

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Code-Of-Conduct Policy Transportation Research at McGill (TRAM)

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McGill University is located on unceded land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous peoples whose presence marks this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

1. Background

Transportation Research at McGill (TRAM) is an interdisciplinary group of researchers, faculty members, and students who conduct research primarily in the field of transportation planning and operations in the School of Urban Planning at McGill University. Our Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Code of Conduct Policy aligns with McGill University's plans and policies, outlined in Appendix A of this document. McGill's [EDI Strategic Plan](#) values “*respectful and inclusive learning and work environments, which seek to identify and challenge historic and systemic barriers to full participation in university life and to foster discovery, advancement, and accomplishment, all of which benefit our University and society more broadly.*” To facilitate a shared understanding of EDI concepts, this document builds on the University's definitions, while recognizing that their meanings may evolve over time:

EQUITY

Equity, unlike the notion of equality, is not about sameness of treatment. It denotes fairness and justice in process and in results. Equitable outcomes often require differential treatment and resource redistribution to achieve a level playing field among all individuals and communities. This requires recognizing and addressing barriers to opportunities for all to thrive in our University environment.

DIVERSITY

Diversity describes the presence of difference within any collection of people. In discussions of social equity, diversity addresses differences in social group membership related, for example, to race, Indigenous identity, class, gender identity or expression, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, and religion. Discussions about diversity linked to access and equity require knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary experiences of oppression and exclusion. Diversity should be understood as uniting rather than dividing. The term calls upon us to appreciate both differences and interconnectedness, and to recognize and respond to systemic and institutionalized discrimination.

INCLUSION

Inclusion refers to the notion of belonging, feeling welcome and valued, having a sense of citizenship. It also speaks to a capacity to engage and succeed in a given institution, program, or setting. Inclusion calls for recognizing, reducing, and removing barriers to participation created by social disadvantage or oppression, and can result in the reimagining of an institution, program, or setting.

A list of related McGill University policies and reports can be found in Appendix A

2. The importance of EDI Considerations in Urban & Transport Planning

A recent (2021) [survey conducted by the Canadian Institute of Planners](#) (CIP) revealed that the planning profession has some key problem areas that require immediate attention, including a lack of diversity in certain dimensions of the profession as well as less racial diversity and representation of women in higher levels of seniority. They found that improving and integrating clear diversity and inclusion strategies within planning research and professional practices will lead to more equitable outcomes.

This Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy is a guiding tool that aligns with this vision and sets forth a plan for how to promote these understandings and practices. We have included a list of resources from the CIP, the American Planning Association, and the Canadian Tri-Council (Canadian Institute for Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) in Appendix B.

3. TRAM's commitment to EDI

TRAM strives to create a welcoming work and learning environment that promotes respect for diversity and the inclusion of all community members in our research ecosystem. We recognize that deep and systemic barriers and biases exist that limit opportunities for underrepresented groups—including members of a racialized and visible minority groups, Indigenous people, women, and persons with disabilities—in transport and urban planning professions and research. Transport researchers, and the planning profession more broadly, have an ethical responsibility to work for the public good. An EDI lens is needed across hiring, research, and pedagogical activities to confront systemic forms of discrimination and exclusion. Our commitment to EDI includes our day-to-day research operations as well as extended educational activities, programs, conferences, events, and virtual meetings. TRAM aims to provide members and participants from diverse backgrounds with the opportunity to research, learn, share perspectives, engage in critical thinking, exchange resources, acquire skills, network, and converse in an environment of mutual respect and accountability.

TRAM is strongly committed to building a workplace that is free of discrimination and harassment. We strive to foster valuable and supportive scholarly research and professional-development opportunities. The purpose of this policy is to protect scholarly exchange through a well-defined process that discourages forms of intimidation, harassment, discrimination, or aggression. We ask that TRAM researchers, students, support staff, and participants of TRAM events work to make space for and amplify the voices of participants who are non-white, non-male, junior-level, or are otherwise in precarious positions. We aim for all people engaging in TRAM's research and events to be valued for their contributions and to be treated with dignity and respect.

4. Hiring Practices

TRAM's hiring practices build on the team's ongoing commitments to advancing EDI goals throughout the educational and research processes. We will continue to harness techniques we have used in the past to implement fair selection processes. Recognizing the systemic barriers that underrepresented groups face in the transport field, our team will work to apply inclusive strategies in recruiting students to maintain gender balance and minority representation. TRAM works to widely advertise student positions and conduct interviews with all applicants to better recognize each candidate's unique skills and experiences. We also actively reach out to organizations that support

underrepresented groups (e.g., WTS: Advancing Women in Transportation) to distribute calls within their networks. For the graduate positions, we advertise through a variety of classes taught at universities in Montreal, while using national and international mailing lists and social media to reach a broad diversity of candidates. We will continue to recruit underrepresented minorities in transport planning by drafting advertisements in an inclusive manner, striving for language that is gender neutral and signals openness to diversity. Applicants are invited to self-identify as members of equity-seeking groups to help maximize diversity among trainees. The hiring committee will monitor the pool of students annually to ensure it reflects the broader population.

TRAM team members have attended several workshops at McGill on how to incorporate EDI in the selection and supervision of students, including workshops on Equitable Hiring & Promotion, Gender Diversity, Anti-Racism, and Mentoring Relationships with a focus on Equity. We will continue to engage in ongoing discussions and training sessions, while working to improve the ease of access to opportunities for applicants coming from underrepresented groups. Interviews will be conducted with the group's Director and with two senior, EDI-trained graduate students and/or postdoctoral fellows to ensure a transparent process where potential unconscious biases are addressed.

5. Promoting EDI through Education, Research, & Knowledge Mobilization

TRAM student trainees work in close collaboration with their peers and senior research staff. The lab's supervisors and mentors (the Director, postdoctoral researchers, and senior PhD students) adopt a one-on-one approach to mentorship, meeting with students almost daily to discuss progress, share ideas, and work together on writing projects. Students receive training in a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods, data-analysis techniques, software, and social-equity concepts. This approach allows supervisors to get to know each student's interests and professional goals, which is crucial for offering the most supportive learning experience possible. We strive to foster an inclusive work environment through our EDI and code-of-conduct policy, recognition of multi-faith holidays, and other accommodations, including for students with children. In addition to individual meetings, we have weekly team meetings where students present their work to the group and receive constructive feedback. TRAM believes that teamwork is key to maximizing the student learning experience and enhances the collective expertise of the research group. Postdoctoral fellows and PhD students are given co-supervising duties so they can be ready to lead transport research groups upon graduation. We are committed to supporting students in developing strong teamwork and interpersonal skills (including respectful communication, providing supportive peer feedback, and time management) given that these skills have proven essential to the inclusivity and productivity of our group's work in the past.

While internships provide the real-world experience that has become essential in the modern job market, we recognize that uncompensated internships threaten to entrench existing socioeconomic inequalities because they are only available to those who can afford to engage in unpaid work. As part of TRAM's commitment to promoting EDI, all trainees (including undergraduate student interns, master's and PhD students) receive stipends for the work.

Our team has also been successful in developing diverse knowledge-mobilization strategies (e.g., public presentations, policy briefs, poster projects, op-eds, etc.) to ensure that research outputs are inclusive, reaching broad public audiences and contributing to social-equity outcomes.

6. Authorship of Academic Outputs

All students will receive credit for their work on TRAM related projects. Students working on manuscripts or reports will generally receive authorship depending on their contribution to the development of the manuscript process and how much of their work is included in the final submissions. Authorship order is decided by Prof. El-Geneidy through consultation with students working on the manuscripts.

Our team follows a modified version of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) guide on authorship, where all authors need to meet all of the following criteria:

- Significant involvement in study conception/design, data collection, or data analysis/interpretation;
- Involvement in drafting and revising manuscript;
- Approval of the final version of manuscript for publication; and
- Responsibility for accuracy and integrity of all aspects of the research.

Students who are not involved in all the above aspects of the process of developing the manuscript will be included in the acknowledgment section of the manuscript. Authorship order can be altered if the publication involved major revisions and the student was not involved in the revision process. If substantial changes took place (e.g., after the graduation of a student) and the student was not interested in being involved in addressing comments or applying changes, their names might be removed from the authorship. If the work developed by a student is not at the level of publication and other team members had to rewrite the manuscript and/or redo most of the analysis to adequately prepare the paper for publication, the student's name will be removed from authorship if they were not involved in the rewriting and reworking of the analysis. These guidelines are designed to ensure that students who have made substantive intellectual contributions to a paper are given appropriate credit, and so that students who are credited as authors understand their roles and are able to take responsibility for what is published.

7. Policy Prohibiting Discrimination & Harassment

TRAM prohibits discrimination and harassment, including (but not limited to) that which is based on actual or perceived sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship status, disability, socioeconomic background, age, religion, marital status, parental status, educational status, health condition, or criminal record. McGill university recognizes that *“All members of the University community have the right to work and learn in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. The University is committed to fostering a community founded upon the fundamental dignity and worth of all of its members and an equitable environment in which all members of the University can flourish.”* All TRAM employees, students, and participants in TRAM's events are expected to abide by this policy.

TRAM's policy is guided by clear definitions of discrimination and harassment, as outlined below.

7.1 What is discrimination?

Discriminatory behaviour includes prejudice, unfair treatment, and/or comments that have an unequal effect based on actual or perceived sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality,

citizenship status, disability, socioeconomic background, age, religion, marital status, parental status, educational status, health condition, criminal record, or the intersection of any of the above.

7.2 What is harassment?

Harassment refers to any unwanted verbal or physical conduct that is reasonably experienced as intimidating, demeaning, derogatory, threatening, abusive, coercive, exploitative, or harmful. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual harassment, such as unwelcome sexual advances or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature.
- Harassment can further include behaviors such as stalking, bullying, hostility or abuse based on actual or perceived sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship status, disability, socioeconomic background, age, religion, marital status, parental status, educational status, health condition, criminal record, or the intersection of any of the above.
- Harassment may consist of a single intense and severe act, or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts which are demeaning, abusive, offensive, or create a hostile environment.
- Harassment may also include circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group.

7.3 Reporting discrimination or harassment

TRAM encourages anyone who has experienced or witnessed harassment or discrimination to use one of the reporting options outlined in this policy.

If participants in any of TRAM's activities or events experience or witness any inappropriate conduct, discrimination, or harassment, they are encouraged to immediately report the conduct to Prof. Ahmed El-Geneidy (ahmed.elgeneidy@mcgill.ca).

Reports of discrimination or harassment will be considered confidential, with all members having agreed to strict non-disclosure of sensitive information. TRAM's academic staff and graduate-student members have a particular responsibility for setting standards in terms of equitable and inclusive exchange as well as in ensuring appropriate conduct is maintained within TRAM's activities. They are responsible for ensuring that any reported concerns are acted upon in a timely manner.

Another way to report harassment or discrimination is through the McGill University Office for Mediation and Reporting (email: omr@mcgill.ca) or through booking a consultation with McGill's Office for Mediation and Reporting: <https://www.mcgill.ca/omr/book-consultation>

8. Additional Commitments & Actions

As a part of our ongoing EDI efforts, TRAM members commit to:

- Valuing the diversity of worldviews, identities, life histories, and knowledge systems and in our group and the wider community.

- Fostering an inclusive work culture whereby we can reflect on our personal and collective identities, while acknowledging the different privileges and/or barriers that different people face related to our identities and lived experiences.
- Recognizing the need for accountability in supporting a culture of mutual respect, support, and safety within our team.
- Referring to team members by their preferred names and gender pronouns as well as using inclusive pronouns and language in research outputs.
- Including diverse knowledge holders, practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in our research during study design, methodological development, analyses, and writing.
- Communicating and providing access to research outputs to people involved in and/or affected by our research topics, or the research itself.
- Putting transport and health equity concerns at the forefront of our research agenda, including continual discussions and learning about relevant equity concepts.
- Creating a diversity of knowledge-mobilization materials, including academic articles, policy briefs, posters, public presentations, and other output to ensure we reach wide public audiences.
- Working to provide open-access publications whenever possible.
- Devoting additional time to continual discussions and learning about EDI issues and sourcing new resources.

APPENDIX A: McGill University's Policies and Reports Articulating EDI Commitments

- 2005 [Policy on Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited By Law](#)
- 2005 [Policy Concerning the Rights of Students with Disabilities](#)
- 2007 [Employment Equity Policy](#)
- 2008 [McGill University Physical Master Plan: Planning and Design Principles](#)
- 2011 [Principal's Task Force on Diversity, Excellence, and Community Engagement](#)
- 2016 [Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Systemic Discrimination](#)
- 2016 [Policy against Sexual Violence](#)
- 2017 [Report of the Provost's Task Force on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education](#)
- 2017 [Strategic Academic Plan 2017-2022](#)
- 2018 [Report of the Principal's Task Force on Respect and Inclusion in Campus Life](#)
- 2018 [Report of the Working Group on Principles of Renaming and Commemoration](#)
- 2019 [McGill Strategic Research Plan](#)
- 2019 [Master Plan](#)
- 2019 [McGill CRC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan](#)
- 2020 [McGill University Equity, Diversity & Inclusion \(EDI\) Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#)
- 2020 [McGill University Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism](#)

- [McGill University Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [McGill University Code of Conduct](#)

APPENDIX B: Additional Resources

- The Canadian Institute of Planners offers several EDI reports and video resources: <https://www.cip-icu.ca/Topics/Equity-Diversity-and-Inclusion>
- The American Planning Association offers several complementary EDI resources: <https://www.planning.org/equity/commitment/>
- Tri-council (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) statement on EDI: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/52543.html>
- We also recommend the Tri-council EDI resources and learning modules: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/52553.html>