



Reconciliation, Equity & Anti-racism Statement

April 2026

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Reconciliation, Equity & Anti-racism Statement (REARS)

The Foundation's Purpose, Vision and Values

The Foundation's purpose is *"To build community well-being and generosity"* with a vision of *"Powering Oakville's social infrastructure & generosity to build a thriving community for all."*

Our values are: *"Responsive Leadership, Collaboration, Trustworthiness, Belonging & Kindness."*

Striving to achieve our values requires an acknowledgement that there are systemic barriers and persistent inequalities in our community that result in an unequal sense of belonging and opportunity to connect, contribute and realize their potential. One of our main strategic plan priorities is to reduce inequities in our operations and our community.

Our Commitment to Reduce Inequities in our Operations and our Community

The Foundation is committed to removing the lingering imprint of colonialism, systemic racism and all forms of discrimination on its operational plans, policies and practices. To support these efforts, The Foundation has aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to monitor our progress, and that of our community, ensuring we "leave no one behind."

To "leave no one behind" is an ambitious goal that aligns with our Vision statement to: *"Build a healthy, vital community where everyone has a sense of belonging and the opportunity to connect, contribute and realize their potential."* **SDG #10: Reduced Inequalities** includes a broad range of those experiencing inequity with diverse backgrounds and experiences. As a charity granting agency, we have influence in our community on the practices and policies of grant recipients. As such, we believe that we can play a leadership role in engaging charity grant recipients in developing their own Equity and Anti-Racism policies.

We can also support equity-deserving communities with accommodations to help improve access to funding, being an enabling force to help remove barriers for these types of applications and be conscious of the concept of "do no harm." With that in mind, the following action plan outlines our community-focused initiatives towards greater SDG #10 alignment. As stewards of endowed funds, we champion local equity initiatives to our Fundholders and donors. However, Fundholders have the greatest discretion over our granting, currently directing over 90% of our grants as set out in Fundholder Agreements. We recognize our role in educating our Fundholders and community through our storytelling, research and subsequent solution creation. Despite current local data limitations, we are committed to bringing an equity lens to the data collection and research that we undertake on behalf of our community that informs granting and solution development.

In addition to our focus on SDG #10 to "leave no one behind", an anti-racism agenda requires The Foundation to create spaces of belonging for voices of underrepresented groups in its research, granting and impact agendas. It requires us to also ensure that we and the local philanthropic sector are not imposing our collective will on equity-deserving communities and that we engage them in solution development.

The Foundation will move forward in the development of our policies and practices in consultation with representatives of equity-deserving communities and encourage the voices of lived experiences in grant-seeking organizations. While we are not a traditional justice-seeking

organization presenting policy proposals to the government, we are their allies and we recognize that we have a leadership role to play in our local community and charitable sector.

This Statement aligns to **SDG#10: Reduced Inequalities**.



SDG #10: Reduce inequalities within and amongst countries

Targets 10.3 and 10.4 include empowering and promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, gender diversity (sex*), disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic status and ensure equal opportunity and reduced inequalities.

**The Foundation recognizes a broader definition than the UN's limited focus on "sex-based" inequalities. As such, we will use the words gender diversity (sex) in this definition.*

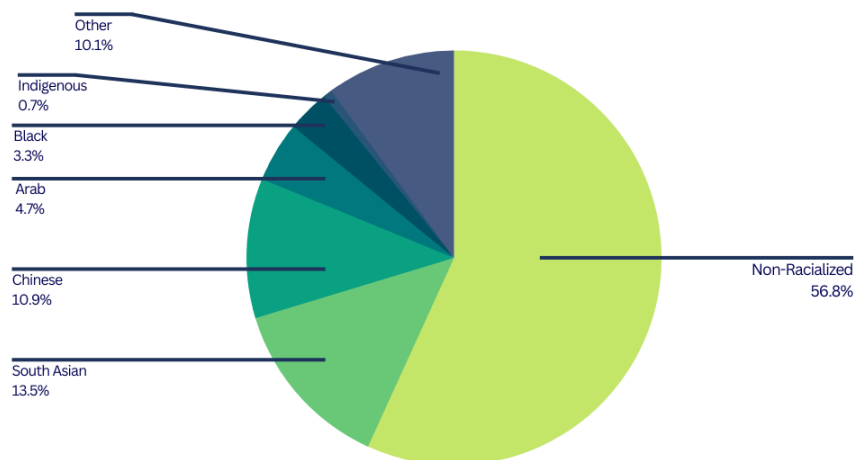
Our Community

As The Foundation strives towards aligning the Board and Staff to reflect the community it serves, it is important to understand the current diversity in Oakville. **In 2021, the population in Oakville had increased by 10.3% to more than 213,000 people.** The increase in Oakville is nearly twice both the provincial average (5.8%) and the national average (5.2%). The population estimate as of 2025 is 240,000.

Based on data obtained from the 2021 census, we know that an estimated **43.2% of Oakville residents report as racialized or with Indigenous ancestry**, including **South Asian (13.5%), Chinese (10.9%), Arab (4.7%), Black (3.3%) and Indigenous (0.7%)**. This is an **11.7% increase in racialized individuals since 2016**, meaning Oakville's population has gone from one-third racialized to nearly half.

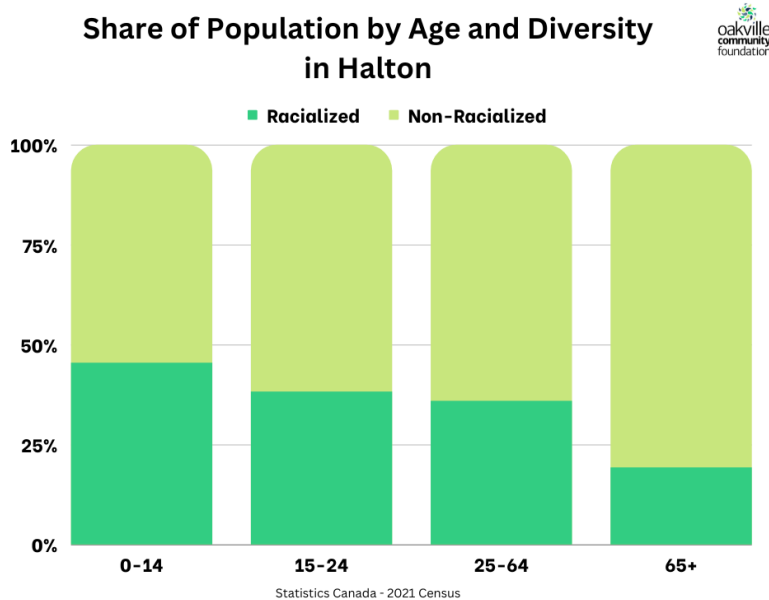
This increase makes the goal of **SDG#10: Reduced Inequalities** even more pressing. The concerns addressed in this statement are not just assumed, but are real issues faced by nearly half of the population in our Town.

Oakville's Racialized Population



Overall, low-income rates have decreased in Oakville from 2016 to 2021. L6K, the Kerr Street Village area, has a low income rate of 12.8% or one-in-ten people.¹

In 2020, the poverty rate of Halton’s racialized population was 8.7% and 12.1% in Oakville. Indigenous individuals in Halton had a poverty rate of 5.3% and 7.1% in Oakville.² More than one in five non-binary people in Canada live in poverty.³



The table above reveals greater diversity for Oakville’s future. Looking at Oakville’s population by age, **diversity is highest among youth**. In addition, the [HDSB student census](#) reported that the greatest share of Oakville’s elementary students identified their faith as Muslim (27%). In the Halton Youth Impact Survey, **Oakville has the smallest percentage of survey participants born in Canada (68%)** compared to other cities and towns in Halton Region.⁴ As such, we can anticipate that Oakville’s demographic profile in the future will be more reflective of its younger residents and thus more diverse.

The proportion of Oakville residents diagnosed with a disability did not change significantly between 2018 and 2023, from 45.3% to 44.4%. Mental health-related disability rates in 2023 were highest (34%), followed by physical (13.9%) and vision (4.9%). Mental health-related disability rates are highest for those 20-24 at 41.4%. The postal code with the highest instance of disability rates in Oakville is L6K with 49.5%, and the lowest instance is in L6M with 42.8%. (ICES).⁵

¹ [Oakville Community Foundation - Is Oakville a Wealthy Community?](#)

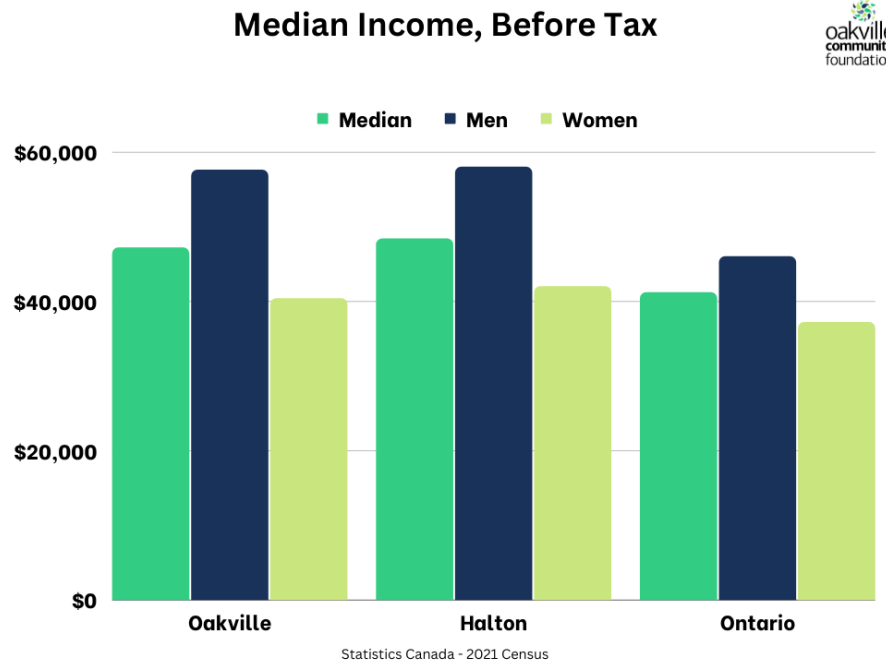
² [Community Development Halton - Our Halton: Income Inequality & Poverty](#)

³ [Disaggregated Trends in Poverty From the 2021 Census of Population](#)

⁴ [Building For the Future: How Youth in Halton Engage in Caring for their Communities](#)

⁵ Disability in Oakville: Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile - Sheridan College & Oakville Community Foundation

The HDSB and HCDSB student census also collected information on disabilities, and, combined, 3,800 students in elementary and secondary schools considered themselves to be a person with a disability(ies).⁶



The median household income in Oakville increased by 12.6% to \$128,000 in 2021, higher than in Halton Region, Ontario, and Canada. Most recent 2024 estimates identify a median household income of \$145,000, almost 50% higher than the provincial median.⁷

Also, based on the 2021 census data, **women** represent 51% of Oakville's population. The median total income for an individual Halton resident was \$48,400, 15% higher than the provincial average. As indicated in the chart above, the **average income for a woman in Halton was \$42,000** compared to **\$58,000 for men**. This difference results in a **38% gender income gap in Halton**. Women of colour in Ontario experience a higher wage gap, with Arab women at 49% and Black women at 42%. Indigenous women experience a 39% wage gap compared to Indigenous men.⁸

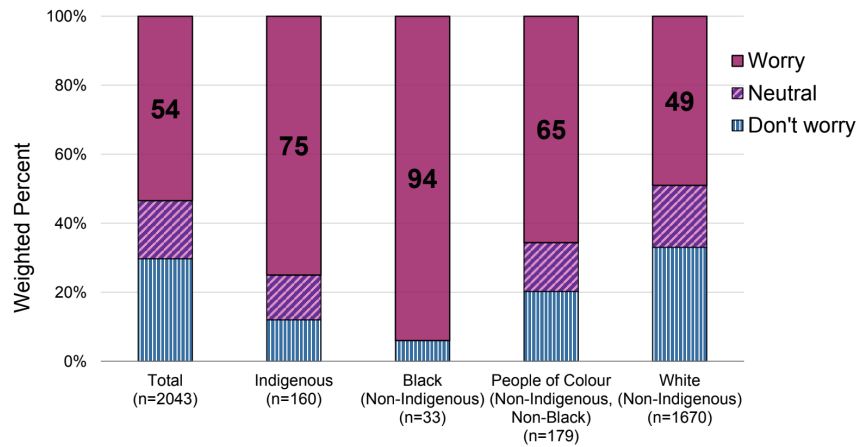
The 2021 census has provided national data that 0.33% of Canadians identify as transgender or non-binary. When applied to Oakville's 2021 population of 213,759, **it is estimated that over 700 people identify as transgender and non-binary in our community.**

⁶ [Community Development Halton - Our Halton: Diversity](#)

⁷ [Oakville Community Foundation - Is Oakville a Wealthy Community?](#)

⁸ [The Gender Wage Gap - Pay Equity Ontario](#)

Proportion of trans and non-binary participants who worry about being harassed or stopped by police or security.



2SLGBTQIA+ and gender diverse populations experience higher rates of mental health concerns, including depression, anxiety and substance abuse, due to discrimination, harassment and barriers to equitable health services. The chart above indicates that **trans and non-binary populations worry intensively about being harassed or stopped by police or security, with 94% of Black trans and non-binary populations indicating this is something they worry about.**

2SLGBTQIA+ youth are 2-3 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual, cisgender peers; one Ontario-based study found 47% of trans people age 16-24 had considered suicide recently, and 19% had attempted suicide in the past year. Racialized 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals have mental health needs nearly 5% higher compared to non-racialized 2SLGBTQIA+ people and 16% higher compared to cis-hetero-non-racialized people.⁹

Definitions

Allyship is an ongoing process of learning where a member of a different group works to end a form of discrimination for a particular individual or designated group. Allies must also have some degree of power to effect change¹⁰.

Anti-Racism is an active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism. Being antiracist is based on conscious efforts and actions to provide equitable opportunities for all people.

“BIPOC” is an acronym that stands for “Black, Indigenous and People of Colour”.

"While we use the term BIPOC to acknowledge collective experiences of racialization, we recognize this term is an umbrella and does not reflect the unique, distinct histories and current realities of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Colour."

⁹ [Health Equity Impact Assessment - LGBT2SQ Populations Supplement](#)

¹⁰ National Institute of Health offices of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Blog by: Samantha-Rae Dickenson <https://www.edi.nih.gov/blog/communities/what-allyship>

Diversity is the acceptance and respect for various dimensions, including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, age, physical abilities, political beliefs, and other ideologies.

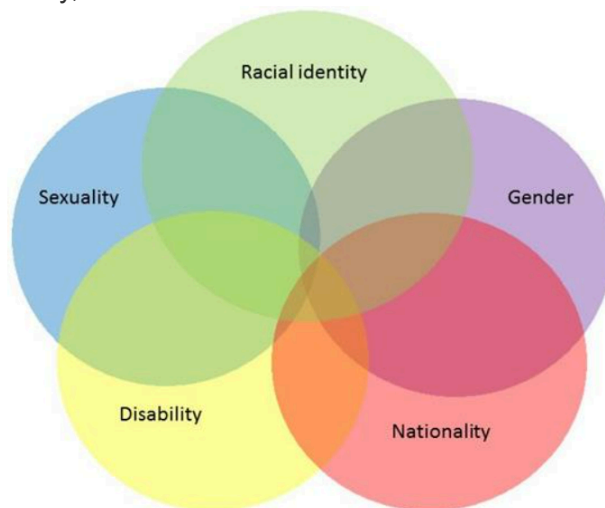
Equity is an approach whereby all people – including those who bear the burden of historic and contemporary forms of marginalization, whether intentional or unintentional – have equal access to opportunities to choose, define and achieve goals. Equity acknowledges unequal starting points and addresses the unequal needs, conditions, and positions of people and communities created by institutional and structural barriers. Equity levels the playing field so that everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

Equity-Deserving Communities is a term used for the purposes of this document to include groups that are marginalized by societal structures. Equity-deserving communities often experience social and financial disadvantages as a result of systems of oppression, including but not limited to racism, sexism, heterosexism and ableism. Examples of equity-deserving communities include: Indigenous peoples; ethnic or linguistic minorities; sexual and people of different sexualities and or gender identities; and people with mental illness or physical or intellectual disabilities.

Inclusion is about people with diverse identities being valued and welcomed. Inclusion is about making sure that a diverse mix of people is able to work well together.

Reciprocity is the practice of exchanging resources with others for mutual benefit, especially privileges granted by one country or organization to another.

This list is not exhaustive and is always evolving. Additional definitions are in the [Belonging and Racial Identity in Halton](#) report. People who belong to multiple equity-deserving communities often experience overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage referred to as intersectionality, identified in the chart below.



The Foundation's Action Plan Operations

Under the leadership of the Governance and Nominating Committee, The Foundation is asking the uncomfortable questions that need to be asked about our current structure and operations. As a privileged charitable entity and local sector leader, it is incumbent upon us to lead by example and share a pathway forward with local charities.

The Foundation can utilize the power of its procurement to amplify equity practices in our community. The Foundation will review anti-racism and equity policies of major suppliers to signal The Foundation's commitment to systemic change to them and to encourage suppliers to develop and implement such policies. The Foundation's largest supplier is the investment manager employed to manage the investment pool. As part of its oversight of the manager's performance, the Investment Committee reviewed the manager's Global Respect and Inclusion Policy. The Foundation will continue to monitor the policies of new suppliers as supported by its new procurement policy.

Action #1: Foundation to request and review Reconciliation, Equity and Anti-racism policies for major suppliers. - COMPLETE

New Action #1: Monitor policies of new suppliers - ONGOING

In addition, The Foundation, as part of its 2022 Business Plan, developed a new Procurement Policy. The new policy seeks to support change and reduce barriers to suppliers from equity-deserving communities. The new policy requires requests for proposals and includes questions about suppliers' reconciliation, equity and anti-racism policies. We have engaged 15 diverse suppliers, including Jensen Group, an Indigenous digital media company, Nish Tees, an Indigenous custom shirt supplier, and DAM Studios, a local AV Production studio. The Foundation will continue to monitor the number of suppliers from equity-deserving communities.

Action #2: New Procurement Policy to be developed, including a requirement for requests for proposals to employ inclusive language to ensure an equitable process and to consider vendors' Reconciliation, Equity and Anti-racism Policies. - COMPLETE

New Action #2: Monitor the number of suppliers from equity deserving communities - ONGOING

While all activities of The Foundation will be open to scrutiny and consideration in this review, resources, capacity and time will dictate priorities.

Governance and Nominating Committee DEI Operational Review

The Governance and Nominating Committee undergoes ongoing review of the adequacy of current Foundation policies and practices with respect to inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism to ensure the creation of inclusive systems and accommodations as needed.

As changes are implemented, it is important for The Foundation to share its learning journey and knowledge with the local charity sector, as well as guidance if new policies impacting granting are introduced. The Foundation rolls out its shared learnings and new policies through webinars, blogs and information sessions. For example, the Enable Education tool is shared

with charities applying to GIVEOakville as well as through our eNews, and we continue to see registration and completion of the course.



10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, gender diversity (sex), disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

Action #3: Governance and Nominating Committee to review the adequacy of current Foundation policies and practices with respect to inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism. - ONGOING

Action #4: Foundation to share learnings and new policies with local charities and other Community Foundations when requested. - ONGOING

There are calls from within Government and regulatory bodies to require public reporting of the demographic profile of charity board leadership as a means of ensuring greater diversity. As part of its risk management process, The Foundation must be prepared to enable reporting if demanded by regulatory bodies. As part of its work tracking the diversity of The Foundation Board and staff, the Governance and Nominating Committee has developed a means to monitor The Foundation's progress under **SDG Indicator #10.2**. All new volunteer board member prospects are invited to share their demographic identity with the Governance and Nominating Committee as part of the nomination process.

Action #5: Governance and Nominating Committee to track the diversity of Foundation Board and staff to enable reporting as required by regulatory bodies. - ONGOING

Indigenous Cultural Advisor

The Foundation has brought a local focus to Truth & Reconciliation initiatives and is committed to working in partnership with local organizations like the Town, Oakville Public Library, school boards and Sheridan College to move this agenda forward. The Foundation has also taken the further step to directly engage an Indigenous Cultural Advisor from the local treaty-holders to provide guidance to The Foundation, staff, Board and community on reconciliation and an Indigenous perspective to local activities.

The guidance of Elder Peter Schuler has resulted in a number of events, initiatives and activities, including the Debwewin: The Oakville Truth Project, the Oakville Treaty Report, the Treaty 22 and 14 Town signs, Treaty Celebration event, New Debwewin Oakville Museum Exhibit and more.

Action #6: Foundation to engage an Indigenous Cultural Advisor to guide The Foundation, Board and community on Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation. - ONGOING

Reciprocity and Allyship: Debwewin: The Oakville Truth Project

In partnership with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), The Foundation launched Debwewin in October 2021 to further our shared understanding of Oakville's Indigenous past and support local Truth & Reconciliation.

Led by MCFN Elder and Indigenous Advisor Peter Schuler, it had an Advisory Council guiding the project to foster a deeper understanding of the local history of the Indigenous people in Oakville from an Anishinaabek perspective. In 2022, The Ally Leadership Council was launched to support community-to-community reconciliation. The Debwewin Project has a number of main long-term objectives and continues to work with Mississauga’s of the Credit First Nations, and local organizations to achieve these objectives. The progress has been shared in the table below:

Objective	Progress
<p>1. Identify, restore and promote the living cultural legacy both pre-colonial and post-colonial, connecting the MCFN and the broader Anishinaabek nation back to Oakville.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Created the Debwewin website to share knowledge and allyship ● Began the development of a repository for MCFN documents ● Supported the Debwewin: Truth of the Land event at the Oakville Centre for Performing Arts ● Supported OFFA indigenous film presentations in recognition of National Indigenous Peoples Day in 2024 and 2025.
<p>2. Recognize Treaty 22 and 14 are living, breathing documents and identify its presence on the land through placemaking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Surveyed the treaties and shared maps on the Debwewin website ● Paid for Town Treaty signage ● Created Treaty signage for purchase ● Debwewin Exhibit available free to community organizations to use and display at their location ● Plans for opening a dedicated Indigenous Gathering Space are underway to be completed in 2026.
<p>3. Honour the allyship of local treaties. Generate local pride in being Treaty People.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launched the Acts of Allyship and Grateful Treaty People campaign ● Created the Commitment to Truth & Allyship ● Launched the Allyship poetry contests ● Created Grateful treaty people buttons and t-shirts ● Commitment to reciprocity through gift giving and participation with community events
<p>4. Increase the shared understanding of the Indigenous perspective of Treaty 22 and the “truth” of how the Mississaugas became landless.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Friendship, Peace and Respect for all Future Generations a report on the MCFN Treaty history of Oakville authored by Emma Stelter former MCFN Governance Coordinator and Policy Analyst

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available free on Debwewin website and for purchase in hardcopy
<p>5. Recover the Indigenous names, significant geographical locations, historical Indigenous figures and Indigenous belief systems in Oakville and bring awareness through placemaking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with MCFN, the Oakville Museum created three copies of Debwewin: The Oakville Truth project exhibits on the shared history for both MCFN and Oakville. • Received provincial anti-racism funding to develop 3 new videos for the Museum’s Exhibits and Community Classroom assets • Community medicine garden will be planted and opening in 2026
<p>6. Develop educational tools to generate broad awareness and shared understanding in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022/23 Paid for live streaming of Susan Aglukark’s Nomad to classrooms • 2022/23 Purchased Moccasin Identifier kits for all Oakville schools • Creating Elementary School Kits that will accompany the Museum Exhibit • 2023/24 created a Virtual Moccasin Trail guided walk for students with Knowledge Keeper Stephen Paquette • 2023/24 Debwewin Videos Free to all Halton Schools online • 2025/26 Partnership in creating Elementary School Kits that will accompany the Museum Exhibit

As a Truth and Reconciliation process, Debwewin relies on healing relationships, sharing truths, listening to the knowledge that is being shared and doing our part to redress past harms. As we recover the truth, healing the original intended relationship of the Treaties as Treaties of Allyship, providing reciprocity — equal benefits from the land to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples — offers a path forward. Restoring allyship and reciprocity with MCFN initially offers tangible outcomes for local reconciliation.

The Foundation has committed to acts of reciprocity such as ensuring the programming through Community Classroom is available to schools in Oakville and to Lloyd S. King Elementary School, that Museum exhibits and accompanying school kits are created for both communities, sharing proceeds from the sale of Treaty plaques, Debwewin t-shirts and the Treaty report while they are available for purchase, as well as ensuring that both communities are able to participate together in community events, such as author events and film screenings.

Action #7: Foundation to commit to reciprocity: mutual benefit in the Debwewin project for the MCFN and Oakville communities. - ONGOING

Equity in Philanthropy and Granting

The Foundation will, as part of the monitoring of The Foundation's progress under **SDG Indicator #10.2**, strive to engage diverse donors and grant applicants located in Oakville. The Foundation will track its allocation of grants to equity-seeking charities that are local to our community and will determine if additional action is required to reach these local charitable equity-seeking communities. **Although some of the philanthropy and granting efforts may be provincial or national in scope, The Foundation's focus and priority will be on opportunities to support local organizations.** Communication processes were reviewed to ensure equitable promotion of donor events and philanthropic and granting opportunities.

The Foundation produces online advertisements in languages such as Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish and Arabic for its GIVEOakville campaign and advertises through community-specific publications like Sing Tao to ensure we are reaching more diverse audiences. Our GIVEOakville Leadership Council endeavors to add members from various cultural communities throughout Town, to ensure more voices are at the table and to help expand the campaign to the entire Oakville community.

Action #8: Foundation to strive to engage diverse donors. - ON-GOING

Action #9: Foundation to track grants to charitable equity-deserving communities and determine if additional action is required to overcome barriers for local Charities from these communities. - ON-GOING

Currently, to receive a community grant, we require charities to sign a Human Rights Code anti-discrimination resolution. We have moved towards greater SDG #10 alignment - **Reducing Inequalities** - in our charity granting requirements from the lens of "leave no one behind". In the event of Foundation top-up dollars being made available for community granting, a minimum of 10% of that total is to be allocated to BIPOC and gender-led organizations that meet a specific set of criteria. This criterion has been developed in consultation with these representative groups. GIVEOakville 2025 saw 11 charities receive these allocated funds for BIPOC and gender-led organizations, along with other donations that totalled \$124,840.67.

The Foundation's Granting Policy for applications with Indigenous or equity-deserving community focus, content or impact requires that such applications be either led or guided by that community. It also commits to reviewing community grant applications that have Indigenous or equity-deserving community content, focus or impact by members of that community. In support of increasing equity in The Foundation's granting practices, in 2022, the Granting Policy was updated to include a requirement for community grant applications relevant to or submitted by equity-deserving groups be led or guided by members of those communities. Charitable solutions for Indigenous and equity-deserving communities must be done "with them and not for them".

At the same time, The Foundation looks to members of equity-seeking communities to be part of The Foundation's application review process, particularly if grants pertain to the BIPOC community for guidance, cultural relevance and acceptability. In addition, regional charities have been encouraged to engage in The Foundation's DEI education tool to further their DEI journey and understanding. This supports the understanding of our granting process and overall mandate.

Action #10: Granting Policy to be updated to ensure charity granting recipients are committed to SDG #10 to "leave no one behind" and will work actively to build

an organizational culture and practice that is inclusive, equitable and anti-racist. - COMPLETE

Action #11: Grants awarded for grant applications from supporting equity-deserving communities must be advised or led by members of those equity-deserving communities. - ONGOING

Action #12: The Foundation will engage grant reviewers from equity-deserving organizations to assist in reviews of applications supporting equity-deserving communities. - ONGOING

Equity in Investing

The Investment Policy, which governs the investments held by The Foundation in the Investment Pool of over \$100 million in charitable funds, reflects consideration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in the investment process — which include equity and anti-racism issues in employment practices and public relations — is necessary to optimize long-term risk-adjusted returns, reduce reputational risk and align with its mission of building opportunity for future generations. The policy specifies that Investment Managers for the Investment Pool will be required to be signatories of the “United Nations Principles for Responsible Investments” (UNPRI).

As part of The Foundation’s commitment towards equity, the Investment Committee will continue to request reporting from our Investment Manager on investments in the portfolio and proxy voting activities that align with SDGs.

Action #13: Investment Committee to work with investment managers to understand how investments in the portfolio align with Equity focused SDG’s like SDG #10. - ONGOING

The Foundation has an opportunity to provide leadership and progress for equity-seeking communities through Impact Investing. The Foundation’s investment of \$50,000 in a promissory note to Windmill Microlending is an example. Windmill provides loans to skilled immigrants who require education and/or re-accreditation in Canada to have access to the Canadian labour market. There is a direct impact on SDG #10 by reducing inequalities for BIPOC immigrants who face barriers to appropriate employment. In 2022, the Foundation invested \$250,000 in the Ilu Investment Impact Bond managed by The Deetken Group to advance gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2025 the Foundation invested \$250,000 in Verge Breakthrough Fund II, which invests in social enterprises that increase access to food, housing, employment, education, healthcare, cultural supports, and economic opportunities for historically excluded and equity-deserving populations.

The Foundation, through its Impact Investment Committee, aligns and tracks all of our Impact Investments to the relevant SDGs, including SDG #10. Impact Investments that benefit equity-seeking communities will be identified, and The Foundation will consider if additional action is required to reach these communities to create Impact Investment opportunities.

Action #14: Impact Investment Committee to track Impact Investments aligned with SDG’s, including SDG #10, and consider if additional action is required to reach these communities. - ON-GOING

In addition, in the consideration of new investment opportunities, the Impact Investment Committee will apply an equity lens to the evaluation of new Impact Investing opportunities.

Impact Investment guidelines note that Investment opportunities with Indigenous or BIPOC content, focus or impact will be reviewed by members of the Indigenous community for Indigenous guidance, cultural relevance and acceptability.

Action #15: Impact Investment Committee to apply an equity lens to the evaluation of new Impact Investment opportunities. - ONGOING

Equity in Research and Storytelling

Amplification of diversity in research and storytelling will empower equity-deserving communities to share their stories, which will provide further exposure to these groups and enable everyone to educate themselves and make changes. Storytelling provides collective memory in many cultures, including Indigenous cultures.

Despite current local data limitations, we are committed to bringing an equity lens to the data collection and research that we undertake on behalf of our community, which informs granting and solution development. For a local equity lens, The Foundation will rely on BIPOC researchers and advisors to interpret data for us which describes them and the community. For example, the **Belonging and Racial Identity in Halton** report engaged BIPOC members of the community to serve as advisors, researchers, writers and interpreters of the data before publication. Similarly, the “**Our Community Legacy: What Oakville Will Our Children and Grandchildren Inherit?**” climate report centered on environmental justice by ensuring the inclusion of an Indigenous perspective with a foreword by Elder Peter Schuler, Indigenous Advisor to The Foundation. The report acknowledges the disproportionate impact of climate change on equity-deserving and older communities and the vital role of traditional ecological knowledge in securing a fair, livable future for all.

Action #16: Foundation data collection and research reports include an environmental and equity lens. ONGOING

As a leader in the local charitable community, The Foundation must strive to engage diverse voices in telling shared stories about philanthropy in Oakville and profile new BIPOC-focused charities. The Foundation published an excerpt of its 2019 **25 Community Conversations** report in Mandarin and has summaries of its 2020 **Resiliency Report** in Spanish, Arabic, Punjabi and Mandarin to increase the accessibility of the information to more diverse sectors of the community. Additionally, The Foundation has translated pieces from Debwewin: The Oakville Truth Project into Anishinaabemowin. The Foundation’s land acknowledgement was available in 5 languages in 2022. BIPOC and gender-diverse charities are also periodically profiled in The Foundation’s eNews communications as well as highlighted on social media platforms.

As part of this effort to reflect the diversity in Oakville, The Foundation will ensure that diverse voices are included in its reports and in other public communications. The Foundation engages external experts and advisors from specific populations to provide their knowledge for our reporting. As an ongoing mandate, we are focused on building an internal volunteer and staff structure that is reflective of the populations we serve. Through committee and board work, volunteers provide further community perspective and insights to our work.

Action #17: Foundation reports reflect diverse voices and stories. - ONGOING

Commitment to Continued Listening and Learning

Foundation staff members attended a webinar series entitled Deconstructing Anti-Black Racism, led by Leena Sharma Seth, founder of Mending the Chasm, Fundholder and former Burlington Foundation employee. The Board and staff were invited to attend a tailored presentation to increase their understanding of BIPOC issues and to support our commitment to focus on DEI. As part of The Foundation's leadership in the journey towards increased diversity, inclusion and equity in the charitable sector in our community, The Foundation will continue to provide opportunities for education and learning for staff, volunteers and local charities. For example staff host Lunch and Learn segments to share learning opportunities from various sectors

With in-kind support from Enable Education and the assistance of experts, advisors and champions, The Foundation developed an online learning program targeted at the local charity sector to assist them in their learning journeys of DEI. The tool is available to charities' staff, volunteers and board members. All Foundation staff have undertaken the Enable Education learning tool.

Action #18: Foundation to provide opportunities for education and training for staff, volunteers and local charities. - ONGOING

In March 2025 The Foundation hosted an Inclusivity and AODA Webinar for Charities featuring a leader from Community Living Oakville discussing the Impact of Accessibility and Inclusion to those living with disabilities and a legal expert from McMillan LLP discussing Understanding AODA. Charities were provided with sample resources including a multi-year accessibility plan and AODA policy.

This Statement is a living document that we expect to evolve and grow with our own education, awareness and strategic thinking. We must continue to listen and to reevaluate processes and actions to ensure we seek to listen, remain humble, relevant and open to emerging needs, ideas and ways of working.

Appendix 1: Reconciliation, Equity & Anti-racism Action Plan- Sept 1, 2022

#	Action	Results
1	Request and review Anti-Racism and Equity Policies for major suppliers.	2024 Ongoing Review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Large Vendor policies tracked ● Vendor survey sent to vendors and new not-for-profit Community Classroom partners ● Responses collected and reviewed
2	New Procurement Policy to be developed, including a requirement for requests for proposals to employ inclusive language to ensure an equitable process and to consider vendors' Anti-racism and Equity Policies.	Completed May 2023 - New Procurement Policy approved and in place. Representative and diverse suppliers engaged for Debwewin, Racial Identity & Belonging report, video & DEI online training
3	Review the adequacy of current Foundation policies and practices with respect to inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism.	Ongoing - G&N Committee has a responsibility to review all new and revised policies before recommending them to the Board. G&N added responsibility to review policies with respect to inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism to the Terms of Reference. 2023 Granting Policy updated to refer to REARS. REARs review on the committee's annual work plan.
4	Share learnings and new policies through information sessions and communications with local charities.	2022 - local Halton charities provided with a link to the Enable training program with over 180 users, 90+ charities. Outreach to GiveOakville Charities to offer use of the tool; BIPOC and Climate report shared with community through enews, local news and more 2023/24 - Treaty 22 event, local charities and stakeholders invited to MCFN 2024/25 Indigenous Film events on Indigenous people day and a featured 2SLGBTQIA+ historical educational film Ongoing - Enews reminders to Charities that Enable education tool is available, continued registration

<p>5</p>	<p>Track diversity of Foundation Board and staff to enable reporting as required by regulatory bodies.</p>	<p>Staff is predominantly white and female. 2023 Spring and Fall intern and 2024 Winter Indigenous Associate and Fall</p> <p>High School Coop student meet diversity criteria. Broad outreach done for the 2024 new hire after the 2024 staff retirement.</p> <p>Governance and Nominations Committee- Board Dimensions and Diversification Survey Annual Review</p> <p>Of 12 elected Board members in 2023, 42% were female, and 50% were racialized</p> <p>Of 15 elected Board members in 2024, 53% were female, and 40% were racialized</p> <p>Of 15 elected Board members in 2025, 47% were female, and 40% were racialized</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Engage an Indigenous Cultural Advisor to guide The Foundation, Board and Community on Indigenous Reconciliation.</p>	<p>National TRC Day held Sep 2021 Debwewin launched in Oct 2021 Debwewin website Launch Feb 2022 Debwewin event May 2022 The Debwewin Workshop with Sheridan College, Nov 2022 Treaty Report Launch Feb 28th 2023 Treaty Day celebration, March 4, 2023 Partnered to host an event on Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21st, 2023 Debwewin Video Launch Feb 28th, 2024 Treaty Day Celebration March 2nd, 2024 June 20, 2024, National Indigenous Peoples Day, Gimaa Laforme Poetry Reading partnership with OPL March 2025 Author event and Beading workshop partnership 2024/25 National Indigenous Peoples Day Film event partnership 2025 Participation in MCFNs Caring Together Day 2026 New Indigenous Gathering Space project</p>

7	Commit to reciprocity: mutual benefit in the Debwewin project for the MCFN and Oakville communities.	Community Classroom offers programming to MCFN. Awards Hub is open to Indigenous students. Debwewin projects have mutual benefits. Museum Exhibit, School Kit & Treaty Report Sales from Report and Plaque sales are shared with MCFN.
8	Strive to engage diverse donors.	Multi-language outreach materials developed for Community Classroom and Community Education Awards Hub in Mandarin, Punjabi, Arabic; Treaty Plaque offered in French and land acknowledgements in 5 languages; GIVEOakville online ads and info translated into Mandarin, Punjabi, Arabic, Spanish and advertisements run with Sing Tao for the Chinese population
9	Track grants to charitable equity-seeking communities in Quarterly Reports and determine if additional action is required to overcome barriers for local charities from these communities.	Ongoing tracking in quarterly grants reports Q1 2025 18 Grants REAR \$ 149,070,68 6 Grants Gender Equity \$ 30,379.77 Total: \$170,450.45 Q2 2025 10 Grants REAR \$ 540,000.00 10 Grants Gender Equity \$ 85,500.00 Total \$ 625,500.00 Q3 2025 7 Grants REAR \$ 34,649.89 1 Grants Gender Equity \$ 1,500 Total \$ 36,149.89 Q4 2025 28 Grants REAR \$ 430,063.00 8 Grants Gender Equity \$ 84,720.00 Total \$ 514,783.00

10	Update Granting Policy to ensure charity granting recipients are committed to SDG 10 to “leave no one behind” and anti-racism.	Completed 2022 Annual Review ongoing
11	Grants awarded for grant applications from supporting equity-deserving communities must be advised or led by members of those equity seeking communities.	2025 - 11 such grants to awarded through GIVEOakville worth \$124,840.67
12	Engage grant reviewers from equity-deserving organizations to assist in reviews of applications supporting equity-seeking communities.	Ongoing - required by Granting Policy
13	Understand how investments in the portfolio align with equity focused SDG’s like SDG #10.	Pooled Investments - Fiera is a UNPRI Signatory, Member of RIA and Canadian Coalition for Good Governance. ESG Integration across Canadian and Foreign Equity, Fixed Income and Alternative mandates.
14	Track Impact Investments aligned with SDG’s, including SDG #10, and consider if additional action is required to reach these communities.	Complete. Impact Investments - Approved Impact Investments aligned with SDG #10 - Deetken (\$250K), Canadian Canoe Museum (\$160K), and Verge Breakthrough Fund (\$250K).
15	Apply an equity lens to evaluation of new Impact Investment opportunities.	In the evaluation of the Canoe Museum investment, Elder Peter Schuler’s advice was sought on the curation and presentation of Indigenous content and the Museum’s relationship with Indigenous people. Elder Peter’s advice was also sought on the Carolinian Canada Social Impact bond.
16	Foundation data collection and research reports to include an environmental and equity lens.	Ongoing: Research will be interpreted by those who it describes. Racial Identity & Belonging research included an Advisory Council, racialized researchers, writers and designer, and filmmakers.

		<p>Oakville Treaty report created with Indigenous oversight and a designer.</p> <p>Climate Report created in partnership with SME's and Indigenous Advisor</p> <p>2026 Research report underway exploring diversity in relation to disability and youth mental health using research provided from Sheridan College</p>
17	Annual Report to reflect diverse voices and stories.	<p>2022 - Report included a profile of Elder Peter, Gender diversity stories and BIPOC grants. Multiple languages' land acknowledgement was also included</p> <p>2023 - AR reflects gender-diverse grants, BIPOC report and Indigenous voices through Debwewin</p> <p>2024 - gender-diverse grants through the Gender Equality Fund, diverse content through Community Classroom, Indigenous voices through Treaty Report, gender-diverse reporting through IPV epidemic</p>
18	Provide opportunities for education and training for staff, volunteers and local charities.	<p>Sept 30/21 event for Board staff members, volunteers</p> <p>May 24th event: Truth of the Land for all volunteers, staff and Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ongoing Staff education at Team meetings - All team members complete Enable DEI education - DEI program shared with Board - CMHA course undertaken by all staff for Mental Health First Aid - OCF hosted a free Inclusivity and AODA Webinar for Charities with local SME's and sample resources - 2026 Student Awards ceremony will include keynote speaker Bev Goodman President and CEO of Ford Motor Company

Appendix II: Stakeholder Consultations: List of Advisors

We are grateful to the following community members for their insights and perspectives in helping to craft a more inclusive statement.

Angela Bellegarde, Indigenous Community Leader

Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton, Board of Directors

Alexandra Hoeck Murray, Executive Director, Community Living Oakville

Marcus Logan, Manager, Community Development & Engagement, Oakville Public Library

Richard Pinnock, Director, Chief Diversity Officer, Export Development Canada

Leena Sharma Seth, Founder, Mending the Chasm

Alicia Sullivan, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Sheridan College

Elder Peter Schuler, Indigenous Cultural Advisor to The Foundation, University of Waterloo, Educator & Elder of the Mississaugas of the Credit

Appendix III: Background

2021 Statement Consultations Began:

The first draft of this Statement was developed and shared in 2021 with Stakeholders representing diverse organizations and backgrounds. We are grateful to the many reviewers who shared their knowledge and expertise to make this statement better. A Stakeholder list is included in Appendix 2. At the same time, The Foundation began developing many of the initiatives expressed in this Statement to realize its commitments, so REARS would not be an empty statement.

Our Diversity and Inclusion journey expands to Equity and Anti-Racism

In 2015, we released a Vital Signs report entitled A Community of Contrasts that identified Oakville's population as 24% visible minority and 31% immigrant based (2011 Census). At the time, The Foundation's Board and Staff were not diverse: 1) The Board was 10 white males and 3 white females; and 2) The Team was all white females. We recognized that we needed to better reflect our community as a board and organization in order to facilitate better engagement across the full community. For our 2016-2018 Strategic Plan, "Diversity and Inclusion" was one of the pillars of our plans to develop local collaborative solutions. We also added the value of "Respect" with the following statement: *"We respect the diversity in our community and the need to create inclusion and a sense of belonging."*

In order to implement this new strategic direction, we undertook a number of initiatives to engage and reflect our community. In 2015, in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, we set up the Oakville Resettlement Fund to support newcomers and worked closely with a local Mosque, faith groups and resettlement services to support new neighbours.

In early 2016, in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action, The Foundation began engaging local Indigenous community members in discussions around

local Truth and Reconciliation. Local Indigenous leaders requested recognition on National Aboriginal (sic) Day in June, the development of Moccasin Trails and local history at the Oakville Museum. In June 2016, on National Aboriginal (sic) Day, Elder Peter Schuler spoke at a Foundation event at Sheridan College. The Foundation signed the Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action on Truth and Reconciliation, committing The Foundation to implement the relevant TRC's Calls to Action, including the UN Declaration of Rights for Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Leading up to the 2017 sesquicentennial, we reached out to many diverse organizations to engage in the 150th, and beyond, Canadian celebrations and funded many Indigenous-led projects as well as celebrations with our Black and Asian communities. As part of the Community Fund for Canada's 150th, with funding from the federal government, The Foundation provided matched funding for two Moccasin Trails and a new Indigenous Heritage Trail Kiosk.

Since 2016, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) and The Foundation have worked with community organizations to provide Oakville residents with events promoting Truth and Reconciliation, including public talks, panels, book launches, performances and video screenings. MCFN and The Foundation have previously partnered with the Town of Oakville, Oakville Public Library, Halton District School Board, Halton Catholic District School Board, Sheridan College and the YMCA. Annually, pre-COVID, events were held on June 20th, National Aboriginal (sic) Day. The Foundation was also a lead proponent in raising the MCFN flag permanently at Oakville's Town Hall.

We took leadership in developing and adopting a granting policy requiring any project that is Indigenous-focused to be Indigenous-guided and Indigenous-reviewed.

In 2017, to complete our sense of belonging research, we sought to engage neighbours representing diverse demographics in our community. In The Foundation's [Belonging in a Community of Contrasts](#) report, we found that *"those with a strong sense of belonging indicated pride and identity in the growing diversity of Oakville, people who reported a weaker sense of belonging were those who experienced discrimination and prejudice."* This finding helped us recognize the paradox that may be faced by immigrant and racialized people: that they were welcome (inclusion) but still felt discriminated against (racism) in Oakville. We recognized that the opportunities for inclusion are not sufficient to combat racism.

Survey data also showed that our "sense of belonging" was increased by participating in local arts and culture. In response, in 2018 The Foundation launched [Community Classroom](#), an initiative to bring a diverse range of local cultural groups to elementary schools. Diverse offerings from hip-hop dancers, steel pan drummers, Chinese opera singers, Indigenous-guided moccasin trail walks, live performances by the Visions of Turtle Island performance group and learning about Oakville's Underground Railway History serve to highlight the diversity of our community and foster a sense of belonging. As a result of the engagement of a broad cross-section of cultural groups with the successful Community Classroom initiative, The Foundation has strengthened its ties with diverse groups and people.

In 2019, as part of our 25th Anniversary celebration, we engaged 25 diverse groups for their thoughts on how to improve belonging in Oakville over the next 25 years. The [25 Community Conversations](#) report shared 25 proposals to build belonging. These groups represented a broad cross section of the community by race, gender, age, ability, income and interest. An

excerpt from the report was published in Mandarin. Our plans to support a number of Belonging projects were sidelined by the pandemic.

While our plans were waylaid in 2020, our focus shifted to ensure that there were no communities facing undue duress from the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. A diverse range of organizations were supported through the Emergency Community Support Fund, Investment Readiness Program, Gender Equality and Resiliency Funds, many for the first time.

We shared the data we gathered on the unequal impact of the pandemic on women, low-income and racialized people in our 2020 Resiliency Report. This Report was published in the 5 dominant languages in Oakville: English, Mandarin, Arabic, Punjabi and Spanish. The 2016 Census data appears in our 2020 Resiliency Report and reaffirms our commitment to greater representation, as racialized communities represented 31% of our population, and 37% of our neighbours were immigrants.

By our May 2020 AGM, the Board achieved greater diversity in representation with 50% of members from racialized communities and 42% female board members. This was achieved by actively recruiting through our community partners. The Team remains majority white but with greater gender and ability diversity. To date, we have not been able to maintain 2 permanent BIPOC-filled positions, and recognize that salary has been a main factor. The Strategic Plan has committed to bringing all staff to the Living Wage in four years. During the pandemic, diverse team members and consultants were hired to lead our Sense of Belonging BIPOC report. Through a concerted effort, there has been racial diversity in hiring, summer students, internships and consulting contracts to bring a diversity of views to the Team.

The murder of George Floyd in 2020 gave us pause to consider whether the path we had followed to increase diversity and inclusion was sufficient to ensure we were not contributing to the maintenance of systemic racism. ([BLOG - What is our role in social justice?](#)) It is this reflection that has reset our goal towards Equity and Anti-racism.

In 2020, we entered into a formal relationship with an Elder of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to ensure that we engage in a culturally-appropriate approach to Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation. We have also engaged a diversity, equity and inclusion consultant to assist us on this journey.

We made a commitment to adopt a formal Equity and Anti-racism Statement and Action Plan as part of our 2021 Business Plan. For the first time, our 2021 Business Plan is aligned to five key [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), specifically SDG #10: Reduced Inequalities. The Board signed the [Halton Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Charter](#).