



PATHWAYS TO JUSTICE: An EDI Journey for the STLHE/SAPES Community

*Report of the STLHE/SAPES
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Task Force*

OCTOBER 29, 2021

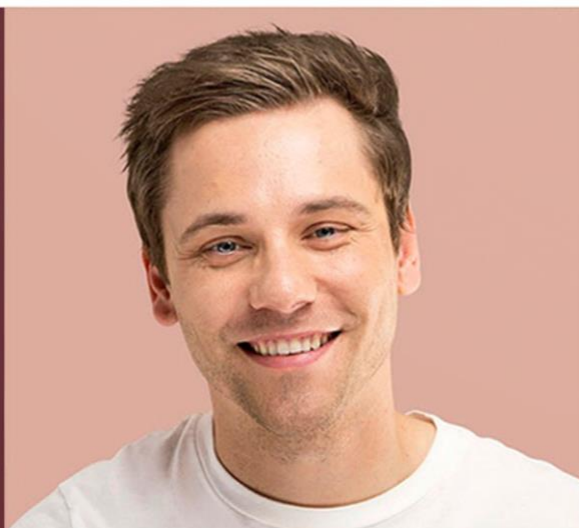


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PREAMBLE

Over the fall/winter 2019/2020 academic year, the STLHE/SAPES Board of Directors undertook a number of discussions about the necessity to engage in a robust examination of its attention to equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the organization, as a response to a number of calls from both constituencies and the membership to do this work. The necessity for this work was made more urgent by the horrific and very public murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, which was the catalyst for the groundswell of anti-racism protests in the USA, Canada, and across the world. This murder was the act that jolted many people awake to the reality of what Black people experience everyday and have been experiencing for a very long time. At the same time, the raging coronavirus pandemic disrupted every aspect of our daily life. It highlighted the inequities in many of our social systems and services, and their adverse impact on the historically marginalized and disadvantaged including women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of racialized groups, persons with different socioeconomic status, and members of 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Above all, it helped to awaken the entire world to the realities of widespread systemic and structural racism and racial injustice, particularly against Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities.

In this context, many organizations, including post-secondary institutions and their various support networks, began asking themselves “Are we doing enough? To what extent do we act to reduce prejudice and racism, sexism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and inequity, xenophobia and other related intolerances that continue to fracture our world?” Many issued statements condemning racism in all its forms and several established committees, working groups, or leadership positions to explore ways of responding to these challenges. STLHE/SAPES was no exception.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Task Force (hereafter referred to as the EDITF) of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE/SAPES) was established by the organization’s Board of Directors in the summer of 2020. Its mandate was to review STLHE/SAPES’ current practices with regard to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in order to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement, and ultimately to recommend a set of strategic directions and proactive measures for integrating EDI into the work and culture of STLHE/SAPES. The EDITF met on a bi-weekly basis from September 22, 2020 until October 29, 2021. This report describes the EDITF’s activities which included:

- information gathering through a survey of STLHE/SAPES members
- an invitation for members to “share their stories” of EDI experiences within STLHE/SAPES
- facilitating a focus group of members
- facilitating an interactive session at the annual STLHE/SAPES conference
- providing an EDI orientation for awards adjudicators
- a review of written communications from STLHE/SAPES constituent groups
- an examination of the STLHE/SAPES website.

The report analyzes the findings from these various data sources and provides a list of recommendations for enhancing EDI within STLHE/SAPES.

We want to stress here that our findings, inferences, and analyses are based on information gathered from a subset of members and are not necessarily representative of the entire STLHE/SAPES membership. While based on a small data set, the collective expertise and experiences of the EDITF members, in addition to the added sources of information examined, give us a strong basis upon which to make our recommendations. Importantly, the EDITF perceives EDI as a lens, a perspective, and a set of values that guide an ongoing process, rather than as a product or end state to be attained. As such, our recommendations are not an exhaustive list of what must be done, but rather, suggestions of where to begin. They invite all of us to engage in constant reflection and rethinking, insisting that statements and actions can—and must—always be further refined, as new experiences and knowledge come to the fore.

Overall, while the EDITF found commendable current practices in STLHE/SAPES, many of these practices were not fully integrated throughout the organization. We identified many more ways in which STLHE/SAPES needs to prioritize EDI, including through: leadership and governance structures; awards, conferences, and other events; membership recruitment and retention. In the rest of this report, we offer our analyses of information gathered and justification for our conclusions, culminating in a more fulsome list of recommendations. We encourage everyone reading this report to see in it the beginning of an ongoing process, rather than an end.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Establishment, Membership and Terms of Reference

On June 2, 2020, STLHE/SAPES President Denise Stockley communicated [a Message on Challenging Racism](#) to the STLHE/SAPES membership. Later that month, the STLHE/SAPES Board of Directors agreed to establish a Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion with Dr. Joy Mighty as its Chair. Dr. Mighty was nominated jointly by the Educational Developers Caucus (EDC) and the President of STLHE/SAPES. The stated mandate of the Task Force was to:

1. Review current practices in EDI, identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement.
2. Recommend a set of strategic directions and proactive measures for integrating EDI into the work and culture of the STLHE/SAPES.
3. Submit a final report to the STLHE/SAPES membership.

On August 3, 2020 STLHE/SAPES published a call for expressions of interest in membership on the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Task Force (EDITF). The call invited candidates to submit a 150-word statement of interest outlining their rationale for applying for membership on the EDITF. It asked applicants to highlight their academic and/or lived experiences with EDI issues, as well as their passion, commitment, or activism relevant to EDI. Further, the call asked individuals to indicate whether they wanted to be considered as representatives of the Society's three official constituencies (3M Council of Fellows, Educational Developers Caucus, and SoTL Canada). It was made clear that such representatives would be chosen by the Executive Committee of the constituency which they applied to represent.

The EDITF consists of ten members with different perspectives and lived experiences in relation to equity, diversity, and inclusion. It is a representation of STLHE/SAPES' membership including colleges, universities, faculty, students, and various constituencies, as well as diverse social identities, with most members identifying as one or more of the equity-deserving groups as identified by the Tri-Council¹. In addition, all members have had experience researching, teaching, organizing or leading initiatives on issues related to equity, social justice, intercultural competence, or anti-racism at their institutions or in their respective communities. The members of the EDITF are:

- Joy Mighty, Chair, member of SoTL Canada
- Ann Braithwaite, member-at-large, member of SoTL Canada, and member of the Council of Fellows (as of spring 2021)
- Jacky Deng, Student member, member of SoTL Canada and member of TAGSA
- Shaobo Huang, SoTL Canada representative, member of TAGSA
- Brian Leacock, member-at-large and member of SoTL Canada
- Valerie Lopes, Ex-Officio STLHE/SAPES Board Liaison, member of EDC, member of SoTL Canada, and member of the Council of Fellows
- Michelle MacDonald, STLHE Executive Director, AOR Solutions (Administrative/Task Force Support)
- Rodrigo Narro Pérez, Student member, member of SoTL Canada
- Bre-Anna Owusu, Student member, Research Assistant
- Pamela Rose Toulouse, Council of Fellows representative

For short bios of the Task Force members please see [here](#).

It should be noted that the Executive and Selection Committees of the Educational Developers Caucus (EDC) objected to the process by which the EDITF was established and subsequently proposed to its members that the EDC not participate in the EDITF. At a special meeting on December 14, 2020, 30 members of the EDC voted to decline the invitation to participate in the EDITF. Subsequently, on December 18, 2020, the STLHE/SAPES Board sent a message ([appended to this report](#)) to the EDC community expressing regret at this decision and reaffirming its commitment to all 261 members of the EDC as well as to the EDITF and its ongoing work.

¹ The Tri-Council refers to the three primary, federal-level research funding agencies in Canada, namely: The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

During its early meetings, the EDITF established its **Terms of Reference** that described the roles and responsibilities governing how it would do its work. It also articulated a **Statement of Core Values**, including a commitment to actively fighting racism in all its forms and promoting the principles of equity and inclusion to ensure fair access to opportunity and services for all individuals and groups that have been historically disadvantaged, including but not limited to, women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of racialized groups, persons with different socioeconomic status, and members of 2SLGBTQ+ communities. The values statement reflected a commitment to EDI, especially in relation to teaching and learning, both within STLHE/SAPES programs and more broadly, emphasizing a focus on:

- practices and policies that work towards inclusivity and broader representation;
- classroom practices and curricula that decenter white, western, masculinist, ableist, heteronormative, and other privileged approaches to knowledge and the ways in which those are so often embedded in ideas about what is knowledge and whose knowledge gets reflected in teaching and research; and
- ensuring that policies, practices, and programming work to decenter embedded assumptions.

The EDITF also committed to transparency and inclusion in engaging with STLHE/SAPES and its groups, particularly through consulting and liaising regularly with members and providing updates about its work through official STLHE/SAPES communications channels.

The EDITF spent some time considering potential questions for STLHE/SAPES members about ways in which STLHE/SAPES may not have been inclusive and possible steps for the Society and its initiatives to be more inclusive in the future. The EDITF identified the following as specific issues to be addressed:

- Awards
- Conferences
- Language
- Leadership and governance
- Membership and committees
- Resources
- Building the role of STLHE/SAPES as a national voice in teaching and learning

In addition, the EDITF identified other important sources of information to be considered:

- the “Anti-Racism List of Demands” submitted to the STLHE/SAPES Board by an ad-hoc working group led by 3M National Student Fellows
- a public letter of apology from the 3M Council of Fellows to Black, Indigenous, and racialized and other marginalized groups and an action agenda

On January 21, 2021, a budget request to support the work of the EDITF was approved by the Board. Subsequently a call for applications for a research assistant was made and, after interviewing several candidates, a selection committee chaired by the EDITF chair hired a PhD candidate from McMaster University to fill the role.

1.2 Clarification of Terms

The work of making organizations more equitable, inclusive, and just/fair often raises conflict, not only from those who do not believe that this work needs to be done at all, but also—and with more difficulty—among those who do. Disagreement about what needs to be done, about how to do it, and about how to assess its success raises a number of conflicts. Key among these is the issue of who gets to “decide” about these issues at any stage. Additionally, EDI work can be defined in two major, and sometimes competing, ways: i) efforts aimed exclusively towards and for otherwise marginalized and excluded “equity-deserving” groups; ii) efforts focused on changing the “culture” of the organization—that is, on altering the taken-for-granted everyday practices and beliefs so that they reflect a broader range of people. While these are clearly related endeavours, where one starts or where one puts the primary focus can lead to different emphases. Throughout its work, culminating in this report and the series of recommendations at the end, the EDITF has worked within both of these focuses. The result is that some of the EDITF’s recommendations are organized around programming and initiatives targeted specifically towards increasing inclusion and representation for equity-deserving groups, while others aim more broadly to engage the entire membership in rethinking everyday practices of academia embedded in STLHE/SAPES’ organizational practices (conferences, awards criteria, etc).

These two major focuses grow out of the terms “equity,” “diversity,” and “inclusion” (EDI) and the different interpretations of and stresses within each of these. Additionally, EDI, while perhaps the most common shorthand for this attention to rethinking organizational structures and practices, also goes by other acronyms: DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion), EDIA (equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility), IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility), JEID (justice, equity, inclusion, and diversity), and even—in some contexts—EDID (equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization). While there is debate over whether decolonization (and indigenization) should be combined with EDI more generally, we have opted to see them as part of the same overall process, even if also different (in terms of history, context). The merging of these terms is partly reflected in the term “Black, Indigenous, and racialized”, as well as in the Canadian government identification of Indigenous peoples in its own EDI policies (for CRCs and Tri-Council grants, for instance). We want to be clear that to say they are related is not to say that we don't recognize the differences, nor that we are not supportive of a strategic plan that focused solely on decolonization. While attempts to define terms as broad, and as broadly used, as any of these are no doubt contentious, we offer the following as quick guidelines for how the EDITF approached these words and the perspectives made possible in our understanding of each.

“Diversity”: We understand diversity as both descriptive and aspirational. We start with the recognition that diversity is a fact. We live and work with diverse groups of people, by almost any definition. People come from different backgrounds. On the one hand, the term diversity describes the realities around most of us—of people, of ideas, of values and perspectives. Diversity often refers to who is “in the room” and assumes that diversity can be perceived in visual signifiers, such as disability, gender, and race. We also recognize the intersections of such signifiers, as we are all so much more than one dimension of ourselves. On the other hand, diversity is also aspirational; one goal of EDI initiatives is to increase the diversity of any group or organization. This often results in programs that aim for greater representation of traditionally disenfranchised and underrepresented groups.

“Inclusion”: Inclusion, for us, describes the ultimate goal of incorporating more “diversity” into an organization or structure. Once people are “in the room,” how do we keep them there? Inclusion is more than simply representational--that is, more than simply having a greater diversity of people present. Rather, it focuses on ensuring that people are also listened to and heard and that their perspectives and knowledge are incorporated. Inclusion rejects an assimilationist approach that requires people to “fit in” Instead, it embraces their presence and invites needed change to organizations and structures. Inclusion is not simply additive; its goal is to be transformative.

“Equity”: The term “equity” describes a major way in which “inclusion” of “diversity” is reflected and incorporated. Equity is differentiated from equality; the latter focuses on treating everyone the same, while the former recognizes that different groups of people may be treated differently to ensure their inclusion. Equality assumes that structures and practices are neutral and universal, and that the problem of exclusion and lack of diversity is one of how individuals are being treated by other individuals. Equity focuses on recognizing how those structures and practices reflect only particular ways of being in the world, and works to alter those to ensure greater inclusion of more people.

An example: (Note: this example can be found in the Enacting Our Shared Values conference [presentation recording](#)). Consider the structure of public washrooms, with their all too common division of gender into two groups, and a corresponding door that reflects a set of assumptions about what identities and expressions (and bodies) belong to each of those groups. The desire to both invite and include more “diversity” of gender identity and expression—at a conference or meeting, for instance—often means that an organization will ensure the presence of an all-gender bathroom in addition to the two existing options. This is an example of an initiative that thinks about a particular excluded group and works to include them, by offering a changed practice for that group of people. Another alternative would be to designate all washrooms all-gender, removing the existing binary structure in favour of changing the entire structure of bathroom options. Both of these are important changes, but their focus is different; the first is a change targeted to a particular group (although, one hopes, no one is actually checking who uses what bathroom), while the second is focused on altering the broader set of cultural practices around public washrooms. Both are no doubt necessary in particular contexts, but they have different focuses--and different consequences. The first makes change for some people; the second changes something for everyone, resulting in everyone having to become more aware of the exclusion being addressed.

The different approaches briefly outlined in this example point to the two main emphases in EDI work outlined above. They are emphases that position us all in different relationships to those changes, and often arouse quite different responses. We highlight this point because it is important to be aware of how even people dedicated to the principles of EDI may be in conflict about how to do this work or about what work is needed. Conflict or disagreement, however, are not necessarily the same as continued oppression. There is no doubt that different groups of people are positioned differently in relation to systems of oppression and exclusion, and that we all have and bear quite different responsibilities for needed change for more just systems. The EDITF has consistently approached conflict as something to be recognized and negotiated, reflecting our ongoing belief that this work is a process for all of us, and one in which we are all invested.

2. EDITF ACTIVITIES

As mentioned above, EDI work is about inculcating a perspective, lens, and set of values into every aspect of an organization. This includes policies and procedures, leadership and governance structures, and programming and activities—for example, from awards committees composition and criteria through to conference and meeting planning. EDI work, as outlined here, involves working from within the organization to hold it/us accountable to the values we espouse. We recognize that the fight for these values also occurs in a variety of other contexts external to the organization, and believe that it takes multiple and different kinds of efforts to bring about meaningful social change and a more just world for more people. We also recognize that this work is not only about a constant and ongoing process, but one that involves negotiating multiple differences that may share different priorities and perceptions (indeed, the EDITF itself has had many such discussions over the past year). We say this here to make clear that EDI work is not a seamless, easy, or straightforward endeavour; it is often fraught with complexity and conflict, and is even seemingly contradictory at times. It is, nonetheless, work worth doing, and work to which all of us are committed.

The following paragraphs summarize the activities that the EDITF undertook.

1. In early February 2021, the EDITF released a document entitled “Statement of Core Values,” in which we outlined our commitment to a set of values that both identified the work to be done and guided our further activities. In this document, we maintained our overall focus on: “Identifying and actively fighting against systemic and structural racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia and transphobia, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination and exclusion. We recognize that these are intersecting systems of oppression that differentially impact people’s lives, and commit to naming, confronting, and contesting those systemic oppressions from our multiple social and economic locations.” The rest of this document highlighted the need to bring this overarching value statement to a number of arenas—from STLHE/SAPES’ internal processes and procedures through to its position as an advocate for teaching and learning in higher education more broadly.
2. This Statement of Core Values was shared with members via the STLHE/SAPES website and through email correspondence. It also provided the framework for orienting the awards coordinators and adjudicators towards looking at the award nominations and adjudication processes through the lens of EDI. This helped them to recognize that there are varied ways of meeting the awards criteria. We also provided them with further readings and resources as they began their deliberations of the following STLHE/SAPES awards for the 2021 awards cycle: the 3M National Teaching Fellowship; the 3M National Student Fellowship, the Alan Blizzard Award, and the D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning.
3. The readings we provided are part of the robust Resource List collated and curated by the EDITF. This list, continually re-examined and updated, is divided into six main categories which clearly crossover and intersect. It provides a range of materials, in different formats, to further members’ knowledge of how the core values of EDI can be embedded into teaching and learning.
4. In May 2021, as a lead-up to the STLHE/SAPES annual conference (held online in June 2021), the EDITF prepared a live document entitled “Enacting Our Shared Values.” In this document (some of which informs our list of recommendations at the end of this report), we outlined a number of ways in which the shared core values could be reflected in conference and meeting

organization and planning. Drafted as an invitation to members to embark together on the process of enacting these values, this document emphasized a series of both individual actions and organizational practices that would further the focus on greater inclusion. It deliberately avoided the use of negative language or a punitive tone, and instead focused on bringing people together, as part of the process of re-examining and de-centering taken-for-granted ways of doing things that too often also (inadvertently) exclude groups of people.

5. “Enacting Our Shared Values” was also the name of the special session organized by the EDITF for the STLHE/SAPES annual conference in June 2021. This session—open to the entire membership and not simply to conference attendees—engaged approximately 60 participants in reflecting on the idea of “enacting” our values through information sharing and breakout discussion groups. These dynamic discussions elicited a number of observations about STLHE/SAPES and about higher education more generally, and generated a variety of additional ideas and suggestions for the EDITF to consider. Notes from these sessions, captured by note-takers during the breakout sessions on a Padlet, also inform our recommendations.
6. A major part of all the EDITF activities since January 2021 has been a series of engagements with the membership to gather more information about members’ EDI-focused experiences with and perceptions of STLHE/SAPES’ practices. We sent out a number of direct emails to the membership, in addition to several calls in Sphere, inviting members to share their experiences with us through three possibilities (they could do any or all of these options): a membership survey, a “share your story” submission, and a focus group. In spite of many reminders, these invitations only elicited 61 responses in all. While this was a disappointingly low response rate, combined with the breakout room comments, and the additional documents produced by members apart from the EDITF—the statement by the ad hoc working group on anti-racism and the letter of apology from the Council of Fellows—we believe that they give us a fairly clear picture of the variety of experiences of members within STLHE/SAPES, and provide us with information upon which to base some of our recommendations.
7. Finally, in addition to the above-mentioned documents (the statement by the ad hoc working group on anti-racism and the letter of apology from the Council of Fellows), the EDITF examined the public face of STLHE/SAPES--the website--for its reflection of EDI values and perspectives. This included looking at most of the sites linked from the main website, except for Keep Teaching and the Canadian Journal on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

3. INFORMATION GATHERING

The EDITF examined several different sources in its information-gathering for this report. These sources include:

1. a survey, a “share your story” option, and a focus group, designed by the EDITF and disseminated through STLHE/SAPES communication avenues;
2. a special EDI session at the annual STLHE/SAPES conference in June 2021, which included comments gathered during the breakout room discussions;
3. the anti-racism statement and list of demands from the ad hoc working group of 3M National Student and Teaching Fellows;
4. the letter of apology from the 3M Council of Fellows;
5. the STLHE/SAPES website.

3.1 Membership survey, “share your story,” and focus group

The EDITF developed a survey to invite members of STLHE/SAPES to identify and address EDI concerns and their experiences within STLHE/SAPES. The survey was developed in discussion with all EDITF members and adapted items from established questionnaires used at other universities (e.g. McMaster University, University of Ottawa). A mix of quantitative (Likert scale) and qualitative (open-ended) methods were used. Items on the survey focused on members’: (1) feelings of inclusion and safety within STLHE/SAPES; (2) perceptions of the state of EDI in STLHE/SAPES; (3) suggestions on how EDI could be enhanced within STLHE/SAPES. A complete copy of the survey is [appended to this report](#). The survey (hosted on SurveyMonkey) was shared with the membership 9 times through official STLHE/SAPES communications and yielded a response rate of just over 6%.

Similarly, an invitation to participate in focus groups was shared with membership 9 times through official STLHE/SAPES communications. The focus group, held in July 2021 with 2 STLHE/SAPES members, was hosted by two EDITF members (one facilitator, one note-taker) with the goal of facilitating an in-depth conversation about the state of EDI in STLHE/SAPES. A focus group protocol was developed by the EDITF to discuss participants’ perceptions of respect, belonging, and empowerment within STLHE/SAPES. The focus group questions and summary report are included in our analysis of findings.

Finally, STLHE/SAPES members were invited to share their experiences regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion within STLHE/SAPES as an organization, through a “share your story” option. Suggestions included a video, audio recording, photo collage, artwork, or written document. The EDITF received two submissions.

3.2 “Enacting Our Shared Values” conference session

On Thursday, June 10, the EDITF facilitated a special interactive session at the 2021 STLHE/SAPES virtual conference, open to all members of STLHE/SAPES and conference attendees. This session included EDITF information updates, observations about EDI broadly and its importance in rethinking organizations specifically, breakout room discussion prompts for smaller group conversations and input, and a plenary discussion session. Additionally, the session opened with a welcome ceremony by Anishinaabe Elder William Nelson Toulouse (Pike Dodem/Clan) from Sagamok First Nation in Ontario, who was also present with us throughout the session.

Prior to the session, we shared two documents with registrants: the “[Statement of Core Values](#)” and a “live” document entitled “[Enacting our Shared Values](#).” These documents served as a point of entry for further discussion during the breakout room sessions.

Approximately 60 people attended this session.

3.3 Statement and list of demands from the ad hoc anti-racism working group of 3M National Student and Teaching Fellows

At the 3M Council 2020 AGM on 5 June 2020, a working group formed to think through how the 3M Council and STLHE/SAPES could address ongoing anti-Black racism in the organization through specific action items. This group met throughout June and July and formulated a list of short-term

and long-term demands urging the 3M Council and STLHE/SAPES to commit to anti-racism in all areas of their activities. This [statement](#) focused on five areas in particular: funding; infrastructure; capacity building; dedicated platforms; and proactive nominations.

3.4 Letter of apology from the Council of 3M National Fellows

On September 23, 2020, the Executive of the Council of 3M National Fellows for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education disseminated a [letter](#) to the membership at large, directing an apology specifically to all the Black, Indigenous, racialized, and other marginalized members of STLHE/SAPES for the systemic inequities and ongoing traumas they have endured and pledging to take concrete action to create a better teaching and learning space together. The Council proposed a series of immediate and longer term actions around issues such as representation, remuneration, research and educational leadership funding, conference programming and learning in community, adjudication of awards, and capacity building and learning.

3.5 STLHE/SAPES website

The EDITF reviewed the STLHE/SAPES website to determine how its textual and visual narrative for its articulated and implied values related to EDI. This review focused on the English language version only. In addition, associated STLHE/SAPES sites, such as “Keep Teaching” (keepteaching.ca) and the Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (https://ojs.lib.uwo.ca/index.php/cjsotl_rcacea), were not included in the review.

4. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Membership survey, “share your story,” and focus group discussion

SAMPLE SIZE AND PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Overall, a total of 55 individuals from the STLHE community participated in the membership survey. 45 responses reported institutional roles from Question 40 ($n = 11$ educational developers; $n = 3$ administrators; $n = 25$ faculty members; $n = 1$ retired faculty member; $n = 3$ instructors; $n = 2$ graduate students) (see *Figure 1*).

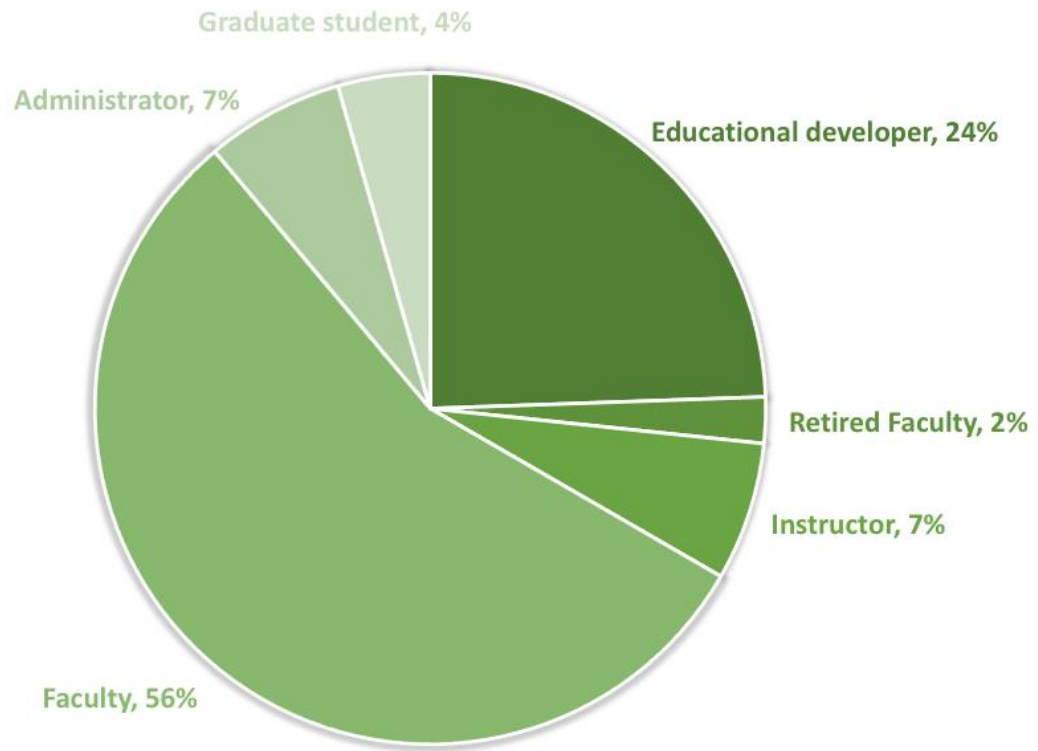


Figure 1: Respondents' self-reported institutional roles.

The data suggest a lack of racial and ethnic diversity among survey respondents. While 55 individuals participated in this survey, Question 33 which asked, “How do you identify racially and/or ethnically?”, only yielded 19 responses (1 response specified “Chinese”). Despite this apparent lack of racial diversity, we caution readers not to interpret these data as generalizable to the entire STLHE/SAPES community. Nonetheless, these sample data may provide a useful benchmark in identifying potential challenges regarding diversity within STLHE/SAPES. (see Figure 2).

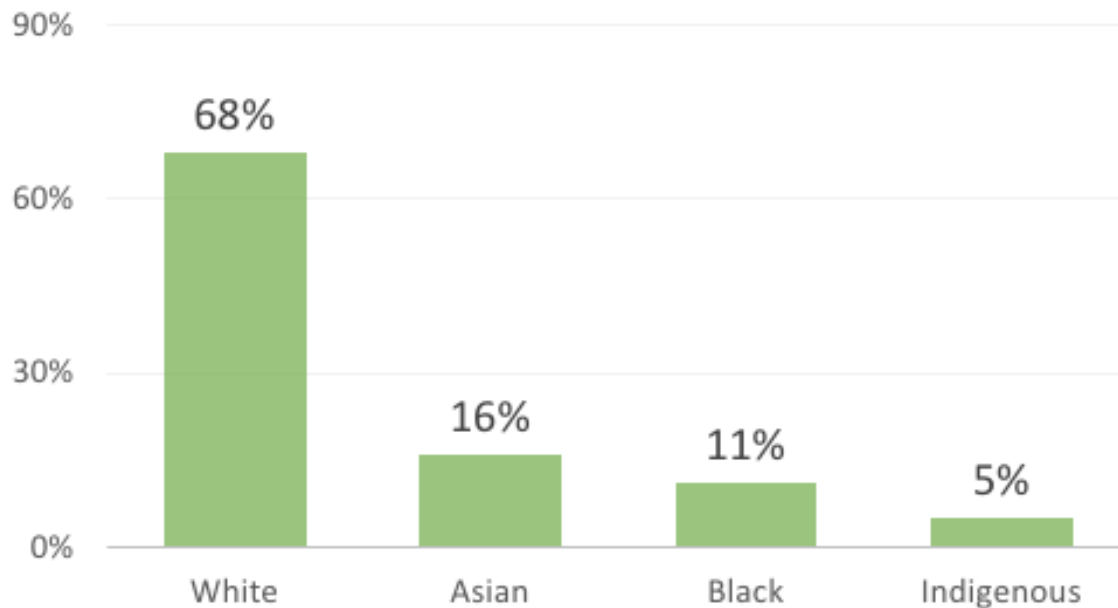


Figure 2: Respondents' self-reported racialized/ethnic identities.

A relatively equal response rate was reported by 52 participants who stated that they have been a part of the STLHE/SAPES community between 5 and 10 years (27%) or more than 10 years (29%). 17 percent reported holding a STLHE/SAPES membership for less than 2 years, while 21 percent have held a STLHE/SAPES membership between 2 to 5 years, leaving a small percentage of participants who preferred not to answer this question (Q38).

For the majority of the participants that responded to Q45, “Which of Canada’s national languages do you communicate in?”, 47 out of 49 participants reported that English is the language they communicate in and 5 out of 49 participants indicated that French is the language they communicate in. Qualitative comments from this question highlight several other languages that a few participants communicate in, namely: Spanish, Hungarian, Italian, and Turkish.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Given the low response rate, we cannot generalize the perspectives shared in the survey to the broader STLHE/SAPES membership. While the results indicate that there are commendable current EDI practices in STLHE/SAPES, they also suggest many ways in which the organization’s activities could further enhance EDI. There were a few expressions of favourable perceptions on the overarching question of the commitment of STLHE/SAPES to EDI issues, but there were sufficient negative perceptions to raise concern. Responses for open-ended questions (Q2-10, 34 and 46) on the member survey were thematically analyzed and summarized in Figure 3. Overall these responses suggest that members feel less included at STLHE/SAPES compared to more responders having a negative perception and/or feelings of disappointment regarding the state of EDI within the society. As many as 30% of the respondents to the member survey expressed “feelings of disappointment” regarding the current state of EDI and only 11% expressed “feelings of inclusion.”

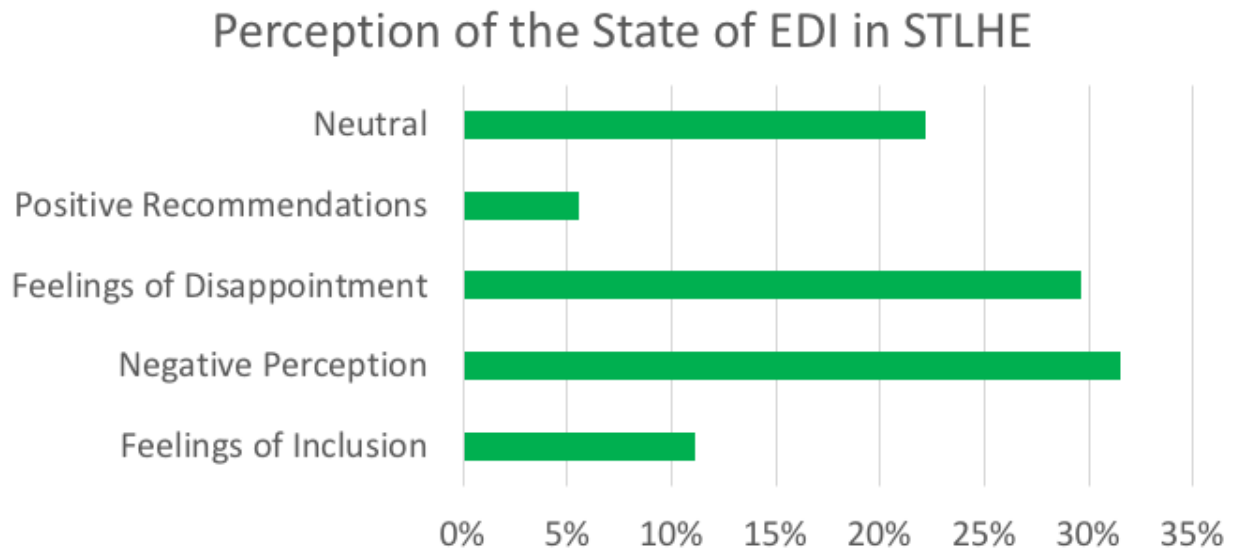


Figure 3: Themes identified from open-ended responses regarding the state of EDI in STLHE/SAPES.

Also worth noting is that approximately 22% of respondents to the membership survey were neutral about the state of EDI in STLHE/SAPES. These mixed responses may indicate differences in level of knowledge about EDI, uneven perceptions of its importance in organizational structures and practices (as well as in higher education in general), or a lack of interest.

Responses from the Likert scales in the member survey were aggregated and summarized. These data also suggest a mix of perspectives on the state of EDI in STLHE/SAPES. For instance, while Figure 4 (Q15, 16, 21, 23) indicates that 55% do not feel excluded or disrespected in STLHE/SAPES, Figure 5 (Q11-14, 17-20, 22, 24) suggests that a smaller number (46%) feel included and respected.

From six- and seven-point Likert scales asking members to indicate their agreement with different factors, weighted averages for members' perspectives on different aspects of STLHE/SAPES and STLHE/SAPES events are shown in Figures 6 and 7 (Q1, 3-10). For these figures, higher values represent stronger agreement with the associated factor, while lower values represent lower agreement (e.g., in Figure 6, these data suggest more members agree they are "Treated fairly" than "Feel close to others"). In terms of their experiences within STLHE/SAPES and at STLHE/SAPES events, respondents rated "Safety" and being "Treated Fairly" the most positively, while "Feel[ing] Close to Others" was rated the least positively (Fig. 6). Respondents feel that STLHE/SAPES and STLHE/SAPES events are "Friendly", "Respectful", and "Welcoming", but not "Supportive" (Fig. 7). Overall, findings from the Likert data suggest that respondents feel respected as members, but do not feel as if they are part of a strong community in which they are supported and/or can find support.

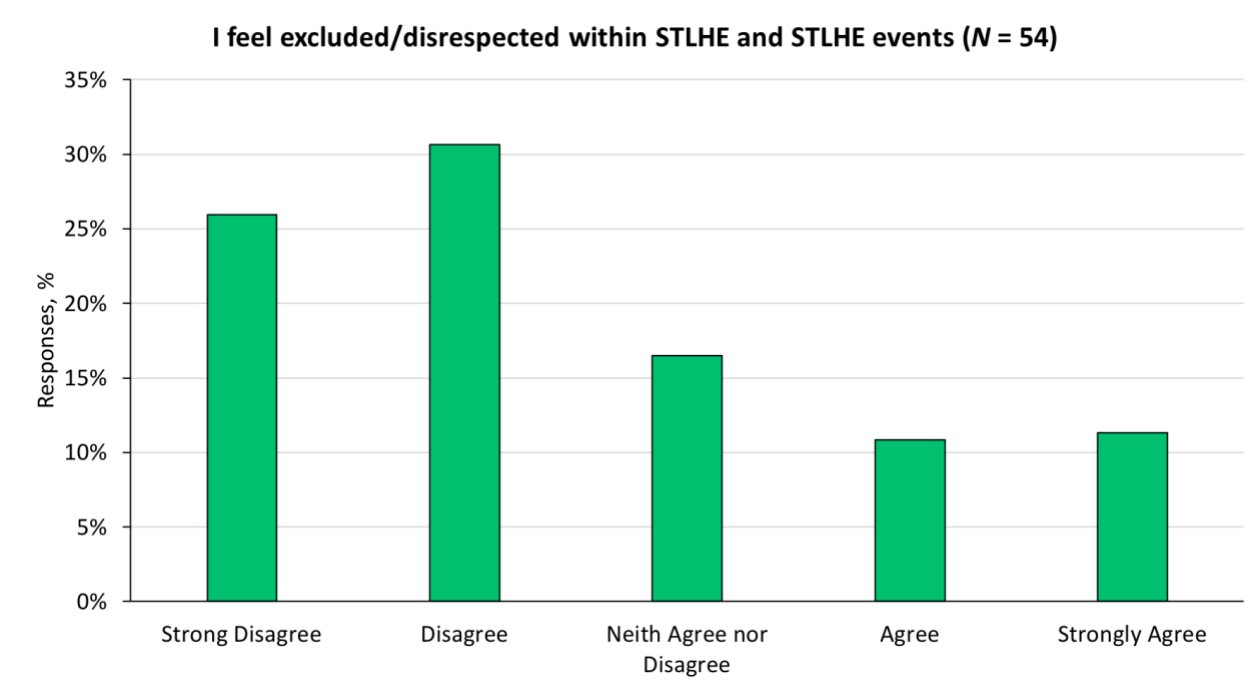


Figure 4: Respondents' reported feelings of exclusion/disrespect within STLHE and STLHE events

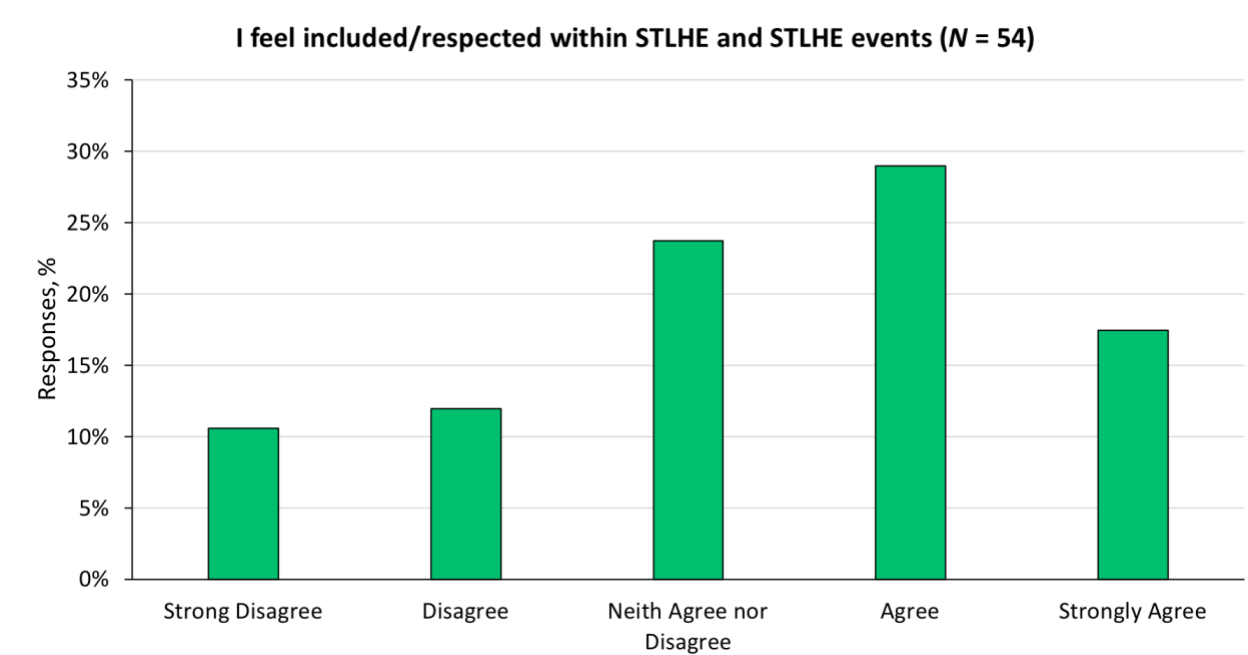


Figure 5: Respondents' reported feelings of inclusion/respect within STLHE and STLHE events

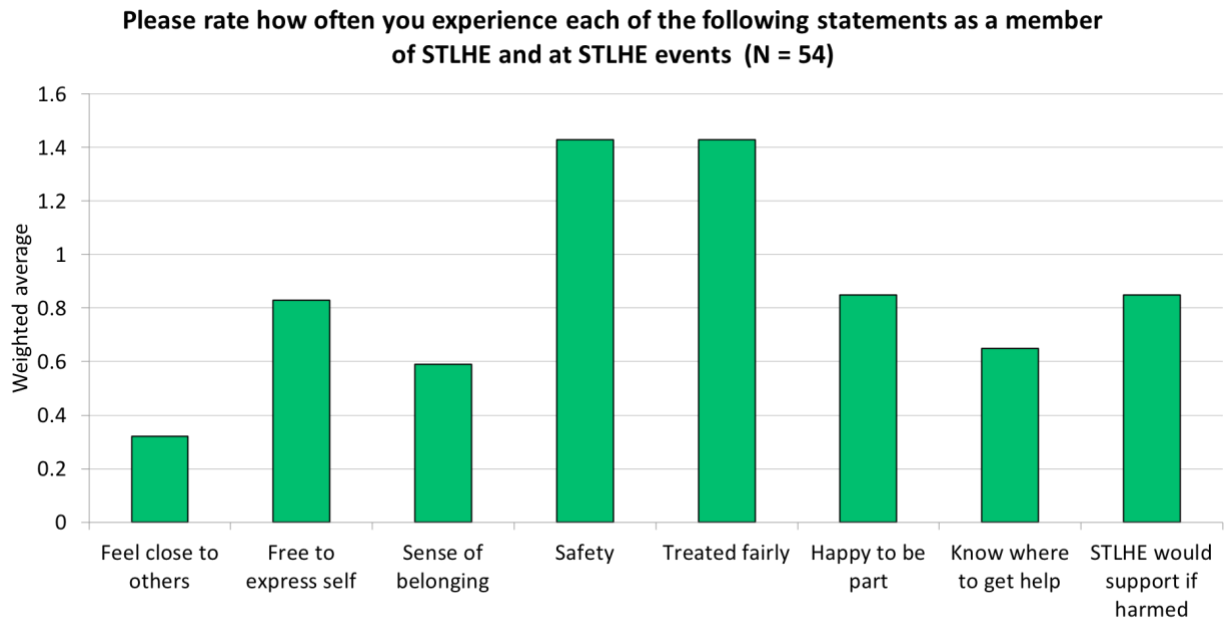


Figure 6: Respondents indicated feeling safe and being treated fairly, but did not feel close to others.



Figure 7: Respondents indicated that STLHE and STLHE events are friendly and respectful, but not necessarily supportive.

Analyses of open-ended comments on the survey also demonstrate a mixed perception of EDI’s presence and value in STLHE/SAPES. Positive responses were characterized by explicit statements

of support of the EDITF's work and its importance in making STLHE/SAPES a more inclusive organization. For example:

“I greatly appreciate the work of the task force. Thank you. Many interesting documents on EDI have recently been published by AERA and the Congress of the Humanities[.] I would encourage the task force to examine those documents.”

“Thank you for doing this. Please look in all directions and be respectful of all persons / groups (which I have no doubt STLHE/SAPES will do). Sometimes we get overzealous in trying to state an issue and fail to recognize that the advantaged groups are made up of people. Those people (at least this one) will be glad to be part of creating and supporting opportunities for everyone to engage.”

“Thank you for doing this important work. I look forward to seeing some tangible outputs! I think an important and fairly significant challenge will be which dimensions of identity to target with specific interventions. I know that it's important for everyone to feel included, but when you're designing specific programs and resources, you do sometimes have to make these kinds of decisions, which can be difficult.”

Other responses focused on suggestions for the future direction(s) of STLHE/SAPES, including what resources, supports, and policies might have the greatest impact in enhancing EDI directives within the organization. For example:

“For those who are new or newish to STLHE/SAPES, providing opportunities to connect with others is welcome. Encouraging new people to connect with people new to STLHE/SAPES provides something in common, and could improve their experience.”

Critical responses expressed skepticism about the intentions of STLHE/SAPES related to EDI, including: 1) beliefs that enhancing EDI is a “fad” and unnecessary; 2) beliefs that STLHE/SAPES and the EDITF are engaging in work that has been misguided and harmful to the community. For example:

“Thus far the EDI initiatives have caused division and bad behavior [...]. They [particular STLHE/SAPES sub-group] do not speak for all of us. The group has been hijacked by woke ideologues and people are leaving, including me.... I love STLHE/SAPES but EDI is ruining the organization.”

“The level of exposure asked, the centering of issues in the person, the white normativity in the demographics, the baked-in assumption of safety, and the wording of the invitation all had the hairs on the back of my neck standing up due to the unsafety your survey presents to me and the community.”

“Stop wringing your hands about fads and stop pandering to the loudest voices who, coincidentally, also claim to be the most aggrieved.”

“Less focus on race. Don't bring back segregation by privileging one race over another.”

“STLHE/SAPES is like a clique of “mean girls” (white females who don't want change).”

These critical responses may in part be attributed to the divide between the EDC and STLHE/SAPES. As one respondent noted,

“Since becoming a member, any activity of the STLHE/SAPES has been overshadowed by the political divide with EDC.”

From their perspective,

“STLHE/SAPES has done little, if anything, to bridge the divide.”

Likewise, the “share your story” submissions highlighted the tension between the EDC and STLHE/SAPES in particular, with one respondent noting that

“I feel I have never been treated so awfully and unprofessionally in my life.”

While not necessarily specific to EDI, this ongoing tension clearly informed some responses.

Stop, Start, Continue

Finally, a set of open-ended questions asked respondents to share their perspectives on what STLHE/SAPES should “stop”, “start”, and “continue” doing with respect to EDI. Many suggested that

STLHE/SAPES should stop practices that limit transparency between the Board and members. For example:

“Not publishing minutes of the Board's meetings--even general summaries would be welcome.”

“Be less secretive and prescriptive.”

“It should stop appointing people deeply rooted in the 'old' ways of thinking.”

“Expressing sorrow and grief but not doing much. perpetuating a narrative that, ‘we are doing a great job!’ Marginalizing the voices of those who criticize the organization - criticism is necessary for growth.”

“I’m from a college and in the past there has been less respect toward college members.”

Respondents’ recommendations for what STLHE/SAPES could “start” doing focused on several core themes including administration, community-building, direction of EDI work, and education. For example:

“Principles for a code of conduct.”

“Actively recruit more men to participate in the society and provide space for the different mannerisms and political perspectives to education that come with increased gender diversity. If you aren't sure what I mean by that, just look at National-level gender-based breakdowns of political polling in recent years.”

“I'd love to see a Collaborative Writing Group Initiative on various EDI-related topics, which can be published but would also go back to STLHE/SAPES to see what can be implemented.”

“Having more town hall meetings where all voices can be heard. Members need to feel heard and respected and it is evident that at the moment not all feel included. Not having a face-to-face meeting for so long has hindered repairing damaged relationships. There is more need for communicating to the memberships the goals and visions of the board.”

“Forming a welcome packet for new members to orient them to the organization. This would make newcomers feel more welcome and included.”

“Make a membership campaign. Deliberate, purposeful recruitment of minorities, especially indigenous people. Invite them.”

“The concept of mental health is absent in your conversation. Given the upward trend in occurrence of mental illness among PSE students (and staff and faculty), this should be a prominent part of discussions.”

“I sincerely hope the STLHE/SAPES takes action and remedies the existing organizational model since it is clearly not working. Time to grow. This is a great opportunity to create something new and better for everyone. This is how we grow together.”

“More outreach to post-secondary institutions. Not just in education programs or to selected advocates at institutions;... lead and offer support in EDI-related-to-education.”

Responses about what STLHE/SAPES should “continue” doing were generally supportive of the current work on EDI. For example:

“Encouraging a diversity of members, who are part of or agents for traditionally underrepresented groups”

“Making a deliberate effort around EDI. As a member of an advantaged group I understand that I may not see / experience imbalances around participation - inclusion - representation. I support this type of initiative, and I am glad to take a back seat so that others have an opportunity to engage”

“What STLHE/SAPES is doing currently. There is a responsibility for every member to be respectful, inclusive and professional - those who have recently shared their feelings so publicly were none of these things.”

“Listening and being willing to meet people on their own terms.”

“Being a self-reflective organization.”

“Trying to communicate with members.”

FOCUS GROUP

The EDITF held one focus group session that included two participants (both faculty members) in attendance. Therefore, again, we cannot generalize these participants’ responses to the broader STLHE/SAPES community. The focus group took place over Zoom on July 21, 2021 between 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM EST and was facilitated by Joy Mighty (chair of the EDITF) and Bre-Anna Owusu (note-taker/research assistant for the EDITF).

Participants were invited to share their perspectives on EDI within STLHE. In particular the focus group protocol included the following questions:

1. How are you involved in STLHE/SAPES?
2. Do you feel that your unique attributes, traits, characteristics, academic skills, experiences, and background are valued at STLHE/SAPES?
3. Can you reflect on your experiences within STLHE/SAPES? Is STLHE/SAPES inviting? How comfortable do you feel as a member of STLHE/SAPES? Can you describe a situation where you felt either included or left out as a member of STLHE/SAPES? Have you encountered any obstacles as a member of STLHE/SAPES?
4. Do you think STLHE/SAPES values Black, Indigenous, and racialized/non-white individuals?
5. Do you see equal opportunities for members who do not identify as white or female? Do you think there are other members who have a different view than you?

6. Do you think STLHE/SAPES should have different caucuses with specific identities?
7. What are your thoughts on STLHE's/SAPES's leadership? Can you identify people like you in leadership positions within STLHE/SAPES?
8. What characteristics, traits, contributions, and behaviours do you think are most valued and rewarded within STLHE/SAPES?
9. What could STLHE/SAPES do to better support EDI within the organization?
10. What could STLHE/SAPES do to better support you?

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Participants' responses were grouped into five major themes:

Theme 1: Absence of minorities among STLHE/SAPES membership

“Action and explicit articulation are needed, otherwise we run the risk of it feeling performative with statements and working groups. I really like the idea of inviting diverse members. To add to this, give these [diverse] members the opportunity to contribute to STLHE/SAPES' structures, so it is not just about having them be members but to help build the society further. E.g., be a part of leadership roles and a part of proposing changes. Because we have to update the structures to meet the needs of new members.”

We found no evidence of an intentional strategy for recruiting members. Instead, it appears that members gravitate towards STLHE/SAPES through their own collegial networks. This therefore results in a membership that is relatively homogenous.

Theme 2: STLHE/SAPES' voice is hidden

“Many full-time faculty members are not aware that this society exists. I think this [STLHE/SAPES] is a hidden secret. We need to get more people to know about it.”

Participants expressed the view that teaching and learning are marginalized in most Canadian postsecondary institutions. They believed that oftentimes when there is just one 'education' faculty member in a department, that member is forced to self-define several standards around funding, promotions, perhaps even publications, since faculty members outside of education simply do not know these standards. Participants felt that this marginalization causes multiple layers of equity issues within higher education.

Theme 3: Absence of minorities in STLHE/SAPES leadership

“All I can think of is past presidents that are white and that in itself speaks to the situation. So STLHE/SAPES can say that they support these members or diversity, but it isn’t the same as having somebody in that [leadership] role who represents a different community [other than white].”

These comments about the leadership are consistent with Theme 1’s observations about the lack of diversity in membership.

Theme 4: Financial barriers

“There were financial barriers getting into conferences [when I was a student], but even there [with regard to relieving financial barriers], as a student member, I see that STLHE/SAPES is more progressive than other professional organizations.”

This theme resonates with the concern for the lack of dedicated resources to facilitate student and/or low-waged members from participating in STLHE/SAPES, as expressed in the documents submitted by the ad-hoc anti-racism working group and the 3M Council of Fellows.

Theme 5: Constituency groups/Lack of specific social and demographic identity caucuses

“I see some pros and cons. It can be powerful and make a statement, but it can also create separation and bring mixed emotions. For example, a member of the Black medical student association of Canada said their first meeting was so powerful because they sat together in a room, and it was the first time [they’d] ever seen that many people of [their] identity in the same room. It was both joy and pain at the same time. But it created a community as an advocacy group for Black medical students in Canada.”

“For example we [specific identities] need to have a space to talk amongst ourselves and share and articulate different ways to ‘survive’ a dominant classroom or share our experiences. It’ll make STLHE/SAPES stronger.”

Although respondents perceived an advantage in having constituency groups and specific social and demographic identity caucuses, they also acknowledged the potential for conflicts.

4.2 “Enacting Our Shared Values” conference session

An analysis of the discussions from the four breakout rooms during the EDITF session at the STLHE/SAPES conference in June 2021 suggests that members are willing to take a step back from their own “normative” assumptions currently held regarding what EDI means to them. In fact, the

discussions in each breakout session demonstrated a strong desire and willingness to listen to different perspectives and stories from STLHE/SAPES' Black, Indigenous, and racialized community—while acknowledging that tokenistic approaches or even overburdening members from equity-deserving groups may ensue. Attendees indicated that to prevent tokenism in an attempt to hear more from the diverse members at STLHE/SAPES, equity and inclusion must be integrated into any approach. One comment suggested compensation for individuals from equity-deserving groups for their time in sharing their lived experiences.

Given that teaching and learning are key to STLHE's mission, one prompt asking, "How might we enact EDI principles in our everyday interactions and in teaching/learning?", led to a broad discussion about colonialism across breakout rooms. Members recognized and vocalized how difficult it is to develop courses/curricula without a colonial perspective. This recognition further substantiates the ubiquitous notion that EDI practices and principles are lacking in Canadian institutions and in our everyday lives. The legacy of colonial perspectives may be the largest barrier we face in order to make any progress towards enacting EDI principles in our teaching and learning, let alone in our everyday interactions. Several members suggested that to effectively implement EDI into our teaching and learning and everyday behaviours, we have to first focus on decolonising and/or decentering normative worldviews and then integrate diverse voices, knowledge, and epistemologies.

The final prompt asked, "How might we as a community integrate equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of STLHE/SAPES?". Two main themes were highlighted across breakout rooms: language and access. Members suggest that the community of STLHE/SAPES embed inclusive language in all aspects of the organization (e.g. the STLHE/SAPES website). One member brought their group's attention to the phrase 'our Indigenous Peoples of Canada' used frequently in everyday life. The word "our", though seemingly insignificant, reinforces privilege and systemic oppression. Moreover, members agreed that looking for help/resources outside of academia can promote equitable practices and increase access for people with disabilities. For instance, a member shared anecdotal evidence of a person with dwarfism who was not able to work to their full capacity given the fact that gloves and lab benches were not accommodating. This particular lab sought guidance from outside the institution as they acknowledged a lack of inclusive/equitable efforts from the academic institution. Access was discussed in each breakout room with the general consensus that awareness about different accessibility needs is critical; however, access should not have to be fought or asked for. This is consistent with many comments regarding decolonizing, acknowledging and also disposing of currently held normative assumptions.

The EDITF received a lengthy list of suggestions on how STLHE/SAPES can advance EDI. These suggestions are included in our recommendations at the end of this report.

4.3 Statement and list of demands from the ad hoc anti-racism working group of 3M National Student and Teaching Fellows

The documents from both the ad hoc working group against racism and the 3M Council of Fellows (4.4 below) suggest a heightened awareness of, and growing concern for, what they perceive to be a lack of attention to EDI matters in STLHE/SAPES. In part, this awareness seems to be motivated by the police murder of George Floyd (and many others) and the inequities made so evident throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

In June 2020, a group of 3M National Teaching and Student Fellows organized to draft a statement and list of demands to STLHE/SAPES to address the ways it identified ongoing anti-black racism in the organization. As part of the process of putting together this statement and list of demands, this group also organized a webinar and a petition for the membership. While that statement itself is signed by a small group of people (7), they note, importantly, that their work is both supported by a larger group (as evidenced by the 31 additional signatories to the petition), as well as by the previous work of other members.

The statement notes that racism is not limited to “intentional and interpersonal discriminatory acts, but rather, is perpetuated in the myriad ways that the university culture is rooted in white supremacy, settler colonial, ableist, and cisheteropatriarchal modes of reason and action.” While the rest of the statement focuses specifically on combating racism in the organization, as this quote indicates, there is important recognition that shifting organizational culture will impact many more groups of people too. This statement reflects the two approaches, and their interconnection, to EDI work discussed earlier (see 1.3 above). That is, it identifies the lack of Black, Indigenous, and racialized representation in the organization generally - at the level of leadership and governance, in committees for awards as well as in award recipients - and more broadly in the membership and through membership activities (conferences, etc.). Additionally, it recognizes the many ways in which organizational practices and structures further these exclusions, and how shifts in those are also necessary to combat ongoing racism. In addressing both of these emphases, through a series of short-term and longer-term proposals, the working group suggests i) a number of initiatives targeted specifically towards the greater inclusion of Black, Indigenous, and racialized people, and ii) changes necessary to the organizational structure and practices of STLHE/SAPES. Demands focus on five main areas for intervention and change: funding; infrastructure; capacity-building; dedicated platforms; and proactive nominations. Much of what they identify in this statement was also reiterated in the breakout sessions at the “Enacting Our Shared Values” conference session in June 2021 (discussed in 4.2 above).

Some examples of gaps identified and addressed that demonstrate this two-pronged approach to EDI include: i) the necessity for dedicated funding/remuneration, capacity-building, and spaces for particular marginalized and disenfranchised groups and the recognition of the “cultural tax”, whereby the work of countering racism too often falls exclusively or disproportionately on Black, Indigenous, and racialized people; and ii) the recognition that many structures and practices - from awards criteria to conference sessions - perpetuate racist/colonial assumptions and the need to “unlearn” as part of their transformation.

The EDITF’s recommendations are informed by and reiterate many of the demands listed in this ad hoc working group’s statement.

4.4 Letter of apology from the Council of 3M National Fellows

In September 2021, the Executive of the Council of 3M National Fellows for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education issued a “letter of apology” as a response to the ad hoc working group’s statement (See 4.3 above). This letter acknowledged the inequities pointed out in the statement and committed to a set of immediate and longer-term actions to address them. The actions outlined in the letter reiterate the emphasis of many of the demands made in the statement. For instance, the Council’s letter commits to the need to recognize the inequitable distribution of labour around combating racism and to both avoid that “cultural tax” and/or remunerate those who bear it. In

particular, both this letter and the aforementioned statement note the need for remuneration for student and un/low-waged members' work. Additionally, it commits to working towards greater inclusion at the representational level, through actions such as mentoring, directed calls and invitations, and dedicated focuses at conferences and in journals.

Importantly, in its letter the Council “pledges to create opportunities for ongoing learning in the community about the serious and systemic inequities in which we participate and to work together to redress these inequities.” In its letter, the Council recognizes that organizational culture likewise perpetuates those inequities, and acknowledges that there is both learning and unlearning to be done by everyone around a number of inequities.

Many of the actions identified in this letter inform the EDITF's list of recommendations at the end of this report.

4.5 STLHE/SAPES website analysis

The goal of the EDITF's review of the STLHE/SAPES website was to determine the extent to which it aligns with EDI values. The inclusion of a separate, stand-alone tab on EDI is an important and commendable feature of the website as it signals the value that STLHE/SAPES leadership and membership wish to place on EDI. The establishment of the EDITF further strengthens the sense of dedication to EDI values and actions. Despite this positive framing however, there are areas of concern that suggest room for improvement in promoting an EDI focus on the STLHE/SAPES website. Examples of such areas of concern are identified below.

- There is a marked absence of territorial acknowledgements from the main splash pages.
- Specific to the membership page, there is little emphasis on text that highlights membership diversity. As a diverse membership is critical to STLHE/SAPES and its espoused value of EDI, the current reference to the value and importance of diversity seems insufficient.
- Although there appears to be a diverse set of voices in the profiled clips in the “Showcase of Significant STLHE/SAPES Members” [section](#), we note that the focus is predominantly on university members, with no college level voices included. The individuals showcased were all suggested by the membership, so their failure to nominate anyone from the colleges seems to emphasize the need to raise greater awareness of EDI among members in general.
- One of the strengths of the textual narrative in the website is the celebration of various STLHE/SAPES Awards. However, in this section, we also noted that the textual narrative primarily highlights a Western perspective of educational values. Specifically, Indigenous ways of knowing/doing are insufficiently represented in the text, structure, and underlying assumptions of the narrative.
- Another aspect of the awards pages appears to be inconsistency in types of diversity. For example, the D2L awards over a ten-year period appear to have a wide range of profile types (e.g. fields of study, types of innovation, geographic locations, career stages [from sessional lecturers to full professor], age, gender, and cultural diversity). The one notable exception is the lack of institutional diversity, with the college sector not represented. The eligibility criteria clearly invite applications from “post-secondary teams”, so there is no obvious explanation for the lack of college representation among the recipients. We also noted that there appears to be no Indigenous recipients. Issues with representation might be related to the structures of the

awards and associated nomination processes, such as who self nominates, the awards criteria, and the adjudication process.

- It is commendable that, specific to the Alan Blizzard Awards, there appears to be a recognition and honouring of Indigenous knowledge. For example, the recipient list includes a Métis scholar profiled in 2021, an Indigenous student-focused project in 2019, and the Northwest Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs project in 2016. However, it appears that only one award was granted to a French institution – the Université Laval in 2002. It is also important to note that independent colleges have never been recognized with this honour.
- There appears to be a range of diversity among the TSGSA Award Recipients. The one possible concern is that only one Francophone has been honoured with this award.
- In general, the website underrepresents the voice of the college sector. In fact, the single college sector award was retired in 2015. However, a noticeable counter to this is the fact that there is specific reference to the college sector in the CJSOTL Co-Editor section.
- Finally, we note that the website highlights an impressive array of diversity (e.g. field of study, geography, gender, cultural backgrounds, etc.) across the years for the 3M National Teaching Fellows and the 3M National Student Fellows. These awards appear to be exemplars of diversity.

5. DISCUSSION

The EDITF's review of EDI within STLHE/SAPES found that, on the whole, the organization espouses EDI values. However, its structure and practices do not always clearly align with these espoused values. In general, the evidence suggests that the messaging about EDI is either unclear or appears to be contradicted by several policies and practices. This may explain the low rate of participation in the review process, as it may not have been widely perceived as essential or even important to the organization. In fact, some participants expressed ignorance about precisely what STLHE/SAPES is doing with regard to EDI or whether it is doing anything at all. Other participants expressed ambivalence about the relevance of EDI, and a few were explicitly critical about what they perceived to be the inadequacy of the response by STLHE/SAPES to this issue. There is no doubt, however, that the current context of racial reckoning in Canada (exacerbated recently by the tragic discovery of thousands of unmarked graves of Indigenous children who suffered decades of abuse at the residential schools they were forced to attend) may have stimulated new or increased interest in articulating a stronger, more definitive commitment to EDI in STLHE/SAPES.

Of particular concern is the perspective, reflected in several of the data sources, that the awards are skewed towards particular groups (e.g. universities vs colleges, whiteness, and ability, with their notions of 'productivity' that reflect the quantity of what people do based on western knowledge systems etc.) This is a point for ongoing discussion and is illustrative of the tensions within higher education, with its notions of excellence, that limit who and what is included. Awareness of this seems very relevant at this point, recognizing that we all live and work in a post-secondary context that is larger than STLHE/SAPES.

Similarly, the data revealed a recurring concern about lack of reflection of indigeneity -- at both a representational level (who is recognized and included) and taken-for-granted assumptions that remain colonial. This is related to the above point but we highlight it here to note that

STLHE/SAPES, like post-secondary education more generally, has much work to do to decolonize and adopt Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.

The following section synthesizes the recommendations and guiding practices suggested by the individuals and groups who participated in the review process and, combining them with the collective experiences and expertise of the EDITF, provides a set of strategic directions and proactive measures for increasing and promoting EDI initiatives and fully integrating EDI into the work and culture of STLHE/SAPES. Each recommendation is followed by examples of specific actions proposed to guide implementation, not listed in any hierarchical order. It is important to emphasize that while these recommendations and guiding practices are offered for consideration, they are not prescriptive and require further consultation and discussion among members of STLHE/SAPES and their community partners. Moreover, the recommendations and associated guiding practices are clearly interconnected. It may be difficult to pursue one strategic direction without in some way engaging with one or more of the others. For this reason, it may be advisable for STLHE/SAPES to create a priority list or action plan identifying what can be reasonably implemented immediately and what would require a more long-term implementation timeframe based on availability of resources such as time, budget, and personnel. It is also necessary to establish processes for regular and ongoing accountability and transparency that continuously update the membership on the progress of the recommendations.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDING PRACTICES

Recommendation 1: Establish a Standing Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We recommend immediately establishing an EDI Standing Committee tasked with: ongoing re-examination of the organization's processes and procedures to ensure continual attention to EDI values and perspectives in all STLHE/SAPES activities; wide-ranging consultation and engagement with the membership to build on the "[Statement of Core Values](#)" and the "[Enacting our Shared Values](#)" documents; accountability and transparency throughout the organization, with regular communication with the membership; ongoing education of the membership about EDI values throughout teaching and learning.

Recommendation 2: Adopt a New Approach to Leadership and Governance

Advancing EDI is difficult and meaningful changes will require STLHE/SAPES to address systemic and structural issues that are currently creating feelings of disappointment and lack of support. We suggest adopting a new approach to leadership, such as the "Shared Equity Leadership" (SEL)

Model. This approach, advocated by Kezar, Holcombe, and Dizon (2021),² develops or strengthens leaders' commitment to equity through examining and understanding their own identity, personal experiences, and relationships. This "personal journey toward critical consciousness" would not only help them to develop the values necessary to share leadership equitably across various groups within STLHE/SAPES, but would also allow them to enact these values through collective leadership practices. This approach would go a long way to bridge perceived gaps between the STLHE/SAPES leadership (e.g. the Board) and members of other STLHE/SAPES constituencies, thereby sustaining EDI through embedding it in the leadership structure as an ongoing process as opposed to a single or occasional event. EDI should permeate the governance structures of STLHE/SAPES.

Guiding Practices:

Examples of guiding practices to address the need for changing leadership and governance structures to advance EDI, in no particular order, include:

- Invite and facilitate the establishment of membership caucuses organized around specific social identities or interests.
- Establish, for greater transparency and accountability, a "count/accounting" list for all committees, board, awards nominations, conference submissions etc.: that is, record who applied/was nominated and elected/selected.
- Consider how to build representation/capacity in the membership so that "diversity" is reflected in governance positions, committee membership, conference participation, etc. Note that this idea is focused on 'who', and not on normative practices. Education around normative ideas of leadership and the assumptions embedded in that term will also help with diversification as members become more aware of the "invisible" assumptions reflected in this term/language.
- Encourage specific and intentional recruitment to STLHE/SAPES and leadership positions within STLHE/SAPES from Black, Indigenous, racialized, and other equity-deserving communities.
- Establish a procedure for using the STLHE/SAPES name officially while being cautious not to discourage freedom of speech or a diversity of perspectives throughout the society. There have been on-going issues with unofficial listservs that do not include the full membership but use the name STLHE/SAPES.
- Develop an explicit statement articulating that STLHE/SAPES is committed to and values EDI. This statement should be placed in a prominent position on the STLHE/SAPES website and highlighted as part of all STLHE/SAPES communications (e.g., calls for nominations, awards, etc.)
- Sign "The Charter on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization in the Social Science and Humanities" included in the report on "Igniting Change" released by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences' Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization (AC-EDID). Signing The Charter is meant to demonstrate a commitment to

² <https://pullias.usc.edu/blog/new-paper-suggests-equity-leadership-is-everyones-work/>

implement actions that address all forms of discrimination, bigotry, prejudice, and injustice against equity-deserving groups.

The EDITF has signed the Charter both as individuals and as a group.

Recommendation 3: Build Awareness and Support for EDI

Building an inclusive environment is important to support the goals of increasing diversity and addressing inequity within STLHE/SAPES. One way to provide an inclusive environment is to implement programs for increasing awareness and support for EDI among all STLHE/SAPES members. This involves ongoing education to ensure all members understand the principles and shared values of EDI. Given the ever changing membership within the organization, it is necessary that educational workshops about the meaning of and differences between equity, diversity and inclusion, and similar initiatives, are ongoing and embedded within various structures of STLHE/SAPES. While we recommend this work of education in our first recommendation about establishing a standing committee, we reiterate it here as a standalone focus in order to highlight some of the complex work it entails, work which might also involve more people than just the standing committee.

Guiding Practices:

Examples of guiding practices to build awareness and support for EDI, in no particular order, include:

- Provide workshops/webinars/online modules to further educate the membership (and others outside of the organization) and ensure that EDI values and perspectives are brought to all activities.
- Maintain and expand the webpage on EDI resources to promote ongoing education and appropriate action on EDI principles, values, and initiatives.
- Gather information to determine demographic representation of STLHE/SAPES and to establish baseline data about the composition of the membership in order to determine action implications for recruitment, inclusion, and retention.
- Develop, review, and/or revise conflict resolution processes with a view to increasing understanding of the complexity and difficulty of being inclusive.
- Implement mentorship programs for early career members to help identify and navigate the norms of academia, including its white, cisgender heterosexual male, and able-bodied emphases.
- Create support structures, such as mentorship and scholarship programs, that target Black, Indigenous, and racialized individuals as a means of recruiting and retaining Black, Indigenous, and racialized members and reducing the isolation typically associated with being “the only one” or “one of a few”.

- Commit to establishing programs/mechanisms in STLHE/SAPES where gaps may exist. For example, implement workshops on neurodiversity and mental health embodying EDI in the curricula.
- Fund equity scholarships to encourage Black, Indigenous, and racialized student memberships.

Recommendation 4: Ensure Integration of EDI at STLHE/SAPES Conferences, Meetings, and Other Events

Given that enhancing teaching is a major part of the mission of STLHE/SAPES, we recommend that special attention be paid to fully integrating EDI perspectives in the planning and running of conferences, meetings, and other events. To be effective, conference organizers, presenters, and attendees require support to enhance their knowledge and skills in EDI and in facilitating diverse, inclusive, and equitable learning opportunities for the STLHE/SAPES community.

Guiding Practices:

Examples of guiding practices to ensure integration of EDI at STLHE/SAPES conferences, meetings and other events, in no particular order, include:

- Encourage conference and meeting participants to adopt practices to promote a scent-free environment.
- Invite Indigenous elders to begin conferences (and other major/signature events) with traditional protocols (smudging, land acknowledgements, etc) in recognition of the Indigenous stewardship of the land. Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers' work/participation at events should be respected through appropriate protocols and honorarium processes. While recognizing and making space for smudging and other practices, it also needs to be recognized that negotiations about other participants' needs (such as a scent-free environment) should occur.
- Review public spaces where conferences are taking place and confirm that these spaces are accessible to persons with disabilities. Recognize that this includes being aware of both physical and sensory disabilities.
- Reach out to Black, Indigenous, and racialized professional organizations (e.g., Black Teachers Federation, Indigenous Teachers Alliance) where such groups exist, inviting them to collaborate with STLHE/SAPES, to become members, or to be guest speakers.
- Designate spaces for prayer or other religious activities, specifically for members of the Islamic faith.
- Create safe spaces for caucus meetings for equity-deserving groups. Ensure that appropriate space and time is created for these group meetings, and that they are not always at the very beginning or very end of the day.
- Ensure all food and drink options cover many dietary practices and that all ingredients are clearly marked.

- Arrange for an ASL/LSQ interpreter to be present, and ensure captioning on all video conferencing events and sessions.
- Provide for students and emerging/early career faculty support that ranges from financial, to travel, to food, to lodging and other critical resources for meaningful participation.
- Ensure that conference participants are supplied with options of presentation formats for consideration: for example, large text papers for distribution to those who want them; avoidance of videos with flashing lights and overlapping sounds; invitation to stand if desired or if able; introductions that include pronouns. Ensure as much as possible given available information, equitable representation across identity groups (gender, race and ethnicity, disability, etc.), and further ensure that this representation is across all panels and sessions (and not all in the same one).
- Provide name tags with space for participants to include pronouns and any other information they want to include that ensures their fuller participation.
- Accommodate family/childcare needs (e.g. through family care grants).
- Build relationships with local communities possibly in collaboration with local conference hosts.

Recommendation 5: Promote Inclusivity and Equity via Awards and Language

To foster an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity in STLHE/SAPES and to build greater understanding, acceptance, and mutual respect among members, there is great need for STLHE/SAPES to develop and implement plans and activities to support a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives among the STLHE/SAPES community. Both organization-wide and subgroup-specific activities should encourage engagement and participation of all STLHE/SAPES members by using appropriate language and allocating appropriate resources to current award programs and new ones that advance EDI in the society.

Guiding Practices:

Examples of guiding practices to promote inclusivity and equity via awards and language, in no particular order, include:

- Ensure the use of inclusive language—that doesn't perpetuate norms about gender, race, and disability, for instance—for all communication and correspondence to members in meetings and events, as well as in print/digital form (calls for papers, award instructions, etc.). See, for example:
 - <https://buffer.com/resources/inclusive-language-tech/>
 - <https://www.queensu.ca/styleguide/inclusivelanguage>
 - <https://www.uvic.ca/brand/story/style/inclusivity/index.php>

- Invite francophone members to participate more often in STLHE/SAPES events. For an organization that claims to be a national voice on teaching and learning in higher education, STLHE/SAPES needs to encourage more francophone representation and participation.
- Intentionally seek to increase diversity in award programs by expressly inviting applications that reflect a range of diversity in teaching and learning in higher education.
- Create new awards to recognize emerging and early career scholars who focus on teaching and learning, noting that there is a large gap in career stages between the 3M National Student Fellowship and the 3M National Teaching Fellowship.
- Build upon current grants and create specific grants for students from equity-deserving groups who may not already have access.
- Devote resources to remunerate work on committees by precarious and unwaged colleagues and emerging/early career scholars.
- Create reward/award systems (for both individual and institutional members) that recognize contributions to the EDI mission.
- Ensure that content on the STLHE/SAPES website reflects EDI and decolonial perspectives, and that future edits align with these perspectives.
- Voice/make public statements on topical issues to increase the national presence of STLHE/SAPES particularly on EDI issues.

CONCLUSION

This report describes the activities of the EDITF over approximately fourteen months as it reviewed the current EDI practices of STLHE/SAPES. The review process included engaging with members to obtain their perspectives and analyzing key documents as well as the main STLHE/SAPES website. Although members' participation rate was low, and therefore not fully representative of the entire membership, based on our analyses of the data gathered and the EDITF'S collective experiences and expertise we are confident in the main conclusions drawn from the process. The evidence suggests that, in general, STLHE/SAPES espouses EDI values but that these values are not always practised and do not appear to be fully integrated throughout the organization. We recommend ways in which STLHE/SAPES could build on its good intentions by prioritizing EDI in its leadership and governance structures; awards, conferences, and other events; membership recruitment and retention; and use of inclusive language.

We reiterate here that our recommendations are not comprehensive end products, but rather constitute guiding practices to be constantly explored. Further, we strongly encourage continuous reflection and reassessment of progress being made in enacting EDI values and integrating them into the culture of STLHE/SAPES. For this reason, we urge the organization to prioritize establishing an EDI Standing Committee (See Recommendation 1) responsible for ongoing attention to EDI values, perspectives, and practices in STLHE/SAPES. We also encourage STLHE/SAPES to be more responsive to and reflective of the context in which it exists, particularly to the increasing diversity of the population. In this regard, we note the relative inattention to decolonization and indigeneity within STLHE/SAPES. We therefore encourage the new EDI Standing Committee to explore ways of promoting reconciliation with Indigenous communities. Finally, we call on all members to become actively engaged in the ongoing process of transforming

this organization, to which we are all deeply committed, into a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community.

FINAL NOTE

The EDITF wants to thank STLHE/SAPES for the opportunity to engage in this process over the past year. This was an exceptional committee to work with and our experience with each other throughout was both rewarding and enriching. We also want to thank the membership for their participation in this work, and hope that they see their contributions reflected in this report. In particular, we want to thank those members who took the initiative to make their voices heard by submitting their own documents and statements that advanced this work, in particular, the ad hoc anti-racism working group of 3M National Student and Teaching Fellows and the Council of National 3M Fellows. Members of AOR Solutions, and Michelle MacDonald especially, greatly facilitated every step of our work, and we thank them immensely. We look forward to continuing this work with everyone as we pursue many pathways to a more equitable and inclusive STLHE/SAPES.

APPENDIX A

- [**Anti-Racist Demands from Working Group**](#)
- [**Council Apology Sept 23_EN**](#)
- [**EDITF Statement of Core Values**](#)
- [**“Enacting Our Shared Values” Document**](#)
- [**“Enacting Our Shared Values” Unconference presentation recording**](#)
- [**Mandate and Terms of Reference.docx**](#)
- [**Member Survey**](#)
- [**Message on Challenging Racism from STLHE/SAPES President Denise Stockley**](#)
- [**Message to EDC**](#)
- [**Showcase of Significant STLHE/SAPES Members**](#)
- [**STLHE/SAPES EDI Resource List, curated by EDITF**](#)
- [**STLHE/SAPES EDI Task Force Member Biographies**](#)