WFCP

Backgrounder

Inclusion in Education Protocol for Colleges and Polytechnics

The domestic diversity of signatory institutions is not always reflected in the institutions themselves. Signatories acknowledge that there is need to fully include people of all races, ethnicities, creeds, socioeconomic classes, gender identities, sexual orientations and disability statuses by transforming policies, structures and practices that have been exclusionary to members of these traditionally marginalized groups.

In 2015, world leaders set the development agenda for the coming 15 years, which firmly entrenches a commitment to inclusive and equitable education through the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). The international community has committed to:

- ensuring equal access to men and women to affordable and quality professional and technical education and training (PTET);
- substantially increasing the number of youth and adults with relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
- eliminating gender disparities in education
- ensuring equal access to education for the vulnerable, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

Through the 2016 Vitória Declaration on Inclusion, the Federation and its members commit to striving to achieve the goal of inclusive and equitable education for all.

Signatory institutions agree to:

1. **Commit to making inclusion in education a priority.**

- Develop specific institutional and department plans for diversity and inclusion.
- Embed inclusion as a cross-cutting theme in strategic decision making across all aspects of decisions that affect the campus community.
- Identify barriers to inclusion at your institution or in your community and identify best practices that can be implemented that have addressed similar barriers in your community or around the world.
- Ensure leaders in your institution lead by example by engaging in diversity training to determine how inclusion at your institution will develop.

2. **Ensure governance structures recognize and respect all peoples.**

- Have your Board set goals to foster an atmosphere of inclusion that begins at the top both within the Board structure and the campus community.
- Commit to the representation of traditionally marginalized groups in governance structures across the institution from the Board of Directors to student councils.
- Create a welcoming environment and encourage the participation and the voices of student or community groups that represent traditionally marginalized groups in governance meetings and decision-making.

3. **Implement various intellectual and cultural traditions through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities.**

- Ensure curricula are based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion for all students; students should see themselves reflected in their curriculum, physical environment and broader school community.
- Inclusive curriculums should aim to understand, identify, address and eliminate biases, barriers and power dynamics that limit students' ability to learn.

- Engage with students while in primary and secondary school to facilitate pathways to post-secondary education for traditionally marginalized communities.

- Offer flexibility for learners to pause or restart programs as required due to family, community or work obligations.

- Identify and adopt teaching methods used by traditionally marginalized communities.

- Develop and deliver community-based education and training programs that are aligned with the economic and social development and labour market needs of local communities.

4. Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among traditionally marginalized groups.

- Offer staff and faculty diversity and inter-cultural training

- Develop professional development opportunities for staff and faculty to identify hidden biases and develop strategies for inclusive classrooms.

- Offer fora for the community to engage in discussions on diversity and inclusion.

- Develop knowledge of cross-cultural communication amongst staff, faculty and students.

5. Commit to increasing the number of individuals belonging to traditionally marginalized groups with ongoing appointments throughout the institution, including senior administrators.

- Adopt "blind hiring" practices to eliminate indirect discrimination in appointing positions.

- Initiate recruitment of traditionally marginalized communities early to offer pathways out of disenfranchisement.

- Set goals for inclusion at top management and ensure management is held to account to meet the goals.

- Develop pathways to move promising students from traditionally marginalized groups to positions of authority within your institution.

- Ensure equity in pay and opportunities for promotion for staff members of traditionally marginalized groups.

- Facilitate an environment that allows staff to voice their concerns without fear of repercussion.

6. Establish inclusive holistic services and learning environments for learner success.

- Establish a centre for first-generation post-secondary students.

- Improve mental health services.

- Diversify funding opportunities for low-income students, such as emergency funding grants.

- Establish a committee of staff, faculty and students who can develop curriculum and train staff on diversity and inclusion.

7. Build relationships and be accountable to traditionally marginalized communities in support of integration and inclusion through education, training and applied research.

- Identify community needs in genuine and transparent consultations on inclusion in the broader school environment and in the curriculum.

- Identify programs that are outside the traditional norm of your institution but are meaningful for traditionally marginalized communities.

- Work with local government leaders to enhance resources and support for traditionally marginalized students.

- Create scholarships specifically for traditionally marginalized communities.