

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS AND TECHNOLOGISTS (OACETT)

2024 BELONGING AND INCLUSION REPORT

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For: Ontario Association of Certified Engineering
Technicians and Technologists (OACETT)

2024 Belonging and Inclusion Report





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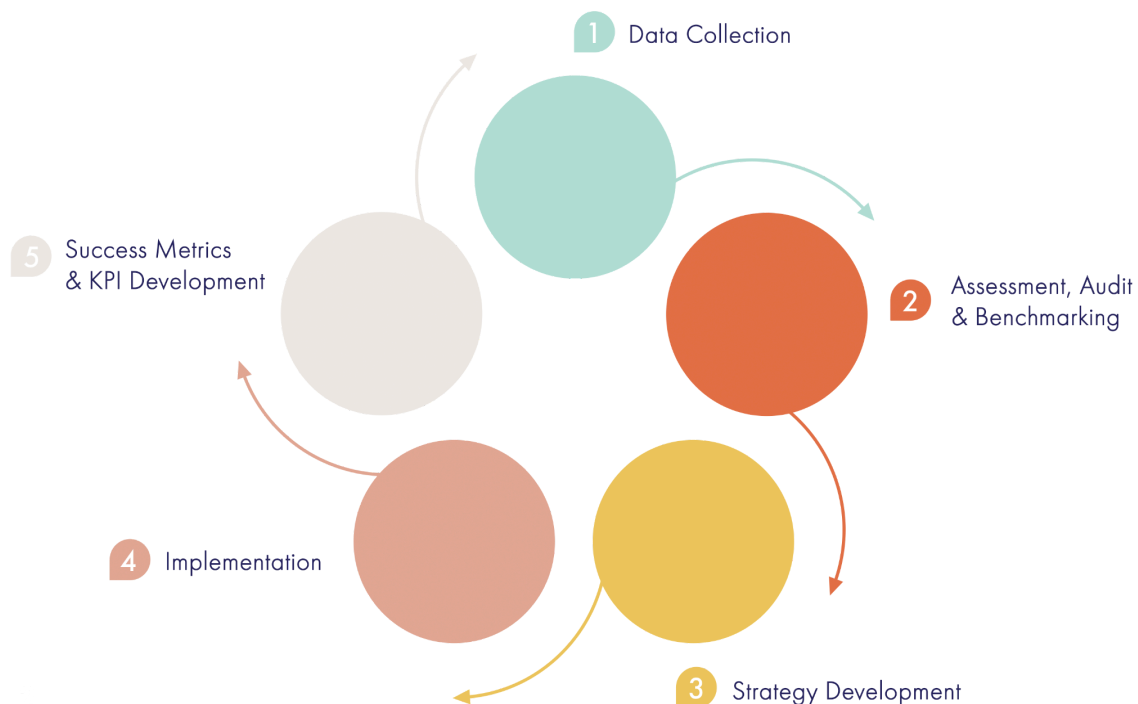
Any remaining references to "DEI" or "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion" within this report reflect the verbatim questions and responses from the survey that was issued prior to the name change to "Belonging and Inclusion".



BELONGING AND INCLUSION (BI) AT ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS AND TECHNOLOGISTS (OACETT)

In March 2024, Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists (OACETT) partnered with CultureAlly to begin a comprehensive assessment and visioning of their Belonging and Inclusion (BI) program specific to the membership experience. Throughout the partnership, CultureAlly supported OACETT in evolving and developing current policies, practices and governance structures so that they are aligned with best practices in BI, and can be incorporated into OACETT's strategic membership priorities.

CultureAlly uses the following flow when delivering a BI strategy. Steps 1-3 will be covered in this report, starting with #1: Data collection.



This report presents a detailed analysis of important insights gathered from BI survey data, 1:1 and Focus Group interviews hosted by CultureAlly, as well as a review of OACETT's existing policies, practices, and integration strategies. It highlights the main areas where improvements in BI can be made and proposes a data-informed BI strategy for OACETT.



TERMINOLOGY

Belonging is about fostering environments where people feel respected, safe, and free to be their authentic selves.

Inclusion is when people of different traits are socially accepted and welcomed. This is about creating an environment where everyone has the opportunity to fully participate, and each person is valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives.

Diversity is the state of showing a great deal of variety or differences. These differences can be in the form of experiences, perspectives, and identities, both visible and invisible. There are different dimensions of diversity such as age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, mental and physical ability and language, to name a few. **Image 1** shows examples of different dimensions of diversity.



Image 1: Dimensions of Diversity

Equity is ensuring that people have access to the same opportunities. This does not necessarily mean treating everyone equally. Equity acknowledges that historic and systemic barriers exist and recognizes that we do not all start from the same place. To ensure there is equity, barriers must be addressed by making adjustments to imbalances so that everyone has the opportunity to realize their full potential.

The term **marginalized** describes an identity or group that is treated insignificantly, pushed to the margins of society, and rendered powerless. Marginalized groups are those that have been historically disempowered and oppressed by influential and/or discriminatory groups. These groups may experience barriers in various forms at the workplace and can include: women, people with disabilities, people of color, 2SLGBTQ+ folks, Indigenous Peoples, people of a lower socio-economic status and so on. Read more about what marginalized means [here](#).

Intersectionality, a term coined by scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, is how systems of oppression overlap to create distinct experiences for people with multiple identity categories. For example, an individual that is Indigenous and transgender encompasses two marginalized dimensions of diversity that are intersecting. Another example, an individual that is white, neurotypical, and wealthy encompasses three privileged dimensions of diversity. When considering visible and invisible dimensions of diversity, it is important to recognize intersectionality between dimensions. Read more about what intersectionality means [here](#).

Psychological safety is the belief that one will not experience interpersonal or social threats when asking questions, asking for help, providing feedback, acknowledging mistakes or trying something new. Interpersonal or social threats include rejection, disrespect and intimidation. One may be labeled unfavorably or receive a punishment that impacts one's identity, status and/or career. When an atmosphere is psychologically safe, all individuals share a sense of trust, respect, and belonging. Read more about what psychological safety means [here](#).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists (OACETT) partnered with CultureAlly to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the organization's Belonging and Inclusion (BI) practices, specifically focusing on the membership experience. This initiative aimed to evaluate current policies, practices, and member sentiments related to BI, and to identify actionable steps towards fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse environment within OACETT.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

The assessment involved multiple data collection methods, including an organization-wide member survey, focus groups, 1:1 interviews, and a detailed review of existing policies and practices. The survey, administered via SurveyMonkey, garnered a response rate of 5% from OACETT's 20,742 members. Additionally, six focus groups and three individual interviews were conducted, offering nuanced insights into the BI experiences of members.

Key Findings

1. Survey Data Analysis

The survey revealed both strengths and areas of concern within OACETT's BI efforts. A notable strength was the positive perception of diversity among the membership, with the sentiment "OACETT has diverse members with different experiences and backgrounds" receiving the highest average score. However, challenges were also evident, particularly regarding leadership opportunities, as reflected in the lowest scoring sentiment, "I see a path for myself to a leadership role within OACETT."

Key themes emerged from the written responses in the survey:

- **Equality and Fairness:** Members emphasized the importance of equal treatment and access to opportunities for all.
- **Sense of Belonging:** There was a strong desire for an environment where everyone feels welcome and included.
- **Diverse Representation:** Respondents highlighted the need for broader representation of diverse backgrounds within leadership roles.
- **Removing Bias and Promoting Allyship:** Many called for more active efforts to combat biases and promote a culture of respect and understanding.
- **Barriers to BI:** Key barriers identified included an 'old school mindset' resistant to change, unconscious biases, and a lack of diverse role models in leadership.

2. Focus Groups and Interviews

Participants in focus groups and interviews identified several recurring themes, including challenges in the certification process, financial barriers, lack of support for marginalized members, and inconsistent member experiences. There was also a strong desire for improved communication and engagement from OACETT, particularly in terms of providing clear pathways for leadership opportunities.



3. Policy and Practice Review

The review of OACETT's policies and practices revealed both strengths and opportunities for improvement. While the organization has made strides in incorporating BI principles, there are significant areas where policies could be enhanced to better support equity and inclusion. The review highlighted the importance of ensuring that policies are accessible and inclusive for all members, particularly those from underrepresented groups. It also identified that whilst OACETT's policies promote transparency and accountability, more could be done to ensure that inclusion is embedded in day-to-day practices such as setting data-driven objectives and implementing regular BI monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following key recommendations have been developed to enhance BI within the membership experience at OACETT:

1. Recruitment and Retention

- **High Priority:** Enhance Chapter support for underrepresented groups, such as women, minorities, and LGBTQ+ individuals, by offering member resource groups, mentorship programs and networking opportunities. OACETT may also offer targeted professional development resources. This directly addresses existing disparities and can lead to immediate positive outcomes.
- **Medium Priority:** Enhance transparency on the OACETT website and create new communications channels for added accessibility in the certification processes by providing clear criteria linking educational and professional requirements to approvals for certification, building trust and ensuring equitable practices.
- **Low Priority:** Broaden access to development opportunities and ensure equitable selection for certification, though this will require more systemic changes and cross-departmental collaboration.

2. Training and Development

- **High Priority:** Develop clear criteria for training program selection based on professional needs and career progression, ensuring training is relevant and impactful, which can quickly improve member satisfaction and engagement.
- **Medium Priority:** Offer training programs that integrate BI principles, including topics like Unconscious Bias and the Foundations of BI. While essential for promoting BI awareness, these programs may require significant time and resources to implement effectively.
- **Low Priority:** Regularly assess the uptake, effectiveness, and operational application of training programs to ensure continuous improvement, but this should follow the establishment of foundational BI training initiatives.

3. Membership Engagement and Culture

- **High Priority:** Strengthen marketing and communication efforts around diverse representation in leadership positions and role models within OACETT, leveraging success stories to build awareness of member diversity. This is critical for fostering a culture of inclusion and can have immediate visibility and impact.



- **Medium Priority:** Host social activities that offer a wide range of interests, encouraging interaction, bonding, and understanding among all members. While important, these activities require careful planning and resources to be effective.
- **Low Priority:** Enhance community building through online engagement events that include remote members and those with different cultural backgrounds, addressing economic and geographic barriers. This should be implemented after foundational BI strategies are in place.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 Belonging and Inclusion Report for OACETT highlights significant progress in the organization's journey towards a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse environment. However, it also underscores the need for continued efforts to embed BI principles into every aspect of OACETT's operations. By implementing these recommendations, OACETT has the opportunity to set a new standard for inclusivity within the engineering and technology sectors, ensuring that all members, regardless of their background, feel valued and supported.

This report will help CultureAlly and OACETT to create a strategic roadmap through the identification and implementation of these recommendations to drive progress over the coming years. The path forward will require sustained commitment, ongoing evaluation, and the active participation of all OACETT members.



PART 1: DATA COLLECTION





DATA COLLECTION

We took a thorough and varied approach to understand how BI currently stands at OACETT through different modes of data collection.

Organization-Wide Member Survey via SurveyMonkey

A primary instrument in our data collection was a survey administered through SurveyMonkey. This survey, which ran from May 30, 2024 - June 17, 2024, aimed to measure inclusion sentiments of OACETT members.

The survey response rates are summarized in the table below.

OACETT Members	Members	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Total Members	20,742	1070	5%

Table 1: Survey response by Total Members within OACETT, where the response rate is calculated by dividing the number of responses by members. The margin of error is 2.92%, which is a positive indicator of the precision of the survey results. Statistically, the results from 1070 respondents are fairly accurate, within ± 2.92 percentage points, assuming the sample is unbiased.

The list of survey questions can be found in the [Appendix 1](#) section.

Note: The recent survey was not designed to reveal key insights into the organization's current diversity landscape. In future, OACETT intends to collect demographic data (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, income, socio-economic status, immigration status, etc.) about its members to better understand the demographic make-up of OACETT's membership. The goal is to use that information to enhance OACETT's BI membership strategy. This understanding will serve as the foundation for refining and reinforcing OACETT's BI strategies, emphasizing its dedication to celebrate diversity and foster a truly equitable and inclusive environment.

Focus Groups and 1:1 Interviews

CultureAlly hosted six Focus Groups and three 1:1 Interviews, encompassing 10 individuals. Participants included Chapter Leaders and Chapter Members from OACETT who voluntarily participated. These interactions afforded us nuanced perspectives on BI experience of members within OACETT.

Focus group discussion questions can be found in the [Appendix 2](#) section.

Review of Policies, Practices, and Integration

An essential part of the evaluation involved an in-depth review of documents, including organizational policies, governance policies, human resources policies, and the Membership Outreach Strategy. Insights from OACETT staff and members through Focus Groups and interviews further informed the current state of BI at the organization, enabling a thorough audit of key areas like Recruitment and Retention among OACETT members. This holistic approach helped pinpoint strengths and improvement areas in OACETT's membership BI practices.



In the next parts of this report, there is a detailed analysis of the data collected, offering insights into OACETT's BI dynamics and offering pathways for future improvements.

PART 2: SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS





SURVEY OVERVIEW SUMMARY

Inclusion sentiments provide a nuanced understanding of how members perceive OACETT in terms of inclusivity. This section is crucial for understanding both strengths and areas of opportunities within OACETT's BI efforts, guiding strategic decisions to foster a more inclusive membership experience.

Perceived workforce diversity is a strength within OACETT. "*OACETT has diverse members...*" was the highest scored sentiment across the survey. This demonstrates that there is a good perception of diversity within the organization's members.

Conversely, "*I see a path for myself to a leadership role within OACETT...*", was the lowest scoring sentiment, highlighting potential barriers for development and recruitment.

WHAT BELONGING AND INCLUSION (BI) MEANS TO OACETT MEMBERS

The meaning of Belonging, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to members raised several interesting themes:

- **Equality and fairness**, particularly around the access to opportunities and resources.
- The importance of a **sense of belonging** to OACETT members.
- **Diverse representation** that reflects the diversity of the broader society.
- **Removing bias and promoting allyship** that recognizes and addresses systemic inequalities.
- **Collaboration and respect** and the impact on organizational decision-making.

BARRIERS TO BI

Members identified several barriers to BI within OACETT membership. Recognizing and addressing these barriers is essential to develop a strong and informed BI strategy. The main barriers highlighted by members include:

- **The 'old school mindset' and resistance to change.** Policies and practices were specifically identified as areas in which resistance to change was observed.
- **Unconscious bias and stereotypes.** Some members expressed that biases and stereotypes, specific to immigrants, background, appearance, race, and culture, existed within OACETT as a barrier to BI. This has the ability to undermine the implementation of policies and processes across OACETT, and should be addressed through education and training opportunities. Learn more about [Unconscious Bias](#) in the workplace.
- **Lack of representation and role models in leadership positions.** This identifies member recruitment and development practices as a potential area of focus within future BI strategy.
- **Membership Communication and engagement issues.** Remote members and those with different cultural backgrounds highlighted communication as a barrier to BI. The consideration of different learning styles, time and access to resources should be a consideration for BI strategy and initiatives.



- **Economic and geographic barriers.** Financial constraints and geographical challenges affecting participation and access to opportunities were highlighted as barriers. When considering engagement and communication, factors such as financial support and geographic considerations should be taken into account.

Addressing these barriers would require a combination of training, inclusive adjustments to existing policies and practices, and a robust approach to communications.

FUTURE COLLECTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

When considering the future collection of demographic data to further understand membership and strengthen BI initiatives, members raised several focus areas that should be considered. These considerations would encourage members to share the information, whilst maintaining trust in OACETT.

- **Privacy and security:** This was the most significant area of concern. Members requested that data is stored securely on encrypted servers, with access restricted to authorized individuals.
- **Transparency and consent:** Feedback from members emphasized the need for informed consent regarding the usage of data and the option to opt out or decline participation.
- **Data collection methods:** Suggested collection methods include online surveys, phone interviews or paper-based options. All collection methods should provide anonymity and options for self-identification to accurately capture diversity within OACETT members.
- **Inclusive and respectful engagement:** Members highlighted that inclusive and respectful communication would foster open dialogue, particularly if the importance of participation was emphasized.
- **Usage and accountability:** It is important to members that OACETT use the information appropriately and dispose of it once the exercise is complete. Transparency around the actions taken based on the collected data drives accountability and therefore confidence in the overall process.

BI FOCUS AREA PRIORITIZATION

Members were asked to rank BI focus areas to identify top priorities for the future BI strategy. Focus areas ranked '1' were identified as the highest priority and '9' as the lowest. Our analysis identified the highest priority items as the focus areas with the lowest numerical rank (closest to 1). As an additional layer of analysis, the percentage of participants ranking each topic as either first or second priority was also identified.

'Training for members' was identified as the top priority with an average rank of 2.6 and 65% of respondents ranking this as one of their top two priorities. This was followed by addressing *'barriers based on gender'* and *'socio-economic factors'*, with an average rank of 3.2 and 3.4 respectively.

The three lowest priority areas were *'addressing barriers based on sexual orientation'* (6.4), *'addressing Indigenous matters'* (6.8), and *'additional priorities'* (7.7).

Members were asked to describe 'additional priorities' as written responses. The following were identified and prioritized based on their recurring prevalence.



- **Equitable and transparent processes.** This particularly focused on hiring and promotion practices within their respective organizations and advancement opportunities as members of OACETT.
- **Promoting BI in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education and careers.** Members identified outreach, professional development and structure barriers as priority areas within STEM education and careers.
- **Recognition of foreign education and experience.** Members called for focus on the certification processes and the valuation of these experiences by Canadian organizations.
- **Detailed and transparent communication.** This was centered around OACETT communications to members as well as providing the opportunity and mechanism for members to communicate with OACETT.
- **Addressing barriers for additional groups.** Additional areas of consideration included barriers for groups based on race, ethnicity, religion, age and neurodiverse individuals.



SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

The inclusion sentiment questions in the survey were designed to measure the current sentiment around BI among members of OACETT. These questions guide the development of the BI strategy by identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement; inclusion scores can also serve as a foundation for benchmarking. The long-term goal is to elevate inclusion scores across all aspects, reflecting progress in fostering an inclusive environment and supporting the evaluation of BI initiatives.

The questions asked are listed in [Table 4](#) and assess various facets of inclusivity at OACETT. The survey question on the prioritization of BI roadmap focus areas is analyzed separately below.

INCLUSION SENTIMENTS		IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSION
1	I feel like I belong within OACETT.	Measures members' sense of belonging and inclusivity within the organization.
2	I can share my thoughts and opinions within OACETT without fear of negative consequences.	Reflects the openness and safety in communication across the organization.
3	OACETT has diverse members with different experiences and backgrounds.	Assesses perceptions of member diversity within OACETT.
4	When I speak up within OACETT, my opinion is valued.	Assesses how much member opinions are valued.
5	I see a path for myself to a leadership role within OACETT if I wanted it - in the Chapters or at the provincial level.	Reflects the availability and transparency of development into leadership opportunities.

[Table 4](#): Overview of Inclusion Sentiment Survey Questions and Their Implications for Assessing Inclusivity at OACETT.

Each question was asked on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) → 5 (Strongly Agree). The average sentiment scores can be found in [Table 5](#).

INCLUSION SENTIMENTS		OACETT OVERALL
1	I feel like I belong within OACETT.	4.1
2	I can share my thoughts and opinions within OACETT without fear of negative consequences.	4.0
3	OACETT has diverse members with different experiences and backgrounds.	4.4
4	When I speak up within OACETT, my opinion is valued.	3.9
5	I see a path for myself to a leadership role within OACETT if I wanted it - in the Chapters or at the provincial level.	3.8

[Table 5](#): Inclusion sentiment scores across OACETT Members.



KEY STRENGTHS

The highest scoring sentiment is "*OACETT has diverse members with different experiences and backgrounds*", indicating a positive perception of member diversity. This sentiment scored an average of 0.45 points higher or ~9% (based on a 5-point scale) higher than other sentiments.

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

Conversely, the lowest scoring sentiment is "*I see a path for myself to a leadership role within OACETT if I wanted it...*", scoring about 0.3 points lower or roughly 6% lower than most other sentiments. This highlights a potential area for improvement in ensuring members are aware, encouraged and empowered to aspire to a leadership position within OACETT. It also highlights the importance of identifying any barriers or inequity that may be driving this sentiment.

The analysis of the sentiment results indicates that the average scores for the majority of questions are relatively close to each other. While there is a discernible highest and lowest sentiment, the minimal variation between these scores suggests that each area warrants attention. This scoring highlights the importance of addressing these sentiments to ensure a comprehensive and balanced BI strategy.



WRITTEN RESPONSES

In this section, we identify and summarize the key themes that emerged from the following written response questions within the survey:

- What does Diversity, Equity and Inclusion mean to you?
- What do you feel is the biggest barrier to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion we face at OACETT?
- OACETT intends to collect demographic data (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, income, socio-economic status, immigration status, etc.) about its members to help us better understand the demographic make-up of OACETT's membership. The ultimate goal is to use information to enhance OACETT's DEI strategy. Please share any questions, comments or suggestions here about how OACETT should best gather and work with this sensitive information.

Themes have been identified and prioritized based on their recurring prevalence for each question. These themes provide nuanced insights into the specific areas related to Belonging and Inclusion that require further attention, as respondents shared information both based on their interpretation of BI and barriers within OACETT. Further insights related to comments around data collection can provide an indication of members' expectations, trust and openness around BI communications with OACETT.

WHAT BELONGING AND INCLUSION MEANS TO OACETT MEMBERS

Equality and Fairness

Many respondents emphasized that BI means ensuring equal treatment and opportunities for everyone, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. They believe that everyone should be treated fairly, have equal access to resources, and be able to contribute fully based on their abilities and efforts.

"Everyone is treated fairly and has the same opportunities no matter what they look like, where they are from, or what they believe."

"Means everyone gets the same chance at an opportunity regardless of gender, sexual orientation, etc."

"Treating everyone with respect and understanding the challenges that they have or will experience in life."

Sense of Belonging:

A significant number of responses highlighted the importance of creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, valued, and included. This involves fostering a sense of belonging where diverse perspectives are respected, and all individuals can participate without fear of judgment or exclusion.



"It means a lot and feels home to the members."

"A commitment to ensuring everyone has a sense of belonging, regardless of the many factors and circumstances that make us unique."

"We all have a part in our organization and can include all sorts of experiences."

Diverse Representation

Respondents frequently mentioned the need for diverse representation in their respective fields and workplaces. This includes having people from various backgrounds, cultures, and identities represented in all levels of the organization, ensuring that the workforce reflects the diversity of the broader society.

"Diversity, equity, and inclusion mean representation, fairness, and belonging in all aspects of life and society."

"A wide range of people able to work, be fairly compensated and involved in the workplace."

"Seeing a balanced representation of the environment around me in the organization I'm involved in."

Removing Bias and Promoting Allyship

Several responses focused on the importance of actively removing biases and increasing allyship within the organization. This involves recognizing and addressing systemic inequalities, supporting underrepresented groups, and promoting a culture of respect and understanding.

"Recognizing that other backgrounds, experiences, and identities than your own hold value."

"Acceptance and realization of the strengths of different people, as well as ensuring they're provided with the support and resources to be included."

"Mutual respect of opinion, a safe space of expression. All people and perspectives are welcome."

Collaboration and Respect

Many members emphasized that BI is about working together collaboratively and respectfully. They believe that embracing diversity leads to innovative solutions, better decision-making, and a more positive and productive environment.

"Bringing in lots of different opinions and being able to share it in a judgment-free zone and showing respect for each other overall."

"It means accepting, being kind, and collaborating with people regardless of social/physical, or psychological state and/or other differences."

"Diversity, equity, and inclusion promote the fair treatment and full participation of all, without discrimination based on one's background, identity, or disability."



BARRIERS TO BI

These themes reflect the various challenges that OACETT faces in promoting a truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment. Addressing these barriers requires a comprehensive approach, including education, policy changes, and a commitment to fostering an inclusive culture.

'Old School Mindset' and Resistance to Change

Many members mentioned long-standing cultural and systemic norms that create resistance to adopting BI principles and practices. These can be further complicated by generational differences. These norms hinder BI efforts and create unequal opportunities.

"Cultural stigmas and deeply ingrained practices."

"Systemic biases, which can manifest in organizational culture, policies, and practices, leading to unequal opportunities and a lack of representation for underrepresented groups."

"Generational Differences: Senior members might face challenges due to generational differences in understanding and implementing DE&I principles."

Unconscious Bias and Stereotypes

Unconscious biases and stereotypes related to gender, race, and culture were frequently mentioned as barriers to BI at OACETT. Unconscious bias can affect many BI activities and erode the purpose of processes and policies. Therefore, supporting members to understand and acknowledge their own biases can drive BI engagement and progress.

"Unconscious bias made between different qualities such as gender, race and culture without conscious awareness."

"Prejudice from upbringing and the lack of integration within communities for immigrants."

"Unconscious biases are the automatic judgments and stereotypes that people hold about others based on their background, appearance, or other characteristics."

Lack of Representation and Role Models

A lack of diverse representation in leadership positions and role models within the organization was highlighted. Not only does this identify that leadership development processes should be reviewed for improvement opportunities, but it also speaks to the quality of role models and the opportunity for BI leadership within OACETT.

"Underrepresentation of diverse groups in leadership roles, decision-making positions, and influential sectors."



"The largest barrier is the transition from all white male leaders to a more diverse population of people in leadership roles."

"Promote diversity in leadership positions to ensure DEI initiatives are prioritized and championed."

Communication and Engagement Issues

Members identified communication and engagement as barriers to BI at OACETT. Specifically, members highlighted challenges in communication and lack of engagement with diverse members, particularly remote members and those with different cultural backgrounds. Providing varied styles of communication and engagement opportunities is important to drive belonging and inclusion, particularly if in-person learning opportunities are limited. The consideration of different communication preferences, time and access to resources should be considered to ensure effective communication and drive increased engagement.

"Need more visibility within chapter leadership."

"Not having enough knowledge about one another."

"Disconnectedness - most members' only connection to OACETT is through email."

Economic and Geographic Barriers

Financial constraints and geographical challenges affecting participation and access to opportunities were highlighted as barriers to BI for OACETT members. With geography exacerbating existing financial burden, these barriers can often disproportionately impact different societal areas and demographic groups. When considering engagement and communication, factors such as financial support and geographic considerations should also be taken into account.

"Finances. The costs for OACETT including the admission, exams, and yearly dues are expensive and add up."

"Geography of the province. Travel distance and costs associated for events, education, etc."

"Economic inequalities that disproportionately affect marginalized groups, limiting their access to quality education, healthcare, housing, and other critical resources necessary for equal opportunities."



FUTURE COLLECTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Members provided a number of comments and suggestions related to the collection of demographic data. Focus and communication around these themes would allow OACETT to effectively gather and work with sensitive demographic information while maintaining the trust and privacy of its members.

Privacy and Security

Privacy and security emerged as the most significant area of concern, receiving the highest prevalence of comments. Members emphasized the importance of securely storing any sensitive demographic information, with access restricted to authorized personnel only. They highlighted the need for encryption and secure servers to ensure data protection. Additionally, members requested regular audits and staff training on data privacy and security practices to prevent breaches and mishandling of data. Members also urged OACETT to anonymize and aggregate data to maintain confidentiality and protect individual identities.

"Provide details on the level of information required, how and where it is kept, used and deleted and how individuals can request their information be scrubbed."

"Ensuring the data is stored in a safe, secure, encrypted environment. Especially in this day in age where data is stolen and hackers are constantly making claims."

"Sensitive information should be stored securely. This could involve encryption, secure servers, and restricted access."

Transparency and Consent

OACETT members were keen to ensure there was clear communication regarding the purpose and benefits of collecting demographic data, including how it will be used and who will have access to it. This included obtaining explicit, informed consent from members before collecting any personal information, making it clear that participation is voluntary and individuals can opt out if they choose. Members also requested that OACETT regularly update members on how the data is being used and the impact it has on BI initiatives to ensure that members remained informed and could consent to any updated purpose for the data.

"You will have to be very, very clear on the process by which this information is gathered, anonymized, retained, secured and who is the party doing this (OACETT directly, or 3rd party vendor hired by OACETT)."

"By approaching the collection and use of demographic data thoughtfully and responsibly, OACETT can gather valuable insights to inform its DEI strategy while upholding the principles of privacy, confidentiality, and respect for its members' diversity and autonomy."

"Clearly communicate to members why demographic data is being collected, how it will be used, and the measures taken to protect their privacy."



Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods were also a topic of focus. Members recommended that OACETT utilize anonymous and voluntary surveys to gather demographic information, ensuring members feel comfortable and safe when providing their data. Multiple data collection methods, such as online surveys, phone interviews, and paper-based options, were also highlighted to accommodate different preferences and access levels. Regardless of the collection method, members also requested that the survey questions are inclusive and provide options for self-identification to accurately capture the diversity within OACETT.

"Surveys with incentives for all."

"Anonymous survey. Similar to salary survey where personal information is not recorded."

"Online/anonymous type questionnaire is easiest."

Inclusive and Respectful Engagement

The style of engagement during data collection emerged as a key theme for this question. Members requested that communications reflect a respectful and inclusive manner throughout the data collection process, acknowledging the importance of their participation. This would foster open dialogue and elicit feedback from members to build trust and collaboration, ensuring that future initiatives are informed by their input and experiences.

"Foster open dialogue and feedback to build trust and collaboration."

"Allow members to choose whether to provide demographic information, and ensure that participation is anonymous to protect individual privacy."

"Respectful anonymous survey/questionnaire."

Usage and Accountability

The final theme identified from this question and members' responses was to ensure that the usage of the data remained as communicated, ensuring that it is not misused or shared without proper authorization, and that OACETT took accountability for the proper disposal of data. This included the call for OACETT to establish clear policies for data retention and destruction, ensuring that old data is securely deleted when it is no longer needed and to be transparent about the actions taken based on the collected data and to hold the organization accountable for making meaningful progress in BI initiatives.

"Take all precautions to ensure that this information is kept secure - and access provided to only those who are needing to work with this data. Delete ALL once the study is complete"

"Very cautiously please. Yes, data can help to understand the nominal trends but the data can also be used to skew opinions."



"Collecting demographic data can be valuable for understanding the diversity within OACETT's membership and informing its DEI strategy. However, it's crucial to handle this sensitive information with care and respect members' privacy and confidentiality."



FOCUS AREA PRIORITIZATION

Survey respondents were asked to rank a list of focus areas to identify the most important priorities for future OACETT BI strategy. The table shows the average rank for each focus area and the % of respondents that identified the focus area as high priority (ranked first or second place).

The results are presented in two tables due to a change made to the survey on June 12, 2024. From May 30 to June 11, 2024, 793 respondents ranked a set list of focus areas, as shown in Table 6. Starting June 12, 2024, an additional option, "Addressing Indigenous matters," was included in the survey due to participant feedback. Table 7 reflects the survey results from the 277 respondents between June 12 to June 18, 2024, incorporating this additional focus area. This distinction is important for understanding how the inclusion of "Addressing Indigenous matters" influenced the prioritization of focus areas during these two survey periods.

Focus Area (May 30 to June 11, 2024)		Average Rank	1st or 2nd Rank (%)
1	Training for members (promoting diversity, unconscious bias, etc.)	2.5	66%
2	Addressing barriers based on gender	3.1	50%
3	Addressing barriers based on socio-economic status	3.4	28%
4	Addressing barriers based on immigration status	4.4	13%
5	Addressing barriers based on region	4.6	16%
6	Addressing barriers based on disabilities	4.7	15%
7	Addressing barriers based on sexual orientation	6.3	3%
8	Additional priorities (described in comments)	6.9	10%

Table 6: Prioritization of different focus areas by OACETT members (May 30 to June 11, 2024), displayed by average score and % of participants ranking the topic first or second priority.

Focus Area (June 12 to June 18, 2024)		Average Rank	1st or 2nd Rank (%)
1	Training for members (promoting diversity, unconscious bias, etc.)	2.9	61%
2	Addressing barriers based on socio-economic status	3.3	32%
3	Addressing barriers based on gender	3.5	40%
4	Addressing barriers based on immigration status	4.6	14%
5	Addressing barriers based on region	4.9	16%



Focus Area (June 12 to June 18, 2024)		Average Rank	1st or 2nd Rank (%)
6	Addressing barriers based on disabilities	4.9	16%
7	Addressing Indigenous matters	6.4	8%
8	Addressing barriers based on sexual orientation	6.7	4%
9	Additional priorities (described in comments)	7.7	11%

Table 7: Prioritization of different focus areas by OACETT members (June 12 to June 18, 2024), including the additional focus area "Addressing Indigenous matters," displayed by average score and % of participants ranking the topic first or second priority.

Analyzing the result:

- *'Training for members'* received the highest average rank, and therefore was identified as the top priority for the OACETT future BI roadmap. Over 60% of question respondents identified the topic as their first or second BI priority area.
- Conversely, *'Additional priorities'* received the lowest average rank because it was often placed as the least important. However, when looking at the percentage of respondents who ranked *'Additional priorities'* as their first or second choice, it's important to note that fewer respondents rated this focus area, making the percentage less representative.
- Amongst the *'Addressing barriers...'* focus areas, gender was ranked as the most important focus area, receiving both a high average rank and substantial number of respondents scoring this as first or second place in their priority ranking.
- When comparing the two data trends, two focus areas stand out as they deviate from the overall pattern. The two outliers, *'Addressing barriers based on immigration status'* and *'Addressing barriers based on sexual orientation'*, should be carefully considered to ensure their prioritization is accurately reflected in the BI strategy.

Additional Priorities (Written Responses):

The following additional priorities were identified from the written responses submitted for this survey question. They have been identified and prioritized based on their recurring prevalence and significance in the responses from members.

Equitable, Transparent Processes

Many respondents emphasized prioritizing hiring and promotion practices based on merit, skills and competence over identity markers. This suggests that there is a lack of clarity and understanding of the current recruitment and promotion practices across the various industries employing OACETT members.

"Promoting/hiring based on merit, skills, knowledge, experience."

"Ensuring processes are blind to immutable characteristics, success is purely based on merit/performance/experience."



"Focus on providing fair opportunities for all, not the minority."

Promoting DEI in STEM Education and Careers

Members identified the promotion of BI in STEM to be a priority area, specifically encouraging underrepresented groups to pursue STEM education and careers, including outreach, professional development, and addressing structural barriers such as the gender pay gap and family-friendly policies.

"Continuously encourage minorities to pursue STEM education through early outreach."

"Provide professional development opportunities and Initiatives."

"Encourage minorities to stay in STEM careers through sponsorship programs and opportunities for career advancement."

Recognition of Foreign Education and Experience

Although linked to addressing barriers based on immigration status, recognition of foreign education and experience was shared as an additional priority area by respondents. This was inclusive of both certification processes and the assessment and valuation of these qualifications and professional backgrounds by Canadian organizations.

"Options for qualified technical people from foreign countries gain technical recognition."

"Education folks with foreign education and experience not to look down on those that don't have similar experience."

"Not recognizing foreign education and experience. Plus, the barriers that HR put in because they won't allow the hiring manager(s) to implement what OACETT might develop."

Detailed and Transparent Communication

Respondents also identified detailed, clear, and comprehensive communication as a crucial priority for future BI Strategy. They stressed the importance of both OACETT communications to members and the avenues for members to communicate with OACETT. This has the potential to foster trust and understanding amongst members, driving the BI strategy forward and creating a cohesive link between actions and values.

"Addressing all questions around policy is another key aspect of inclusive communication."

"Inclusion in communication means that all members, regardless of their role, experience, or background, should have equal access to information and opportunities to express their views."

"Ensure that all members feel valued, heard, and included, which is key to the success of the organization."



Addressing Barriers for Additional Groups

Members emphasized the importance of addressing barriers for various groups. This includes those based on race, ethnicity, religion, cultural background, and age, ensuring inclusive practices for all. Additionally, respondents highlighted the need to address ageism and the generational gap in the workplace. Several members also pointed out the importance of addressing barriers specific to neurodiverse individuals, viewing these as distinct from broader disability initiatives.

"Addressing barriers based on ethnicity."

"Addressing barriers based on religion."

"Addressing barriers based on age/seniority within this career field."

"The needs of older generations are significantly different than the needs of newer generations."

"Additional priority - addressing barriers based on neurodiversity (which I see separate from 'disabilities')."



PART 3: FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS





INTERVIEWS SUMMARY

During the data collection phase, Focus Groups and 1:1 Interviews were conducted to deepen our understanding of the current state of Belonging and Inclusion at OACETT. Each session, lasting around 60 minutes, used key discussion questions or prompts to deepen our understanding of existing practices and identify areas for enhancing equity and inclusivity within OACETT's operations. Focus Group discussion questions can be found in the [Appendix](#) section.

CultureAlly hosted Focus Groups and 1:1 Interviews with the following participants:

- Member Engagement and Services, Government Relations
- Registration & Professional Practice
- Chapter Leaders
- Chapter Members

Additionally, all survey participants had the option to participate in 1:1 Interviews through submitting a request from the survey. The purpose of these sessions was to gain insight into the perspectives of members on the state of Belonging and Inclusion at OACETT.



FOCUS GROUP & 1:1 INTERVIEWS AT OACETT

In total, six Focus Groups and three 1:1 Interviews were conducted, encompassing 10 individuals who shared their sentiments, feedback, and experience related to Belonging and Inclusion.

The themes highlighted below are drawn from Focus Groups and 1:1 Interviews, collectively capturing a wide range of sentiments across OACETT. These themes represent the recurring sentiments expressed across all interview conversations, giving us a comprehensive understanding of the Belonging and Inclusion landscape within OACETT. The recurrence of these themes across individuals at OACETT highlights their importance and informs our prioritization in the strategy development. While some themes might not be complemented or reflected in the data, sentiments are important to inform strategies as they represent the lived experiences of individuals at OACETT.

These are the main conversation themes derived from the Focus Groups and 1:1 Interviews with individuals at OACETT:

1. Challenges in the Certification Process
2. Inconsistent Member Experience
3. Financial Barriers and Lack of Support
4. Support for Marginalized Members
5. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Efforts
6. Need for Improved Communication and Engagement
7. Value and Relevance of Membership
8. Professional Development and Continuous Learning

Below, we elaborate on the feedback shared for each conversation theme.

1. Challenges in the Certification Process

Many members, particularly those with international education backgrounds, find the certification process difficult to navigate and understand. The steps required to achieve certification, such as specific exams and assessments, are not always clearly communicated, leading to confusion and delays. Additionally, the perceived need for Canadian work experience or additional certifications creates further obstacles for international professionals seeking certification. Although OACETT has confirmed that Canadian work experience is not required for certification, clear communications can help dispel any misconceptions about this requirement.

2. Inconsistent Member Experience

Members experience inconsistencies in how policies and processes are applied, which can lead to perceptions of bias. Members report that the subjective evaluation of their experience and qualifications can result in different outcomes for individuals with similar backgrounds. This inconsistency undermines trust in the certification process and the organization, and is particularly challenging when it comes to recognizing international credentials and work experience.

3. Financial Barriers and Lack of Support

Financial barriers are a significant issue for many members, and there is a lack of adequate support to help them overcome these challenges. High fees for exams, membership dues, and additional courses



can be prohibitive, especially for those from marginalized or lower-income backgrounds. The organization is perceived as not doing enough to provide financial assistance or flexible payment options, which makes it difficult for some members to afford and maintain their membership and certification status.

4. Support for Marginalized Members

Current policies and processes do not adequately support marginalized members, who often face additional barriers in their professional journeys. There is a need for more specific support mechanisms, such as financial assistance, tailored mentorship programs, and resources that address the unique challenges faced by these groups. Providing targeted support can help ensure that all members have equal opportunities to succeed within the organization.

5. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Efforts

While there are some initiatives in place, members feel that these efforts are not sufficiently impactful or widespread. There is a need for more robust support systems for women and international members, who often face unique challenges in the industry. Enhancing programs to include targeted mentorship, networking opportunities, and resources can help create a more inclusive environment that supports all members. Hearing these sentiments echoed by OACETT members underscores the importance of a strategy to strengthen support systems and enhance programs and initiatives.

6. Need for Improved Communication and Engagement

Members feel a lack of proactive communication and engagement from OACETT, which affects their sense of connection and belonging. Regular, meaningful interactions and updates are scarce, and members often feel uninformed about important changes or opportunities within the organization. Improved communication strategies, including more personalized and frequent updates, could help foster a stronger sense of community and engagement among members.

7. Value and Relevance of Membership

Many members question the value and relevance of their OACETT membership, feeling that the benefits provided do not justify the costs. There is a sense that the organization needs to better articulate and deliver tangible benefits, such as career development resources, networking opportunities, and industry recognition. Clear communication about the advantages of membership and how it can positively impact their careers is essential to address these concerns.

8. Professional Development and Continuous Learning

While the importance of continuous professional development is acknowledged, there are significant barriers to accessing and completing these opportunities. Members need clearer guidance on the requirements and more support in navigating the available resources. Simplifying the professional development process, providing more accessible and relevant courses, and offering clear pathways for career progression can enhance members' ability to stay current in their fields and advance their careers.



PART 4: POLICIES, PRACTICES & INTEGRATION





REVIEWING POLICIES AT OACETT

Our audit of policies at OACETT involved a comprehensive review of various documents and the integration of Belonging and Inclusion themes across employee and membership policies and practices.

To complement the review of documents, we also incorporated insights from Focus Groups and 1:1 Interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders. These interactions provide a more nuanced understanding of the lived experiences and perspectives of OACETT members. Participants include employees from Member Engagement and Services, Government Relations, and Registration & Professional Practice. Participants also include Chapter Leaders and Chapter Members.

Drawing on both documents and conversations with OACETT stakeholders gave us a more holistic understanding of Belonging and Inclusion at OACETT. While the documents laid out the policies, hearing from members helped us gauge how these policies are lived out day-to-day, offering a real-world perspective on the organization's culture and practices.

The upcoming sections of this report will include:

- Our approach to the audit and how we examine policies and practices through the Belonging and Inclusion lens
- Overall impressions of OACETT's current policies and practices specifically from a Belonging and Inclusion lens
- Detailed audit and review of the policies and practice
- Summary of recommendations

The [summary of recommendations](#) encompasses relevant suggestions from our audit and may be used as insight to further OACETT's commitment to strengthening policies and practices.

Through implementing inclusive policies and practices, the goal is to establish a comprehensive strategy for embedding Belonging and Inclusion principles into the core of OACETT's organizational culture, enhancing the employee experience, and promoting a diverse and inclusive environment.



AUDIT APPROACH

Before reviewing organization policies and practices, it is important to understand the three lenses in which we are auditing from: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

THROUGH A DIVERSITY LENS

We understand that in BI we are looking at different barriers employees and members face during their interactions with OACETT. It is important to recognize that not all identities, specifically marginalized identities, face the same barriers to equity and inclusion.

Diversity is an important aspect of the audit in understanding who we are trying to remove barriers for, since the solutions do not all look the same. Understanding which marginalized identities are impacted by policies and practices will be key to informing a strategy that is effective and intentional.

THROUGH AN EQUITY LENS

Equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. This is sometimes confused with equality, which refers to everyone being treated equally. In theory, equality would be great, but we know in our society we all hold different identities that enable or disable privilege, and not everyone has equal opportunity. This is why we prioritize equity. We are recognizing that we need to put systems and processes in place to mitigate barriers to opportunity, and that sometimes systems have greater impact on certain identities. Equity is about creating equal access to opportunities.

When reviewing policies and practices through an equity lens, we want to approach it through the lens of marginalized identities of focus. We use the following framework of questions in our audit:

- Does a policy or practice perpetuate or help to dismantle historical barriers to marginalized identities?
- Does a policy or practice disproportionately impact marginalized identities?
- If disparities are identified, can they be mitigated or eliminated?
- Does a policy ensure fair and consistent practices throughout the organization?
- Are there hidden biases?

THROUGH AN INCLUSION LENS

Through an organization's policies and practices, inclusion involves creating a sense of belonging for all policy stakeholders. Inclusion does not happen naturally, it is intentional.

When reviewing policies through an inclusion lens, we look at:

- Using inclusive language
- Clarity about an organization's commitment and efforts towards BI
- Transparency in policy procedures and decision-making processes
- Providing accessible options and formats



OVERVIEW OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES AT OACETT

REFLECTING ON DIVERSITY WITHIN OACETT

The review of OACETT's documents, including policies and terms of reference, reveal a structured approach to promoting diversity, particularly through the expansive list of Committees of the Association, summarized in the 'GP105 Committees of the Board of Directors' policy, which emphasizes demographic representation and specifically highlights the inclusion of a Belonging and Inclusion (BI) Committee. This policy illustrates OACETT's recognition of the importance of diverse perspectives in governance and decision-making.

However, the analysis also highlights opportunities to deepen the organization's understanding and application of diversity. Current documents, such as the 'Membership Outreach Strategy 2022', reflect the visibility of limited demographic characteristics, which will be addressed within OACETT's future BI strategy. To truly reflect and support a diverse membership, there is a need to expand these definitions to include other critical dimensions such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Additionally, the use of 'visible' and 'non-visible' diversity categorization, as referenced in the 'Application: Volunteer Position - Committees' and 'Application: Volunteer Position - Board of Directors' could be seen as oversimplifying the complex identities of OACETT's members. Broadening the range of demographic data collected, reviewing the categorization of demographic information and integrating these into the organization's strategic planning will enable OACETT to better identify and address barriers faced by underrepresented groups.

EQUITY IN MEMBER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Equity within OACETT's member engagement and support processes is crucial for ensuring that all members, regardless of their background, have fair access to opportunities and resources. The 'GP404 Volunteer Management' policy presents an opportunity to reinforce equity by ensuring that recruitment and management practices are accessible to all potential volunteers, including those from diverse backgrounds. This could involve offering accommodations for individuals with disabilities, providing materials in multiple languages, and actively seeking volunteers from underrepresented groups.

Operationally, The 'GP202 Financial Management' policy demonstrates a commitment to equitable financial practices such as offering equal opportunities for vendors. However, the policy could be enhanced by explicitly prioritizing engagement with minority-owned and women-owned businesses, promoting economic equity within OACETT's broader ecosystem. By embedding these considerations into all policies and practices, OACETT can create a more equitable and supportive environment for all.

NURTURING INCLUSION FOR ALL

Inclusion at OACETT is supported by policies that promote transparency and accountability, such as the 'GP104 Board of Directors Code of Conduct' and the 'GP403 Elections Policy'. These policies establish clear expectations for behaviour and decision-making, contributing to a culture where all members can feel valued and included.



However, the audit identified significant opportunities to strengthen inclusion further. For instance, the 'Volunteer Management' policy, while emphasizing respect and safety for volunteers, does not explicitly address the recruitment of volunteers from diverse backgrounds or the provision of accommodations for those with disabilities or language barriers.

To nurture a truly inclusive environment, it is essential for OACETT to set data-driven objectives and implement transparent reporting mechanisms across all committees, as outlined in the Terms of Reference documents. Regular monitoring and reporting on diversity and inclusion metrics will allow OACETT to track progress and make informed decisions that support all members and stakeholders.



REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES AT OACETT

OACETT documents were grouped into three categories during the analysis: Documents, Policies and Terms of Reference.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The following documents were reviewed. Strengths and opportunities for improvement for each document are shared below.

- Application: Volunteer Position - Committees and Board of Directors
- Membership Outreach Strategy 2022
- Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement 2020
- OACETT Strategic Plan (2019-2024)
- OACETT Employee Handbook

Two additional documents were reviewed, however no opportunities for improvement were found.

- OACETT Board Profile
- Member survey results 2023

APPLICATION - VOLUNTEER POSITION - COMMITTEES AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

STRENGTHS

- The document is clearly structured, with relevant supporting documents linked throughout to provide additional information to candidates and ensure full visibility of the committees and requirements.
- Description of the necessary qualifications, time commitment and available compensation are described.
- Questions ask for necessary information, with text referring to the membership database to explain any missing demographic questions. This provides context to why questions may be omitted from the application.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Remove the grouping of 'Visible' and 'Non-Visible' Diversity. Currently, this structure implies that one set of characteristics may be more valuable to a committee than the other.
- Expand the demographic questions to collect required demographic information, including but not limited to gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, socio-economic status, immigration status, whilst maintaining the option to decline to provide an answer.
- Define the term 'good standing' within the Board of Directors sponsorship section.



MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH STRATEGY 2022

STRENGTHS

- The document presents a well-structured strategy covering key aspects such as awareness, recruitment, retention, and onboarding, with clear objectives and action plans laid out for a three-year period.
- It includes specific action items with timelines, KPIs, budget requirements, and identified stakeholders, ensuring accountability and facilitating progress tracking.
- The strategy identifies and addresses various membership segments, including students, internationally educated professionals (IEPs), early-career professionals, and existing members, with tailored value propositions and communication channels for each segment.
- The document demonstrates a strong understanding of age demographics within OACETT Members and refers to benchmark data to draw conclusions.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Integrate BI principles and additional demographic data throughout the analysis and strategy, emphasizing the importance of belonging and inclusion in all membership outreach and engagement activities.
- Ensure all materials and communication channels are accessible, conforming to [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#). This includes providing alternative formats for documents and ensuring online platforms or electronic documents comply with accessibility standards.
- Enhance support for underrepresented groups, such as women, minorities, and LGBTQ+ individuals, by offering mentorship programs, networking opportunities, and targeted professional development resources.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT 2020

STRENGTHS

- The document clearly states the purpose and importance of maintaining confidentiality and protecting sensitive information, emphasizing the potential risks to the organization if confidentiality is breached.
- The policy provides a detailed and thorough definition of what constitutes confidential information, covering a wide range of data and materials.
- The document outlines specific guidelines for members on how to handle, store, and dispose of confidential information, ensuring consistency and security in information management.
- There is a clear section for members to acknowledge their understanding and agreement to adhere to the confidentiality guidelines, reinforcing accountability.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Specify clear reporting mechanisms for breaches of confidentiality that are inclusive and accessible to all members, including those who may have language barriers or other accessibility needs.
- Ensure the guidelines consider cultural differences in communication and data handling, promoting an understanding of diverse perspectives on confidentiality.
- Highlight the importance of protecting sensitive demographic information, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status, ensuring that members' privacy is respected.

OACETT STRATEGIC PLAN (2019-2024)

STRENGTHS

- The strategic plan for 2019-2024 clearly outlines OACETT's vision to be a leader in certification and member experience, with a mission centered on providing professional support and opportunities for engineering professionals.
- The plan includes specific strategic priorities focused on careers, chapters, and communities, with detailed strategies and key performance indicators (KPIs) that demonstrate a commitment to supporting members throughout their career journeys.
- DEI is explicitly addressed as the plan includes the establishment of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee tasked with broadening the engagement of underrepresented demographics within OACETT's membership and leadership. This reflects a proactive approach to addressing BI issues within the organization.
- The plan provides a comprehensive approach to stakeholder engagement, emphasizing the importance of engaging with a broad community of stakeholders, including government entities, employers, colleges, community groups and related professional associations, to support members' careers and enhance the organization's profile.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Detail and implement a process for ongoing evaluation of BI efforts within the strategic plan, such as regular reporting from the BI Committee, member surveys to assess the inclusivity of OACETT's programs and services, and adjustments to the strategic plan based on feedback and emerging best practices in BI.
- Future strategic plans could benefit from including specific actions related to belonging and inclusion training and awareness for members. This could involve mandatory training for chapter executives, development of BI resources for members, and ensuring that all events and programs are accessible and inclusive.
- While the plan mentions specific events for IEPs, additional support mechanisms could be integrated throughout the strategic priorities. This might include mentoring programs, targeted professional development opportunities, or partnerships with organizations that serve immigrant communities.



OACETT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

STRENGTHS

- The handbook covers a wide range of policies, including Code of Conduct, Human Rights, Training and Development, Attendance Management, Progressive Discipline, Conflict of Interest, and Termination of Employment, ensuring a thorough framework for managing employee relations.
- The handbook demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity, particularly in the Human Rights and Hiring sections, by outlining anti-discrimination policies and promoting equal opportunity in employment.
- Policies such as the Right to Disconnect, Mental Health Support, and Flexible Work Hours emphasize the organization's commitment to employee well-being, promoting a healthy work-life balance and mental health.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Integrate explicit Belonging and Inclusion (BI) language throughout the handbook to reinforce the organization's commitment to these principles. This includes the removal of gendered language such as 'his or her/he or she' that could be replaced with 'their/they'. This ensures all gender identities are considered.
- Consider the provision of anonymised reporting mechanisms to provide increased psychological safety for those reporting issues, particularly around harassment or conflicts of interest.

CultureAlly has provided a separate document containing detailed feedback on the different sections of the Employee Handbook, however as the BI strategy is focused on the member experience, detailed analysis of the handbook has not been included in this report.



POLICY ANALYSIS

The commentary below highlights the overall strengths and opportunities for improvement across all policies. This is then followed by policy-specific opportunities for improvement for the following items:

- GP104 Board of Directors Code of Conduct
- GP105 Committees of the Board of Directors
- GP202 Financial Management
- GP203 Financial Reimbursement
- GP205 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Policy
- GP301 Human Resources Policy: Chief Executive Officer
- GP302 Human Resources Policy: Chief Executive Officer Succession
- GP401 Proxies
- GP403 Elections Policy
- GP404 Volunteer Management

The following policies were also reviewed, however no policy-specific opportunities for improvement were found. The overall strengths and opportunities for improvement should still be considered relevant for these items.

- 102: Board of Directors Policies - Introduction
- 103: Board of Directors Duties and Responsibilities
- GP201 Reduced Membership Dues
- GP204: Reserve Policy
- GP402 Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct
- GP502 Privacy Policy
- GP503 Certified Member Identification Stamp

OVERALL STRENGTHS

Format and Structure: Policies are laid out in a clear, structured manner. Language is gender-neutral and for the most part is clear and concise, although there are instances of vocabulary which is more advanced or open to interpretation.

Commitment to Ethical Conduct and Professional Standards: Many policies emphasize ethical behavior and professional integrity, ensuring accountability and high standards for professional conduct. For example, the Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct sets clear expectations for behaviours.

Transparency and Accountability: Policies such as the Elections Policy and Financial Management Policy outline clear procedures and guidelines, promoting transparency and ensuring that decisions are made openly and with accountability.

Professional Liability and Legal Awareness: The Certified Member Identification Stamp Policy, among others, highlights the importance of professional liability insurance and awareness of legal



responsibilities, ensuring that members understand the gravity and implications of their professional actions.

OVERALL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Incorporate BI Principles More Explicitly: Many policies do not explicitly integrate belonging and inclusion principles. Ensuring that all policies reflect a commitment to belonging and inclusion, such as incorporating specific BI criteria in the Elections Policy, can promote a more inclusive environment.

Enhance Inclusivity and Accessibility: Policies such as the Volunteer Management Policy need to ensure that their processes are accessible to all members, including those with disabilities or language barriers, by providing clear instructions, support or the opportunity to request accommodations.

Implement Regular BI Training: There is a consistent need for mandatory BI training and awareness programs. Policies should include provisions for ongoing BI education for all relevant stakeholders.

Establish Feedback Mechanisms: Establish a feedback mechanism to report any concerns or suggestions related to policies or processes, ensuring continuous improvement and inclusivity. This can be a continuously available service, such as a specified contact or tool, or through periodic review cycles that specifically reach out to stakeholder groups for their input.

POLICY SPECIFIC ANALYSIS

GP104 BOARD OF DIRECTORS CODE OF CONDUCT

STRENGTHS

- The Code of Conduct is well-structured and outlines responsibilities and expected behaviours of Board members.
- Emphasizes ethical conduct, integrity, and respect for the organization and its members.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Include a glossary or define unfamiliar terms (e.g., "malice," "conflict of interest," "intemperate") for clarity and understanding.
- Explicitly align the code with the organization's BI commitments by detailing how decisions should consider BI principles, explaining how the Board will support BI initiatives and highlighting the importance of inclusive behaviour.



GP105 COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STRENGTHS

- The policy provides a clear structure for the establishment and operation of Committees of the Board of Directors, including standing committees and special committees.
- There is a focus on ensuring that committee members are selected based on a demographic mix, regional representation, and a mix of competencies.
- The inclusion of a Belonging and Inclusion Committee indicates an organizational commitment to BI.
- The policy outlines the terms of service, meeting procedures, and quorum requirements, promoting consistent and organized operations.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Ensure that succession planning explicitly addresses BI, aiming to build a pipeline of diverse leaders within the organization.
- Encourage committees to actively engage with diverse communities and stakeholders to gather a wide range of perspectives and foster an inclusive environment.

GP202 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

STRENGTHS

- The financial management policy ensures prudent use of financial resources, emphasizing maintaining a balanced budget, appropriate reserve funds, and capital reinvestments, which supports organizational stability.
- The policy includes clear guidelines for signing authority, investments, credit card use, cash advances, and tendering procedures, promoting transparency and accountability.
- There is a provision for equal opportunity for vendors, with a preference for local and Canadian manufacturers, which supports economic inclusivity.
- The policy outlines strict rules against accepting gifts or rebates, ensuring ethical conduct and preventing conflicts of interest.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Develop a more detailed vendor selection process that prioritizes not only local and Canadian manufacturers but also minority-owned and women-owned businesses to support economic equity.
- Implement mandatory training on BI principles for all staff involved in financial management to ensure they are aware of and can address potential biases in financial decision-making.



GP203 FINANCIAL REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

STRENGTHS

- The policy covers various expense categories, including travel, accommodation, meals, IT reimbursements, and special circumstances for executive expenses, promoting transparency and accountability.
- The policy includes clear documentation requirements for expense claims and sets deadlines for submission, ensuring proper record-keeping and financial management.
- The policy provides a family-friendly environment by allowing reimbursement for travel companions and guests under specific conditions.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Consider cultural or religious differences in meal preferences and physical restrictions in other expenses, ensuring that volunteers from diverse backgrounds feel comfortable and supported.

GP205 COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) POLICY

STRENGTHS

- The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) policy ensures that staff salaries are adjusted annually based on inflation, supporting staff in maintaining their purchasing power amidst rising costs of goods and services.
- The policy relies on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from Statistics Canada to calculate the annual adjustment, providing a transparent and objective method for determining salary increases.
- The policy grants the CEO discretion to incorporate the COLA in the annual budget without separate approval from the Board of Directors, promoting efficient financial management.
- The policy includes provisions for freezing salaries if critical financial factors necessitate, ensuring the organization can manage all fiscal obligations.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Enhance transparency by requiring the CEO to provide a rationale for any discretionary decisions to freeze salaries, including an explanation of the financial factors considered.
- Ensure that the COLA policy is implemented equitably across all staff, taking into account any potential disparities in salary adjustments for different groups.



GP301 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

STRENGTHS

- The Human Resources Policy for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) outlines the delegation of management activities, such as performance management, compensation, succession planning, and recruitment, to the Human Resources Committee.
- The policy ensures that the Board of Directors retains oversight by requiring approval of all decisions made by the Human Resources Committee regarding the CEO.
- The policy includes provisions for annual performance reviews, complaint handling, disciplinary actions, and maintaining personnel records for the CEO.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Enhance transparency by providing a framework or criteria for compensation decisions, ensuring that the process is fair and equitable.
- Ensure that the performance management process for the CEO includes BI-related key result areas and metrics, promoting accountability in advancing BI initiatives.

GP302 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUCCESSION

STRENGTHS

- The Human Resources Policy for Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Succession outlines procedures for planned and unplanned absences or departures of the CEO, ensuring continuity of leadership and operations.
- The policy considers both temporary and permanent changes, with specific processes for short-term, long-term, and emergency situations.
- The Human Resources Committee is responsible for implementing the succession plan and appointing an Acting or Interim CEO as needed.
- The policy includes provisions for communication with stakeholders, the authority of the Acting or Interim CEO, and regular review of the succession plan.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Include provisions for leadership training and development programs to prepare a diverse pool of potential candidates for CEO succession.
- Ensure that the succession planning process is equitable and inclusive, considering candidates from diverse backgrounds for leadership roles.



GP401 PROXIES

STRENGTHS

- The Proxies policy specifies that the use of proxies is only applicable for the Annual General Meeting or other Special General Meetings of members and not for other types of meetings.
- Only Certified Members are allowed to issue proxies, and they have the option to specify the motions on which the proxy can vote.
- The policy ensures that members can attend and vote in person even if they have submitted a proxy, by allowing them to revoke the proxy before the meeting.
- It outlines the process for depositing voting instructions and prohibits the solicitation of proxies by the Association or its members.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Explicitly integrate belonging and inclusion principles within the proxies policy to ensure that all members, including those from diverse backgrounds, feel represented and included in the proxy voting process.
- Ensure that the policy allows for the representation of diverse voices in the proxy voting process by encouraging members to appoint proxies who are diverse and inclusive in their perspectives.

GP403 ELECTIONS POLICY

STRENGTHS

- The Elections Policy delegates activities related to succession planning, nominations, and elections for the Board of Directors, Board Committees, and other Board entities to the Nominating Committee.
- The policy outlines clear procedures for nominations, campaigns, and elections, including eligibility requirements, campaign conduct, and voting processes.
- The policy includes specific roles and responsibilities for the Returning Officer to ensure the integrity and transparency of the election process.
- It provides guidelines for special circumstances such as the development of an alternate slate and mid-term vacancies.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Enhance transparency by providing clear criteria for candidate selection and evaluation, ensuring the process is fair and equitable.
- Ensure that the nomination and election processes seek and support candidates from diverse backgrounds to promote equitable representation within the Board and committees.



GP404 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

STRENGTHS

- The Volunteer Management policy emphasizes the importance of volunteers as valuable resources to OACETT, outlining principles of respect, safety, and a welcoming environment for volunteers.
- The policy includes detailed procedures for volunteer recruitment, training, supervision, and management, ensuring that volunteers are properly oriented and supported in their roles.
- Confidentiality and representation of the association are highlighted, with volunteers required to maintain confidentiality and represent OACETT appropriately.
- The policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of volunteers, including the right to refuse assignments, the expectation to notify of absences, and the conditions under which volunteers may be dismissed.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Ensure that the recruitment, training, and management processes are accessible to all potential volunteers, including those with disabilities or language barriers, by providing clear instructions, support and accommodations if needed.
- Ensure that recruitment initiatives actively recruit volunteers from diverse backgrounds to promote equitable representation within the organization.



TERMS OF REFERENCE ANALYSIS

The following Terms of Reference documents were reviewed. The commentary highlights the overall strengths and opportunities for improvement across all of these items.

- TOR101 Nominating Committee Terms of Reference
- TOR102 Registration and Professional Practice Terms of Reference
- TOR102.1 RPPC - Complaints Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- TOR102.2 RPPC - Continuing CPD Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- TOR102.3 RPPC - Education and Exam Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- TOR102.4 RPPC - Emerging Markets Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- TOR102.5 RPPC - Fellow Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- TOR102.6 RPPC - Discipline Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- TOR103 Member Engagement and Services Terms of Reference
- TOR104 Young Professionals Committee Terms of Reference
- TOR105 Finance and Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- TOR106 Governance, Policy and Strategy Committee Terms of Reference
- TOR107 Human Resources Committee Terms of Reference
- TOR108 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Terms of Reference
- TOR109 Fletcher Foundation Board of Trustees Terms of Reference

OVERALL STRENGTHS

Clear Mandates and Responsibilities: Each document provides a well-defined mandate for the respective committees, subcommittees, or boards, outlining specific roles and responsibilities. This clarity ensures that members understand their duties and can work effectively towards their objectives.

Structured Composition and Reporting: The composition of each committee or board is clearly specified, often ensuring representation from various regions and demographics. The reporting structures are well-defined, promoting transparency and accountability.

Authority and Governance: The documents empower committees and boards to initiate investigations, obtain external expertise, and act within budget requirements. This authority ensures that they have the necessary resources and support to fulfill their mandates effectively.

OVERALL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Accessibility: Ensuring that documents are accessible to individuals with disabilities is a recurring opportunity for improvement. This includes making documents compatible with screen readers, using appropriate font sizes, and providing alternative text for visuals.

Metrics and Targets: Establishing data-driven metrics and targets to evaluate the success of initiatives and processes would help set clear expectations and objectives for committee efforts.

Monitoring and Reporting on Diversity: Include a mechanism for monitoring the diversity of the members involved in the committee and the outcomes of membership services and recognition



programs. Regular reports should be submitted to the Board of Directors to ensure transparency and accountability.

Training for Committee Members: Providing training for committee members ensures equal access to resources and that there is a minimum level of BI education across all Committee members. Training can be used to promote understanding so committees can focus on specific audiences and objectives knowing a baseline of BI awareness exists. Training should cover topics such as unconscious bias, intersectionality, privilege and inclusivity.



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Incorporating BI principles into everyday policies and documents is an integral strategy for fostering inclusivity across the organization. While additional insights and recommendations may be found in the audit, the following are highlighted as the key recommendations, identified as the highest priority for enhancing Belonging and Inclusion.

Below are the key recommendations to enhance BI in the **documentation, policies and terms of reference** at OACETT.

DOCUMENTS	
Document Name	Key Recommendations
Application - Volunteer Position - Committees and Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Remove the grouping of 'Visible' and 'Non-Visible' Diversity.● Expand the demographic questions to collect required demographic information, whilst maintaining the option to decline to provide an answer.● Define the term 'good standing' within the Board of Directors sponsorship section.
Membership Outreach Strategy 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Integrate BI principles and additional demographic data throughout the analysis and strategy.● Ensure all materials and communication channels are accessible, conforming to WCGA standards.● Enhance support for underrepresented groups, such as women, minorities, and LGBTQ+ individuals.
Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Specify clear reporting mechanisms for breaches of confidentiality that are inclusive and accessible to all members.● Ensure the guidelines consider cultural differences in communication and data handling.● Highlight the importance of protecting sensitive demographic information, ensuring that members' privacy is respected.
OACETT Strategic Plan (2019-2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Outline the process for conducting and reporting ongoing evaluations of BI efforts within the strategic plan, including how findings may lead to adjustments in the plan.● Provide additional visibility of BI training and awareness for members, including mandatory training for chapter executives, development of resources, and ensuring all events and programs are accessible and inclusive.● Detail any integrated support mechanisms for Internationally Educated Professionals throughout the strategic priorities, including mentoring



	programs, targeted professional development opportunities, or partnerships with organizations that serve immigrant communities.
OACETT Employee Handbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Integrate Belonging and Inclusion (BI) language throughout the handbook to reinforce the organization's commitment to these principles. ● Consider the provision of anonymised reporting mechanisms to provide increased psychological safety for those reporting issues, particularly around harassment or conflicts of interest.
POLICIES	
Overall Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that all policies reflect a commitment to BI. ● Confirm that processes are accessible to all members, including those with disabilities or language barriers. ● Implement regular BI training as well as mechanisms to regularly review and improve BI practices. ● Establish a feedback mechanism to report any concerns or suggestions related to policies or processes, ensuring continuous improvement and inclusivity. 	
POLICY-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS	
Policy Name	Key Recommendations
GP104 Board of Directors Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include a glossary or define unfamiliar terms for clarity and understanding. ● Explicitly align the code with the organization's BI commitments.
GP105 Committees of the Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that succession planning explicitly addresses BI, aiming to build a pipeline of diverse leaders within the organization. ● Encourage committees to actively engage with diverse communities and stakeholders to gather a wide range of perspectives.
GP202 Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a more detailed vendor selection process that prioritizes not only local and Canadian manufacturers but also minority-owned and women-owned businesses to support economic equity. ● Implement mandatory training on BI principles for all staff involved in financial management.
GP203 Financial Reimbursement Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider cultural differences in meal preferences and other expenses, ensuring that volunteers from diverse backgrounds feel comfortable and supported.



GP205 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Enhance transparency by requiring the CEO to provide a rationale for any discretionary decisions to freeze salaries.● Ensure that the COLA policy is implemented equitably across all staff.
GP301 Human Resources Policy - Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Enhance transparency by providing a framework or criteria for compensation decisions.● Ensure that the performance management process for the CEO includes BI-related key result areas and metrics.
GP302 Human Resources Policy - Chief Executive Officer Succession	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Include provisions for leadership training and development programs to prepare a diverse pool of potential candidates.● Ensure that the succession planning process is equitable and inclusive, considering candidates from diverse backgrounds for leadership roles.
GP401 Proxies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Explicitly integrate belonging and inclusion principles within the proxies policy to ensure that all members feel represented and included in the proxy voting process.● Ensure that the policy allows for the representation of diverse voices in the proxy voting process by encouraging members to appoint proxies who are diverse and inclusive in their perspectives.
GP403 Elections Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Enhance transparency by providing clear criteria for candidate selection and evaluation.● Ensure that the nomination and election processes actively seek and support candidates from diverse backgrounds.
GP404 Volunteer Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ensure that the recruitment, training, and management processes are accessible to all potential volunteers by providing clear instructions, support and accommodations, if needed.● Ensure that recruitment initiatives actively recruit volunteers from diverse backgrounds.
TERMS OF REFERENCE	
Overall Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ensure that documents are formatted to be accessible.● Establish metrics and targets to evaluate the success of initiatives and processes.● Include a mechanism for monitoring the diversity of the members involved in the committee and the outcomes of membership services and recognition programs.● Provide training for committee members to ensure there is a minimum level of BI understanding across committees.	



Below are the key recommendations to enhance BI within the **membership experience** at OACETT.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION		
<i>Ensure equitable access to certificate and opportunities for leadership development</i>		
Priority	Recommendation	Rationale
High	Enhance Chapter support for underrepresented groups, such as women, minorities, and LGBTQ+ individuals, by offering member resource groups, mentorship programs and networking opportunities. Head Office may also offer targeted professional development resources.	Directly addresses existing disparities and can be implemented relatively quickly, leading to immediate positive outcomes.
Medium	Enhance transparency on the OACETT website and create new communication channels for added accessibility in the certification processes by providing clear criteria linking educational and professional requirements to approvals for certification.	Improving transparency builds trust and is vital for equitable processes, but may require some coordination and policy adjustments.
Low	Broaden access to development opportunities and ensure equitable selection for certification.	Important but may require more systemic changes and collaboration across various departments.
Low	Engage with college students to address the pipeline issue and demonstrate awareness of age and/or gender issues impacting the industry.	Essential for long-term BI success but requires building partnerships and developing programs, which can be time-consuming.
Low	Acknowledge foreign experience and education recognition to address concerns among members who are marginalized within the industry.	Requires complex policy changes and collaboration with external entities, making it a longer-term initiative.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT		
<i>Provide equitable learning opportunities that promote BI awareness and skills</i>		
Priority	Recommendation	Rationale
High	Develop clear criteria for training program selection based on professional needs and career progression. This may include training and awareness for each Chapter.	Ensures training is relevant and impactful, which can quickly improve member satisfaction and engagement.
Medium	Offer training programs and the integration of	Important for promoting BI awareness,



	BI principles, ensuring they are practical and applicable to various organizations within the industry. Training topics may include the Foundations of DEI and Unconscious Bias to address the level of understanding and importance of equity versus equality.	but developing and implementing these programs effectively may require more time and resources.
Low	Regularly assess the uptake, effectiveness, and operational application of training programs.	Assessment is important for continuous improvement, but it's a secondary step after effective training programs are in place.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURE		
<i>Foster a supportive environment where diverse perspectives and identities are valued</i>		
Priority	Recommendation	Rationale
High	Strengthen marketing and communication efforts around diverse representation in leadership positions and role models within OACETT to build awareness of member diversity (e.g., leverage success stories).	Critical for fostering a culture of inclusion and can have immediate visibility and impact.
Medium	Host social activities that offer a wide range of interests to encourage interaction, bonding, and understanding among all members.	Important for building a supportive environment, though it requires planning and resources to be effective.
Low	Enhance community building via online engagement events that engage remote members and those with different cultural events, simultaneously addressing economic and geographic barriers.	Valuable for inclusivity, but may be more effective once other foundational BI strategies are in place.
Low	Facilitate and support open discussions about BI to learn from each other's experiences.	Can be developed over time as the organization becomes more comfortable with BI practices.
Low	Improve transparency regarding how leadership and developmental opportunities are accessed within OACETT.	Can be implemented gradually, once other high-impact strategies are underway.
Low	Implement a feedback mechanism for members to provide input on the inclusivity and effectiveness of current policies (e.g., membership renewal call campaigns or anonymous feedback mechanism such as member surveys).	Useful but should follow the implementation of key BI initiatives to gather meaningful feedback.



ANALYSIS CONCLUSION

The 2024 Belonging and Inclusion Report for the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists (OACETT) marks a significant step in the organization's commitment to fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse membership experience. This report, prepared in collaboration with CultureAlly, offers a comprehensive assessment of the current state of BI within OACETT, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement.

Through a detailed analysis of survey data, focus groups, interviews, and a thorough review of policies and practices, this report has identified key barriers and opportunities that must be addressed to advance OACETT's BI objectives. The recommendations provided aim to enhance the inclusivity of OACETT's environment, ensuring that all members, regardless of their background, feel valued and supported.

Moving forward, it is crucial that OACETT continues to prioritize the implementation of these recommendations, with a focus on ongoing evaluation and adaptation of strategies to meet the evolving needs of its diverse membership. By embedding BI principles into every aspect of its operations, OACETT can lead by example, setting a standard for inclusivity within the engineering and technology sectors.

The journey towards a truly inclusive organization is continuous, requiring sustained effort, commitment, and the collective engagement of all members. This report will help CultureAlly and OACETT to create a strategic roadmap through the identification and implementation of these recommendations to drive BI progress over the coming years. As OACETT embarks on this path, it has the opportunity to not only enhance the experiences of its members but also to contribute positively to the broader societal push towards equity and inclusion.

Thank you to all those who took part in the survey, focus groups and interviews to develop these insights. Members were invited to enter a prize draw during the survey. The three winners were Ibrahim Amerih, A.Sc.T., Thi Truong, C.E.T., rcsi and Gregory Eller, C.E.T.



PART 5: BELONGING AND INCLUSION STRATEGY





STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR BELONGING AND INCLUSION

STRATEGY STATEMENT

At OACETT, we are committed to fostering an environment where Belonging and Inclusion are integral to our culture. Our mission is to make a meaningful impact by supporting Engineering Technicians and Technologists in navigating their careers with intention, transparency, and respect in all that we do. We are dedicated to creating an environment where all OACETT members feel valued, empowered, and supported, enhancing the membership experience and increasing leadership accountability in fostering a culture of equity and inclusion.

CultureAlly designed a strategic framework highlighting four pillars for a robust BI strategy. These pillars articulate the broad focuses for the strategy and are the guiding themes for strategic actions.

STRATEGY PILLARS	
BELONGING AND GROWTH <i>Objective: Enhance access to leadership development, ensuring equitable certification processes, and fostering a culture of inclusion.</i>	POLICIES AND PRACTICES <i>Objective: Ensure equitable experiences among members by refining policies and practices, removing barriers that impact diverse groups, promoting fair opportunities, and ensuring all OACETT members feel valued and respected.</i>
EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT <i>Objective: Build a culture of understanding by providing learning opportunities to address knowledge gaps, and promoting engagement among OACETT members, enabling them to contribute positively to a supportive and inclusive environment.</i>	COMMUNITY IMPACT AND RELATIONS <i>Objective: Strengthen community relations by implementing proactive, culturally sensitive engagement strategies that enhance OACETT's ability to empower diverse groups in the profession.</i>



The next sections will detail each of these pillars, outlining the reasons for these specific focuses and the corresponding tactics we recommend.

1. BELONGING AND GROWTH

Objective: Enhance access to leadership development, ensuring equitable certification processes, and fostering a culture of inclusion.

RATIONALE - WHY THIS FOCUS

- Enhancing access to leadership development and fostering a culture of inclusion for underrepresented groups is essential for promoting diversity, equity, and long-term success of the association by addressing systemic barriers and creating equal access to opportunities for all members.

INTENDED OUTCOME

- Cultivate a culture within OACETT and within the industry that continuously adapts to remove inequities and foster belonging.
- An association where every individual consistently feels safe, valued, understood, and genuinely included.

GOALS & TACTICS

Goal 1.1: Leadership Development

- Offer member resource groups, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities to enhance support for underrepresented groups.
- Offer targeted professional development resources.
- Design a leadership pipeline program that identifies and supports diverse talent from within the membership to advance into leadership roles.
- Promote inclusive decision-making by including diverse voices and perspectives in leadership deliberations and initiatives.
- Introduce sponsorship programs (separate from mentorship initiatives) where senior leaders actively advocate for the career advancement of women as part of OACETT's Women In Tech (WIT) networking group.

Goal 1.2: Address perceived disparities and foster inclusion

- Create forums or safe spaces where members can openly discuss disparities they perceive or experience without fear of repercussion.
- Create visibility campaigns celebrating the diversity of members by highlighting new joiners and/or long-standing members.



- Further emphasize foreign experience and education recognition to address concerns among members who are marginalized within the industry. Provide clearer guidance on how international qualifications are recognized to address perceived barriers based on immigration status.
- Establish an "Inclusion Champions" recognition program where members who actively work to foster inclusion are acknowledged and rewarded, encouraging others to model similar behavior.

Goal 1.3: Long-term pipeline development

- Broaden access to development opportunities.
- Engage with post-secondary students to address the BI pipeline issue and demonstrate awareness of age, and/or gender issues impacting the industry.
- Consider subsidized membership fees and other financial support for referrals and to members from lower socio-economic backgrounds to access new opportunities.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Note: Some individuals may participate in roles in one or more categories below. For example, an individual who is part of the OACETT Board may also be a member of the BI Committee and a Volunteer with multiple responsibilities across OACETT.

OACETT Staff & Board	BI Committee	Volunteers & Members
Key Accountability	Key Accountability	Key Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the BI Committee has the necessary resources—funding, materials, and logistical support—to run member resource groups, mentorship programs, and networking events effectively.• Offer targeted professional development resources such as mentorship and networking opportunities.• Enable local chapters to create their own member resource groups, ensuring consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organize meetings, workshops, and events where members of underrepresented groups can gather, share insights, and address their unique challenges.• Regularly collect feedback from members, especially those from underrepresented groups, to ensure that the programs are meeting their needs. Use this feedback to adjust and improve initiatives continuously.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interact with individuals in leadership roles within OACETT.• Tap into exclusive resources, such as training, scholarships, or career development tools.



<p>with OACETT's broader BI goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set clear goals, metrics, and reporting structures to track participation and the impact of these programs. Encourage BI Committee to report on their initiatives and the success of their programs in supporting underrepresented members.• Create a mentorship matching system that pairs mentees from underrepresented groups with experienced mentors, ideally with an understanding of the mentees' challenges.• Offer mentors and mentees training on effective communication, goal setting, and how to foster an empowering mentor-mentee relationship, ensuring both sides are set up for success.• Offer a semi-annual webinar on "The Path to Leadership", outlining what opportunities look like and how to succeed in the application process.		
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2. EQUITABLE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Objective: Ensure equitable experiences among members by refining policies and practices, removing barriers that impact diverse groups, promoting fair opportunities, and ensuring all OACETT members feel valued and respected.

RATIONALE - WHY THIS FOCUS

- Explicitly integrating BI principles into policies ensures fair opportunities and equitable certification processes to make for a more inclusive environment for all members.
- Enhancing policies to support members with disabilities or language barriers ensures broader participation and equal access to processes.
- Regular BI training and feedback mechanisms ensure ongoing awareness and adaptation to meet the needs of a diverse membership.

INTENDED OUTCOME

- Ensure BI is integrated into the governance, policies and practices at OACETT.
- Create a more inclusive, accessible, and equitable organization where all members, regardless of background or ability, have fair opportunities to participate, grow, and contribute.
- Ensure continuous improvement through regular training and feedback mechanisms.

GOALS & TACTICS

Goal 2.1: Integrate BI principles across all policies

- Ensure that policies, such as the Elections Policy, reflect clear BI standards to promote fair representation of all groups within leadership and decision-making processes.
- Ensure that new policies are developed with BI objectives in mind, fostering an organizational culture of equity and inclusion from the outset.
- Develop internal BI Audit checklist for use within policy review cycles.
- Map the policy review cycle and review the opportunities to collect feedback such as surveys, focus groups, sub-committees, and/or Chapter specific reviews.
- Leverage the BI Strategy Statement to provide a consistent theme across the policies.

Goal 2.2: Build trust and transparency to enhance accessibility and participation

- Enhance transparency on the OACETT website by simplifying the layout with more visuals as well as adding step-by-step clarity on how the criteria is reviewed for certification promoting a more consistent experience among members on the selection process.



- Revise policies, like the Volunteer Management Policy, to remove barriers for members with disabilities, language challenges, or other accessibility needs by offering accommodations and clear guidance.
- Ensure that key documents, instructions, and support services can be made available in accessible formats, including large print, audio, or braille for individuals with disabilities.
- Create new communication channels such as mobile apps with real-time status updates, chatbots, or personalized text messages to members, to improve accessibility in the certification processes by providing clear criteria that link educational and professional requirements to approvals for certification.
- Build processes into policies that allow members to request accommodations easily, such as interpreters, assistive technologies, or flexible participation options.
- Ensure equitable admissions processing and criteria for certification.

Goal 2.3: Foster ongoing BI resources and feedback

- Create a central resource hub for BI resources. Report on the take-up of BI resources for members, celebrating those who have gone above and beyond.
- Create clear and accessible channels for members to provide feedback on policies, allowing for ongoing input and continuous improvement.
- Regularly review policies and procedures through a BI lens, using feedback and data to adjust and improve inclusivity and equity across the organization.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Note: Some individuals may participate in roles in one or more categories below. For example, an individual who is part of the OACETT Board may also be a member of the BI Committee and a Volunteer with multiple responsibilities across OACETT.

OACETT Staff & Board	BI Committee	Volunteers & Members
Key Accountability	Key Accountability	Key Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize and endorse BI strategy, ensuring its alignment with OACETT's overall strategic goals.• Implement a regular review cycle that solicits feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders and includes transparent communications to members at the close of each review cycle.• Within OACETT's Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct, address potential discrepancies related to BI comments by integrating clear BI principles, communicating changes to the guidelines, and celebrating positive conduct aligned with BI values.• If member resource groups are created, the development of an organization-wide member resource group policy for all groups to align to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publicly champion BI initiatives, reinforcing the association's commitment to inclusivity.• Establish a regular cadence in meetings for sharing BI information and reminders.• Gather feedback from volunteers and members to share with OACETT staff to drive additional BI improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Familiarize oneself with BI goals and contribute towards achieving them.• Seek out and attend BI training sessions to enhance understanding.• Contribute to the policy and process review to ensure continuous improvement.



3. EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Objective: Build a culture of understanding by providing BI learning opportunities to address knowledge gaps, and promoting engagement among OACETT members, enabling them to contribute positively to a supportive and inclusive environment.

RATIONALE - WHY THIS FOCUS

- BI learning opportunities help staff, volunteers and members understand and overcome unconscious biases and systemic barriers.
- Educating staff, volunteers and members on BI encourages them to contribute positively to a more inclusive and supportive environment.
- A culture of understanding fosters better relationships, ensuring diverse perspectives are valued and integrated into decision-making.
- Including Indigenous communities in BI education is essential for fostering an inclusive and respectful approach, as their unique knowledge and perspectives enrich the understanding of these communities.

INTENDED OUTCOME

- Create a more informed, engaged, and collaborative organization where everyone is equipped with the knowledge and tools to actively contribute to a supportive, inclusive, and equitable culture within OACETT and the industry.
- Establish a learning and communications system that promotes inclusivity, transparency, and continuous engagement.
- Staff, volunteers and members are encouraged and empowered to develop their understanding of BI, promoting inclusivity and safety.

GOALS & TACTICS

Goal 3.1: Establish a comprehensive learning program focusing on fostering an inclusive and transparent culture

- Develop a Learning Curriculum through the creation of a structured learning path that includes mandatory and optional BI topics, tailored to different elements such as culture and career progression. Publish completion rates to encourage training participation.
- Offer training modules addressing specific barriers (based on socio-economic status, gender, immigration status, region, disabilities, Indigenous heritage, and sexual orientation) and offer continuous learning opportunities through workshops, webinars, and e-learning platforms.
- Offer training programs on cultural awareness and the integration of BI principles to all OACETT Staff, volunteers, and members. Training topics may include the Foundations of DEI and Unconscious Bias to address the level of understanding and importance of equity versus equality.



- Extend the offering of training topics as part of the 360 Partnership Program, ensuring they are practical and applicable to various organizations within the industry.
- Offer a variety of learning formats, such as online courses, guest speaker events, 'lunch and learn' opportunities, cultural celebrations, webinars, and interactive modules, to cater to different learning preferences.
- Incorporate BI learning modules into the volunteer leadership orientation (mandatory) and membership onboarding process (voluntary).

Goal 3.2: Encourage active participation through interactive BI activities

- Organize events and initiatives such as cultural celebrations, panel discussions, and BI-focused workshops that encourage participation and foster a sense of community.
- Design and implement a BI Calendar and set of resources for OACETT Staff, BI Committee, and volunteers to use.
- Launch BI challenges and campaigns that invite members to engage in activities that promote learning and awareness.
- Create platforms and opportunities for members to share their personal stories and experiences related to BI, fostering empathy and understanding.

Goal 3.3: Implement mechanisms to monitor and assess the progress of BI education and strategies, adapting based on feedback and evolving needs

- Conduct post training surveys to measure the efficacy, relevance and impact of the training content.
- Collaborate with volunteers and members to gather insights, assess BI progress, and identify opportunities for adaptation and growth to enhance the effectiveness of BI initiatives.
- Create specialized programs and recognition opportunities to empower and cultivate members aspiring to become BI leaders and champions within the organization.
- Conduct regular reviews of events, webinars, and activities to ensure that panels, presenters, and trainers are selected based on those who have lived those experiences themselves to foster inclusivity, aligning with BI principles.
- Leverage feedback and data to adjust and improve inclusivity and equity across the organization.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Note: Some individuals may participate in roles in one or more categories below. For example, an individual who is part of the OACETT Board may also be a member of the BI Committee and a Volunteer with multiple responsibilities across OACETT.

OACETT Staff & Board	BI Committee	Volunteers & Members
Key Accountability	Key Accountability	Key Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commit to fostering an environment that prioritizes open communication and feedback.• Provide BI training opportunities to OACETT Staff, Board, BI Committee, volunteers, and members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Endorse and engage in regular BI training to set the tone for all members.• Actively seek BI learning opportunities and implement learnings where possible.• Encourage BI discussions, sharing experiences within the industry and feedback.• Facilitate opportunities for members looking to participate or lead BI initiatives within OACETT or their respective organizations.• Encourage member participation in training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in BI discussions, sharing experiences and feedback.• Express interest in taking BI leadership opportunities within respective local chapters to drive further engagement and progress.



4. COMMUNITY IMPACT AND RELATIONS

Objective: Strengthen community relations by implementing proactive, culturally sensitive engagement strategies that enhance OACETT's ability to empower diverse groups in the profession.

RATIONALE - WHY THIS FOCUS

- Understanding the diversity within OACETT, identifying gaps, and setting goals to foster inclusion and build trust through transparency.
- Culturally sensitive engagement fosters trust and meaningful relationships with diverse and underrepresented groups.
- Aligning strategies with the needs of marginalized communities ensures OACETT remains relevant and attracts new members.
- Proactive engagement strengthens OACETT's ability to promote BI and develop a more innovative, representative profession.

INTENDED OUTCOME

- Contribute to cultivating a profession that continuously adapts to remove inequities and foster belonging.
- A community where every individual consistently feels safe, valued, understood, and genuinely included.

GOALS & TACTICS

Goal 4.1: Collect demographic data and develop culturally sensitive engagement practices

- Build trust, raise awareness, and ensure the collection of data is respectful and inclusive. Clearly communicate the purpose, usage, and security of data collection, obtaining explicit, voluntary consent. Create open forums for members to ask questions and express concerns about data collection.
- Use anonymous surveys upon recruiting new members (and conduct annually for existing members) with multiple participation methods (online, phone, paper) through unbiased third parties and design inclusive questions that allow for self-identification. Offer incentives for participation.
- Ensure transparency in how demographic data is collected, stored, and used, providing clear opt-out mechanisms for members who choose not to participate. Implement regular audits and clear data retention and deletion policies.
- Regularly seek input from underrepresented communities to tailor engagement strategies that resonate with their unique needs and experiences. Provide regular updates on how the data supports BI initiatives and allow members to opt out.



Goal 4.2: Tailor outreach to shape the future of OACETT

- Create dedicated coaching opportunities that focus on building the specific skills women can leverage to navigate the path to leadership roles within the industry. Pair or open the lines of communication between women in the community with women in leadership roles at OACETT to attract more talent.
- The OACETT Women In Technology (WIT) networking group can introduce workshops for male colleagues to understand the challenges women face in technology and how they can be better allies.
- Offer targeted mentorship and networking programs for internationally educated professionals, focusing on integrating them into local chapters and volunteer opportunities.
- Use digital platforms, such as podcasts, social media, virtual events, to engage with a larger pool of professionals, making it easier for them to connect with OACETT. Create regional hubs or virtual networks to facilitate engagement and professional development for members in remote locations, addressing barriers based on region.
- Establish a disability inclusion resource group to identify barriers and recommend ongoing improvements to support members with disabilities.
- Establish an LGBTQ+ resource group to guide OACETT on best practices for inclusivity in policies and events.
- Establish an Indigenous resource group to enhance the inclusion of Indigenous professionals within OACETT, establishing Truth and Reconciliation priorities and developing effective land acknowledgements for consistent implementation within OACETT meetings.
- Implement neurodiversity-focused support structures, ensuring that members with cognitive differences are included and supported in all aspects of professional development.

Goal 4.3: Foster strong partnerships with diverse communities

- Build partnerships with other organizations that represent underrepresented groups in the profession, creating joint initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion.
- Host events or forums in diverse communities to encourage dialogue and involvement in shaping the future of the profession, ensuring diverse voices are part of the conversation.
- Partner with technology companies from the 360 Partnership Program to elevate the visibility of women leaders in the field through conferences, speaking engagements, and public recognition, creating joint initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion.
- Co-create programs and events alongside individuals from marginalized communities (based on socio-economic status, gender, immigration status, region, disabilities, Indigenous heritage, and sexual orientation) to ensure their perspectives are authentically represented.
- Expand partnerships with educational institutions and community groups to offer scholarships, internships, and outreach programs that attract talent from diverse backgrounds into the profession.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Note: Some individuals may participate in roles in one or more categories below. For example, an individual who is part of the OACETT Board may also be a member of the BI Committee and a Volunteer with multiple responsibilities across OACETT.

OACETT Staff & Board	BI Committee	Volunteers & Members
Key Accountability	Key Accountability	Key Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form a working group responsible for monitoring data collection practices.• Offer clear, concise consent forms, explaining why data is being collected and how it aligns with BI goals.• Collaborate with a third-party provider to administer unbiased surveys and assure members of confidentiality and objective data collection.• Publicly support and allocate funds for new programs to promote inclusivity.• Regularly communicate BI progress and commitments to members, reiterating its priority level in OACETT's overall strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit trusted representatives from different Chapters to act as advocates, helping facilitate discussions on data and BI goals.• Create biannual reports on data collection outcomes and impact, accessible to members, showing how the data informs BI efforts and any adjustments made based on feedback.• Invite representatives from underrepresented groups to join panels and provide insights into the data strategy.• Share updates on how the data supports BI goals, along with anonymized data findings to demonstrate impact.• Encourage members to participate in events and conversations.• Celebrate and recognize members who demonstrate behaviours that contribute to a healthy and safe culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support data collection efforts and participate in surveys to help shape the future of BI at OACETT.• Participate in events and discussions to foster a culture of mutual growth.• Collaborate with other members to create a cohesive, inclusive environment.• Volunteer to mentor and/or participate as a mentee.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

To further support OACETT’s success, we recommend the creation of additional KPIs as part of ongoing data collection efforts. The following table shares KPIs identified to measure the success of the strategy across the four strategic pillars. KPI progress should be reviewed regularly to ensure the strategy is being implemented and successfully integrated across the organization.

Although these KPIs are set on an annual basis, we recommend collecting data and communicating progress quarterly to ensure transparency and sustained success. The staff members of the Head Office are considered the owners of these KPIs, particularly regarding data consolidation and reporting, however responsibility for gathering of data can be dispersed to the BI Committee and Volunteers of OACETT.

Note: Collecting demographic data is recommended for KPIs to be effective, which is addressed in the Community Impact and Relations section.

PILLAR NAME	Belonging and Growth	Equitable Policies and Practices	Education and Engagement	Community Impact and Relations
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Year-over-year retention rates of diverse members vs. overall membership.	Percentage of policies reviewed and updated to incorporate BI principles annually.	Percentage of members and leadership who complete BI training programs.	Increase in the number of professionals, particularly from diverse backgrounds, actively participating in OACETT activities.
	Diversity in feedback on leadership development initiatives (disaggregated by demographic data).	Number of barriers identified and removed through changes to policies or practices.	Number of members engaged in BI related forums, discussions, or workshops.	
		Percentage increase in positive responses from diverse groups on whether they feel valued and respected via	Pre-assessment and post-assessment scores showing improvement in understanding BI concepts.	



		membership surveys.		
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YEARLY DETAILED BREAKDOWN

The following table shares a recommended breakdown of actions for Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3+. These are divided into each strategy pillar with owners and proposed timelines. Timelines may be amended based on resource availability, member feedback and strategic alignment.

Each item is colour-coded based on level of priority (high priority, medium priority, and low priority), determined through survey results and in support of the recommendations provided in the Analysis Report.

Strategy Pillar: Belonging and Growth		
Action	Owner	Timeline
Provide resources for BI Committee initiatives.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Offer targeted mentorship and networking resources.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Enable OACETT to form BI-aligned resource groups.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Set metrics to track program participation and impact.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 3+
Create a mentorship matching system.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Train mentors and mentees for effective relationships.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Host semi-annual "Path to Leadership" webinars.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 2
Host events for underrepresented groups to connect.	BI Committee	Year 2
Gather feedback to meet members' needs.	BI Committee	Year 2
Engage with OACETT leaders.	Volunteers & Members	Ongoing
Access exclusive BI training and resources.	Volunteers & Members	Ongoing
Strategy Pillar: Equitable Policies and Practices		



Action	Owner	Timeline
Align BI strategy with OACETT goals.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Implement regular, transparent review cycles.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 2
Address BI in Code of Ethics and conduct.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 2
Develop Policy Audit Checklist and a policy for member resource groups.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Publicly champion BI initiatives.	BI Committee	Year 1
Share BI updates regularly in meetings.	BI Committee	Year 1
Collect feedback for BI improvement.	BI Committee	Year 2
Update policies and processes in line with CultureAlly's recommendations.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Support and work toward BI goals.	All	Ongoing
Increase understanding of certification processes.	All	Year 1
Strategy Pillar: Education and Engagement		
Action	Owner	Timeline
Foster open communication and feedback.	OACETT Staff & Board	Ongoing
Release new training topics regularly to drive engagement.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 3+
Endorse and participate in BI training.	All	Year 2
Develop and implement a feedback survey for members focused on strengths and opportunities for improvement.	BI Committee	Year 2
Facilitate BI involvement and leadership opportunities.	BI Committee	Year 2
Develop a training curriculum.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 3+
Promote member participation in BI training.	BI Committee	Year 2
Identify leadership development opportunities, focused on inclusive leadership and BI competencies.	BI Committee	Year 2



Provide updates on training completion levels.	BI Committee	Ongoing
Strategy Pillar: Community Impact and Relations		
Action	Owner	Timeline
Monitor data practices.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 2
Provide clear consent forms for data collection.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 2
Use third-party for unbiased, confidential surveys.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 2
Fund new programs for inclusivity.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 3+
Establish a communication plan around BI, with emphasis on Leadership Endorsement.	OACETT Staff & Board	Year 1
Create dedicated coaching opportunities that focus on building the specific skills women can leverage to navigate the path to leadership roles.	BI Committee	Year 2
Publish biannual BI data impact reports and share anonymized data supporting BI goals.	BI Committee	Year 3+
Plan regular BI events, workshops and speaker series to foster continuous learning.	BI Committee	Year 2
Establish a disability inclusion resource group to support members with disabilities.	BI Committee	Year 2
Establish an LGBTQ+ resource group.	BI Committee	Year 2
Share monthly observances and celebrations and recognize members fostering positive culture.	BI Committee	Year 3
Ensure BI is a standing agenda item at annual meetings and local chapter events, providing updates on goals where possible.	Volunteers & Members	Ongoing
Support data efforts by completing surveys.	Volunteers & Members	Ongoing
Engage in events to promote mutual growth.	Volunteers & Members	Ongoing
Collaborate to build an inclusive environment.	Volunteers & Members	Ongoing



APPENDIX





A1: EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION (DEI) SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What does diversity, equity and inclusion mean to you?

On a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), how much do you agree with the following statements? Please select N/A if not applicable.

2. I feel like I belong within OACETT.
3. I can share my thoughts and opinions within OACETT without fear of negative consequences.
4. OACETT has diverse members with different experiences and backgrounds.
5. When I speak up within OACETT, my opinion is valued.
6. I see a path for myself to a leadership role within OACETT if I wanted it – in the Chapters or at the provincial level.
7. What do you feel is the biggest barrier to diversity, equity & inclusion we face at OACETT? Feel free to share thoughts, opinions, suggestions or anything you feel is important to note. For example, perhaps you are not sure where to find information about getting involved. Or, you attended a meeting where you may not have felt welcome. If you're unsure, you can simply answer 'don't know' or 'unsure'.
8. As OACETT looks to establish its DEI roadmap and priorities, please rank order this list based on your priorities, or add something that is not included in the list:

Training for members (promoting diversity, unconscious bias, etc.)

Addressing barriers based on gender

Addressing barriers based on socio-economic status

Addressing barriers based on immigration status

Addressing barriers based on region

Addressing barriers based on disabilities

Addressing barriers based on sexual orientation



Addressing Indigenous matters

Additional priorities

9. Please specify what "additional priorities" you have added to the list if applicable. Please write "N/A" if not applicable.
10. OACETT intends to collect demographic data (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, income, socio-economic status, immigration status, etc.) about its members to help us better understand the demographic make-up of OACETT's membership. The ultimate goal is to use information to enhance OACETT's DEI strategy. Please share any questions, comments or suggestions here about how OACETT should best gather and work with this sensitive information.
11. If you would like to share more feedback about your experience at OACETT or engage more deeply on matters beyond this survey, we invite you to attend a Focus Group or a 1:1 Interview with CultureAlly, our DEI Partner. To sign up for a Focus Group, please leave your email address below, and CultureAlly, will follow up with you on participation details. If you prefer to share more feedback about your experience at OACETT via a 1:1 online interview (Zoom), you can schedule time with CultureAlly by using this *booking link*.
12. As a thank you for sharing your thoughts, all survey participants will be entered into a raffle draw. It's our way of saying thanks for helping make OACETT a better place for everyone. Please enter your email address below for a chance to win one of several \$25 gift cards.



A2: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following list comprises key questions explored during the Focus Group sessions. Please note that while these were the primary prompts, additional questions may have been posed based on the flow of the discussions.

Member Engagement and Services, Government Relations

- What are the different membership segments and how does each application process differ?
- What are some of the key differences in processes between applying Student Membership and Associate Membership?
- What are your current recruitment channels and how would you describe the recruitment process (membership growth) for each?
- What are your current retention strategies (onboarding and engagement)? Which ones would you describe as most effective and why?
- Do you collect demographic data for members?
- Do you feel that the current membership policies and practices address barriers faced by marginalized members?
- How do current retention policies and processes support marginalized members?
- Do you see any policies or practices that may disproportionately impact certain groups or identities?
- Are there any other barriers you have identified that impact members of OACETT?
- How do you think DEI could be improved for members?

Registration & Professional Practice

- What does each stage of the certification process currently look like? Is this consistent across all chapters and members?
- Do you collect demographic data for certified members?
- Do you feel that the current policies and practices address barriers faced by marginalized members?
- How do current certification policies and processes support marginalized members? Do you see any policies or practices that may disproportionately impact certain groups or identities?
- Are there any other barriers you have identified that impact members of OACETT?
- How do you think DEI could be improved for certified members?

Members

- From your perspective, what do you feel OACETT does well as it relates to diversity, equity or inclusion?
- Do the processes at OACETT appear consistent for all members?
- Do you see any policies or practices that may disproportionately impact certain groups or identities?
- How do current certification policies and processes support marginalized members?
- How do current recruitment policies and processes support marginalized members?
- How do current retention policies and processes support marginalized members?
- How do current policies and processes related to volunteer leadership opportunities support marginalized members?
- How do you think Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) could improve among OACETT chapters and members?
- Do you have any additional comments or thoughts you have to help our DEI analysis?