



# Annual Report of The Vice Provost – Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, And Anti-Racism.

SEPTEMBER 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 2022 – YEAR 1.

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## INTRODUCTION

The office of the Vice Provost Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (EDI-AR) was opened on August 27, 2021, within the Vice President and Provost's Suite. The portfolio was staffed by the Vice Provost alone until May 2022 when a Program Manager was contractually hired for one year. Since 2021, the portfolio has received part-time Executive Assistant support from various individuals. Graduate students have provided significant support to help maintain the portfolio's daily operations. Despite the small staff compliment, personnel have been busy responding to requests from across the university. The university community's demonstrated excitement for the potential contribution of the EDI-AR portfolio and highlighted gaps in EDI-AR infrastructure which resulted in the Office of the Vice Provost EDI-AR, been inundated with requests for support, training, skills development, and resources.

One of the key strategic plans of this portfolio is to encourage and model pan university cultures across all Memorial University's campuses while acknowledging the uniqueness, independence, and differences within and among different entities. To this end, the Vice Provost have been meeting with campus leaders, including students and senior administrators as well as working from each campus one to two days per month. In addition, projects, events, and activities originating from within the portfolio is comprised of membership from across all campuses.

## LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT

The two members of the portfolio is involved in over 30 committee and working groups across the university and have contributed to over 50 activities and programs some of which are discussed briefly and/or listed in Tables 1 and 2.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING:** Beginning March 2022, members of this team have received skills development pertaining to strategic planning, and education to increase their knowledge and understanding of various EDI-AR related subject matters. A wide consultation strategy, (e.g., survey and focus groups) has been implemented to hear feedback from the Memorial University communities about current EDI-AR successes, opportunities, and vision for Memorial. The Team provided input to the EDI-AR survey that was distributed institutionally across all campuses and have contributed to notetaking and facilitating of 35 consultations.

**EDI-AR ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** The committee will provide advice and recommendation to the office of the Vice Provost and the Strategic Planning Team as well as write the Employment Equity Report for submission to the President's Advisory Team.

**DIGITAL RESOURCE:** In partnership with the Queen Elizabeth II Library, a process for having digital EDI-AR resources accessible is ongoing with anticipation of having a basic searchable database ready by summer 2023.

**DATA ACQUISITION:** Knowing the university constituents is important for program planning and development. Work is underway to implement a student census to collect standardized data like other post-secondary institutions across Canada have done. Strategies are also being developed to collect employee data.

**CONFERENCE:** Initial plans are in place to host an international EDI-AR conference at Memorial University in Summer 2023. A small amount of funds has been attained and further funds are being sought to finance the conference, reduce cost to participants and increase access.

**RESEARCH:** In partnership with multidisciplinary scholars and community-based partners, the portfolio has received a small research grant to explore accessibility through a racial justice lens across Memorial University. This research is at the beginning stages.

**PRESIDENTIAL RENAMING TASKFORCE:** The Taskforce is reviewing the names of internal streets, buildings, schools, faculties, awards, etc. across Memorial University. A report will be provided to the president at the end of the review. Administrative supports have been provided to support the work of the Taskforce.

**PRESIDENTIAL ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE:** This Taskforce will conduct an anti-racism scan across Memorial University. Administrative supports will be provided to support the work of this Taskforce.

## IMMEDIATE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**EDI-AR STRATEGIC PLAN:** The strategic planning process will continue with a view to complete consultations with student groups, faculty/units and senior administrators. More than 35 focus group consultations have been held across three campuses with over 400 individuals and an online survey received over 300 responses from staff and faculty. The goal is to finalize consultation and have a draft EDI-AR Strategic Plan by Fall 2023.

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:** Memorial University urgently requires an overarching policy to guide institutional behaviors. When the Policy Analyst is hired, the individual will focus on building on work already done with respect to reviewing, drafting, and consulting the university community on a proposed human rights policy with an estimated date of implementation with a 12-month period. Other institutional policies related to EDI-AR, including the Respectful Workplace Policy, will be reviewed.

**SCARBOROUGH CHARTER:** Memorial University became a signatory to the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education (the Charter). The Charter outlines specific institutional responsibilities that each signatory is expected to accomplish including Black cluster hires, mentorship of Black faculty, staff and students and addressing anti-Black racism in research, hiring and promotion. The Anti-Black Racism Taskforce and Working Group will be formed in accordance with the expectations of the Charter. Funds will be sought through a competitive application process to support this work.

## Staffing and Personnel

There are three ongoing search processes to fill positions for a full-time Executive Assistant, a six-month contractual Communications Advisor, and a six-month Policy Analyst. It is anticipated that a full-time Communications Advisor will be available to assume responsibilities for the portfolio’s marketing and communications including building and populating the website and creating an EDI-AR public presence within and external to Memorial University. In addition, Research Initiatives and Services and Human Resources have agreed to share the Equity Diversity and Inclusion Research Officer (Canada Research Chair Program) and the Employment Equity Officer with the EDI-AR portfolio to support its work.

## Physical Infrastructure

Discussions of the portfolio’s space requirement has been ongoing since September 2021. A formal request was made to the Space Committee in July 2022. The Space Committee approved a modest, self-contained, dedicated space for the portfolio in the Bruneau Centre. Occupancy is anticipated to be relatively soon with cosmetic renovations expected to be completed during occupancy.

**Table 1: Contributions and priorities**

EVENTS	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS EVENTS	INVITED PRESENTATIONS	PAN UNIVERSITY VISITS	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
BLACK HISTORY AND LIBERATION MONTH	DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH	CITIZENSHIP CANADA (ATLANTIC REGION)	TWO VISITS TO GRENFELL CAMPUS	STRATEGIC PLAN
WOMEN’S DAY	ATLANTIC BLACK POLICY CONFERENCE	FACULTY OF MEDICINE	ONE VISIT TO LABRADOR CAMPUS	HUMAN RIGHTS AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY
PRIDE MONTH	GARDNER CENTRE	CITY OF ST. JOHN’S	SEVERAL VISITS TO MARINE INSTITUTE	SCARBOROUGH CHARTER ON ANTI-BLACK RACISM AND BLACK INCLUSION
THREE COMMUNITY TABLE TALKS	INCLUSION NL	KEYNOTE CITL ANNUAL CONFERENCE	ONE VIRTUAL MEETING WITH HARLOW CAMPUS	OFFICE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**Table 2: Requested supports and Committee membership**

MOST REQUESTED SERVICES	MOST REQUESTED DIRECT SUPPORT	COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR	COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP	WORKING GROUPS
EDUCATION, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING	REFERENCES AND SUPPORT LETTERS	EDI-AR ADVISORY COMMITTEE	CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISING PRIORITY	DEANS COUNCIL'S EDI WORKING GROUP
DOCUMENT EDIT, FEEDBACK, REVIEW, LANGUAGE	SYSTEMIC RACISM	EDI-AR DATA ACQUISITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE	RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE	EDI-AR DATA ACQUISITION WORKING GROUP
RESOURCES, COURSES LITERATURE, VIDEOS	ANTI-BLACK RACISM	SCARBOROUGH CHARTER TASKFORCE	EDI RESEARCH STRATEGY FRAMEWORK	
INVITATION TO ATTEND EVENTS	ACCESSIBILITY	RENAMING TASKFORCE	PEER ADVISORY (GROUP) ON INDIGENOUS RESEARCH RELATIONSHIPS (PAIRR)	
PRESENTATION, TALKS, WORKSHOPS	ENDORSEMENTS	PRESIDENTIAL ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE	ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE	

## CONCLUSION

The Vice Provost EDI-AR's portfolio has been well received across many areas within and outside of the university. There is excitement and anticipation coupled with a growing demand that has quickly outpaced the portfolio's staffing capacity. Nonetheless, numerous successful partnerships and sustaining collaborative relationships have been forged. Involvement in new and continuing projects, as well as providing leadership in EDI-AR matters university-wide is a basic function of the portfolio. Long-term, sustainable, increased staffing will provide the necessary capacity to position the Vice Provost to carry out Memorial University's EDI-AR mandate timely and successfully.