

What We Heard – Phase 2

A Summary of Feedback from Summer/Fall 2019 Consultations on the Development of the Inclusion Action Plan (IAP)



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Executive Summary

Between July and September of 2019, the Equity & Inclusion Office (EIO), on behalf of the University, conducted a second phase of consultations with the UBC community on the draft Inclusion Action Plan (IAP). The first phase solicited ideas from across UBC's campuses about actions to include in the plan. This second phase of consultations focused on engaging students, staff, and faculty, in particular those identifying as belonging to historically, systemically, or persistently marginalized groups, as well as senior leadership teams, to refine the draft actions.

The consultations revealed a high level of support for the IAP and a number of recommendations for changes to the draft actions. Recommendations for changes were coded, analyzed, and reviewed by the EIO for incorporation into the final version of the IAP. The final version was endorsed by Executive in October 2019 and reviewed by the Board of Governors in December 2019.

Similar to the first phase of consultations, it is important to note that this second phase reached a sample of the UBC communities in Vancouver and the Okanagan and may not be representative of all voices, particularly those that are directly affected by equity issues. Engagement with historically, systemically, or persistently marginalized groups remains a priority of the EIO as the IAP moves into implementation.

This report describes the consultation process, what was heard from those participating, and the analysis and review process that resulted in several changes to IAP actions.

For questions about the [Inclusion Action Plan](#), the consultation process or this report, please contact the Equity & Inclusion Office at info@equity.ubc.ca.

Background

In 2018, the University of British Columbia developed a new Strategic Plan: [Shaping UBC's Next Century](#). The plan presents three themes: Inclusion, Collaboration, and Innovation. These three themes are cross cutting, spanning the core areas of People & Places, Research Excellence, Transformative Learning, and Local & Global Engagement.

Figure 1. Shaping UBC's Next Century - Core Attributes, Themes & Areas



UBC's Inclusion Action Plan (IAP) operationalizes the inclusion theme. The IAP identifies strategic goals for inclusion at UBC and the institutional actions needed in order to achieve those goals, builds on and connects previous and ongoing efforts at UBC and incorporates relevant ideas and recommendations in a single action plan that guides efforts at UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan.

As part of the process to develop the IAP, it is important that the voices of our diverse campus communities, particularly those who have been systemically, persistently, or historically marginalized, are reflected in the plan. Successful engagement informs the development of an Inclusion Action Plan that reflects the experience and desired outcomes of our diverse students, faculty, and staff at UBC. Accordingly, the Equity & Inclusion Office (EIO) has facilitated consultations with the UBC community across both campuses, as well as targeted groups of stakeholders, to identify focus areas and actions needed to create a more inclusive and welcoming community.

There were two major phases of consultation on the IAP with the UBC community. Between March and May 2019, the EIO solicited ideas to inform decisions about what actions to include in the IAP, findings from which are highlighted in the first [What We Heard](#) report. A second phase of broad consultations took place from July to September 2019, providing an opportunity to share the draft IAP and receive feedback from both campuses on the specific actions included in the plan. This [What We Heard – Phase 2](#) report presents a summary of those findings.

Engagement Goals

The goals of this second engagement phase were to:

- Increase participation in the Inclusion Action Plan process, particularly among historically, systemically or persistently marginalized groups;
- Ensure historically, systemically or persistently marginalized groups feel that the Inclusion Action Plan will make the UBC campus community more inclusive, based on their lived experiences;
- Increase awareness of the Inclusion Action Plan among historically, systemically or persistently marginalized groups, and how the plan can be used to advance inclusion at UBC; and
- Build and /or strengthen relationships with students, faculty, and staff to support implementation of the Inclusion Action Plan now and into the future.

Methodology

With these goals in mind, the EIO conducted targeted consultations on the draft IAP between July and September 2019. The primary output of these consultations were comments and feedback from the UBC community that could be considered for application to the next revision of the IAP.

The EIO offered five ways for the UBC community to provide suggestions for the IAP:

- 1) Open sessions with students, staff and faculty,
- 2) Facilitated sessions by request,
- 3) A self-guided conversation toolkit,
- 4) Direct engagement with divisions and other IAP stakeholders, and,
- 5) An online comment form.

The Appendix lists each of the engagements, along with the engagement date, stakeholder, and number of attendees.

Open Sessions with Students, Staff, and Faculty

The EIO advertised 11 consultation sessions and hosted a total of nine with students, staff, and faculty from both UBC campuses in August and September.

In these consultations, an overview of the IAP was presented, followed by an open session for participants to provide feedback on each of the actions across the five IAP goals. Participants were asked whether they agreed with the proposed draft actions or had any concerns, and if so, what they thought was missing.

Facilitated Sessions by Request and Self-guided Conversation Toolkit

Facilitated sessions by request and self-guided conversation toolkits were made available to the UBC community as another mechanism to provide feedback on the IAP actions. While self-guided conversation toolkits were requested, feedback from these conversations was not submitted to the EIO during the consultation phase.

Direct Engagements

EIO staff engaged directly with some UBC leadership and IAP stakeholders through existing forums such as divisional meetings and hot lunches. In-person feedback was collected through these engagements in a similar format to the open consultations.

Online Comment Form

On the IAP page of its website the EIO provided an online comment form during this consultation phase. Site visitors were asked to share their comments and feedback on the IAP. A handful of comments were submitted and these were included for analysis and consideration alongside the comments and feedback from the in-person sessions.

Figure 2. Engagement Timeline



Data Processing and Analysis

Engagement efforts reached a broad spectrum of UBC students, staff, and faculty. Almost all feedback from the UBC community was shared via the open consultations and direct engagements.

For each in-person open session, all of the proposed draft actions were presented on large-format poster boards around the perimeter of the meeting room. Participants were asked to review the proposed draft actions under each of the five goals and use sticky notes to indicate whether they agreed or had concerns, and if so, to write down what they thought was missing. Each indication of agreement and concern, along with each note of what participants thought was missing, was captured from each board using photo documentation and transcribed into an Excel spreadsheet.

In addition, notes taken during other discussions of the IAP, reviews of the online draft, and comments from the online comment box were transcribed into the same spreadsheet for consideration.

Each of the comments were then coded into the following five primary categories.

- **Clarity:** Comments which made requests for clarity or specific examples of the content of a proposed draft action.
- **Critique:** Comments which critiqued the meaning or overall intent of a proposed draft action.
- **Evaluation:** Comments addressing how progress on a proposed draft action would be measured or evaluated.
- **Implementation:** Comments and questions on the process for implementing a proposed draft action.
- **Language:** Comments which provided edits or proposed revisions to existing wording of the actions.

These categories, along with an estimated number of comments coded into each, are listed in the table below. Some respondents provided multiple comments on a single sticky note. As well, some comments pertained to more than

one category. In many cases, a comment was given a secondary code. Secondary codes that captured matters of clarity were assigned to distinguish among the following requests:

- examples of what an action would look like,
- clarity about whom an action would include or pertain to,
- definitions of key terms, or,
- inclusion of hyperlinks to any key documents or resources referenced in the action statement.

Secondary codes that pertained to implementation were developed to distinguish among the following comments:

- how an action would be executed,
- who would be responsible for leading an effort,
- suggestions for key considerations to keep in mind, or,
- suggestions for resources that could support implementation of an action

Category	Number of comments
Clarity	42
Critique	75
Evaluation	16
Implementation	127
Language	25

Comments related to evaluation and implementation of the IAP, which were the most common, were beyond the scope of this phase of consultation. These comments have been noted and reviewed by EIO staff and will be revisited during the development of an implementation structure and supports as well as an overall evaluation framework. Comments concerned with clarity and language, as well as critique of the actions themselves, were considered for the next version of the draft IAP.

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The following section describes the types of comments that were coded into each primary category, as well as some examples for each.

Clarity

Comments that addressed the clarity of an action were coded here. These included comments that demonstrated uncertainty about the intended implementers or what was involved in the actions, as well as questions about terminology. For example:

Referring to the Conflict Engagement & Dialogue action of the Capacity Building goal – “Build conflict engagement skills and practices of all members of UBC’s community to equip people for working across differences that matter, including engaging in dialogue and conversation around sensitive topics at UBC and beyond.”, – one participant stated:

“This action states ‘equip people for working across differences that matter...’ I was a bit unsure what differences are being referred to?”

In reference to an action on Accommodations, under the Systems Change goal – “Develop an infrastructure for supporting and accommodating faculty, staff, and students with respect to religious, spiritual, and cultural observances, flexible work arrangements, housing, and childcare to enhance opportunities for success and retention.” – one participant noted:

“Not sure what this means, and it sounds like it crosses into various other areas that are not solely focused on specific faculty/staff. Recommend clarifying or removing.”

Critique

Some comments critiqued the action itself, often as being too broad or too specific, or requiring refinement to better support movement towards the goal. For example:

Under the Recruitment, Retention & Success goal, in reference to the Implement Systems Reviews goal – “Improve the experiences of those currently marginalized by implementing the recommendations of the 2018 Employment Systems Review for faculty and staff, and conduct a similar review to examine any disparities in experiences for students.” – one participant posed the question:

“Who are we missing in all this? (contract faculty, sessionals, post docs, cleaning staff)”

Under the Accountability goal, pertaining to an action on Transparent Reporting Mechanisms - Review and enhance streamlined mechanisms and related policies for people who experience harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and bullying to report incidents and policy breaches to ensure transparency.” – one participant asked:

“Making it transparent for who? What kind of transparency are we trying to achieve?”

Similarly, another participant asked with regards to the same action:

“What happens when something is reported? Will those processes be reviewed as well? Why is transparency the focus of this action when it is not the only issue around UBC's reporting systems”?

Evaluation

Some participants provided comments that addressed evaluation of the actions themselves. Most comments related to evaluation asked how an action would be measured, For example:

In reference to the Degree Requirements action of the Systems Change goal – “Incorporate equity, diversity and inclusion skills and competencies into degree requirements.” – a participant noted:

“Good idea. How can this be measured?”

Similarly, in reference to an action on Inclusive Teaching and Learning, under the Learning, Research and Engagement goal – “Support instructors and teaching assistants to make teaching and learning more inclusive throughout course design and teaching practice.” – a participant asked:

“How to measure success/impact?”

With respect to an action on EDI Leadership Training, under the Capacity Building goal – “Develop EDI curriculum and deliver/leverage training specifically for leadership at all levels to deepen understanding and encourage modelling of inclusive behavior, with a focus on applied skills and performance management in diverse workplaces.” – another participant asked:

“How will training be evaluated at the leadership level?”

Implementation

Comments related to implementation of the IAP actions were by far the most common. These comments typically provided considerations or suggestions regarding how an action should be implemented, who should lead implementation, or what might be missing or unnecessary in an action. For example:

Under the Accountability goal, the Workday Institutional Data action – “Ensure Workday collects institutional data with appropriate privacy safeguards to enable regular systematic analyses of access, engagement, promotion, success, attrition, etc., for students, staff, and faculty.” – a participant raised the following:

“Big data: How will the UBC community be assured the privacy safeguards are sufficient and for the long-term?”

Under the Systems Change goal, pertaining to the Equity Leads action – “Appoint a faculty or staff member within each department or unit who is responsible for coordinating the implementation of commitments made

in the Executive or Faculty level plans at the local level, supported by an Equity Leads Network facilitated by the Equity & Inclusion Office. – one participant suggested:

“Consider assigning the equity lead to different levels within a department and not just an individual with a leadership title. Could create more accountability and commitment.”

Under the Learning, Research and Engagement goal, with respect to an action on Inclusive Teaching and Learning – “Support instructors and teaching assistants to make teaching and learning more inclusive throughout course design and teaching practice.” – one participant commented:

“Needs broad-based support and cultural shift. E.g. Having CTLT to offer workshop. Introduce these to new faculty. Bring in evidence to shift the traditional course design approach.”

Language

Some participants noted specific concerns with relation to the language of the actions. These concerns often addressed a perceived lack of specificity and options for different wording choices and syntax. For example:

Referring to the Grant Applications action under the Learning, Research & Engagement goal – “Include equity, diversity, and inclusion principles in the review processes for all grant applications, assessing the diversity of the research team, the commitment to the development of inclusion skills and diversity competencies for highly qualified personnel, and the inclusion of an EDI lens throughout the learning, research and engagement process.” – a participant remarked:

“Language of ‘exceeding’ is vague (How? What is the bar? Who is judging that?)”

Similarly, another participant asked:

“What qualifies as exceeding requirements? Who gets to decide?”

Referring to the EDI Awards, Funding & Incentives action also under the Learning, Research & Engagement goal – “Establish awards, funding, and incentives that recognize outstanding equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives and contributions in learning, research, and engagement, including community-based research and community-led initiatives.” – another participant specified:

“Change to community-engaged research (CBR is slightly different)”

IAP Revision Process and Examples

After each comment was coded into one or more of the five primary categories, the EIO reviewed the comments and made recommendations for revision to the IAP. Suggestions for revision fell into one of three categories – addition of an action, removal of an action, or change to an action.

Addition of Actions

Feedback from the UBC community signaled the need to add some actions. One such example was the addition of an action related to inclusive spaces and initiatives under the *Recruitment, Retention, and Success* goal, as a result of consultation participants' view that the uneven playing field and emotional labour faced by marginalized groups be more visible in the IAP. The resulting action is stated as follows:

Inclusive Spaces & Initiatives

LEADS: Provosts; VP, Human Resources; VP, Students

Support mentorship, peer support, and affinity/resource groups that enhance spaces and initiatives toward inclusion. Promote extra-curricular programming, professional development opportunities, and events that help build inclusive cultures.

Removal of Actions

Through the consultation process, some actions were removed. For example, consultation participants noted concerns with the following action that fell under the *Accountability* goal:

Advancement

LEADS: Provosts, VP, Human Resources

Evaluate mechanisms to consider that promotion, merit pay, and consideration for leadership roles for all faculty and staff include an annual assessment of demonstrated diversity skills and competencies.

Feedback on this action included the view that it was redundant and overlapped with other IAP actions.

Changes to Actions

The consultation process surfaced a number of suggestions for changes to actions. Under the *Capacity Building* Goal, the *Conflict Engagement & Dialogue* action was modified as result of the feedback provided. The action was edited to remove "Conflict" from the title and to make the intent and language of the action clearer. The revised action now states:

Dialogue & Engagement

LEADS: Provosts; VP, Human Resources; VP, Students; VP External Relations

Facilitate and provide opportunities for dialogue and conversation around sensitive topics at UBC and beyond. Build conflict engagement skills and practices among all members of UBC's community to equip people for working across differences.

Conclusion

The second phase of the Inclusion Action plan consultations reached students, staff, faculty, and leadership teams across the UBC Vancouver and Okanagan campuses. Most comments and feedback were provided by UBC community members via open consultations and direct engagements. The comments were sorted and reviewed by EIO staff, leading to both direct changes to the draft IAP itself, as well as documentation of key considerations for subsequent implementation and evaluation of the IAP.

The revised IAP was endorsed by the UBC Executive in November 2019 and reviewed by the UBC Board of Governors in December 2019. As focus shifts to implementation of the IAP in 2020, the EIO remains committed to ensuring that future IAP engagements centre the voices of the historically, systemically, or persistently marginalized groups.

Appendix: Summer/Fall 2019 Consultations

Date of Engagement	Stakeholder	Attendees	Engagement Type
Aug 15th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-O: Staff	20	Open session
Aug 19th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-V: Faculty	0	Open session
Aug 22nd 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-V: Staff	20	Open session
Aug 26th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-V: General	8	Open session
Aug 28th 10:00am	VP Students Leadership Team	10	Direct engagement
Aug 28th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-V: Faculty & Staff	8	Open session
Aug 28th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-O: Faculty	2	Open session
Aug 28th 1:45pm - 3:30pm	SACADI Session	8	Direct engagement
Sept 3rd	HR Executive Team	12	Direct engagement
Sept 9th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-V: Undergrad Students	5	Open session
Sept 9th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-V: Undergrad Students	0	Open session
Sept 10th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-O: Undergraduate Students	0	Open session
Sept 10th 1:30pm - 3:00pm	Inclusion Advisory Committee	22	Facilitated session
Sept 11th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-V: Graduate Students	7	Open session
Sept 12th	HR Equity Committee	4	Direct engagement
Sept 13th 11:30am - 1:30pm	UBC-O: Graduate Students	6	Open session
Mid-September	Individual consultations – persons with disabilities	4	In-person meetings
Sept 16th 10:00am	HR Senior Leaders Network	26	Direct engagement
Sept 16th 10:00am	Okanagan Leadership Team	12	Direct engagement
Sept 17th 8:30am - 10:15am	Graduate Class - iSchool	13	Direct engagement
Sept 18th 9:15am	VP External Relations Leadership Team	23	Facilitated session by request
Sept 25th 2:00pm - 3:00pm	Building Operations	35	Facilitated session by request
Late September	VP Research & Innovation	2	Email discussions

Date of Engagement	Stakeholder	Attendees	Engagement Type
October	VP Finance & Operations	2	Email discussions
October	FNHL	2	Email discussion
October 2 nd 12:00 pm	HR Executive Team	12	Direct engagement
July to September	UBC Community	10	Online comments