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## NEW FRONTIERS IN RESEARCH FUND SPECIAL CALL

### Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Tips & Resources

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#### OVERVIEW

NFRF Special Call applications must demonstrate the team's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). This EDI tips and resources document is offered in addition to the [2022 Special Call Full Application Guide](#), the [NFRF guide to Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research](#), and the [merit indicators](#), and it is not intended to replace a careful reading of those materials.

#### General Tips for Addressing EDI

- If this is your first time addressing EDI criteria in a research funding application, you are encouraged to consult the [EDI in Research & Innovation website](#), including the introductory videos available on the [University resources page](#).
- **Do not simply copy and paste** text from this document into your application. Please tailor and customize these suggestions to fit the EDI context that is specific to your research team or research area(s). You are also encouraged to individualize the text to reflect team members' past experience in recruitment, mentoring, and training.
- Structure the content of the EDI section around the [merit indicators](#), directly addressing the points in the "Pass" column.
- Per the [full application instructions](#), applicants **must not** include any personal/demographic information about team members or trainees in the EDI section. The focus is on the team's commitment to EDI, demonstrated by concrete plans and actions, not its demographic profile.

#### ANALYSIS OF CONTEXT (maximum 2,500 characters)

This part of your Special Call application must describe the EDI context of team, focusing on the specific circumstances or EDI challenges related to the team members, trainees, and/or the research disciplines.

- You might start by asking the following questions (adapted from [this resource](#) from WISE Atlantic/CFSG):
  - Is there diversity in the current team, or teams in the relevant research fields in general?
  - If no, what are some of the key explanations? What changes might be needed?
  - If yes, is this diversity the result of intentional actions, or of chance? What can teams do to more **intentionally** engage and support members of under-represented groups?
  - What are the usual practices for recruitment and research training in your team or research disciplines? Are these practices fair and consistent?
  - Do all team members and trainees feel included and supported in their success? Why or why not? What more could be done to proactively foster a sense of belonging?
- When thinking about this context, point to **specific** systemic barriers and structural biases. For example, you could discuss some of the following barriers, as relevant:
  - The impact of unconscious bias in recruitment/hiring and peer review

- The effects of the research climate and culture on members of under-represented groups
  - A lack of role models/mentors for students, trainees, and junior faculty members from under-represented groups
  - Inequitable distribution of funding, mentoring, and training opportunities
  - Lack of access to informal networks in the research community
  - Physical and sensory experienced by researchers with disabilities
  - Disproportionate service burdens faced by under-represented faculty members
  - Narrow definitions of excellence that undervalue emerging areas of research or non-traditional scholarship
  - The disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 on women and other under-represented groups
- Include some level of detail and analysis when discussing the barriers, describing how their impacts in the research area(s). For more information on structural biases and barriers, please consult the “[Further Reading](#)” page of the EDI in Research & Innovation website.
  - As noted in the [merit indicators](#), the context and the barriers described here must be addressed by the specific actions that you describe in the remainder of the EDI section.
  - Please keep in mind that statistics on representation are not barriers in themselves; describe the policies, practices, and/or structures that underlie this under-representation.
  - Describe the team’s overall commitment to advancing EDI and addressing these barriers. As applicable, discuss the team’s strengths related to EDI. For example, describe team members’ expertise in EDI and their experience in initiatives or leadership activities designed to promote an equitable, diverse, and inclusive research community.

## EDI PRACTICES

In this part of your Special Call application, you will name and describe the best practices that you will adopt for each of the following areas: 1) team composition and recruitment processes; 2) training and development opportunities; and 3) inclusion

For examples of best practices to advance EDI, please consult the VPRI handbook on [Addressing EDI in Your Research Funding Application \(Research Teams and the Training of Highly Qualified Personnel\)](#).

This handbook offers a range of potential practices to support EDI in your research team and HQP training, as well as excerpts from successful funding applications at U of T. Links to institutional resources have been included for your reference and information; it is **not sufficient** to simply state that you will follow an institutional policy or to link to an existing institutional policy or resource.

You are also encouraged to consult the following resources:

- the [NFRF Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research](#)
- the [external resources](#) available on the EDI in Research & Innovation website

These resources are intended to provide you with a wide range of potential practices. Because there are strict character limits in the NFRF EDI form, you will need to **select the particular strategies that are most applicable** to your research team context. At the same time, this list of resources and suggested practices is not exhaustive, and you are encouraged to describe other relevant strategies or resources with which you are familiar.

### Provide the Best Practices (maximum 250 characters for each area)

For each of the three areas (team composition and recruitment, training and development, and inclusion), provide the best practices that your team has adopted/will adopt.

- For each area, identify **at least one concrete practice**. Reviewers will be looking for examples of specific steps and processes.
- Name or list the practice(s) using concise language, providing further description in the “Relevance, Approach, and Expected Impacts” section (see below).
- Each of these specific practices must **address the context and challenges** you have described in the “Analysis of Context” section.

### Provide the Relevance, Approach, and Expected Impacts (maximum 2500 characters for each area)

For each of the three areas (team composition and recruitment, training and development, and inclusion), provide a brief explanation of the best practices you have identified in the preceding section.

- Describe the relevance of these practices to your team. Each of these practices must be **specific to the context of the research team** you have described in the “Analysis of Context” section; be sure to make the connections between the context and the practices clear for the reviewers.
- Describe the implementation of these practices—say how you will carry them out, what specific steps you will take, how you will follow through on these practices over the life of the grant, etc.
- Describe any potential challenges in implementing these practices, as well as plans to mitigate or address these challenges.
- Describe the anticipated impact of these practices in advancing EDI within your team, and include the measures/indicators for assessing this impact.
- When assessing impacts related to recruitment, keep in mind that you will not have access to self-identification information for trainees and team members. Instead of measuring impact by providing demographic information, for example, you could point to the size and breadth of applicant pools or to successful outreach and engagement with prospective trainees/team members.
- Other measures of impact might include the following:
  - Successful completion of EDI team training/education (e.g., number of team members completing EDI education, number of workshops attended, hours of training completed)
  - Equitable delivery of training and development opportunities, relative to career or academic level (hands-on experience, co-publications, conference presentations, mentorships, networking, etc.)
  - Successful execution of mentorship/training plans
  - Effective resolution of concerns/complaints
  - Organization of accessible and inclusive events
  - Increased diversity among invited speakers or presenters

For more information, please consult the VPRI handbook on [Addressing EDI in Your Research Funding Application \(Research Teams and the Training of Highly Qualified Personnel\)](#), which includes guidance on implementing EDI practices on an ongoing basis.