

**The University of Northern British Columbia  
Canada Research Chairs Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan**

**Revised by: UNBC Office of Research  
December 21, 2018**

## Table of Contents

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Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	3
Equity/Diversity/Inclusion Objectives and Measurement Strategies	3
Management of Canada Research Chair Allocations	5
UNBC Equity Targets and Collection of Equity and Diversity Data	6
Retention and Inclusivity	7
Conclusion	9
Contact Information	9
Appendix – Self Identification Form (Under Revision)	10

*This document outlines the University of Northern British Columbia Canada Research Chairs Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan in conjunction with the policies set out by Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat (TIPS). This document is a work in progress with several processes currently under review.*

## **Commitment to Equity Diversity and Inclusion**

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In accordance with the Canada Research Chairs Program, the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) is committed to excellence in research and research training for the benefit of Canadians. Achieving a more equitable, diverse and inclusive Canadian research enterprise is also essential to creating the excellent, innovative and impactful research necessary to seize opportunities and for responding to global challenges. As such, UNBC is committed to the federal government's policies on non-discrimination and employment equity.

The following EDI Action Plan has been developed by Office of Research and Human Resources staff along with members of senior administration, and is a work in progress and several processes are currently under review. Community consultation including members of the Four Designated Groups (FDG's) is essential, and is planned in early 2019.

## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives and Measurement Strategies**

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Impactful equity and diversity objectives, indicators and actions have been developed to facilitate swift progress towards meeting UNBC's equity targets and goals in the next 12 months (objectives are S.M.A.R.T.: specific, measurable, aligned with the wanted outcome, realistic and timely).

### **Objectives:**

1. To provide strong leadership that facilitates consultation on our revised action plan, integration of feedback and subsequent follow-through on proposed actions.
2. To create a communication plan for our EDI leadership and an engagement strategy for the four designated groups to ensure that implementation and refinement of the EDI action plan happens in a timely manner.
3. To provide effective EDI training for all hiring committees for CRC's, faculty and staff, the EDI working committee and any other staff working on the EDI initiative.
4. To improve policies and procedures on employment equity to ensure that recruitment, selection and retention of faculty and staff in addition to CRC positions will follow best practices regarding equity, diversity and inclusion.
5. To conduct an EDI Awareness Campaign that will shift the culture at UNBC, putting equity, diversity and inclusion at the forefront of people's minds.
6. To monitor and measure achievement of objectives and corresponding actions.

### **Actions and Indicators:**

1. Convene the current CRC committee in January of 2019 to review the action plan and assess progress. Assign a leadership role to an internal Senior HR Consultant to spearhead the EDI Action Plan consultation, feedback integration and implementation. Delegate an Office of Research staff member to work with the Senior HR Consultant. Establish an EDI working committee that is chaired by the Director of Human Resources and includes representation from the FDG's and the LGBTQ+ community. *Indicator: A checklist will be compiled from the actions proposed in the EDI Action Plan and progress will be monitored on a bi-weekly basis by both the senior HR consultant and Office of Research delegate.*

2. The Office of Research and Human Resources will work together to establish an effective communication plan that includes quarterly reporting to senior leaders, monthly meetings with Directors and bi-weekly interaction between the Senior HR Consultant and the Office of Research delegate(s). Progress on implementation of the EDI Action Plan will be communicated to both the EDI working committee and the CRC committee on a quarterly and biannual basis respectively. *Indicators: Development and implementation of the communication plan; meeting dates and times will be established and added to the checklist; completion and implementation of engagement strategy; representation of the FDG's on both the CRC and the EDI working committees achieved.*
3. A consulting firm or equity expert will be hired to lead a workshop on equity, diversity and inclusive hiring and retention practices to help establish a baseline level of training. The workshop is currently planned to be held in April 2019 during our Celebration of Research week. "Research Beyond Boundaries" is the general theme for the week, and EDI practices will be utilized throughout the planning and implementation of the event. All departmental Chairs, faculty Deans and senior administrators will participate in the training in addition to those who are involved in the hiring process. The EDI working committee and the CRC hiring committee will also participate. Additional training will be provided to HR and Research staff responsible for implementation of the CRC EDI requirements. In addition, online training opportunities will be investigated for quality educational opportunities that can be utilized on an annual basis to ensure that the baseline level of training established is maintained and improved. *Indicators: Records will be kept of who is trained, creating a pool of individuals from which to draw when forming hiring committees.*
4. The current self-identification form used during the hiring process is being updated based on CRC program feedback and plans will be made to develop safeguards that ensure the collected data is utilized according to policy. Prior to any further CRC nomination, a standard operating procedure will be refined for the CRC hiring process that considers the new EDI requirements as of September, 2018. A complete comparative review of the CRC chairholders institutional support will also be conducted in 2019. Plans will also begin within the next 24 months to undertake a detailed employment systems review. *Indicators: Updated self-identification form is being utilized and is informing hiring practices; CRC hiring SOP utilized in next nomination; comparative review completed; employment systems review planning underway.*
5. A new webpage will be created to demonstrate the importance of promoting EDI and provide the UNBC community with easy access to our EDI Action Plan, additional information and a new form for self-identification. An email campaign and a series of engagement sessions will be used to advertise and promote the new webpage and EDI Action Plan, educate the community about the importance of self-identification and begin the consultation needed to revise and improve the plan. *Indicators: Number of individuals that visit website; number of individuals that attend meetings and engagement sessions; number of individuals that self-identify.*
6. A checklist of action items will be created and referred to on a bi-weekly basis by both the Senior HR Consultant and the delegated Office of Research staff member(s) to ensure that progress is being made. Monthly updates will be provided to the Directors of Research and Human Resources. Progress on implementation will be reported to both the EDI working committee and the CRC committee on a quarterly and biannual basis respectively. Further mechanisms for monitoring and measurement will be determined by the EDI working committee. *Indicators: Meeting of EDI committee; number of EDI action plan progress reports completed; Action plans created to address reports.*

The preceding objectives, actions and indicators will guide UNBC in understanding and addressing any

disadvantages identified as being experienced by individuals in the FDG's. Given the unique challenges UNBC faces (e.g. size, capacity, geographic location, etc.), the EDI working committee will connect with international organizations, professional societies and associations of designated groups (e.g., Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology; Pride at Work Canada), as well as relevant industry and research organizations (e.g., Aboriginal Professional Association of Canada, Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women) to enhance our recruitment and retention strategies in an effort to address any inequities.

### **Management of Canada Research Chair Allocations**

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UNBC currently has a Canada Research Chair Committee comprised of the following members: Vice-President of Research and Graduate Programs, Director, Office of Research, 3 Deans, Provost and Vice-President Academic, FRBC / Endowed Research Chair in Landscape Ecology, 2 Canada Research Chairs and UNBC's Equity Officer equivalent. The CRC Committee Chair will ensure that the four designated groups (FDGs) will be represented on the CRC Committee by working with the new EDI Working committee to develop a strategy for recruitment. This will include surveying academic programs requesting individuals to self-identify, and also express their interest to serve on the Committee. This committee is responsible for the selection of UNBC's Canada Research Chairs. All members of this committee will be provided with mandatory equity training, which will include instruction on how to recognize and combat unconscious, implicit, overt, and prejudicial bias, as well as any other kinds of bias.

This committee will meet at a minimum of once per year to review UNBC's equity and diversity targets to ensure UNBC addresses the underrepresentation of members of the FDGs among their chairholders. This data will be submitted in an annual report to the *Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat* so the program can monitor the UNBC's progress toward meeting our established targets.

UNBC's policies and processes for the recruitment of Canada Research Chairholders includes safeguards that are in place to ensure that these practices are open and transparent. UNBC's *Equity in Employment Policy*, states:

*The fundamental consideration for recruitment and retention of faculty and staff at the University of Northern British Columbia is individual achievement and merit. Consistent with this principle, the University will ensure that equal opportunity is afforded to all who seek employment at the University and that all faculty and staff are treated equitably. The University of Northern British Columbia will establish a program of employment equity to ensure the maintenance of a fair and equitable workplace.*

To ensure that both this policy and the Faculty Collective Agreement are adhered to, the Human Resource Consultant - Faculty Relations will work alongside the Office of Research to advise and provide a safeguard during the CRC selection process. According to Article 11 Employment Equity of the Faculty Collective Agreement "...the best qualified person shall always be recommended for appointment. However, where the qualifications of the leading candidates for appointment are substantially equal, and one or more is from a designated group or groups for which under-representation has been found to exist, the most qualified candidate from an under-represented group shall be deemed the best qualified and shall be recommended for appointment." UNBC policy also requires that a review of the selection process be completed when the short list does not have representation from the designated groups. The hiring committee must also report on the search process with the number of female and self-identified applicants included. This report is to be reviewed by the responsible Dean prior to recommending any formal offer of appointment and it can be recommended to extend the competition deadline.

UNBC manages its allocation of chairs through the CRC Committee. The positions listed above for the CRC

Committee Membership inform the Vice-President Research, who is ultimately responsible for the decisions made. UNBC's decision making process for determining in which faculty/department/research area to allocate its chair positions, includes an open call for nominations that goes out to the research community. The CRC Committee then discusses the nominations received and makes a decision based on the following Key Principles:

1. Alignment with UNBC's Strategic Research Vision
2. Consideration of linkages to existing Faculty position
3. Synergy with existing UNBC Chairs/research programs

The CRC Committee, along with the appropriate institutional units, decides on the following, which are ultimately approved by the Vice-President Research:

- the decision making process for how the institution chooses to use the corridor of flexibility in managing its allocation of chairs;
- the decision making process and criteria used to decide whether Tier 2 and Tier 1 chairholders will be submitted for renewal;
- the process and criteria used for deciding whether to **advance** individuals from a Tier 2 chair to a Tier 1 chair;
- the process and criteria used for deciding which chairholder(s) will be 'phased-out' in the case where the institution loses a chair due to the re-allocation process;
- the decision making process for deciding what level of support is provided to chairholders (e.g. protected time for research, salary and benefits, additional research funds, office space, mentoring, administrative support, equipment, etc.). In addition to the Vice-President Research, Department Chairs and Deans will also be involved in the decisions made under this category;
- measures taken to ensure that individuals from the FDGs are not disadvantaged in negotiations related to institutional support (salary, research stipend, protected time for research, lab space, etc.);
- measures to ensure that individuals from the FDGs are not disadvantaged when applying to a chair position in cases where they have career gaps (for reasons related to parental or health related leaves or for the care and nurturing of family members); and
- training and development activities related to unconscious bias, equity, diversity and inclusion for administrators and faculty who are involved in the recruitment and nomination process for chair positions (acknowledging that it has been shown that unconscious bias can have adverse unintended negative impacts on the overall success/career of individuals - especially those from the FDGs).
- UNBC will implement standardized, bias-conscious, and equity-audited assessment criteria/grids to be used in chair selection/interviewing. This will be done in alignment with the recommendations of the Canadian Human Rights Commission report on Employment Systems Review on Employment Equity. Specifically, Part 4: Assessing Compliance.

The current CRC committee will meet in January of 2019. During this meeting the processes and measures outlined above will be discussed and formalized. Criteria and safeguards will be determined to ensure that equitable decision making processes are followed. As we move forward, the CRC Committee will also work to address any equity gaps identified following the target-setting exercise in the next section.

### **UNBC Equity Targets and Collection of equity and Diversity Data**

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UNBC currently holds 7 Canada Research Chair positions, with one Canada Research Chair position available.

Using the Target-Setting Tool, UNBC’s equity targets are listed below:

<b>SECTION I - Data Entry</b>	
<b>INPUT DATA</b>	<b>Number of active Chairs</b>
<b>Chairs by agency</b>	
NSERC	2
CIHR	3
SSHRC	2
<b>Total active Chairs</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chairs who are members of the designated groups</b>	
Women	4
Visible minorities	0
Persons with disabilities	0
Aboriginal Peoples	0

<b>SECTION II - Results</b>				
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Occupancy</b>	<b>Gap</b>	<b>Gap (# of Chairs)*</b>
Women	34%	57%	no gap	no gap
Visible minorities	15%	0%	15.0%	1
Persons with disabilities	4%	0%	4.0%	N/A
Aboriginal Peoples	1%	0%	1.0%	N/A

\* If the number of Chairs needed to fill the gap is less than 0.5, the cell indicates N/A

Currently UNBC collects data on the FDGs when applicants apply to UNBC. It is recognized that additional strategies are needed for encouraging individuals to self-identify once they are successful and become more secure in their appointment. UNBC’s self-identification form has been revised since the last iteration of this plan (see appendix) and is under further review, with the possibility of an on-line form being implemented. Further, consultation with institutions in Ontario that have had success implementing new strategies for self-identification will be done. We will also enhance our web presence to both encourage and educate our University community on self-identification. (Note: we will look at examples such as Ryerson to guide us in this exercise <https://www.ryerson.ca/diversity-self-id/employees/why-self-identify/>).

In an effort to increase representation of the FDGs within UNBC’s CRC pool, special recruiting efforts will include establishing and maintaining relationships with pool-enlargement caucuses, research groups, among others, to seek their assistance in identifying qualified candidates.

### **Retention and Inclusivity**

UNBC provides a supportive and inclusive workplace for all chairholders and other faculty (including those from the FDGs) and this is monitored (e.g. survey of chairholders/faculty re: diversity and inclusion, monitoring why chairs and faculty leave) through provisions in the Faculty Agreement that guides the recruitment process and also the Respect in the Workplace Policy. Further, exit surveys are used to monitor why faculty leave the institution.

The current process by which UNBC manages complaints from its chairholders/faculty related to equity is done following an investigation process using trained investigators. A review of this process is planned for 2019 in order to address the concerns raised in the feedback already received from the CRC program.

- a. Upon receipt of a concern, the Vice-President, and/or the Equity Officer will conduct an inquiry to establish whether the concern is real or perceived and whether an investigation is warranted. A responsible concern is one that is made in good faith, and is based on matters which have not been the subject of a previous allegation. As part of the inquiry, the Vice-President may do any or all of the following:
  - i. inquire into the concern further;
  - ii. request that the Humans Resources department of the University review the concern, or some aspect of the concern, and report to the Vice-President; and
  - iii. appoint an individual(s) to review the concern, or some aspect of the concern, and report to the Vice-President.
- b. At the conclusion of the inquiry, the Vice-President may do any or all of the following:
  - i. dismiss the concern, or some aspect of the concern;
  - ii. appoint an Investigative Committee to investigate the concern, or some aspect of the concern; and
  - iii. take such other action as the Vice-President deems appropriate, including referring the matter to another appropriate University office.
- c. At the conclusion of the inquiry, the Vice-President will inform the respondent and other parties, where necessary in writing as to whether or not the University is proceeding with an investigation of the concern. The Vice-President will also normally inform the party who made the concern and, if the party is a UNBC Person, the party's Dean, Director or Department Head.
- d. If the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat (TIPS) was advised of a concern, the Vice-President will also advise the Secretariat as to whether or not the University is proceeding with an investigation of the concern.
- e. The inquiry process will normally be completed within two months of receipt of the allegation.

It is recognized that more detailed and specific measures are necessary to ensure that a supportive and inclusive workplace is indeed provided. UNBC would like to implement more proactive measures to foster an inclusive environment and facilitate retention. Consultation with the UNBC community, including the FDG's, and data from the 2018 Employee Opinion Survey that just closed in October will provide the necessary feedback needed to make informed decisions. A monitoring plan will also be established that ensures progress moving forward.

## Conclusion

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UNBC recognizes the importance of the CRC program requirements regarding equity, diversity and inclusion and will be carefully planning the next CRC nomination to ensure that UNBC's processes align with the new guidelines, thereby providing a model for future hiring practices. UNBC will continually strive for improvement to our EDI Action Plan.

UNBC's equity targets and gaps for each of the FDGs align with the targets outlined by TIPS. More information can be found here: [program's equity target data](#)

Information on UNBC policies that govern the staffing of Canada Research Chair positions at the institution (to be published December 15, 2017, acknowledging that these policies may change as part of the development of the institutional action plan) can be found here: <https://www.unbc.ca/policy>

UNBC's CRCP utilization spreadsheet can be found here: <https://www.unbc.ca/research/research-chairs> This utilization spreadsheet outlines how many chair allocations UNBC has, how many are filled and by which chairholders (with their term start and end dates), type of **flex moves** used and which allocations are available.

The link to the advertisement for all chair position postings for external recruitment processes, which are open to all potential internal and external candidates, will be advertised widely. <https://www.unbc.ca/career-opportunities>

## Contact Information

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For questions or concerns regarding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Public Accountability and Transparency please contact:

Kerry Roberts  
Human Resources Manager  
**Phone:** 250-960-5576  
**Email:** [Kerry.roberts@unbc.ca](mailto:Kerry.roberts@unbc.ca)

For general information, please contact:

Mark Barnes  
Director, Office of Research  
**Phone:** 250-960-5184  
**Email:** [mark.barnes@unbc.ca](mailto:mark.barnes@unbc.ca)

OR

Office of Research  
Charles J. McCaffray Hall ADM-2015  
**Email:** [research@unbc.ca](mailto:research@unbc.ca)  
**Phone:** 250-960-5852  
**Fax:** 250-960-5156

**Appendix**

Please see below UNBC's self-identification form currently under revision. This form is sent to applicants when they first apply for a position at UNBC. An additional on-line form is under development to be used by current employees.

CLEAR FORM



**University of Northern British Columbia  
Statement of Employment Eligibility**

Re: \_\_\_\_\_

In order to facilitate with further consideration of your application for employment for the above noted position, please complete the following information by answering all questions fully, date and sign where indicated below, and return this form within **3 business days** by scan and email or fax:

**Human Resources Department**  
University of Northern British Columbia  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, B.C. V2N 4Z9  
Telephone #: (250) 960-5521 Fax #: (250) 960-5695

**The information requested below will be kept strictly confidential and will not be released outside of the Human Resources Department.**

	Yes	No				
Are you legally entitled to work in Canada in this type of employment? Please check the appropriate category:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Yes</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Yes	No					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
<i>I am a Canadian Citizen</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>I am a Permanent Resident</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>If Other please specify</i> _____						
Are you aware of any reason(s) that would result in your application for bonding to be denied? If yes, please provide the reason(s): _____ <i>Note: This information will only be taken into consideration if your employment at UNBC is for a position that requires bonding.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Have you been convicted for a criminal offense that would restrict you from performing the duties of this position? If yes, please provide the nature of the offense: _____ <i>Note: Answering 'yes' to this question will not necessarily disentitle you to employment at UNBC. Only offenses related to your employment duties will be considered. Please be advised that you may be required to undergo a criminal reference check.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I agree to the University of Northern British Columbia requesting information from my previous employer(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Optional:** The information requested in this section is strictly voluntary and will be used for the purpose of reporting and analyzing information as outlined in the Canada Employment Equity Act and Federal Contractors Program. This information may assist the University in the development of employment equity initiatives and will be treated confidentially to ensure the originator of this information is not identified. Please check the box(s) that apply to you:

**I consider myself:**

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer
Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer	
A person with disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer	
A visible minority	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer	

**Please read carefully:**

I understand that any misrepresentation made by me in connection with this statement and/or resume will be just and sufficient cause for separation from the University of Northern British Columbia.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature of applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(printed name of applicant)