

# **Advancing Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Work- Integrated Learning: A Toolkit for Employers and Community Partners**

This toolkit is a primer and, ideally, a starting place. We hope it provides some practical guidance in assisting your organization meet its JEDI goals, as well as motivating your curiosity in an area rich with growth opportunities.



# table of contents

## **A. Introduction and Overview**

- [3 Introduction](#)
- [3 Toolkit Overview](#)
- [4 Project Background](#)

## **B. What Students Told Us**

- [6 Relationship building across cultural differences in WIL experiences](#)
- [6 Navigating diverse communication styles in professional settings](#)
- [7 Addressing power dynamics in the workplace](#)
- [8 Addressing microaggressions in the workplace](#)
- [9 Reflecting on reconciliation responsibilities in the workplace](#)

## **C. What You Can Do**

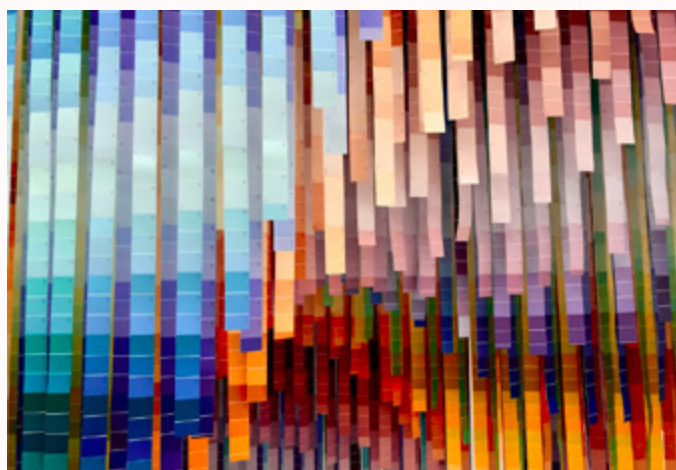
- [10 Conduct a JEDI Needs Assessment](#)
- [12 Learn, Unlearn, and Educate](#)
- [15 Act in Meaningful Ways](#)
- [19 Reflect and Keep Going](#)

## **D. References**

## **E. About the Creators**

Employers and community partners who provide Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities have the potential to provide transformative and empowering career experiences for students. It is especially important for WIL students who experience **marginalization** to participate in workplaces where issues of **justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion** (JEDI) can be addressed in holistic and intersectional ways. Doing so can be key to ensuring all WIL students are able to reach their full potential. This toolkit has been designed to assist employers and community partners who are considering ways to create more empowering, equitable, and inclusive work environments.

The toolkit is intended as a practical, action-orientated primer to assist your organization or company in advancing your JEDI commitments. Rather than a checklist, we hope you will take this document as an opportunity to consider the specific context, nuances, and JEDI needs of your workforce. When it comes to JEDI, issues are not fixed and context matters. As a result, coming up with over-simplified checklists can create more problems than solutions. Carefully considering the context in which you are trying to make JEDI changes is highly recommended. Patience and resilience in your commitment to JEDI will help you to both attend to the local complexities that arise in your own workplace and to keep pace with the ever-shifting JEDI landscape. Above all, we invite you to consider looking for safe ways to continue to learn from workers who experience marginalization.



## II. Toolkit Overview

This toolkit is intended to both amplify the voices of WIL students who experience marginalization, and to provide employers and community partners with actionable strategies for advancing JEDI. Following the introduction, the document is organized into two main sections: “What Students Told Us” and “What You Can Do.” A separate List of Resources and Glossary of Terms is also provided to support you in meeting your organization’s JEDI goals.

In the “**What Students Told Us**” section, we report on students’ discussions relating to five key themes that were central topics in the professional development opportunity they engaged in. Reporting in this section and throughout the toolkit is a reflection of combined responses, and the identities of all participants remains confidential. We encourage you to remember that no one statement reflects the views of all participants. In terms of the results, we were both unsurprised and disturbed to find that students who experience marginalization described experiences of harm, **discrimination**, inequity and exclusion related to all of these themes. At the same time, we were uplifted by students’ experiences of and actionable suggestions for creating empowering, inclusive and equitable workplaces. We hope you will be likewise inspired to make transformative changes in your organization.

In the “**What You Can Do**” section, we bring student voices into conversation with existing research to suggest strategies for addressing identified JEDI issues in WIL. Four core strategies are identified:

- Conduct a Needs Assessment or JEDI Audit
- Learn, Unlearn, and Educate
- Act in Meaningful Ways
- Reflect and Keep Going

Each approach is discussed in relation to this initiative to provide specific, actionable strategies for you to consider implementing at your organization. Examples are provided that detail both what students are hoping for from WIL employers and community partners, and strategies suggested by current research and experts in the field of JEDI.

## III. Project Background

This project was founded on a recognition that JEDI for WIL is at its best when we work in partnership with students and improve our capacities to learn from them. The two-stage initiative was also designed in the spirit of **reciprocity**.

In the first stage, students engaged in a four-week WIL EDI online facilitated professional development (PD) opportunity. Students were told that their contributions to the course would inform the development of this JEDI Toolkit for employers and community partners. The opportunity was available to up to 263 students. A total of 252 students successfully completed the PD, which is a 96% success rate. Students who experience marginalization were prioritized for participation in this WIL EDI PD opportunity. The demographic breakdown of the 251 students was as follows:

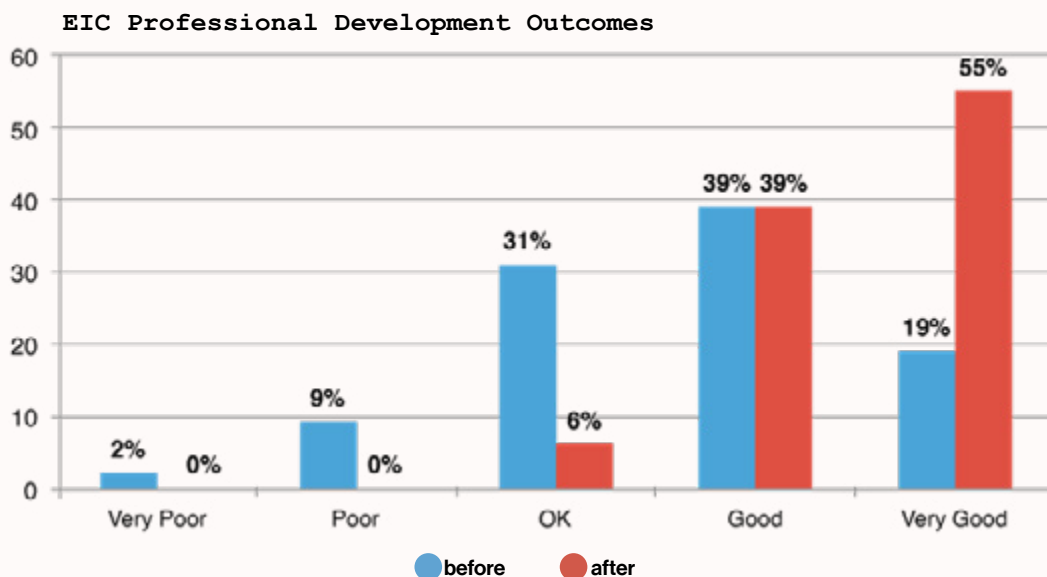
- 53% Persons of Colour\*
- 24% Women Studying STEM
- 14% **LGBTQAI2s+** Persons
- 6% Persons with a disability
- 6% **Newcomer to Canada**
- 3% **Non-binary** Persons
- 2% **Indigenous** Persons

In stage two, WIL practitioners and employers/ community partners have the opportunity to gain skills, capacity, and understanding of JEDI practices that best serve diverse WIL students.



Students who took the PD were asked to complete a post-pre impact assessment. The assessment asked “knowing what you now know, how would you rate yourself both before and after taking Effective **Intercultural** Communication for WIL” on various scales. As shown on the scale below, overall, the very poor and poor categories reduced to 0%. The very good category almost triples, moving from 19% before to 55% after.

*\* In keeping with contemporary trends and CEWIL practices, we use the term **BIPOC** to refer to people who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. We acknowledge the limitations of this and other terms. You can learn more about some of these critiques [here](#) and [here](#).*



## a. Introduction and Overview

Here are some additional results for the key themes of this professional development opportunity:

**Project Goal:** Relationship Building Across Cultural Differences

**Result:** Participant confidence in building relationships across differences improved in the category of “Very Good” from 20% to 48% after taking the professional development opportunity.

**Project Goal:** Navigating Diverse Communication Styles in Professional Settings

**Result:** Students ranked their ability to identify cultural influences and how they inform their preferences in verbal and non-verbal communication. Only 8% of participants ranked themselves as ‘very good’ at this prior to taking the professional development opportunity, compared to 48% afterwards. As well, students’ capacities to “recognize the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion in my professional communication” moved from 32% to 71% on the impact assessment.

**Project Goal:** Addressing Power Dynamics in the Workplace

**Result:** Students ranked their ability to “recognize power and privilege and how they can affect how people do or do not engage with their differences.” While only 15% of participants ranked themselves as ‘very good’ prior to the professional development, afterwards this increased to 67%.

**Project Goal:** Addressing **Microaggressions** in the Workplace

**Result:** Only 12% of participants reported they were ‘very good’ in terms of being “familiar with the critical role of being an **ally** in today’s diverse society with an understanding of microaggressions” prior to taking the professional development. After taking the professional development opportunity, this proportion jumped to 52%.

**Project Goal:** Reflecting on **Reconciliation** Responsibilities in the Workplace

**Result:** While 21% of students reported they had a ‘very good’ understanding of some of the impacts of **colonialism** on the **Indigenous Peoples** in Canada prior to taking the professional development opportunity, 46% reported they did so afterwards.

One thing that became very clear through this initiative was that many WIL students are hungry for JEDI-focused professional development opportunities. Many students commented that such skills and training should be mandatory aspects of post-secondary programs and/or professional requirements. Several also actively sought ways for such training to be offered to their WIL community partners or employers.

## b. What Students Told Us

If we are going to create more equitable and inclusive WIL opportunities that meet the needs of diverse students, we need to do a better job of learning from our students in general, and from students who experience marginalization in particular.

This section highlights some things students have to teach us about JEDI in WIL. Students made it clear that many WIL students are experiencing harm. They talked about the ways students who experience marginalization could be and are being empowered through WIL experiences. And they shared their own visions for transforming WIL. We are incredibly grateful for the honesty, candour, and passion that students brought to these conversations, and the opportunity they offer to all WIL employers and community partners to reflect carefully on JEDI issues.



### **I. Relationship Building Across Cultural Differences**

It should come as little surprise that a common theme in student discussions about relationship building across cultural differences was exclusion. Many students reported difficulty relating to and communicating with co-workers, as well as problems with exclusion in workplaces where they were a minority. These experiences showed up in different ways: from having co-workers who were unable or unwilling to learn their names, to having their skills questioned because they spoke English as an additional language, to being treated as unprofessional because of their cultural clothing or hairstyle, to experiencing discrimination on work trips, and more.

At the same time, students also said relationship building across cultural differences could be a source of empowerment and belonging. They talked about how being exposed to diverse workplaces and work experiences helped them to recognize and confront their own **biases**, and to change. Many students who experience marginalization reported that the chance to connect with students who experience marginalization differently than they do helped foster a sense of safety, understanding, and mutual respect. Students spoke about how important it was to pay attention when emotions are at play and to learn about differences in communication styles, patterns, and preferences.

### **II. Navigating Diverse Communication Styles in Professional Settings**

Many students in this initiative had experienced dealing with communication styles, patterns, and preferences at work. For example, some Indigenous students reported navigating differences between Indigenous and dominant Canadian cultural norms. Students from more **indirect, high-context** communicative cultures talked about problems with miscommunication in the workplace, and having to work extra hard to make up for cultural differences in communication. These differences in communication styles, patterns, and preferences seem to be even more challenging for students who have English as an additional language. Many of those students talked about having a hard time making themselves understood at work. Some students with English as their first language reported stereotyping of coworkers with strong accents, encountering biases that such workers were unskilled, and witnessing discrimination against people with accents.

Workplace norms around communication are tied to power. Students who are marginalized in additional ways – including (but not limited to) race, class, gender, religion, language, physical disability, and neurodiversity – reported facing higher challenges when trying to communicate across cultural differences. For example, some

## b. What Students Told Us

students explained that ideas that women need to appear non-confrontational prevented them from fully participating in and contributing to the workplace. At the same time, students felt empowered by intercultural communication training. Students reported applying their new skills and knowledge to address and prevent misunderstandings in the workplace.



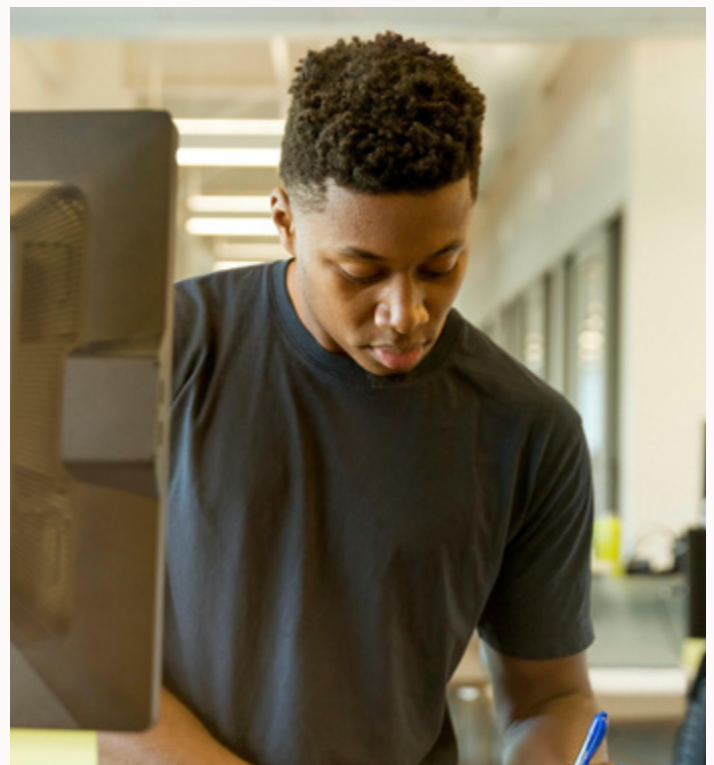
### **III. Addressing Power Dynamics in the Workplace**

Students in this initiative reported being impacted by **prejudice** and discrimination in diverse ways. BIPOC students described being held to different standards, including around time and lateness, than their White colleagues. Some of those students also described being harmed by colourism and racist beauty standards. In contrast, White students explained that they never had their lateness be associated with their race, or reflect negatively on all White people. Many Asian students explained that their sense of workplace safety has decreased with the rise of anti-Asian racism associated with COVID-19. They talked about trying to learn how to deal with racism because they increasingly expected to be targets of anti-Asian hatred, or already had been.

Students discussed how people who experience marginalization are disempowered when colleagues make assumptions that they were hired on the basis of their identity alone. For example, women in male-dominated fields reported experiencing prejudice that they were hired on the basis of gender alone. Overall, students who

experience marginalization talked about the stress, uncertainty, and anxiety that came along with trying to know whether or not their identity was a factor in their struggles to obtain employment and succeed at work.

One of the most common forms of job discrimination that students in this initiative reported having to deal with was name discrimination. Many talked about experiencing and witnessing name discrimination from early on, as well as during hiring and at work. Students with names not associated with White cultures talked about the stress and worry over whether their names would work against them. Many students reported changing their names (or having friends do so) to improve their work opportunities. Some described having a drastic increase in responses from employers after changing their names to sound more White. In contrast, students with names associated with White cultures described being privileged in hiring processes where people with names not associated with White cultures were discriminated against. One student spoke about confronting their own biases against female and non-white sounding names.



## b. What Students Told Us

In general, students explained they had an increasing awareness of White privilege. White students talked about experiencing racial privilege in hiring processes and at work. They also described being listened to, respected, and treated better by clients, co-workers, and supervisors compared to their non-white colleagues. White students trying to challenge racial discrimination at work spoke of the struggles they had trying to support colleagues who experienced racism. Some said they had been unable to do much due to a lack of support from management and employers. Many students explained that they were struck by the lack of diversity in their organizations, and in particular how leadership positions are consistently held by White men. This is more important because BIPOC students explained how empowering it can be when BIPOC people are represented in leadership positions.

### **IV. Addressing Microaggressions in the Workplace**

Many students in this initiative had experienced microaggressions. They collectively reported experiencing microaggressions that were racist, sexist, ableist, anti-Indigenous, Islamophobic, sexist, and anti-Asian. Many students who had experienced marginalization reported having to give up or hide aspects of themselves to succeed at work. Recognizing racial privilege in the workplace pushed several students to attempt to 'pass' as White to avoid or minimize discrimination on the basis of race, religion, and Indigenous identity. Many students who experienced racial marginalization also talked about struggling to tell the difference between racist microaggressions and general rudeness.

**Stereotypes** and tokenism played a role in many of the students' experiences of microaggressions at work. This includes many students being impacted by the myth of the '**model minority**'. For example, a student talked about how supposedly 'positive' racial stereotypes that all Asians are good at math had been very harmful for them. Another

student who is a newcomer to Canada talked about how supposedly positive commentaries about their language were really insulting. Reports of tokenism were also widespread. Many BIPOC students described being constantly treated as representatives of their entire racial group. For example, some Indigenous students described being asked to 'speak for' and represent all Indigenous Peoples.

At the same time, students' stories showed that they are out there doing the work of connecting across differences. WIL students who experience marginalization reported working hard to develop relationships across differences – including with people who had discriminated against them. BIPOC students, in particular, described working to combat stereotypes about their communities by working harder and longer than their co-workers. These efforts were also reflected in smaller, day-to-day decisions, such as avoiding bringing foods associated with their **culture** to work to avoid offending co-workers. Finally, many students who experience marginalization described being empowered in more diverse and representative workplaces.





### **V. Reflecting on Reconciliation Responsibilities in the Workplace**

Three themes came out of students' discussions about reconciliation responsibilities at work in this initiative: many students wanted to support reconciliation, those trying to make a difference faced many barriers, and students are feeling more inspired and empowered to act on reconciliation activities at work.

In terms of barriers, students described coming up against beliefs that colonialism is over and Indigenous Peoples should 'move on.' Students indicated that national beliefs about Canada as a 'nice' multicultural country, particularly compared to the United States, help hide anti-Indigenous racism and act as barriers to reconciliation. Newcomers to Canada spoke how they were shocked to learn about colonialism in this country. Settler students, meanwhile, reported discomfort and shame over colonialism and the lack of material, cultural, and spiritual reparations to Indigenous Peoples.

Despite these experiences, many students in this initiative were trying to get involved in reconciliation. They talked about the importance of truth before reconciliation, and responsibilities to be educated on the ongoing impacts of colonialism for Indigenous Peoples, their cultures, and their communities. Settler students wanted to support reconciliation and **decolonization** in their careers and workplaces. They said that having opportunities to learn from Indigenous Peoples directly improved their ability to act on their reconciliation responsibilities, and to support their organizations to do the same. Those working in environments with strong commitments to reconciliation spoke of the importance of ongoing Indigenous-led professional development opportunities. Overall, students emphasized the importance of practicing reconciliation as an ongoing action within and outside of the workplace.



## c. What You Can Do

There is always the danger of JEDI initiatives getting stalled at the level of talk. Too often, the fear of doing things wrong is a barrier to action. Uncertainty and imperfection are hallmarks of JEDI work that never go away, and they are answered only through ongoing learning, adaptation, and resilient commitment. To do this, we need to move away from focusing on our good intentions and towards focusing on the impact of the actions that we take. JEDI issues are complicated, and we need to move beyond common-sense solutions to profoundly complex problems. If we are going to do JEDI work well, we need to talk to the experts. That means learning from JEDI researchers and practitioners, but it also means drawing on the expertise of people who experience marginalization in your organization. This is important because their knowledge is local and specific to your organization, and their expertise is derived from their own knowledge and lived experiences.



### **I. Conduct a JEDI Needs Assessment**

Decisions and planning around JEDI should be evidence-based, which is what makes a needs assessment such a valuable tool. A needs assessment will give you a sense of where you are at in terms of JEDI, and it can provide a starting point for charting the road ahead. A needs assessment can also be an opportunity for your organization to address some of the complex JEDI issues that have emerged from the global pandemic, including workplaces being more fractured, siloed, and short, medium, and long term implications of remote work.

When doing a needs assessment, it is important to think about what gets counted as 'real' evidence, and what might be missed – or who might be silenced – as a result. Make sure you include safe ways of gathering both formal (demographics, retention rates, pay scales, promotion rates, correlations between jobs and social hierarchies, and so on) and informal (perceptions, experiences, JEDI behaviours and practices) data. Benchmarking progress is important: link your plans to actionable, measurable, and scheduled JEDI goals for policies, processes and practices. Look for opportunities to build accountability into your plan, and make sure there are meaningful stakeholder consultations in all stages. It can be important to plan for the emotions that come up during and after a JEDI assessment. For these and many other reasons, having someone with expertise in this area is highly recommended.

### **Example: Relationship Building Across Cultural Differences**

At its core, a JEDI needs assessment is about asking questions. Below is an example of the kinds of questions you might ask about topics students in this initiative reported were important when it comes to relationship building across cultural differences. Please note that these are not all the questions that might be asked; we encourage you to think of others that may be more specific to your organization and context.

### **Students are looking for diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces.**

Questions to Consider:

- Who are the people who work for my organization? Do they reflect the diversity of the surrounding community?
- Are jobs segregated by identity categories (such as by race, gender, ability, citizenship status or other factors)? If so, which groups tend to be at the top of those job categories? The bottom?
- What are pay, promotion, retention, and turnover rates for employees who experience marginalization compared to other employees?

### **Students want to be in workplaces where empathy is valued.**

Questions to Consider:

- How does the organization ensure a culture of trust, empathy, and mutual respect among team members? For example, do people feel safe sharing their problems, issues and challenges - including around JEDI topics - with each other without fearing judgment?
- Are peoples' mental, physical and emotional wellness prioritized over deadlines and workloads? Are folks able to access accommodations (such as remote work/flexible days) without having to navigate bureaucratic obstacles?
- Are there strategies for stress reduction that are promoted at work? Are people able to access the supports they need in a fairly straightforward manner?

### **Students want employers who value collaboration and meaningful engagement.**

Questions to Consider:

- Is there a sense of community and culture of collaboration at work? Are supports in place for workers to engage in teamwork and to rely on each other?
- How are JEDI issues in the process of collaboration and engagement addressed? Whose voices are being heard and whose might be silenced or unheard? Do all team members feel safe enough to speak up? Do they feel assured that their thoughts and ideas will be valued and credited to them?
- Do members of your workforce collaborate with external stakeholders and/or the broader community? Are these collaborations built on a foundation of reciprocity and also appropriate compensation?

### **Students want work environments that reduce intercultural conflicts and support conflict resolution.**

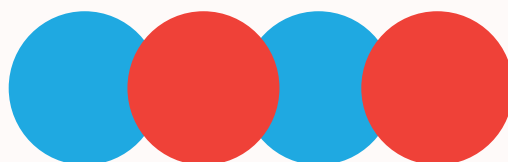
Questions to Consider:

- Do you have open dialogue in your team or are there deeper interpersonal conflicts that damage group dynamics?
- Are you having regular internal communication breakdowns? Are breakdowns occurring due to cultural or equity differences among team members? If so, what kind of differences are surfacing and among whom?
- When breakdowns do occur, what mechanisms are in place for resolving issues and restoring harmony? Are core issues meaningfully addressed? How are resolutions agreed upon?

### **Students want employers who are able to address how power and privilege impact work dynamics and communication.**

Questions to Consider:

- Is there recognition of the inherent power dynamics and workings of privilege among team members and leaders? How do peoples' diverse identity characteristics (e.g. race, class, gender, ability, age, and so on) influence workplace dynamics?
- What are some ways in which those who hold more power and privilege are held accountable? Is privilege leveraged to include those who lack it?
- How are JEDI commitments being meaningfully addressed? Does your organization tend to treat JEDI as a Human Resources initiative, or as a comprehensive issue to be addressed throughout the organization? What measures are in place to make sure JEDI initiatives foster substantive change?



## c. What You Can Do

### Students are looking for employers that encourage open dialogue, allyship, and who work to create safe and inclusive workplaces.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you have policies that foster an equitable and inclusive workplace? What processes are in place for when someone identifies an exclusionary workplace policy or practice?
- Can folks voice a contrary opinion without fear of negative consequences? Are folks encouraged to respect diversity of opinions and lived experiences?
- How do you deal with situations where disrespect or harm has occurred? Do you have a streamlined and documented process for dealing with such situations?

### Students want to work in fields where intercultural development, anti-discrimination training, and emotional skills are job requirements.

Questions to Consider:

- What JEDI education, training, professional development, and/or support networks and programs do you offer? Are these opportunities offered equitably to all employees? Is there an expectation for employees to engage in such opportunities? Do they occur on paid time?
- Do folks know where to find JEDI resources to learn more about these issues? Are lessons learned brought back to the larger team and reflected on?
- If certain folks are resistant to JEDI opportunities and engagement, how are they encouraged to participate in fostering an equitable and inclusive workplace culture?

## II. Learn, Unlearn, and Educate

Speaking about education, residential schools, and reconciliation, the Honourable Murray Sinclair famously said that “education has gotten us into this mess, and education will get us out of this mess” (CBC, 2015). JEDI education can take many forms, from formal courses to community engagement and everything in between (see the Resources booklet for places to get started, and in

particular the ‘Toolkits and Guides’ and ‘Education and Training’ resources).

There is much unlearning as well as learning to be done. The call to unlearn invites us to let go of harmful assumptions and stories that have been widely taught as ‘facts.’ Unlearning encourages us to reflect carefully on the limits of our own knowledge, including on things we may have long assumed to be absolutely true. Writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie discusses some these issues in her famous Ted Talk “[The Dangers of a Single Story.](#)”

Learning and unlearning about JEDI issues has many impacts. It calls us toward action, towards making meaningful change when and where we can. It also has the potential to build connections, as we begin to learn more from and about people who may be different from ourselves, who may understand and move through the world in ways we have never experienced. Learning and unlearning is also a process, it is a lifelong path with ever more to learn. If we think of education as a gift, then we can recognize that we are also responsible to share what we learn so that we can all move forward together.



### **Example: Navigating Diverse Communication Styles in Professional Settings**

JEDI education improves our capacities to learn from, for, and with people who experience marginalization. This means learning about the historical and current realities of injustice, exclusion, and social inequities. But it also means having the opportunity to learn about the stories, lived experiences, wisdom, cultures, strength and resilience of people who may be different from ourselves. Students in this initiative identified things they are looking for from employers when it comes to navigating diverse communication styles in professional settings. Below are training and strategies that you might consider in relation to those student reports.

#### **Students are looking for organizations with inclusive communication strategies.**

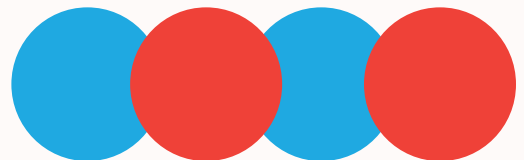
When doing your needs assessment, look for ways to create more equitable and inclusive communication strategies. Learn all you can about your organization's current practices, potential gaps, and what needs to be included in your communication plan. Develop safe and effective strategies to learn from your employees, organization leaders, clients, and the communities you serve. Consider whether your communication plans represent the diversity of community members, and if they are built for accessibility and universal design. Also, move from the general to the more specific; for example: what is your organization's approach to land acknowledgements? What about pronouns in workplace communications? Overall, work to develop communications policies and plans that are grounded in JEDI principles and practices. Among other things, this includes building in accountability and adaptability for ongoing learning and shifting contexts.

#### **Students want employers and organizations to listen to and learn from Indigenous Peoples.**

There are many important considerations to take into careful account when developing opportunities to learn from Indigenous Peoples. Looking for ongoing, appropriately reciprocal ways to engage with Indigenous Peoples should begin by informing yourself about local communities and protocols. Many programs and education initiatives promote learning from Indigenous Peoples. As you proceed, be mindful of the disproportionate burdens that decolonization and reconciliation initiatives can place on Indigenous Peoples and communities. Ensure appropriate reciprocity and look for opportunities to learn that do not increase those burdens (for example, documentaries, webinars, podcasts, books, and Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs). If possible, you can consider whether developing a program involving an Indigenous Elder or Knowledge Keeper in residence is appropriate.

#### **Students want ongoing professional development to deal with the impacts of culture, identity, and bias on communication.**

Indigenous, intercultural, and JEDI scholars have all emphasized the importance of knowing yourself and your own cultural background as a key aspect of being able to bridge across differences. Understanding the impacts of our culture(s), identities, and biases on our communication practices can help us to also develop strategies for engaging well with people who may be different from ourselves. Looking for training opportunities that explicitly incorporate a focus on these topics, as well as reflective practices, can be a good place to start.



### **Students are looking for organizations where intercultural skills are a job requirement.**

Many students in this initiative emphasized that, in a diverse society and globalizing world, intercultural skills are (or should be) a job requirement. This is an invitation for you to consider the importance of intercultural skills to your organization. Are there jobs that would or would not benefit from intercultural skills? How might you adopt this approach in equitable ways (for example, how might informally developed intercultural skills be acknowledged and valued)? Consider which accessible training and learning programs on intercultural development would be a good fit for your organization. As you encourage workers to engage in their intercultural professional development, make sure they also have the resources they need to accomplish those goals (such as dedicated time).

### **Students want to have open conversations about communication styles, patterns, and preferences at work. They want employers who know how high and low context communication styles matter at work.**

Supporting intercultural engagement in the workplace means supporting ongoing conversations about communication styles, patterns, and preferences. Having these conversations early on, such as during onboarding, can help everyone learn how to communicate well with each other. This can help improve team dynamics, as well as prevent or minimize potential conflicts and misunderstandings. It is important that the people leading these conversations understand some key concepts in intercultural communication. WIL students in this initiative found the concepts of **high and low context communication** styles especially helpful. See the Glossary and Resources booklets for some definitions and tools about these and other key terms. As you learn more, remember the importance of avoiding making assumptions about the communication styles, preferences, and patterns of others based on stereotypes or over-generalizations.

### **Students want organizations to address intercultural communication in online work environments.**

There could be no more intercultural work environment than the internet, and online work is an increasing part of almost all jobs. This means that workers and employers both need the skills and training to be able to support equitable and inclusive online work environments. It's important that employers avoid assuming that technological ability is the same thing and online intercultural communication skills.

Providing training in online communication with a focus on intercultural communication is a good place to start. Making sure online communication platforms and programs are based in the principles of universal design really important. Talk to your employees about JEDI considerations in online communication regularly so that you can quickly address issues as they come up.

### **Students want intercultural and JEDI professional development. They want to be in workplaces where community and relationship-building promote JEDI.**

There are many ways for organizations of different sizes and make-ups to encourage and support their members to improve their intercultural and JEDI skills and knowledge. These include formal training programs, but also a wide range of informal activities and community-building events. As you look for ways to build a workplace culture of inclusion and belonging at your organization, keep in mind that learning on these topics is ongoing and occurs over the course of a lifetime. Also, planning for these activities can be improved by thinking carefully about the diversity of your employees and the communities you serve. What sorts of **culture-specific** and **culture-general** skills and knowledges might be most relevant and important to members of your organization at a given time?

### **III. Act in Meaningful Ways**

When it comes to JEDI work, we need to move beyond words and into meaningful action. As Dr. Monica Cox (2021) has said “Instead of showing me your diversity statement, show me your hiring data, your discrimination claim [statistics], your salary tables, your retention numbers, your diversity policies, and your leaders’ public actions against racism.” A needs assessment can give you a roadmap to what actions are most important and pressing for you to take. It is important that the actions you take respond to the needs of your workforce, the communities you serve, as well as your own organizational structure and context. This means there are no simple ‘one size fits all’ approaches. However, participants in this initiative made clear what they were looking for from employers and community partners. Here, we bring those requests into conversation with expert suggestions for how to promote positive JEDI change in your organization.



### **Example: Addressing Power Dynamics in the Workplace**

Attending to power dynamics is a key part of taking action on JEDI issues at work. This means addressing more obvious power dynamics, such as those that have to do with job hierarchies, worker status, seniority and so on. However, power dynamics related to race, class, gender, ability, culture, age, sexuality, gender expression, interpersonal dynamics and more are also at play in the workplace. These issues need to be meaningfully addressed so that everyone can have a sense of belonging and feel empowered to reach their full potentials. Research shows that organizations with a diverse, empowered workforce benefit significantly in terms of innovation, productivity, retention, lower rates of absenteeism, and more. Read on to learn about steps you can take to address power dynamics in ways that respond to the needs of WIL students.

#### **Students are looking for employers who will support them taking anti-discrimination response training.**

If possible, providing employees with ongoing access to established education, training, and professional development in anti-discrimination response and JEDI skills and knowledges more broadly ideal. Supporting book clubs, allowing time for employees to watch a free webinar on anti-discrimination response training, and promoting involvement in community events related to JEDI and intercultural engagement are all straightforward JEDI strategies that your organization could consider.

#### **Students are looking for employers and organizations to address name discrimination.**

Dr. Banerji outlines [three steps all organizations can take to help reduce name discrimination](#):

1. Education and training of members of hiring committees on the role of unconscious bias in hiring decisions.
2. Entrust hiring to a diverse panel, as opposed to a single individual, thereby help to balance possible unconscious biases.
3. Increase diversity at all levels of the organization.

## c. What You Can Do

Another strategy is “anonymous recruitment” — the removal of the applicant’s name and other identifying information from resumes and cover letters. It may also be worth considering whether alternative ways of applying for a job could better showcase the talents of a more diverse candidate pool. For example, could you ask candidates to anonymously demonstrate their job skills? The idea behind this strategy is that applicants will then be initially judged only on their abilities. For additional resources, check out these [Toolkits for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in WIL](#) from ACE-WIL.

**Students who experience marginalization are looking for employers to respond meaningfully when they self-advocate. Students who experience racial privilege want to be supported to be anti-racist.**

It is very important to help all new hires (and existing employees) to understand their rights and the types of supports and professional development they have access to. It is best if time is spent on this very early on, during the onboarding and training period. Offer employees the opportunity — whether it requires time, funding or encouragement — to expand their JEDI professional and personal goals by supporting further education, learning a new skill, and/or creating space for all voices. Another way is for leadership to model behaviours that show employees that no topic is taboo, and that your door is always open for discussions addressing exclusion, othering, and racism.

**Students want to be empowered to have difficult conversations about power and privilege at work. Students are looking for workplaces where they can learn about injustices that they do not experience.**

People need to feel connected to a common cause — something bigger than themselves — while also being recognized for their uniqueness. When honesty, accountability and integrity are embedded in an organization’s culture, it allows

people to acknowledge mistakes without fear of blame. This creates the space for people to work with the team to reflect, learn, and move forward positively. Providing employees with supportive and educational tools that create opportunities for them to learn and unlearn about topics related to power and privilege and how they might show up in the workplace setting is one important way of doing this.

**Students are looking for employers who take a holistic view of employees’ lives, and support work life balance.**

There are many strategies to support work life balance among your employees. Seek feedback from your employees and give them space to tell you how you can help them with work-life balance. This helps avoid taking a one-size-fits-all approach. You may need to adapt for parent hours, or for accessibility. You may need to offer a wider variety of choose-your-own benefits so that people from all backgrounds and lifestyles can make employment with you work for them.

Remember, an employee staying later to complete tasks does not automatically indicate their productivity levels are high or that they are working harder. Studies show that this is actually a myth and part of our unconscious bias. Be sure to regularly review workloads, ensuring the tasks and timelines are realistic and manageable. Encourage employees to take breaks during the work day. Hosting meetings in a new setting outside the office can show employees you care about their well-being as well as their work.

Finally, if you are in a supervisory position, one of the most important ways you can promote work life balance among those you supervise is to model it to those you work with. When organizational leaders work exceptionally long hours to the detriment of their personal lives and health, it puts pressure on workers to do the same.



## c. What You Can Do

### **Students want training and workplace cultures that help them to be accountable for their privileges.**

A starting point for this is to give employees the support and tools they need to be inclusive. Whether it's employee resource groups, specific professional development opportunities, or technology, look to existing resources as valuable solutions and easy starting points for inspiring supportive behaviours. For example, to create more inclusive meetings, encourage employees to send agendas and materials in advance so everyone feels prepared. Use time wisely by setting up technology and asking in advance if meeting attendees have accommodation requests. Such steps can ensure you are actively involving all members equitably and normalizing an inclusive workplace culture.

One of the trickiest things about privileges is that they are often invisible to those that enjoy them. This makes it very difficult for us to recognize when our perspectives, ideas, and practices may be harming or excluding others. Promoting a supportive workplace culture where people are encouraged and supported in [“calling each other in,” when and where appropriate](#), can help people to be accountable for their privileges. Encouraging people to [focus on and address the impact of their words and actions, rather than the intentions behind them](#), is likewise important.

### **Students want standards of professionalism and appearance that do not harm people who experience marginalization. They are looking for employers who practice inclusion on an everyday basis.**

Although standards of professionalism are widely thought of as neutral, research shows that they are actually biased in ways that harm people who experience marginalization. Increasingly, there is a movement to ensure standards of professionalism are more inclusive (for example, these guides support greater inclusion of [LGBTQIA2s+](#) and [BIPOC](#) folks). Inclusion and equity in a workplace

often revolves around the day-to-day interactions between employees, managers, leaders, teams and peers. This is why new employees often look at the current employees in your institution. Does everyone look and sound the same, or is there diversity in terms of accents, abilities, ethnicities, gender, work experiences and more? Oftentimes such diversity indicates that your company works is inclusive and celebratory of differences. Promoting a 'deep' culture of inclusion can promote a sense of belonging that leads to greater collaboration and innovation, has positive impacts on employee retention, and more.



### **Example: Addressing Microaggressions in the workplace**

The previous example provides some tools for addressing power dynamics broadly. However, these issues also need to be addressed 'on the ground' and on an everyday basis. One of the most common and difficult ways that exclusions and discrimination show up in the workplace is through microaggressions.

These are intentional or unintentional slights and insults that convey negative messages or stereotypes about people based on their membership in a group that experiences marginalization (Wing Sue, 2010). Too often, people are left uncertain of how to act or what to do when they are targeted by or witness a microaggression. Below, we provide some tools to help you prevent and address the issue of microaggressions in the workplace.

## c. What You Can Do

**Students want to be a part of making a difference. They want to work for organizations and employers that are engaging in transformational change.**

Position the fight to end systemic injustice as an ongoing effort that you are committed to in the long run. Becoming an equitable and inclusive organization is not a static, one-time, short term achievement; it is life-long work that the employers and all employees must commit to each and every day (through resources, official processes and policies). Make sure that the goals you set are understood, measurable, and embodied by everyone, and that every member of your team knows what role they play in achieving these goals towards making a difference.

**Students are searching for workplaces where microaggressions can be safely identified, discussed, and addressed. BIPOC students don't want to have to wonder if minor slights and rudeness have racist undertones.**

Research suggests that not everyone understands what a microaggression is and what it can look like in a workplace. In order to identify and address such instances, understanding the subtle nature of microaggressions is crucial. It is also important to remember that some people may be associated with more than one marginalized group and experience **intersectional** microaggressions.

Education on the various types of microaggressions and the harmful impacts of such behaviors is an important step in reducing microaggressions. This might be in the form of professional development for all employees, calling in speakers and/or consultants who might develop an action-plan, or simple steps such as believing the stories of those who report issues of microaggressions in the workplace.



**Students want to see themselves reflected in the power structures of the organization. They are also looking for organizations to address tokenism.**

Organizations should approach hiring diverse employees by asking themselves questions like: How can we make our jobs more visible and appealing to a diverse candidate pool? How can we make the roles or employee policies more inclusive for people from a broader range of backgrounds? Take stock of the current levels of representation in your organization. Are people who experience marginalization in roles that have the power to create meaningful change? If the employees who experience marginalization are clustered in positions that have little power or influence over the company culture, then the risks of tokenism are very high.

In this initiative, many participants who experience marginalization reported having their qualifications and skills dismissed through microaggressions that implied they got their position based solely on their marginalized identity. Meaningful inclusion requires going beyond just hiring for diversity to ensuring workplaces are safe and inclusive of people who experience marginalization. This means refusing to tolerate discriminatory microaggressions; actively combating prejudice, bias, and stereotypes; and creating accountability mechanisms based on the principles of safety, dialogue, and **restorative conflict resolution**.

**Students are searching for organizations that provide safe spaces for people who experience marginalization.**

Some ways of providing safe spaces for employees include encouraging open dialogue, building trust, being willing to have uncomfortable conversations, ensuring confidentiality, and intervening to address prejudiced and discriminatory beliefs and behaviours. Employers can begin by considering what they can do to support social justice initiatives in the industry

## c. What You Can Do

and the broader community. Employers can provide training on respect in the workplace; diversity, equity and inclusion; and in de-escalation techniques. Those in leadership positions can lead by example, with open-door policies for anyone facing JEDI related issues in the workplace.

### **Students are looking for workplaces where the harms of supposedly ‘positive’ stereotypes are acknowledged and addressed.**

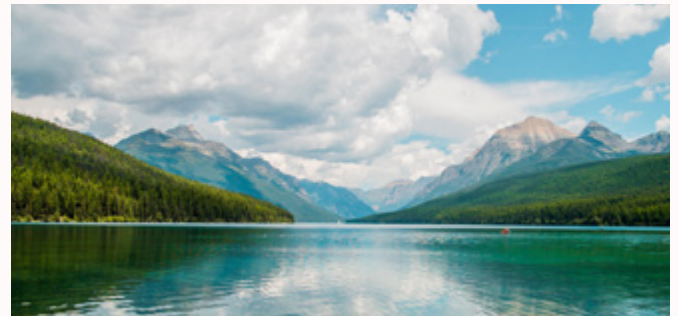
The “model minority” myth implies that certain ethnic minorities are better than others (for example, better at adjusting to a different cultures, more hardworking, better at math, and so on). Research shows that people targeted by these stereotypes may feel inadequate if they experience mental, emotional, academic, or economic turmoil. As a result, they may avoid seeking help for fear of tainting that positive image and letting their family and/or community down.

Additionally, these myths can lead to members of these groups being perceived of as smart, hardworking and easy-to-manage employees, while also being considered less capable as leaders and managers. For example, [research](#) done in the United States has found that Asian Americans were more likely to be promoted to CEO only when the organization was on a decline “because decision makers believe Asian Americans are inclined to sacrifice their self-interest to improve the welfare of others” (Gündemir, Homan & Carton, 2019). When companies want to take risks and grow, corporate America prizes leaders who are perceived to be charismatic, extroverted, assertive and bold — and they’re more likely to assume these are inherent in tall, white businessmen.

### **Students are looking for organizations who are using online technologies to address workplace inequities and microaggressions.**

When looking to harness the potential powers of virtual technologies to mitigate inequities and microaggressions, begin by carefully considering the contexts of online interactions. Where are the risks of harm particularly high? Make sure

you take the time to learn from your employees and understand context. Consider safe ways for employees to report their experiences, such as anonymous surveys, formal and informal reporting, and incident tracking. Ensure that platforms are accessible, and pay attention to issues such as colour in branding and email signatures. It is also important to model JEDI best practices in your communications plans and practices. For example, consider including pronouns, avoid assigning genders and titles based on gender and marital status. To get started, check out these resources on [Accessible Virtual Events](#) and [Accessible Social Media](#) for WIL and Co-op.



## **IV. Reflect and Keep Going**

Engaging in JEDI work is exciting, transformative, inspiring – and very, very hard. Goals are rarely accomplished overnight. It sometimes takes a long time to see the positive impacts of your efforts. A final recommendation is to keep going. The determined resilience of Indigenous Peoples in striving towards justice exemplifies this commitment. In *The Reconciliation Manifesto: Recovering the Land, Rebuilding the Economy*, Arthur Manuel (2017) explained:

“I refuse to give up... I still see hope, a faint light on the horizon. This is the gradual dawning of awareness among ordinary Canadians that things are not right and things have to change, that there may be many important projects in protecting the land and fixing Canada to make it a land of justice for all... Many Canadians want to see reconciliation between the settlers and Indigenous peoples. But that cannot be forced. Reconciliation has to first pass through truth. And we still have not

## c. What You Can Do

had enough of that from this government or from Canada as a whole” (56).

As Manuel and other Indigenous leaders have made clear, there is still much truth work to be done before reconciliation can move forward.

One goal of this initiative was to provide participants' with additional education on the impacts of colonialism on Indigenous Peoples and communities in Canada. Although difficult, those learnings inspired many participants to want to walk alongside Indigenous communities on the path towards decolonization and reconciliation. Students reflected on and actively crafted strategies through which they might apply their learnings on reconciliation and decolonization in the workplace. Many students reported that this was one of the most impactful take-aways from the professional development learning opportunity. Students developed and reported on how they might apply specific reconciliation and decolonization strategies in diverse WIL fields, from education to supply chain management, from health sciences to retail, from public service to sports and recreation. Many students expressed a commitment to lifelong learning on these topics, developed concrete strategies for their workplaces, and critically engaged with the inadequacy of many current decolonization and reconciliation initiatives.



### **Example: Reflecting on Reconciliation in the Workplace**

In this section, we look specifically at the calls that participants had for employers to consider how organizations might keep going in terms of moving

decolonization and reconciliation initiatives forward. It is inspiring to consider the meaningful, transformational change that could come from harnessing the dedication and potential practical applications that WIL participants' developed on these topics.

### **Students want to be at workplaces that are working to address their reconciliation responsibilities.**

The first step towards addressing your reconciliation responsibilities is to know what they are. This means taking the time to know and reflect on your responsibilities in relation to:

- Indigenous employees, clients, individuals and communities that you serve, work with, and/or who are impacted by what you do.
- Local Indigenous Communities
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and in particular the Calls to Action.
- The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which is a legislated responsibility federally and provincially in British Columbia.
- Section 35 of the Constitution Act

### **Students want organizations to acknowledge the Indigenous territories they operate on.**

Engaging in territorial acknowledgements has become increasingly common practice in Canada. Territorial acknowledgements can take many forms. Most often, they involve statements at the beginning of an event or document that publicly acknowledge Indigenous lands, treaties, and Peoples. If your organization has not already done so, it is worth considering whether to develop a territorial acknowledgement complete with guidelines for use and pronunciation (a quick online search can help you locate pronunciation guides for your region). In doing so, it is important to consider why you are acknowledging territory, when to acknowledge territory, and how to address different responses to territorial acknowledgements. You can find out more

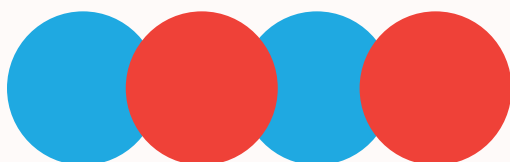
## c. What You Can Do

about the Indigenous territories your organization operates on [here](#). Check the Resources booklet for some items to help you get started, including “[Territory Acknowledgement](#)” by NativeLand.ca and “[Beyond Territorial Acknowledgements](#)” by Chelsea Vowel. An important point to keep in mind is one that has been repeatedly raised by Indigenous scholars and community members: territorial acknowledgements alone cannot ever replace meaningful action on decolonization and reconciliation. For these reasons, it is important to reflect on some [Indigenous critiques of territorial acknowledgements](#), and to link your acknowledgements to meaningful and transformative action.

### **Students want to work in organizations and fields where education about Indigenous Peoples, colonialism, decolonization and reconciliation are prioritized.**

Almost everyone has much more that they could learn on the topics of Indigenous Peoples, colonialism, decolonization and reconciliation. As Manuel’s earlier quote indicates, understanding the ongoing social and historical contexts and complexities of working with Indigenous communities is crucial to advancing decolonization and reconciliation in WIL.

Prioritizing this learning can involve different strategies. It might include valuing related prior learning and training in hiring processes; supporting and resourcing employees to engage in ongoing professional development on these topics; developing in-house professional development opportunities on decolonization and reconciliation, or some combination of all of these options. Please see the resources section of this toolkit for some learning opportunities on these topics that may be of interest to you.



### **Students want to have difficult conversations about decolonization and reconciliation. They want to work with organizations that can recognize mistakes, learn, and change.**

As important as they are, conversations about decolonization and reconciliation are not easy. Empowering workers to have meaningful conversations about these topics with each other, with supervisors, and with community members has the potential to transform workplaces and relationships in positive ways. However, there is also potential for harm if people do not have the JEDI skills they need to engage in these conversations, and if organizations are not willing to take meaningful action in response to what they learn from these dialogues. These kinds of complexities show that this is long-term work and learning, with action and education needed to support each other on an ongoing basis. Reconciliation Canada has provided a [Kitchen Table Guide for Reconciliation Dialogue](#) that might help you get started, as well as a [Toolkit for Individuals, Communities, and Organizations](#).

### **Students are looking for decolonization and reconciliation initiatives that are Indigenous-led. They want to see Indigenous leadership and practices in their fields of work.**

Decolonization and reconciliation are work we all need to do. However, Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing things have been suppressed and stigmatized. Decolonization and reconciliation mean looking for and creating opportunities to learn from Indigenous Peoples and respectfully adapting our practices accordingly. This learning should move beyond just including some Indigenous perspectives towards more embedded, immersive experiences that recognize Indigenous communities and Knowledge Keepers as authorities and experts. Louie and Chung (2021) identify the art of checking in, the practice of informed consent, and the platinum rule as three important tools for decolonization ([learn more](#)).

## c. What You Can Do

Ensuring Indigenous leaders and employees are supported, as well as that non-Indigenous folks have the skills to engage on these topics in a good way, are crucial. As you look towards building your own decolonization and reconciliation initiatives, consider the importance of ensuring that these initiatives are Indigenous-led from the outset. At the same time, such initiatives require a tremendous amount of time, energy, work and care. No one should be asked to engage in this work 'off the side of their desks.' Such work must be appropriately resourced, relationship-based, and reciprocal. It should never be assumed that an Indigenous employee should or will want to lead such an initiative based solely on their identity. When and where possible, consult carefully with appropriate representatives of local Indigenous communities. Also consider organizational capacity. For example, would an Elder in Residence program be appropriate to your goals and organization? Do you have capacity to offer a culturally safe working environment for such an initiative?

### **Students are looking for employers and organizations to be truly equitable and inclusive of Indigenous Peoples.**

For most organizations, transformational change is needed to work towards being truly equitable and inclusive of Indigenous Peoples. Anti-Indigenous racism, systemic inequality, and discrimination remain pervasive in Canada, and these ongoing social injustices are directly tied to colonialism. Working differently requires addressing complex topics including the ongoing legacies of colonialism, anti-Indigenous bias, white privilege and more.

### **It also requires a focus on Indigenous knowledges, cultural safety, trauma-informed practices, and intercultural development.**

Critical to all of these practices is meaningful relationship building with Indigenous Peoples and communities, which takes time and long-term commitment.

### **Students are considering whether employers and organizations truly value reconciliation and relationship building.**

Intercultural development and awareness are important goals, but by themselves they do not go far enough to accomplish the transformational change needed to move towards reconciliation. Many scholars emphasize the importance of relationship building between Indigenous communities and organizations for all stakeholders to maximize the benefits of WIL opportunities. Working to embed collaborative, reciprocal reconciliation and relationship-building initiatives with Indigenous Peoples and communities may promote transformational change in WIL students and organizational relationships. Such relationship building requires long-term commitments in order to be done in a good way, which means building appropriate resourcing and adaptable organizational planning around such initiatives.

### **Students want to be at organizations working for reconciliation at the level of policy. They want reconciliation responsibilities reflected in ongoing organizational planning.**

As is true of JEDI more broadly, in order to move forward on decolonization and reconciliation, there is a need to embed these approaches in organizational policies, practices, and planning on an ongoing basis. Doing this work involves going beyond superficial statements to really taking up the meaningful work of transformational change. Including an explicit focus on decolonization and reconciliation in policies, practices, and planning provides an opportunity to benchmark progress and, crucially, to ensure the work is transparent, accountable, and properly resourced.



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### **Simran Ahmed**

*(she/her)*

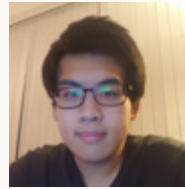
resides on the unceded homelands of the hən̓q̓əmi̓nəm̓ and Skwx̓wú7mesh speaking peoples. She is the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Educator within Work Integrated Learning at Simon Fraser University where she instructs two online courses: Job Search Success (JSS), designed to help students with their work search documents; and Effective Intercultural Communication (EIC), designed to help students grapple with concepts such as power, privilege, reconciliation and intercultural dynamics. She also creates and curates educational resources related to JEDI topics. Simran is currently pursuing her MA within SFU Criminology with a focus on cross-cultural validity of risk assessments.



### **Te (Dony) Li**

*(he/him)*

is a UX designer who graduated from the school of Interactive Arts and Technology in Simon Fraser University. Dony was responsible to design the visual of the ihub toolkit. Through empathic research and holistic human-centered design, Dony aim to solve real-world challenges. He believes every new and existing product can be transformed with a bit of UX magic. With the inclusive focus on the end-users, a good design is always an awesome spices that improve people's life.



### **Howard Chu**

*(he/him)*

is a graphic and UI/UX designer who recently graduated from Simon Fraser University (SFU). He was the graphic designer (co-op) for the SFU Work Integrated Learning - Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team in fall/spring 2021. During the co-op, Howard was primarily responsible for creating infographics and illustrations for students and teachers on the EDI courses. He was also responsible for creating short comic strips and visual dictionaries that focused on the EDI scenarios. When off work, Howard always enjoys cooking, basketball, and playing video games with his friends and family.



### **Amie McLean, Ph.D.**

*(she/her)*

lives on the unceded territories of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc within Secwépemc'ulucw. She is a sociologist and anti-racist feminist writer and educator whose work focuses on social justice issues in Canadian post-secondary education and work. She was co-Chair of the Learning at Intercultural Intersections international conference, and co-edited a special issue from that event. She is the Manager for EDI Curriculum for Work Integrated Learning at Simon Fraser University. She applies intersectional, decolonizing, and anti-oppressive approaches to embed EDI content, frameworks, and practices in faculty, staff, student, and employer-facing curricula.



### **Tim Michel, MDDE**

*(he/him/his)*

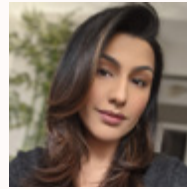
is a Secwép̓m̓c from Kamloops (Ct̓k̓em̓lups) who has migrated to the Wet̓ém̓kec-ul̓uc (Coast Salish Lands) of the x̓m̓əθ̓k̓ʷəy̓əm, Sk̓w̓x̓w̓ú7̓mesh Úx̓wum̓ixw, sə̓lil̓w̓ətaʔ̓ and k̓ʷik̓ʷəł̓əm. Tim has worked as a lecturer in SFU's Faculty of Education, in Indigenous student services and in various Indigenous community positions. He brings his broad experiences to his social equity, decolonizing, diversity and inclusion work on the SFU WIL EDI team. Tim works with Indigenous and Student Services units to improve outreach and engagement with Indigenous students. Plans are to foster solid relationships with Indigenous urban and First Nations communities and host organizations and employers.



### **Heather Williams**

*(she/her)*

is a fifth generation settler whose ancestors were English, Irish and Jewish. She is grateful to live on unceded Coast Salish territories of the Kwantlen and Qayqayt Nations. As a queer identified, anti-racist feminist Heather applies intersectional and trauma-informed approaches to her work. She is a life-long learner who approaches equity, diversity, decolonization and inclusion with a carefully cultivated sense of cultural humility. Heather has published on intercultural learning, equity and inclusion in curriculum design. She is pursuing her PhD in Education. Heather's greatest teachers are her children who inspire her to make the world a better place.



### **Akanksha Thakur, M.Ed.**

*(she/her)*

immigrated from Mumbai, India and resides on unceded Indigenous territories in BC. She is Program Coordinator: EDI Resources in Work Integrated Learning at Simon Fraser University. She curates and collaborates to build EDI resources designed to make WIL more inclusive. Her lived experiences as an immigrant and settler fuel her passion for issues of anti-racism, equity, accessibility and inclusion. Akanksha received the John Gibbard Memorial Award from the United Nations Association of Canada for fostering positive change within the local community. She also offers workshops on anti-racism and intercultural communication nationally through the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.