

People, Equity, & Inclusion Strategy

2025-2028



University
of Windsor

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that the University of Windsor sits on Treaty 2 territory, the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, which includes the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to live, work, and learn on this land, and we respect the long-standing relationships that the Indigenous Nations who have stewarded these lands and waters since time immemorial have to this place.

We acknowledge the historical and ongoing injustices of colonialism and neocolonialism and commit to actively working towards Truth and Reconciliation. This includes a commitment to ongoing education and critical reflection to challenge and dismantle colonial legacies.



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Throughout this document, we use the following initialisms:
EDI – Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion
PE&I – People, Equity, & Inclusion

This document is available in an alternate format upon request.

Message from the Vice-President, People, Equity, & Inclusion

Dear colleagues, students, and friends:

I am pleased to share with you the University of Windsor's inaugural People, Equity, and Inclusion (PE&I) Strategy.

This strategy is aligned with UWindsor's Aspire strategic plan, which reaffirms the University's commitment to its people. Aspire provides the foundation for the PE&I Strategy, serving as a blueprint to foster a more equitable, inclusive, and healthy environment in which to work, innovate, and learn.

Institutional commitment, individual effort, and shared responsibility are essential to achieving transformative change. Therefore, this strategy provides a framework for areas across the University to embed equity, diversity, and inclusion in their own strategic and operational plans.

Recognizing the importance of Indigenization and Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Windsor, a separate Indigenous Plan is being drafted, led by the Senior Advisor to the President on Indigenous Relations and Outreach. The PE&I Strategy also acknowledges that being an anti-racist institution means engaging in active, intentional, and sustained efforts to address the wide-ranging harms of racism on our campus to bring about racial justice. A dedicated Anti-Racism Strategy that builds from the PE&I Strategy will be released in early 2025.

The development of the PE&I Strategy relied on data gathered by the University over the last several years through various processes and consultations, including the Charles C. Smith Report, Anti-Black Racism Task Force Report and Implementation Plan, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Reports (HESA), Employee Engagement Survey (2022) (including key actions and outcomes emerging from the work of the Engagement Action Group), and the Employee Mental Health Strategy.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Consultative Working Group (Appendix C), the members of the People, Equity, and Inclusion Division, and all who provided feedback at various stages of this strategy's development for your guidance, insights, and contributions.

As you review this document, I invite you to refer to Appendix B for working definitions of key terms, acknowledging that language and interpretations can change depending on context and lived experience.

The journey to achieve our vision, to be a place where every member of the campus community feels welcomed, included, valued, and can thrive, requires all of us to work together. By listening to diverse perspectives, amplifying marginalized voices, and intentionally embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion into all aspects of the University, we can achieve authentic and meaningful transformation.

I invite you to join us in co-creating a more inclusive, equitable, and people-centred organization.

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'Clinton Beckford', written in a cursive style.

Clinton Beckford, PhD (he/him)
Vice-President, People, Equity, & Inclusion

Strategy Development

The People, Equity, and Inclusion Consultative Working Group (Appendix C) was established in Spring 2024 to provide guidance and advice throughout the strategy development process.

Over the past several years, the University has carried out various consultations and processes, resulting in the Charles C. Smith Report, Anti-Black Racism Task Force Report and Implementation Plan, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Reports (HESA), Employee Engagement Survey (2022) (including key actions and outcomes emerging from the work of the Engagement Action Group), and the Employee Mental Health Strategy. A review of these documents, along with the insights from the PE&I Strategy Consultative Working Group and members of the People, Equity, and Inclusion Division, resulted in the identification of potential opportunities and areas for improvement.

A thematic analysis of this information facilitated the development of a clear **Vision** for the future, a **Purpose Statement**, and **five Guiding Principles** as well as **strategic priorities, goals, and actions** for achieving this Vision.

At various stages of the strategy development process, we engaged the Consultative Working Group, the People, Equity, and Inclusion Division, the EDID Senate Subcommittee, senior leaders, and the broader campus community, whose valuable feedback helped refine the strategy.



Strategy At-a-Glance

The People, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy is grounded on the University's strategic plan *Aspire*. The Purpose, Vision, and Guiding Principles of the PE&I Strategy are in alignment with *Aspire*'s Mission, Vision, and Values, as outlined in Appendix A of this document.

The PE&I Strategy identifies seven strategic priorities and forty corresponding actions to be implemented over the period of January 2025 through December 2028.

The *Aspire* strategic plan reaffirms the University's commitment to its people. The successful implementation of the strategic actions outlined in this document will foster a stronger sense of belonging among campus community members, enhancing the experience for both employees and students.



Purpose, Vision, & Guiding Principles

Purpose

Establish a strategic framework to foster a more equitable, inclusive, and healthy environment to work, innovate, and learn.

Vision

We aim to be a place where every member of the campus community feels welcomed, included, valued, and able to thrive in tangible, meaningful, and authentic ways.

Guiding Principles

The principles outlined below will guide the strategy implementation. They are key to enabling our success.

Note: "We" refers to the campus community, including leaders, faculty, staff, and students.

Diverse Voices

We listen to, value, and elevate diverse perspectives and marginalized voices to achieve impactful change.

Shared Responsibility

We share in the responsibility to achieve lasting systemic change.

Collaboration

We foster collaboration grounded on empathy, compassion, integrity, humility, and respect.

Intentional Approach

We intentionally embed EDI principles into all aspects of the University to shift systems and culture beyond performative actions.

Transparency and Accountability

We commit to flexibility, responsiveness, transparency, and integrity to strengthen trust, build credibility, and create sustainable change.

Strategic Priorities

1

Equity-Related Data Collection,
Use, & Disclosure

2

Teaching, Research,
& the Student Experience

3

Professional
Development

4

Employee Experience
& Workplace Culture

5

Leadership
& Governance

6

Community
Partnerships

7

Institutional Infrastructure
& Accountability

1

Equity-Related Data Collection, Use, & Disclosure

Strategic Goal

Enhance the collection and sharing of qualitative and quantitative equity-related data to support planning and decision-making.

Strategic Actions

- 1.1 Align with and implement the University's Data Strategy, focusing on data initiatives related to equity, diversity, and inclusion and respecting Indigenous data sovereignty.
- 1.2 Make equity-related disaggregated data readily available to the University community to inform short- and long-term plans and monitor progress towards EDI-related goals.
- 1.3 Develop standardized EDI-related questions, including self-identification questions, to enable consistent collection of data.
- 1.4 Continue promoting the Student Self-Identification Survey.
- 1.5 Develop a knowledge mobilization strategy to effectively utilize student self-identification survey data to enhance student supports.

Aspire strategic priority alignment

- Establish and Implement an Institutional Data Strategy (foundational commitment)

2

Teaching, Research, & the Student Experience

Strategic Goal

Advance inclusive excellence in teaching, creative activity, research, and the student experience.

Strategic Actions

- 2.1 Provide resources and supports to faculty and academic units to enhance their capacity to practice inclusive/anti-oppressive and critical pedagogies.
- 2.2 Embed EDI principles into the research and creative activity ecosystem to foster a more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and supportive research culture.
- 2.3 Implement strategies to ensure experiential, work-integrated, and research-focused learning opportunities are equitable, inclusive, and safe.
- 2.4 Review biannually the student non-academic misconduct policies, procedures, and structures to ensure due process, procedural fairness, and a focus on restorative justice.
- 2.5 Embed EDI principles into student/customer services and processes to enhance service delivery and satisfaction.

Aspire strategic priority alignment

- Becoming an Increasingly Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, and Just University
- Advancing Bold, Impactful Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

3

Professional Development

Strategic Goal

Build the capacity of our campus community to foster a welcoming, inclusive, and healthy working and learning environment.

Strategic Actions

- 3.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive equity and anti-oppression education and training framework.
- 3.2 Continue the implementation of educational and awareness-raising related actions outlined in the [Anti-Black Racism Task Force Report \(2021\)](#) and [Employee Mental Health Strategy \(2023\)](#).
- 3.3 Establish coaching, mentoring, and other programs to support career/professional growth, including tailored opportunities for equity-deserving groups.
- 3.4 Create resources/tools to address, mitigate, and redress systemic discrimination and bias.

Aspire strategic priority alignment

- Fostering an Engaged, Healthy, Safe, and Environmentally Sustainable Campus
- Ensure that Faculty and Staff Have the Skills and Support to Maximize Impact, Growth, and Engagement (foundational commitment)
- Advancing the Journey toward Truth and Reconciliation

4

Employee Experience & Workplace Culture

Strategic Goal

Attract, engage, and retain outstanding faculty and staff and create a more welcoming and healthy work environment in which all employees can thrive.

Strategic Actions

- 4.1 Establish a comprehensive conflict-resolution program and structure to resolve interpersonal conflicts inclusive of informal facilitated conversations, mediation, conflict coaching and traditional Indigenous conflict resolution methods.
- 4.2 Continue the implementation of the Employee Mental Health Strategy (2023) and the Employee Engagement Survey Action Group recommendations (2022).
- 4.3 Implement a campus mental health and well-being structure to support student and employee mental health and well-being.
- 4.4 Conduct the Employee Engagement Survey every 2-3 years to measure progress.
- 4.5 Continue the transformation of Human Resources related structures and policies as outlined in the EDI review (2023).
- 4.6 Establish a Human Resources plan that embeds equity, diversity, and inclusion practices into the employee life cycle (attraction, recruitment, onboarding, retention, development, separation/retirement) and positions the University strategically to meet current and future talent needs.
- 4.7 Create and implement a comprehensive communication strategy to promote our shared responsibility for creating a respectful workplace, highlighting relevant institutional policies and connecting employees to resources and supports.
- 4.8 Expand opportunities to recognize and celebrate the work of equity-deserving groups.
- 4.9 Meet requirements to be designated an Age-Friendly University and create an action plan to meet the University's commitments under the Okanagan Charter.

Aspire strategic priority alignment

- Becoming an Increasingly Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, and Just University
- Fostering an Engaged, Healthy, Safe, and Environmentally Sustainable Campus
- Ensure that Faculty and Staff Have the Skills and Support to Maximize Impact, Growth, and Engagement (foundational commitment)

5

Leadership & Governance

Strategic Goal

Enhance the capacity of leaders to embed EDI principles and a people-centric approach into the fabric of the University and drive transformative change.

Strategic Actions

- 5.1 Establish a leadership competency framework and embed these competencies into talent management practices (recruitment, hiring, development, and goal setting/performance).
- 5.2 Design and implement leadership development initiatives and resources to enhance the capacity of leaders to model inclusive practices, foster employee engagement, facilitate change management, and create a psychologically healthy and safe workplace culture.
- 5.3 Implement a robust succession-planning program for leadership and other risk-sensitive positions.
- 5.4 Develop and implement a plan to enhance the capacity of the Board of Governors and Senate to support lasting systems and culture change.
- 5.5 Identify concrete actions to increase the representation of equity-deserving groups in senior leadership and governance structures (Senate, Board of Governors, and committees) as per the 50-30 Challenge goals.
- 5.6 Embed EDI accountabilities and competencies into leadership and supervisory roles.

Aspire strategic priority alignment

- Becoming an Increasingly Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, and Just University
- Fostering an Engaged, Healthy, Safe, and Environmentally Sustainable Campus
- Ensure that Faculty and Staff Have the Skills and Support to Maximize Impact, Growth, and Engagement (foundational commitment)



Community Partnerships

Strategic Goal

Build and nurture intentional, reciprocal, and collaborative community partnerships.

Strategic Actions

- 6.1** Embed EDI principles into all institutional partnerships and establish a framework/structure to nurture, coordinate, and sustain partnerships with the external community.
- 6.2** Develop and implement a strategy and guidelines to intentionally engage, collaborate, and build reciprocal relationships with the community to advance and sustain common EDI goals.
- 6.3** Work with community partners, including non-profit organizations, the public sector, and educational institutions, to establish an EDI network to advance equity, inclusion, and anti-oppression in our region.

Aspire strategic priority alignment

- Generating Local and Global Impact through Partnership and Community Engagement

7

Institutional Infrastructure & Accountability

Strategic Goal

Transform institutional structures, policies, systems, and accountability mechanisms to support sustainable change.

Strategic Actions

- 7.1 Develop guidelines for creating and reviewing administrative and academic policies from an equitable, anti-oppressive, and people-centric lens.
- 7.2 Develop and implement an ongoing and proactive policy-review process to enhance the workplace culture and the employee experience as well as manage risks.
- 7.3 Develop and implement a sustainable long-term resource-development plan to adequately fund EDI and anti-oppression work across the University.
- 7.4 Develop a long-term plan to ensure inclusive spaces across the University that are accessible, welcoming, and safer for all.
- 7.5 Align the structure of the broader People, Equity, & Inclusion portfolio to the PE&I Strategy.
- 7.6 Develop an institutional framework to measure progress towards EDI goals and to help inform future EDI planning.
- 7.7 Establish a plan to continue meeting the University's commitments and accountabilities under the Scarborough Charter.
- 7.8 Publicly report progress towards the PE&I priorities annually based on established metrics and accountabilities.

Aspire strategic priority alignment

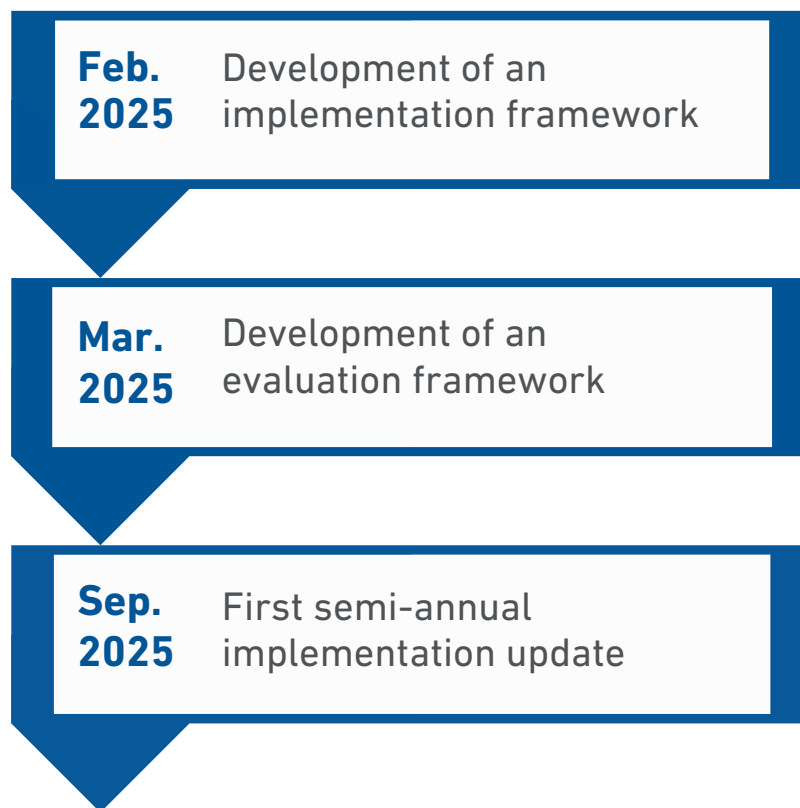
- Becoming an Increasingly Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, and Just University
- Fostering an Engaged, Healthy, Safe, and Environmentally Sustainable Campus

Delivering on our Priorities

Overall accountability for the implementation of the People, Equity, & Inclusion Strategy will reside with the Vice-President, People, Equity, & Inclusion. Institutional commitment, individual effort, and shared responsibility are essential to achieve transformative change.

As a next step, we will be establishing an implementation plan to deliver on the goals and priorities in a coordinated and collaborative way. The implementation plan will include a responsibility matrix and metrics to track progress towards goals. Regular monitoring and evaluation will allow us to not only track progress but also to identify and address bottlenecks and adjust the plan as needed to achieve the strategic goals.

The graphic below outlines timelines associated with these next steps:



Appendix A

Aspire Strategic Plan

The University's Mission, Vision, and Values as outlined below and in the Aspire strategic plan are the foundation of the PE&I Strategy's Purpose, Vision, and Guiding Principles (outlined on page seven of this document).

Mission

To empower positive change through regionally and globally engaged inquiry, learning, scholarship, creative activity, and research.

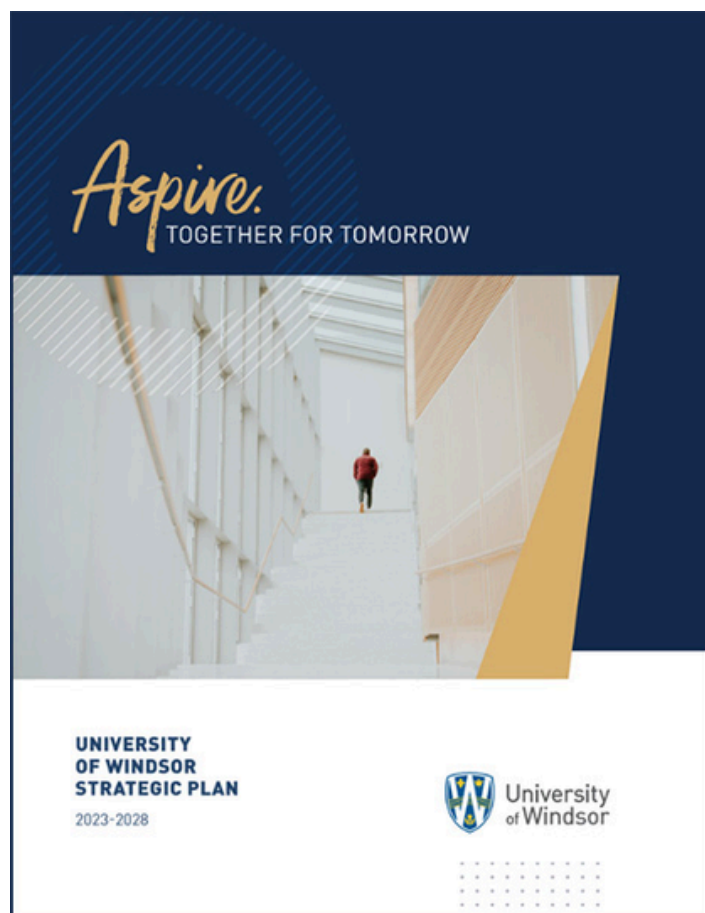
Vision

As a locally engaged, globally connected institution, the University of Windsor will enable people to transform their circumstances. As partners, leaders, and learners, we will engage in impactful research, relevant teaching, creative endeavours, and inclusive relationship building to foster positive change.

Values

- Academic Excellence
- Action on Indigenization, Truth and Reconciliation
- Community Impact
- Engagement with Students
- Environmental Sustainability
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Openness to Change
- Prioritizing People
- Trustworthiness

The Aspire strategic plan also outlines six **Foundational Commitments** and six **Strategic Priorities**. Please refer to the PE&I Strategy web page for a detailed chart outlining the PE&I Strategy's alignment with Aspire.



Appendix B

Key Terms

The following are working definitions of key terms used throughout this document. We acknowledge that language and interpretations can change depending on context and lived experience. The below definitions are not formally adopted by the University of Windsor.

Accessibility:

A general term for the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, physical environment and information) can be accessed, used and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. The term implies conscious planning, design and/or effort to make sure something is barrier-free to persons with disabilities. *(Source: ohrc.on.ca)*

Anti-racism:

An active and ongoing process to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism and racial discrimination. *(Source: ohrc.on.ca)*

Anti-oppression:

Strategies and actions that actively challenge existing intersectional inequities and injustices. *(Source: ccdi.ca)*

Barrier:

An obvious or subtle obstacle that prevents or restricts members of society from accessing, using, or doing something that others can readily access, use, or do. Can be physical, economic, financial, informational, and/or organizational policies/practices. *(Source: ccdi.ca)*

Belonging:

The feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group. *(Source: cornell.edu)*

Bias:

A predisposition, prejudice, or generalization about a group of persons based on personal characteristics or stereotypes. *(Source: ohrc.on.ca)*

Critical Pedagogy:

Embraces the belief that educators should encourage learners to examine power structures and patterns of inequality through an awakening of critical consciousness in pursuit of emancipation from oppression. *(Source: sph.emory.edu/rollins-tlc)*

Discrimination:

Intentional or unintentional denial of equal treatment, civil liberties and opportunity to individuals or groups with respect to education, housing, health care, employment and access to services, goods, and facilities. Can occur based on ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, record of offences, race, colour, nationality, sex, age, religion, gender identity, gender expression, political affiliation, marital or family status, sexual orientation, and disability.

- **Individual discrimination:** The unequal and prejudiced treatment of individuals based on their identity or membership to a particular group.
- **Systemic/institutional discrimination:** Systemic discrimination is institutionalized. Systemic discrimination is embedded and practiced in social institutions, such as government, policies, religion, education, and organizations. Results in the exclusion and stereotyping of the targeted groups. (Source: *ccdi.ca*)

Diversity:

Is about representation. The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within an individual, group, or organization. Diversity includes such factors as age, sex, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, religion, sexual orientation, educational background, and expertise. (Source: *ohrc.on.ca*)

Equity:

Is fundamentally about fairness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life (Source: *ohrc.on.ca*). Equity underscores that equal doesn't always means fair.

Equity-Deserving Groups:

Used to refer to communities and groups that experience significant collective barriers in participating in society. This could include attitudinal, historic, social, and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, Indigeneity, gender identity and gender expression, nationality, race, sexual orientation, etc. (Source: *ubc.ca*)

Equitable:

Just or characterized by fairness or equity. Equitable treatment can at times differ from same treatment. (Source: *ohrc.on.ca*)

Fairness:

In the workplace refers to an aspect of organizational justice with regards to both process and outcome impartiality. Some of the factors that support fair treatment in the workplace include mutual respect, strong interpersonal relationships and honest communication. (Source: *cornell.edu*)

Healthy Work Environment:

An environment where employees feel safe, valued and supported both physically and mentally. It is a respectful and considerate environment where employees feel heard and acknowledged for their contributions. (Source: *www.achievers.com*)

Inclusion:

Is about belonging. Inclusion is creating a culture that embraces, respects, accepts, and values diversity. It is a mindful and equitable effort to meet individual needs, so everyone feels valued, respected, and able to contribute to their fullest potential. (Source: *ccdi.ca*) It includes intersectional identities and varied lived experiences. Inclusion answers questions about who is at the table, but more than that, who matters, as reflected by whose voices are heard, respected, and valued.

Inclusive Excellence (IE):

A systems-wide approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion. IE states that true excellence in an institution is unattainable without inclusion – and in fact, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to excellence. It moves away from historical approaches to diversity that focused on numbers and representation. Instead, IE helps us think about the institution as a vibrant community that can create excellence by embedding diversity throughout the institution. (Source: *ubc.ca*)

Intersectionality:

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity as they apply to a given individual or group. Intersectional identities create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. (Source: ubc.ca)

Leaders:

Includes faculty, staff, and students who hold formal leadership positions as well as those who have been elected to leadership roles.

Marginalized Groups:

Members of society that face exclusion due to societal and systemic barriers. (Source: ccdi.ca)

Oppression:

The unfair treatment or control of marginalized groups to maintain status, privilege, or power. (Source: ccdi.ca)

People:

For the purpose of this strategy, people refers to employees (faculty, staff, and student employees) and students.

People-centric:

Refers to an approach or mindset that places individuals at the centre of organizational strategies, policies, and practices. It emphasizes valuing and prioritising the well-being, development, and engagement of employees.

(Source: <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/diagnosing-organisations>)

Psychological Safety:

The feeling of being safe to express ideas, feelings, and questions or to make mistakes without repercussions. (Source: ccdi.ca)

Racism:

A belief that one group is superior or inferior to others. Racism can be openly displayed in racial jokes, slurs, or hate crimes. It can also be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values and stereotypical beliefs. In some cases, people don't even realize they have these beliefs. Instead, they are assumptions that have evolved over time and have become part of systems and institutions. (Source: ohrc.on.ca)

Thriving:

Moving beyond well-being and a sense of belonging. It is a strengths-based concept that describes both one's current state and the journey towards optimal development. It is linked to internal characteristics such as social, emotional, and cognitive competencies, skills, and dispositions and influenced by our social and physical environment. Contextual factors either promote or constraint thriving.

(Source: <https://forumfyi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Thriving.Equity.Learning.Report.pdf>)

Appendix C

PE&I Strategy Consultative Working Group

Marcela Ciampa, Organizational Effectiveness Strategist, Human Resources (Strategy Development Lead)

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of Windsor