Developing a data-driven approach to equity, diversity and inclusion in a specialized research setting

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Overview
Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) best practices strengthen the validity and impact of scientific research and are integral to innovation and excellence. Developing an EDI plan that directly engages, empowers, and represents underrepresented faculties and communities helps to ensure the success of research initiatives. We used a data-driven, adaptive and long-term approach to identify and implement best practices in EDI at all levels of career progression, in research design and the research environment (Figure 3).

Case Principles
- We take ownership in addressing the challenges that remain in achieving full participation from members of underrepresented groups (including women, visible minorities, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ2S+ people and people with disabilities) in our research communities.
- Comprehensive equity, diversity and inclusion practices increase access to a larger pool of qualified potential participants, strengthen research outputs, and enhance overall research experience.
- The creation of an equitable, diverse and inclusive research community is the responsibility of every member of the community, not just members of underrepresented groups.
- Diversity representation is absolutely necessary to reach our full potential as a research community and academic institution.

Action Plan Framework
The EDI Committee is the BrainsCAN sub-committee tasked to oversee all matters related to equity, diversity and inclusion that pertain to BrainsCAN, its scientific programs, and the wider academic community. The Committee consists of eight members which include representatives from the executive leadership, faculty, staff, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students.

- The EDI Action Plan contains a data-driven approach to address challenges related to EDI within BrainsCAN, and within the overall academic community. Central to our approach is accessing our community for input and guidance. Having no data collected from all stakeholders, it was challenging to access the diversity of voices and experiences living within our community, while also addressing the impact of initiatives to address equity, diversity and inclusion.


Selected Key Findings
A. Age Breakdown

![Age Breakdown Chart]

B. Gender

![Gender Chart]

C. Race and Ethnicity

![Race and Ethnicity Chart]

Data-driven Action Plan Items

![Data-driven Action Plan Items Diagram]

Selected Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

![Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Diagram]

The ultimate goal of our EDI Action Plan is to develop a research community where all experiences and identities are adequately represented and equally valued. Progress toward the long-term goals will require regular evaluation of representation among faculty and HQP, as well as tracking career progression within the university (i.e. promotion) and for those leaving Western.