



# IPIC's Blueprint for Inclusion:

## **An Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Action Plan**

[ipic.ca/edi](http://ipic.ca/edi)



Intellectual Property  
Institute of Canada



# IPIC's EDI Action Plan

Thank you for your interest in learning more about IPIC's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan and related initiatives. We are pleased to share this information and we invite you to join us on this exciting journey!

IPIC's approach to EDI is about achieving meaningful engagement leading to positive and lasting change. Supporting an environment of inclusion where everyone feels welcome and can fully participate benefits all members of the IP profession and, ultimately, innovation in Canada.

## Background

In January 2021, the [Intellectual Property Institute of Canada \(IPIC\)](#) announced its [2021-2023 Strategic Plan](#), with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as a key goal area. With funding received from Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), IPIC has also launched its EDI project titled *Building Back Through Innovation & Increasing Diversity in Canada's IP Sector*. The overarching goal of both the Strategic Plan and the project is to promote inclusivity and belonging. This involves recognizing and understanding complex issues regarding race, Indigeneity, socioeconomic status, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, ability, spirituality, language, education, and others.

- Integrate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Best Practices into IPIC's Governance
- Support Industry Best Practices in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion



## About the Intellectual Property Institute of Canada (IPIC)

IPIC is proud to be the voice for intellectual property professionals in Canada. Founded in 1926, IPIC has grown to more than 1,700 members, which include practitioners in law firms and agencies of all sizes, sole practitioners, in-house corporate IP professionals, government personnel, administrators, and academics. As the only professional association dedicated to the Canadian IP profession, IPIC is the national hub for patent agents, trademark agents, lawyers, and practitioners in all areas of IP law.

As the IP industry has evolved in recent years, so too has IPIC. IPIC has strengthened its management processes to ensure that its operations are modern, relevant, and member focused and our current Strategic Plan builds on those strengths, with EDI as a priority.

## EDI as a Strategic Goal Area

IPIC believes that promoting EDI is a key goal which stands on its own, as well as underlying and informing our other strategic goals. Research consistently shows that high levels of gender and ethnic diversity are correlated with organizational performance and positive outcomes.

IPIC has also supported Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) within the IP profession in the past and continues to do so. In addition to having a number of leading

women IP professionals as Past Presidents, Board Members and Committee Chairs, IPIC has supported various career developing and networking initiatives through its Women in IP Networking Group (WING). In 2019, IPIC had also conducted research that identified a notable gender-based pay gap among Canada's IP professionals. Additionally, IPIC's Indigenous IP Committee is playing a role in raising awareness of the challenging issues such as the protection of Indigenous knowledge and cultural expressions. IPIC acknowledged National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day with blog postings and a complimentary webinar for members titled *Conversation with Lyndon Linklater on Truth and Reconciliation*.

For Mental Health Awareness Month, IPIC also offered a complimentary webinar titled *Mental Health Awareness and Workplace Culture: How We Respond Matters*. Other IPIC EDI-related webinars included the following:

- *Microaggressions in the Workplace and Beyond*
- *Mentoring for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*

With respect to charitable initiatives, the [Patent and Trademark Institute Educational Foundation](#) (PTIEF) is managed by the Executive Members of IPIC's Board. The PTIEF's mission is to promote diversity and inclusion by helping remove barriers to access and offer financial support to deserving individuals from marginalized groups that wish to pursue educational opportunities in the field of IP. In June 2021, IPIC kicked off a concentrated fundraising effort in support of the PTIEF's Gordon Henderson Fund with plans to continue its commitment to giving back to the Canadian IP community.

## EDI Project Funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE)

In addition to having EDI as a strategic goal area with several initiatives already planned, IPIC was fortunate to be a recipient of funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) under the [Feminist Response and Recovery Fund](#) announced in 2021. As a result of this funding, IPIC has developed a project plan with resources dedicated to delivering a measurable impact.

The project takes an intersectional approach and involves engagement with various equity-seeking groups. This includes supporting a feminist response and recovery from the current impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, through removing barriers and addressing systemic issues adversely impacting Canadian women's advancement as leaders and decision-makers in the IP sector. The project is also guided by [Gender-based Analysis Plus \(GBA Plus\)](#), a process of analyzing and assessing how different women, men and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives.

The IPIC EDI project plan, *Building Back Through Innovation & Increasing Diversity in Canada's IP Sector*, consists of initiatives planned through to March 2024. EDI is a complex area, and it is important to engage experienced EDI professionals who can provide guidance on best practices. IPIC has been working closely with some of Canada's leading experts in the field to assist with various aspects of the project.

As part of the proposal to WAGE for the project funding, IPIC designed a work plan that set out specific deliverables, objectives, and timelines. IPIC has already achieved some important project milestones. The initial phase of the project focused on information gathering and providing opportunities for Canadian IP professionals to have their voices heard on EDI issues. Below are some key highlights of what IPIC has accomplished so far and some future planned project initiatives.



# Policy Development & Initiatives

**Design, develop and conduct baseline evaluation to gather relevant data to improve evidence base and inform EDI policies as well as related activities.**

## ▶ COMPLETED

- IPIC's first-ever Equity, Diversity and Inclusion survey launched in early June 2022 and was open to all Canadian IP professionals. The survey provided a useful baseline evaluation in support of IPIC's EDI priorities and initiatives.
- The feedback from survey participants confirmed that IPIC is on the right track with the initiatives as set out in the EDI project work plan. The results have also played a key role in determining areas of focus for the EDI project going forward as well as priorities for programming.
- IPIC members attended a Listening Session in July 2022. The Listening Session offered a safe space to discuss various EDI-related topics. Facilitated by EDI experts with lived experiences, the session was respectful, inclusive, and confidential. The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive and more of these opportunities for member engagement are planned.
- IPIC will be sharing key survey results with members and providing opportunities for discussion.



**Plan, organize and engage with key partners and stakeholders to convene a roundtable. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss EDI issues, share the EDI objectives in IPIC's 2021-2023 Strategic Plan, and explore potential areas of collaboration related to IPIC's EDI project.**



## ▶ COMPLETED

- In May 2022, IPIC hosted an EDI roundtable with government stakeholders and IP associations. Attendees included representatives from the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO), AIPPI Canada, AIPLA, the Canadian Bar Association, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and others.
- Further discussions and collaboration with roundtable participants are planned on topics such as programming and engagement with equity-seeking groups.

**Design, develop and implement policies and practices to ensure that EDI is integrated into IPIC's leadership development activities. This will include working with EDI experts, IPIC volunteers, and other stakeholders to review the process of identifying and encouraging members to seek leadership roles such as Committee Chairs.**

## ▶ Timeline: 2022-2023 – IN PROGRESS

- The results and feedback from IPIC's EDI survey confirmed that IPIC taking the correct approach by including policy review as a key element in the EDI project work plan.

# Programming

**Identify training and programming priorities based on data from baseline evaluation/EDI survey.**

## ▶ COMPLETED

- IPIC is focussing on subjects of particular interest to Canadian IP professionals including, for example, training on overcoming bias. IPIC is also using this information in planning and tailoring educational programming for IPIC members.

**Design, develop, and deliver programming. This will include activities such as EDI training and workshops for Canadian IP professionals and expanded mentoring programs. Additionally, IPIC will be offering IP education programming for businesses involving traditionally underrepresented groups.**

▶ **Timeline: 2022-2023 – IN PROGRESS**

- IPIC is conducting outreach to enterprises and entrepreneurs from equity-seeking groups to collaborate on the delivery of IP seminars nationally, both in-person and remotely in English and French. IPIC has also had discussions with the IP Village about working together on this initiative and achieving shared EDI objectives.

**Improve, promote, and amplify BIPOC visibility as well as other equity-seeking groups. This includes highlighting success stories of BIPOC IP professionals in Canada and continuing to engage with IPIC members on volunteer opportunities such as outreach and delivering programming as well as writing articles for IPIC's UnscriPted blog.**

▶ **Timeline: 2022-2023 – IN PROGRESS**

- In 2022, IPIC honoured Black History Month and International Women's Day by highlighting members' achievements and sharing their inspirational stories.
- In recognition of Pride Season, IPIC engaged with members of the UK's IP Inclusive "IP Out" division, a community for LGBTQ+ IP professionals on a posting for the UnscriPted blog.

**Gather, analyze, and incorporate feedback from stakeholders and participants on the programming. Ongoing evaluation will include surveys, interviews, focus groups, and other forms of feedback.**

▶ **Timeline: 2022-2024 – IN PROGRESS!**

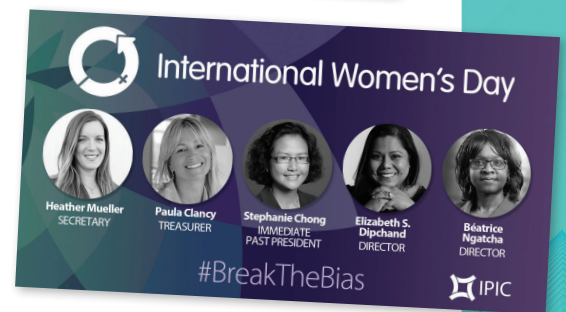
- As is IPIC's standard practice for webinars, seminars, and other educational offerings, feedback via surveys and other types of engagement will be utilized to tailor and customize programming.

## Best Practices

**Design, develop and deliver resources on EDI best practices for the IP sector. This will include on-demand e-Learning modules with resources such as guidance on best practices, in-person or online EDI workshops, focus groups and other EDI training activities.**

▶ **Timeline: 2022-2024 – COMING SOON!**

- IPIC's goal is to offer accessible EDI educational and training opportunities that provide the most up-to-date and practical information.
- Based on the feedback received from participants in the EDI survey, IPIC has identified topics that are in demand by Canadian IP professionals. We listened to your feedback and will be offering training on a range of subjects of interest including cultural awareness training, ability (mental health), EDI fundamentals, and others.





Create and distribute information and resources to inspire future IP professionals from equity-seeking groups and incentivizing IP ownership. A common theme in the feedback from IPIC's EDI survey was that to achieve more diversity within the IP profession, outreach to students is essential. This includes providing programming and resources for students, educators, and career counsellors to explore careers in IP.

► **Timeline: 2022-2023 – COMING SOON!**

- In addition to sharing the inspirational stories of our members' careers and providing role models, IPIC members will be engaging with students from across Canada.

Create and launch website or microsite in conjunction with a social media campaign. The new site will provide resources for download as well as links and other information. This initiative will also include digital outreach via social media channels and videos highlighting programming.

► **Timeline: 2022-2024 – IN PROGRESS!**

- This is a key element of IPIC's EDI project as it will help promote programming and volunteer opportunities as well as outreach and engagement with stakeholders.
- In the meantime, IPIC has created a placeholder site at [ipic.ca/edi](http://ipic.ca/edi) that contains information about ongoing EDI initiatives.



Women and Gender  
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité  
des genres Canada

IPIC acknowledges the financial support of Women and Gender Equality Canada. With this funding, IPIC has been able to develop, and is delivering on the initiatives under our *Building Back Through Innovation & Increasing Diversity in Canada's IP Sector* project. In addition to the initiatives funded by WAGE under this project over the next few years, IPIC remains committed to EDI as a key goal area in its 2021-2023 Strategic Plan as well as over the longer term with the objective of achieving measurable and meaningful change.

## Get involved!

There will be additional opportunities for IPIC members to get involved and make a difference! Whether it is participating in focus groups, attending workshops, engaging in outreach to entrepreneurs and businesses from equity-seeking groups, or speaking with students about careers in IP, our members, together with other key stakeholders, will play an important role in the success of IPIC's various EDI project initiatives.

We encourage those interested in taking part to stay tuned to IPIC's weekly IP Newsbreak and our EDI page at [ipic.ca/edi](http://ipic.ca/edi) for more details.

**For more information, please contact:**

Loreto Lamb  
Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion  
Intellectual Property Institute of Canada  
360 Albert Street, Suite 550, Ottawa, ON K1R 7X7  
613-234-0516 x.28 | [llamb@ipic.ca](mailto:llamb@ipic.ca)

\*Please note that timelines are projected and may be subject to change.