

School of Molecular Life Sciences (MLSC), University of Victoria
MLSC Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (MLSC EDI)

Terms of Reference

Approved on: April 13, 2023

Administrative update August 2026

Purpose

1. MLSC EDI is a standing committee that advises the MLSC Director on the development of policies and procedures to ensure the School of Molecular Life Sciences is a welcoming, supportive, diverse and inclusive working and learning environment. The MLSC EDI committee also advises the MLSC Director on opportunities for education and activities within MLSC related to enhancing EDI.
2. These terms of reference were developed under the UVic Unit Equity Committees General Terms of Reference <https://www.uvic.ca/equity/assets/docs/tor.pdf>
3. While the MLSC EDI does not deal with complaints or disclosures, it will provide confidential referral to the appropriate University office for complaints or disclosures.

Responsibilities

1. To make recommendations to the School of Molecular Life Sciences to enhance equity, diversity and inclusion throughout MLSC.
2. To invite ongoing input on the development of policies on equity, diversity and inclusion from all members of the MLSC community.
3. To provide safe mechanisms for MLSC members to bring forward suggestions, questions and information relevant to the EDI work of this committee.
4. To support and advise the MLSC Director on equity, diversity and inclusion issues and possibilities including training and seminar speakers within the School.
5. To report each April to the MLSC Director on its activities, accomplishments and recommendations accomplished during the prior 12 months, as well as any challenges faced.
6. To establish each May an annual work plan identifying major priorities and activities for the coming year.
7. To develop guidelines, procedures, training, and educational activities related to EDI for School approval. The following UVic policies will be followed: [Human Rights, Equity and Fairness GV0200](#); [Discrimination and Harassment GV0205](#); [Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response GV0245](#); and [Employment Equity HR6100](#).
8. To develop strategies to ensure MLSC is a welcoming and supportive environment for all school members, including within research laboratories and classrooms.
9. To develop and revise as required faculty and staff hiring plans to enhance diversity within MLSC.
10. To develop and revise as required an inclusion plan within MLSC to support faculty and staff hires and undergraduate and graduate students who are members of underrepresented groups.
11. To act as an advisory committee to the undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees on revisions of the curriculum to address equity, diversity, inclusion and Indigenization.
12. To establish and maintain a MLSC EDI webpage that includes links to all relevant EDI resources.

13. To identify and showcase the successes of a diverse cross-section of current and former MLSC trainees through the MLSC school webpage and online presence.
14. To highlight through the EDI webpage ongoing community connections in MLSC that enhance equity, diversity and inclusivity.
15. The committee will undertake continuing education to advance their own learning about equity, diversity and inclusion topics including: university policies, offices and resources; the experiences of diverse populations; relevant topics related to the functioning of the committee, e.g. policies on confidentiality.
16. To observe strict confidentiality on all discussions of the committee with the exception of topics previously agreed by the committee to require discussion outside the MLSC EDI.
17. To liaise with the MLSC Director on minor matters that can be addressed internally. Such matters may be brought forward while maintaining strict confidentiality requirements to the MLSC EDI by the School Director, or they may be brought to the School Director by the MLSC EDI Chair. In each case, the two leaders will discuss whether the matter is best handled by the MLSC EDI or by the MLSC Director.

Membership

1. The membership of the MLSC EDI will include diverse representation from MLSC faculty, staff, graduate students, undergraduate students and research personnel. The MLSC Director is not an *ex-officio* member or regular member of the MLSC EDI.
2. The membership will consist of four (4) faculty members, one (1) staff member, one (1) graduate student, 1 undergraduate student and 1 grant-funded research staff. Membership can be expanded to up to two (2) additional non-faculty members.
3. A member on study leave or leave of absence from the MLSC School for longer than 6 months will be replaced. For leaves of 6 months or less the committee will proceed with one less member.
4. One of the faculty members will be recommended by the committee to serve as the MLSC EDI Chair, with not more than two dissenting votes. The MLSC Director will approve the recommendation and appoint the MLSC EDI Chair.
5. In situations where an acting MLSC EDI Chair is required, the role of acting MLSC EDI Chair will be one of the other faculty members as assigned by the MLSC EDI Chair. Acting chairs will not be appointed for terms exceeding six (6) months.
6. Faculty and staff serving on the MLSC EDI will have a maximum 3 year term, with renomination possible. However, in the interests of providing the greatest accessibility and diversity of representation, those seeking renomination are encouraged to take at least a one (1) year break before rejoining the committee.
7. To ensure continuity, faculty and staff will have a staggered start, with some faculty and staff having a shorter tenure on the committee (i.e., 2 year term).
8. Graduate student, undergraduate student, and grant-funded researcher staff members will be appointed for a 1 year term, with renomination possible.
9. When positions are up for renewal, a call for nominations will be issued. Additionally, a call for nominations will be issued as needed to immediately fill any vacancy. The relevant representative groups described in #1 can nominate members. Self-nominations are acceptable. Nominees will need to complete a "Statement of Interest" form.
10. Membership selections will be made based upon an anonymous vote by the current EDI committee members, and will require committee support with not more than two dissenting votes. In selecting nominations to support, the committee will strive for diversity of membership by gender, ethnicity/place of origin, Indigenous status and many other

aspects of identity using Appendix 2 of the [Guide to Faculty and Librarian Recruitment](#) for guidance. Supported nominations will be forwarded by the MLSC EDI Chair to the MLSC Director for final approval of membership.

11. Members may be required to step down from the committee for failure to fulfill the responsibilities of MLSC EDI as specified in the MLSC EDI Terms of Reference or for any action by a member that undermines the integrity of the committee. The final decision on dismissal from the committee will be taken by the MLSC Director after consultation with the EDI Chair or acting EDI Chair as appropriate.

Confidentiality

1. The MLSC EDI will use all necessary procedures to ensure confidentiality of all deliberations.
2. The MLSC EDI will not discuss concerns, complaints or disclosures that are brought to the committee. If the committee addresses any matter internally on the request of the MLSC Director, the discussion will be only about the actions to be taken. In such cases, the committee will keep sufficient notes to clarify what the MLSC Director asked them to do and what actions were taken by whom, but not further details. No names or identifying details will be recorded.

Meetings

1. Meetings will be held bi-monthly.
2. The agenda will be prepared by the MLSC EDI Chair or delegate and distributed at least 24 hours prior to each meeting.
3. The MLSC EDI Chair or delegate will assign action items resulting from each meeting within one week after the meeting.
4. One standing agenda item for each meeting will be to follow up on all ongoing action items.
5. Additional standing agenda item for each meeting will be website reviews and updates.

Reporting

1. The MLSC EDI Chair will submit the committee's annual report by April 30th to the MLSC Director.

Approval and review

1. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the MLSC EDI in May.