

Women continue to be under-represented in many professions and industries in Canada. Currently, women make up 16% of roles in the mining industry and 14% of the engineering profession (Engineers Canada, 2020; Mining Industry Human Resources, 2018a). Underrepresented groups, such as women, can help to fill projected labour gaps and aid in solving challenges faced by industry. Such shifts are necessary, because inclusive and diverse workplaces have been found to be more profitable, more innovative, and better places to work (BCG, 2018; Catalyst, 2016; Noland, Moran, & Kotschwar, 2016). Despite many studies which document recommendations to improve workplace inclusion and diversity, few show examples of successful implementation and case studies (Mining Industry Human Resources, 2018b; Wells, Williams, Corrigan, & Davidson, 2018). This multi-phase study will put recommendations into action to shift Saskatchewan mining workplace culture to be inclusive and welcoming of all actual and potential employees.

Using a participatory research approach between industry and academic researchers, this multi-phase International Mineral Innovation Institute (IMII) and Mitacs-funded study focuses on how to transform and implement experiences and best practices into solutions to advance equity in the Saskatchewan mining industry. The study involves three key data collection phases and will be conducted in cooperation with mining industry partners. Data and analysis from each phase will feed into subsequent phases. Firstly, researchers will interview equity champions, individuals who are already working to implement equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) changes in workplaces. Secondly, a pilot study will be conducted within the College of Engineering to implement gender equity solutions. Thirdly, equity solutions will be implemented at a Saskatchewan mining site.

## The Status Quo

Gender inequity is a global and societal problem. The United Nations Development Programme (2020) publishes the Gender Inequality Index annually and reports there is no country in the world that has achieved gender equality. In Saskatchewan, women account for nearly 60% of bachelor’s degrees holders in the province (Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics & Statistics Canada, 2016); however, women are still a minority in engineering in Saskatchewan, where only 19% of engineering students and 13% of registered professional engineers are women (Engineers Canada, 2020). When considering inequities, there are great opportunities to meaningfully engage under-represented groups, such as Indigenous people, as companies incorporate the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (2015) Calls for Action and the United Nations (2007) *Declaration of the Right of Indigenous Peoples* into their businesses.

Jocelyn's Previous Research	Rising Voices & Global Impact	Recruitment and Retention Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Communicated the prevalence of systemic and cultural sexism in mining industry.</li><li>•Study results showed the high prevalence of gender-based discrimination and harassment experienced by women in Canadian mining. Less than 25% of these incidents are reported.</li><li>•This study identified the need for improved communication and training to advanced EDI.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Growing call from various social movements to end oppressive systems and behaviours.</li><li>•Dismantling systems of oppression starts with awareness of challenges.</li><li>•Under-represented groups need to be engaged in EDI processes.</li><li>•Intersectionality acknowledges various aspects of our identities and is required to understand challenges and develop inclusive solutions.</li><li>•COVID-19 pandemic prevention measures have impacted women's workplace advancement and forced flexible work options into practice.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Proven solutions to reduce bias in the recruitment process can be used along with appropriate governance and oversight to enact a fairer hiring process.</li><li>•Mentorship, sponsorship, and allyship are all important aspects of retaining women in their careers.</li><li>•The conversation on retention has shifted from helping women “fit” into their workplace to shifting the workplace to be an inclusive place that can support and accommodate all.</li></ul>

## Future State

When considering a future state of mining and engineering workplaces, let's consider how equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) can benefit businesses and the people who work for them. Equity is a means of fairness according to one's respective needs (Pavlic, Ruprecht, & Sam-Vargas, 2000). Diversity is a measure of variety which can indicate a variety of ways of thinking, or be used to measure and describe educational, physical, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and/or racial differences. In order to realize the benefits of diversity, a workplace also needs to be inclusive (Peltier-Huntley, 2019). Inclusion as the acceptance and celebration of differences in an organization; verbal and non-verbal inclusionary behaviors may be required in recognition of educational, physical, gender, sexual orientation, religious, and/or racial differences (Peltier-Huntley, 2019). The experience of working in an equitable, inclusive, and diverse workplace would be a supportive and rewarding environment where employees can be themselves and reach their full potential. The benefits of diversity are realized in an inclusive and equitable workplace that has continuous improvement mechanisms to ensure supports, metrics, strategies, and policies to meet all employees' needs.

### Inclusive Workplaces

- In inclusive workplaces people can be their authentic selves.
- In an equitable workplace, employees also feel empowered to realize their fullest career potential through all of life's planned and unplanned events.
- Inclusive workplaces are built on a foundation of shared values and goals.
- Employees and leaders have the skills to treat others inclusively and are held accountable through equitable processes.
- The result is that people exhibit inclusive behaviours which results in an inclusive culture.

### Essential Language

- As part of any transformational change, it is necessary to be strategic and purposeful in our communication in order to see any change effectively implemented and realized. How we implement change matters.
- We also need to be persuasive and effectively motivate our audience to hear our message and act upon that message.
- Listening, in particular, is an essential language skills that can be used to better understand the perspective, values, and experiences of others.
- In the absence of listening, a person's perspective may not feel heard, resulting in feeling silenced or excluded.

### Essential Education

- Additional training will be required for leaders to support EDI strategies, policy changes, and guide behavioural changes in all employees.
- Course design will move beyond just information transmission to incorporate activities involving critical thinking and practice using inclusive skills.
- Educational elements could include common language, genuine listening skills, historical awareness, allyship, reconciliation, anti-racism, and by-stander interventions.

## Study Phase Outcomes & Next Phase Outlook

A series of meetings and workshops were held with industry and academic committee members during the project initiation phase. The primary purpose of this first phase of study was align key stakeholders from industry and academia with common language and processes to be used throughout the remaining four phases of study. Phase 1 involved a review of relevant literature for understanding gender retention in the Saskatchewan mining industry and engineering profession. During the first phase of the study, researchers, industry representatives, and academics populated a Recommendation Evaluation Tool. This tool, similar to a risk matrix, will be used throughout subsequent study phases to capture and evaluate EDI recommendations.

In the next phase of study, researchers plan to interview 10 – 20 people who are working to make EDI changes happen. Diversity of experiences, genders, races, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, and abilities will be considered when selecting participants for these 1-hour interviews. Researchers are interested to find examples of how these champions are inspiring allies and perhaps acting as allies towards groups with whom they do not necessarily identify.

## Contact Information

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### Need support with leading your EDI Changes?

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