



**I.D.E.A.**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
2023-2024

Continuing our Journey  
of Inclusion, Diversity,  
Equity, and Accessibility

## Land Acknowledgement

Algonquin College campuses (Ottawa, Pembroke and Perth) are located on the traditional unceded, unsundered territory of the Anishinàbe Algonquin People. The Algonquin People have inhabited and cared for these lands since time immemorial. We take this time to show our gratitude and respect to them and to the land for all that it has provided us and will continue to provide us.

As a post-secondary institution, we acknowledge the harms done to Indigenous Peoples learning from the past; we commit to promote healing and resilience in moving forward in partnership with the Algonquin Nations, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in a spirit of reconciliation.

While we acknowledge that territorial acknowledgements are only one step in cultivating greater respect for and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, these words will accompany actions invested in building a future and community better for all.

We commit to continue to explore and make meaningful contributions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.

Miigwetch/Thank-You

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# OUR VISION & ACTION

A letter from the Vice President of Human Resources



**DIANE MCCUTCHEON**  
Vice-President,  
Human Resources

Algonquin College continued to make Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (I.D.E.A.) a priority in 2023-24. I am so proud of the progress we have made and to see the benefits which come with integrating belonging, inclusion, equity, and accessibility into the very fabric of our diverse community. As the representation within our workforce demographics continue to change, new challenges are most definitely going to keep presenting themselves. However, because of the work we have done this year, and in years prior, I believe we will be ready to rise to any challenge. We've done a lot of the foundational work and will continue implementing enhancements to the experience of our employees.

Fostering a readiness for change requires that we become increasingly comfortable with discussing inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility topics. These conversations are not always easy. There needs to be safe space and openness to share our experiences and perspectives and a willingness to acknowledge those experiences that are different from our own as valid. This past year has seen improvements to our collective listening skills, where through robust and compassionate dialogue we were able deepen our understanding of the lived experiences of our people, and to strengthen our commitment towards allyship with those who expertly enable our learners in transforming their hopes and dreams into lifelong success.

In the pages that follow, you will read how the College has been implementing our I.D.E.A. Blueprint, released in March 2023 with tactics that will allow us to forge our path ahead and articulate our progress with even greater clarity. Through capacity building, ongoing robust conversations, and enhanced workforce recruitment efforts, we will continue to make Algonquin College an increasingly inclusive and wonderfully diverse institution to work, play, and grow in community.

Thank you for being a part of our journey as we continue to travel along on this path. Together, we can take the steps necessary to create equal opportunities, and to build a respectful and caring workplace, where employees feel safe and a sense of belonging.



“

The safe space to share on this important topic was wonderful! So empowering to feel I am not alone in my challenges.”

**Allyship participant**  
**Robust Conversations:**  
**Affinity Group Conversation**  
**Circle Pilot Program**

# INTRODUCTION



On March 2, 2023, the **2023-26 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Blueprint** was released as a call to action for our People Leaders and employees. Our newly minted plan clears our path toward a culture of inclusion by narrowing in on three strategic areas of focus: **Capacity Building, Robust Conversations, and Workforce Recruitment.**

Before this plan was endorsed by the College's **Inclusion and Diversity Circle**, our efforts to build the strategy started with a thorough analysis of input from employees, leadership, unions, as well as the consultation of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) subject matter experts, and the execution of industry and sector best practices (i.e. Global Diversity Equity and Inclusion Benchmarks). Once we completed an assessment of our current state, agreeing on what changes we have seen over time, and what culture we intend to foster forward, our draft came together and was circulated amongst stakeholders for further refinement. In March of 2023, the 2023-26 I.D.E.A. Blueprint was finalized and published.

**By 2026, our goal is to see an Algonquin College where:**

- Our workforce reflects the world around us. If there are still gaps, we are working diligently to close them.
- Our people are proud and confident in their individual identities and trusting enough to identify themselves.
- Any of our employees who see hurtful interactions in our work environment, as well as those who experience them, have the comfort and skills to take action and be an influence for positive change.
- Our people management processes are rapidly becoming best in class.
- Our work climate reflects our thirst for knowledge and skill-building. An active I.D.E.A. program of events, resources, and networks prompts us to challenge ourselves and learn together in safe spaces.

This Blueprint is only the design; it will take the actions and commitment of all of us to succeed with the building effort.

This annual report seeks to capture and communicate initiatives undertaken in the 2023-2024 reporting year which proved to further our community's progress toward improvements in inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility (I.D.E.A.).

As in any good plan, finetuning and adjustments are made to remain in alignment to business needs and changes to the landscape. Notably, our model for creating an inclusive College has been strengthened, now including tactical clarity on the "how" behind our goals to achieve a true culture of inclusion: Capacity Building, Robust Conversations, and Workforce Recruitment.

This report meets our commitment to collecting, tracking, and reporting on equity data to assess progress and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, as required under Policy **HR24 Inclusion & Diversity**. It does not document the many efforts and activities which fall outside the scope of Human Resources (specifically, it does not include those initiatives driven by Student Support Services, Truth and Reconciliation Initiatives group (TRI), Academic Areas, and Student's Association, among others).

We hope you will enjoy reading about the progress we have made on our journey this year, and if you have comments, questions, or feedback to share, we look forward to hearing from you. Please email [diversity@algonquincollege.com](mailto:diversity@algonquincollege.com) to connect with a member of the AC Inclusion & Diversity Team.

# CAPACITY BUILDING

## I.D.E.A. WALL OF LIVED EXPERIENCE AND ALLYSHIP



This past year, we have maintained an excellent track record for engagement with the employee community, ensuring that opportunities to understand and develop oneself are clearly communicated and easily accessed. The diversity website receives consistent traffic year-round with over 10,000 users between March 31-2023-March 31 2024; the diversity and accessibility email inboxes continued to receive outreach emails from colleagues and managers in need of EDI related support; and the inclusion and diversity newsletter keeps our 100+ champions well informed of events, training opportunities and requests for input or feedback.

For 2023-2024 we held nine successful **Inclusion Infusions** learning events and workshops attended cumulatively by more than **400 employees**.

This series continues to build momentum engaging our communities and deepening their cultural competency, growth of allyship skills, and cultivating curiosity around the importance of inclusion. The following is a summary of the activities undertaken to motivate employees along their personal introspective journey, and how we are conveying the message that inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility benefits everyone.

## The Inclusion & Diversity Website

In our efforts to continuously build awareness of past and present Inclusion & Diversity initiatives, we have consistently directed our community to explore the resources on the **Inclusion and Diversity Website**. The Diversity website offers content that is updated regularly, is searchable, engaging, and available on demand. Here, College employees are easily able to engage with new concepts, learning and development opportunities, as well as skill building toward cultural competency and I.D.E.A. capacity building

The site is home to the Inclusion & Diversity Circle member biographies and terms of reference, well-used resources such as links to I.D.E.A. related policies, reports, and survey data, as well as the Inclusion & Diversity Blog, Diversity Mural Project details, the episode guide for the Inclusion Infusion Podcast, and instructions for downloading the Multicultural Calendar in Outlook.

- 2023-2024 saw traffic from 10,102 users, with 11,824 engaged sessions between March 31-2023-March 31 2024.

## Multicultural Calendars

Disseminating both digital and physical copies of the multicultural calendars is a widely appreciated initiative, enabling our communities to set inclusive intentions for the year. **Multicultural calendars** are a valuable community building tool for anyone working, learning or collaborating in a diverse environment.



The calendars allow for easy access to mark multicultural days of significance, helping us all to keep aware of holidays, observances, and occasions of importance across a wide and diverse spectrum of identities, faiths, cultures and more. The distribution of physical calendars, communications around the availability of the digital calendar, and instructions for downloading the overlay were orchestrated prior to the new year. This allowed College employees to ensure their plans could be more inclusive throughout the entire year. The Multicultural Calendars are a simple way in which the I.D.E.A. team supports and guides incremental culture transformation by incorporating inclusion into planning, routines and process for College employees.

- 382 clicks to download the 2024 Multicultural Calendar
- 1,314 page views of the Multicultural Calendar webpage
- 100 physical calendars distributed across three campuses

## Inclusion Infusions

The Inclusion Infusions Event and Workshop series continues to attract and engage College employees in programming aimed at deepening their cultural competency, growth of allyship skills and the cultivation of curiosity around the importance to inclusion. Live stream events with expert speakers were offered throughout the year, aligning with cultural days of significance and observances, heritage months and important celebrations of diverse communities within our workforce.

Nine **live events and learning engagements** were held with a cumulative total of over **400 attendees**.

The following details the Inclusion Infusions events that took place in 2023-24:

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**MAY 2nd, 2023**

**ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH EVENT WITH SUCHETA RAWAL**

In celebration of Asian Heritage Month, the AC community was invited to take a virtual tour of India with India-born, travel expert Sucheta Rawal. In this keynote, participants were taken on a vivid journey through the different geographic regions of India, navigating sceneries in travel, cuisine, customs, traditions, and social norms in order to gain a broader understanding of the diverse people of India and how to effectively relate to and communicate with them.

- 36 Participants
- 14 Net Promoter Score (NPS)

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**JUNE 2nd, 2023**

**FOCUS INDIA INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY WORKSHOP WITH JAS KARLA**

Participants engaged in building intercultural awareness and competencies in the workshop “Working Effectively in an Intercultural Environment: Focus India” This interactive workshop helped participants develop the skills necessary to interact with the Indian diaspora more effectively.

- 21 participants
- 67 NPS Score

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**AUGUST 27th, 2023**

**CAPITAL PRIDE – CELEBRATION & MARCH**

**Annual participation of AC community in Capital Pride Parade in partnership with AC Student Association**

Algonquin College joined more than 150 marching groups and floats to celebrate and advocate for the 2SLGBTQ+ community during Pride week in Ottawa.

- 55 AC community members marched for pride (\*largest group participating to date).
- 100 Net Promoter Score

“

Everyone was so so welcoming and the organizers had hats and umbrellas to keep the sun off us and great music to dance too!! I hope to be able to be in the parade next year! Thank you for a fun day!”

**Participant**  
Pride Parade





**SEPTEMBER 29th, 2023**  
**NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION - SHIFTING THE LENS: The Impacts of Systemic Racism on Indigenous Engagement Inclusion with Becky Sasakamoose Kuffner**

In recognition of National Day for Truth & Reconciliation, the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility team hosted Becky Sasakamoose Kuffner for a keynote presentation entitled “Shifting the Lens - The Impacts of Systemic Racism on Indigenous Engagement and Inclusion.” The session provided a foundational understanding of the impact of institutional and systemic manifestations of racism on Indigenous engagement and inclusion.

- **106 Participants**
- **75 Net Promoter Score**



**OCTOBER 17th, 2023**  
**ISLAMIC HERITAGE MONTH WITH ZARQA NAWAZ ON REPRESENTATION IN THE MEDIA**

In recognition of Islamic Heritage Month, the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility team hosted a keynote presentation by Zarqa Nawaz, entitled: Does Representation in the Media Really Matter? How Television and Film can change the way we think about one another.

Nawaz’s talk stemmed from her experiences as a Muslim woman in Canada and what it was like creating the first comedy about a western-based Muslim society in Canada.

- **35 participants**
- **62 Net Promoter Score**



**DECEMBER 4th, 2023**  
**INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY KEYNOTE WITH AMANDA LEDUC ON DISABILITY REPRESENTATION IN STORY**

In celebration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (I.D.E.A.) team partnered with Student Support Services to host disable author and speaker Amanda Leduc, to deliver a talk on centering the voices of people with disabilities. Participants learned how the work of building an accessible world is one that starts with the stories that we tell and should continue to inform every element of corporate, artistic and social decision making.

- **70 Participants**
- **55 Net Promoter Score**

**DECEMBER 4th, 2023**  
**INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WORKSHOP ON SELF-ADVOCACY WITH CARLY FOX**

In this two-hour workshop for Algonquin College employees with disabilities, participants explored the benefits and challenges of self-advocacy to empower them in all aspects of their lives. Through activities designed to expand comfort zones, practice self-advocacy, and navigate realistic scenarios, learners were equipped with practical approaches for greater self-advocacy.



**FEBRUARY 15th, 2024**  
**BLACK HISTORY MONTH - BEING BLACK IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE STRUGGLE FOR AUTHENTICITY; WITH DR. ANTIJA ALLEN AND JUSTIN STEWART; KEYNOTE**

In recognition of Black History Month, the I.D.E.A. hosted scholar’s Antija Moore and Justin Stewart who presented a keynote entitled, The Struggle for Authenticity: Code Switching in Academia.

Participants were engaged in discussing the intersections of identity, cultural norms and social hierarchies that can challenge one’s sense of belonging. Code switching in speech, attire and mannerisms is often used to “fit in” with the majority and though can be leveraged to find success personally and professionally, can also be detrimental to one’s well being.

- **73 participants**
- **84 Net Promoter Score**

**FEBRUARY 15th, 2024**  
**BLACK HISTORY MONTH WORKSHOP: WE’RE NOT OKAY - A DIALOGUE ABOUT BLACK EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES AT POST SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, WITH DR. ANTIJA ALLEN AND JUSTIN STEWART**

In this dialogue space for Racialized employees, the authors of “We’re Not OK: Black Faculty Experiences and Higher Education Strategies” took a deep dive into the ramifications of racial disparities on social belonging and mental health. Topics included racial trauma, tokenism, code switching, and imposter syndrome. Participants were equipped with mental wellness strategies that they can implement personally and professionally.

## Introduction To Inclusion & Diversity

In 2023, the Introduction to Inclusion and Diversity training course was updated and refreshed. New content included the addition of pointers for neurodiversity allyship, an update to gender identity terms with updates to inclusive language and expanded lessons on our College's roadmap were added in order to ensure this self-guided learning remains aligned to present-day issues facing our communities.

**The Inclusion & Diversity at Algonquin College** training course was originally published in September of, 2020, and since that time over total of **312** colleagues have earned a badge for completion of the course to date.

This year alone (April 2023 – February 25, 2024) **64 employees** completed this introductory course, where learners are exposed to the foundations of inclusion and diversity.

## Ethical Upstander Training Workshops

This year saw over 40 employee learners engaging in active allyship, learning the skills for Ethical Upstanding practice.

**Four half-day workshop sessions were delivered** to groups of employees who have done the work and earned a badge in the introductory Inclusion & Diversity course.

**Ethical Upstander training** is an advanced four-hour Inclusion and Diversity workshop that provides participants with the basic skills to become an active bystander. This training includes short videos, partner sharing, small group activities, templates for challenging discussions, scenarios, and activities for practise.

Since the introduction of this training, **235** employee learners cumulatively have received a digital badge as Ethical Upstanders. Quarterly workshops will continue to be offered throughout 2024-25.

“

Enjoyed participating in the breakout sessions. Gave me an opportunity to connect with my peers in a safe space.”

**Participant comment**

**Black History Month Workshop:  
We're Not Okay Post-event survey**

# ROBUST CONVERSATIONS



A major focus of driving robust conversations this year was through the creation and launch of Affinity Group Conversation Circles. The conversation circles are a strategically aligned tactic toward equitable community building and robust conversation through the launch of identity-based employee networks.

“

I enjoyed meeting other 2SLGBTQ+ people at the college and being included in the group. I think it's wonderful that this group was put together and our voices will be heard.”

**2SLGBTQ+ Participant  
Affinity Group Testimonial**



# THE AFFINITY AND ALLYSHIP CHANGE ACTIVATOR

MARCH 5, 2024



## Robust Conversations: Affinity Group Conversation Circle Pilot Program

The Affinity Group Conversation Circles were a facilitator-led series of conversations meant to bring employees together in dialogue around a shared interest in the continuous improvement of our culture of inclusion at Algonquin College. This pilot program resulted in the formation of 6 affinity groups which included 2SLGBTQ+ Community, Indigenous Identities, Racialized Identities, Women's, People with Disabilities & and Allyship Conversation Circle.



Affinity Groups are inclusive communities in which the members tend to share common characteristics and lived experience. At Algonquin College, Affinity Groups are a space for employees who belong to equity deserving groups to create community, build common ground, and engage in networking to foster a greater sense of belonging.

- 12 Affinity Group conversations were held over 3 months, with an average rating of 4.6 out of 5 stars
- Over 100 employees participated in the Conversations circles, across the 6 different groups
- 6 Affinity Groups were formed
- 60 employee contributions towards the creation of the I.D.E.A. Wall of Lived Experience and Allyship

# THE AFFINITY AND ALLYSHIP CHANGE ACTIVATOR

MARCH 19, 2024



## Robust Conversations: Change Activator

To drive sustainable change, Algonquin College leaders were invited to participate in Robust Listening for Leaders session which focused on I.D.E.A. fundamentals, inclusive language, privilege and allyship, and unconscious bias. This session was followed up by two hybrid Change Activator events which invited leadership and employees to listen actively and reflectively to lived experience statements prepared by employee affinity group members from equity-deserving groups. Insights from the lived experience statements were captured live by a graphic artist and visual note-taker.

## Inclusion & Diversity Circle

Algonquin College's **Inclusion and Diversity Circle (IDC)** is a group of committed employees who advise and act as representatives for diverse lived experiences on behalf of the College. Members of the circle support the management of Inclusion and Diversity progress and champion initiatives to interrupt systems of exclusion as well as recommending approaches for removal of barriers for equity deserving groups of employees.

The IDC held a total of **8 meetings** in 2023-24 and were engaged in several key initiatives:

- Endorsed the revised I.D.E.A. Blueprint 2023-2026.
- Supporting the development and launch of the affinity group pilot program and change activator events.
- Informing the development of new training programs for employees.
- Ongoing facilitation support for the delivery of Ethical Upstander training.

## Intercultural Development Continuum

**Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Group Assessment and Planning Sessions** are a training and learning opportunity for teams of College employees who are interested in assessing and building upon their collective intercultural competence and skills.

Teams complete an individual assessment, and work through the results to develop an action plan for personal and inter-personal development. Managers may request this training for their intact teams on an ad hoc basis.

This training was delivered in March 2024 to a group of **20 leaders** through the Algonquin College Leadership in Education Institute (ALEI).

# WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT



Ensuring diversity in our recruitment efforts will enable us to be more innovative and adaptable, positioning us to best reflect our community and meet the evolving challenges of a post-secondary environment. Among the key drivers for change are new groups of students with different expectations, partner industries with rapidly shifting needs, and our commitment to Indigenization.

“

I felt really grateful to be able to participate and hear the stories being shared. Extremely impactful as I work to ensure I can provide both a safe and a brave space in our workplace.”

**Participant**  
Robust Conversations: Change Activator

Activities and planning undertaken in 2023-24 to catalyze systems and processes to achieve greater diversity and inclusion included the following:

## Employee Demographics: Employment Equity Survey

The Employment Equity Survey continues to be an impactful way to spark positive change and progress at Algonquin College. This data helps the College get a fuller, clearer and increasingly accurate picture of all identities represented within our College community. Measurement is the first step toward creating the equitable, diverse and inclusive work environment our leadership team envisioned when committing to the actions outlined in the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.

In 2023, the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (I.D.E.A.) program launched the College's first employment equity survey. Now 24 months of data collection has seen nearly 3,000 employees responded to the equity census, representing a 78% response rate.

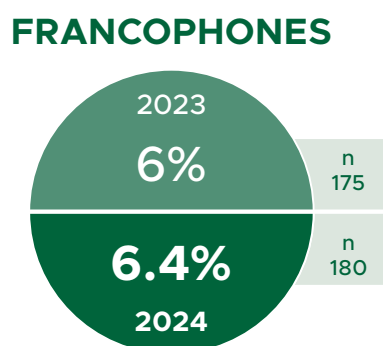
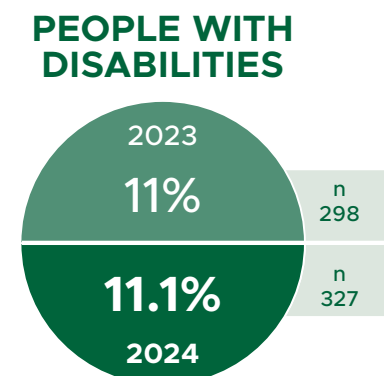
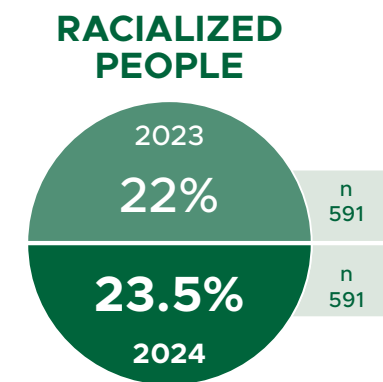
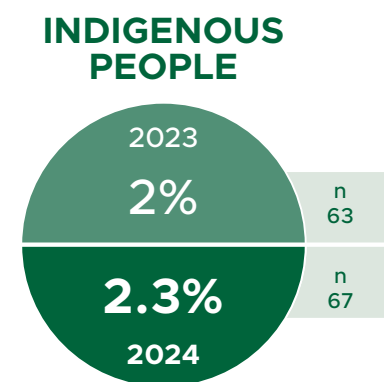
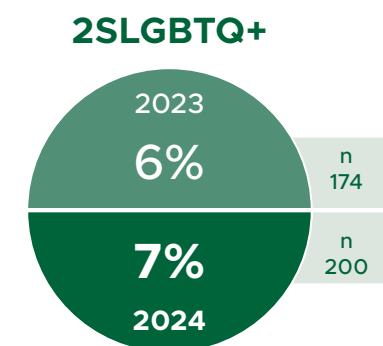
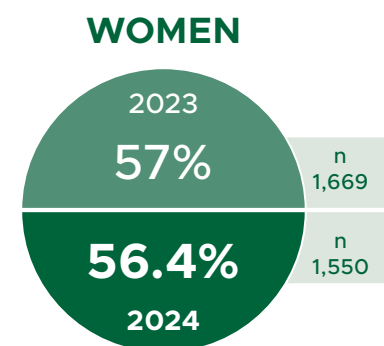
The demographic snapshot (infographic) represents the observed changes in the demographic composition of Algonquin College's workforce from 2023 to 2024:

- **WOMEN:** There was a slight decrease in the representation of women, from **57%** in 2023 to **56.4%** in 2024.
- **2SLGBTQ+:** There was a small increase in the 2SLGBTQ+ composition, from **6%** in 2023 to **7%** in 2024.
- **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:** The representation of Indigenous people increased slightly from **2%** in 2023 to **2.3%** in 2024.
- **RACIALIZED PEOPLE:** The representation of racialized people increased slightly from **22%** in 2023 to **23.5%** in 2024.
- **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:** There was a very slight increase in the representation of people with disabilities, from **11%** in 2023 to **11.1%** in 2024.
- **FRANCOPHONES:** There was a slight increase in the representation of francophones, from **6%** in 2023 to **6.4%** in 2024.

The insights from the survey serve as a critical input towards building awareness and driving equity attraction and retention strategies at the College. As we continue to measure progress toward improving diverse representation in our College workforce, we can work to address and deepen our understanding of barriers experienced by marginalized groups of employees.

More information on the **2024 Workforce Diversity data can be found on the Inclusion and Diversity** webpage.

## Algonquin College Workforce Diversity Summer Report on April 2024



A diverse qualified workforce – who can reflect the full range of age, gender, race, culture, ability, and so on – is critical to bringing the required perspectives and creating the needed innovation. Algonquin College continues to seek new avenues to leverage more opportunities to identify, attract and retain talented individuals with a range of diverse characteristics.



The Human Resources team continued to support the enhancement of our recruitment approach with a focus on attracting talent from equity deserving groups, through participation in various job fairs throughout the Ottawa geographical area. In the past year, Human Resources have participated in job fairs that focused on under-represented groups (e.g., Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition, Accessible Spring Career Fair for individuals with accessibility challenges, Technata with a heightened focus on new immigrants).

## The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

In accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), the Accessibility Committee of Algonquin College presents the Algonquin College 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

The **2022-2026 Multi-Year Plan** focuses on three main themes: Accountability, Education and Training and Physical Accessibility Improvements. These themes directly correspond to the Algonquin College **Strategic Plan** and its foundational themes of a Learner-Driven and People-Centred Culture.

Further, this plan anticipates the emerging new accessibility standard for Post-Secondary Education and its proposed nine barrier types by aligning the plan components with the barriers that can be impacted by plan implementation. The plan spans over five years the specificity of the plan decreases as the plan moves forward. This allows for the addition of evolving issues and the inclusion of new requirements over time. The plan can be viewed as firm for Year 1, flexible for Years 2 and 3 (current), and fluid for Years 4 and 5. The overarching goal of the plan is to ensure the College remains barrier-free and continues to be a leader in the area of accessibility in the Ontario College sector. To read the plan visit the following link to open the **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**.

### (Re) Building with Belonging in Mind: Investing in Accessibility on-Campus at Algonquin College

Our physical environment was also a major focus in 2023-24 with adoption of universal design anchored on inclusion and accessibility. **Improvements** were made to our built-in environment including safety features with pull string for emergencies, visual strobe fire alarms, and adjustments to fixture height.

We also completed renovations including the creation of additional all-inclusive and universal washroom facilities as well as the first deliberately designed and constructed **all-gender washrooms** in College-owned facilities. To further enhance the inclusiveness of this new



space, Facilities Management worked collaboratively with all members of the College's Inclusion and Diversity Circle (IDC) to create **three wall art installations** which serve to affirm feelings of belonging, body positivity and body diversity for all users of the space.

## Accessible Communications Standards & Training

In 2023, the launch of Accessible Communication training was added to the College's robust learning opportunities. The **Accessible Workplace Communications** training program was designed to support employees who produce and disseminate College-wide communications in ensuring greater levels of accessibility when producing content. The training has engaged all employees whose roles are focused on developing written communication and marketing collateral, encouraging them to upskill in applying accessibility to published documents and correspondence.

The 90-minute self-directed learning helps to address invisible barriers that exist throughout our workplace, promoting inclusion by working to remove obstacles that can create a less than ideal experience for some of our colleagues.

Participants in this course learn the practical skills for locating, identifying, and repairing potential accessibility barriers in workplace communications through videos, discussions, various authoring tool resources, as well as guided tutorials where participants can reflect upon the importance of ensuring accessibility and demonstrate the use of built-in accessibility tools.

To **date, 31 employee learners** (including those in communications positions) have completed the accessible workplace communications course and earned a certificate.

By the end of this course learners will be able to:

- Identify provincial legislation and College policies that relate to accessibility;
- Participate in the end-user experience that inaccessible documents create for people attempting to read them using assistive technologies.
- Discuss common accessibility barriers that are present in the workplace.
- Explain your role in ensuring that office communications are accessible.
- Identify built-in accessibility tools in common office communication creation and editing software.
- Locate accessibility issues in a document using built-in accessibility tools; and
- Correct accessibility barriers in an inaccessible document.

## I.D.E.A. Team Involvement In External Engagements

The College's inclusion subject matter experts are available on demand to provide advice and resources to our employee community. They are called upon frequently by faculty, deans, and chairs to support creating an inclusive college community.

For 2023-2024 the team's expertise also continued to be leveraged by the external community through involvement in a number of associations and informational events. Events ranged from panel discussions to informational roundtables and educational dialogues, where partners in our community reached out for support to promote inclusion externally.

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### MARCH 21st, 2023

#### ALLYSHIP #ITSTARTS WITH ME PANEL DISCUSSION FOR INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

*Campaign developed by the Simcoe County, Lanark, Renfrew, and Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership to encourage positive communication among residents to reduce racism and discrimination.*

Invited to participate as a subject matter expert and co-moderator, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Coordinator, Kara McNeil, helped to guide three panelists in a robust conversation on the topic of allyship. The event took place on International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and featured three ally-knowledgeable speakers who brought personal stories, professional and lived experience, as well as practical advice for those wanting to learn how to be an effective, active and anti-racist ally to stand up against racial discrimination.

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### Partnerships & Leadership with I.D.E.A. Community Organizations

#### EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCE NETWORK; EARN

EARN's Leadership Group is comprised of employers, service providers, and other interested stakeholders. Local employers are leaders in the community who foster a culture of inclusion and accessibility in their workplaces. Service providers give advice, assistance and expertise to employers regarding disability issues, best practices and accommodation supports. EARN's Leadership Group helps to plan and deliver on the goals set out by the Steering Committee to satisfy the overall mission of the network. It also supports mechanisms for additional EARN initiatives and activities that help to further advance its mandate.

**The Leadership Group meets on a monthly basis.** Sarah Gauen is the Chair.

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#### HIRE IMMIGRANTS OTTAWA

Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) is an initiative that brings together employers, immigrant agencies and stakeholders to enhance employers' ability to access the talents of skilled immigrants in the Ottawa area. The initiative was launched in 2006 as a response to a growing need to identify and address barriers and challenges employers face in attracting, hiring and integrating skilled immigrants into the labour force. HIO's mandate is to increase the capacity of employers in the Ottawa region to more effectively attract, hire and integrate skilled immigrants into skills-appropriate positions. Laura Gallo is the representative for Algonquin College as an employer-partner organization. Laura attends monthly working group meetings and regularly scheduled newcomer employment opportunity coaching events.

## Looking Ahead

In 2024-25 I.D.E.A. will continue to remain a critical program for the College. We will focus on continued delivery of great events, training, and awareness sessions to drive inclusion and a sense of belonging.

We will continue our focus on training and awareness through deployment of new training programs for People Leaders including Managing with Anti-Racism in Mind and training on Anti-Black Racism. We will also deploy our Responding to Racism: Front Line Interactions course alongside our foundational programs including Ethical Upstander Training and Intercultural Development Inventory training.

The College will continue its implementation of the **2022-26 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan** with a continued focus on training on universal design and investment in our physical environment with improvements and continued enhancements to our exterior spaces including ramps and sidewalks with the goal of removing barriers to paths of travel. Work will also continue on signage upgrades, height adjustments to life-safety devices, lighting and handrail improvements.

The College will also continue its journey on Affinity Groups and will apply our lessons learned from our pilot program to launch a new series in 2024-25.

Finally, the College will invest in its approach to enhance diversity through new outreach initiatives to support our enhanced workforce recruitment strategy. This will include building partnerships to diversify our talent pools and well as participation in job fairs to attract talent from equity deserving groups informed by our equity survey.

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The facilitators ensured that we all felt comfortable and safe in the space by sharing open and honest examples of possible responses before we were expected to respond. They exemplified caring, integrity, learning and respect in a way that made me feel comfortable even when I became emotional.”

**Womens group participant comment**  
Robust Conversations: Affinity Group  
Conversation Circle Pilot Program

## CONTACT

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility  
in the Algonquin College Work Environment

1385 Woodroffe Ave  
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8  
613.727.4723 ext. 7660  
[diversity@algonquincollege.com](mailto:diversity@algonquincollege.com)

[algonquincollege.com/diversity](http://algonquincollege.com/diversity)

[algonquincollege.com](http://algonquincollege.com)

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