

RESPECT, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

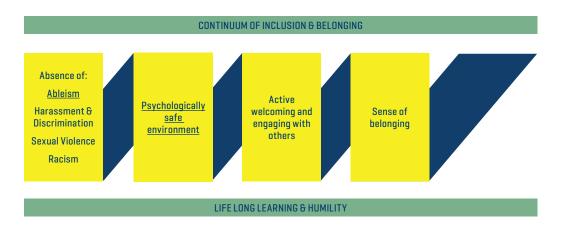
Greetings from the RDI Director

It is my pleasure and honour to provide the first BCIT Annual Report for the Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion [RDI] department. I'd like to acknowledge with respect and humility that the British Columbia Institute of Technology campuses are located on the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish Nations of, Skwxwú7mesh [Squamish], Səlilwəta?/Selilwitulh [Tsleil-Waututh], and xwməθkwəyəm [Musqueam].



When doing the work of the Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion department we regularly reflect on three of the BCIT Values: Championing Diversity and Inclusion, Engaging with Respect, and Pursuing Collaboration. It is worth noting that in the 2022 BCIT Employee Experience Survey, diversity was one of the most positively scored strengths.

At BCIT, all staff, students, and faculty have the right to learn and work in an environment free of Ableism, Harassment, and Discrimination, Sexual Violence, and Racism. We strive to create an environment that promotes a sense of belonging. Along the way, we need to have a psychologically safe environment, so all people are actively welcomed and engaged. This Continuum of Inclusion and Belonging guides the efforts of the RDI department:



There is much work to be done at BCIT to ensure an inclusive, and accessible working and learning environment for all. This requires a commitment to lifelong learning and humility, so our entire community remains engaged, respectful, and open to change.

Jackie Gruber

Jackie Gruber
Director

Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion

The RDI department

In 2019 the RDI department, formerly known as the Harassment & Discrimination Prevention office, was rebranded. The RDI department consists of one Coordinator, two Advisors, and a Director.

The RDI team has been building and reforming the department since then to place greater emphasis on education and awareness. We have developed various initiatives and collaborated with members within our BCIT community as well as external subject matter experts.



Our goal is to foster a respectful and inclusive environment by creating awareness and belonging through education, events, training, and tools. We also act as a confidential resource—providing assistance and support to departments, and individuals with concerns of bullying, harassment, and discrimination. We assist individuals with informal and formal conflict resolution.

Workshops & Presentations

The RDI department has developed presentations and workshops, and has participated in speaking engagements for both staff and students that address topics related to BCIT's values—Championing Diversity and Inclusion, Pursuing Collaboration, and Engaging with Respect.

Over the past year, our department has received increased requests from instructors to present to students so as to prepare them for the work environment, as well as requests for presentations and workshops for various departments to proactively create safer spaces. In addition to standardized workshops, we offer custom presentations and workshops including:

- Respect in the working and learning environment
- Dealing with micro-aggressions
- Unconscious bias
- Diversity considerations in hiring
- Anti-racism
- Proper pronoun use

Additionally, as BCIT is a member of the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI), all BCIT faculty and staff have access to their free webinars.

Online Training

Over the last three years, the RDI department has developed five online training modules that are available to staff in the Employee Learning Centre and available to the public for free as Massive Open Online Courses [MOOCs]. To date, these MOOCs have been accessed by more than 900 people. While Respectful Workplaces is mandatory training for all BCIT employees, the optional courses in the Employee Learning Centre have been accessed by more than 1100 employees. In the last two years we have released the following five courses:

2022 COURSES

Anti-Racism

Participants will be challenged, stretched, and supported to reflect, engage deeply, and cultivate a stronger anti-racist practice. This module strives to build deeper relationships with people that participants encounter in their work, education, and beyond.

Human Rights 101

This module supports participants in gaining a better understanding of their legal rights and obligations under human rights legislation.

Relearning Gender

Gender inclusion is something many of us are learning, or relearning. This online module helps participants create safer spaces for the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community.

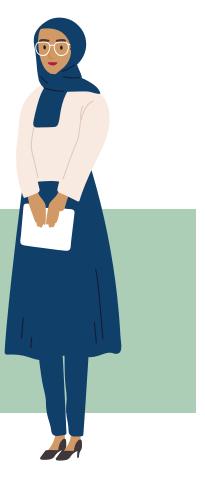
2021 COURSES

Respectful Workplaces

This training explores the fundamentals of a respectful workplace which will help participants contribute towards a more inclusive and welcoming environment, and gain a deeper understanding of what constitutes discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

Understanding Unconscious Bias

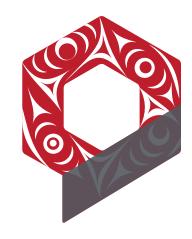
An examination of our own unconscious biases and how they may impact our decision-making and interactions with others. This training includes practical tips on how to reduce the impact of unconscious bias on our actions.



Diversity Circles

Diversity Circles provides staff, faculty, students, alumni, and the public with panels, workshops, conversations, tools, and connections to engage with increasing diversity positively, sensitively, and strategically. Diversity Circles leverage the power of community-based expertise to drive responses to diversity and empower all participants in the diversity conversation.

Founded in 2015 by Dr. Shannon Kelly, Zaa Joseph, and Kyla Epstein, the Diversity Circles team has delivered over 100 workshops, launched mentoring and networking programs, and shared their findings across Canada. To continue this important work with increased support, BCIT's Diversity Circles was made part of the Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion department in 2019. Committee members are from various areas within and outside of BCIT.



RDI Tools

The RDI team has created many tools and resources for staff and students as part of their commitment to education and awareness. Resources are available on the RDI website and cover a variety of topics including:

- EDI Libquide
- Complaint Process FAQ
- Harassment & Discrimination Complaint Options
- <u>Harassment & Discrimination Reporting Flow Chart</u>
- How to Give and Receive Feedback
- Human Rights Fact Sheet
- Inclusion Lens for the Learning Environment
- Inclusive Committee Checklist
- Respectful Conference/Video Call Etiquette
- Respectful Email Etiquette
- Student Accommodation Requests [non-disability related]
- Workplace Conflict Checklist



Consultations

Staff, faculty, and students contact the RDI department for advice, support, and information related to:

- → Concerns around behaviour that may contravene the Harassment & Discrimination [H&D] Policy
- → How to respond to disrespectful behaviour
- → Furthering EDI principles in their work
- → EDI best practices and resources
- → Support for informal conflict resolution

During this fiscal year the RDI department received approximately 145 new inquiries. Most of these inquiries are addressed informally without filing a formal complaint under the H&D policy. Some inquiries involve only one conversation to address, while others lead to multiple meetings. Any BCIT community member who believes that another BCIT community member violated the H&D Policy by engaging in harassment, bullying, or discrimination has the right to file a formal written complaint for mediation or investigation.

Most inquiries related to the behaviour of others appear to be related to interpersonal conflict. The RDI department is currently in the process of developing a custom database (expected to be completed later in 2023) which will record and accurately categorize the specific nature of the inquiries. This will allow us to generate more specific data and identify trends in the future.



Committees and Working Groups

The RDI Director co-chairs several committees and working groups. In addition, the RDI department is represented on many other working groups and committees by one or more RDI team members:

INTERNAL TO BCIT

- Accessibility Committee (co-chair)
- Anti-Racism in Nursing
- Black Excellence Day Working Group
- Canada Research Chair Selection Committees
- Diversity & Inclusion in Learning (co-chair)
- Diversity Circles
- Equity Diversity & Inclusion Committee (chair)
- Holidays and Observances Working Group (co-chair)
- Pink Shirt Day Working Group
- Pride Committee
- Policy Review Committee
- Sexual Violence and Misconduct Prevention Committee (co-chair)
- Sexual Violence Response Team member
- T & T Pavilions Building Committee and other working groups supporting facilities from a lens of inclusion

EXTERNAL TO BCIT

- Post-Secondary Employers' Association Justice Equity Diversity & Inclusion Community of Practice
- WAGE: Project with the Government of Canada's department for Women and Gender Equality and Electricity Human Resources Canada to address and remove barriers that impede women's access to the economic opportunity, prosperity, and security that the electricity industry offers.
- CiCan National Working Group Career Launcher to assist with the creation of tools and resources to encourage medium sized employers to hire equity-deserving apprentices.
- The RDI Director was also appointed to the Technical Committee on Accessible Service
 Delivery by the British Columbia's Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
 to address barriers to full and equal participation of people with disabilities through the
 implementation of the Accessible British Columbia Act.

Accessibility

In accordance with the Accessible British Columbia Act, BCIT established an Accessibility Steering Committee and related working groups in fall 2022. Please review the <u>Accessible British Columbia Act FAQ</u> for more information about the Act and Regulations.

The purpose of the Committee is to assist the Institute in identifying barriers to participation and advising on how to remove and prevent such barriers in our community through the development of an Accessibility Plan. The BCIT RDI Office received an investment of \$50,000 from the Canada Research Chairs Program administered by the federal government's Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat to further this work.

Guiding objectives for the Committee are:

ACCESS

Persons should have barrierfree access to places, events, and other functions that are generally available in the community.

EOUALITY

Persons should have barrierfree access to those things that will give them equality of opportunity and outcome.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Access should be provided in a manner that does not establish or perpetuate differences based on a person's disability.

SYSTEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility to prevent and remove barriers rests with the person or organization that is responsible for establishing or perpetuating the barrier.

The Committee is co-chaired by the Associate Vice President of Academic Operations and the Director of the RDI department and reports directly to the President. Care has been taken to ensure the Committee is reflective of both the BCIT community and the diversity of persons in British Columbia. At least half of the members are either persons with disabilities or individuals who support persons with disabilities.



The RDI department commissioned TransFocus to complete an audit of Inclusive [all-gender] washrooms. The results from the assessment, along with recommendations on increasing inclusive washrooms, were released in the 2022 Inclusive Washroom Guidelines for BCIT report. The RDI department continues to support Campus Planning and Facilities in their ongoing efforts to increase inclusive washrooms for both staff and students.

Anti-Racism Framework

BCIT acknowledges that racism exists within our community, just as it does within the broader community. While BCIT has taken proactive steps for years to reduce and address discrimination it was recognized that more work is needed. In July 2020 BCIT formed an Anti-Racism Working Group comprised of diverse BCIT community members to expand these efforts.

Members of the Anti-Racism Working Group included employees from each of the unions, the Student Association, excluded (non-unionized) staff, Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships, senior leadership, and the RDI department. BCIT also brought in consultants from diverse backgrounds from the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. The purpose of the working group was to provide leadership and advice in identifying existing barriers in the BCIT Community for racialized people, as well as helping to generate ideas for the development of a plan and related specific action items, particularly from the perspective of racialized groups. In Fall 2020, a ThoughExchange facilitated dialogues were undertaken to identify areas of strength from resources throughout BCIT as well as key priority areas for future actions.

The information gathered through those processes formed the basis of the <u>Anti-Racism Framework</u>, released in 2021. The framework identified priority action items in four key areas:

- → Education and Raising Awareness
- → Data Collection, Analysis and Utilization
- → Human Resources and Policy
- → Inclusive Learning Environments

Significant progress has been made in implementing identified priorities over the last two years. Some examples include:

- → New Human Rights 101 and Anti-Racism training modules
- → Workshops focused on diversity considerations and unconscious bias in the hiring process
- → Tools and workshops for students and faculty focused on the learning environment
- → Integration of data collection as part of the current EDI assessment process



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Assessment

The RDI department is working with VEZA Global, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy specialists, to build a strategy addressing the unique needs of our diverse BCIT community. VEZA's founder, Manpreet Dhillon, is a BCIT alumna. The RDI department was the recipient of a Canada Research Chairs EDI Grant which will be used to assist in the development of the strategy.

In summer 2022, an EDI assessment began in order to aid in the design of the BCIT EDI strategy. The assessment includes a review of key BCIT documents and polices, individual interviews and focus groups with key community members, as well as confidential surveys open to all staff, students, and alumni. The purpose of the assessment is to learn more about the make-up of our BCIT community, what we are doing well, and what opportunities and barriers to full inclusion and participation remain. The results of the assessment are expected later in 2023 and will guide the formation of the EDI strategy expected to be completed the following year. Data collection was one of the identified key areas in BCIT's Anti-Racism Framework.

Harassment & Discrimination Policy & Procedure

The Harassment and Discrimination ("H&D") Policy 7507 sets out the definitions of harassment, bullying, and discrimination, as well as BCIT's obligations to address such issues. The Procedure sets out the process for a fair and equitable resolution of complaints of harassment, bullying, and discrimination made under the Policy.

Policy 7507 is a unique policy which was created in conjunction with BCIT, the three unions, and the BCIT Student Association who together constitute the Harassment and Discrimination Steering Committee. The RDI department acts as a resource for this committee. The policy is included in the BCGEU Faculty Collective Agreement at Article 1.7 and BCGEU Support Collective Agreement at Article 1.8. The Policy and Procedure are currently under review. However, in accordance with both collective agreements, BCIT needs the unions' mutual agreement for any changes to the Policy.

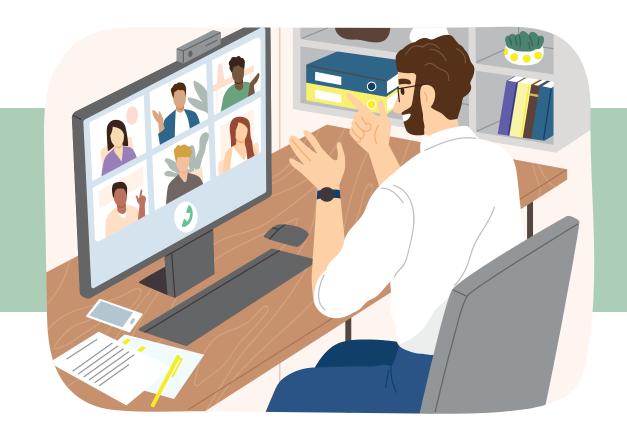
The RDI department has been working diligently with the H&D Steering Committee to update the current Policy.

Get Involved

Taking steps to further an environment free of discrimination and harassment that is accessible, equitable, diverse, and inclusive is the responsibility of all of our community members. We appreciate every individual and department who has taken the time to collaborate on initiatives with the RDI department and further these principles in their work.

We encourage the BCIT community to get involved and collaborate with the RDI department. Consider reviewing materials on our webpage, reading our monthly newsletter, completing online training modules, and signing up for workshops and events.

Remember it takes all of us to make lasting change.



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EDUCATION FOR A COMPLEX WORLD.

bcit.ca/respect