



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Principles

August 2022

Introduction

As an organization, Saitsa is dedicated to providing a safe and inclusive space where all individuals can show up as their authentic self. We are committed to fostering an environment that is free of harassment, bullying, discrimination, and violence.

Saitsa acknowledges that equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is an ongoing process, and we will continue to work hard to make progress in our EDI journey.

Definitions

Accessibility – The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable for those with disabilities. Examples can include elevators, entry ramps, self-opening doors, etc.

Belonging – An individual's sense of acceptance and inclusion by those they are surrounded with. Belonging can apply with many different groups such as family, friends, co-workers, etc. Belonging further means to have a sense of connection and identification with others.

Discrimination – The unequal treatment of individuals or groups, usually based on categories of human rights legislation. Examples include race, gender, social class, physical and cognitive abilities, sexual orientation, religion, age, etc.

Diversity – The variety of shared and different characteristics amongst a group of people. It is the practice of including individuals from different social and ethnic backgrounds, abilities, gender, sexual orientations, neurodiversity, and any other differences.

Equality – Treating all individuals the same while providing everyone access to the same opportunities.

Equity – Providing an individual or group required or needed resources to equip them with an equal advantage.

Exclusion – Intentionally or unintentionally leaving someone out. These differences can be related to prohibited grounds or generally leaving someone out.

Inclusion – The process of involving traditionally excluded individuals and groups into conversations, processes, activities, etc. Inclusion allows individuals to feel psychologically safe, valued, motivated, and respected.

Microaggression – Comments, snubs, or actions that insult marginalized groups. These are often very subtle comments and/or actions that are internalized from a place of unconscious bias or stereotypes.

Neurodivergent (also worded in the context of neurodivergence) – The term used when an individual's brain processes, receives, learns, and/or behaves different than what is considered "normal."

Psychological Safety – the belief that individuals won't be reprimanded or humiliated for speaking up and voicing their opinions, questions, mistakes, or concerns.

Racism – The oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that gives privilege to white people.

What does inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility mean to Saitsa?

- **Inclusion** – The process of involving traditionally excluded individuals and groups into conversations, processes, activities, etc. Inclusion allows individuals to feel psychologically safe, valued, motivated, and respected.
- **Diversity** – The variety of shared and different characteristics amongst a group of people. It is the practice of including individuals from different social and ethnic backgrounds, abilities, gender, sexual orientations, neurodiversity, and any other differences.
- **Equity** – Providing an individual or group required or needed resources to equip them with an equal advantage.
- **Accessibility** – The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable for those with disabilities. Examples can include elevators, entry ramps, self-opening doors, etc. Accessibility also applies to those who are neurodiverse and can require incorporating flexible spaces, quiet areas, and other appropriate sensory experiences.

Saitsa principles & commitments

- We are dedicated to improving the student experience at every opportunity
- We commit to working hard to create an environment where students are inspired to learn, lead and be exceptional
- We commit to fostering a campus-wide culture that students are proud to be a part of
- We commit to advocating on behalf of students to all levels of government, and internally to Sait as an institution
- We will identify and work to meet the needs of underrepresented groups within the SAIT community
- We commit to supporting students in their education and/or personal life
- We commit to investigating any acts of discrimination, violence, bullying, harassment, and racism, based on all grounds and legislation
- We commit to removing systemic and programmatic barriers to ensure all individuals have the opportunity to fully contribute and pursue their potential.

Treaty 7 land acknowledgement

Saitsa acknowledges that this land is situated on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy, which encompasses the Niitsitapi (nit-SIT-ah-pee) and the people of the Treaty 7 Region in Southern Alberta. This includes the Siksika (SICK-sick-ah), Piikani (pih-GAH-nee), the Kainai (GUY-nai), the Tsuu T'ina (TSOO-tunah) and the Stoney Nakoda First Nations including Chiniki (CHIN-ee-kee), Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations. The City of Calgary is also home to the Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

The City of Calgary encompasses a region that the Blackfoot tribes of Southern Alberta described as Moh'kinsstis, meaning "Elbow," in reference to its location where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet. Since time immemorial, this region was a traditional gathering place for the tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy.

Saitsa hopes to move towards reconciliation with the First Nations whose land we are learning, working, and organizing on today. We hope to move forward together to advance the reconciliation process by working with and learning from the Indigenous peoples of Treaty 7.

Indigenous Inclusion

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

As an organization operating in Canada, we recognize and participate in the Call to Action 92 (Business and Reconciliation):

“We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- I. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
- II. Ensure that Indigenous peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Indigenous communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
- III. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Indigenous peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Indigenous–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

Have further questions?

For more information, please visit: <https://saitsa.com/studentsupport/>

If you require the assistance of a Saitsa representative, we would be happy to assist. Please email saitsa.info@edu.sait.ca and request a meeting for support.