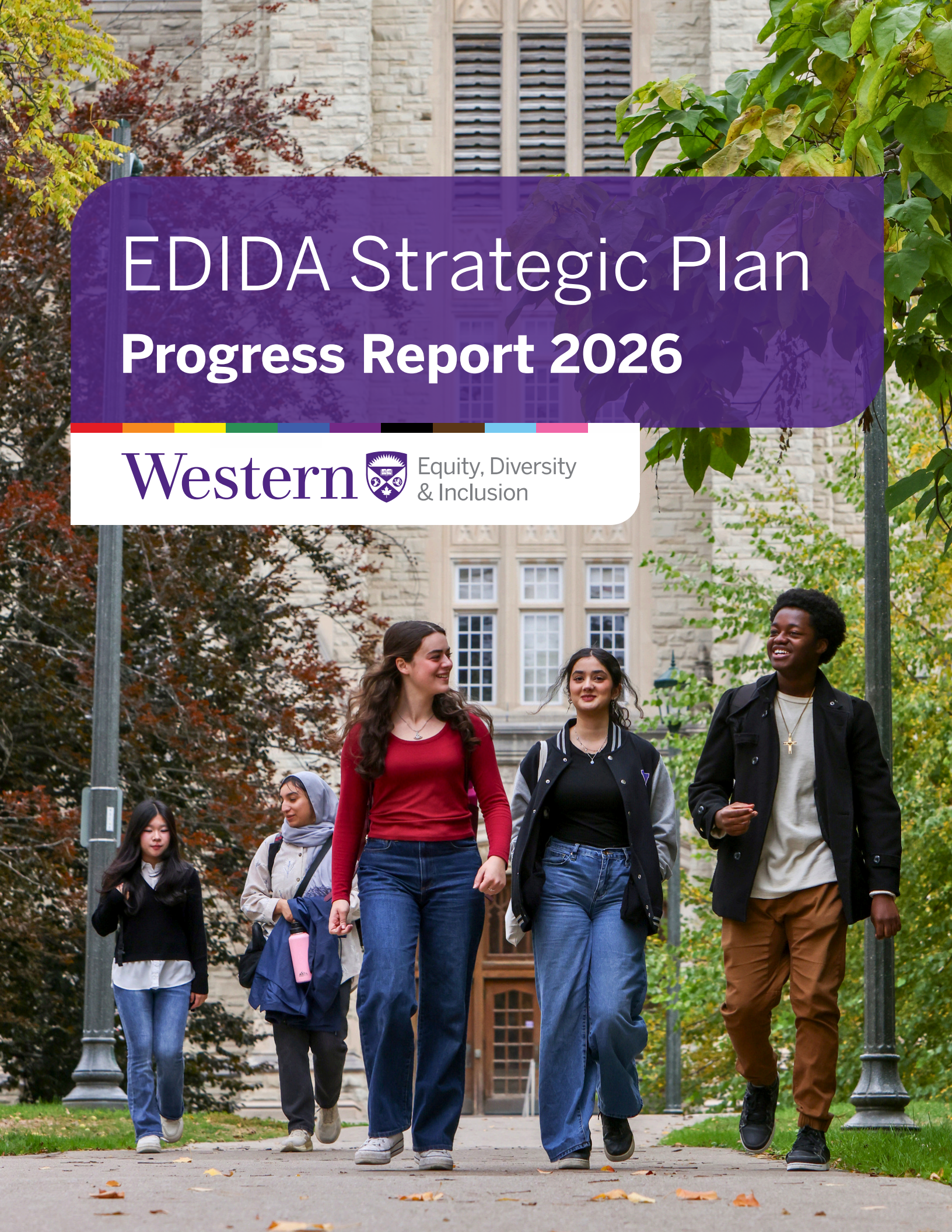
EDIDA Strategic Plan

Progress Report 2026

Western Equity, Diversity & Inclusion



Land Acknowledgement

Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee and Lūnaapéewak peoples, on lands connected to the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum and the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796.

We recognize the enduring relationships Indigenous Peoples have with these lands as the original caretakers and acknowledge the historical and ongoing injustices experienced by First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. As a public institution, we share a responsibility to advance decolonization through teaching, research and community engagement, while renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities. This work is strengthened through the leadership of Western's Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

Across Western, this commitment is reflected in our work in equity, diversity, inclusion, decolonization and accessibility (EDIDA). Through collective action, we continue working to create a university where diverse perspectives are valued, barriers are reduced and all members of our community can thrive.

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Executive Summary

Western's EDIDA Strategic Plan launched in December 2024, establishing a university-wide framework for advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, decolonization and accessibility. Throughout the 2025-2026 reporting period, units advanced initiatives across all five strategic priorities, expanding equitable pathways, strengthening inclusive learning and research environments, improving accessibility and embedding EDIDA into governance, planning and decision-making.

While initiatives were reported across all five priorities, the strongest concentration of activity focused on accessibility, cultivating inclusive learning environments and student experiences, The progress reflected in this report provides a strong foundation for continued action, learning and accountability at Western.

Fast Facts

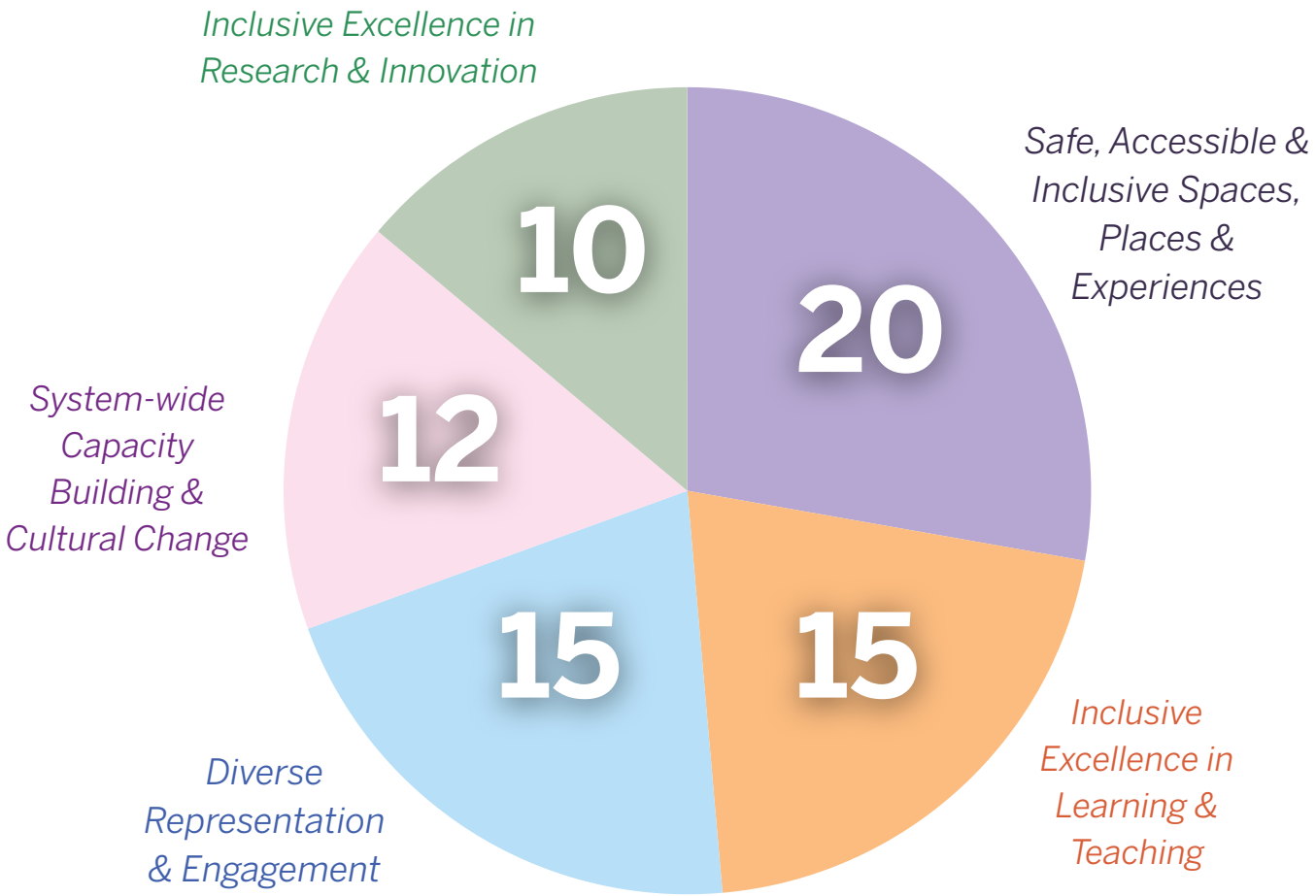
- **24** academic and administrative units submitted progress updates
- At least **72** notable progress updates were shared through this reporting cycle
- Work underway across all **five** EDIDA strategic priorities
- Units reported activity across an average of three strategic priorities
- Safe, Accessible and Inclusive Spaces, Places and Experiences emerged as the priority with the most activity
- A university-wide EDIDA progress reporting framework was developed
- The EDIDA Strategic Plan moved from planning to implementation across faculties and administrative units during its first full year

Institutional Snapshot

During the first year of implementation, EDIDA work took shape in different ways across the university. While priorities varied by unit, many reported progress in multiple areas of the Strategic Plan, reflecting a growing commitment to embedding EDIDA into teaching, learning, research, operations and community life.

In total, **72** progress updates were received, with three updates submitted by each of the **24** units. The breakdown below shows the number of initiatives reported under each Strategic Plan priority.

How many initiatives are underway across campus in each priority area?





Message from the President & Vice-Chancellor

I want to thank everyone who is helping to create a more diverse, more equitable and more inclusive Western. Our progress so far reflects your dedication and commitment.

Advancing Inclusive Excellence is a shared responsibility – one that is ongoing and that challenges us to think more deeply, collaborate with intention and learn continuously.

It's about creating the kind of community we want to be – a rich environment where learning, teaching and research can thrive and where people truly feel they belong.

This important work is never finished. It is built layer by layer, conversation by conversation, action by action. More than ever, as individuals and teams we need to embrace this commitment in every part of our community and in every corner of campus.

Collaborate. Connect. Share success stories. Be open to new perspectives.

Let's continue to build the Western we want to see – a community where everyone feels supported and empowered to be their best.



Alan Shepard
President & Vice-Chancellor



Message from the Associate Vice-President (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

Celebrating Progress, Building Momentum

There is an African proverb that says, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." As I reflect on the progress shared throughout this report, I am reminded of how true those words are.

Since December 2024, I have been encouraged by what I have seen across our campus community. Units have strengthened accessibility, created more inclusive learning environments, expanded opportunities for representation and belonging, built new partnerships, and embedded EDIDA into planning, decision-making and everyday practice. While these efforts take different forms across the university, they all reflect a shared commitment to ensuring that members of our community can participate, contribute and thrive.

What stands out most is that this work is no longer happening in isolation. Across Western, people are sharing ideas, learning from one another and taking collective responsibility for advancing change. The stories in this report demonstrate that EDIDA is increasingly becoming part of how we work, teach, learn, research and lead.

We know there is still work ahead. Change takes time, persistence and courage. Yet the progress reflected in these pages provides clear evidence that Western is not in the same place it was when the Strategic Plan was launched. Together, we are building momentum, strengthening relationships and laying the foundation for lasting change.

This progress belongs to all of us, and I am grateful for the care, commitment and leadership that continue to move our community forward. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this work.



Opiyo Oloya
Associate Vice-President (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

Diverse Representation and Engagement

Strategic Plan Commitment

Western ensures students, staff, faculty, librarians, archivists and leaders reflect the diverse communities we serve, partner with and impact, including all equity deserving groups who have been historically and are currently underrepresented and under-resourced.

Key Highlights Across Western

- **The Faculty of Law** expanded the Black Students Law School Application Package, providing application fee waivers, LSAT preparation support and dedicated recruitment initiatives such as the Black Law Students' Association Pre-Law Expo. The Faculty also strengthened its partnership with BlackNorth to increase mentorship, internships and leadership opportunities.
- **Student Experience** expanded culturally responsive health and wellness services, including Indigenous outreach delivered through the Indigenous Student Centre and community spaces, while enhancing clinical systems to better support preferred names and pronouns.
- **The Office of the Vice-Provost (Academic)** strengthened pre-degree and pathway programs, including Western's Initiative for Scholarly Excellence (WISE), School Within a University (SWAU), and the Indigenous Student STEM Access Program (ISSAP), through partnerships with local school boards, Indigenous communities, families and students.
- **Ivey Business School** continued to expand its University Pathways Program (UPP) for Black students while broadening recruitment pathways into the HBA program and publicly reporting student demographic data.
- **The Faculty of Education** recruited an Indigenous Teaching Scholar, created Section 14 (targeted Indigenous hiring) postings for Indigenous instructors in the Education Doctorate program, hired two Teaching Scholars from equity-deserving communities and established a Graduate Affairs Assistant role supporting Indigenous education initiatives.
- **The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry** continued its Access, Indigenous and Black Applicant Pathways within the MD Program while supporting learner engagement through CREDIT (Council on Reforming Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for Trainees).

Additional examples and unit contributions are available online.

EDIDA Community Profile

Creating Pathways to Representation in Medicine (Schulich)

The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry is working to strengthen representation in medicine by creating pathways that support aspiring learners from historically underrepresented communities. Through outreach, admissions initiatives and mentorship opportunities, the School is helping to remove barriers while fostering meaningful connections between current students and future applicants.

By supporting representation throughout the learner journey, Schulich is helping ensure that future health-care providers better reflect the communities they serve and are equipped to deliver culturally responsive care.



"These pathways tell prospective learners that medicine has a place for them, not despite their background, but informed by it. For future applicants, seeing themselves represented in our classes signals that this profession is genuinely open to them.

Ultimately, a workforce that mirrors the diversity of our communities delivers better care: patients are more likely to trust, communicate openly with and receive culturally attuned treatment from physicians who understand their lived experience."

George Kim
Associate Dean, Admissions,
The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry



"By breaking down barriers for engagement across Schulich, we ensure our programs, research and teaching are developed through the lens of equity and social accountability."

Sukhveer Bains
Associate Dean, Equity and Social Accountability,
The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry

Inclusive Excellence in Learning and Teaching

Strategic Plan Commitment

Western cultivates inclusive, equitable and accessible learning environments, embedding Indigenization and EDIDA principles and best practices into our teaching, curriculum, programming and assessment.

Key Highlights Across Western

- **The Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement (OAQE)** continued to embed EDIDA into cyclical program reviews through IQAP workshops, self-study supports, and efforts to increase diversity among review panel members and external reviewers.
- **Western Libraries** partnered with the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing to develop Knowledge Justice in the Helping Professions: From Theory to Practice, an open educational resource grounded in anti-colonial pedagogy and epistemic justice.
- **The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry** advanced curriculum renewal through Inclusive Anatomy, Indigenous health education, anti-racism initiatives and the development of an Inclusive Curriculum for Health Professions Education resource hub.
- **The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)** facilitated 53 EDIDA-focused programs attended by 1,753 participants, supporting anti-racist pedagogy, accessibility, cultural competency and inclusive course design.
- **The Department of Geography & Environment** created opportunities for learning and connection through events such as Donuts & Diversity: Strengthening Community in Challenging Times, bringing faculty and graduate students together to explore Indigenous knowledge, climate justice and community inclusion.
- **The Faculty of Law** expanded cultural competency learning through programming and experiential opportunities that prepared students to work with diverse communities and better understand barriers within legal systems.
- **The Faculty of Science** shared student experiences and practical strategies for creating more inclusive classrooms through presentations delivered at Faculty Council.

Additional examples and unit contributions are available online.

EDIDA Community Profile

Advancing EDIDA Through Curriculum Integration (Faculty of Science)

Bringing EDIDA into the classroom means helping students engage with these concepts as part of their learning. Pamela Doxtator, Career Services Officer with the Master of Environment and Sustainability, incorporates the Office of EDI's online EDIDA learning modules into course design, creating opportunities for discussion, reflection and applied learning.

Pamela has also shared this work with colleagues across the **Faculty of Science**. At the Faculty's Fall Faculty Council meeting, she and her colleagues highlighted student feedback and shared practical strategies for creating more welcoming and accessible learning environments.

These efforts demonstrate how EDIDA can be integrated into everyday teaching while supporting broader conversations about inclusive learning across the Faculty. Pamela notes that students often engage most deeply when they can connect what they are learning to their own lives and the world around them.

"Through embedding the EDIDA modules, reflections, inclusive leadership principles and Indigenous Allyship into courses and professional development, students engage with diverse perspectives, challenge unconscious biases, deepen intercultural competencies and strengthen collaboration. Students bring an inclusive lens and new strategies to their courses, projects and community engagement.



It is truly exciting to see our students thrive in their summer co-op work term and early careers as inclusive, respectful and engaging team members, leaders and allies who are championing positive impact across industries, government, universities and organizations."

Pamela Doxtator
Career Services Officer, Master of Environment and Sustainability,
Faculty of Science

Inclusive Excellence in Research and Innovation

Strategic Plan Commitment

Western builds inclusive and accessible research and innovation environments through equitable practices, policies and supports that foster diverse perspectives and impactful outcomes; embracing the intentional integration of inclusive, decolonial, Indigenization and anti-racist approaches within our research initiatives and ecosystem.

Key Highlights Across Western

- **The Faculty of Education** strengthened inclusive research environments through the creation of the Education Research Commons, a shared space that supports collaboration, mentorship and knowledge exchange among graduate students, researchers and visiting scholars. The Faculty also advanced equity-informed research governance and expanded opportunities for international research collaboration through transnational mobility funding.
- **The Department of Political Science** introduced tracking processes to monitor the diversity of invited speakers and research programming, supporting more intentional representation in scholarly engagement.
- **The Faculty of Health Sciences** completed a faculty-wide environmental scan to identify equity-focused research activities, partnerships and gaps, creating a foundation for future collaboration and planning.
- **The Department of History** delivered an EDIDA-focused Research Seminar Series exploring topics including queer identity, coloniality, gender and sexuality, Indigenous memory studies and the history of Blackface.
- **The Faculty of Social Science** collaborated with the Faculty of Science to host the Afternoon of Allyship, featuring presentations on allyship in research, Indigenous knowledge, reconciliation and knowledge mobilization. Approximately 100 students, staff and faculty participated.

Additional examples and unit contributions are available online.

EDIDA Community Profile

Fostering Inclusive Research and Knowledge Exchange (Faculty of Social Science)

The Faculty of Social Science continues to advance Western's EDIDA Strategic Plan by creating opportunities for researchers, students, faculty and staff to engage with allyship, reconciliation and inclusive research practices. Through initiatives such as the annual Afternoon of Allyship, the Faculty brings together the campus community to explore how research can better reflect diverse perspectives, community impact and Indigenous knowledge systems.

In collaboration with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Western Research's Inclusive Research Excellence and Impact Office and the Faculty of Science, the 2025 program featured presentations on allyship in research and knowledge mobilization. By creating space for learning, reflection and dialogue, Social Science is helping foster a research culture grounded in collaboration, community engagement and equitable knowledge creation.



"At our Afternoon of Allyship event, we aim to present programming that is student-friendly to support learning and unlearning on this non-instructional day. We have welcomed a broad audience of graduate and undergraduate students, staff and faculty from across campus to these events. They provide an opportunity to bring awareness to resources and show how researchers put the principles of allyship into practice in their own community-directed and collaborative work.

We are grateful to those instructors who have incorporated these events into their teaching activities and especially to the panelists who have been willing to share their allyship journeys."

Kim Clark
Assistant Dean (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility)
Faculty of Social Science

Safe, Accessible and Inclusive Spaces, Places and Experiences

Strategic Plan Commitment

Western plans, designs, builds and maintains university spaces, places and experiences to be welcoming, safe, accessible and usable for all students, staff, faculty and visitors, with special attention to the needs and representation of people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and additional equity-deserving groups.

Key Highlights Across Western

- **Facilities Management** integrated the City of London's Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) into new capital projects and strengthened internal expertise through accessibility certification training.
- **The Faculty of Education** completed five new accessible entrances, installed a permanent ramp to the auditorium stage, improved hybrid meeting spaces and began planning an Inclusive Classroom/Flex Space.
- **Human Resources** enhanced inclusive employee supports through initiatives including sensory-friendly spaces, maternity parking and the Rest and Renewal Room.
- **Housing & Ancillary Services** held student-led reviews of the myHousing portal, identifying opportunities to improve accessibility, safety and inclusion within residence services.
- **Western Continuing Studies (WCS)** centralized student support resources within Brightspace and converted course materials into captioned video formats to improve accessibility and flexibility for learners.
- **Student Experience** established an Accessibility Committee for Orientation Week, introduced sensory-friendly spaces and expanded accessibility training for Orientation Leaders and student volunteers. Student Experience also launched Western's campus-wide Accessibility Advisory Committee, bringing together students, faculty and staff with lived experience to help inform accessibility priorities and decision-making.

Additional examples and unit contributions are available online.

EDIDA Community Profile

Advancing Accessibility Through Design and Practice (Student Experience)

Student Experience is helping make Western more accessible through coordinated efforts across programs, services and campus spaces. Under the leadership of Emily Branov, Project Manager, Accessibility, this work brings together people and resources from across the university to address barriers and improve access for students.

This year, much of the focus has been on moving forward the Accessible Western Project Portfolio, which is implementing recommendations from the Government of Ontario's 2022 Postsecondary Education Standards Development Committee Report. The portfolio is helping to improve accessibility planning, policies and supports across campus. Working in consultation with Western's Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Accessible Western Working Group continues to lead more than ten collaborative projects aimed at creating a more accessible university experience.

"The Accessible Western Working Group unites over 15 units and faculties to turn 185 provincial recommendations for a new postsecondary standard under the AODA into action. The Accessibility Advisory Committee gives students, staff and faculty with disabilities an official feedback mechanism to shape projects through lived experience and disability-informed perspectives. Both are essential.



Barriers span physical spaces, digital systems, teaching, services, events and communications beyond one division's scope. Sustained progress requires shared responsibility, alignment and ongoing collaboration with those most affected."

Emily Branov
Project Manager, Accessibility, Student Experience

Enabling Priority: System-wide Capacity Building and Cultural Change

Strategic Plan Commitment

Western builds system-wide capacity and capabilities to lead and ignite bold and meaningful EDIDA cultural and operational change.

Key Highlights Across Western

- **Procurement** embedded the Supplier Code of Conduct into supplier onboarding, contracts and procurement processes, with ethical requirements included in all centrally managed Requests for Proposals.
- **Human Resources** developed an EDIDA planning rubric to support consistent integration of EDIDA principles into workplace initiatives, policies and decision-making.
- **The School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies** aligned admissions, scholarships, graduate assistant appointments and thesis examination processes with Western's Indigenous Affirmation Policy.
- **Western Technology Services (WTS)** amplified diverse perspectives through storytelling and awareness initiatives, including campaigns highlighting the experiences of women in technology.
- **Western Libraries** established EDIDA Co-Lead positions and expanded staff engagement through initiatives such as the EDIDA Showcase, Black Reads, Pride programming, Truth and Reconciliation learning opportunities and ongoing community education activities.
- **The Office of the Registrar** used engagement initiatives and incentives that contributed to an 80% response rate on its EDIDA survey, supporting EDIDA participation across the unit. The Office also revised Academic Calendar language to better reflect inclusive and equitable terminology.
- **The Faculty of Engineering** developed Guidelines for Respectful and Inclusive Behaviour, establishing a shared framework for respectful and inclusive interactions across the Faculty.

Additional examples and unit contributions are available online.

EDIDA Community Profile

Building the Foundation for Lasting Change (Faculty of Engineering)

As Co-Chairs of the EDIDA Committee in the **Faculty of Engineering**, Ana Luisa Trejos and Georgia Trifon-Morgan have helped advance the implementation of Western's EDIDA Strategic Plan through committee leadership, collaboration and sustained engagement across the Faculty.

A significant milestone this year was the development of the Faculty of Engineering Guidelines for Respectful and Inclusive Behaviour. Created through extensive consultation and review, the guidelines establish a shared framework for respectful and inclusive interactions and were unanimously approved by Faculty Council. Ana Luisa and Georgia are helping build a culture of shared accountability and inclusion across the Faculty of Engineering.

"Leading EDIDA implementation within the Faculty of Engineering has been an opportunity to create meaningful change within our workplace. The new Guidelines help move EDIDA from an abstract goal to a practical commitment that is embedded in our daily interactions and sense of community."



Ana Luisa Trejos
Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and School of Biomedical Engineering



"For all the faculty members involved in leading EDIDA efforts and developing the Guidelines, remaining actively engaged throughout the process helps bring this work to life; sustained engagement is indeed what it takes to build even a small foundation for change."

Georgia Trifon-Morgan
Outreach Program Coordinator, Faculty of Engineering

Shared Challenges and Looking Ahead

As units across Western advance the EDIDA Strategic Plan, several shared challenges reflect the complexity of embedding this work across a large and diverse institution:

Capacity and Sustainability

EDIDA work is often advanced alongside existing responsibilities, creating ongoing challenges related to time, resources and long-term sustainability.

Building Shared Ownership

Many units identified the need to broaden engagement and distribute responsibility for EDIDA work across faculty, staff and leadership, rather than relying on a small number of champions.

Moving from Initiatives to Systems Change

Units continue to explore how programming, events and learning opportunities can be translated into sustainable changes within policies, processes and everyday practices.

Measuring Impact

Several units highlighted the importance of strengthening data collection, evaluation and reporting processes to better understand outcomes and support ongoing accountability.

Building on our collective progress, the Western community will continue to focus on:

- Embedding EDIDA into policies, governance, curriculum, research, services and operations.
- Strengthening leadership capacity, collaboration and shared learning across units.
- Enhancing accountability through continuous reflection, assessment and measurement.
- Advancing accessibility and inclusive design across campus environments and experiences.

Spring 2027: Release of the final report on Phase One EDIDA implementation.

Fall 2027: Development of Phase Two of the EDIDA Strategic Plan.

Thank You

The first year of implementation has demonstrated what is possible when individuals and units work together to advance EDIDA across the university. This report reflects the commitment, collaboration and leadership of the academic and administrative units that contributed to Western's inaugural EDIDA Strategic Plan Progress Report.

As this work continues, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion remains committed to supporting campus partners through guidance, resources, coordination and opportunities for shared learning. Together, we are building a Western where every member of our community can contribute, belong and thrive.



Western's Pride Out At The Beach Celebration, Passover Lunch, Iftar Dinner and Black Graduation.


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