of non/all-gender washrooms and their inclusion on campus maps.

Sample quotes

- "Because people are very supportive, I can live with who I am…mostly it's the people who make me feel welcome. But sometimes I don't know if I feel welcome."

- "Older profs are sometimes very dismissive of trans/nb/etc. people existing and also make comments that dismiss LBGTQ people being common"

- "Classes that don't give the opportunity to inform the professor and students of pronouns engenders discomfort, not feeling safe, and an environment that encourages misgendering"

- "The professors don't use the most inclusive language, or include relevant information in class about LGBTQ+ people or issues relating to the topic…"

- "Increase access to public amenities, language, and education for individuals regarding those who are gender diverse. This includes an increase in accessible gender neutral spaces on campus, altering the language and signage used on campus and in the classroom, steering away from gendered terms, and providing education for students and professors on what it means to be gender diverse, the use of proper terminology, and how to foster an accepting and diverse environment for all students."

Annex C: Survey and Interview Instruments and Statistical Analysis

EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Welcome to the Vancouver Island University Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Survey!

PURPOSE OF SURVEY

One of Vancouver Island University (VIU)'s core values is diversity. Our academic plan notes, "We value human diversity in all its dimensions." Welcoming the unique talents, perspectives, and contributions of the different people who make up our campus community implies fair and equitable treatment for all, and will lead us toward excellence in our studies and research.

This survey aims to solicit feedback on the diversity of our employees. We seek to understand the extent to which employees feel genuinely included, while identifying opportunities for creating a more inclusive, diverse and equitable environment.

The data gathered through this survey will inform VIU policies and plans, including an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Results from this survey may also be used for scholarly conference and journal publications to share VIU's EDI experience with the wider academic community.

TAKING THE SURVEY

Participation in this survey is voluntary. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate (see consent at bottom of page 2). This survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey will be open until March 5, 2020. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind. You may skip any questions that you do not wish to answer or stop the survey at any time. There will be no negative consequences if you do not complete this survey.

Please drop your completed survey in the box indicated for this purpose, at the location where you picked up the survey form.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This data is collected under the authority of the **University Act (RSBC 1996, c.468)** and the **BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (RSBC 1996, c.165)** and is subject to protections under the Act. The survey is administered by the VIU Office of University Planning and Analysis (OUPA), according to standard practice in compliance with the legislation above, to support the **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action (EDIA) project** within the Office of Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity (SRCA). Only authorized personnel from OUPA and SRCA will have access to the raw data. All information will be stored on secured servers at VIU, and will be destroyed 5 years after the end of the project.

When survey results are reported, your answers will be combined with the answers of others and analyzed at the group level so that you cannot be identified. Your written comments may be used for reporting purposes. However, any information you provide in your comments that could identify you will be removed to the extent possible. Confidentiality will be respected and no information that discloses your identity will be released or published without your consent, unless required by law. This legal obligation may include a number of circumstances, such as compliance with a court order or to protect your own or someone else's safety.

RISKS (AND SUPPORT)

Although participation in this survey poses minimal risk, there is the potential for feelings of distress or discomfort. If you would like to speak to a professional regarding these feelings, please contact either:

- **Mental Health Walk-in Clinic:** Ph. 250.370.8699

- **Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP):** Ph. 1.800.663.1142

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions at any time about this survey, or wish to participate in our research, please contact:

- Karen Bernard, EDI Advisor (Karen.Bernard@viu.ca)

- Sean De Maio, EDI Policy Analyst (Sean.DeMaio@viu.ca)

- Tehmina Khwaja, EDI Post-doctoral Fellow (Tehmina.Khwaja@viu.ca)

❒ **I confirm that I am at least 18 years of age. I have read and understood the above information, and I voluntarily agree to participate in the survey.**

1. What is your primary VIU campus location?

❒ Nanaimo   ❒ Powell River

❒ Cowichan   ❒ Off-campus

❒ Parksville-Qualicum   ❒ Online

2. Regarding your employment at VIU:

Part 1: Are you Full-time, Part-time, or Casual? Select all that apply.

*Casual defined as working at least one shift at VIU within the last 6 months.

❒ Full-time   ❒ Casual

❒ Part-time   ❒ Other. Please specify (optional): _____

Part 2: Are you Faculty or Staff? Select all that apply.

❒ Faculty (VIUFA, BCGEU)   ❒ Other. Please specify (optional): _____
   (proceed to Question 3)   (proceed to Part 3)

❒ Staff (proceed to Question 3)

Part 3: Are you Instructional or Non-instructional? Select all that apply.

❒ Instructional   ❒ Non-instructional

- **Which best describes your current gender identity?**

❐ Woman   ❐ Prefer not to answer

❐ Man   ❐ An identity not listed. Please specify (optional):

_____

- **Are you someone with trans experience**
  (meaning your gender identity does not align with your assigned sex at birth)?

❐ Yes   ❐ Questioning

❐ No   ❐ Prefer not to answer

- **Do you self-identify as a person who is part of the LGBTQ2S+**
  (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit) community?

❐ Yes   ❐ Questioning

❐ No   ❐ Prefer not to answer

Part 1: Do you self-identify as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit)?

❐ Yes (proceed to **Part 2**)

❐ No (proceed to **Question 7**)

❐ Prefer not to answer (proceed to **Question 7**)

Part 2: Please select all which you identify with:

❐ First Nations   ❐ Non-status (not registered)

❐ Métis   ❐ Prefer not to answer

❐ Inuit   ❐ Other. Please specify (optional): _____

❐ Status
(registered, based on the federal Indian Act)

- The *Employment Equity Act of Canada* defines visible minorities as "persons, **other than Aboriginal peoples,** who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour."

Part 1: Do you self-identify as a member of a visible minority/racialized group in Canada?

❐ Yes (proceed to **Part 2**)   ❐ Not sure (proceed to **Question 8**)

❐ No (proceed to **Question 8**)   ❐ Prefer not to answer (proceed to **Question 8**)

Part 2: Please select all that apply (categories derived from Statistics Canada):

- ❐ Black
- ❐ Chinese
- ❐ Filipino
- ❐ Japanese
- ❐ Korean
- ❐ Latin American (e.g. Mexican, Central or South American)

- ❐ South Asian (e.g. Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi)
- ❐ Southeast Asian (e.g. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai)
- ❐ West Asian/Middle Eastern/North African (e.g. Arab, Egyptian, Iranian, Afghani)
- ❐ Prefer not to answer
- ❐ A visible minority/racialized group not listed. Please specify (optional): _____

- **As defined by the Government of Canada, persons with disabilities have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, psychiatric, sensory, or learning impairment, and:**
  - a) Consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment (or in studies) by reason of that impairment; or
  - b) Believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment.

Part 1: Do you self-identify as a person with a disability?

- ❐ Yes (proceed to **Part 2**)
- ❐ No (proceed to **Question 9**)
- ❐ Not sure (proceed to **Question 9**)
- ❐ Prefer not to answer (proceed to **Question 9**)

Part 2: Please select all that apply:

- ❐ Coordination or dexterity (e.g. difficulty using hands or arms, such as grasping objects or using a keyboard)
- ❐ Mobility (e.g. difficulty moving from one space to another, walking long distances, or using stairs)
- ❐ Blindness or visual (e.g. unable to see or difficulty seeing, glaucoma; however, do not include yourself if you can see well with glasses or contact lenses)
- ❐ Deafness or hearing (unable to hear or difficulty hearing)
- ❐ Speech (unable to speak, or difficulty speaking and being understood)
- ❐ Neurodevelopmental disorder (e.g. autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, Down syndrome)
- ❐ Learning disorder or comprehension impairment (e.g. dyslexia)
- ❐ Anxiety disorder (e.g. generalized anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder)
- ❐ Mood disorder (e.g. depression, bipolar disorder)
- ❐ A disability not listed. Please specify (optional): _____
- ❐ Prefer not to answer

- **Please choose your age group:**

❒ 18-24 years ❒ 55-64 years

❒ 25-34 years ❒ 65+ years

❒ 35-44 years ❒ Prefer not to answer

❒ 45-54 years

Household income is the combined gross income (before taxes) of all members of a household who are 15 years or older. Individuals do not have to be related in any way to be considered members of the same household.

- **Please estimate your average annual household family income (in Canadian Dollars):**

❒ Under $25,000 per year ❒ $75,001 – $100,000 per year

❒ $25,001 – $50,000 per year ❒ Over $100,000 per year

❒ $50,001 – $75,000 per year ❒ Prefer not to answer

- **To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your VIU employee experience over the last 12 months (or less, if you have not been here that long):**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know or Not applicable
a) I feel like I am a part of the VIU community.						
b) At VIU, I am free to be myself without feeling out of place						
c) At VIU, I am free to be myself without feeling out of place.						
d) In my general interactions with others on campus, I feel I am being heard.						
e) My efforts and achievements at VIU are often not appreciated.						
f) I am unhappy at VIU because of the way I'm treated here.						

- **At VIU, what makes you feel welcome or included?**_____

- **At VIU, what makes you feel unwelcome or excluded?**_____

- **Please suggest how to improve inclusion and belonging at VIU:**_____

_____

Thank you for completing this survey. Your time and opinion "matter here"!

STUDENT SURVEY

Welcome to the Vancouver Island University Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Survey!

PURPOSE OF SURVEY

One of Vancouver Island University (VIU)'s core values is diversity. Our academic plan notes, "We value human diversity in all its dimensions." Welcoming the unique talents, perspectives, and contributions of the different people who make up our campus community implies fair and equitable treatment for all, and will lead us toward excellence in our studies and research.

This survey aims to solicit feedback on the diversity of our **students (those enrolled in at least one VIU course or educational activity between January 1, 2020 and today's date).** We seek to understand the extent to which students feel genuinely included, while identifying opportunities for creating a more inclusive, diverse and equitable environment.

The data gathered through this survey will inform VIU policies and plans, including an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Results from this survey may also be used for scholarly conference and journal publications to share VIU's EDI experience with the wider academic community.

TAKING THE SURVEY

Participation in this survey is voluntary. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate (see consent at bottom of page 2). This survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey will be open until March 5, 2020. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind. You may skip any questions that you do not wish to answer or stop the survey at any time. There will be no negative consequences if you do not complete this survey.

Please drop your completed survey in the box indicated for this purpose, at the location where you picked up the survey form.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This data is collected under the authority of the **University Act (RSBC 1996, c.468)** and the **BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (RSBC 1996, c.165)** and is subject to protections under the Act. The survey is administered by the VIU Office of University Planning and Analysis (OUPA), according to standard practice in compliance with the legislation above, to support the **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action (EDIA) project** within the Office of Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity (SRCA). Only authorized personnel from OUPA and SRCA will have access to the raw data. All information will be stored on secured servers at VIU, and will be destroyed 5 years after the end of the project.

When survey results are reported, your answers will be combined with the answers of others and analyzed at the group level so that you cannot be identified. Your written comments may be used for reporting purposes. However, any information you provide in your comments that could identify you will be removed to the extent possible. Confidentiality will be respected and no information that discloses your identity will be released or published without your consent, unless required by law. This legal obligation may include a number of circumstances, such as compliance with a court order or to protect your own or someone else's safety.

RISKS (AND SUPPORT)

Although participation in this survey poses minimal risk, there is the potential for feelings of distress or discomfort. If you would like to speak to a professional regarding these feelings, please contact either:

• **VIU Counselling Services** (on-campus): 3rd floor of Building 200, Ph. 250.740.6416

• **Mental Health Walk-in Clinic:** Ph. 250.370.8699

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions at any time about this survey, or wish to participate in our research, please contact:

• Karen Bernard, EDI Advisor (Karen.Bernard@viu.ca)

• Sean De Maio, EDI Policy Analyst (Sean.DeMaio@viu.ca)

• Tehmina Khwaja, EDI Post-doctoral Fellow (Tehmina.Khwaja@viu.ca)

❒ **I confirm that I am at least 18 years of age. I have read and understood the above information, and I voluntarily agree to participate in the survey.**

1. What is your primary VIU campus location?

❒ Nanaimo   ❒ Powell River

❒ Cowichan   ❒ Off-campus

❒ Parksville-Qualicum   ❒ Online

2. Regarding your enrolment as a VIU student*:

* Enrolled in at least one VIU course or educational activity between January 1, 2020 and today's date.

Part 1: Are you a Domestic or International student?

❒ Domestic   ❒ International

Part 2: What type of program are you enrolled in? Select all that apply.

❒ Academic (proceed to **Part 3**)   ❒ Adult Basic Education/Upgrading (proceed to **Part 3**)

❒ Vocational/Trades (proceed to **Part 3**)   ❒ Other (Elder College, Community Education, etc.). Please specify (optional):

_____

(proceed to **Question 3**)

Part 3: Are you a Full-time or Part-time student?

❒ Full-time   ❒ Part-time

3. Which best describes your current gender identity?

❒ Woman

❒ Man

❒ Gender fluid/Non-binary

❒ Prefer not to answer

❒ An identity not listed. Please specify (optional): _____

**4. Are you someone with trans experience
(meaning your gender identity does not align with your assigned sex at birth)?**

❒ Yes

❒ No

❒ Questioning

❒ Prefer not to answer

**5. Do you self-identify as a person who is part of the LGBTQ2S+
(Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirit) community?**

❒ Yes

❒ No

❒ Questioning

❒ Prefer not to answer

6. Part 1: Do you self-identify as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit)?

❒ Yes (proceed to **Part 2**)

❒ No (proceed to **Question 7**)

❒ Prefer not to answer (proceed to **Question 7**)

Part 2: Please select all which you identify with:

❒ First Nations

❒ Métis

❒ Inuit

❒ Status (registered, based on the federal Indian Act)

❒ Non-status (not registered)

❒ Prefer not to answer

❒ Other. Please specify (optional): _____

**7. The Employment Equity Act of Canada defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal
peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour."**

Part 1: Do you self-identify as a member of a visible minority/racialized group in Canada?

❒ Yes (proceed to **Part 2**)

❒ No (proceed to **Question 8**)

❒ Not sure (proceed to **Question 8**)

❒ Prefer not to answer (proceed to **Question 8**)

Part 2: Please select all that apply (categories derived from Statistics Canada):

- ❐ Black
- ❐ Chinese
- ❐ Filipino
- ❐ Japanese
- ❐ Korean
- ❐ Latin American (e.g. Mexican, Central or South American)

- ❐ South Asian (e.g. Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi)
- ❐ Southeast Asian (e.g. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai)
- ❐ West Asian/Middle Eastern/North African (e.g. Arab, Egyptian, Iranian, Afghani)
- ❐ Prefer not to answer
- ❐ A visible minority/racialized group not listed.

  Please specify (optional): _____

8. **As defined by the Government of Canada, persons with disabilities have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, psychiatric, sensory, or learning impairment, and:**

   a) Consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment (or in studies) by reason of that impairment; or

   b) Believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment.

Part 1: Do you self-identify as a person with a disability?

- ❐ Yes (proceed to **Part 2**)
- ❐ No (proceed to **Question 9**)
- ❐ Not sure (proceed to **Question 9**)
- ❐ Prefer not to answer (proceed to **Question 9**)

Part 2: Please select all that apply:

- ❐ Coordination or dexterity (e.g. difficulty using hands or arms, such as grasping objects or using a keyboard)
- ❐ Mobility (e.g. difficulty moving from one space to another, walking long distances, or using stairs)
- ❐ Blindness or visual (e.g. unable to see or difficulty seeing, glaucoma; however, do not include yourself if you can see well with glasses or contact lenses)
- ❐ Deafness or hearing (unable to hear or difficulty hearing)
- ❐ Speech (unable to speak, or difficulty speaking and being understood)
- ❐ Neurodevelopmental disorder (e.g. autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, Down syndrome)
- ❐ Learning disorder or comprehension impairment (e.g. dyslexia)
- ❐ Anxiety disorder (e.g. generalized anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder)
- ❐ Mood disorder (e.g. depression, bipolar disorder)
- ❐ Prefer not to answer
- ❐ A disability not listed. Please specify (optional): _____

9. Please choose your age group:

☐ 18-24 years   ☐ 55-64 years

☐ 25-34 years   ☐ 65+ years

☐ 35-44 years   ☐ Prefer not to answer

☐ 45-54 years

10. Household income is the combined gross income (before taxes) of all members of a household who are 15 years or older. Individuals do not have to be related in any way to be considered members of the same household.

Please estimate your average annual household family income (in Canadian Dollars):

☐ Under $25,000 per year   ☐ $75,001 – $100,000 per year

☐ $25,001 – $50,000 per year   ☐ Over $100,000 per year

☐ $50,001 – $75,000 per year   ☐ Prefer not to answer

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your VIU student experience over the last 12 months (or less, if you have not been here that long):

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know or Not applicable
a) I feel like I am a part of the VIU community.						
b) At VIU, I have the opportunity to perform to my full potential.						
c) At VIU, I am free to be myself without feeling out of place.						
d) In my general interactions with others on campus, I feel I have been heard						
e) My efforts and achievements at VIU are often not appreciated.						
f) I am unhappy at VIU because of the way I'm treated here.						

11. At VIU, what makes you feel welcome or included?_____

12. At VIU, what makes you feel unwelcome or excluded?_____

13. Please suggest how to improve inclusion and belonging at VIU:_____

Thank you for completing this survey. Your time and opinion "matter here"!

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions for Participant

Ice breaker: *Do you have any questions or concerns about this research we are doing?*

1) Tell us about your experience as an employee/student at this university?

2) What are the elements that contribute to your identity as a person and as an employee/student here?

3) To what extent do you feel you can be yourself on campus, without having to suppress parts of your identity?

4) What, if anything, has been most helpful to you in your career/student life to deal with individual or systemic barriers, if any, that have arisen?

5) Please describe your feelings of isolation, if any? How, if at all, do you deal with your sense of isolation? Have you sought help? If so, did you receive the support you needed?

6) Please share an experience, if any, on campus where you felt you were welcomed and supported as an individual with a non-dominant identity/in particular role [adapted to particular identity/role].

7) Please share an experience, if any, on campus where you felt that you were mistreated/isolated/dismissed/ignored because of your non-dominant identity/in your role [adapted to particular identity/role].

8) How, if at all, can you as a person identifying as woman/indigenous/non gender binary/LGBTQ2S+/a person living with a disability (and/or particular role) be better supported by the university so you can feel more of a sense of belonging on campus?

9) How, if at all, can you be better supported by the university in your role as student/researcher/faculty/staff so you can fulfill your potential?

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data from the six Likert-scale survey items were statistically analyzed using SPSS. Almost all the data are not normally distributed with significant skewness and kurtosis. Hence, parametric tests were not conducted. Independent samples t-tests (Man Whitney U) were conducted to test mean differences in groups by Designated Groups. The larger sample size for students (N=1391) vs. employees (N=624) allowed for more intersectional analysis on student data. Results that were statistically significant at p≤.05 are reported below.

Employees

Gender. Among employees, women (N=315) rated their positive experiences as lower and negative experiences as higher than men (N=141). This trend was evident on all items with statistical significance on the following items: not feeling part of the community (p=.041), not being heard in campus interactions (p=.007), having less freedom to be self (p=.046), and feeling less happy (p=.048).

	VIU Community	VIU Potential	VIU Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	19698.500	20219.500	19755.500	18859.000	20388.000	19839.500
Wilcoxon W	69468.500	69989.500	69525.500	68629.000	30399.000	29850.500
Z	-2.039	-1.601	-1.996	-2.712	-1.443	-1.981
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	.109	.046	.007	.149	.048

VIU Test Statistics[a]

a. Grouping Variable: Gender Identity

Living with a Disability. Employees living with disabilities (N=34) indicated feeling that they do not have the freedom to be themselves (p=.009) compared with employees not identifying as living with a disability (N=422).

	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	6304.000	6976.000	5352.000	6738.500	6013.500	5970.000
Wilcoxon W	6899.000	7571.000	5947.000	7333.500	95266.500	95223.000
Z	-1.244	-.281	-2.609	-.621	-1.619	-1.772
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.214	.779	.009	.535	.105	.076

VIU Test Statistics[a]

a. Grouping Variable: Disability Yes or No

2SLGBTQI+/Women Intersectionality. Employees identifying as 2SLGBTQI+ women (N=22) indicated that they had less freedom to be themselves compared with women employees who did not identify as 2SLGBTQI+ (N=293) at a statistically significant level (p=.013).

	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	2861.500	3123.500	2256.000	3141.000	2928.000	2710.000
Wilcoxon W	3114.500	3376.500	2509.000	3394.000	3181.000	45781.000
Z	-.925	-.254	-2.483	-.211	-.737	-1.337
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.355	.800	.013	.833	.461	.181

VIU Test Statistics[a]

a. Grouping Variable: 2SLGBTQI+ Yes or No

Living with a Disability. Students living with disabilities (N=155) indicated several statistically significant differences: they feel they cannot perform to their potential (p=.010), have less freedom to be themselves (p=.001), are not appreciated (p=.000) and feel unhappier (p=.005) than students who do not identify as living with disabilities (N=602).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	43619.000	40721.500	39072.000	42710.000	38114.500	40564.000
Wilcoxon W	55709.000	52811.500	51162.000	54800.000	219617.500	222067.000
Z	-1.302	-2.570	-3.290	-1.707	-3.684	-2.838
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.193	.010	.001	.088	.000	.005

a. Grouping Variable: Disability Yes or No

Living with a Disability/Women Intersectionality. Women students living with disabilities (N=106) report having less opportunity to perform to their full potential (p=.015), less freedom to be themselves (p=.003), feel they are not heard (p=.031), feel underappreciated (p=.001) and unhappier (.011) than women students who do not live with a disability (N=379).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	18193.000	17152.000	16532.500	17464.000	16102.500	17179.000
Wilcoxon W	23864.000	22823.000	22203.500	23135.000	88112.500	89189.000
Z	-1.547	-2.424	-2.937	-2.157	-3.267	-2.551
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.122	.015	.003	.031	.001	.011

a. Grouping Variable: Disability Yes or No

Visible Minorities. Visible minority students (N=119) feel they have fewer opportunities to perform to their full potential (p=.022), have less freedom to be themselves (p=.034), and don't feel they are heard (p=.001) compared with students who don't identify as visible minorities (N=638).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	36108.500	33202.500	33555.500	31280.000	36997.000	35739.000
Wilcoxon W	43248.500	40342.500	40695.500	38420.000	240838.000	239580.000
Z	-.881	-2.285	-2.119	-3.205	-.461	-1.148
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.379	.022	.034	.001	.645	.251

a. Grouping Variable: Visible Minority Yes or No

Visible Minorities/Black. Visible minority students identifying as Black (N=20) reported feeling that they lack the opportunity to perform to their full potential (p=.023) compared with students who do not identify as Black (N=737).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	6112.000	5279.000	6105.000	6101.000	6611.000	6991.000
Wilcoxon W	6322.000	5489.000	6315.000	6311.000	278564.000	278944.000
Z	-1.357	-2.279	-1.381	-1.381	-.824	-.444
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.175	.023	.167	.167	.410	.657

a. Grouping Variable: Visible Minority-Black

Gender/Visible Minority Intersectionality. Women students identifying as visible minorities (N=76) feel they are not heard in their interaction at a statistically significant level (p=.001) then do women students who do not identify as visible minorities (N=409).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	14501.500	13601.500	13618.500	12124.500	14198.000	13927.000
Wilcoxon W	17427.500	16527.500	16544.500	15050.500	98043.000	97772.000
Z	-.966	-1.822	-1.807	-3.195	-1.253	-1.611
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.334	.068	.071	.001	.210	.107

a. Grouping Variable: Visible Minority Yes or No

Gender/International. Women international students (N=68) feel they are not part of the VIU community (p=.006) compared with domestic women students (N=414).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	Potential	Freedom	Interaction	Lack of Appreciation	Unhappiness
Mann-Whitney U	11258.500	14046.000	13367.000	13685.500	12122.000	13676.500
Wilcoxon W	97163.500	16392.000	99272.000	16031.500	14468.000	99581.500
Z	-2.758	-.030	-.702	-.385	-1.919	-.419
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.976	.483	.700	.055	.675

a.Grouping Variable: Domestic or International

2SLGBTQI+. 2SLGBTQI+ students (N=133) report feel less appreciated (p=.037), and that they cannot perform to their full potential (p=.018) compared with students not identifying as 2SLGBTQI+ (N=596).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	**Potential**	**Freedom**	**Interaction**	**Lack of Appreciation**	**Unhappiness**
Mann-Whitney U	38680.500	34693.500	37908.500	38378.000	35262.500	37908.500
Wilcoxon W	47591.500	43604.500	46819.500	47289.000	213168.500	215814.500
Z	-.452	-2.365	-.828	-.601	-2.085	-.888
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.651	.018	.408	.548	.037	.374
a.Grouping Variable: 2SLGBTQI+ Yes or No						

2SLGBTQI+/Gender Intersectionality. 2SLGBTQI+ women students (N=90) feel they have fewer opportunities to fulfill their potential (p=.009), and feel they are underappreciated (p=.008) compared with women students identifying as 2SLGBTQI+ (N=372).

VIU Test Statistics[a]						
	Community	**Potential**	**Freedom**	**Interaction**	**Lack of Appreciation**	**Unhappiness**
Mann-Whitney U	15704.500	13918.500	15178.000	16452.000	13871.000	15951.500
Wilcoxon W	19799.500	18013.500	19273.000	20547.000	83249.000	85329.500
Z	-.949	-2.613	-1.448	-.266	-2.640	-.776
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.342	.009	.148	.790	.008	.438
a. Grouping Variable: 2SLGBTQI+ Yes or No						

Annex D: Self-Identification Survey

Commencing late summer 2021, a voluntary Equity and Diversity Job Applicant Self-Identification Questionnaire will be included with each job-posting. VIU also intends to collect voluntary self-identification information from existing VIU employees commencing fall 2021. This action fits with our core values and is being taken in anticipation of the pending VIU EDI Action Plan, which will formalize VIU's EDI initiatives and will outline actions needed to enhance EDI throughout VIU.

Welcoming the unique talents, perspectives and contributions of the different people who make up our campus community implies fair treatment for all and will lead us toward excellence in our delivery of education, service, scholarly activities and research. In Canada and worldwide, there is a growing realization that diversity is vital for communities to flourish, to be at their healthiest and most successful. People from different backgrounds and identities bring unique perspectives, talents and ways of knowing that benefit all of us. Vancouver Island University is committed to achieving improved and lasting diversity, equity and inclusion, and many of VIU's strategic planning initiatives include core commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion. In addition, we have signed on to Universities Canada's "Inclusive Excellence Principles" and the Dimensions Charter, and have received support from the Federal Tri-Agencies, to help us advance our equity, diversity and inclusion goals.

At VIU, we believe that having employees who reflect the diversity of our students and our community makes us a better university. One of the ways to move towards greater diversity is through collecting diversity data to assess the recruitment, representation and retention of employees from five equity-deserving groups: women, persons with disabilities, racialized persons, Indigenous peoples, and persons of a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

VIU is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the University and all its operations. Through the development of evidence-driven practices and systems, including gathering self-identification data on job applicants, the University commits to attracting and retaining faculty, staff, and leaders from all backgrounds. In Human Resources, we are committed to identifying where barriers exist in our recruitment process, creating strategies to address them and measuring our success. Understanding the diversity of our applicants and their progress through the hiring process will inform our goals, strategies and actions.

Self-identification data will be used to set equity, diversity, and inclusion goals; develop action plans; and report on progress. Data will also be used to inform strategies for improving the job application experience and climate for applicants, particularly those from equity-deserving groups.

We are working on strengthening our hiring strategies and processes; however, without data, we limit our ability to measure the success of these initiatives.

Having data related to employee recruitment will help the university understand who is applying and progressing through the hiring process and ultimately who is successful in attaining positions. This will help us take action to increase representation through external hires and assess internal movement and growth for existing staff from equity-deserving groups. Understanding where barriers exist helps us address them in an intentional and focused way.

COLLECTING AND PROTECTING SELF-IDENTIFICATION DATA

Access to EDI self-identification date will be strictly limited to select employees in, or designated agents of, the Human Resources Office, and to select Information Technology employees for maintenance and troubleshooting purposes. These individuals are required to keep this information confidential.

Anonymized self-identification data may be shared with search committee chairs for the purpose of helping to ascertain whether there is a diverse pool of qualified applicants and aiding in decision-making with respect to the shortlisting and job offer process. The data will only be accessible to a few individuals whose job it is to produce diversity reports for recruitment, retention, and strategic planning purposes.

For Canada Research Chair applications, self-identification information may be shared with the Chair of the Search Committee and select employees of the Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity Office for the purpose of administering the Canada Research Chair Program.

VIU collects, uses, discloses and retains personal information only in compliance with the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). VIU collects the personal information pursuant to section 26 (c) and (e) of FIPPA.

EXAMPLE OF THE SELF-IDENTIFICATION FORM FOR CRC OPPORTUNITIES

Vancouver Island University Equity and Diversity Job Applicant Self-Identification Questionnaire

CANADA RESEARCH CHAIRS

Vancouver Island University embraces the principle of employment equity and encourages applications from women, persons with disabilities, racialized persons, Indigenous peoples, and persons of a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity. VIU is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the University and all its operations. Through the development of evidence-driven practices and systems, including gathering self-identification data on applicants and employees, the University commits to attracting and retaining faculty, staff, and leaders from all backgrounds.

VIU collects, uses, discloses, and retains personal information only in compliance with the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). VIU collects the personal information on this form pursuant to section 26 (c) and (e) of FIPPA.

The data you provide will be accessible for recruitment purposes and reporting purposes as described below. Access to the data collected in the Self-Identification Questionnaire is strictly limited to select employees in, or designated agents of, the Human Resources Office. When necessary, access to the electronic data is granted to select Information Technology employees for system maintenance and troubleshooting purposes only.

Recruitment Purposes

For Canada Research Chair applications, self-identification information may be shared with the Chair of the Search Committee and select employees of the Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity Office for the purpose of administering the Canada Research Chair Program.

Reporting Purposes

Self-identification data will be used to set equity, diversity, and inclusion goals; develop action plans; and report on progress. Data will also be used to inform strategies for improving the job application experience and climate for applicants, particularly those from equity-seeking groups. Your responses are only accessible to a few individuals whose job it is to produce equity reports to improve employment equity at VIU. Your self-identification information will be combined with the self-identification information of others and reported in an aggregated (statistical summary) format so that you cannot be identified.

Questionnaire

We encourage you to self-identify in all groups that apply to you; however, you are not required to share your self-identification information. You may select "prefer not to answer" to any of the self-identification questions below.

Indigenous Peoples

Do you self-identify as an Indigenous person?

❒ Yes

❒ No

❒ Prefer not to answer

Racialized Persons

Do you self-identify as a racialized person?

❒ Yes

❒ No

❒ Prefer not to answer

Persons with a Disability

Do you self-identify as a person with a disability?

❒ Yes

❒ No

❒ Prefer not to answer

Sex

Do you self-identify as a woman?

❒ Yes

❒ No

❒ Prefer not to answer

Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity

Do you consider yourself a person of a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity?

❒ Yes

❒ No

❒ Prefer not to answer

EXAMPLE OF THE SELF-IDENTIFICATION FORM FOR NON-CRC OPPORTUNITIES

Vancouver Island University Equity and Diversity Job Applicant Self-Identification Questionnaire

Vancouver Island University embraces the principle of employment equity and encourages applications from women, persons with disabilities, racialized persons, Indigenous peoples, and persons of a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity. VIU is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the University and all its operations. Through the development of evidence-driven practices and systems, including gathering self-identification data on applicants and employees, the University commits to attracting and retaining faculty, staff, and leaders from all backgrounds.

VIU collects, uses, discloses, and retains personal information only in compliance with the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). VIU collects the personal information on this form pursuant to section 26 (c) and (e) of FIPPA.

The data you provide will be accessible for recruitment purposes and reporting purposes as described below. Access to the data collected in the Self-Identification Questionnaire is strictly limited to select employees in, or designated agents of, the Human Resources Office. When necessary, access to the electronic data is granted to select Information Technology employees for system maintenance and troubleshooting purposes only.

Recruitment Purposes

The self-identification information you provide in this questionnaire is not part of your application and will not be accessible to search committee members. Anonymized self-identification data may be shared with search committee chairs for the purpose of helping to ascertain whether there is a diverse pool of qualified applicants and aiding in decision making with respect to the shortlisting and job offer process.

Reporting Purposes

Self-identification data will be used to set equity, diversity, and inclusion goals; develop action plans; and report on progress. Data will also be used to inform strategies for improving the job application experience and climate for applicants, particularly those from equity-seeking groups. Your responses are only accessible to a few individuals whose job it is to produce equity reports to improve employment equity at VIU. Your self-identification information will be combined with the self-identification information of others and reported in an aggregated (statistical summary) format so that you cannot be identified.

Questionnaire

We encourage you to self-identify in all groups that apply to you; however, you are not required to share your self-identification information. You may select "prefer not to answer" to any of the following self-identification questions.

Indigenous Peoples

Do you self-identify as an Indigenous person?

❐ Yes

❐ No

❐ Prefer not to answer

Racialized Persons

Do you self-identify as a racialized person?

❐ Yes

❐ No

❐ Prefer not to answer

Persons with a Disability

Do you self-identify as a person with a disability?

❐ Yes

❐ No

❐ Prefer not to answer

Sex

Do you self-identify as a woman?

❐ Yes

❐ No

❐ Prefer not to answer

Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity

Do you consider yourself a person of a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity?

❐ Yes

❐ No

❐ Prefer not to answer

Annex E: EDI Plan for Canada Research Chairs

This annex to VIU's institution-wide plan describes in detail how the university applies its equity, diversity, and inclusion goals in the management of Canada Research Chair (CRC) positions and the support we offer to those who fill these important roles.

Page 16 identifies a matrix that clearly maps the elements of the plan to the CRC requirements.

PEOPLE: PROFILE OF CANADA RESEARCH CHAIRS

VIU has an allocation of four Tier 2 CRC's as well as two BC Regional Innovation Chairs (BCRIC's) VIU Research and Innovation Chairs. Each of these chairs plays an important role in helping to realize the strategic research priorities in the Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Strategic Plan.

With respect to the CRC's, all chair holders are Tier 2 CRC's who are within their first five-year term. Fifty percent of them are from an equity deserving group. Fifty percent of CRC chair holders are women, but otherwise none are from other equity-seeking groups.[11] One of the BCRIC's is an Indigenous woman. The gap in chair representation of persons with disabilities and Indigenous peoples falls below 0.5 at present. VIU has a demonstrated a gap in respect to Visible Minority representation among current Chair allocations[12] which will be the target of the next CRC recruitment process.

VIU has been experiencing growth in its research enterprise and is hopeful that we will receive an allocation for a fifth CRC over the next 2-3 years.

PROCESS: MANAGING, RECRUITING, RETAINING AND SUPPORTING CANADA RESEARCH CHAIRS

Management of Positions

Management of CRCs at VIU is done in accordance with the Vancouver Island University Faculty Association (VIUFA) Collective Agreement and a Letter of Understanding between VIUFA, the Vice President of Human Resources, and the Provost and Vice President Academic, outlining employment terms and working conditions for Research Chairs, including CRCs.

The research areas for CRCs are based on the priorities identified in the Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity Strategic Plan. These priorities include: 1) teaching and learning, 2) health, resilience and well-being, 3) Integrated sciences, technology and environment, 4) resilience of island, coastal and rural regions, 5) innovation, entrepreneurships and social change, 6) cultural, heritage and creative expression, and 7) equity, diversity and social justice. Each of the CRC's is aligned to at least two of these strategic research priorities.

---

[11] VIU also has two BC Regional Innovation Chairs, of whom one is an Indigenous woman.

[12] Targets are set in conformity with the target-setting strategy described on the CRC website.

When a CRC position is established or vacant, the Associate Vice President of Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity (AVP SRCA) notifies the Deans of all Faculties, requesting expressions of interest for new CRC positions. The EOI's must address:

1. The topic area that the CRC would address (including a potential title for the CRC and a short description of the topic area);

2. Which research theme or strength(s) the CRC align with in the <u>VIU Strategic Research Plan</u>?

3. Which Department would the CRC be aligned with? What other departments/disciplines at VIU would be involved in the CRC's research program?

4. What types of students does the CRC have access to for training and mentorship of high quality personnel (HQP)?

5. What other faculty exist within the Department or in other Departments at VIU that could collaborate in the research program of this CRC?

6. What resources exist within VIU to create a supportive climate for this CRC?

The EOI's are reviewed by the Provost and AVP SRCA. The decision is based on the strength of the proposal, the number of research chairs in the Faculty (priority is given to Faculties with no chairs), the fit within the Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Plan, and the number of current or potential graduate programs in the research area. One or more proposals are approved to move forward through Human Resources to recruit potential candidates. If more than one proposal is accepted, then more than one CRC position is advertised.

Recruitment

The AVP SRCA chairs an interdisciplinary selection committee with representation of the Deans of the Faculties for the CRC's. The AVP SRCA ensures that the interdisciplinary selection committee members take the unconscious bias training module developed by the CRCP, that an EDI champion is identified, that self-identification data is collected and that all requirements of the CRCP are met.

To ensure transparency and allow for a large pool of applicants, each CRC position is advertised for a minimum of 6 months. Given the university's longstanding Indigenous commitment, VIU actively seeks Indigenous candidates and mentors selected current Indigenous graduate students to facilitate their path to a CRC position. In 2019, VIU began to implement intentional measures to attract diverse candidates from the equity-seeking FDG groups and to collect equity data on CRC applicants based on self-identification. Search committee members took mandatory training on unconscious bias, and the EDI Advisor sat on the search committee as the EDI champion throughout the process to monitor the process and suggest best practices. Tabulation of the data showed that these efforts succeeded in obtaining significant numbers of diverse applicants (with the notable exception of Indigenous persons) and that an equitable portion were shortlisted and interviewed.

Given the small number of Chairs at VIU, VIU has not yet made use of the corridor of flexibility. When VIU was first granted CRCs in the early 2000s, the Provost determined that Tier 2 Chair holders would be most appropriate for the institution, noting the academic stature and salary level of VIU professors compared to other universities. Since then, this practice has continued with the goal of increasing the number of CRC's at the institution and distributing them across the decanal areas.

VIU holds annual interviews with chair holders, led by the AVP SRCA and the Dean. The purpose of these reviews is to highlight progress made on the research plan and to identify barriers or renewal issues. To facilitate these discussions, the CRC submits their written annual report prior to the meeting. The written report asks the chair holder to identify any barriers related to equity, diversity and inclusion that are impacting their research program. All reports are also forwarded to the Provost for review and an annual lunch meeting is held with the chair holders, the Provost and the AVP SRCA to discuss the reports. This process ensures that the chair holders have an opportunity to share their successes and barriers including any potential renewal issues with senior management regularly.

VIU affords various leaves to all employees, including CRCs, per the employment provisions for each respective employee group. CRCs at VIU are members of the Vancouver Island University Faculty Association and subject to the VIUFA Collective Agreement. That Collective Agreement provides for various paid and unpaid leaves, and those leaves are afforded to all faculty equitably, including CRCs.

VIU supports the renewal of chair holders where the research remains aligned with the research priorities in the strategic research plan. The following outlines the process used to support the renewal process.

1. **Step 1:** the AVP SRCA notifies the CRC and the Dean of the 5-year renewal timeline during the initial orientation of the chair holder and at the three-year annual review meeting. A framework and timeline for the renewal process is shared with the chair holder noting criteria, roles, responsibilities and deadlines.

2. **Step 2:** One year prior to the end of the first CRC term, the AVP SRCA and Dean discuss whether the chair holder will have the opportunity to submit a renewal nomination taking into consideration a) whether or not the research program of the chair holder is aligned with the research priorities in the SRP and b) whether or not the chair holder is a full time faculty member.

3. **Step 3:** When a renewal nomination has been approved in principle the Dean determines if the chair holder would like to renew for another 5-year term and notifies SRCA of the decision.

4. **Step 4:** Upon confirmation by the chair holder in renewal, the chair holder is assigned a grants facilitator to support them in the renewal process including the development of their performance report and new 5-year plan. The chair holder is reminded that the renewal nomination must be submitted a minimum of 6 months prior to the end of their first CRC term for either the April or October intake dates so there is no break in the chair holder's tenure. The chair holder and grants facilitator ensure that a current CV, self-assessment, list of 4-6 referees and detailed outline of a new research proposal is developed following the guidelines of the CRCP for assessment by an institutional review committee.

5. **Step 5:** The Dean and AVP SRCA identify which referees they would like to contact and the grants facilitator provides a template for reference letters including TIPS letter of reference requirements and best practices to avoid unconscious bias in writing letters of reference.

6. **Step 6:** The AVP SRCA and Dean identify members for a review committee which will include internal research active faculty members, 2 external independent reviewers, the Manager of Research Development and where appropriate, external community partners. A member of the AVP SRCA will chair the review committee

7. **Step 7:** The Review Committee meets to discuss the renewal candidate assessing the materials provides (CV, self-assessment, reference letters and new research proposal).

The criteria for successful review align with the CRCP renewal criteria and include:

1. Track record of successful performance on the original 5-year plan (40 points)

    a. Is there evidence that the Chair holder actively pursued and accomplished the targets that were laid out in their original plan?

    b. Has the chair holder carried out a research program that is producing leading-edge research that are making significant impact as identified in the original proposal? What knowledge has the Chair holder created or co-created during their term? How has the knowledge been mobilized to reach the audiences identified in the original proposal?

    c. Does the Chair have a provincial, national or international reputation for the work that they have done in the past 5 years?

    d. Have they been successful at leading significant initiatives/projects or programs aligned to their plan?

    e. Have they been successful at applying for and securing external funding to operationalize their plan?

    f. Has their track record been commensurate for a faculty member receiving 75% protected time for research (compared to faculty without protected time for example).

2. Impact of the Chair (30%)

    a. What impact has the 5-year plan had on the audiences identified in the original proposal?

    b. Has the work of the chair enhanced the reputation of VIU in the region (region as defined in the proposal). Has the work of the Chair holder aided communities or other groups to address issues/needs? What level of engagement and buy in has the Chair established within the region for their work? How has the Chair shared their work with relevant groups in the VIU region??

    c. Has the work of the Chair holder created a positive impact at VIU? Has their work raised the profile and reputation of the institution, Faculty or research center?

    d. Have they mentored other faculty and benefited their research performance?

    e. Have they contributed to the culture of scholarship, research and creative activity at VIU?

3. Research training and mentorship of high quality personnel (HQP) (30%)

    a. Has the chair successfully attracted, developed and retained excellent trainees and students to the postsecondary institution or affiliated institute? (Number, level, indicators of success such as publications, presentations, awards, funding)

    b. What level of funding has been dedicated to the development of HQP?

8. **Step 8:** The aggregate scores are shared at the meeting protecting anonymity of the reviewers and is used to frame a discussion on the likelihood that the renewal is likely to receive a positive external review when submitted to the CRCP. The Review Committee votes on the decision whether or not to renew the chair holder and provides a memo to the Dean of the outcome incorporating rationale for the decision.

9. **Step 9:** The Dean prepares a letter without the vote results and sends it to the renewal candidate providing them with 14 days to respond to the Dean with their comments. The chair holder will also be provided with a copy of the letter and guidelines for evaluation that was sent to the external referees, and a copy of the criteria and scoring that are referenced in review of the candidate.

10. **Step 10:** Where renewals are supported, the grants facilitator and chair holder will prepare the nomination package as per the "Nomination Process" for new nominations. Where renewals are not supported, the chair holder assumes a regular faculty position following the end of their term.

VIU does not have a rank and tenure system so there is no process for advancement of chair holders. After successfully completing a two-year probationary period, they are granted an ongoing appointment as Professor. The Dean approves the faculty probationary period based on satisfactory evaluations including teaching and research.

Where a chair holder is phasing out of the second term as a CRC, the Dean and chair holder will discuss the goals of the chair holder with respect to research. Where the chair holder wishes to remain engaged in research, the Dean and chair holder will explore potential resources to protect a portion of their time for research.

Moving forward, VIU will conduct an exit interview with CRCs that leave the university prior to the completion of CRC grant to understand the rationale for the departure and to identify to what extent, if any, EDI concerns factored into their decision.

Complaints from any faculty, including chair holders, are made to the Dean and if needed are escalated to the Director of Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR). While formal complaints result in an nvestigation through DEHR, an informal resolution process undertaken by either the DEHR or the Dean is also an option if both parties agree.

Support for Chair holders

- CRC's at VIU receive 75% protected time to complete their research program and the additional 25% equates to 2 courses per year of teaching assignment. One section of teaching may be reassigned to research where funding permits in the first year of the CRC's research program.

- All CRC's are introduced to one another and the other BC Regional Innovation Chairs in an attempt to create a community of practice for VIU research chairs. This group meets about 4 times per year and is encouraged to relay suggestions to the AVP SRCA at the annual meetings with the Provost.

- During the onboarding process, the AVP SRCA and Dean help the CRC identify an internal or external mentor to support them in their program.

- The SRCA Office offers continual research development training via workshops and presentations throughout the year.

- When submitting a CRC nomination, all NSERC and CIHR CRC's at VIU receive between $25,000 to $50,000 depending upon their equipment and supply requirements. SSHRC CRC's receive $25,000 from the institution based on reduced requirements for equipment and supplies. The Dean approves this in the CRC nomination and the AVP SRCA ensures consistency when reviewing nomination budgets.

- VIU currently reserves its $400,000 CFI allocation for distribution to its CRC's first after which time, any remaining funds are made available to faculty via a call for CFI projects. Institutional matching fund support for Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) applications varies depending on the availability of vendor funding. As the CFI allocation increases, all CRC's will be able to apply for a portion of the institutional allocation if needed in the open competition. Weight will be given to those requiring CFI funding for research commitments such as a CRC grant.

- Chair holders receive administrative support through the Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Office with a Secretary, Research Chairs. This position serves all institutional chairs with administrative tasks to ensure that they can dedicate their time and energy toward their research program. This position provides valuable assistance navigating with institutional service departments, updating websites, processing paperwork and financials and hiring of students. Additional support for teaching is provided within their Faculty.

- VIU does not have a spousal hiring policy however we have actively supported spousal opportunities in the region by way of introductions to potential employers and sharing postings.

- With a small number of CRC's, VIU has been able to standardize the supports for CRC's. Most requests for support are made at the time of the nomination which is overseen by the same grant facilitator in the SRCA office and approved by the AVP SRCA which ensures consistency in the application of these standards. This also helps to safeguard members of FDGs from being disadvantages in negotiations.

ASSESSMENT: COMPARATIVE REVIEW

In an effort to identify if there were any differences in institutional support for VIU chair holders, a comparative review was conducted. This review included in depth interviews with chair holders during the environmental scan and a scan of institutional documents such as the VIUFA Collective Agreement.

The following elements were assessed: a) salary, b) protected time, c) leaves, d) representation of FDG's, e) administrative support, and f) access to space. The goal for the comparative review was to flag any inequities or potential systemic bias that exists at VIU for existing chair holders.

Salary:

VIU has a letter of understanding with the Vancouver Island Faculty Association (VIUFA) on Research Chairs. This document allows for research chairs to be placed at or moved to Step 1 of the Provincial Salary scale. VIU hires all CRC's and BCRIC's at the top of the salary scale when they are hired hence there is no difference in the salary for chair holders at VIU.

Protected time:

As stipulated in the VIUFA letter of understanding, all chair holders, regardless of discipline receive 75% of their workload as protected time for research and 25% is allocated to teaching (which equates to 2 courses per year). The Vice-President, Academic may grant additional release time in order to meet the requirements of the research chair. All existing chair holders have 75% protected time for research and all were given a lighter workload in their first year with a one course teaching reduction.

All research chairs are eligible for leaves within the VIUFA collective agreement, assuming that they follow the guidelines for the granting agency. None of the existing chair holders has applied for an assisted leave.

When chair holders cease their role as a research chair, they become a regular faculty member with a full teaching load in their assigned department. VIU does not have a rank and tenure model and all faculty hold the title Professor so the chair holder would assume the title of Professor once they are no longer a research chair. Research chairs cannot be laid off and cannot be bumped by other faculty members.

Representation of FDG's:

With respect to gender, 50% of the chair holders are male and 50% are female. None of the current chair holders identifies as a visible minority, a person with a disability, or as an indigenous person. Within the BC Regional Innovation Chair holders, one identifies as a male and one as a female who is also indigenous. When VIU receives its fifth CRC allocation, a person who identifies as a visible minority will be targeted during recruitment.

Institutional support:

All chair holders are supported administratively by a secretary, research chairs position in the Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Office. While some chair holders utilize this support more than others, there is no inequity in access to administrative support at VIU. All SSHRC CRC's received the same annual institutional research grant of $25,000 per annum. The NSERC CRC received $50,000 due to the nature of the supplies and equipment for the research program. All chair holders receive a standardized orientation facilitated by the Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Office. This ensures that supports, procedures and policies are all communicated with them at the start of their term. Each chair holder is required to submit an annual review followed by a meeting with their Dean and the AVP SRCA, followed by a lunch with the Provost. This ensures that the chair holders all have equitable access to leadership and an opportunity to convey highlights and barriers/challenges on an annual basis.

Access to space:

The comparative review did indicate some differences in the experience of existing CRC's with respect to access to space for their research program. The NSERC chair holder was brought in to help maximize the use of existing research centers and labs in fisheries and aquaculture. The SSHRC CRC's research plans involved the creation of new research centers at the institution. These chair holders have experienced challenges in gaining access to space for their research and while both of these individuals are women, the review indicated that this was likely a result of VIU not having a space governance model that incorporated research needs. A new space governance committee has been created in 2021 which will review all requests for space at the institution, including research. This entity will enable chair holders to request access to space so they can successfully complete their research programs.

VIU's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

Version 1.0

November 2021

VANCOUVER ISLAND
UNIVERSITY