

Part I - IGNITING CHANGE: FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Igniting Change: Final Report and Recommendations
Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization
March 8, 2021

Introduction

On May 5, 2020, the Board of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (Federation) approved a proposal to create an Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). The Board approved a draft terms of reference on May 12, 2020, delegating the power to appoint the committee's membership to the Executive. In consultation with the committee chair, the second "D" was added to the terms of reference, and this was approved by the Board.¹¹ On July 30, 2020, the Federation announced the appointment of the Congress Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization (AC-EDID).¹²

This Final Report and Recommendations brings to a close the work of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences' Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization (AC-EDID). Following six months of committee deliberations, social sciences and humanities community consultations and interviews, and a research and literature review, the report represents our efforts to fulfill our mandate. In this report we detail the nature of our work and our recommendations which should enable the Federation to actively engage in anti-racism and decolonization practices, and to embed, advance, and achieve a more equitable, accessible, diverse, and inclusive Congress. Moreover, through these recommendations, the Federation, as the premier association representing the social sciences and humanities, should be more actively engaged in leading change in the broader social sciences and humanities community that meets at Congress and other Federation events.

Our Mandate

1. Status

1.1. The Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization (EDID) is a special committee established by the Federation's Board of Directors to provide advice to the President and CEO and the Board

¹¹ The decision to add the second "D" was agreed upon in consultation with Dr. Malinda S. Smith (former VP of Equity and Diversity at the Federation) and Dr. Cindy Blackstock (former Director of Equity and Diversity at the Federation).

¹² The Federation appoints a Congress Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization, <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/federation-appoints-congress-advisory-committee-equity-diversity-inclusion-and-decolonization-0>

of Directors on objectives and strategies to support EDID in Congress and other Federation Events.

1.2. Discussions by the Advisory Committee will take into account the full range of events organized by the Federation, as a suite of activities.

1.3. Establishment of the Advisory Committee was approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting of May 5, 2020.

1.4. The initial term for the Advisory Committee is May 5, 2020, to November 1, 2020.

1.5. The term can be renewed as required and approved by the Board of Directors.

2. Mandate

2.1. The Advisory Committee's mandate is to advise the Board on (1) strategies to support EDID in Congress and other Federation events, and (2) specific actions the Federation and its members can take, in the short, medium, or longer term, to:

2.2. Support equitable and inclusive access and participation for its members to Federation activities.

2.3. Support decolonization and reconciliation with Indigenous communities, and collaborate to increase opportunities for Indigenous students, scholars, and communities.

2.4. Support critical conversations about colonialism and anti-Black racism, including an intersectional lens that makes visible the impact of multiple forms of systemic discrimination.

3. Membership

3.1. Members of the Advisory Committee and its chair/co-chairs will be appointed by the Federation's Executive Committee.

3.2. The Advisory Committee will consist of a minimum of six members, and include current and former Federation Board members and representatives of the University of Alberta.

3.3. Members of the Advisory Committee will be selected to support all aspects of diversity, to bring knowledge of the Federation and Congress, and to contribute experience and expertise on EDID issues.

3.4. The Federation's Manager of Programs and Policy will serve as secretary to the Advisory Committee.

3.5. The President and CEO may engage consulting services to provide strategic advice to the committee or to facilitate its work.

Meetings

4.1. The Advisory Committee will meet by telephone or video conference.

4.2. The meetings shall be conducted in either English or French. No simultaneous interpretation will be provided for meetings.

4.3. A meeting schedule will be presented to the Advisory Committee for approval at its first meeting.

Committee Membership

Malinda S. Smith (Chair), Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), Professor of Political Science, and 2018 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Fellow, University of Calgary; Past Vice President (Equity Issues), Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Noreen Golfman (Vice-Chair), Professor of English, and former Provost and Vice President Academic, Memorial University; Past President, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Marie Battiste, O.C., F.R.S.C., 2019 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Fellow, and Professor Emerita, Educational Foundations, University of Saskatchewan.

Wesley Crichlow, Critical Race Professor, University of Ontario Institute of Technology, and Director, Federation for Humanities & Social Sciences; Federation EDID Board Lead.

Jay T. Dolmage, Associate Chair, Undergraduate Communication Outcomes Initiative, and Professor, English Language and Literature, University of Waterloo.

Florence Glanfield, Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming & Research), and Professor of Secondary Education, University of Alberta.

Claudia Malacrida, Professor of Sociology and Board of Governors Research Chair Emerita; Past Associate Vice-President Research, University of Lethbridge; Federation Board member.

Anne-José Villeneuve, Associate Professor of French Linguistics, Campus Saint-Jean, University of Alberta.

Background

Several lines led to the formation of this committee. The first and most obvious one can be traced to the racial profiling of Black graduate student Shelby McPhee at Congress 2019 held at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the chain of events that ensued.¹³ A second, and

¹³Shelby McPhee has written and spoken on his experience at Congress, hence using his name. “Scholar who was racially profiled welcomed back at UBC: ‘Believe the victim’: Shelby McPhee was wrongly accused of stealing a laptop from a university conference,” CBC (February 7, 2020), <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1695133763826>; Karin Larsen, “Nova Scotia student says he was racially profiled at UBC-held congress: Shelby McPhee says he was asked to show his congress registration and falsely accused of stealing a laptop,” CBC (June 5, 2019), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/nova-scotia-student-says-he-was-racially-profiled-at-ubc-held-congress-1.4668201>

related, rationale relates to the recognized harm and the need to answer the question: what is to be done to repair the harm? What must the Federation – and, in turn, its constituent member associations, universities, and affiliates – do to combat the scourge of anti-Black racism, to repair and to prevent further harm to colleagues in the Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA) meetings he was attending, and to facilitate solidarity among the many scholarly associations? While the racial profiling had occurred at a Congress hosted by UBC,¹⁴ the Federation agreed to the demand of the BCSA that Western University, the 2020 host of Congress, would modify its conference theme to “*Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism*”¹⁵ in order to focus attention on the historical and contemporary Black and Indigenous experiences in Canada. When Congress 2020 was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, another question arose: how does the Federation, and the social sciences and humanities community, continue the engagement with confronting anti-Black racism and colonialism? The pandemic created considerable uncertainty about the conditions under which Congress 2021 would occur – in-person, hybrid, or virtual – and the conditions and possibilities for the continuation of the conversations on anti-Black racism and colonialism.

The most obvious reason for the formation of the committee can be traced to the incident of racial profiling at Congress held at the University of British Columbia (UBC) on June 1-7, 2019 and the chain of events that ensued. Specifically, on June 2, Shelby McPhee – a young, Black graduate student who was attending his first national conference at the Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA) meetings¹⁶ – was the target of racial profiling by a white Congress attendee who questioned his status as a registered attendee, and falsely accused him of stealing a laptop.¹⁷ McPhee was also questioned by campus police and the RCMP. McPhee was subjected to suspicion, made to feel out of place, as if Black people like him did not belong in the Congress space. The event was covered by several media sites, notably by the public broadcaster which directly quoted the Black scholar’s complaint:

As a Black man in this predominantly white space, I not only felt harassed but disrespected and embarrassed to not only have been blatantly profiled by two of your conference attendees but also held in front of bystanders for over half an hour and interrogated for all to see... Suffice it to say, I felt dehumanised and violated and in that

¹⁴ UBC, “Revised: Statement regarding report of anti-Black racism incident during Congress 2019 (June 11, 2019), <https://equity.ubc.ca/news-and-stories/revised-statement-regarding-report-of-anti-black-racism-incident-during-congress-2019/>

¹⁵ Patrizia Albanese, President, “Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Federation President’s update regarding the Congress 2020 theme” (August 14, 2019), <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/federation-presidents-update-regarding-congress-2020-theme>; Jeff Tennant, Academic Convenor for Congress 2020, “Welcome to Congress 2020: “Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism.” (March 5, 2020), <https://www.congress2019.ca/congress-blog/welcome-congress-2020-bridging-divides-confronting-colonialism-and-anti-black-racism>

¹⁶ Karen Larsen, “Nova Scotia student says he was racially profiled at UBC-held congress,” CBC (June 5, 2019), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/nova-scotia-student-says-he-was-racially-profiled-at-ubc-held-congress-1.4668201>; Bailey Moreton, “Fighting against racial profiling on university campuses,” Charlatan (April 19, 2020), <https://charlatan.ca/2020/04/fighting-against-racial-profiling-on-university-campuses/>

¹⁷ Federation Statement, August 14, 2019

moment, I felt as though The Federation and the Congress did not actively work toward creating for me, 'a safe, respectful and collegial experience,' as your Code of Conduct claims.¹⁸

No member of the social sciences and humanities community should experience such public humiliation while attending Federation events. In a June 5, 2019 open letter to the Federation, the BCSA drew attention to how the victim of racial profiling was further harmed by the Federation's response, including the lack of support for McPhee during the incident. The BCSA's specific demands to repair the harm included the need for the Federation to issue a formal apology,¹⁹ and to make an explicit reference to anti-Black racism in the Congress 2020 theme. A number of scholarly associations and individuals expressed their solidarity with McPhee and support for the BCSA's statement and demands by issuing their own statements on their web pages and on social media.

The incidence of racial profiling cast a long shadow over Congress and raised the question of whether it was an inclusive space in which Black scholars and scholarship could thrive. The incident, and the chain of responses that followed, also highlighted the need for broader social sciences and humanities community engagement with institutional and systemic racism and with the everyday lived experiences of racial profiling. Such profiling often plays out in professional spaces as "unconscious demotion," that is, as "the unthinking habit of assuming that somebody holds a position lower in status or expertise than they actually do."²⁰ Ultimately, the independent investigation commissioned by the Federation led to the perpetrator being banned from attending Congress for three years. In subsequent public statements, the Federation denounced "anti-Black racism, racial profiling, harassment and discrimination of any kind."²¹

The BCSA's demand, and the Federation's efforts to repair the harm, created space and opportunity for the social sciences and humanities community to collectively examine and combat anti-Black racism and colonialism at its premier gathering. The original theme at Western University, the 2020 host of Congress, was *Bridging Divides*, characterized as follows:

"The theme emphasizes that Congress assembles scholars, artists and members of the general public who engage with the world from differing viewpoints, offering a forum to share perspectives, to listen deeply and critically, and to respond. Also, it's an invitation for people to listen to the land and the water. It brings a focus on interdisciplinarity (bridging disciplinary divides) and on internationalization (bridging

¹⁸ Canadian Press, "Man banned for racially profiling black N.S. student at B.C. meeting," CBC (August 29, 2020), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/racial-profiling-student-nova-scotia-british-columbia-1.5264614>

¹⁹ Patrizia Albanese, President, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, "Letter to the Black Canadian Studies Association" (June 5, 2019), <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/letter-black-canadian-studies-association>

²⁰ Better Allies, "Being an Ally When People Don't Look The Part or Have Other Visible (or Invisible) Differences," (December 14, 2018), <https://betterallies.medium.com/being-an-ally-when-people-dont-look-the-part-or-have-other-visible-or-invisible-differences-167153b12688>

²¹ Federation Statement, June 2019.

national divides). At the same time, it highlights our disciplines' engagement in bringing people together to build resilience in the face of forces that tear them apart (bridging political and ideological divides) and in overcoming the divisiveness of colonialism while promoting reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and settler populations."

In August 2019, the Federation's president agreed to the BCSA's demand and announced the revised theme as *Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism*²² in order "to respond to the serious issue of anti-Black racism."²³ This change was meant to open "important opportunities for participants" to engage in "difficult but essential discussions about the most serious issues facing us as scholars, citizens, and members of our society." Many scholarly associations responded to the new theme in their conference Call for Papers, keynote invitations, and plenary planning.

The Long Shadow of the COVID-19 Pandemic

On March 19, 2020, as COVID-19 was closing in, the Federation announced that Congress 2020 would be held remotely. This decision was criticized by the BCSA and other scholarly associations who thought the conference, and the theme, should be postponed rather than cancelled. Other opponents of the "virtual Congress" highlighted the fact that, like remote learning, virtual conferencing can affect the quality of interpersonal exchanges, and exacerbate existing inequities, including the digital divide. On April 1, 2020, the Federation reversed its decision and announced the cancellation of Congress 2020. A few months later, the Federation was ensnared by another public row when the announcement of the Prix du Canada in June 2020 led to the resignation of the Indigenous Advisory Circle, an event it described as "an important wake-up call for the Federation."²⁴ Individually, and together, these developments strengthened the resolve to go beyond commitments to EDI, reconciliation, Indigenization, and decolonization to identifying and proposing promising practices for systemic change.

When the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of the conference at Western University, the question became: how can the Federation bring forward into Congress 2021 the

²² Patrizia Albanese, "Federation President's update regarding the Congress 2020 theme," Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (August 14, 2019), <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/federation-presidents-update-regarding-congress-2020-theme>; Jeff Tennant, "Welcome to Congress 2020: "Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism." (March 5, 2020), <https://www.congress2019.ca/congress-blog/welcome-congress-2020-bridging-divides-confronting-colonialism-and-anti-black-racism>

²³ Patrizia Albanese, "Federation President's Update regarding the Congress 2020 theme," Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (August 14, 2019), <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/federation-presidents-update-regarding-congress-2020-theme>

²⁴ Patrizia Albanese, Chair of the Board, and Gabriel Miller, President & CEO, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, "Statement regarding the 2020 Prix du Canada" (2020), <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/statement-regarding-2020-prix-du-canada>

conversations on confronting anti-Black racism and colonialism? Despite the pandemic shaping the conditions under which the AC-EDID was conducting this work, we wanted to engage in a deeper understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and we especially wanted to tease out the implications of the second “d” of decolonization. For Congress, and member scholarly associations, the pandemic created considerable uncertainty about the conditions under which the annual meeting would occur – in-person, hybrid, or virtual – and the possibilities and conditions under which the conversations on racism and colonialism would be occurring. Concern was expressed by the BCSA and other associations that the online venue would not be ideal for having substantive conversations about anti-Black racism, colonialism and decolonization.²⁵ At the same time, a number of other scholarly associations had decided to bring forward to Congress 2021 the conversations they had planned to hold at Western University. Added to this complex configuration of developments was the fact that the theme of the May 29-June 4, 2021 Congress at the University of Alberta, *Northern Relations*,²⁶ had been announced for some time.

“Congress 2021’s theme, Northern Relations, will encourage delegates to explore the connections between peoples, communities, cultures, and ways of knowing, while also listening to those voices that speak directly to some of the most pressing issues in the North: reconciliation, governance, social justice, climate change, reciprocity, education and much more.”²⁷

The institutional and territorial shift – from Congress at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver to Western University in London and, ultimately, to the University of Alberta in Edmonton – highlights why our focus shifted from individuals to institutional and systemic factors. It also underscores why, as a committee, we wanted to look back at the historical antecedents but also pivot to examine accessibility, equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization in Congress, other Federation events, and the social sciences and humanities more broadly.

The Committee Sets to Work

The AC-EDID was announced on July 30, 2020, during a summer of discontent shaped by the twin pandemic of racism and COVID-19, and the growing evidence of disproportionate impacts

²⁵ Art Markman, “How to Have Difficult Conversations Virtually,” *Harvard Business Review* (July 8, 2019), <https://hbr.org/2019/07/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-virtually>; Taylor Mulcahey, “How to Navigate Difficult Convos Virtually,” *Rewire* (June 29, 2020), <https://www.rewire.org/navigate-difficult-conversations-virtually/>

²⁶ Lauren Boothby, “Congress 2021: University of Alberta to host largest academic gathering in Canada,” *Edmonton Journal* (January 25, 2020), <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/congress-2021-university-of-alberta-to-host-largest-academic-gathering-in-canada>

²⁷ Federation Press Release, “University of Alberta to Host Canada’s Largest Academic Gathering in 2021” (January 24, 2020), <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/university-alberta-host-canadas-largest-academic-gathering-2021>

on some equity-deserving groups.²⁸ To do the work with a sense of urgency as well as grounded in knowledge, the committee was constituted to intentionally include members from wide-ranging backgrounds. Committee members brought to the table research, teaching, community engagement, administrative, and lived experiences in the areas of accessibility, anti-colonialism, anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Expertise was drawn from social sciences and humanities disciplines in universities across Canada, as well as from former and current Board members. Despite the already full schedules and multiple layers of commitments added on during this work, this all-volunteer committee worked through the multiple meetings, writing, editing and collaborating through holidays, weekends and nights. We also worked through the intellectual, emotional, physical and administrative challenges of building trust and a shared understanding of the complex terrain of the work in a virtual environment, in the midst of a continuing pandemic, and in the face of the urgent and practical need to respond to how to continue the critical conversations on anti-Black racism and colonialism, specifically, and equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization more broadly, in face-to-face, hybrid, or virtual Congress environments.

Although it was expected that the schedule of the committee's work would conclude by the end of 2020, the scope of the work, in the midst of a pandemic, presented an expectation that could not be reasonably met in the limited timeframe, and the schedule had to be revised and the mandate extended. The work of this committee, and the recommendations that flow from it, should also be viewed as necessary to reinvigorate equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Federation's work (see Appendix 1 and 2), including Congress and other events, and to vigorously pursue anti-racism (anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, anti-Asian, systemic), anti-colonialism and decolonization in the social sciences and humanities community that meets at Congress.

As our report and recommendations outline, equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (EDID) are not singular as the acronym "EDID" suggests, and it is not a checkbox of activities that can be managed in rote fashion. Rather, the metaphor of "journey" more aptly captures the necessary and ongoing conscientization about oppression and its multiple sources, and the labour to eliminate injustice and oppression arising from racism, colonialism, and structural and systemic inequities. Our consultations found that while uneven, this work is already being pursued at Congress by some Federation member associations, universities, and affiliates.

Our mandate includes advising on how to embed equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization into Congress and other Federation events at Congress 2021 and beyond. This complex terrain, and the requirements of our work, including the contested language, grammar, and practices associated with the institutionalization of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), and the relationship to the *longue durée* of anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and decolonization struggles, had to be tackled head-on but also with a kind of care that time did not seem to permit. As a committee, we recognized that the language and practice of EDID, how each term might be

²⁸ Concept coined by Wisdom Tettey at the University of Toronto, <https://utsc.utoronto.ca/news-events/inspiring-inclusive-excellence-professor-wisdom-tetteys-installation-address>

taken up, whether individually or in tandem, by the Federation and member associations, were not going to be resolved through a committee process. The language and practices of EDI, who and what are included under its umbrella – and how²⁹ – vary significantly across scholarly associations and at universities. While equity initially emerged as the language of justice and fairness, some critics see “EDI” as the language of appeasement.³⁰ Likewise, the language, processes, and practice of decolonization are often presented in opposition to EDI, such as the formulation “decolonize, not diversity”³¹ or the equally generative question “diverse from what?”³²

On a practical level, it was necessary to specify our own working understanding, hence the development of a glossary of key terms, which might also be used to support the Federation’s member associations that meet at Congress in their own generative lines of enquiry. Efforts to move the dial on EDID requires acknowledging that decades of unsatisfactory EDI initiatives to name and combat discrimination and systemic inequities, including in the areas of racism, ableism, and homophobia, have created frustration and even the rejection of EDI as a framework for change. Such critiques also inform widespread scepticism about EDI committees like our own, including the belief that such committees are where important social justice issues go to die. The tendency to use “decolonization” as a metaphor,³³ or in ways that are either silent on Indigenous peoples or conflate it with reconciliation and Indigenization,³⁴ informed the committee’s work to clarify these key concepts in its mandate. The working definitions are captured in the Glossary and are elaborated throughout the Report, particularly in Part II on **“Decolonization: Principles, Guidelines, and Promising Practices.”** The recommendations, likewise, are understood by the committee as both necessary and “promising practices” on a journey to create a more equitable, diverse, inclusive Congress, one that is actively engaged in and leading the movement toward decolonization as integral to the future of the broader social sciences and humanities community.

²⁹ Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

³⁰ D-L Stewart, “Language of Appeasement,” *Inside Higher Education* (March 30, 2017), <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2017/03/30/colleges-need-language-shift-not-one-you-think-essay>

³¹ Example, Sue Lemos, “Decolonise Not Diversify,” *Social History Society* (October 1, 2018), https://socialhistory.org.uk/shs_exchange/decolonise-not-diversify/; Lauren Blackwood, “The Reality of Diversification without Beginning the Process of Decolonisation,” *Diversity Digest* (May 28, 2020), <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/diversity/2020/05/28/the-reality-of-diversification-without-beginning-the-process-of-decolonisation/>; Nihan Albayrak, “Diversity helps but decolonisation is the key to equality in higher education,” LSE: Eden Centre for Education Enhancement (April 16, 2018), <https://lsepccertcitl.wordpress.com/2018/04/16/diversity-helps-but-decolonisation-is-the-key-to-equality-in-higher-education/>

³² Sadiya Ansari, “‘Diverse from what?’: Dionne Brand on art for all people,” *Globe and Mail* (September 26, 2018), <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/books/article-diverse-from-what-dionne-brand-on-art-for-all-people/>

³³ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Wang, “Decolonization is not a metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1, 1 (2012): 1-40, <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18630>

³⁴ Karl Gardner and Devin Clancy, “From Recognition to Decolonization: An Interview with Glen Coulthard,” *Upping the Anti: A Journal of Theory & Action*, 19 (8/2/2017), <https://uppingtheanti.org/journal/article/19-from-recognition-to-decolonization>; and Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz, “Indigenization as inclusion, reconciliation, and decolonization: Navigating the different visions for indigenizing the Canadian Academy,” *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous People*, 14, 3 (2018): 218-27.

The Task Force on Congress 2021 Contingency Planning

As our committee convened and began its discussions about process and expectations, it became clear just how formidable our task was. From the start, we agreed that we were not interested in offering bland bromides merely to shield the Federation – and our own scholarly communities in the social sciences and the humanities – from further scrutiny on equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization matters, that our work needed to be ambitious, bold, and practicable.

However, we soon encountered two issues that impacted our ability to fulfill our mandate, issues that are all-too familiar to equity committees established to address specific issues but with inadequate attention to design, resources, and especially relationship between new and existing structures. We learned that not only had a Task Force on Congress Contingency Planning already been appointed by the Federation Board in partnership with the 2021 campus host, University of Alberta, but that it had already convened a number of times to take on its own mandate “to assess the risks associated with COVID-19 and provide some recommendations around the possibilities of hybrid and/or virtual participation.”³⁵ This begged the question: what was the relationship between the Task Force and the Congress Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization’s (AC-EDID’s) work? Moreover, the 2021 Congress theme had long been determined by the partners to be *Northern Relations*.³⁶ Our committee recognized the important and timely focus, yet the situation begged the question of where the mandate of the AC-EDID’s “fit” into an already determined set of priorities, approaches, and expectations.

It is no small irony that a committee mandated to take on weighty matters relating to exclusionary and discriminatory practices was itself conceived as a kind of sidecar to the main bus of Congress planning. Given the already established *Northern Relations* focus of Congress 2021, what, then, of the cancelled theme for Congress 2020 – *Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black racism*?³⁷ Would it be lost or displaced in the 2021 Congress planning? And would our own recommendations be taken seriously in view of that main bus moving forward without our participation? Our work really got going in August 2020, as we played catch-up to what the Task Force had already been considering.

³⁵ “Task Force on Congress Contingency Planning: Update from Co-Chairs” (July 30, 2020), <https://congress2021.ca/task-force-congress-contingency-planning>

³⁶ Michael Brown, “Edmonton and U of A to host Canada's biggest academic conference in spring 2021,” Folio, University of Alberta (January 24, 2020), <https://www.ualberta.ca/folio/2020/01/edmonton-and-u-of-a-to-host-canadas-biggest-academic-conference-in-spring-2021.html>

³⁷ Michael Tennant, “Welcome to Congress 2020: ‘Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism’” (March 5, 2020), <https://www.congress2019.ca/congress-blog/welcome-congress-2020-bridging-divides-confronting-colonialism-and-anti-black-racism>

Tensions generated over this asynchronous two-committee arrangement underscored the very structural deficits that the AC-EDID was actively working through. The AC-EDID made its frustrations known to Federation staff, and we turned to providing as much input as possible to the Task Force's report on Congress 2021 contingencies in view of fast encroaching deadlines. The Federation was working towards two days of Congress virtual planning meetings with association program chairs and local arrangement coordinators for September 22 and 24, and in view of an October 31, 2020 deadline when it expected to make a final, formal announcement regarding Congress format – whether it would be an in-person, hybrid, or virtual structure.

On September 2, 2020, the Task Force Co-Chairs Michael O'Driscoll and Laura Chajkowski were scheduled to meet with the AC-EDID so that we could hear from them on their work to date. For our part, we wanted to express our ongoing concerns about the structure of the relationship that produced EDID issues as an add-on rather than as a foundational consideration of Congress planning, which the Task Force draft framework unfortunately indicated. Of increasing concern was the inattention being given to the second 'D' of our remit – decolonization. Importantly, we agreed to coordinate mechanisms with the Task Force for shared communications for future crossover meetings and for Congress 2021. The Federation established a Google drive to ensure AC-EDID members could contribute to the Task Force's draft report as iterations evolved.

Consultations on Embedding EDID in Congress

Coming out of that joint meeting, we determined to undertake a comprehensive consultation plan which would include, but not be limited to, the Co-Presidents of the Black Canadian Studies Association, Dr. Rosalind Hampton and Dr. OmiSoore H. Dryden, and former member of the Indigenous Advisory Circle Dr. Sheila Cote-Meek. Our outreach had to include all Federation member associations, large and small. Ensuring specific attention was being paid to the lived experiences and knowledge mobilization of each equity-deserving group, we insisted consultations included, but were not limited to, representatives of scholarly associations, such as Women and Gender Studies et Recherches Féministes, Canadian Disability Studies Association, Canadian Sexuality Studies Association, and the Canadian Linguistic Association, and other French-language groups. We also wanted to meet with national bodies like the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and Universities Canada to explore what they were doing to advance EDID, anti-racism, reconciliation, and Indigenization. Given the breadth of the work plan, we also recommended that the Federation hire a research assistant to assist us with scans of EDID “promising practices” or “better practices” to inform the Committee's final recommendations.

The AC-EDID contributions to the Task Force draft report were extensive. They included questions such as:

- Was there a plan in place to report and remedy online experiences of racism?
- What plan existed for experiences of harassment, discrimination, bullying?
- What virtual supports exist for those who experience trauma?
- What capacity/supports exist for bilingualism, and for sign language in English and French?
- Did the existing technology enable preferred names?
- Was Congress going to issue a statement on manels (all-male panels) and wanel (all-white panels)?
- Were the keynotes and plenaries inclusive of topics on colonialism, anti-Black racism and with diverse speakers, knowledges, and ways of knowing?

Glaringly absent in the early draft of the Task Force’s report was language about access/ibility, diversity, inclusiveness, and decolonization, which AC-EDID members provided in a detailed response to the Task Force and is incorporated into the *“Report from the Task Force on Contingency Planning for Congress 2021”* (October 30, 2020).³⁸ Since then, these ideas have been further elaborated in Part II (on *“Decolonization: Principles, Guidelines, and Promising Practices”*) and Part III (on *“Better Practices for an Inclusive Conference Guide”*) of this final report.

In advance of the morning and afternoon sessions of the Congress 2021 Virtual Planning Meetings on September 22 with Congress programmers and association coordinators, we circulated four key questions to inform discussion and prepare participants for how to keep EDID matters top of mind in their own planning:

1. If we took antiracism and equity seriously, what should be an equitable Congress experience? What would it “look like” for diverse peoples (equity-deserving groups), disciplines, and associations?
2. What do scholarly associations mean when they invoke a commitment to diversity (people, perspectives, formats) and how should this be reflected in all aspects of Congress?
3. What does inclusion or an inclusive Congress require for each equity-deserving groups (women, Indigenous peoples, visible/racialized minorities, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ2S, and intersectionality), the Federation, Congress and associations’ structures, content and practices?

³⁸ Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, “Report from the Task Force on Contingency Planning for Congress 2021” (October 30, 2020), <https://congress2021.ca/sites/default/files/sites/default/uploads/documents/task-force-report-en.pdf>

4. What does decolonization require of Congress with respect to praxis, including invitations, organizational structure, content/offering, practices (face-to-face, hybrid, online)?

We anticipated the discussion at the planning meeting, and the feedback collected from our Google drive for individuals and associations unable to attend that meeting, would help inform the Task Force Report. Indeed, it did so along with our committee's detailed interventions on EDID. In what follows we provide insights into the concerns and responses that the Federation's membership made to these key questions.

An Inclusive Congress?

Our work required engaging the multiple uses of the key terms, like "inclusion" (see glossary and Parts III and IV of this report) and the implications for different equity-deserving groups. During the Congress 2021 Virtual Planning Meetings, scholarly association members indicated that moving Congress to an electronic or blended format would offer both advantages and disadvantages to marginalized groups. On the plus side, virtual programs reduce barriers to international presenters, presenters from low-income communities and countries, and people. Deaf, French-speaking, and Indigenous language-speaking attendees could benefit from Zoom's (or other appropriate platforms') closed captioning in presenting their work and in participating as audience members. Recording sessions in Zoom may also benefit those with childcare responsibilities or difficulties accessing live technology. That said, technology can be a challenge to many people whose accommodation requirements are diverse, and to Indigenous and Northern people in remote communities where internet access is limited.

An equitable and inclusive Congress would address these concerns by setting up full institutional access to Congress via public universities or libraries across the country for those without reliable internet access. It would also provide infrastructure to support linguistic and disability-specific access at all Congress events. Financial barriers, particularly for Indigenous and racialized graduate students, could be addressed by offering free participation to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) students at Congress, as a first step to redressing historical inequalities in the academy and the Federation.

Whether virtual or in-person, the disciplinary siloing of knowledge that is a hallmark of Congress was identified as a key barrier to culture change. Sessions on gender, disability, racialization, Indigenization, decolonization, and sexuality are often marginalized, or made available only to members of related scholarly associations. An equitable Congress would make all programming relating to EDID transparent, organized in an open access database, and freely available to all attendees, thereby bringing marginalized voices from the edges to the centre and fostering EDID learning and collaboration across disciplines and groups. As well, it is critical

to continue to deploy Congress themes that encourage and support academic enquiry and knowledge translation on EDID issues.

Embedding Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization

Scholarly associations were asked to describe their efforts and existing practices towards equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization, and to reflect on how these might be translated to Congress more broadly. Creating specific opportunities for BIPOC and other marginalized groups, including diverse bodies of knowledge and knowledge systems, were seen as key. Some associations offer scholarships, travel support, and EDID-specific calls for scholarly sessions and engagement, attracting students and faculty from across equity-deserving groups. Other associations described recruiting and mentoring members of marginalized groups within their own governance structures in hopes of bringing more of these scholars into leadership roles within their associations and across the academy more broadly.

However, the consensus was that these efforts should not be add-ons, but must be consistently and repeatedly woven into the fabric of all Congress and Federation activities, which means that centralized funding for these initiatives must be available. Otherwise, as often occurs with equity initiatives, enthusiasm and effectiveness can fade as new pressures distract, or as activist personnel move to new endeavours. In other words, the Federation should commit permanently to transforming culture and practice. This commitment begins with listening and communicating and continues with concrete actions that show that the Federation is hearing and responding. Such actions may include different funding models for participation, more diverse sites for Congress events, creating avenues for access that are equitable, ensuring representation and linguistic diversity, and improving transparency. The Federation is well positioned to take a lead role in this important work.

Equitable Participation

On the matter of what inclusion means in general, and for specific equity-deserving groups in particular, language and culture were seen as key. Inclusion is about relations of power. It's a skill. It invites questions such as: Who is inviting whom? Who or what is being included, and how, and into what kinds of session, and spaces? Cultivating inclusion and feelings of belonging is also a skill. Practices across the Federation and its members should make people from each equity group valued as scholars. While our question to the members sought insights concerning the specificities of what it would mean to plan and design a Congress that was equitable and an inclusive experience for women, Indigenous Peoples, visible/racialized minority groups, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ2S+ peoples, the responses to our questions were often of a higher order.

An inclusive experience would mean supporting linguistic diversity (in official languages, Indigenous languages, and sign languages), taking up and supporting different ways of knowing and knowledge translation, and strengthening responsive and respectful bonds with one another and the broader community. Above all, respondents noted that when EDID goals are not met, when mistakes are unacknowledged, or when attendees experience, for example, racism, sexism, ableism, and transphobia at Federation events, there must be transparent, concrete, and open communication and, above all, a mechanism for action. This has not been the case historically. The Federation must devise, implement, and report openly its mechanisms and measures to respond to such incidents. It also needs to clearly convey to members the activities and recommendations of EDID advisory committees, the ways that all Federation committees are populated, and how and by whom EDID actions are reviewed. The Congress organizing committee needs to devise protocols to do all of this within the framework of virtual delivery as well as in-person meetings (see Part III of this report). Virtual delivery may mask or attenuate negative encounters, and participants need to know the tools available to them for redress. The Federation must resource these activities and create structures to move this forward, including curating repositories of knowledge and better practices, and involving diverse members in the organization, planning, and leadership of Congress and in all other Federation activities.

While the Congress 2021 Virtual Planning Meeting included organizers at the level of associations and Congress planning, participants noted that graduate students and faculty from marginalized groups will need to be directly surveyed, too. It is important to learn from the diversity of new scholars/attendees in particular, as they will have fresh insights as to how the conference experience presents barriers, and how it could be made more inclusive.

Decolonization

Our committee found negligible Federation engagement with decolonization, and uneven programming at Congress (see Appendices 1 and 2). Some associations, however, have created committees on decolonization. While some associations were happy to see the Federation working toward decolonization at Congress, others felt that Congress and the Federation will first need to examine critically its own history of complicity in racism, colonialism, and exclusionary practices. This requires confronting Eurocentrism and cognitive injustice³⁹ rooted in colonialism and that have led to a failure to recognize heterogeneous bodies of knowledges and different ways of knowing by pursuing a decolonial approach that moves from margin to centre Indigenous knowledges and languages represented in Canada, as well as epistemologies of the south and “other worldly” knowledges.

Notably, the Federation should rethink the history and legacy of the Canada Book Prize/Prix du Canada, which is awarded during Congress. Decolonization would mean offering programming

³⁹ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemology of the South* (NY: Routledge, 2014).

in more than Canada's two official languages. The notion of academic excellence must be rethought, and the Federation needs to promote and host forums in which we can collectively redefine research methods and knowledge production in keeping with Indigenous interests, values and concerns, and with the interests of formerly colonized and enslaved peoples.

We need to redefine what constitutes "good scholarship" and this, in turn, would shape what kinds of knowledges are presented at Congress and profiled in Federation events. This could mean establishing new and specific awards and events relating to decolonization, as well as broadening the criteria of all current awards to include community responsiveness, collaborative knowledge sharing, respectful research 'ownership,' oral histories, recognition of historical inequities, and cultural competency in order to recognize decolonization scholarship properly. The Federation can have a role in turning these ideas into praxis and provide resources for its members to replicate these examples in their scholarly associations and disciplines.

For most respondents, these discussions really only began to open up questions of how to build towards equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization at Congress, and throughout the Federation's work. Practical suggestions included making presentations shorter, offering alternative presenting and attendance options, producing a "passport" to open up cross- and interdisciplinary sessions relating to EDID. Other suggestions included ending all-white, all-male panels, reconfiguring awards, supporting marginal students and precariously employed academics to attend, recognizing colonial legacies and continued colonizing practices, making land acknowledgements more meaningful, centering conference themes and keynote speakers in equity issues, recording Congress and using closed-captioning to improve accessibility, addressing language inequalities, and more.

The work ahead for the Federation, Congress, and the scholarly associations is broad and complex. The Federation can be an invaluable leader in this work by attending to the experiences of its members, learning about the successes of its members and of other similar academic bodies, sharing that knowledge with its membership, and modeling positive change in its own work.

Consultations with the BCSA and the Indigenous Advisory Circle

The experience of racial profiling at Congress 2019 was a key factor leading to the AC-EDID's mandate. Much of this engagement happened in the public sphere, including through social media such as Twitter and Facebook. In addition to a confidential brief and presentation by the Federation staff for the AC-EDID, we sought an independent consultation with the BCSA in order to obtain the association's perspective.

We were also aware that, during this same timeframe the Federation's Indigenous Advisory Circle resigned, again with limited details on its website and social media, including in this post on Twitter.⁴⁰

*"The Board of Directors of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences takes seriously the resignation of the Indigenous Advisory Circle regarding the recent selection for the francophone Prix du Canada. 1/2
The IAC's resignation, along with subsequent input of area experts, have convinced us that we did not show a proper understanding of the issue. We will provide an update early next week about necessary steps we need to make toward systemic change in the Federation. 2/2"*⁴¹

In view of the second "D" in our remit, we thought it was necessary to understand these dynamics and how they might inform our input on reconciliation, indigenization and especially decolonization. We read social media posts, the Federation's media statements, and held a consultation with a former member of the Federation's Indigenous Advisory Circle that had resigned *en masse* from the Federation. We also held a consultation with leaders of the Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA), the association that sparked the focus on anti-Black racism and helped to ignite the hashtag campaign, "Black on Campus" and "Black in the Ivory." These experiences speak to the ways in which the Federation's practices seemed to maintain and reinforce structural and systemic inequities, despite expressed commitment to equity and diversity.

Members of the Indigenous Advisory Circle felt there had been a growing disconnect between the Indigenous Advisory Circle and the Federation Board, that the committee never found a clear path to open communications with the Board, and that they had dealt largely with Federation staff. Meetings were infrequent, undermining continuity, and led to members' sense that the committee was tokenistic. A major rupture, which remains unreconciled, came with the awarding of the 2020 Prix du Canada to the authors of *Les Bois-Brûlés de l'Outaouais*. This generated widespread controversy both about the book's authors and the book's subject of Métis identity. That controversy led to members of the Advisory Circle being identified on social media by Indigenous communities as complicit in the book prize, when, in fact, they had no role in the adjudication of the prize. More, the members felt that when they were finally consulted by the Federation, "a lot of things were said but advice was not really followed up." Members of the Circle did not feel as if the Federation had protected or listened to them, and soon after the committee resigned.

In an October 29, 2020, meeting with the BCSA they, too, expressed a belief that the Federation had abdicated its responsibility to BCSA following the decision to cancel the 2020 Congress at

⁴⁰ Statement regarding the 2020 Prix du Canada by Patrizia Albanese, Chair of the Board, and Gabriel Miller, President & CEO, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences <https://www.federationhss.ca/en/statement-regarding-2020-prix-du-canada>

⁴¹ Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (June 12, 2020), https://twitter.com/federation_hss/status/1271644531444846593?s=20

Western University. BCSA had recommended postponing, not cancelling, the scheduled 2020 theme: *Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism*. Although extended discussions with the Federation ensued about carrying the theme forward into the 2021 Congress, the Federation's early announcements of the theme at the University of Alberta – *Northern Relations* – killed whatever good faith and momentum BCSA had hoped for. As they saw it, and also expressed in open letters to the Federation, what could have been an opportunity for Congress 2021 – to highlight the 2020 theme in concert with the BCSA, and have Black Studies serve to make an intervention – “disintegrated.”

The consultation also highlighted how the BCSA, like other small associations, lacks resources to do extensive consulting, planning and applying for Congress funding opportunities. They wanted a streamlined process and fewer and more-focused meetings, given their administrative capacity. Administrative support is essential for good Congress organization. They voiced much frustration over their dealings with Federation staff and leadership over both 2020 and 2021 Congress planning, noting “if the Federation is irrelevant, it will become irrelevant.”

Consultations with the Social Science and Humanities Community

The Research and Engagement Process

The AC-EDID met with various associations, national organizations, and a federal granting agency to discuss specific questions and promising practices on equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization to inform the findings and recommendations for the report. The consultations took place between December 2020 (7, 10, 11) and January (6) 2021. Given the timing, at the end of term and in the midst of a pandemic, representatives from some scholarly organizations were not able participate in the interviews.

Consultations were held with a dozen scholarly associations, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and Universities Canada (UC) using Zoom technology. The AC-EDID Committee members took turns being the lead as facilitators and interviewers, with the Federation staff offering support in taping and transcribing the recordings. Most sessions had a French-speaking moderator and note-taker.

Each of the consultations began with Indigenous land acknowledgements, introductions to the committee and its purpose, request for recording consent, and participant introductions, followed by the EDID committee members asking a set of five questions (see below), as well as follow-up questions, and offering opportunities for members of the group being consulted to ask questions regarding the committee's work on Congress, or offer any supportive documents on promising practices to move the dial on EDID.

1. Can you tell us what your scholarly association or organization is doing to advance equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization within the association/organization, among members and, specifically, at Congress?
2. Can you tell us what your scholarly association or organization is doing to address anti-Black and other forms of racism and to advance racial equity within your members? Does your association/organization have an anti-racism policy?
3. Can you tell us how your association or organization is engaging with Indigenous peoples within the Association/organization and in Congress and other programming?
4. Can you tell us how, specifically, your scholarly association or organization is engaging with people with disabilities, including in initiatives among members, at Congress and other events?
5. Can you tell us how your scholarly Association or organization is engaging LGBTQ2S, including in initiatives among members, at Congress or at other Association events?

Each session lasted 1 to 1.5 hours on Zoom calls. Participants in these sessions were often organizational leaders from their scholarly association. Each drew from both their experiences and work, addressing equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization. Each shared personal actions and experiences, as well as their enthusiasm and frustrations with the ongoing challenges around EDID themes in their organizations and at Congress meetings.

Towards a More Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, Decolonial Congress

To the question of what associations are doing to achieve equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization, the answers were varied. Many of the associations consulted recognized the need and challenges of pursuing equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization in their disciplines and at their annual meetings at Congress. Many promising practices were offered of work already done, and currently under way, to improve EDID, including proactive efforts to challenge institutional whiteness, recruit and support BIPOC in leadership, develop and share anti-racism policies and practices with members, create committees to ensure diverse and inclusive participation, provide mentorship to new Indigenous, Black, and racialized scholars, and provide grants, scholarships or waiving fees for low-income students. Some were committed to holding more sessions that were open to the public. Some associations also wanted more attention paid to EDID at Big Thinking on the Hill, Congress Career Corner, and in the SSHRC Storytellers Showcase that takes place at Congress.

At Congress, some associations were already working to ensure that their invited keynotes, plenaries and panels are inclusive of members of all equity-deserving groups, particularly underrepresented BIPOC scholars. As well, some associations were able to speak practically to issues of access and equitable inclusion of scholars and community members with diverse disabilities, citing limited resources as a barrier to ensure accessibility. Other associations

focused on building their official French–English bilingual components for their web pages, journals, and meetings. Beyond representational issues, efforts to combat racism were also notable for their absence.

Member associations made repeated references to experiences of inequity at Congress, including racism and micro-aggressions, homophobia, heterosexism, and mis-gendering. They also raised concerns about inaccessible presentations and spaces. As well, associations wanted to see greater Federation support for bilingual panels, and repeatedly raised costs as a barrier to reducing inequities. Another concern for scholarly associations was how to deal with resistance from members. These are areas in which coordination between the Federation and scholarly associations would be beneficial.

In these solution-oriented discussions, themes that stood out were aspirations for change in the organization (data collection, creation of diverse committees and governance structures), and creative undertakings for improving inclusivity, such as, but not limited to:

- Recognizing and consulting Elders for community protocols and knowledge inclusions;
- Going beyond land acknowledgements;
- Creating scholarships for Indigenous and racialized students;
- Providing accessible conference and presentation materials to participants;
- Ensuring diverse representation, voice;
- Providing mentorship for BIPOC, Deaf, people with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ scholars (with attention to intersections);
- Tackling obstacles and challenges to French–English bilingual capacities in meetings and in conference presentations;
- Improving the diversity of members in the universities in general, and in their associations, especially in leadership positions;
- Addressing the accessibility challenges of Congress, and its large and impersonal climate;
- Ensuring gender-neutral bathrooms at conference sites;
- Making childcare and safe spaces for breastfeeding available.

Scholarly associations were pursuing reconciliation and Indigenization initiatives, which the Federation can learn from and build upon. For example, one association indicated it only attends Congress every other year, followed by a meeting held in an Indigenous community. This improved the group's engagement with Indigenous communities and their diverse knowledges, and enabled smaller more relational meetings with community. Most notable among all the associations was the absence of an expressed overall commitment to decolonization and the prevalent tendency to conflate Indigenization with decolonization.

Aspirations and Challenges

Associations clearly expressed that they want more opportunities to find and create local community connections. One concrete step would be to ensure that opportunities are created for local community members to attend for free and that funding be provided to incentivize community engagement and inclusion. It was suggested that the Federation in concert with the Congress host universities should allocate financial, human and logistical resources to support better community engagement.

The size of Congress can be a huge impediment for EDID, as there is confusion about who is tasked with addressing which issues of equity. Is it the Federation's, the associations', and/or the host university's responsibility? Clarity about who should be taking the lead on equity issues is desperately needed. Most associations believe Congress should be doing more to lead, for instance, by "providing associations of all sizes with some templates and resources on how to move forward" on equity issues.

Some associations have or are creating an EDI infrastructure to support their work and they would like greater coordination with the Federation at Congress. These associations have created sub-committees or caucuses to address equity issues; they discuss equity issues at their annual general meeting (AGM); others have devoted themselves to particular equity-related themes. But there is a duplication of EDID labour amongst the associations, which are largely volunteer-run and often inadequately resourced. The lack of coordination and communication about policy and implementation between the Federation, the university host coordinators, and the associations attending Congress creates an unfortunate knowledge, awareness and accountability gap: who is ultimately responsible for EDID?

In the absence of a collaborative EDID framework at Congress, there are a lot of redundancies. Labour is being duplicated, initiatives do not gain momentum, complaints have no clear place to land, and sometimes there are outcomes at cross-purposes. As just one example, the Federation has invested money and time in making the Canada Prize/Prix du Canada more equitable, but many attendees feel that these are part of a colonial structure, with a troubled history extending to the present.

Associations would like to see better accessibility at Congress. This is inclusive of consideration for communities that have low bandwidth or too few computers for a virtual congress. They need presenters willing to share their materials in an accessible manner (including in both official languages and large font) and before the conference. Associations have a hard time coordinating and calling for this access and paying for translations, including ASL/LSQ and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) when needed. Here lies another organizational problem. Who should support/pay for these resources? Associations suggested that they could support an increase in fees to enhance accessibility. But accessibility guidelines need to be more proactively shared and strongly promoted by associations, and particularly by the Federation and Congress. Site accessibility and distance between venues also need to be

carefully considered when locations are chosen, and then clearly described and communicated to members in advance of arrival. Further incentives and resources are needed to increase accessibility, but there also need to be *disincentives* for those individuals and associations who do not share in the work of increasing accessibility. For example, the limited requirement for signage in Canada's only two official, colonial languages sets up barriers for additional languages, people with disabilities, and Indigenous attendees.

Indigenization and reconciliation initiatives at Canadian universities are ongoing, with universities on the prairies much farther ahead. However, Université Laval and the Université du Québec network, as examples, will co-host Universities Canada's national Building Reconciliation Forum in 2021. Each university is working at its own level and in its own local social and cultural context.

In general, EDI – equity, diversity, inclusion – are better known than decolonization, a concept and phenomenon thought by some to be interchangeable with Indigenization. These realities highlight the need for further elaboration and dissemination as discussed in Section II of this report – ***Decolonization: Principles, Guidelines, and Promising Practices***. Continuing colonialism is invisible, unseen to those who are not affected by colonial languages, policies, and effects. The Federation should take a leadership role in clarifying their meaning and actions.

While offering only a snapshot of scholarly associations and disciplines, the consultations were nonetheless informative. Associations showed there is adequate awareness for continuing work in EDID. Overall, the consultations suggested a need for greater coherence, communication, collaboration, resourcing, and unification toward the goals of EDID.

Consultations already undertaken between the EDID Advisory Committee and associations might become a model for further collaboration in the future. The reality is that equity work falls on a particular group of people, over and over, and it is critical to ensure that this work can be efficient and have impact. In particular, association members working on equity issues could be supported with incentives by the Federation, such as covering registration fees to collaborate, share, and harmonize their efforts and resources at Congress. What else could be harmonized between associations and Congress? Templates for inclusion and accessible content delivery? Ongoing EDID training? Post-conference EDID assessment?

Deepening Knowledge and Engagement with Equity-Deserving Groups

In our consultation with two national bodies. Universities Canada and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), we wanted to learn about what they were doing to achieve equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization, as well as reconciliation and Indigenization. What could we learn from these two national bodies that the Federation could borrow from, and build upon, to advance EDID? What was notable about these organizations

were the efforts they were undertaking to better understand their members. What could the Federation extrapolate from these consultations about the diversity of its own membership (associations, universities, affiliates) and the obstacles and barriers to participation that members may face at Congress?

Increasing the numerical representation of equity-deserving groups is necessary but not sufficient for cultural change. Both Universities Canada and SSHRC have pursued knowledge about the diversity of their respective communities through self-identification surveys, and this is something the Federation should undertake to better understand the diversity and experiences of its own community. The consultations emphasized the ongoing challenge of getting basic representational diversity data, and how even understanding how much work remains to be done poses an obstacle to change. SSHRC described difficulties in collecting accurate data. Achieving equitable representation and, more importantly, ensuring participation, and obtaining the perspectives and valuable insights and guidance from members of the federally-designated groups are needed. In their efforts to identify the inequities through surveys, both SSHRC and Universities Canada adhere to privacy legislation about the data they receive, how they are used, and what can be made public.

As noted in Parts II and III of this report, Indigenous perspectives, epistemologies of the South, and decolonization education and institutional processes are crucial pieces to accomplishing any meaningful sense of inclusion at Congress. In addition, addressing geopolitical inequalities between urban and rural, northern and southern, metropolitan and peripheral communities, including different ways of knowing and expressing knowledge by, but not limited to, Indigenous, diasporic, immigrant, Deaf, persons with disabilities and LGBTQ2S+ scholars, is long overdue. Tri-Agency programs such as the Canada Research Chairs, Dimensions EDI, and all SSHRC funding programs have incorporated an EDI and intersectional lens. SSHRC also acknowledged that closing the diversity gaps in representation starts long before SSHRC's grants and awards programs, which serve graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and new and established faculty. That said, the organization has supported early career researchers through New Frontiers in Research Fund and Insight Development Grants and has seen the proportion of equity-deserving applicants and awardees increased.⁴² It remains to be seen what impact the pandemic will have on these data. The early research evidence does suggest COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on racialized, Indigenous, and women scholars⁴³ and we can assume an intersectional analysis would reveal a compounded disadvantage for racialized, Indigenous, and women.

⁴² SSHRC Facts and Figures: Dashboards, https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/about-au_sujet/facts-faits/index-eng.aspx

⁴³ Statistics Canada, "COVID-19 Pandemic: Academic Impacts on Postsecondary Students" (May 14, 2020), <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00015-eng.htm>; CAUT, "By the Numbers / The Impacts of COVID-19 on Post-secondary Education," Ottawa, September 20, 2020, <https://www.caut.ca/bulletin/2020/09/numbers-impacts-covid-19-post-secondary-education-staff>; Jennifer Davis, "University survey shows how COVID-19 pandemic is hampering career progress for women and racialized faculty," The Conversation (March 2, 2021), <https://theconversation.com/university-survey-shows-how-covid-19-pandemic-is-hampering-career-progress-for-women-and-racialized-faculty-153169>.

Universities Canada acknowledged the variety of universities and colleges they serve and that each has different capacities for data collection. This will likely be true for the Federation and the diverse scholarly associations that meet at Congress. For example, in 2019, UC conducted a survey of all member institutions on EDI and found that many of them collected and reported diversity data differently. Collecting data on equity-deserving groups is difficult, whether these are students, faculty, or personnel.⁴⁴ UC is a support organization for universities, offering a structure for gathering presidents and senior leaders, providing conferences, and developing guides, principles, and strategies, such as the Indigenous Education principles⁴⁵ and Principles on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.⁴⁶ Each of these initiatives enables UC to engage its members in this work. UC supports universities in their honoring of Indigenous ways of knowledge, in reconciliation, and creating Indigenous accreditation options.

Overall, federal granting agencies, such as SSHRC, and national higher education bodies like Universities Canada, have engaged in strategic planning and developed policies and strategies to incorporate EDI into their work. The Federation can learn from, and build upon, this work in its own engagement with scholarly associations. For example, a cultural audit of SSHRC led to the creation of a national Indigenous Advisory Circle to increase Indigenous scholars' participation in examining policies aimed at Indigenous research and improving peer reviews with Indigenous peoples. There is also a project under way, stymied by the COVID pandemic, to increase the inclusion of Deaf scholars and scholars with disabilities in research funding. SSHRC is proactively engaged in consultations to address these issues and is building an Indigenous Strategy that opens up knowledge and research to broader understanding of excellence, including Indigenous conceptions of research, methodologies and self-creation of knowledge. The Tri-Agency's EDI action plan includes initiatives to improve the representation and experience of equity-deserving groups in the Canada Research Chairs program, the Canada Excellence Research Chairs program and, with other agencies like Heritage Canada, to address systemic racism in public service, is having an impact. The Tri-Agency's use of a self-identification questionnaire to collect disaggregated data on faculty and students.

In addition to our research and consultations, an abundance of EDID-relevant literature and knowledge exists in various forms, from research on diverse groups, to reports from the field, to analyses and critiques in journals and books, to lectures and videos on YouTube, Vimeo, Ted.com, and great academics and scholars who have developed multiple layers of expertise. These resources and people offer exceptional ways to grasp the complexity of individual and group/Indigenous nation situations that require institutions, associations, organizations, and individuals to attend to justice, fairness, and equity so that the human dignity of everyone can be fully appreciated and exercised.

⁴⁴ Universities Canada, "Equity, diversity and inclusion at Canadian universities: Report on the 2019 survey" (November 4, 2019), <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/publications/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-at-canadian-universities-report-on-the-2019-survey/>

⁴⁵ Universities Canada, "Indigenous student education," <https://www.univcan.ca/priorities/indigenous-education/>

⁴⁶ Universities Canada, "Inclusive Excellence Principles," <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-equity-diversity-inclusion/>

List of Consultations

January 6, 2020 – Town Hall One

Facilitated by Dr. Malinda S. Smith and Dr. Jay Dolmage

- Dr. Ryan Conrad (York University), Vice-Chair, Sexuality Studies Association
- Dr. Claire Carter (University of Regina), Women and Gender Studies et Recherches Féministes
- Dr. Alana Butler (Queen's University), Canadian Sociological Association's Black Caucus; Black Canadian Studies Association member
- Dr. Megan Strickfaden (University of Alberta), Canadian Disabilities Studies Association
- Ms. Maha Kumaran (University of Saskatchewan), Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians

January 6, 2020 – Town Hall Two

Facilitated by Dr. Wesley Crichlow and Dr. Claudia Malacrida

- Dr. Vanessa Watts, Canadian Sociological Association – Subcommittee on Decolonization
- Dr. Irene Shankar, Canadian Sociological Association – Subcommittee on Equality
- Dr. Alexandra Wright, Canadian Association of Social Work Education
- Dr. Isabelle Kirouac Massicotte, L'Association des professeur.e.s de français des universités et collèges canadiens

December 11, 2020 – Consultation with Universities Canada

Facilitated by Dr. Malinda Smith, Dr. Florence Glanfield and Dr. Claudia Malacrida

- Dawn Jeffry, Senior Government Relations Officer
- Hannah Jevne, Government Relations Officer

December 10, 2020 – Consultation with small scholarly associations

- Dr. Temitope Oriola (University of Alberta), President, Canadian Association of African Studies
- Dr. Kristina Bidwell (University of Saskatchewan), President, Indigenous Literary Studies Association

December 7, 2020 – Consultation with Social Science and Humanities Research Council

Facilitated by Dr. Malinda Smith, Dr. Florence Glanfield and Dr. Claudia Malacrida

- Andrea Matyas, Director of Communications
- Matthew Lucas, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Performance

October 28, 2020 – Meeting

Facilitated by Dr. Malinda S. Smith and Dr. Noreen Golfman

- Dr. Rosalind Hampton (University of Toronto), Co-President, Black Canadian Studies Association
- Dr. OmiSoore H. Dryden (Dalhousie University), Co-President, Black Canadian Studies Association

October 20, 2020 – Meeting on Indigenous Advisory Committee

Facilitated by Dr. Malinda S. Smith and Dr. Noreen Golfman

- Dr. Sheila Cote-Meek, former member of the Indigenous Advisory Circle, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences

September 22, 2020 – Town hall on Congress Planning session on EDID at Congress

- Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English
- Association Canadienne de Linguistique Appliquée
- Association for Canadian and Quebec Literatures
- Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
- Canadian Game Studies Association
- Canadian Philosophical Association
- Canadian Population Society
- Canadian Sociological Association
- Canadian Society for the History of Medicine
- Canadian Society for the History and Philosophy of Science
- Canadian Society of Medievalists
- Canadian Society for the Study of Comics
- Canadian Society for the Study of Names
- Canadian Society for the Study of Religion
- Film Studies Association of Canada
- Hungarian Studies Association of Canada
- Indigenous Literary Studies Association
- Canadian University Music Society
- Society for Socialist Studies.