



## Action Framework

Among practitioners, activists, educators and change agents, the call for accountability and action on inclusion is clear, and the need urgent. The COVID-19 pandemic presents a unique opportunity to re-imagine the future. Racism, or more aptly, systemic racism, has become a concern of endemic proportion, requiring immediate action and accountability. There is a consensus among employers and other stakeholders on the need to build back better. Building back better requires a commitment to ensuring no one is left behind in Canada's efforts towards social and economic advancement.

The Inclusion Project, with partners, Excellence Canada and the Canada Council for Aboriginal Business, is embarking on a mission to advance equity and inclusion, and address systemic racism and inequities faced by racialized and other equity-deserving groups across public and private sector organizations across Canada. Through the Employment Equity Partnership, we will bring together multi-sector stakeholders through a pilot initiative to champion employment equity, define employment standards and benchmarks for organizations within Canadian workplaces and in the Employment Equity Network.

The Employment Equity Network is a community of employers and organizational stakeholders working together with a common commitment to embed social justice, equity and inclusion within organizations through accountability measures and benchmarks for employment equity. By signing the Employment Equity Pledge, members of the Network will commit to data transparency, accountability and equity in employment practices, including recruitment, retention, pay, professional advancement and representation in leadership, for equity-deserving groups, particularly designated groups identified in the Employment Equity Act: women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and racialized people.

### Accountability through Partnership

One of the many reasons for a lack of consensus on standards for accountability is because organizations continue to work in silos. Good intentions without a commitment to knowledge sharing and collaboration on best practices for equity and inclusion, will prevent us from moving forward as a collective. There is a demonstrable benefit to collaboration and knowledge sharing that enables and empowers people and organizations to work towards employment equity. To move together with a shared focus, organizations at the forefront of their respective sectors need to share agency, resources and power with organizations that are well equipped to catalyze change within the sector.

Adopting a co-share model, sector leaders and accountability partners will work together to develop the Workplace Equity Scorecards for employment equity across the following sectors:

- Civil Society (non-profit and charitable sector)
- Education
- Financial services (banking, insurance, investment etc.)
- Government
- Hospitality/Tourism
- STEM/Tech (healthcare, communications, manufacturing etc.)
- Police/Armed Forces.

We will invite leaders and key representatives to develop best-in-class practices and accountability frameworks for the respective sectors. The Workplace Equity Scorecards will be designed as a toolkit for action, with a holistic framework and index for measuring equity, diversity and inclusion in organizations. The pathway for employment and organizational practices will be clearly defined through the scorecards. Leveraging existing employment equity legislation, the working group will design frameworks and dashboards for addressing systemic inequalities and barriers to employment for racialized people and other minorities in the workplace.

The pilot initiative will empower the Employment Equity Network to:

- Identify and analyze gaps in employment practices within organizations;
- Shift from a compliance-focused imperative for data collection to an equity-focused imperative for collecting, analyzing and sharing disaggregated employment data;
- Adapt data-driven solutions to address inequities faced by women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, racialized people and other equity-deserving people;
- Develop metrics and key indicators for measuring progress and modelling best practices for data transparency and accountability among stakeholders;
- Support partnership with community groups and organizations working with specific equity-deserving groups.

### **The Commitment**

1. Financial investment in the development of Workplace Equity Scorecards;
2. Corporate responsibility & support for smaller organizations with lesser financial capital;
3. Commitment to The Inclusion Project's Employment Equity Pledge;
4. Commitment to knowledge-sharing, collaboration and co-developing best practices on employment equity;
5. Commitment to data transparency, accountability and equitable data culture.

At the end of the pilot phase spanning 12 – 18 months, we will share the standards publicly for use across Canadian workplaces, and for adapting the legislation on employment equity.