



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Intercultural Health

Action Plan

Canadian Mennonite University

2026

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Welcome

CMU's EDI Action Plan reflects our collective vision and our shared responsibility to create a community where everyone feels they belong and can thrive and contribute. We invite all members of the CMU community to join in this work.

Canadian Mennonite University is deeply committed to being a learning community where every person feels like they belong, where they encounter difference, and are transformed through the power of education. This EDI action plan represents exciting and tangible ways to help us achieve those goals. It represents thoughtful engagement with CMU's Mission and Commitments, our Anabaptist roots, and with the members of our learning community. This engagement helps to ensure that our approach to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging is authentic and transformative.

The priorities that are outlined here are ambitious and exciting. They focus on building trust, resourcing initiatives, and developing belonging. These priorities demonstrate a clear vision for taking our campus culture forward while being nourished and enlivened by our mission and commitments.

I am very grateful for the faculty, staff, and students who have contributed to this work, especially Valerie Smith and Dr. Jodi Dueck-Read.

CMU looks forward to this work and the transformation that will occur on our campus through its implementation.

Charlie Peronto
Vice-President, Student Life and Campus Operations

Introduction and Commitments

Canadian Mennonite University is an innovative Christian university, rooted in the Anabaptist faith tradition. CMU is dedicated to embodying the inclusivity of Jesus Christ's life and teachings. CMU is guided by four commitments, which arise from CMU's mission:

1. Educating for Peace–Justice
2. Learning through Thinking and Doing
3. Generous Hospitality...Radical Dialogue
4. Modelling Invitational Community

Flowing from CMU's Anabaptist roots, faith commitment, and guiding principles, CMU is committed to interrupting and addressing systemic inequities by creating an anti-oppressive and purposefully inclusive environment across the whole university, including its enrolment, academic, and employment practices. This involves listening to and relating more justly with Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, women and gender diverse people, people with disabilities, people experiencing economic marginalization, people of diverse faith backgrounds, and all systemically oppressed people. CMU will work continuously toward equity, diversity, and inclusion to foster a flourishing community for all.

At CMU, we are honoured to live and learn on Treaty 1 Territory, the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Ininiwak, Anishininewak, and Dakota Oyate First Nations, and the national homeland of the Red River Métis. As an expression of Christian faith and commitment, CMU acknowledges the truth of past harms and ongoing wrongs and seeks active reconciliation with Indigenous communities and people.

CMU is committed to intercultural health within and beyond the CMU community. Intercultural health means fostering a culture of respect and understanding, and welcoming difference. It involves the practice of honest and respectful conversation about the varied needs and gifts of all members of the community and the barriers they may face. Intercultural health acknowledges the work and values the richness that comes with meaningful connections across difference and strives to ensure all members of the community feel valued, respected, and included.

The commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and intercultural health extends to CMU's participation in the Canada Research Chairs Program and the institution's broader research enterprise.

The EDI Action Plan sets direction and priorities and provides a means of accountability for CMU's commitment to intercultural health. When there is capacity to exceed or extend the objectives listed here, that is to be encouraged and celebrated.

Glossary of Terms

2SLGBTQIA+: Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual community. The plus represents additional sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions not explicitly listed in the initialism.

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Colour. Intended to highlight the unique, historical, and ongoing systemic violence and discrimination experienced by Black people, Indigenous people, and other People of Colour.

Equity: the process of removing systemic barriers such as bias, discrimination, racism, and ableism so all individuals have fair access and opportunity, recognizing that people start from different places and may need different supports to reach an equal playing field.

Diversity: variety of human differences and identities, including race, colour, place of origin, immigrant/newcomer status, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, and age.

Inclusion: fostering a culture where humans are valued, respected, and supported in a culturally-safe environment.

Intercultural health: a culture of respect and understanding that welcomes difference. It involves the practice of honest and respectful conversation about the varied needs and gifts of all members of the community and the barriers they may face. Intercultural health acknowledges the work and values the richness that comes with meaningful connections across difference and strives to ensure all members of the community feel valued, respected, and included.

Intersectionality: Recognition that individuals experience inclusion, opportunity, and disadvantage through the combined and overlapping effects of multiple social identities (such as race, gender, disability, and socio-economic status). In settings with a limited number of people, such as CMU, addressing intersectionality in data-reporting is limited to protect individual identities.

Assessing Current Realities

In developing its EDI Action Plan, CMU gathered data about the lived experiences within the CMU community through a qualitative research study conducted by a consultant in 2022/2023. In 2022, CMU also established an Intercultural Health and EDI Committee to both guide the development of an EDI Action Plan, and coordinate actions to address gaps and build intercultural health at CMU. Two members of the Intercultural Health committee with EDI-related roles (CMU's EDI Project Director and the Director of the Research Office) were directly involved in drafting initial items for the plan and subsequently hosting focus groups to solicit feedback from community members, with attention to people from underrepresented groups. As part of the review and engagement process, interviews and conversations were held with the CRC Chairholder and senior administrators. Additionally, we held consultations on the plan with the University Senate and CMU Staff Council. Based on this feedback, revisions were made to the plan and on April 8, 2026, CMU's President's Council approved the plan.

Qualitative Research Study

To understand the lived experiences of CMU community members, the current institutional climate, and directions on advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), CMU partnered with the Centre for Community-Based Research (CCBR) to conduct a qualitative research study from September 2022 - April 2023. The study included a literature scan of EDI plans from 14 Canadian universities and reviewed 30 CMU policy documents. CCBR staff also organized and led focus groups for faculty, staff, students, and board members (45 participants, which includes 17% of CMU faculty and 14% of CMU staff), and conducted individual interviews (4 participants), ensuring that a range of identities and institutional roles were represented. CCBR also created and analyzed data from online CMU-wide discussion boards (291 posts and responses).

The study revealed a wide range of experiences — some participants felt welcomed and empowered, while others, particularly from equity-deserving groups such as 2SLGBTQIA+, BIPOC, and international students, reported experiences of exclusion, lack of safety, and systemic barriers. The study also highlighted how proximity to Mennonite identity and institutional hierarchies can influence perceptions of privilege and inclusion.

The report identified both strengths and challenges in CMU's current EDI landscape. The university is recognized by many within the community for its welcoming culture and interpersonal relationships. As a university with Anabaptist roots, CMU prioritizes community, relationships, and constructive dialogue. These strengths can be useful as CMU works to address gaps in inclusion and intercultural health. The report notes that CMU lacks sufficient institutional infrastructure, policies, and resources to effectively support equity-deserving groups. Key recommendations include:

1. Enhancing resources for EDI work
2. Fostering individual and collective awareness of privilege

3. Providing participatory anti-oppression training
4. Critically examining the role of Mennonite culture in shaping inclusion
5. Enhancing the visibility and support for marginalized groups
6. Intentional policy development
7. Greater transparency in EDI efforts
8. Strategic communication with both internal and external stakeholders

Environmental Scan

In preparation for developing CMU's EDI Action Plan, CMU sought to understand the broader EDI landscape and reviewed the EDI work of 18 universities (larger Canadian, small Canadian, Christian, and Mennonite universities in Canada and the US). This included a review of university websites, publicly available EDI action plans and, in two cases, virtual meetings with EDI offices.

Focus Groups

The second stage of data gathering was a series of safer-space focus groups, held January – March 2025. All staff and faculty were invited to participate in a meeting with others in their identity group, in an open group, or in one-on-one conversations. Five of the focus groups were offered for those who identified within equity-deserving groups: women and gender minorities, 2SLGBTQIA+ persons, Indigenous people, people from underrepresented racialized groups, and people with disabilities. We also facilitated an open focus group and held two one-on-one meetings. In total, 19% of staff members and 13% of the faculty participated in feedback sessions.

Focus groups with underrepresented groups were facilitated by individuals sharing identity with the group members. Each session lasted from 55-75 minutes and participants were provided lunch where they gathered in a secure space. Focus groups were designed to create space for connection with others who share an identity (within a particular equity-deserving group), to gather feedback from those within equity-deserving groups about their lived experience and common barriers at CMU, and to provide feedback on a draft of CMU's EDI Action Plan. Facilitators posed questions and participants answered in a circle format while a notetaker recorded participant responses on a computer or on a few occasions on paper visible to participants.

The results of the focus groups revealed participant emphasis on the importance of ensuring that EDI work is authentic, transformative, and not merely performative or compliance driven. Key themes emerged including the value of storytelling and relationship-building, the need for a moderate pace to sustain long-term change, and the complexity of language used in EDI discourse. Feedback also highlighted the significance of divisions beyond federally designated categories (e.g., faculty/staff, Mennonite/non-Mennonite), encouragement to be transparent and careful with employee identity data collection and storage, and the need to equip the community to engage in respectful disagreement and improve meeting facilitation.

Participants shared personal experiences that revealed both strengths and gaps in CMU's intercultural health landscape. Feedback affirmed the importance of trust-building and a distinctly Christian framework for intercultural health and noted, with appreciation, CMU's emphasis on storytelling and relationship-building. Participants also commented that CMU has the resources to continue building on dialogue and facilitation skills. Some participants urged CMU to remain attentive to internal divisions and the diverse needs of its community. Although many felt supported by supervisors and colleagues, others — particularly women, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities — reported discomfort, exclusion, or uncertainty about available resources. Suggestions for improvement included:

1. Policy reviews with an EDI lens
2. Better facilitation practices
3. More resources and supports for including and supporting students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented groups

Responding to Identified Gaps

In response to the recommendations and gaps that were identified through the qualitative research study, environmental scan, and focus groups, CMU has identified eight strategic priorities and accompanying objectives. CMU has also identified those who are responsible for overseeing each objective and has listed specific progress indicators for each priority. These priorities will provide direction and accountability for CMU's ongoing efforts to build intercultural health. The table below shows the correlation between the named gaps and the objectives. This is followed by the full list of strategic priorities, corresponding objectives, and progress indicators.

Summary of planned actions to address the key recommendations from the qualitative research study and focus groups:

	Actions	Key Recommendations								
		Enhance EDI Resources	Foster awareness of privilege	Provide anti-oppression training	Examine Mennonite culture	Support marginalized groups	Develop and review policy	Enhance transparency	Communicate widely about EDI	Better facilitation practices
1.1	Convene symposium 'Theologies of Belonging'				X					
1.2	Plan trust and relationship-building activity		X	X						
2.1	Appoint equity officer for CRC	X				X	X	X		
2.2	Support Intercultural Health and EDI Committee	X				X		X	X	
2.3	Hire EDI Project Director	X					X	X		
2.4	Provide resources for policy review	X					X			
2.5	Find grants to support intercultural health	X					X			
2.6	Establish ICH mini-grants	X	X	X		X				
2.7	Establish ICH advocates					X		X	X	
3.1	Equip faculty and staff in a particular area of diversity	X	X	X		X				
3.2	Equip members of the ICH and EDI committee yearly	X								
3.3	Offer facilitation training		X	X						X
4.1	Review recruitment practices to remove barriers					X			X	
4.2	Review, revise, and standardize onboarding practices with EDI lens					X	X			

	Actions	Key Recommendations								
		Enhance EDI Resources	Foster awareness of privilege	Provide anti-oppression training	Examine Mennonite culture	Support marginalized groups	Develop and review policy	Enhance transparency	Communicate widely about EDI	Better facilitation practices
4.3	Create 'Onboarding Buddies' program					X				
4.4	Review and revise personnel policies with an EDI lens						X			
4.5	Provide high-quality unconscious-bias training			X		X				
5.1	Strategize and offer targeted recruitment and supports					X			X	
5.2	Offer free dorm housing for all first-year students.					X				
5.3	Revise awards with an EDI lens		X			X	X			
5.4	Review student groups for inclusion		X	X		X				
5.5	Equip student leaders on diversity		X	X						
5.6	Provide inclusive syllabus review	X		X		X				
6.1	Create policy for identity-related employee data							X		
6.2	Create strategy for voluntary self-identification							X	X	
6.3	Develop voluntary self-identification form for new faculty and staff	X						X		
6.4	Implement voluntary self-identification form for current faculty and staff							X		

	Actions	Key Recommendations								
		Enhance EDI Resources	Foster awareness of privilege	Provide anti-oppression training	Examine Mennonite culture	Support marginalized groups	Develop and review policy	Enhance transparency	Communicate widely about EDI	Better facilitation practices
6.5	Survey of faculty and staff to assess changes in campus culture		X		X		X			
6.6	Analyze self-identification data for policy					X		X	X	
6.7	Report on EDI initiatives and data to CMU community							X	X	
7.1	Revise CMU's internal grant application to include EDI	X								
7.2	Offer workshops on integrating EDI into research	X				X	X			
7.3	Analyze EDI data on internal research and funding opportunities	X				X	X			
8.1	Provide accessible washrooms in public buildings					X				
8.2	Improve lifts in Assiniboine Castle					X				
8.3	Create/renovate accessible units in residence buildings					X				
8.4	Create low-sensory study rooms					X				

Strategic Priority 1: Foundations and Trust-Building

For the work of building intercultural health at CMU to be authentic, transformative, and lasting, it must be grounded in the vision and commitments of the University. Naming that this work is rooted within Anabaptist tradition and theology can also help to allay concerns that initiatives are simply intended to ‘check a box.’ Further, the work of building intercultural health requires trust and relationships within and across the community. A solid foundation of trust and connection, built in part through conversation and storytelling, is key to working across difference, naming gaps in intercultural health, and addressing challenges.

Objective 1A

Ensure the work of intercultural health at CMU is authentic, transformative, and lasting by grounding the work within CMU’s Anabaptist theology and traditions.

Objective 1B

Increase trust and connections across the CMU community, with particular attention to connections that are not emphasized through regular CMU interactions. Attend to potential tensions or divisions particular to CMU, including barriers created by CMU’s roots in the Mennonite community.

Action 1.1	Hold a symposium on the topic of ‘Theologies of Belonging.’
Implementation timeline	Winter 2027
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee
Progress Indicators	- Symposium is held in Winter 2027. - A minimum of 50 faculty, staff, and students participate in or attend the symposium. - Post-event surveys indicate that the university community has grown in its understanding of how different people experience belonging at CMU and developed a shared language about belonging that informs our actions.

Action 1.2	Hold at least one trust and relationship-building activity with intercultural health lens for the CMU community each academic year.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee
Progress Indicators	- One event is held each academic year. - Survey results indicate new and deeper connections and relationships across difference and across campus.
Completed Actions	2023/24

	• Social location and theological resources discussion at staff & faculty retreat • Lunch, film viewing (Beans), and discussion event for all staff and faculty
	2024/25 • Identity activity, video, and discussion event for all staff and faculty • Lunch, film viewing (Origin), and discussion event for all staff and faculty • Human Library storytelling activity for faculty, staff, and students

Strategic Priority 2: Resourcing

Improving the intercultural health of the institution is only possible when that work is adequately resourced. Resourcing includes allocating employee time for the work of intercultural health through EDI specific roles, updated job descriptions with an EDI component, or ICH committee work. Further, soliciting and supporting initiatives from faculty, staff, and students builds equity-mindedness throughout the university. Seeking grants or other funding enables and expands the work of improving intercultural health within the institution.

Objective 2A

Expand staffing resources available for building intercultural health at CMU.

Objective 2B

Secure and distribute external funding to extend and support the work of building intercultural health at CMU.

Action 2.1	Appoint an Equity Officer for CRC recruitment, nomination, and hiring committees.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	Director of the Research Office
Progress Indicators	• An Equity Officer is appointed. • Equity Officer serves on the ICH and EDI Committee. • Equity Officer is a member of the Recruitment and Nomination committee for CRC hiring. • Committee members report increased awareness of equitable hiring practices due to Equity Officer involvement.

Completed Actions	2023/24 - Equity Officer reports to the Vice-President Academic. - Equity Officer serves on the ICH and EDI Committee. - Equity Officer is a member of the Recruitment and Nomination committee for CRC hiring processes.
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Action 2.2	Establish and support an Intercultural Health and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ICH and EDI) Committee that listens to the CMU community and coordinates ICH activities. The committee has a diverse membership, including representation from across the university and members from underrepresented groups. The ICH and EDI committee reports to President's Council and receives direction from them.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	President's Council
Progress Indicators	- The ICH and EDI committee maintains diverse membership. - The ICH and EDI committee meets regularly. - The ICH and EDI committee organizes regular events and offers resources to the CMU community. - Surveys show positive response from campus stakeholders regarding the committee's role in promoting intercultural health.
Completed Actions	2022/23 - An ICH and EDI Committee is established and begins meeting monthly throughout the academic year. Membership includes those from underrepresented groups, members in senior leadership positions, and representation from across the university. 2023/24 - The ICH and EDI Committee offers events and resources to build connections within the CMU community and to equip faculty, staff, and students. 2024/25 - The ICH and EDI Committee mandate is finalized.

Action 2.3	Hire a part-time EDI Project Director.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee Co-Chairs and Director of the Research Office
Progress Indicators	EDI Project Director is hired.
Completed Actions	2023/24 .3 FTE EDI Project Director hired

	2024/25 .2 FTE EDI Project Director hired 2025/26 .2 FTE EDI Project Director hired
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Action 2.4	Fund additional human resources staffing to apply an EDI lens in employee recruitment and retention practices and policy review
Implementation timeline	2025-2027
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee
Progress Indicators	- Recruitment practices have been reviewed and enhanced with a focus on equity and attracting employees from underrepresented groups. - Onboarding and offboarding procedures have been developed to enhance staff and faculty retention, particularly among underrepresented groups. - Key personnel policies have been reviewed and revised with an EDI lens.
Completed Actions	September 2025 Funding is provided to increase HR time available to apply an EDI lens in recruitment and retention practices and policy review.

Action 2.5	Seek grants to support intercultural health resourcing to enhance internal CMU resources.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee co-chairs and Director of the Research Office
Progress Indicators	- At least one grant application is submitted each year. - Funding is granted to support intercultural health resourcing.
Completed Actions	2023/24 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) grant submitted and awarded 2024/25 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) grant submitted and awarded

Action 2.6	Offer ICH Mini-Grants to CMU faculty, staff, and students to carry out projects that support intercultural health at CMU.
Implementation timeline	2024-2026
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee

Progress Indicators	- Annually, CMU faculty, staff, and students are invited to apply for ICH Mini-Grants. - A minimum of four applications are received and funded each year. - Surveys and report on the ICH Mini-Grant show new and stronger connections within the community and specific learning about some aspect of intercultural health.
Completed Actions	2024/25 - Faculty and staff submitted six applications. - Six applications were funded, including two book clubs on intercultural health themes, a workshop for student leaders, a viewing and discussion of 'Autism Goes to College,' a community forum on conversations across difference and a project to increase dining-hall inclusiveness. 2025/26 - Faculty, staff, and students were invited to apply for ICH Mini-Grants.

ICH Mini-Grants are a great way to extend the intercultural health work at CMU. They draw in diverse ideas, perspectives and people, and contribute to shared ownership for building intercultural health with the CMU community. These projects can provide additional and unexpected ways of meeting institutional EDI objectives.

Action 2.7	Establish ICH Advocates throughout the university community to serve as safe points of contact for those with questions or concerns about intercultural health and for those experiencing discrimination or barriers.
Implementation timeline	September 2029
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	- A framework is established for the selection and role of ICH Advocates. - ICH Advocates are selected and trained. - Faculty and staff seek out ICH Advocates with questions and concerns. - Community members report feeling safer and more supported when raising concerns about discrimination or barriers.

	• Greater trust in institutional processes for addressing discrimination and barriers.
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Strategic Priority 3: Equipping

Improving the intercultural health of the University requires ongoing opportunities for new understanding, acquiring additional skills and tools, and interrogating language. This includes creating opportunities for careful listening and sharing through conversation and storytelling. It also involves regular opportunities for learning so all members of the university community are equipped to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion within their own areas of work and influence.

Objective 3A

Equip faculty and staff to better welcome, understand, and support a wide range of diversity within the university community.

Objective 3B

Enhance faculty, staff, and student capacity in group-facilitation, decision-making processes, and conversation across differences.

Action 3.1	Offer at least one event each year to equip faculty and staff with new understanding, knowledge, and tools in a particular area of diversity, focussing on an alternating area of diversity each year.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee
Progress Indicators	• At least one event is held each year, focussed on an alternate area of diversity. • Faculty and staff are invited and able to name specific learning and potential actions in surveys following event. • Regular surveys and focus groups indicate that faculty and staff feel better equipped to support diversity. • Regular surveys and focus groups indicate that students, faculty, and staff in underrepresented groups feel they face fewer barriers to inclusion and belonging.
Completed Actions	2024/25 • 'Decolonizing Teaching' workshop with La Royce Batchelor 2025/26 • Viewing and discussion of 'Autism Goes to College'

Action 3.2	Offer at least one event each year to equip members of the ICH and EDI Committee with new understanding, knowledge, and tools for the work of intercultural health.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	ICH and EDI Committee Chairs
Progress Indicators	- At least one event is held each year. - Post-event surveys indicate that committee members have an increased understanding, knowledge, and or tools in a particular area of intercultural health work.
Completed Actions	2023/24 - Workshop on anti-racism (half-day) 2024/25 - Workshop on obstacles and opportunities in anti-oppression work (half-day) 2025/26 - Workshop on understanding neurodiversity (half-day)

Action 3.3	Offer workshops to faculty, staff, and students in group facilitation, decision-making, and conversation across differences.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	EDI and ICH Committee
Progress Indicators	- Faculty and staff participate in events and workshops on group-facilitation, decision-making, and conversation across differences. - Decision-making and group-facilitation processes shift within committees and other CMU groups. - Faculty, staff, and students from underrepresented groups report increased ability to participate fully in discussions and decisions.
Completed Actions	2025/26 Approximately thirty students, faculty, and staff participated in a community forum on practicing conversation across difference.

Strategic Priority 4: Employee Recruitment and Retention

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are drivers of institutional excellence and strengthen a university's ability to attract and retain talented students, faculty, and staff from a wide range of backgrounds. When individuals see their identities reflected and valued in institutional practices and culture, they are more likely to feel a sense of belonging and

commitment. Attention to barriers and biases in all aspects of the employee recruitment process is vital to attracting diverse employees. Likewise, careful attention to EDI within institutional policy and strong onboarding and offboarding practices are important for retaining employees from underrepresented groups and creating a healthy university culture.

Objective 4A

Remove barriers to underrepresented groups throughout the recruitment and hiring processes.

Objective 4B

Retain employees from underrepresented groups.

Action 4.1	Review, revise, and standardize employee recruitment practices to remove barriers and attract a more diverse range of applicants. Review will include job descriptions, advertising, interviews, and assessment processes.
Implementation timeline	September 2026
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	- Positions throughout the university attract a diverse range of applicants, including those in underrepresented groups. - Diversity of applicants remains throughout the recruitment process.
Completed Actions	2024/25 - Broadened number and types of job boards used for job posting, with attention to job boards used regularly by people in underrepresented groups. - Reviewed all new job postings to include more inclusive language, a note about accommodations during the recruitment process, and an equity commitment. - Interview questions were sent in advance to all candidates selected for an interview to increase accessibility.

Action 4.2	Review, revise, and standardize onboarding practices with an EDI lens.
Implementation timeline	September 2026
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	- Surveys, focus groups, and exit interviews indicate that employees, particularly from underrepresented groups, feel welcome and included at CMU. - Retention of employees from underrepresented groups is high.

	Proportional representation of underrepresented groups among faculty and staff.
Completed Actions	2024/25 Onboarding checklists in place to support hiring supervisors.

Action 4.3	Establish an 'Onboarding Buddies' program that pairs new employees with an onboarding mentor. Develop the program using an intercultural health lens.
Implementation timeline	September 2026
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	- Onboarding program is in place for all new employees. - Surveys, focus groups, and exit interviews indicate that employees, particularly from underrepresented groups, feel welcome and included at CMU. - Retention of employees from underrepresented groups is high. - Proportional representation of underrepresented groups among faculty and staff.

Action 4.4	Review and revise personnel policies with an EDI lens.
Implementation timeline	2025-2028
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	- Personnel policies are updated with inclusive language and an equity lens. - Surveys, focus groups, and exit interviews indicate that employees, particularly from underrepresented groups, feel welcome and included at CMU. - Retention of employees from underrepresented groups is strong. - Proportional representation of underrepresented groups among faculty and staff.
Completed Actions	2024/2025 'Respectful Campus' policy review completed.

Action 4.5	Provide high-quality unconscious-bias training to CMU faculty and staff.
Implementation timeline	January 2028
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources & Director of the Research Office

Progress Indicators	- Online unconscious-bias training is completed by the CRC selection committee. - Offer high-quality, in-person, unconscious-bias training to faculty and staff, with an initial focus on recruitment processes. - Evidence of bias-aware practices incorporated into recruitment, evaluation, and committee processes
Completed Actions	2020/21 Online unconscious-bias training completed by the CRC selection committee.

Strategic Priority 5: Student Body

When students feel valued and supported, they are more likely to thrive academically, socially, and personally. Creating a welcoming and inclusive space for students in the university requires attention to barriers in attracting, retaining, and supporting students from underrepresented groups. Careful attention to policies, physical spaces, classroom pedagogy, and campus culture contribute to a university where all students feel they belong.

Objective 5A

Attract students from underrepresented groups, including first-generation university students.

Objective 5B

Retain students from underrepresented groups, including first-generation university students, by creating a supporting and inclusive campus culture.

Action 5.1	Increase and sustain CMU's first-generation university student population to between 15-20%, as part of CMU's recruitment strategy, through targeted messaging, engaging parents of first-year students, and creating wrap-around supports.
Implementation timeline	September 2030
Person Responsible	Director of Admissions and Coordinator of Student Advising
Progress Indicators	15-20% of CMU's incoming undergraduate class are first-generation university students.

Action 5.2	Offer free, dorm housing for all first-year students.
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Implementation timeline	Fall 2026
Person Responsible	Vice-President, Student Life and Campus Operations
Progress Indicators	- Increased enrollment in CMU's dormitory program from students with accessibility needs - Increased enrollment in CMU's dormitory program from first-generation university students

Action 5.3	Review and revise awards and award criteria and assessment with an EDI lens and work with donors to create award Terms of References that prioritize students from underrepresented groups.
Implementation timeline	September 2028
Person Responsible	Financial Aid and Awards Manager
Progress Indicators	- Evaluation criteria for some awards have been updated to better recognize and support students from equity-deserving groups. - Pool of award applicants is diverse and includes applicants from underrepresented groups. - Proportional representation of underrepresented groups among award recipients
Completed Actions	2025/2026 New financial award is established to support first-generation university students.

Action 5.4	Using an EDI lens, review practices on establishing and running student groups to ensure student groups invite diverse membership and represent diverse interests.
Implementation timeline	December 2026
Person Responsible	Director of Student Community Life
Progress Indicators	- Proportional representation of underrepresented groups among student group membership and leadership - Students from underrepresented groups report feeling welcomed and able to participate in student groups.

Action 5.5	Offer a minimum of one workshop a year to equip student leaders to better create a culture of welcome and belonging within the student body. These workshops will offer student leaders new understanding, knowledge, and tools in a particular area of diversity, focussing on an alternating area of diversity each year.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing

Person Responsible	Director of Student Community Life
Progress Indicators	In post-workshop surveys, student leaders can name concrete actions to improve inclusion and belonging.
Completed Actions	2024/25 - Mini workshop with student leaders on invitational introductions, with a focus on gender and pronouns 2025/26 - Workshop with student leaders on creating welcoming spaces, with a focus on gender and pronouns - Mini workshop with student leaders on creating accessible spaces and events - Workshop with student leaders on cross-cultural bridge-building

Action 5.6	Offer instructors an opportunity to have course syllabi reviewed through a lens of inclusivity and accessibility.
Implementation timeline	2029
Person Responsible	Academic Dean and Coordinator of Accessibility Services
Progress Indicators	- Instructors have syllabi reviewed with a lens of inclusivity and accessibility. - Syllabi are revised to increase inclusivity and accessibility.

While actions have been selected specifically to address particular objectives, EDI work is interconnected. Many actions address more than one objective and could be located under multiple strategic priorities.

Strategic Priority 6: Data Collection and Analysis

Strong intercultural health requires an accurate understanding of the lived experience of those within the community and of all institutional stakeholders. Data collection is one vital way to understand the intercultural health of the institution. It is helpful to identify gaps that require attention, particularly when those gaps may be inadvertently masked by the stories and culture that comprise institutional identity. Over time, data collection is also a way to track progress and provide motivation towards next steps in the ongoing work of increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion within the community. As collected data also has the potential for misuse, CMU must create policy on data collection, storage, and sharing.

Objective 6A

Collect, store, and analyze identity data from CMU faculty and staff in a safe, transparent, and respectful manner to identify gaps and assess success in building intercultural health within the CMU community.

Action 6.1	Create a policy for identity-related employee data storage, usage, analysis, and retention.
Implementation timeline	December 2026
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	Data storage, usage, and retention policy is created and in use.

Action 6.2	Create a strategy to encourage voluntary self-identification and to communicate policies about employee data storage and usage to faculty and staff.
Implementation timeline	January 2028
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	- A growing percentage of new and current faculty and staff choose to complete the voluntary self-identification form. - Data shared from faculty and staff is regularly analyzed to assess progress and guide continuous improvement in EDI outcomes.

Action 6.3	Develop a voluntary self-identification form for new faculty and staff.
Implementation timeline	June 2026
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	- A voluntary self-identification form is created. - All new faculty and staff are invited to complete the form and most choose to complete it. - Disaggregated data from the self-identification form informs strategies to increase inclusion and belonging at CMU.
Completed Actions	2025/26 Optional self-identification section has been added to the new hire form (Commencement Form) for new staff and faculty.

Action 6.4	Implement the voluntary self-identification form for current faculty and staff.
Implementation timeline	January 2027
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	• A voluntary self-identification form is created and all current faculty and staff are invited to complete the form. • The percentage of faculty and staff who have completed the self-identification form grows each year. • Disaggregated data from the self-identification form informs strategies to increase inclusion and belonging at CMU.

Action 6.5	Conduct a biennial survey of faculty and staff to assess experiences of belonging, barriers to inclusion, and shifts in institutional culture.
Implementation timeline	January 2028
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources
Progress Indicators	• Disaggregated data from the survey informs strategies to increase inclusion and belonging at CMU. • Increased reports of welcome and inclusion from CMU faculty and staff.

Action 6.6	Analyze data from the self-identification forms and communicate analysis to senior administration and others, as appropriate, for accountability and to shape changes in policy and practice.
Implementation timeline	January 2028
Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources and Vice-President External
Progress Indicators	• Disaggregated data from the self-identification form informs strategies to increase inclusion and belonging at CMU. • Improved institutional capacity to analyze identity-based workforce data to inform EDI initiatives. • Increased inclusion and belonging are reported by faculty and staff.

Action 6.7	Increase transparency and trust within the CMU community by sharing a biennial report with President's Council on EDI initiatives and an anonymized summary of the results from the survey of faculty and staff.
Implementation timeline	January 2028

Person Responsible	Director of Human Resources and Vice-President External
Progress Indicators	- Regular discussion of the biennial EDI report at President's Council, with documented questions, feedback, and/or follow-up actions. - Increased understanding, trust, and ownership in CMU's EDI work, indicated in event participation and results from faculty and staff surveys

Strategic Priority 7: Research

Inclusive research is vital, both because it addresses inequities and because a diverse group of researchers, research questions, methodologies, and ways of knowing offer the best opportunities to find answers to our most pressing challenges. Improving equity, diversity, and inclusion in research involves identifying and removing barriers to researchers in equity-deserving groups. Providing EDI-related research resources and implicit-bias training to all researchers is also key to ensure the questions asked and the methods used are not limited to dominant perspectives or by implicit bias.

Objective 7A

Ensure the research environment at CMU incorporates an EDI lens at all levels of research design, data collection, and analysis as guided by best practices and Tri-Council guides.

Objective 7B

Increase awareness of strategies for integrating EDI into research and decolonizing research across CMU's research community, including the Faculty Research Committee, Research Ethics Board, and university research partnerships in accordance with Tri-Council policies and guidance.

Objective 7C

Reduce barriers to internal research funding for equity-deserving groups and track internal research funding with an EDI lens.

Objective 7D

Ensure that CMU hiring processes for CRCs are equitable and accessible.

Action 7.1	Revise CMU's internal grant application to include a section integrating an EDI lens to better incorporate underrepresented groups into research design, data collection, and analysis.
Implementation timeline	September 2027

Person Responsible	Director of the Research Office and Faculty Research Committee
Progress Indicators	- CMU's internal grant application invites faculty to identify how EDI is incorporated in research design, data collection, and analysis. - Faculty Research Committee adds EDI criteria for assessment. - Internal grant-funded projects reflect more inclusive and equitable research practices.
Completed Actions	2024/2025 Researchers incorporate EDI criteria in research-related course release competition.

Action 7.2	Provide workshops to faculty and research staff on incorporating an EDI lens in research, decolonizing research, and First Nations, Metis, Inuit and other global Indigenous peoples research protocols.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	Director of the Research Office and Vice President Academic
Progress Indicators	- Chair of the Research Ethics Board attends Ownership, Control, Access, and Permission (OCAP) training. - Three workshops on EDI integration, decolonizing research, and Indigenous research protocols are developed and offered to interested faculty and research staff. - Director of the Research Office incorporates Indigenous research protocols in Strategic Research Plan and Data Management Plans. - Internal research proposals reflect stronger consideration of equity, inclusion, and Indigenous research ethics.
Completed Actions	2023/24 - Workshop on decolonizing research is offered to LINCZ researchers and staff. 2024/2025 - REB Chairperson and CRC Chairholder attended OCAP training.

Action 7.3	Analyze data regarding equity-deserving groups at CMU in relation to internal research and funding opportunities.
Implementation timeline	Ongoing
Person Responsible	Director of the Research Office and Vice President Academic
Progress Indicators	- Internal research funds awarded are tracked using equity categorizations. - Faculty Research Committee and senior leadership are made aware of the analysis.

	A strategy is developed to address gaps in equity in relation to internal research and funding opportunities.
Completed Actions	2024/2025 Research office begins tracking who submits funding applications, amount of funding awarded, and gender-equity considerations.

Action 7.4	Create and utilize CMU's Selection Process for CRCs, a document that integrates EDI best practices into the CRC hiring process.
Implementation timeline	September 2026
Person Responsible	Vice-President Academic and Director of the Research Office
Progress Indicators	- Director of the Research Office inputs excerpts from CRC's guide <i>Creating an Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Research Environment: A Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention</i> into CMU Selection Process for CRCs. - Document is approved and socialized by those utilizing the process (Vice-President Academic, Office of the President, Human Resources department, Faculty Research Committee).
Completed Actions	2025/2026 Rough draft of document is created.

Strategic Priority 8: Physical Spaces

Sometimes the barriers faced by equity-deserving groups are not metaphorical, but literal. Intentionally shaping spaces to reflect diverse needs ensures that students, faculty, and staff can fully and safely participate in the breadth of campus life, both inside and outside the classroom.

Objective 8A

Ensure all buildings on campus are accessible and welcoming to those with disabilities.

Objective 8B

Ensure all buildings on campus are accessible and welcoming to people of all genders.

Objective 8C

Ensure every residence building on campus includes accessible units that are accessible to those with disabilities.

Objective 8D

Increase supports for those who are neurodiverse.

Action 8.1	Provide accessible washrooms in all publicly accessible buildings.
Implementation timeline	September 2025
Person Responsible	Vice-President, Student Life and Campus Operations and Accessibility Committee
Progress Indicators	People with accessibility needs can independently access and use washrooms in all publicly accessible CMU buildings, reflected in positive user feedback and the removal of reported barriers related to washroom accessibility.
Completed Actions	September 2023 - A new accessible and gender-neutral washroom is complete in Assiniboine Castle. September 2022 - A new accessible and gender-neutral washroom is complete in the South Hall. September 2025 - Seven new, accessible, and gender-neutral washrooms are created in the Poettcker Hall residence building.

Action 8.2	Improve lifts in Assiniboine Castle.
Implementation timeline	September 2023
Person Responsible	Vice-President, Student Life and Campus Operations and the Accessibility Committee
Progress Indicators	- Lifts in Assiniboine Castle function well. - People using mobility aids can access the entirety of the Assiniboine Castle without requesting assistance.
Completed Actions	September 2023 Lifts on the first floor of the Assiniboine Castle are replaced so they function better and more reliably.

Action 8.3	Create/renovate accessible units in residence buildings that currently lack accessible units.
Implementation timeline	September 2030
Person Responsible	Vice-President, Student Life and Campus Operations
Progress Indicators	Poettcker Hall residence building includes accessible units.

	• Katherine Friesen Apartment building includes accessible units. • Students with accessibility needs are able to access and live in residence units that meet their mobility and accommodation requirements, demonstrated by increased occupancy of accessible units and positive feedback on accessibility, safety, and usability.
Completed Actions	September 2025 • Two accessible dorm rooms are complete in the Poettcker Hall residence building. September 2030 • One accessible apartment is complete in Katherine Friesen Apartments building. • An elevator is added in Katherine Friesen Apartment building.

Action 8.4	Create low-sensory study rooms.
Implementation timeline	September 2029
Person Responsible	Vice-President, Student Life and Campus Operations and the Accessibility Committee
Progress Indicators	• A room on campus is adapted and stocked to serve as a low-sensory study space. • Students who benefit from low-sensory environments report improved ability to focus, regulate sensory input, and successfully engage in academic work after using the low sensory study rooms.

Policies that govern the staffing of Canada Research Chair positions

Canadian Mennonite University is committed to employment equity and encourages applications from the four federally designated groups (First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and women). The management and development of the University's Canada Research Chair Program is guided by the policies and procedures that govern faculty recruitment and advancement, as well as those that provide a framework for research. These include but are not limited to the following policies:

- [CMU Academic Staff Policies](#) from the CMU Personnel Policy Handbook
- [Policy Regarding Conflicts Of Interest In Research And Scholarship](#)

Process for Reporting, Monitoring, and Addressing EDI Concerns and Complaints

Concerns related to equity, diversity, and inclusion, both within the CRCP and the campus, will follow CMU's Respectful Campus Policy. The complainant may choose to pursue either an informal or formal resolution process, both of which are described in detail in the policy.

CMU's Human Resources department monitors CMU's Respectful Campus Policy. With permission from the complainant, the RCC will submit EDI concerns related to the CRC in writing to the Vice-President Academic. If a conflict of interest exists between the complainant and the Vice-President Academic, the complainant can bring concerns to the President. The Director of the Research Office, under the direction of the Vice-President Academic, will maintain documentation of correspondence and files for formal CRC EDI matters.

The Vice-President Academic will meet formally with the chairholder(s) once per year and more regularly on an informal basis to discuss their role, concerns, and any explicit EDI-related issues.

EDI-related concerns outside of the CRC Program can be directed to the ICH and EDI Committee.

Concerns or complaints relating to CMU's EDI agenda or implementation can be directed to:

[Charlie Peronto](#), Vice-President, Student Life and Campus Operations, and Chair of the ICH and EDI Committee
cperonto@cmu.ca
204-487-3300 ext. 327

Concerns or complaints relating to CMU's management of the institution's CRC allocations can be directed to the Vice-President Academic or designate:

Jerry Buckland, Vice President Academic
jbuckland@cmu.ca
204-487-3300 ext. 642