

**Addressing EDI Considerations in
your NSERC Discovery/RTI Application**
September 20, 2022 @ 11:00 am-12:00 pm

With
Andrea Gill, PhD, Research Equity
and Diversity Strategist, Research
Services Office

register: cris.utoronto.ca/event/addressing-edi-considerations-in-your-nserc-discovery-rti-application-sept-20-2022

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Addressing EDI Considerations in Your NSERC Discovery/RTI Application

September 20, 2022 @ 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

- Thank you for joining us, the session will begin shortly
- You are currently placed on mute
- Reminder: this session will be recorded and transcribed



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Addressing EDI Considerations in Your NSERC Discovery/RTI Application

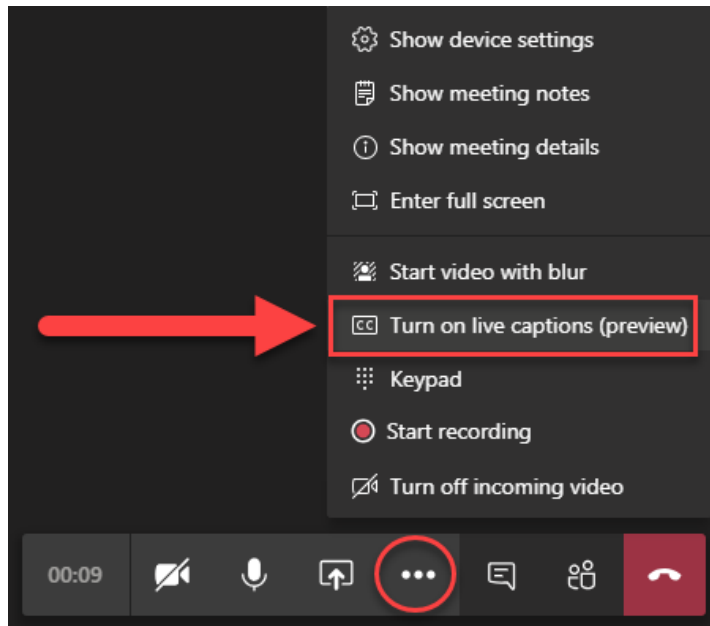
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SPEAKER

Andrea Gill

PhD, Research Equity and Diversity
Strategist, Research Services
Office

Turning captions on and off



- Go to your meeting controls
- Select **More options**  > Turn on/off live captions

Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates.

For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Housekeeping

- This webinar is being recorded & transcribed
- Please mute your audio and turn off your video
- A link to the recording will be sent to all participants after the session
- Presenter slides will also be shared
- We will hold questions until the end
- Please put questions into the chat box



Presented by



Andrea Gill

PhD, Research Equity and Diversity
Strategist, Research Services Office



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NSERC Discovery and Research Tools & Instruments Grants Addressing EDI Considerations

Presented by:

Andrea Gill
Research Equity & Development Strategist

September 20, 2022

AGENDA

- Overview of EDI requirements for NSERC Discovery and Research Tools & Instruments
- EDI definitions and concepts
- EDI in teams and training – concrete practices and common weaknesses
- GBA+ in research design
- Questions

EDI CRITERIA IN YOUR APPLICATION

Discovery Grants

HQP Training Plan:

- Discussion of challenges or barriers to ensuring an inclusive research and training environment
- Consideration of EDI in past and planned HQP training (actions to address these barriers)

Proposal Attachment:

- Consideration of sex, gender, and diversity in the research design, where applicable to the field of research

RTI Grants

Proposal Attachment:

- Consideration of EDI in the rationale of the team composition
- Consideration of EDI in the training of HQP

Demographic data is neither requested nor required to assess EDI in teams and training.

EDI DEFINITIONS

EQUITY

- The process of treating all people fairly
- Policies and decisions that are fair to all and do not disadvantage groups or individuals based on their identity or lived experience

DIVERSITY

- The demographic mix of the community
- The expressions and experience of different groups based on gender identity, ethno-racial identity, disability, sexual orientation, Indigeneity, etc.

INCLUSION

- The creation of an environment where everyone is treated equitably and with respect, and feels welcome
- Everyone can access opportunities and reach their full potential

EDI goes beyond a counting or box-checking exercise

OTHER KEY DEFINITIONS

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

- Systems, policies or practices that result in some individuals from under-represented groups being excluded or receiving unequal access
- These barriers can be unintentional or “invisible”

INTERSECTIONALITY

- The interconnected nature of social categorizations (race, gender, sexuality, Indigeneity, and disability)
- The recognition that there are overlapping systems of discrimination or marginalization

GBA+

- Gender-based analysis plus
- The consideration of sex, gender, and other identity factors in research design and methods, data collection and analysis, and knowledge mobilization

Advancing EDI in research reduces systemic barriers, furthers excellence in research and innovation, and makes research more usable/socially relevant.

EXAMPLES OF SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

- **Unconscious bias in recruitment/peer review**
 - Implicit assumptions or mental shortcuts
 - Research studies show how biases disadvantage members of under-represented groups
- **Narrow definitions of excellence**
 - Over-reliance on publication numbers/metrics; undervaluing of emerging methods and approaches
- **Lack of access to mentors and sponsors**
- **The “minority tax”**
 - Under-represented faculty take on a disproportionate share of EDI work, mentorship
- **Inequitable distribution of opportunities**
 - Women are under-represented in STEM publications, are less likely to be invited to collaborate
- **Inaccessible or unwelcoming events and spaces**

INVISIBLE OR UNINTENTIONAL BARRIERS

Example of a post-doctoral fellowship selection process

Applicants submit a cover letter, a statement of research, and a list of publications, and arrange for three reference letters. Faculty members in the department also identify excellent candidates before the application deadline and encourage them to apply and/or invite them to give a talk in the department.

The Selection Committee contacts letter writers (and other senior researchers) to obtain further information about the candidates. The Committee uses this information to reduce the initial pool of applicants (usually 200+) to a long list of about 40 applicants. Committee members then read the entire file of each long-listed applicant and also use the information gathered from the letter writers.

The Committee ranks the applicants, and the Committee Chair makes offers to highly ranked candidates who have either given a talk in or visited the department. Top candidates who have not yet visited are often invited to do so. If a visit is not possible, candidates are offered remote interviews with the Chair of the Selection Committee.

APPLYING AN EQUITY LENS

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These types of practices can allow inequities and biases to creep into adjudication and selection processes

EDI IN RESEARCH TEAMS AND TRAINING

- Avoid broad or generic statements about EDI
 - Go beyond listing/quoting institutional policies
 - Demonstrate knowledge of systemic barriers and commitment to EDI
- Provide **concrete actions** that address barriers
 - Tailor these actions to the context of the research team and discipline
 - Show you will proactively support EDI
 - “Already doing” is better than “will do”
- Try to address recruitment, mentorship/training activities, **and** the inclusive environment
- Do not include identifying personal information or demographic data about team members or trainees (focus on practices and their implementation)
 - You may include information about yourself/lived experience

Describe strategies that are

- Specific
- Intentional
- Ongoing

CONTEXT QUESTIONS

- Are there gaps in representation in the current lab or group/department/in the field in general?
 - If no, is this diversity the result of **intentional** actions, or is the result of chance?
- What are the usual practices for recruitment and research training in your team or discipline?
 - Are these practices fair and consistent?
- Are training and mentorship opportunities equitably distributed? Does everyone have the same access to skills and experience, relative to training level?
- Do all team members and trainees feel welcome, included, and supported in their success?

EDI PRACTICES – TEAM COMPOSITION

- Processes/intentional efforts to assemble a diverse team
- Outreach to networks/prospective team members
- Team members' expertise/experience in EDI
- Team members have experience training/mentoring diverse HQP
- Equity/inclusion are embedded into research activities, training, and decision-making
- Flexibility and accommodation in scheduling



EDI PRACTICES – TRAINEE RECRUITMENT

- Embed equity throughout the recruitment process
- Post opportunities openly and widely and use inclusive language
- Engage in pro-active recruitment, where possible
 - Use targeted venues
 - Encourage diverse candidates to apply
- Establish diverse selection committees, wherever possible
- Ensure that all committee members complete unconscious bias education
 - Move beyond simple “awareness” to self-reflection and course correction



EDI PRACTICES – TRAINEE SELECTION

- Evaluate candidates using pre-determined selection criteria
- Create an evaluation rubric and discuss criteria before opening any applications
- Apply these criteria consistently to all applications
- Base decisions on the application materials
- Take into account career/academic interruptions or non-linear career paths
- Carefully evaluate emerging methodologies or non-traditional scholarship
- Be aware of biases in letters of reference
- Spend sufficient time on each application —biases are most pronounced when we are rushed
- If interviewing, use the same format and ask all candidates the same questions
- Conduct process check-ins with other committee members



EDI PRACTICES – TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP

- Create equitable training and career development opportunities, relative to career stage
 - Opportunities to gain skills, co-publish, present research, network, engage with partners, etc.
 - Track these opportunities
- Develop a team EDI training plan to build capacity
- Create equitable access to mentorship opportunities; distribute mentorship work equitably
- Develop a team mentorship network
- Create mentorship plans/individual development plans with all trainees
- Make use of UofT resources
 - [School of Graduate Studies Supervision Guidelines](#)
 - [Centre for Graduate Mentorship & Supervision](#)



EDI PRACTICES – INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

- Inclusion is **not** a matter of counting under-represented groups
 - A diverse environment is not necessarily inclusive
 - Inclusive environments are supportive, collaborative, professional, respectful, collegial, and value wellness
- Lead by example — model inclusive behaviours
- Adopt a team values statement or code of conduct and share widely
 - Create accountability — show you take concerns seriously
- Establish “core hours” and accommodate flexibility in scheduling
- Organize/host accessible and inclusive events
- Communicate University resources that support EDI, accessibility, and mental health



EDI RESOURCES AT U OF T

Tri-campus Equity Offices

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\) Office](#)
- [Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office](#)
- [Family Care Office](#)
- [Office of Indigenous Initiatives](#)
- [Sexual & Gender Diversity Office](#)

Related and Other Offices

- [UTM Equity & Diversity Office](#)
- [UTSC Equity & Diversity Office](#)
- [Community Safety Office](#)
- [Indigenous Student Services/First Nations House](#)
- [Health & Well-Being Services & Programs](#)
- [Multi-Faith Centre](#)
- [Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre](#)
- Student accessibility services ([St. George](#), [UTM](#), and [UTSC](#))
- Student wellness/counselling centres ([St. George](#), [UTM](#), and [UTSC](#))

COMMON WEAKNESSES

“I believe that equity, diversity, and inclusion are very important to building a research team. I have always sought to uphold these values, and I will continue to do so in my proposed research program. EDI will be considered in any future recruitments to my team and in my training activities. I will put these principles into practice and create a team environment that is equitable and inclusive.”

“I am very committed to EDI: two of my PhD students, Ms. X and Ms. Y, are women, and one of my post-docs, Dr. Z, is a member visible minority. My team will continue to recruit outstanding females and other under-represented trainees. We will also include a woman, Professor Q, on the team’s Leadership Committee.”

“The University of Toronto is committed to equity, diversity, and excellence, and especially welcomes applications from racialized persons/persons of colour, women, Indigenous/Aboriginal Peoples of North America, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ persons, and others who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas. My team will adhere to all University EDI and human resources policies.”

Vagueness
&
lack of
specificity

Counting/
listing
demo-
graphic
info

Restating
University
policies

DIVERSITY/GBA+ IN RESEARCH (NSERC Discovery)

Pulse oximeter

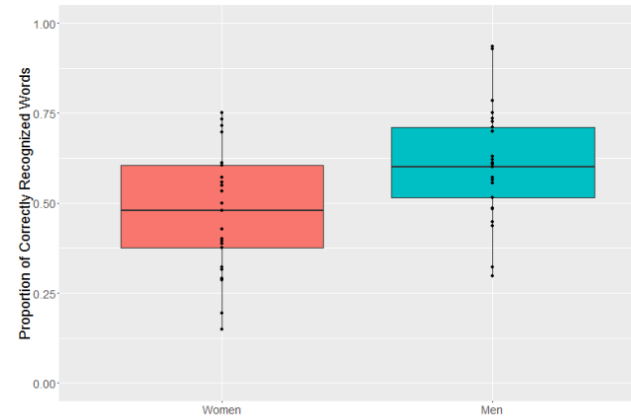
- Overestimate oxygen levels in the blood in patients with darker skin, putting them at risk for organ failure if supplemental oxygen is not provided
- Can also be also inaccurate for women, due to finger size/shape. Black women may experience the highest error rates.

Voice recognition software

- Bias in design means software is more likely to recognize male voices/male speech

The “Reference Man”

- Safety equipment is designed around the average cis man's body
- Occupational research has focused on male-dominated industries



GBA+ – KEY QUESTIONS

- Have sex (biological) or gender (social/cultural) considerations/impacts been taken into account?
- Have race and ethnicity considerations/impacts been taken into account?
- Does this research engage/have an impact on Indigenous peoples or communities?
- Are other intersecting factors (age, disability, economic status, etc.) taken into account?
- If the research is collecting/analyzing population data, can the data be disaggregated by identity factors (race, gender, etc.)?
- Is there diversity in the supporting/secondary literature consulted in the literature review?
- Have diversity considerations been addressed regarding knowledge users, potential end users, the communication of results, etc.?

DIVERSITY IN RESEARCH DESIGN – NSE EXAMPLE

- **Robotics and Haptic Technology**

- The use of touch and haptic feedback in robotics
- Should robotic touch follow human conventions? How does gender figure into human touch?
- Studies include men, women, and gender-fluid individuals
- Robots configured by different genders
- Data disaggregated and results analyzed by gender

Sources: [Gendered Innovations](#) and [Intersectional Design](#)

RESOURCES/CONTACT

EDI in Research & Innovation website – [Resources page](#)

- VPRI handbook: [Addressing EDI in Your Research Funding Application \(Research Teams and the Training of Highly Qualified Personnel\)](#)
- External resources (EDI in Teams and Training, Diversity in Research Design)
- Further reading on systemic barriers




Unconscious Bias Education Modules (TIDE)

- <https://faculty.utoronto.ca/academic-administrators/advancing-equity-and-inclusion/>

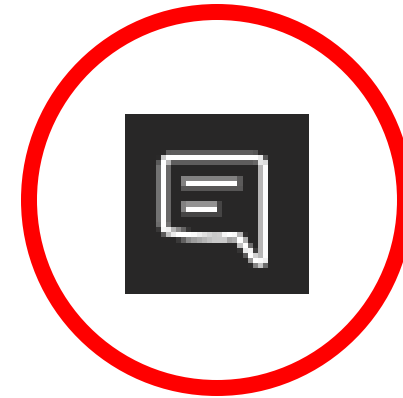
RSO Contact

- Andrea Gill, Research Equity & Development Strategist, amk.gill@utoronto.ca

Q & A – How to ask questions

- Please use the chat
- Click on the  icon in the bottom menu to bring up the Meeting Chat pop-out window
- Type your question and hit Enter on your keyboard or click the  button to submit.
- We will **not** be using the “Raise your hand”  feature.

Please note: You may be asked to Unmute to clarify your question



Upcoming Event:

**Let's Talk International
Partnerships Fireside Chats –
International SOS**

**Date: Sep. 29, 2022
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm**



**Let's Talk
International
Partnerships**

*A Fireside Chat with the Office of
the Vice-President, International*

Sept. 29, 2022

International SOS

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

<https://cris.utoronto.ca/recurring/international-chats/>

Online Event

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<https://cris.utoronto.ca/rdf/programs/>

Upcoming Event:

**In Conversation: Intro to
EDIRI at U of T**

**Date: Sept. 21, 2022
10:30 am - 11:30 am**

In Conversation with...Dr. Nicole Kaniki & Dr. Barbara Fallon

VISITING TOPICS IN EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION



Intro to EDIRI at U Of T



September 21, 2022
@ 10:30 am-11:30 am



Session Info & Registration:
[cris.utoronto.ca/event/in-
conversation-
intro-to-ediri-at-u-of-t-sept-21-2022](https://cris.utoronto.ca/event/in-conversation-intro-to-ediri-at-u-of-t-sept-21-2022)



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<https://cris.utoronto.ca/rdf/programs/>



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Thank you!

- A link to the recording, presenter slides, and feedback form will be sent out after the session
- Follow-up questions can be addressed to amk.gill@utoronto.ca

