



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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CANADA

IMPACT OF THE CRITERIA FOR AWARDING FEDERAL FUNDING ON RESEARCH EXCELLENCE IN CANADA

**Report of the Standing Committee on Science and
Research**

Salma Zahid, Chair

**SEPTEMBER 2026
45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION**

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Chair**

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Reports from committees presented to the House of Commons

Presenting a report to the House is the way a committee makes public its findings and recommendations on a particular topic. Substantive reports on a subject-matter study usually contain a synopsis of the testimony heard, the recommendations made by the committee, as well as the reasons for those recommendations.

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ON SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

has the honour to present its

FOURTH REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), the committee has studied the impact of the criteria for awarding federal funding on research excellence in Canada and has agreed to report the following:

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SUMMARY

In Canada, most federal funding for scientific research is awarded by the three granting agencies – the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) – through their scholarship, award and research grant programs. Funding from the three agencies is awarded on the basis of merit, according to specific criteria for each program. To this end, funding applications are reviewed by expert panels based on these criteria.

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research undertook a study on the impact of the criteria used for awarding this federal funding on research excellence in Canada. Over the course of this study, the Committee held a total of 10 meetings, five of them during the 44th Parliament. It heard from 49 witnesses and received 35 written briefs, four written responses to questions from the Committee, eight reference documents and two information documents.

Witnesses acknowledged the difficulty of defining research excellence. They discussed the challenges of the distribution of federal funding, particularly with respect to the different types of research, small and medium-sized institutions, and French-language research. The evidence also pointed to the existence of marginalized groups in the research ecosystem.

Also addressed was the impact of using bibliometric indicators to assess research projects, as well as initiatives such as the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, which aim to broaden the criteria used to assess research.

During this study, discussions also addressed diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies and measures in research. A series of testimonies criticized these measures and recommended that they be reformed or abandoned. For these witnesses, DEI measures are ineffective, risk politicizing research, lead to discrimination, undermine viewpoint diversity in research, and impose an additional administrative burden. For these reasons, these witnesses deemed EDI measures to be incompatible with research excellence.

Conversely, other witnesses defended EDI measures. In their view, EDI considerations must be incorporated into research project design to avoid bias and ensure that research impacts benefit all Canadians. These witnesses also pointed out that EDI measures in recruitment, research team management and researcher training are meant to break down barriers so that all talent can participate in the research ecosystem. They said that

including this talent improves research productivity and quality, and they considered EDI to be a condition for research excellence.

At the conclusion of this study, the Committee made 20 recommendations for the Government of Canada.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of their deliberations committees may make recommendations which they include in their reports for the consideration of the House of Commons or the Government. Recommendations related to this study are listed below.

Funding Programs

Recommendation 1

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—cease using past grant amounts as a criterion for awarding funding, in order to avoid putting small or medium-sized postsecondary institutions at a disadvantage. 50

Recommendation 2

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—review how the Research Support Fund operates to better assist small or medium-sized postsecondary institutions and colleges with covering the indirect costs of research. 51

Recommendation 3

That the Government of Canada increase the share of research funding awarded to applied research conducted in colleges, institutes, CEGEPs, college centres for the transfer of technology and innovative social practices, technology access centres and polytechnics through the College and Community Innovation Program and other granting agency programs. 51

Recommendation 4

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—while maintaining the place of basic research, introduce evaluation criteria that emphasize research impact for some targeted funding programs. 51

Support for Research in French

Recommendation 5

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—ensure that funding applications submitted in French are treated equitably and that action is taken to support scientific research and publication in French.

51

Recommendation 6

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—consider introducing funding targets regarding applications submitted in French.

51

Evaluation Committees

Recommendation 7

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—strengthen their implicit bias training programs for expert panel members and redouble their efforts to ensure that the composition of expert panels is representative of the research community, including from a linguistic perspective.

52

Recommendation 8

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—consider creating incentives to encourage participation on expert panels as part of peer review.

52

Evaluation Criteria

Recommendation 9

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—continue to implement the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment principles and step up their efforts to encourage other research stakeholders to recognize a wider variety of forms of contributions to research.

52

Recommendation 10

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—take steps to familiarize evaluation committees and funding program applicants with the use of the new narrative CV format.

52

Recommendation 11

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—continue to experiment with new approaches to award certain types of funding, such as de-identifying funding applications or randomly awarding a portion of the funding.

52

Data From the Three Granting Agencies

Recommendation 12

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—allow access, as part of scientific projects subject to the appropriate ethical standards and data security protocols, to disaggregated data on their funding programs, including for unfunded applications.

53

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Recommendation 13

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—remove all references to equity, diversity and inclusion in the process for awarding federal funding in support of research.

53

Recommendation 14

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—limit equity, diversity and inclusion considerations to the review of research project content when appropriate.

53

Recommendation 15

That the Government of Canada ban the use of demographic quotas and proportionality targets by federal funding programs administered by the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

53

Recommendation 16

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—take steps to protect academic freedom and to promote viewpoint diversity in their funding programs.

53

Recommendation 17

That the Government of Canada audit the equity, diversity and inclusion policies and measures of the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—and that this audit provide quantified measures of the outcomes of these policies and measures.

54

Recommendation 18

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—introduce compulsory training on equity, diversity and inclusion principles and on the ethical and societal impact of research for all funding program applicants.

54

Recommendation 19

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—require the incorporation of equity, diversity and inclusion principles into the design of research projects submitted to their funding programs.

54

Recommendation 20

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—create incentives for inclusive research teams and establish dedicated funding sources and incentives for projects that demonstrate fair and equitable hiring practices, whose management teams are diverse and feature collaborations with historically excluded communities.

54



IMPACT OF THE CRITERIA FOR AWARDING FEDERAL FUNDING ON RESEARCH EXCELLENCE IN CANADA

INTRODUCTION

On 18 June 2025, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research (the Committee) adopted the following motion:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee undertake a study on the impact that the various criteria for awarding federal funding have on research excellence in Canada; that the Committee evaluate whether the criteria used are still appropriate within the evaluation committees, allow for the achievement of program objectives, strengthen the development of knowledge, and contribute to innovation, research, and science in Canada; that the Committee assess whether modifications should be made to these criteria; That the evidence and documentation received by the committee during the 1st Session of the 44th Parliament on the subject be taken into consideration by the committee in the current session. Furthermore, that the Committee devote at least 4 meetings to this study and report its findings to the House.¹

With this motion, the Committee resumed a study on the same subject that it had begun during the 1st Session of the 44th Parliament. As part of this study, the Committee held a total of 10 meetings, including five during the 44th Parliament. It heard from 49 witnesses² and received 35 written briefs, four written responses to questions from the Committee, eight reference documents and two backgrounders.

The Committee sincerely thanks all the individuals and organizations that took the time to contribute to this study.

Based on the evidence gathered, this report examines the criteria used to award federal research funding and the related equity, diversity and inclusion measures. At the

1 House of Commons, Standing Committee on Science and Research (SRSR), [Minutes](#), 18 June 2025.

2 Six of these witnesses were heard twice during the study.



conclusion of this report, the Committee made 20 recommendations for the federal government.

FEDERAL FUNDING OF RESEARCH AND ITS IMPACT

In Canada, most federal funding for scientific research is awarded by the three granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)—which distribute scholarships, research grants and awards. Each agency manages its own programs for the scientific fields within its respective mandate and the three agencies have established joint programs such as the Research Support Fund (RSF), the Canada First Research Excellence Fund and the Canada Research Chairs program.

Under the *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Act*, SSHRC’s mandate is to “promote and assist research and scholarship in the social sciences and humanities,”³ which it does through grants, scholarships and fellowships. Its budget for 2025–2026 is \$1.3 billion.⁴

Under the *Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada Act*, NSERC’s mandate is to “promote and assist research in the natural sciences and engineering, other than the health sciences.”⁵ Its budget for 2025–2026 is \$1.5 billion.⁶

Regarding CIHR, the *Canadian Institutes of Health Research Act* defines its mandate as follows:

Excel, according to internationally accepted standards of scientific excellence, in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more

3 [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Act](#), R.S.C., 1985, c. S-12. See also: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), [Our mandate](#).

4 Government of Canada, [2025–26 Estimates](#). In recent years, SSHRC spent \$1 billion in 2021–2022; \$1.1 billion in 2022–2023; \$1.2 billion in 2023–2024; and \$1.3 billion in 2024–2025. Government of Canada, [“Infographic for Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada,”](#) GC InfoBase, database, accessed 6 January 2026.

5 [Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Act](#) R.S.C., 1985, c. N-21.

6 Government of Canada, [2025–26 Estimates](#). In recent years, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) spent \$1.4 billion in 2021–2022; \$1.4 billion in 2022–2023; \$1.4 billion in 2023–2024; and \$1.5 billion in 2024–2025. Government of Canada, [“Infographic for Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada,”](#) GC InfoBase, database, accessed 6 January 2026.

effective health services and products and a strengthened Canadian health care system.⁷

CIHR's budget for 2025–2026 is \$1.4 billion.⁸

The three granting agencies collaborate within the Canada Research Coordinating Committee to offer joint funding opportunities and align some of their policies.

During the Committee's study, some of the witnesses discussed the impact of federal research funding. Most emphasized the positive impact of this funding, both on research excellence and on the higher education system.⁹ The evidence focused in particular on scientific advances made in Canada and on the fact that research funding in postsecondary institutions is an investment in training future talent.¹⁰ It was also pointed out that federal research funding has "a real impact on priority sectors of the Canadian economy and lead[s] to direct benefits in francophone minority communities."¹¹

However, several witnesses mentioned the financial pressures facing universities,¹² and some felt that federal funding should be increased to support universities and colleges, students and research.¹³ It was noted that research funding in Canada as a whole is "lagging behind our peer nations."¹⁴

7 [*Canadian Institutes of Health Research Act*](#), S.C., 2000, c. 6.

8 Government of Canada, [*2025–26 Estimates*](#). In recent years, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) spent \$1.4 billion in 2021–2022; \$1.3 billion in 2022–2023; \$1.3 billion in 2023–2024; and \$1.4 billion in 2024–2025. Government of Canada, [*"Infographic for Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada,"*](#) GC InfoBase, database, accessed 6 January 2026.

9 For example, SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 28 November 2024, 1600 (Jeremy Kerr, Professor of Biology, University of Ottawa, and Chair of NSERC's Committee on Discovery Research, as an individual); and SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 3 December 2024, 1615 (Gabriel Miller, President and Chief Executive Officer, Universities Canada).

10 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 28 November 2024, 1600 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 28 November 2024, 1710 and 1715 (Daniel O'Donnell, Professor of English, University of Lethbridge, As an Individual); SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 (Dylan Hanley, Executive Vice-President, U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities); SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 3 December 2024, 1615 (Gabriel Miller); and SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 5 December 2024, 1725 (Wasiimah Joomun, Executive Director, Canadian Alliance of Student Associations).

11 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 17 September 2025, 1735 (Martin Normand, President and Chief Executive Officer, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

12 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 (Dylan Hanley).

13 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 15 September 2025, 1220 (Grace Karraam, Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Coordinator, Higher Education Graduate Program, University of Toronto, as an individual).

14 Evidence for Democracy, [*Written Submission for the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), September 2025.



Conversely, two witnesses believe that the federal government should not be funding university research at all. Bruce Pardy, a professor of law at Queen’s University, said that “federal research money corrupts the intellectual enterprise of universities,” which he described as “deep black holes into which gobs of money disappear.”¹⁵ John Robson, Executive Director of Climate Discussion Nexus, argued a similar position.¹⁶

PEER REVIEW

The evidence highlighted the role of peer review in the process for awarding federal research funding. Funding applications are reviewed by expert panels, which select the projects to be funded through the three granting agencies’ various programs.

Daniel O’Donnell, professor of English at the University of Lethbridge, speaking as an individual, said that “you are adjudicated on capability, which is the evidence you can provide that you are able to deliver the kind of research you’re planning to do. You’re judged on the intrinsic, domain-specific merit of the research you’re proposing to do, the overall research design and aspects like that.”¹⁷ Expert panels do this using a series of predetermined criteria to review the applications. These criteria vary by funding program and the programs’ specific goals.¹⁸

Some of the evidence drew a direct link between peer review and research excellence.¹⁹ According to U15 Executive Vice-President Dylan Hanley, “[it’s] important to note that excellence in research rests on the foundation of peer review, wherein experts in the fields are the ones to judge which proposals move forward and receive funding.”²⁰ In a brief, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) wrote the following:

Peer review is the foundation of credible, high-quality research funding. It is the mechanism by which expert scholars assess each other’s work based on disciplinary

15 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1705 (Bruce Pardy, Professor of Law, Queen’s University, as an individual).

16 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 12 December 2024, 1610 (John Robson, Executive Director, Climate Discussion Nexus, as an individual).

17 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1750 (Daniel O’Donnell). See also: SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1100 (Mahadeo Sukhai, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Scientific Officer, IDEA-STEM Consulting Inc.).

18 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1610 (Karine Morin, President and Chief Executive Officer, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1750 (Daniel O’Donnell).

19 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 (Dylan Hanley); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1610 (Karine Morin); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1100 (Mahadeo Sukhai); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1630 (Ted Hewitt, President, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council).

20 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 (Dylan Hanley).

standards, originality, and impact. It ensures that research excellence is defined by scholarly merit and protects against political interference.²¹

Some witnesses held a favourable view of the process. For example, Marc Green, a professor at Queen's University, speaking as an individual, said the following: "In funding decisions, I have found the processes to assess excellence to be rigorous, fair and collegial."²² However, the evidence highlighted some limitations in the federal funding and peer review process as currently implemented.²³ Part of these discussions focused on the criteria used to judge the excellence of projects and their impact. Witnesses also discussed the role of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) measures.²⁴ These observations are presented in the following sections.

CRITERIA USED TO ASSESS RESEARCH AND AWARD FUNDING

Discussions focused on the difficulty of defining excellence in research and the criteria used to do so. Testimony highlighted the effects of these criteria on the distribution of federal research funding. Witnesses focused in particular on quantitative or bibliometric criteria and discussed alternative criteria.

1. Difficulty in Defining Research Excellence

Witnesses told the Committee that research excellence is a difficult concept to define and measure. Yves Gingras, Scientific Director of the Observatory of Science and Technology at the University of Quebec at Montreal, speaking as an individual, said that excellence is "a tautology" since "[e]xcellence is what we deem to be excellent."²⁵ Vincent Larivière, a professor at the University of Montreal, speaking as an individual, said that there is "a lot of subjectivity" in the definition of excellence since "[s]cientific excellence is multi-faceted. It can vary depending on the context. It can be the ingenuity

21 Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), [*Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025.

22 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 24 September 2025, 1635 (Mark Green, Professor, Queen's University, as an individual).

23 Gregory Patience, [*Brief*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

24 For consistency, this report uses the expression "equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)," although some witnesses used the expressions "diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)" or "equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA)."

25 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 22 September 2025, 1120 (Yves Gingras, Scientific Director, Observatory of Science and Technology, University of Quebec at Montreal, as an individual).



of a method, the originality of a research issue, the quality of an argument's construction or the potential applications of a research project."²⁶

It is difficult to select indicators to measure excellence since "[there] are no criteria that specifically define what constitutes good or bad research. In every discipline, there are always different views competing with each other as to which current theory should be followed."²⁷ Kelly Cobey, a scientist at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, who spoke as an individual, said that the way to define excellence in research also depends on the scientific disciplines and research contexts.²⁸ The criteria chosen to assess excellence is important because "how the federal government chooses to assess research excellence directly impacts what research is done, how it is done and who does it."²⁹

The Committee was also told that the way excellence is viewed and measured is "not static,"³⁰ and that excellence is now viewed in a broader sense than in the past.³¹

2. Challenges Distributing Federal Research Funding

Witnesses discussed the distribution of federal research funding among different types of research, scientific disciplines, and postsecondary institutions. They noted that certain groups of researchers are disadvantaged and examined the challenges of conducting research in French.

2.1. Distribution Among Types of Research

Witnesses discussed the distribution of federal funding among the various types of research. Sarah Watts-Rynard, Chief Executive Officer of Polytechnics Canada, argued for

26 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1225 (Vincent Larivière, Professor, University of Montreal, as an individual).

27 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1220 (Julien Larregue, Associate Professor, Laval University, as an individual).

28 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1255 (Kelly Cobey, Scientist, University of Ottawa Heart Institute, as an individual).

29 Ibid., 1215. See also: Support Our Science, [Written Submission to the SRSR for The Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), October 2025.

30 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1635 (Ted Hewitt).

31 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1630 (Imogen R. Coe, Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biology, Toronto Metropolitan University, as an individual).

“thinking about research funding in a way that is much more evenly distributed across different kinds of research and different kinds of results.”³²

Several witnesses spoke about the balance between support for basic research and support for applied research.³³ Pari Johnston, President and Chief Executive Officer of Colleges and Institutes Canada, and Sarah Watts-Rynard on behalf of Polytechnics Canada, told the Committee that applied research as practised in the college sector needs to be better supported.³⁴

With this in mind, witnesses recommended adopting indicators that emphasize research impact, such as:

[P]artner uptake of research outputs, capacity of a project to develop new IP or develop a novel application of an existing technology, or policy reports that lead to improved implementation pathways.³⁵

The committee heard that colleges and institutes receive less than 4% of the funding provided by granting agencies to support research.³⁶ Pari Johnston, on behalf of Colleges and Institutes Canada, recommended that 10% of all research investment in the country be awarded to applied college research.³⁷ Ken Doyle, Executive Director of Tech-Access Canada, suggested an amount “somewhere around \$150 million a year, maybe growing by 10% a year to meet the demand”³⁸ and recommended “a dedicated program within

32 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1755 (Sarah Watts-Rynard, Chief Executive Officer, Polytechnics Canada).

33 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1600 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1645 (Pari Johnston, President and Chief Executive Officer, Colleges and Institutes Canada); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 (Dylan Hanley); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1755 (Sarah Watts-Rynard); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 10 December 2024, 1635 (Philip Kitcher, John Dewey Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, as an individual); and Centre de recherche de l’Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, [Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), December 2024.

34 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 and 1645 (Pari Johnston); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1755 (Sarah Watts-Rynard).

35 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 (Pari Johnston); and Benjamin Fung, [Suggestions for Standing Committee on Science and Research](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 24 November 2024.

36 Colleges and Institutes Canada, [Ensuring research excellence assessment leads to impact](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, October 2025.

37 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1645 (Pari Johnston).

38 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1810 (Ken Doyle, Executive Director, Tech-Access Canada).



Industry Canada, outside the granting councils, that recognizes applied excellence and adequately supports collaborative industrial R and D at the speed of business.”³⁹

Conversely, Centre de recherche de l’Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont wrote in a brief that “[current] funding priorities increasingly favour applied research projects, which are often perceived as having immediate economic or societal benefits,” at the expense of basic research.⁴⁰ A brief from Psychosocial CARE4Kids Lab made a similar point.⁴¹ It was noted that it is difficult to know in advance or in the short term what impact research will have, and in certain research areas, the benefits may not be felt for several years after the end of a project.⁴² It was therefore recommended that increased funding be awarded to basic research projects, without requiring immediate proof of their applicability, and that the proportion of funding directed toward targeted initiatives be capped at 5% to “ensure that the targeted initiatives do not overshadow emerging fundamental areas.”⁴³

Witnesses also recommended better support for community-based research.⁴⁴

Nadia Hasan, Assistant Professor with the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies at York University, speaking as an individual, said that “federal funding must be structured in ways that make community-academic partnerships more accessible, efficient and sustainable.”⁴⁵

39 Ibid., 1740.

40 Centre de recherche de l’Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, [*Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), December 2024.

41 Psychosocial CARE4Kids Lab, [*Written Submission for the Standing Committee on Science and Research*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, August 2025.

42 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 5 December 2024, 1710 (Maydianne Andrade, Past President and Co-founder, Canadian Black Scientists Network); SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 5 December 2024, 1750 (Wasiimah Joomun); and SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 17 September 2025, 1645 (Yuan Yi Zhu, Assistant Professor of International Relations and International Law, Leiden University, as an individual).

43 Targeted initiatives refer to funding opportunities that focus on a specific area of research or aim to address a specific challenge, as opposed to more general funding opportunities. Centre de recherche de l’Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, [*Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), December 2024.

44 For example, SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 15 September 2025, 1105 (Gita Ljubicic, Professor, McMaster University, as an individual); SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 15 September 2025, 1255 (Kelly Cobey); and SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 24 September 2025, 1745 (Nadia Hasan, Assistant Professor, School of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies, York University, As an Individual).

45 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 24 September 2025, 1745 (Nadia Hasan).

Lastly, one witness mentioned the Indigenous innovation and leadership in research network grants and told the Committee that they “encourage focused, indigenous-led work to deeply reflect on criteria to achieve excellence.”⁴⁶

2.2. Distribution Across Scientific Disciplines and Support for Interdisciplinary Research

Some witnesses discussed the distribution of funding across scientific disciplines. CAUT noted that the distribution of federal research funding remains unbalanced in this respect: “the social sciences and humanities [...], despite encompassing the majority of Canadian researchers, consistently receive less than 20% of federal research support.”⁴⁷ Regarding the humanities, one witness recommended that SSHRC “rethink how it allocates talent program funding across disciplines.”⁴⁸

The evidence also stressed the importance of supporting interdisciplinary research.⁴⁹ Gad Saad, Visiting Scholar at the Declaration of Independence Center for the Study of American Freedom at the University of Mississippi, speaking as an individual, said that “[s]ome of the biggest and most important breakthroughs in science come at the intersection of disciplines. Interdisciplinary diversity does improve science.”⁵⁰ Several witnesses recommended providing better support for interdisciplinary and collaborative research, either by adapting the evaluation criteria or by creating targeted programs.⁵¹

SSHRC President Ted Hewitt explained that the funding agencies are collaborating on this issue and noted that the three agencies’ interdisciplinary peer review program

46 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1635 (Mark Green).

47 CAUT, [Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025.

48 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1630 (David Freeman, Associate Professor, Simon Fraser University, as an individual).

49 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1605 (Christian Casanova, Vice President of Research and Partnerships, École de technologie supérieure); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1700 (Mark Green).

50 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1820 (Gad Saad, Visiting Scholar, Declaration of Independence Center for the Study of American Freedom, University of Mississippi, as an individual).

51 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1715 (Alison Evans, President and Chief Executive Officer, Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1605 and 1645 (Christian Casanova); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1725 (Wasiimah Joomun).



allows applicants to submit a single funding application for a project that falls under the responsibility of several agencies at once.⁵²

2.3. Distribution Across Institutions

With regard to the types of institutions, the evidence referred to federal funding being concentrated in larger universities at the expense of smaller institutions and colleges.⁵³

Among the factors explaining this concentration of funding, witnesses said that some federal programs award funding based on the amounts previously received by the host institution, which tends to favour larger institutions with past success.⁵⁴ This is particularly the case for the Canada Research Chairs Program, the Research Support Fund (RSF) and the Government of Canada's postgraduate scholarships programs.

There are also biases favouring researchers at large universities, which are sometimes perceived as more prestigious. One witness described the Matthew effect, "a well-known phenomenon in the sociology of science," where "the scientists or the institutions with the biggest amount of symbolic capital and prestige will receive even more, regardless of the intrinsic quality of it all."⁵⁵ This kind of attitude within evaluation committees puts applications from smaller universities and colleges at a disadvantage.⁵⁶ Julien Larregue, an associate professor at Laval University, speaking as an individual, showed that with regard to SSHRC, the number of grants obtained in the past and the prestige and size of the universities are two factors that greatly influence the likelihood of receiving funding.⁵⁷

Regarding colleges in particular, witnesses pointed to a lack of understanding of the reality of research conducted in colleges and polytechnics. For example, according to

52 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1655 (Ted Hewitt).

53 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1710 and 1735 (Daniel O'Donnell); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1630 (Pari Johnston); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1710 (Sarah Watts-Rynard); and Alliance of Canadian Comprehensive Research Universities (ACCRU), [Impact of the criteria for allocating federal funding on excellence of research in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 11 December 2024.

54 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1245 (Vincent Larivière); ACCRU, [Impact of the criteria for allocating federal funding on excellence of research in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 11 December 2024; and University of Quebec, [Shifting from concentration to deployment to maximize Canada's scientific potential](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 18 December 2025.

55 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1245 (Vincent Larivière).

56 Colleges and Institutes Canada, [Ensuring research excellence assessment leads to impact](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, October 2025.

57 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1220 (Julien Larregue).

one witness, federal funding programs are too focused on principal investigators and do not adequately take into account the teaching load of polytechnic instructors.⁵⁸ The Committee also heard that the rules of certain federal funding programs effectively exclude colleges and institutes.⁵⁹

Several witnesses focused on the RSF, a program designed to contribute to the indirect costs of research.⁶⁰ Recommendations included reviewing the eligibility thresholds for this program to ensure that all institutions have equitable access, and reviewing the eligibility criteria for other RSF-based funding programs.⁶¹

Broadly speaking, several witnesses believe that spreading out funding would foster innovation.⁶² For example, according to Vincent Larivière, “[s]preading out the funding allows for more chances for discovery. The more researchers there are doing research, the more discoveries there will be.”⁶³ With this in mind, the Alliance of Canadian Comprehensive Research Universities (ACCRU) recommended “[implementing] a more equitable funding allocation model that considers a broader range of factors, including institutional size, geographic location, research capacity, and potential impact.”⁶⁴ The Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne (ACUFC) recommended that granting agencies increase grants awarded to small and medium-sized institutions.⁶⁵

58 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1710 (Sarah Watts-Rynard).

59 Ibid., and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1610 (Pari Johnston).

60 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1710 (Sarah Watts-Rynard); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1735 (Daniel O’Donnell).

61 ACCRU, [Impact of the criteria for allocating federal funding on excellence of research in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 11 December 2024.

62 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1250 (Vincent Larivière); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1220 (Julien Larregue); and University of Quebec, [Shifting from concentration to deployment to maximize Canada’s scientific potential](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 18 December 2025.

63 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1250 (Vincent Larivière). See also SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1140 (Yves Gingras).

64 ACCRU, [Impact of the criteria for allocating federal funding on excellence of research in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 11 December 2024.

65 Association des collèges et universités de la Francophonie canadienne (ACUFC), [Supplementary Brief from the Association des collèges et universités de la Francophonie canadienne](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2025.



2.4. Groups of Disadvantaged Researchers

The evidence also highlighted the fact that certain groups of researchers are currently at a disadvantage within Canada's research system.

Maydianne Andrade, Past-President and Co-founder of the Canadian Black Scientists Network, made the following statement:

[T]here's a substantive body of literature showing that recognitions like awards, fellowships and opportunities to do research, particularly in top labs, are affected by identity, not just by scientific promise or excellence, and perceptions of race, gender, socio-economic status and whether you live near a large university. In Canada, the challenge of being pushed to do science in English can affect conventional metrics. For example, a number of studies have shown that standardized application packages and emails are treated differently if the names attached indicate that women or racialized people are submitting them.⁶⁶

Several witnesses highlighted persistent unconscious bias in the process for reviewing applications and awarding research funding.⁶⁷

With respect to women, the Partnership for Women's Health Research Canada (PWHR) wrote the following comments in a brief submitted to the Committee:

Despite women being equally represented at the beginning of their science careers (50% or more at undergraduate level), research shows that women face discrimination at every stage of professional life in science environments, from recruitment and selection, to recommendation, evaluation, promotion, and compensation. These discriminatory dynamics and effects are often worse for women of colour.⁶⁸

According to data cited in another brief submitted to the Committee, "[a] 2015 study found that within the 20 largest Canadian research universities, women made up less than 25% of [science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)] professors."⁶⁹

66 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1710 (Maydianne Andrade).

67 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1625 (Karine Morin); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1835 (Nadia Hasan); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1730 (Paul Hébert, President, Canadian Institutes of Health Research).

68 Partnership for Women's Health Research Canada (PWHR), [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

69 Krysta Mila Coyle, [Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

Among the barriers encountered by certain groups of researchers, one witness spoke about “attitudes and behaviours (such as harassment, chilly climate and toxic environments) or systemic and organizational factors.”⁷⁰ The persistence of gender wage gaps was also mentioned.⁷¹

With respect to Indigenous researchers, Wasiimah Joomun, Executive Director of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, said that they “face unique barriers” and recommended that evaluation committees broaden their criteria “to value Indigenous methodologies, community-based research, and culturally significant topics.”⁷²

Lastly, witnesses pointed to “the influence of socioeconomic background on university success”⁷³ and the risk that “talented students from lower-income or first-generation backgrounds self-select out of graduate study” if “stipends and lack of access to funding leave trainees below poverty thresholds.”⁷⁴

2.5. Challenges Facing Research in French

The evidence also brought up the case of francophone researchers.⁷⁵ For example, Gabriel Miller, President and Chief Executive Officer of Universities Canada, said that “systemic barriers remain an issue in French-language research, including differences in success rates according to language.”⁷⁶ In a written brief, the University of Quebec provided the following information:

In certain programs, applications written in French, as well as those from small or medium-sized universities, consistently have lower success rates. More significantly, the

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- 70 Imogen R. Coe, *Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.
- 71 SRSR, *Evidence*, 17 September 2025, 1755 (Malinda Smith, Associate Vice-President, Research (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), University of Calgary, as an individual).
- 72 SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1705 (Wasiimah Joomun).
- 73 André-Marie Tremblay, *Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, December 2024. See also: SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1155 (Yves Gingras).
- 74 Support Our Science, *Written Submission to the SRSR for The Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, October 2025.
- 75 SRSR, *Evidence*, 3 December 2024, 1615 and 1640 (Gabriel Miller); SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1605 (Christian Casanova); SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1650 (Ghyslaine Gagnon, Dean of Research, École de technologie supérieure); and Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, *Submission for the Standing Committee on Science and Research study concerning the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, December 2024.
- 76 SRSR, *Evidence*, 3 December 2024, 1615 (Gabriel Miller).



share of federal funding allocated to francophone institutions dropped from 22% in 2014 to 16% in 2024. We also observe that the proportion of grant applications submitted in French is lower than it should be based on the demographic weight of francophones, and it is declining.⁷⁷

The finding was supported in briefs submitted by the École de technologie supérieure and the ACUFC.⁷⁸

Martin Normand, President and Chief Executive Officer of the ACUFC, spoke about “the anglicization of research, the internationalization of research objects and the predominance of publishing articles in English in Canada.”⁷⁹ He told the Committee that these trends “cast doubt on the excellence of research in French [and] help standardize scientific production.”⁸⁰ There are prejudices that lead to research conducted or published in English being considered more prestigious, at the expense of French.⁸¹

The evidence also focused on the importance of reviewers’ language skills.⁸² One brief noted “the chronic lack of specialized francophone evaluators,” requiring francophone reviewers to “evaluate applications that are far from their field of expertise simply because they are proficient in French.”⁸³

Several recommendations were made to address this situation. Martin Normand, on behalf of the ACUFC, said that the granting agencies “are required to aim for substantive equality between the linguistic communities in the deployment of their programs.”⁸⁴ He recommended that the granting agencies “adopt a real plan for implementing their obligations under the Official Languages Act” and that they “undertake a strategic

77 University of Quebec, *Shifting from concentration to deployment to maximize Canada’s scientific potential*, Brief submitted to SRSR, 18 December 2025.

78 École de technologie supérieure, *Maximizing Scientific Potential: Mobilizing Excellence and Talent Diversity in Canada*, Brief submitted to SRSR, January 2025; and ACUFC, *Supplementary Brief from the Association des collèges et universités de la Francophonie canadienne*, Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2025.

79 SRSR, *Evidence*, 17 September 2025, 1735 (Martin Normand).

80 Ibid.

81 SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1245 (Vincent Larivière).

82 SRSR, *Evidence*, 17 September 2025, 1800 (Martin Normand); and Sylvain Hallé et al., *Linguistic and Institutional Equity in the Funding of Scientific Research in Canada*, Brief submitted to SRSR, 17 October 2025.

83 Sylvain Hallé et al., *Linguistic and Institutional Equity in the Funding of Scientific Research in Canada*, Brief submitted to SRSR, 17 October 2025.

84 SRSR, *Evidence*, 17 September 2025, 1735 (Martin Normand).

review of their policies and programs with a view to reducing linguistic and institutional biases that undermine scientific production in French.”⁸⁵

In a written brief, Sylvain Hallé and 38 professors from the University of Quebec at Chicoutimi recommended a series of measures, including the following: “[e]xplicitly recognize the language of the submission and the size of the institution as equity parameters on the same level as gender, minority or disability”; “[e]stablish a language correction fund or a weighting mechanism to offset the structural disadvantage associated with both small universities and applications submitted in French”; and “[e]xperiment with de-identifying the language of applications at certain stages of the evaluation process.”⁸⁶ Another proposal was to set percentage targets for grant applications submitted in French and for their success rate.⁸⁷

3. Use of Bibliometric and Quantitative Indicators

Many witnesses criticized the use of quantitative or bibliometric criteria to assess the merit of funding applications.⁸⁸ According to the evidence, these criteria, which are based on the number of publications, the number of times a publication is cited or scholarly journal impact factors, are inadequate for evaluating the merit of research and researchers’ individual contributions.⁸⁹

The evidence illustrates how the use of these quantitative indicators tied to publications can benefit certain researchers and penalize others, regardless of the quality of their work. For example, according to PWHR, “[r]esearch has demonstrated that regardless of women’s role in conducting research and the time dedicated to the research, women are less likely to be credited as authors than men.”⁹⁰ These indicators can also penalize

85 Ibid.

86 Sylvain Hallé et al., *Linguistic and Institutional Equity in the Funding of Scientific Research in Canada*, Brief submitted to SRSR, 17 October 2025.

87 SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1650 (Ghyslain Gagnon).

88 For example, SRSR, *Evidence*, 28 November 2024, 1630 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, *Evidence*, 3 December 2024, 1610 (Pari Johnston); SRSR, *Evidence*, 3 December 2024, 1720 (Ivan Oransky, Co-Founder, Retraction Watch); SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1605 (Christian Casanova); SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1620 (Karine Morin); SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1105 (Gita Ljubicic); SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1215 (Kelly Cobey); SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1225 (Vincent Larivière); University of Quebec, *Shifting from concentration to deployment to maximize Canada’s scientific potential*, Brief submitted to SRSR, 18 December 2025.

89 SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1620 (Karine Morin).

90 PWHR, *Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.



researchers who have had career breaks, such as for health reasons, or those who conduct applied research or work in fields that generate fewer publications.⁹¹ Also penalized are researchers who publish in French, since English publications are often seen as more prestigious.⁹² Conversely, the use of these types of indicators may “disproportionately reward those who already benefit from access to elite institutions, funding and networks.”⁹³

The use of such indicators to evaluate research and determine funding has also increased pressure on researchers and students to publish as much as possible.⁹⁴ Witnesses drew a link between the pressure to publish and the issue of research integrity.⁹⁵ Ivan Oransky, co-founder of the website Retraction Watch, said that “fraud, misconduct and sloppiness are all born of the same mother, and that mother is the pressure to publish.”⁹⁶ He suggested awarding some of the funding to analysis and oversight of the research to support research integrity.⁹⁷

For these reasons, witnesses recommended that granting agencies abandon this type of indicator for the evaluation of research projects.⁹⁸

4. Alternative Measures of Excellence

The evidence highlighted other approaches to evaluating the quality of research projects.

Many witnesses mentioned several international initiatives such as the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), the Coalition for Advancing Research

91 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1630 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1610 (Karine Morin); CAUT, [Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025; Colleges and Institutes Canada, [Ensuring research excellence assessment leads to impact](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, October 2025.

92 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1250 (Vincent Larivière).

93 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1730 (Malinda Smith).

94 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1720 and 1740 (Ivan Oransky); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1655 (Karine Morin).

95 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1720 (Ivan Oransky); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1650 (Dylan Hanley); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1720 (Maydianne Andrade).

96 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1740 (Ivan Oransky).

97 Ibid., 1725.

98 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1700 (Gabriel Miller); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1225 (Vincent Larivière).

Assessment (CoARA) and the Leiden Manifesto, which aim to change the way scientific research is assessed.⁹⁹

DORA was described as “a modern approach to research evaluation that assesses thoughtfully what researchers have achieved, rather than looking at journal impact factors or other reductive, and potentially lazy, metrics.”¹⁰⁰ Kelly Cobey, a scientist at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, who spoke as an individual, is also a DORA co-chair. She explained that the recommendations at DORA apply to funding agencies, academic institutions, journals, metrics providers and individual researchers.¹⁰¹ The Committee was told that one of DORA’s key recommendations is to stop using the impact factor, one of the bibliometrics used to measure the visibility of scientific journals.¹⁰² Most of the witnesses expressed support for DORA,¹⁰³ although one witness was opposed.¹⁰⁴

In Canada, the three granting agencies signed DORA in 2019 and have been working to implement its recommendations.¹⁰⁵ When asked why only a small number of Canadian universities signed DORA, Kelly Cobey replied that she sees “many institutions in this country actively implementing so-called responsible research assessment without having signed a declaration.”¹⁰⁶

99 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1600 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1745 (Ivan Oransky); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1610 (Karine Morin); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1215 (Kelly Cobey); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1630 (Imogen R. Coe). See also: [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#); Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), [About](#); and [Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics](#).

100 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1600 (Jeremy Kerr).

101 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1215 (Kelly Cobey).

102 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1745 (Ivan Oransky).

103 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1600 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1635 (Gabriel Miller); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1820 (Ivan Oransky); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1605 (Christian Casanova); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1655 (Karine Morin); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1710 (Maydianne Andrade); and Maryse Beaumier, [Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 10 January 2025.

104 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1640 (Geoff Horsman, Associate Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Wilfrid Laurier University, as an individual).

105 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1215 (Kelly Cobey).

106 Ibid., 1230.



In a written response, CIHR stated that it has “an implementation plan for furthering the agency’s responsible research assessment practices, including our commitment to [DORA].”¹⁰⁷ CIHR provided the following clarifications:

CIHR adapted strategies, policies, programs and guidance to align with the principles of DORA—namely, to direct reviewers to assess productivity and progress broadly (range of contributions and the context of the applicant), and to avoid using metrics in isolation to assess productivity (journal-based metrics are to be avoided as surrogate measures of quality and impact of a researcher’s work).¹⁰⁸

NSERC noted that it “[avoids] the use of journal-based metrics, such as journal impact factors, as a surrogate measure to assess an individual researcher’s contribution in funding decisions,” and that it “[considers] the value and impact of all research outputs, for the purposes of research assessment.”¹⁰⁹ In addition, NSERC “released revised guidelines in 2022 to encourage reviewers and applicants to consider a more comprehensive range of contributions to research, training and mentoring.”¹¹⁰

It was pointed out to the Committee that although the granting agencies adopted new policies, “the tri-agencies’ new definitions of research excellence do not always come to be considered in practice in how research is evaluated by committees.”¹¹¹ According to Julien Larregue, associate professor at Laval University, as an individual, “the general criteria adopted by funding agencies, such as SSHRC, are not applied uniformly by committees. Much depends on the cultures of the disciplines.”¹¹² There may also be a mismatch between the policies of funding agencies and the practices of institutions.¹¹³ That is why the Committee was told that the granting agencies should “provide leadership by fostering change in the research culture.”¹¹⁴

107 CIHR, *CIHR’s response to a request for information made by the Standing Committee on Science and Research on October 1, 2025*, October 2025. See: CIHR, [Research Excellence at CIHR: Implementing CIHR’s Research Excellence Framework](#).

108 CIHR, *CIHR’s response to a request for information made by the Standing Committee on Science and Research on October 1, 2025*, October 2025.

109 NSERC, *Written response to the SRSR Committee*, October 2025.

110 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1640 (Anne-Marie Thompson, Vice-President, Research Grants and Scholarships Directorate, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council).

111 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1215 (Kelly Cobey).

112 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1220 (Julien Larregue).

113 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1235 (Kelly Cobey).

114 RIQEDI, [Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, November 2025.

Among other DORA-inspired measures, witnesses discussed changes in the way that CVs are presented in funding applications.¹¹⁵ Granting agencies announced the adoption of a narrative-style CV, which focuses on applicants' contributions and career trajectories, for funding applications.¹¹⁶ This initiative was welcomed by most witnesses.¹¹⁷ However, one witness raised the need to train researchers and evaluators on the use of this tool.¹¹⁸

Other measures were proposed by the witnesses. It was suggested that the content of research projects first be evaluated in a blind process by the expert panel, before then considering the researchers' qualifications and achievements.¹¹⁹ The Committee heard that the granting agencies should be able to experiment in order to "find slightly fairer ways to develop, to better measure or to better qualify scientific excellence."¹²⁰

For example, several witnesses discussed the idea of awarding a portion of federal funding randomly, an approach that has been adopted in Switzerland and Germany.¹²¹ However, one witness believed that this would reduce the "medium-run impact of research."¹²² It is worth noting that random selection processes have been tested in several programs, including the New Frontiers in Research Fund, SSHRC's new Destination Horizon Grants, and small programs at NSERC and CIHR.¹²³

Finally, witnesses also recommended reviewing the composition and workings of the expert committees that evaluate applications. It was recommended that the committees be more representative in terms of types of research, types of institutions, language and

115 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1620 (Karine Morin); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1755 (Maydianne Andrade).

116 Government of Canada, [Message from the Tri-agency Presidents: Granting councils transitioning to a new CV template](#), 24 October 2024.

117 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1755 (Maydianne Andrade).

118 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1215 (Kelly Cobey).

119 Ibid., 1240; and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1220 (Julien Larregue).

120 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1250 (Vincent Larivière).

121 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1805 (Ivan Oransky); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1140 (Yves Gingras); and ACUFC, [Supplementary Brief from the Association des collèges et universités de la Francophonie canadienne](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2025.

122 David Freeman, [Brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research](#), September 2025.

123 Mélanie Joly, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, [Government Response to the First report of the Standing Committee on Science and Research](#), 26 January 2026.



community experience.¹²⁴ It was also recommended that reviewers who currently volunteer be compensated, or that incentives be provided to encourage participation in these committees.¹²⁵

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MEASURES

Many witnesses discussed equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) measures and their impact on research excellence in Canada. The Committee received conflicting evidence on this topic. Some witnesses opposed the use of EDI in funding decisions and more generally in the field of research and felt that EDI was incompatible with research excellence. Other witnesses defended EDI measures and their positive impact on research. This section presents these differing views.

1. Overview of the Granting Agencies' Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Measures

The three granting agencies have developed EDI policies. Such initiatives include the [Tri-Agency Statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#) and the [Tri-Agency EDI Action Plan \(2018–2025\)](#). The action plan pursues two objectives: fair access to tri-agency research support, and equitable participation in the research system. Other tri-agency joint activities include the [Dimensions Canada](#) program, which includes a charter and a recognition program to encourage postsecondary institutions to take measures to promote EDI.

In addition to these joint initiatives, the granting agencies have evolved their internal governance to address EDI issues. For example, in 2020 NSERC created the [Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#), a standing advisory committee that provides management with recommendations. SSHRC established an [Advisory Committee to Address Anti-Black Racism in Research and Research Training](#) and an [Indigenous Advisory Circle](#). CIHR formed a [CIHR Anti-Racism External Advisory Committee](#) in 2021–2022 to help develop an anti-racism action plan.

124 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1105 (Grace Karram); Colleges and Institutes Canada, [Ensuring research excellence assessment leads to impact](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, October 2025; Sylvain Hallé et al., [Linguistic and Institutional Equity in the Funding of Scientific Research in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 17 October 2025; and Centre de recherche de l'Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, [Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), December 2024.

125 Gregory S. Patience, [Brief](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1605 (Christian Casanova).

The three agencies have also published guides explaining how EDI considerations are addressed in the evaluation of applications for their various funding programs. Examples include the [NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research](#); the Canada Research Chairs' [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Requirements and Practices](#); the [Guide to addressing equity, diversity and inclusion in College and Community Innovation program grant applications](#); and the New Frontiers in Research Fund's guide on [Best practices in equity, diversity and inclusion in research practice and design](#).

The tri-agencies have also developed funding initiatives and programs to directly support certain underrepresented groups. For example, NSERC funds [Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering \(CWSE\)](#) and [Chairs for Inclusion in Science and Engineering \(CISE\)](#); SSHRC developed an [Action Plan for Black Researchers \(2024–2029\)](#); and CIHR offers a [CIHR Research Excellence, Diversity and Independence Early Career Transition Award \(REDI\)](#). The tri-agencies have also collectively introduced initiatives such as [funding for Black scholars](#) and the [Indigenous Scholars Awards and Supplements Pilot Initiative](#). Lastly, the agencies have developed programs to support other groups of researchers, such as [Discovery Development Grants](#) for researchers from small universities, and the [Health System Impact Embedded Early Career Researcher Award](#).

It should also be noted that, as part of their funding programs, the three granting agencies collect self-identification data including information on age, gender identity, sexual orientation, Indigenous identity, visible minority status, demographic group, disability status and languages spoken. Completing this questionnaire is mandatory as part of a funding application, but participants are given the option to select “I prefer not to answer” for each question.¹²⁶ The agencies publish aggregate statistical data on their competitions using this self-identification data.¹²⁷

Witnesses raised the issue of whether scientists should have access to disaggregated data from granting agencies on their funding programs, including for applications that did not receive funding. Julien Larregue told the Committee that, in connection with his research, he was able to access such data for SSHRC, but not for the other two agencies.¹²⁸ He explained that NSERC and CIHR “systematically refuse to share their data

126 See: NSERC, [Equity, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#); and Government of Canada, [Self-Identification Data Collection in Support of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#).

127 See: Canada Research Coordinating Committee, [Annex I: Self-identification data collection in support of equity, diversity and inclusion](#); NSERC, [Equity, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#); SSHRC, [Competition statistics](#); SSHRC, [Equity, diversity and inclusion dashboard](#); CIHR, [Funding Analytics](#); and Government of Canada, Canada Research Chairs, [Program representation statistics](#).

128 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1225 (Julien Larregue).



on submitted projects that were not funded, claiming that doing so would pose a risk to the applicants' privacy."¹²⁹ He recommended making granting agencies' data available to researchers, including data on non-funded projects, "as part of a supervised research project with the usual approvals."¹³⁰ This recommendation was supported by another witness.¹³¹

2. Critiques of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Measures

Witnesses who criticized EDI measures argued that they are ineffective; politicize science; lack diversity of perspectives; promote discrimination; are unpopular; represent an administrative burden; do not have a positive impact on taxpayers; and undermine research excellence. This section presents these arguments.

2.1. EDI is Ineffective

Several witnesses criticized the objectives of EDI policies and deemed EDI measures ineffective, in terms of both improving the quality of research and reducing inequality.

Regarding the objectives, some witnesses felt that the role of granting agencies and universities is to promote research excellence, not reduce social inequalities.¹³²

Witnesses also questioned the results of the EDI measures taken by granting agencies and postsecondary institutions.¹³³ In a brief, one witness wrote the following: "At no point has any expert or committee member put forward high-quality (randomization or quasi-randomization) based evidence to support the idea that EDI practices benefit either scientific progress or student outcomes."¹³⁴

129 Julien Larregue, *Brief Presented to the Standing Committee on Science and Research—Impact of Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, 27 August 2025.

130 Ibid.

131 SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1120 (Yves Gingras).

132 For example, SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1135 (Yves Gingras); SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1300 (Geoff Horsman); and SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1300 (Patanjali Kambhampati, Professor, McGill University, as an individual).

133 For example, Mikko Packalen, *Brief submitted to the House Committee on Science and Research; Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, 15 October 2025; SRSR, *Evidence*, 17 September 2025, 1715 (David Freeman); and SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1255 (Patanjali Kambhampati).

134 Mikko Packalen, *Brief submitted to the House Committee on Science and Research; Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, 15 October 2025.

With regard to scientific progress, the Committee was told that the diversity promoted by EDI measures does not guarantee an improvement in the quality of scientific research.¹³⁵ According to Gad Saad, “[m]eritocracy is the sole operative ethos when judging research excellence.”¹³⁶

The evidence also called into question the effectiveness of EDI measures in reducing inequities. Witnesses said that policies aimed at rectifying inequalities by changing funding or hiring criteria do not address the conditions that cause these inequities in the first place. Stephen Pinker, Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, speaking as an individual, said the following:

[W]hile it’s laudable to attract the widest range of talent in science and to overcome past barriers to inclusion, the awarding of grants takes place at the end of the science training pipeline, far too late in a person’s life to rectify social and historical inequities. Obsessing over statistical differences in the awarding of research grants draws attention away from formative influences that create inequities in the first place, including education from the preschool years through university as well as social and cultural norms that make science attractive as a career.¹³⁷

Yves Gingras emphasized the demographic factors that affect researcher training to explain that it takes 15 to 20 years of experience to qualify as a senior research chair, and that the current pool of candidates for these chairs therefore reflects past imbalances in faculty recruitment.¹³⁸ He said that “[i]f we want to encourage girls or indigenous people to become professors, we have to give them schools and get them to college and university. It’ll take 20 years for them to become professors. There’s no reason to believe that today’s faculty will represent the population.”¹³⁹

The Committee was also told that the equity targets for certain programs, including the Canada Research Chairs Program, are imposed too abruptly and do not take local demographic realities into account.¹⁴⁰

135 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1815 (Gad Saad); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1135 (Steven Pinker, Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology, Harvard University, as an individual).

136 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1740 (Gad Saad).

137 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1120 (Steven Pinker).

138 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1135 (Yves Gingras).

139 Ibid., 1125.

140 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1125 (Azim Shariff, Professor, University of British Columbia, as an individual); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1130 (Christopher Dummitt, Professor, Canadian Studies, Trent University, as an individual).



One brief made the following observation: “merely creating the appearance of equity without addressing the barriers that limit the participation of women, Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities will never achieve true equity—at least not in a fair way.”¹⁴¹ For Yves Gingras, “[t]he only mathematical way to achieve equity is a random or double-blind process.”¹⁴² According to Dave Snow, Associate Professor at the University of Guelph, as an individual, the kinds of inclusive research environments being promoted are progressing even without the use of EDI criteria.¹⁴³

2.2. EDI Politicizes Science, Encourages Cancel Culture and Empowers Activist Research

Many witnesses were critical of the ideological or political nature of EDI measures.¹⁴⁴ Professor Eric Kaufmann from the University of Buckingham, speaking as an individual, said that “[EDI], as practised by the tri-council research councils, reflects a particular world view. It’s a left-wing world view that I term ‘cultural socialism.’”¹⁴⁵ Dave Snow said that his research shows that there are several forms of EDI, saying:

Granting agencies’ EDI language increasingly reflects what I call activist EDI, whereby the terms “equity,” “diversity” and “inclusion” are used to advance the particular political agenda of social justice activism ... “to overthrow systems of structural racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia.”¹⁴⁶

He cited the example of the definition of excellence used by CIHR in its research excellence framework, which states that “research is excellent when it’s inclusive, equitable, diverse, anti-racist, anti-ableist and anti-colonial in approach and impact.”¹⁴⁷

141 François Plamondon and Louis-Joseph Brouillard, [Brief](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 16 December 2024.

142 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1140 (Yves Gingras).

143 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1710 (Dave Snow, Associate Professor, University of Guelph, as an individual).

144 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1555 and 1625 (Eric Kaufmann, Professor, University of Buckingham, as an individual); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1605 (Yuan Yi Zhu); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1700 and 1720 (Christopher Dummitt); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1720 (Bruce Pardy); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1600 (Geoff Horsman); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 10 December 2024, 1630 (Heather Exner-Pirot, Director, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment, Macdonald-Laurier Institute, as an individual).

145 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1555 (Eric Kaufmann).

146 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1640 (Dave Snow).

147 Ibid., 1725. See: CIHR, [Research Excellence at CIHR](#).

Some witnesses focused specifically on the inclusion of EDI statements or declarations in certain funding applications. These statements describe the role of EDI in the research project and in the management of the research team. Several witnesses felt that these statements are not neutral and imply adherence to a particular ideology.¹⁴⁸ Witnesses felt that requiring such statements in funding applications could lead to discrimination against those who oppose them.¹⁴⁹ For example, Christopher Dummitt, Professor of Canadian Studies at Trent University, speaking as an individual, said that these statements “are a classic example of systemic discrimination.”¹⁵⁰

Some witnesses believed that this could cause some researchers to self-censor or to fill out this type of statement even if they do not agree with it.¹⁵¹ Witnesses raised the possibility that researchers might use AI tools to write such statements in their applications.¹⁵² Several witnesses recommended eliminating these diversity statements from funding applications.¹⁵³

Witnesses drew the Committee’s attention to the risks of politicizing research. Bruce Pardy noted that institutions must adopt EDI plans to be eligible for certain funding programs, such as Canada Research Chairs.¹⁵⁴ He believes that these requirements mean that “the whole institution is driven by the political ideological agenda that is embedded in the tri-council programs.”¹⁵⁵

148 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1720 (Christopher Dummitt); Douglas Allen, [Brief: On EDI Requirements for Research Funding](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, October 2025; SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1630 (Geoff Horsman); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 10 December 2024, 1630 (Heather Exner-Pirot); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1135 (Steven Pinker); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1155 (Yves Gingras).

149 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1630 (Geoff Horsman).

150 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1720 (Christopher Dummitt).

151 Ibid., 1705; and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1630 (Geoff Horsman).

152 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1135 (Steven Pinker); André-Marie Tremblay, [Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), December 2024; and Gregory Patience, [Brief](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

153 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1630 (Eric Kaufmann); and Gregory Patience, [Brief](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

154 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1720 (Bruce Pardy). See: Government of Canada, Canada Research Chairs, [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Requirements and Practices](#).

155 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1720 (Bruce Pardy).



Witnesses linked EDI requirements to funding for what they described as “activist research.”¹⁵⁶ Dave Snow said that according to his research, “[t]he percentages ... of activist projects within the SSHRC main insight grants was between 10% and 15% with explicitly activist language in their titles,” and “[w]ith those more explicitly activist grants, it was more like two-thirds in terms of that.”¹⁵⁷ He also said that “activist EDI-driven criteria shift research funding away from objective knowledge creation towards intellectually incurious research that first and foremost seeks to advance a political agenda rather than discover new knowledge.”¹⁵⁸

The Committee heard that if universities become politicized or are perceived as such, they set themselves up for political attacks, which can come from both sides of the political spectrum.¹⁵⁹ Some said that Canada has a reputation for being a “woke” country and wondered how the politicization of universities has affected their ability to attract the best talent.¹⁶⁰

As a result, several witnesses recommended abandoning EDI requirements in order to depoliticize research and universities.¹⁶¹

2.3. EDI Lacks Viewpoint Diversity

Some witnesses felt that EDI measures could exacerbate what they see as the lack of viewpoint diversity that already exists in Canadian universities.

156 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1640 and 1655 (Dave Snow); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1630 (David Freeman); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1640 (Yuan Yi Zhu).

157 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1655 (Dave Snow).

158 Ibid., 1640.

159 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1140 (Azim Shariff); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1145 (Steven Pinker).

160 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1655 (Yuan Yi Zhu); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1140 (Azim Shariff); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1205 (Steven Pinker); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1840 (Gad Saad).

161 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1205 (Geoff Horsman); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1640 (Dave Snow).

Many witnesses found that there is a lack of viewpoint diversity within Canadian universities.¹⁶² Christopher Dummitt presented the results of his survey, in which he found that 88% of university professors surveyed in Canada identified as politically left-leaning.¹⁶³ In a brief submitted following his appearance before the Committee, David Freeman, Associate Professor at Simon Fraser University, as an individual, wrote: “[t]he left skew in faculty political orientations is so extreme that radical leftists outnumber all faculty right-of-centre, and many SSHRC disciplines have nearly zero conservatives.”¹⁶⁴

Some witnesses believe that the ideological imbalance within universities creates pressure, hostility in the workplace, and self-censorship.¹⁶⁵ Yuan Yi Zhu, Assistant Professor of International Relations and International Law at Leiden University, speaking as an individual, said that “[r]esearchers whose political or ideological views don’t align with the majority engage in self-censorship on a persistent and daily basis.”¹⁶⁶ Christopher Dummitt told the Committee that some conservative scholars reported being frightened of letting their colleagues know what their political opinions are.¹⁶⁷ David Freeman shared his own experience: “as people have tried to politicize the university in various ways [...] my views have come out. You can’t find my office location online. I lock my doors and make sure people don’t know where I live.”¹⁶⁸

The Committee’s attention was drawn to the importance of viewpoint diversity for scientific research.¹⁶⁹ For example, Steven Pinker said the following:

162 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1610 (Yuan Yi Zhu); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1610 (Eric Kaufmann); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1700 (Christopher Dummitt); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1600 (Geoff Horsman); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 10 December 2024, 1630 (Heather Exner-Pirot); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 12 December 2024, 1620 and 1625 (John Robson); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1630 and 1645 (David Freeman); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1255 (Patanjali Kambhampati).

163 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1700 (Christopher Dummitt).

164 David Freeman, [Brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research](#), September 2025.

165 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1700 (Christopher Dummitt); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1600 (Geoff Horsman); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 12 December 2024, 1625 (John Robson); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1605 and 1610 (Yuan Yi Zhu); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1830 and 1835 (Gad Saad).

166 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1645 (Yuan Yi Zhu).

167 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1700 (Christopher Dummitt).

168 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1700 (David Freeman).

169 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1630 (Dylan Hanley); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1110 (Christopher Dummitt); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1830 (Gad Saad); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1725 (David Freeman); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1205 (Geoff Horsman); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1815 (Eric Kaufmann); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1710 (Anne-Marie Thompson).



A diversity of viewpoints [...] is necessary to do science properly. This is not because diversity is aesthetically pleasing; it's because people are not omniscient or infallible [...] In a community in which people with different viewpoints can criticize those they disagree with without fear of punishment, censorship or cancellation, one person can point out another's errors, and the whole community can be more rational than any of the individuals in it.¹⁷⁰

For Christopher Dummitt, “current federal EDI policies in research and in the Canada research chairs not only don’t deal with this issue but also probably make it worse.”¹⁷¹ This view was shared by other witnesses.¹⁷² Steven Pinker gave an illustration of how diversity as promoted by EDI policies does not guarantee viewpoint diversity:

More recently, the term “viewpoint diversity” became popular as an ironic response to racial and gender diversity. The joke went that in a university, “diversity” means people who look different and think alike; viewpoint diversity, in contrast, is the form of diversity that really matters in scientific and intellectual life.¹⁷³

Some pointed out that this could dissuade researchers from studying certain topics.¹⁷⁴ Conversely, according to one witness, “research proposals that contain buzzwords and fashionable progressive political language have a much better chance of being successful.”¹⁷⁵ Several witnesses noted that this context has made it difficult to conduct research on EDI policies themselves or to question their validity.¹⁷⁶ In a written brief, André-Marie Tremblay, Professor in the Physics Department and member of Sherbrooke University’s Institut quantique, compared EDI in its current form to a religion.¹⁷⁷

Some witnesses also raised concerns about the risk of political discrimination in faculty recruitment.¹⁷⁸ One witness explained that this type of discrimination can be implicit, for

170 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1120 (Steven Pinker).

171 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1110 (Christopher Dummitt).

172 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1715 (David Freeman).

173 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1120 (Steven Pinker).

174 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1735 (Christopher Dummitt); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 10 December 2024, 1630 (Heather Exner-Pirot).

175 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1605 (Yuan Yi Zhu).

176 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1755 (Christopher Dummitt); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1205 (Geoff Horsman).

177 André-Marie Tremblay, [Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), December 2024.

178 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1610 (Eric Kaufmann); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 12 December 2024, 1620 (John Robson).

example when funding is granted for positions that require adherence to concepts such as decolonization.¹⁷⁹ However, Jeremy Kerr, Professor of Biology at University of Ottawa and Chair of NSERC's Committee on Discovery Research, as an individual, said that during the many years he has been an evaluator, never once did he witness anyone try to apply a political filter in evaluating research.¹⁸⁰

In response to these concerns, several witnesses suggested incorporating the issue of political diversity into the evaluation process. Geoff Horsman, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Wilfrid Laurier University, proposed "implementing some sort of official mechanism for a devil's advocate type of approach" in order to "bring in people who can articulate the strongest possible argument on either side of an issue."¹⁸¹ Christopher Dummitt said, "I think the question is about having more diverse viewpoints on the panel. If assessments are going to be part of it, I think political viewpoints and viewpoint diversity should really be part of the assessment."¹⁸² In a brief, David Freeman wrote the following:

[I]t would be deeply unprincipled for the Tri-Councils to continue the existing EDI regime without also adopting an "EDI for conservatives" to address the underrepresentation of conservative voices in academia and research. [...] I ask that Tri-Council EDI policies prioritize political viewpoint over all other considerations.¹⁸³

2.4. EDI is Discriminatory

According to some of the evidence, EDI measures are discriminatory. A few witnesses raised the issue of population groups covered by EDI measures, noting that these measures focus on criteria related to gender and ethnicity, but neglect other factors such as language or socioeconomic background.¹⁸⁴ Some witnesses argued that by focusing on gender and ethnicity, some EDI measures could end up being

179 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1705 (Christopher Dummitt).

180 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1620 (Jeremy Kerr).

181 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1625 (Geoff Horsman).

182 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1755 (Christopher Dummitt).

183 David Freeman, [Brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research](#), September 2025.

184 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1800 (Christopher Dummitt); and André-Marie Tremblay, [Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), December 2024.



discriminatory.¹⁸⁵ For example, Steven Pinker believes that these policies “can be inherently unfair. Funding is a zero-sum game. If people of one sex or skin colour are given an advantage, then others of a different sex or skin colour are being put at a disadvantage.”¹⁸⁶

Several witnesses spoke about recruitment. The Committee heard that certain positions and programs are set aside for candidates from categories covered by EDI measures, which ends up excluding other candidates based on their race or gender.¹⁸⁷

The Canada Research Chairs program was cited several times in this regard.¹⁸⁸ Some witnesses told the Committee that a complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission about this program in 2003 resulted in a settlement agreement in 2006, requiring institutions to set equity targets based on the pool of qualified candidates.¹⁸⁹ Then, in 2019, an addendum reinforced the implementation of these commitments by setting equity, diversity and inclusion targets for women, visible minorities (members of racialized groups), persons with disabilities and Indigenous peoples.¹⁹⁰ These measures are meant to correct the underrepresentation of these groups in the allocation of chairs, something that was observed during the early years of the program: for example, “[w]hen the program was launched, 14% of the chairholders were women when, in fact, in academia, more than 40% of the faculty were women.”¹⁹¹

185 SRSR, *Evidence*, 28 November 2024, 1650 (Eric Kaufmann); SRSR, *Evidence*, 28 November 2024, 1735 (Christopher Dummitt); SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1600 (Geoff Horsman); SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1245 (Patanjali Kambhampati); and André-Marie Tremblay, *Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, December 2024.

186 SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1155 (Steven Pinker).

187 For example, SRSR, *Evidence*, 5 December 2024, 1600 and 1640 (Geoff Horsman); and SRSR, *Evidence*, 24 September 2025, 1750 (Robert Thomas, President, Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship).

188 SRSR, *Evidence*, 28 November 2024, 1605 (Yuan Yi Zhu); SRSR, *Evidence*, 28 November 2024, 1625 (Eric Kaufmann); SRSR, *Evidence*, 28 November 2024, 1750 (Christopher Dummitt); Louis-Joseph Brouillard and François Plamondon, *Brief*, Brief submitted to SRSR, 16 December 2024; SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1125 (Azim Shariff); and SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1255 (Geoff Horsman).

189 CAUT, *Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025; Marjorie Griffin Cohen et al., *Brief to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research and Excellence in Canada*, 22 September 2025; and SRSR, *Evidence*, 1 October 2025, 1715 (Valérie Laflamme, Associate Vice-President, Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council).

190 See: Government of Canada, Canada Research Chairs, *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Requirements and Practices*.

191 SRSR, *Evidence*, 1 October 2025, 1715 (Valérie Laflamme).

In order to meet these targets, institutions may engage in “strategic hiring” to recruit candidates from the four designated groups.¹⁹² Several witnesses opposed this practice, which they called “affirmative action.”¹⁹³ However, other witnesses defended these measures.¹⁹⁴

2.5. EDI is Unpopular

Another criticism of EDI had to do with its unpopularity with the public. According to Eric Kaufmann, “59% of Canadians favoured a colour-blind approach of ‘combating racism by treating people as individuals and trying not to see race,’ as against just 29% in favour of the colour-conscious approach of ‘combating racism by being aware of race, in order to better notice inequality.’”¹⁹⁵

Several witnesses believe that imposing EDI measures in academia undermines public confidence in science and support for public research funding.¹⁹⁶ Yuan Yi Zhu said the following:

However, in these difficult economic times, many Canadians already question the value of funding academic research, which can seem sometimes irrelevant to their daily lives, and the heavy-handed imposition of EDI and other ideological requirements in research funding undermines public support for public research funding.¹⁹⁷

However, Wendy Cukier, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Strategy at Ted Rogers School of Management and Academic Director of the Diversity Institute, speaking as an individual, contradicted this finding by providing the following data:

192 See: Government of Canada, Canada Research Chairs, [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

193 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1650 (Eric Kaufmann); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1620 (Jeremy Kerr); and Louis-Joseph Brouillard and François Plamondon, [Brief](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 16 December 2024; SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1135 (Azim Shariff).

194 CAUT, [Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025; Marjorie Griffin Cohen et al., [Brief to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research and Excellence in Canada](#), 22 September 2025.

195 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1555 (Eric Kaufmann).

196 Ibid.; SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1605 (Yuan Yi Zhu); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1630 (Geoff Horsman); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1120 (Steven Pinker); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1825 (Gad Saad); Louis-Joseph Brouillard and François Plamondon, [Brief](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 16 December 2024.

197 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1605 (Yuan Yi Zhu).



[W]e recently did a survey with Environics of 5,000 Canadians across the country. Fifty-six per cent believe that the current focus on equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility is a good thing. Twenty-seven per cent were neutral, and only 16% thought it was a bad thing.¹⁹⁸

2.6. EDI Adds Administrative Burden

Critics have also pointed to the administrative burden of EDI requirements. According to a written brief from the Centre de recherche de l'Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, “[r]esearchers must now spend a significant portion of their time meeting EDI requirements, rather than focusing on scientific content.”¹⁹⁹ It was pointed out that these requirements impose a comparatively heavier burden on smaller institutions with less infrastructure.²⁰⁰

Implementing mandatory EDI training for all candidates was recommended to ensure “that researchers have the tools they need to promote an equitable and inclusive environment, without turning grant applications into administrative exercises.”²⁰¹ McGill University recommended simplifying and harmonizing evaluation processes: “This can be achieved by integrating EDI and data-management considerations into assessments of research design, using common guidance templates across agencies, and shifting recurring institutional elements out of project-level forms.”²⁰²

2.7. EDI is Bad Value for Taxpayers

Some of the evidence suggests that EDI measures can be a waste of taxpayer money: “it can be a waste of taxpayer money if grant dollars don’t go to the scientific research that

198 SRSR, *Evidence*, 22 September 2025, 1120 (Wendy Cukier, Professor, Entrepreneurship and Strategy, Ted Rogers School of Management and Academic Director, Diversity Institute, as an individual).

199 Centre de recherche de l'Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, *Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, December 2024.

200 SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1200 (Steven Pinker). See also André-Marie Tremblay, *Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, December 2024.

201 Centre de recherche de l'Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, *Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, December 2024.

202 McGill University, *Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*, 31 October 2025.

is judged to be of the highest quality and priority.”²⁰³ Several witnesses told the Committee that it is not legitimate for taxpayer money to go toward activist or politicized research.²⁰⁴

Azim Shariff gave the example of a recruitment process in his department under the Canada Research Chairs program. Because of the program’s EDI targets, the pool of candidates “was further narrowed to members of the four equity-seeking groups, excluding many of the most relevant and impactful scholars.”²⁰⁵ He told the Committee that the hiring process ultimately failed to identify a candidate, putting the future of the institute and the research cluster in jeopardy.

2.8. EDI Undermines Research Excellence

For these reasons, several witnesses felt that EDI is incompatible with research excellence.²⁰⁶ Some argued that the idea of “inclusive excellence” is an oxymoron.²⁰⁷ Eric Kaufmann believes that EDI criteria conflict with the pursuit of scientific truth: “The fact that you have to rig it means you are going to compromise on excellence and scientific truth in order to achieve cultural socialism or EDI.”²⁰⁸ The Committee heard that researchers’ identity characteristics and scientific excellence are unrelated.²⁰⁹

Steven Pinker made the following observation:

It is just not going to be the case that every ethnic group or every sex is going to be perfectly represented in proportion to their membership in the population. If we are truly seeking quality, that should not matter. We don’t have to count. There may be

203 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1120 (Steven Pinker). See also: SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1655 (Yuan Yi Zhu).

204 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1625 (Eric Kaufmann); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1630 (David Freeman); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1640 and 1655 (Dave Snow).

205 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 15 September 2025, 1125 (Azim Shariff).

206 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1740 (Gad Saad); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1210 (Patanjali Kambhampati); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1755 and 1805 (Eric Kaufmann).

207 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1140 (Yves Gingras); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1230 (Geoff Horsman); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1840 (Gad Saad).

208 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1625 (Eric Kaufmann).

209 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1650 (Yuan Yi Zhu); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1225 (Geoff Horsman); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1740 and 1815 (Gad Saad).



discrepancies, and they can go in different directions, but if we're funding the best science, we get the best science.²¹⁰

For these reasons, Gad Saad concluded that “[w]e should do away with all this diversity, inclusion and equity stuff because it harms science.”²¹¹

3. Defence of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Measures

Conversely, other evidence supported EDI measures. This testimony clarified the scope of EDI measures and the advantages of taking EDI into account in the design of research projects and in the recruitment, management, and training of research teams. According to these testimonials, EDI is a condition for research excellence. This section presents these arguments.

3.1. Scope of EDI Measures

Some witnesses began by providing the Committee with details on the objectives and scope of EDI measures, as well as how EDI is applied to the awarding of funding. Azim Shariff explained that diversity measures can pursue distinct objectives, expressing regret that these nuances are not always explicit:

Universities seem to be reluctant to explicitly indicate what diversity is for and why it is good. When they do, they use the same word—diversity—to advance multiple, sometimes contradictory goals: epistemic ones like fostering innovation and reducing groupthink; justice-oriented ones like redressing historical injustice, correcting bias, and offering role models; and pragmatic ones like student recruitment or public trust. All of these might be worthy goals. But they are not the same goal—as our discussion this morning illustrated. Our policies about diversity would be improved by increased clarity on what its purposes are.²¹²

Regarding the way EDI influences how research funding is awarded, witnesses distinguished between EDI being considered in the design of proposed research projects and EDI being considered in relation to the team that will conduct the proposed research.

According to several witnesses, under the NSERC Discovery Grants program, EDI considerations are not factored into the assessment of the researcher's or the research

210 SRSR, *Evidence*, 15 September 2025, 1135 (Steven Pinker).

211 SRSR, *Evidence*, 24 September 2025, 1810 (Gad Saad).

212 Azim Shariff, *Written response to the SRSR Committee*, September 2025.

project's excellence unless the research topic warrants it.²¹³ EDI principles are instead used to assess the principal investigator's approach to recruiting, supervising and training the team that will conduct the research project. Jeremy Kerr said the following:

The area in which equity, diversity and inclusion are accounted for in specific ways is the training plan, and essentially nowhere else. Therefore, it is not part of the quality of the proposal, fundamentally, unless there is a need to include diversity in terms of how it's evaluated.²¹⁴

Anne-Marie Thompson, Vice-President of Research Grants and Scholarships Directorate at NSERC, explained what was assessed with respect to the training plan: "We ask the researcher to elaborate on processes or procedures or how they are building inclusive research training environments. That is assessed by their peers on the committee."²¹⁵

Some witnesses challenged the view that EDI measures are contrary to merit and academic freedom.²¹⁶ Regarding merit, Ted Hewitt, speaking for SSHRC, said:

At the end of the day, nobody gets funded because they are a member of a particular group or identify with a particular group. They get funded on the basis of the excellence of their proposal, as judged by a set of criteria that we make clear from the outset and that conform to international practice.²¹⁷

In a written brief, Stefania Impellizzeri and Costin N. Antonescu, two professors at Toronto Metropolitan University, drew attention to the "myth of meritocracy," pointing out that this term comes from a satirical novel by Michael Young depicting a dystopian society based on rewarding merit, but this system exacerbates social inequalities rather than alleviating them.²¹⁸ According to the brief's authors, "[i]ndividuals from underrepresented or marginalized groups often face implicit biases, microaggressions, and discriminatory practices that hinder their progress, even when their talent and

213 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1650 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1635 (Karine Morin); and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1715 and 1720 (Maydianne Andrade).

214 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1650 (Jeremy Kerr).

215 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1715 (Anne-Marie Thompson).

216 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1730 (Malinda Smith).

217 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 1 October 2025, 1645 (Ted Hewitt).

218 Stefania Impellizzeri and Costin N. Antonescu, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025.



effort are comparable to or exceed those of their peers.”²¹⁹ This makes it necessary to consider these barriers.

For Malinda Smith, Associate Vice-President, Research (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), at the University of Calgary, speaking as an individual, “academic freedom is not evenly distributed.” She said that “[m]arginalized scholars are more vulnerable,” which “narrows inquiry and research agendas and silences debate, and [EDI] directly counteracts these pressures by protecting diverse scholars and enhancing the diversity of the knowledge produced.”²²⁰

3.2. Considering EDI in the Design of Research Projects

With regard to considering EDI in research projects themselves, several witnesses described to the Committee how giving diversity greater consideration has contributed to excellence. In Wendy Cukier’s view, “excellence in research requires an [EDI] lens in the design and implementation of research projects or else we put Canadians’ prosperity, lives and well-being at risk.”²²¹ This was supported by other witnesses.²²²

The witnesses cited examples from several areas of research.

In the health field, it was pointed out that the failure to include or consider certain groups in the design of scientific studies and clinical trials has undermined research quality and has had negative consequences for these excluded populations.²²³ For

219 Ibid.

220 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1730 (Malinda Smith).

221 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1115 (Wendy Cukier).

222 For example, PWHR, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; and SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1100 (Mahadeo Sukhai).

223 For example, Imogen R. Coe, [Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1620 (Imogen R. Coe); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1650 (Tamil Kendall, Director, Partnership for Women’s Health Research Canada); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1115 (Wendy Cukier)

example, women were long excluded from clinical trials, which impeded understanding of diseases that affect women and the effects of treatments on women.²²⁴

Also in the health field, the organization Evidence for Democracy wrote in a brief that in Canada, “racial discrimination and implicit racial biases have had adverse effects on health outcomes, treatments, policies, and healthcare experiences for racialized minorities.”²²⁵ Several witnesses referred to the case of Dr. Anil Kapoor, who died from a toxic buildup of a cancer drug: “Dr. Kapoor carried a genetic variant related to poor drug metabolism that had not been captured in databases because those databases are typically skewed towards white European heritage populations.”²²⁶ Wendy Cukier also noted that “[w]e know with health research that not disaggregating data and bringing in a gender and diversity lens results in [...] COVID vaccination strategies that result in very high infection rates for certain segments of the population.”²²⁷ She went on to cite a study by Kwame McKenzie showing that the Black community in Toronto had much higher rates of COVID-19 infection than the white community, and that “[i]t was when they brought an equity, diversity and inclusion lens to the public health strategies that they were able to reduce that to comparable levels.”²²⁸

The failure to consider diversity in research has also had a negative impact on road safety.²²⁹ One witness said that the design of airbags was initially based on the body type of young men, which resulted in the deaths of small women and children.²³⁰

224 Imogen R. Coe, [*Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; Krysta Mila Coyle, [*Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; and Evidence for Democracy, [*Written Submission for the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), September 2025.

225 Evidence for Democracy, [*Written Submission for the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), September 2025.

226 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 24 September 2025, 1620 (Imogen R. Coe). See also Krysta Mila Coyle, [*Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

227 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 22 September 2025, 1115 (Wendy Cukier).

228 Ibid.

229 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 28 November 2024, 1640 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 22 September 2025, 1115 (Wendy Cukier); Serge Villemure, [*Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, November 2025.

230 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 28 November 2024, 1640 (Jeremy Kerr).



Several witnesses recommended taking steps to give diversity considerations greater weight in research project design.²³¹ For example, in a written brief, IDEA-STEM Consulting Inc. recommended “[requiring] funding proposals and research protocols to justify participant demographics and incorporate an [inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility] lens throughout the research life cycle.”²³²

Some witnesses felt that these issues are unrelated to EDI, as taking diverse populations into account in research design is simply good experimental practice.²³³ However, beyond experimental design, the Committee heard that applicants “must demonstrate the impact for Canadians that the proposed research will have.”²³⁴ For Paul Hébert, CIHR President, “[w]ithout enabling all Canadians to benefit from our many discoveries, we risk tearing at Canada’s social fabric as well as worsening health and economic outcomes.”²³⁵

3.3. EDI Considerations in Recruiting, Managing and Training Research Teams

As previously mentioned, some funding programs incorporate EDI considerations into the training plans for the research teams that will implement research projects. Maydianne Andrade explained that EDI statements are actually statements about training. She said that “[it’s] not about buzzwords [...]. It’s actually about thinking about the kinds of people who might come to your lab and how you might help them do their best and be the best researcher possible when they leave your lab.”²³⁶

Karine Morin, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, explained what is covered in these requirements:

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- 231 For example, SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 22 September 2025, 1105 (Mahadeo Sukhai); PWHR, [*Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; Stefania Impellizzeri and Costin N. Antonescu, [*Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025.
- 232 IDEA-STEM Consulting Inc., [*Advancing Scientific Excellence: The Imperative for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in Research*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, 22 September 2025.
- 233 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 22 September 2025, 1230 (Geoff Horsman); and SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 22 September 2025, 1120 (Yves Gingras).
- 234 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 1 October 2025, 1635 (Ted Hewitt).
- 235 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 1 October 2025, 1640 (Paul Hébert). See also, Stefania Impellizzeri and Costin N. Antonescu, [*Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada*](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025.
- 236 SRSR, [*Evidence*](#), 5 December 2024, 1735 (Maydianne Andrade).

Researchers under those discovery grants are expected to engage in the training of their graduate students, of others who are participating in the research in a lab environment and whatnot. What is being asked is that the researcher or principal investigator take on responsibilities towards fairly supporting all who are part of the research endeavour, making sure there are opportunities for the different types of individuals who are participants in the research. That sort of training plan that is put forward is where we would ask that all be treated equitably; that there be a recognition that the diversity, whether it's backgrounds or academic training and whatnot, will be respected and embraced; and that there be a sense of belonging established in a research environment.²³⁷

The Committee was told that diversity considerations help combat the impact of unconscious bias in research team recruitment.²³⁸ In correspondence with the Committee, Heather Logan, Professor of Theoretical Particle Physics at Carleton University, used her personal experience to outline the benefits of an inclusive training environment.²³⁹

Witnesses also presented studies to the Committee showing that diversity within research teams is associated with higher productivity in terms of publications and impact.²⁴⁰ Imogen R. Coe, Professor with the Department of Chemistry and Biology at Toronto Metropolitan University, speaking as an individual, said one study showed that “[d]iverse teams are more innovative, with productivity and impact 7% higher than homogeneous teams.”²⁴¹

237 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1635 (Karine Morin).

238 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1720 (Maydianne Andrade); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1650 (Tamil Kendall); and Stefania Impellizzeri and Costin N. Antonescu, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025.

239 Heather Logan, “Diversity matters for research excellence in Canada!,” Correspondence sent to SRSR, December 2024.

240 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1730 (Malinda Smith); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1630 (Imogen R. Coe); and PWHR, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

241 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1630 (Imogen R. Coe).



Many witnesses also noted that diversity within research teams fosters the emergence of research questions that would otherwise have been overlooked.²⁴² In a brief, PWHR wrote:

[S]cientific progress is made based on the questions that scientists ask, and personal backgrounds and life experiences influence those questions. To illustrate, female scientists are more likely to study pregnancy than male scientists and are more likely to include sex factors in all research. Black scientists are more likely to study health disparities than White scientists.²⁴³

Lastly, several witnesses stressed the importance of inclusivity in talent development, including for those not pursuing academic careers.²⁴⁴ Mark Green summarized these considerations as follows:

The training of highly qualified personnel is particularly important for Canadian society because these former students go on to successful careers in industry, government and academia. As such, we must ensure that all segments of society have equal and equitable opportunities to access such positions.²⁴⁵

242 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1730 (Malinda Smith); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1745 (Nadia Hasan); Imogen Coe, [Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; PWHR, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; and Evidence for Democracy, [Written Submission for the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), September 2025.

243 PWHR, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

244 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 28 November 2024, 1600 and 1655 (Jeremy Kerr); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1735 (Maydianne Andrade); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1705 and 1725 (Wasiimah Joomun); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1635 (Mark Green); Stefania Impellizzeri and Costin N. Antonescu, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025; and Krysta Coyle, [Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024.

245 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1635 (Mark Green).

3.4. EDI is a Condition for Research Excellence

For these reasons, several witnesses believe that not only are EDI policies and measures compatible with research excellence, but they are necessary for it.²⁴⁶

Several witnesses said that EDI principles and research excellence are mutually reinforcing.²⁴⁷ Malinda Smith summed up the connections between equity, diversity, inclusion, academic freedom, merit and excellence this way:

Equity fuels freedom, diversity drives merit and inclusion unlocks the excellence dividend. [EDI] is the framework that makes freedom and excellence real, durable and widely experienced. Without it, Canada risks leaving talent untapped. With it, Canada can lead globally.²⁴⁸

Several witnesses therefore recommended that the implementation of EDI principles be maintained or strengthened in the field of scientific research.²⁴⁹ For example, McGill University recommended:

[T]hat the federal government and the granting agencies [...] [e]mbed research integrity, equity, diversity, and inclusion as core dimensions of excellence across all assessment processes. EDI principles should be applied not as separate compliance measures, but rather, be integral to how quality, originality, and impact are assessed.²⁵⁰

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- 246 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 5 December 2024, 1610 (Karine Morin); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1815 (Malinda Smith); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1105 (Mahadeo Sukhai); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 3 December 2024, 1630 (Gabriel Miller); SRSR, [Evidence](#), 24 September 2025, 1840 (Nadia Hasan); CAUT, [Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025; PWHR, [Statement to the Standing Committee on Science and Research: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; and RIQEDI, [Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, November 2025.
- 247 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1105 (Mahadeo Sukhai); and RIQEDI, [Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, November 2025.
- 248 SRSR, [Evidence](#), 17 September 2025, 1735 (Malinda Smith).
- 249 For example, CAUT, [Study on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, September 2025; Evidence for Democracy, [Written Submission for the Standing Committee on Science and Research \(SRSR\) on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), September 2025; Imogen Coe, [Statement to the SRSR re: Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), Brief submitted to SRSR, December 2024; and McGill University, [Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), 31 October 2025.
- 250 McGill University, [Submission to the Standing Committee on Science and Research on the Impact of the Criteria for Awarding Federal Funding on Research Excellence in Canada](#), 31 October 2025.



Witnesses also proposed strengthening training initiatives in the area of EDI.²⁵¹

THE COMMITTEE'S OBSERVATIONS

Throughout this study, the Committee heard overwhelming testimony criticizing federal EDI policies being implemented by the tri-agencies and Canadian universities across different programs, research funding applications and position hiring.

EDI is a discriminatory policy that is embraced and politicized by the far-left political agenda. It has become accepted, concentrated, and deeply entrenched in Canadian federal institutions and academia, despite being unpopular with the Canadian population at large.

EDI policies are weakening the quality of Canadian research, Canada's research reputation, and its overall research ecosystem by politicizing science, fostering cancel culture, empowering activist research, adding administrative burden to researchers, imposing mandatory diversity statements, pushing top research talent away, and limiting viewpoint diversity.

Fundamentally, EDI policies are delivering bad value for Canadian taxpayers by weakening research excellence in Canada and undermining public trust and confidence in federally funded research.

Scientific excellence is measured not through an accumulation of criteria, but through the ability of a system to support rigour, a diversity of approaches and intellectual freedom throughout the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the preceding, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

Funding Programs

Recommendation 1

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—cease using past grant amounts as a criterion for

251 For example, SRSR, [Evidence](#), 22 September 2025, 1105 (Mahadeo Sukhai).

awarding funding, in order to avoid putting small or medium-sized postsecondary institutions at a disadvantage.

Recommendation 2

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—review how the Research Support Fund operates to better assist small or medium-sized postsecondary institutions and colleges with covering the indirect costs of research.

Recommendation 3

That the Government of Canada increase the share of research funding awarded to applied research conducted in colleges, institutes, CEGEPs, college centres for the transfer of technology and innovative social practices, technology access centres and polytechnics through the College and Community Innovation Program and other granting agency programs.

Recommendation 4

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—while maintaining the place of basic research, introduce evaluation criteria that emphasize research impact for some targeted funding programs.

Support for Research in French

Recommendation 5

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—ensure that funding applications submitted in French are treated equitably and that action is taken to support scientific research and publication in French.

Recommendation 6

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—consider introducing funding targets regarding applications submitted in French.



Evaluation Committees

Recommendation 7

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—strengthen their implicit bias training programs for expert panel members and redouble their efforts to ensure that the composition of expert panels is representative of the research community, including from a linguistic perspective.

Recommendation 8

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—consider creating incentives to encourage participation on expert panels as part of peer review.

Evaluation Criteria

Recommendation 9

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—continue to implement the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment principles and step up their efforts to encourage other research stakeholders to recognize a wider variety of forms of contributions to research.

Recommendation 10

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—take steps to familiarize evaluation committees and funding program applicants with the use of the new narrative CV format.

Recommendation 11

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—continue to experiment with new approaches to award certain types of funding, such as de-identifying funding applications or randomly awarding a portion of the funding.

Data From the Three Granting Agencies

Recommendation 12

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—allow access, as part of scientific projects subject to the appropriate ethical standards and data security protocols, to disaggregated data on their funding programs, including for unfunded applications.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Recommendation 13

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—remove all references to equity, diversity and inclusion in the process for awarding federal funding in support of research.

Recommendation 14

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—limit equity, diversity and inclusion considerations to the review of research project content when appropriate.

Recommendation 15

That the Government of Canada ban the use of demographic quotas and proportionality targets by federal funding programs administered by the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Recommendation 16

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—take steps to protect academic freedom and to promote viewpoint diversity in their funding programs.



Recommendation 17

That the Government of Canada audit the equity, diversity and inclusion policies and measures of the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—and that this audit provide quantified measures of the outcomes of these policies and measures.

Recommendation 18

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—introduce compulsory training on equity, diversity and inclusion principles and on the ethical and societal impact of research for all funding program applicants.

Recommendation 19

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—require the incorporation of equity, diversity and inclusion principles into the design of research projects submitted to their funding programs.

Recommendation 20

That the granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—create incentives for inclusive research teams and establish dedicated funding sources and incentives for projects that demonstrate fair and equitable hiring practices, whose management teams are diverse and feature collaborations with historically excluded communities.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF WITNESSES

The following table lists the witnesses who appeared before the committee at its meetings related to this report. Transcripts of all public meetings related to this report are available on the committee's [webpage for this study](#).

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
As an individual	2025/09/15	2
Dr. Kelly Cobey, Scientist, University of Ottawa Heart Institute		
Dr. Grace Karram, Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Coordinator, Higher Education Graduate Program, University of Toronto		
Vincent Larivière, Professor, Université de Montréal		
Gita Ljubcic, Professor, McMaster University		
Steven Pinker, Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology, Harvard University		
Azim Shariff, Professor, The University of British Columbia		
As an individual	2025/09/17	3
David Freeman, Associate Professor, Simon Fraser University		
Dr. Malinda Smith, Associate Vice-President, Research (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), University of Calgary		
Dr. Yuan Yi Zhu, Assistant Professor of International Relations and International Law, Leiden University		
Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne	2025/09/17	3
Martin Normand, President and Chief Executive Officer		
Tech-Access Canada	2025/09/17	3
Ken Doyle, Executive Director		

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
As an individual Dr. Wendy Cukier, Professor, Entrepreneurship and Strategy, Ted Rogers School of Management and Academic Director, Diversity Institute Christopher Dummitt, Professor, Canadian Studies, Trent University Yves Gingras, Scientific Director, Observatory of Science and Technology, Université du Québec à Montréal Dr. Geoff Horsman, Associate Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Wilfrid Laurier University Patanjali Kambhampati, Professor, McGill University Julien Larregue, Associate Professor, Université Laval	2025/09/22	4
IDEA-STEM Consulting Inc. Dr. Mahadeo Sukhai, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Scientific Officer	2025/09/22	4
As an individual Imogen R. Coe, Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biology, Toronto Metropolitan University Mark Green, Professor, Queen's University Dr. Nadia Hasan, Assistant Professor, School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, York University Eric Kaufmann, Professor, University of Buckingham Dr. Gad Saad, Visiting Scholar, Declaration of Independence Center for the Study of American Freedom, University of Mississippi Dave Snow, Associate Professor, University of Guelph	2025/09/24	5
Partnership for Women's Health Research Canada Tamil Kendall, Director	2025/09/24	5
Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship Robert Thomas, President	2025/09/24	5
Canadian Institutes of Health Research Dr. Paul Hébert, President Jeff Moore, Associate Vice-President, Government and External Relations	2025/10/01	6

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Anne-Marie Thompson, Vice-President, Research Grants and Scholarships Directorate Marcel Turcot, Vice-President, Strategic, Corporate and Public Affairs	2025/10/01	6
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Dr. Ted Hewitt, President Dr. Valérie Laflamme, Associate Vice-President, Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat	2025/10/01	6

APPENDIX B: LIST OF WITNESSES

The following table lists the witnesses who appeared before the committee at its meetings related to this report. Transcripts of all public meetings related to this report are available on the committee's [webpage for this study](#).

44th Parliament – 1st Session

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
As an individual	2024/11/28	111
Christopher Dummitt, Professor, Canadian Studies, Trent University		
Eric Kaufmann, Professor, University of Buckingham		
Jeremy Kerr, Professor of Biology, University of Ottawa, and Chair of NSERC's Committee on Discovery Research		
Daniel O'Donnell, Professor of English, University of Lethbridge		
Bruce Pardy, Professor of Law, Queen's University		
Yuan Yi Zhu, Assistant Professor of International Relations and International Law, Leiden University		
Colleges and Institutes Canada	2024/12/03	112
Pari Johnston, President and Chief Executive Officer		
Polytechnics Canada	2024/12/03	112
Sarah Watts-Rynard, Chief Executive Officer		
Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery	2024/12/03	112
Alison Evans, President and Chief Executive Officer		
Retraction Watch	2024/12/03	112
Ivan Oransky, Co-Founder		
U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities	2024/12/03	112
Dylan Hanley, Executive Vice-President		
Universities Canada	2024/12/03	112
Gabriel Miller, President and Chief Executive Officer		

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
As an individual Geoff Horsman, Associate Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Wilfrid Laurier University	2024/12/05	113
Canadian Alliance of Student Associations Wasiimah Joomun, Executive Director	2024/12/05	113
Canadian Black Scientists Network Maydianne Andrade, Past President and Co-founder	2024/12/05	113
École de technologie supérieure Christian Casanova, Vice President of Research and Partnerships Ghyslaine Gagnon, Dean of Research	2024/12/05	113
Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences Karine Morin, President and Chief Executive Officer	2024/12/05	113
As an individual Heather Exner-Pirot, Director, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment, Macdonald-Laurier Institute Philip Kitcher, John Dewey Professor Emeritus of Philosophy John Robson, Executive Director, Climate Discussion Nexus	2024/12/10	114
As an individual Philip Kitcher, John Dewey Professor Emeritus of Philosophy John Robson, Executive Director, Climate Discussion Nexus	2024/12/12	115

APPENDIX C: LIST OF BRIEFS

The following is an alphabetical list of organizations and individuals who submitted briefs to the committee related to this report. For more information, please consult the committee's [webpage for this study](#).

Antonescu, Costin N.

Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne

Beaumier, Maryse

B'nai Brith Canada

Canadian Association of University Teachers

Cobey, Kelly

Colleges and Institutes Canada

Douglas, Allen

École de technologie supérieure

Evidence for Democracy

Freeman, David

Griffin Cohen, Marjorie

Hallé, Sylvain

IDEA-STEM Consulting Inc.

Impellizzeri, Stefania

Larregue, Julien

Lysova, Alexandra

Macdonald-Laurier Institute

McGill University

Mulay, Shree

Packalen, Mikko

Prentice, Susan

Psychosocial CARE4Kids Lab

Québec Interuniversity Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Network

Snow, Dave

Support Our Science

Tech-Access Canada

The Privileged Group Inc.

Université du Québec

Villemure, Serge

APPENDIX D: LIST OF BRIEFS

The following is an alphabetical list of organizations and individuals who submitted briefs to the committee related to this report. For more information, please consult the committee's [webpage for this study](#).

44th Parliament – 1st Session

Alliance of Canadian Comprehensive Research Universities

Brouillard, Louis-Joseph

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations

Centre de recherche de l'Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont

Coe, Imogen R.

Coyle, Krista

Dummitt, Christopher

Fung, Benjamin

Partnership for Women's Health Research Canada

Patience, Gregory

Plamondon, François

Tremblay, André-Marie

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 2 to 6 and 42](#)) from the 45th Parliament, 1st Session and ([Meetings Nos. 111 to 115](#)) from the 44th Parliament, 1st Session is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Salma Zahid
Chair

Dissenting Report – Liberal Party of Canada

Research excellence requires an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) lens in the design and implementation of research projects. As Wendy Cukier told the Committee, “Excellence in research requires an [EDI] lens in the design and implementation of research projects or else we put Canadians’ prosperity, lives and wellbeing at risk.” Witnesses argue that when research fails to account for diverse populations, the quality of research suffers, and important knowledge gaps emerge. They maintained that EDI considerations help ensure that scientific discoveries benefit all Canadians and improve the quality, relevance, and impact of research. For this reason, several witnesses stated that EDI is not simply compatible with excellence but is a prerequisite for it.

Witnesses also argued that EDI strengthens research excellence by improving the productivity, creativity, and impact of research teams. Imogen R. Coe pointed to evidence showing that “diverse teams are more innovative, with productivity and impact 7% higher than homogeneous teams.”

Furthermore, the witness stated that there are painful examples of the consequences that arise when research fails to account for diversity. Coe reminded the Committee that Canadian physician Dr. Kapoor died from a toxic buildup of a cancer drug because a genetic variant affecting his ability to metabolize it was overlooked in research databases that underrepresented non-European populations. This lack of diversity is widespread. Coe highlighted that a 2018 study found that more than 78% of participants in genome-wide association studies were of European ancestry, while fewer than 5% were of non-European ancestry.

The Partnership for Women's Health Research Canada emphasized that “scientific progress is made based on the questions that scientists ask, and personal backgrounds and life experiences influence those questions,” noting that women scientists are more likely to study pregnancy and Black scientists are more likely to study health disparities. Summarizing the connection between EDI and excellence, Malinda Smith stated, “Equity fuels freedom, diversity drives merit and inclusion unlocks the excellence dividend,” adding that without EDI, Canada risks leaving talent untapped, while with it, Canada can lead globally.

Witness Tamil Kendall further discussed the importance of EDI research, noting its link to stronger research performance, including the development of original research questions and greater scholarly output. Kendall reminded the Committee that researchers' perspectives and the questions they choose to investigate are inherently shaped by their personal backgrounds and lived experiences. As examples, he cited that black scientists

are more likely to examine health disparities and female scientists are more likely to conduct research that considers both female and male participants.

Research excellence requires an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) lens in the design and implementation of research projects. As Wendy Cukier told the Committee, “excellence in research requires an [EDI] lens in the design and implementation of research projects or else we put Canadians’ prosperity, lives and wellbeing at risk.” Witnesses argued that when research fails to account for diverse populations, the quality of research suffers, and important knowledge gaps emerge. They maintained that EDI considerations help ensure that scientific discoveries benefit all Canadians and improve the quality, relevance, and impact of research. For this reason, several witnesses stated that EDI is not simply compatible with excellence but is a prerequisite for it.

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We recommend that the government continue to support EDI measures, particularly by incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion principles into the design of research projects submitted to federal funding programs, as outlined in Recommendation 19. Several witnesses emphasized the effectiveness of these measures in identifying and addressing hidden biases in research and scholarship

Committee witness Imogen Coe emphasized the importance of incorporating EDI principles into research. She stated that there are painful examples of the consequences that arise when research fails to account for diversity. Coe reminded the Committee that Canadian physician Dr. Kapoor died from a toxic buildup of a cancer drug because a genetic variant affecting his ability to metabolize it was overlooked in research databases that underrepresented non-European populations. This lack of diversity is widespread. Coe

highlighted that a 2018 study found that more than 78% of participants in genome-wide association studies were of European ancestry, while fewer than 5% were of non-European ancestry.

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Continuing EDI measures in federally funded research is essential to addressing hidden biases, closing critical knowledge gaps, and ensuring that research better reflects and serves Canada's diverse population.

Conservative Party of Canada Dissenting Opinion

Conservatives support the principle of equal opportunity for all Canadians. Conversely, Conservatives oppose discriminatory federal policies that have widely emerged, continue to grow, and have become more entrenched in public and academic institutions under successive Liberal governments.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies, also known as DEI or EDI policies, have become politicized, and in turn, they have become discriminatory in practice. In the context of Canadian academia and research supported by federal funding, these policies favour select individual identities over an individual's merit to qualify for federal research funding or for such roles that are supported by the federal government through the Canada Research Chairs Program (CRCP).

Since the Liberals formed government in 2015, DEI policies have steadily crept across the federal government. Today, these policies can be found widely within the federal bureaucracy across different departments and agencies, including within the National Research Council of Canada and the Tri-Council Agencies. These include the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Leveraging their ability to fund research projects and research roles at Canadian universities through Canadian taxpayer dollars and programs like the CRCP, the federal government is exerting its influence upon many Canadian universities across the country to adopt DEI policies and criterion.

The result of implementing these discriminatory DEI policies is the lack of fair access to science and research opportunities that are funded by the federal government using Canadian taxpayer money.

If an individual does not meet the government's identity criteria (E.g., if that individual is not a certain race or if they are not a certain gender or if they are not a certain sexual orientation, etc.) then, that individual will simply be excluded from participating and barred from entry, regardless of their merit, and by virtue excluded from consideration for research opportunities, such as federally funded research or the CRCP.

The government's criteria for this research funding and these research roles is not based solely on the applicant's knowledge, expertise, qualifications, credentials, or any other merit-based factor. In many circumstances, an applicant's individual identity and *who* they are can determine whether they are eligible for consideration before those merit-based factors are assessed. This is simply wrong and bad practice for several reasons.

First, it is discriminatory in its implementation and practice. Originally envisioned and intended to enhance opportunities for marginalized societal groups, DEI policy today is guilty of becoming politicized in and of itself and has resulted in a policy position that perpetuates exclusion, while doing little to promote equity for all. When viewed from the lens of this Committee and this topic, DEI we believe does more harm than good for the advancement and quality of Canadian science and research.

To repair past injustices today with DEI is to create new injustices tomorrow. This is not a solution that benefits our diverse society in Canada. It simply perpetuates and codifies discriminatory practices in Canada's research institutions, to the benefit of a few. During testimony, selected individuals, including those who have been promoted and have benefited from the application of DEI, felt somewhat undeserving of the opportunity they have been granted because they understand their value was based on their identity, not on their merit.

Past and current injustice does not get fixed by implementing policies of DEI. It gets addressed and rectified by a federal government and academic institutions which promote and support an environment of equal and fair opportunity for all, and by rewarding research opportunities and roles based on merit, not identity.

Second, DEI policies can be viewed as being unfair because they are promoted and implemented using Canadian taxpayer dollars. While all Canadians contribute to and help fund federal research and programs - in the amount of approximately \$10 Billion each year - often only an exclusive minority has access to these opportunities, based simply on their ability to check an identity box.

Third, this approach also reduces and limits the number of applicants for Canada Research Chair positions and research funding opportunities.

Offering positions to individuals who only meet a specific identity criteria not only reduces the total size of the applicant pool but it also reduces the chances of securing a candidate who meets *both* the government's preferred identity criteria *and* who also has the highest merit. The committee heard examples of institutions not being able to fill positions because of the stringent DEI imposed hiring obligations, which then leaves positions and programs unfilled. When these instances occur, it is a set-back and a disservice to Canadians, Canadian research, and Canadian academic institutions.

The current DEI approach favoured by the Liberal government filters out many qualified candidates forcing those candidates to seek opportunities elsewhere, often by relocating to another country that has not adopted these misguided policies.

As a result, Canadian institutions are not only funding lower quality research, but they also risk hiring lesser qualified candidates for academic roles, thereby diminishing research excellence in Canada.

Meanwhile, higher valued and higher quality research and the best candidates are being pushed out of Canada by these discriminatory policies. Some have suggested they are being driven out of their own country and forced to pursue academic and research opportunities elsewhere.

In a perverse sense, the Liberal government's own DEI policies are actively contributing to and accelerating the brain drain across Canada. This not only hurts Canadian research, innovation, and prospects of a stronger economic future in Canada, but it ultimately places Canada at a competitive disadvantage when Canadians leave Canada for a foreign country to conduct, publish, and commercialize their research in that foreign country.

Ultimately, that foreign research conducted by a Canadian is often used by that foreign country to compete against Canada, Canadian businesses, and Canadian interests. This is a major problem that must be addressed immediately, especially given the economic and geopolitical context facing Canada in 2026.

As a consequence of these Liberal DEI policies and practices, Canadian federal research lends itself to the pursuit of research mediocrity rather than the pursuit of research excellence.

Perhaps there may be a correlation with federal and academic DEI policies being adopted and implemented and the results of the 2026 Centre for World University Rankings (CWUR).

According to their website, the CWUR “is a leading consulting organization providing policy advice, strategic insights, and consulting services to governments and universities to improve educational and research outcomes.”¹

Since 2012, CWUR has been “publishing the only academic ranking of global universities that assesses the quality of education, employability, quality of faculty, and research without relying on surveys and university data submissions.”²

While this committee report was being drafted, the CWUR released their 2026 results. Shockingly, 37 of 38 Canadian Universities dropped in their global rankings compared to last year. The only Canadian university that did not drop remained at the same rank as last year. Zero Canadian universities improved their position from the previous year.

Further, declines were widespread across several categories among Canadian institutions. 34 out of 38 universities dropped in the research category by the largest and most alarming margins. On average there was a decline of 23.8 rank positions amongst Canadian Institutions.

According to a CTV news article, when asked what is behind the decline of Canadian Universities in this report, the President of the Center for World University Rankings said, “Canadian universities are struggling to deliver high-quality education, attract and retain talent, and produce quality research at scale.”³

Conservatives observe it is interesting that these disappointing trends are resulting at the same time as DEI policies are flourishing in Canada and becoming more widely adopted in Canada’s federal and academic environments. These trends could mean that the results of lesser quality research at home and the effects of pushing away top Canadian researchers to foreign countries is being realized – especially given Canada’s identified struggles to ‘deliver high-quality education’ and ‘attract and retain talent’.

These trends are worth monitoring, and perhaps this can be the topic of future academic research, or the focus of a future study undertaken by the Science and Research Committee.

¹ Centre for World University Rankings (2026): About CWUR. [LINK](#)

² Ibid.

³ CTV News (June 1, 2026): Nearly all Canadian universities fall in global rankings. [LINK](#)

On another important matter, Conservatives are deeply concerned about and strongly denounce rising antisemitism being witnessed and experienced on Canadian university campuses.

On September 17, 2025, the committee heard shocking testimony from David Freeman, a Canadian Jewish faculty member at Simon Fraser University. Although Mr. Freeman was accurately quoted in this report in Paragraph 93, the committee report fails to identify him as a Jewish faculty member. This is a key piece of missing information that should be included, and Conservatives are taking the opportunity to add this detail now.

Further, Conservatives also want to note that nowhere in the entire report is antisemitism mentioned, nor the increasing and active threats being experienced by Jewish Canadians on university campuses. This is troubling and disappointing, and it is an important topic within the study that should have received more attention given the shocking Evidence the committee heard.

Under the Liberal governments watch, hate crimes against Jewish Canadians are skyrocketing across Canada. This is completely unacceptable, especially in a country that prides itself on diversity and tolerance for different faiths and religions.

According to B'nai Brith Canada, Canada is facing a national crisis of antisemitism as reported incidents reach perilous, record-setting heights in 2025. Last year, the total number of reported cases of hatred targeting Jews reached an apex of 6,800 incidents of antisemitism. This is equivalent to 18.6 incidents, on average, each day. It is the highest volume recorded in the annual Audit since its inception in 1982.⁴

When compared to previous years, the 2025 figures appear especially significant. The total number of incidents increased 9.4 per cent from 2024 to 2025, and 145.6 per cent from 2022 – prior to Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, terrorist attacks – to 2025.⁵

Further, a recently published report commissioned by the Government of Canada found,

“Over the past few years, Canada has seen a dramatic rise in antisemitism. Despite only being 1% of the Canadian population, Jewish Canadians made up 68% of reported religiously motivated hate crimes and 18.8% of overall reported hate crimes in 2024—the largest in either category.”

This report is titled, ‘Campus Antisemitism and Student Experiences (CASE)’, and it presents the findings of a comprehensive Canada-wide survey of Jewish postsecondary students on their experiences of all forms of antisemitism. It provides the most comprehensive national evidence to date on antisemitism in Canadian postsecondary institutions. Mention of this report absolutely belongs in this study, and Conservatives are taking the opportunity now to add it through this dissenting opinion.

⁴ B'nai Brith Canada (April 27, 2026): B'NAI BRITH CANADA SPECIAL REPORT: A National Crisis of Antisemitism. [LINK](#)

⁵ Ibid.

The results of this survey reveal an alarming prevalence of campus antisemitism, along with a troubling institutional failure to respond to serious concerns about campus climate and student safety.

The findings indicate that many Jewish students experience widespread and persistent antisemitism on Canadian campuses as a defining feature of postsecondary life that shapes their behaviour, their ability to fully participate in campus life, their safety, and their wellbeing.

Key findings of the CASE survey of Jewish students include the following:

- 84% of Jewish respondents said antisemitism is a serious problem on campus.
- 95.7% said they had experienced or witnessed at least one instance of antisemitism over the previous 12 months
- 70% said their university does not take antisemitism seriously, and 68% said their campus is not a safe and inclusive place for Jewish students.
- 72% limit what they say in class about being Jewish, and 57% avoid wearing or displaying Jewish symbols because of safety concerns.
- 18% of incidents cited faculty members, 7% involved teaching assistants, and 7% involved administrators or staff.
- 36% encountered course content or classroom discussion they experienced as antisemitic or biased, while 34% said a professor introduced Jews, Judaism, Israel, or Zionism when unrelated to the course subject.
- 45% encountered Holocaust denial or distortion often or sometimes, and 65% encountered it “at least rarely.”
- 81% reported hateful or discriminatory treatment of Zionists on campus often or occasionally; 71% reported antisemitic vandalism; 54% reported intimidation or threats directed at Jews; and 22% reported physical violence directed at Jews.
- 34% identified online or social media spaces as a location where incidents occurred, 33% identified student organizations or campus events, 25% classrooms or lecture halls, 23% nearby off-campus spaces, and 9% in student residences and housing.
- 33% reported the incident they described. Among those who reported, 63% were dissatisfied with how it was handled, and 52% of non-reporters said they did not think reporting would help.⁶

These findings in the federal government’s own commissioned report, is clear proof that the Liberal government is failing Jewish Canadians, Jewish faculty, and Jewish students, and must do far more to protect them and assure their safety at large in society, including at Canadian universities and campuses.

Lastly, Conservatives also want to note the contradictions between certain recommendations in this report. For example, recommendations 18, 19, and 20 are pro-DEI, which contradict earlier recommendations that seek to remove DEI or limit its application in the federal government and research granting agencies.

⁶ Government of Canada (August 5, 2026): Campus Antisemitism and Student Experiences (CASE). [LINK](#)

Readers should be aware that it is unusual for parliamentary committee reports to contain contradictions like this in the published recommendations. However, these contradictions exist because the committee adopted the report as it was drafted, mutually agreeing to disagree on these contradicting recommendations. By doing so, the committee was able to advance the report while supporting and preserving the diversity of viewpoints expressed by witnesses throughout this study.

As a final comment, Conservatives want to reiterate support for upholding diversity of opinions and viewpoints across Canadian society, including within the federal bureaucracy, academic institutions, and research granting agencies.

In academic settings, diverse opinions and viewpoints often make research stronger and higher quality. Not only does it invite new ideas to be put forward, but it also permits researchers and peer reviewers to challenge theses, papers, and ideas from multiple angles and perspectives. This helps uncover and address any potential gaps, oversights, or missing information, unintentional biases, or other weaknesses in the work. When those weaknesses are identified and addressed, the work itself becomes stronger, resulting in higher quality research. That's what Canadians deserve.

Research quality inevitably drops if it is lacking viewpoint diversity. This is the irony with 'Diversity' in DEI policies – although DEI proponents claim to support diversity, in practice, DEI policies actually risk reducing the diversity of opinions and views from being considered for and included in research opportunities by its exclusionary nature. This harms the entire research ecosystem at large, and it will only get worse over time if DEI implementation trends are not frozen, scaled-back, or entirely repealed.

For these reasons, Conservatives support repealing DEI policies from our federal and academic institutions and replacing them with a bureaucracy and academic environment that supports equal opportunities for all, where the best candidates are selected, hired, and rewarded based on their individual merit, not their individual identity.

That is how Canada must pursue and attain research excellence.

Dissenting Opinion by the Bloc Québécois

The Bloc Québécois wishes to thank the staff of the Library of Parliament, the committee clerks, and the interpreters for all their work throughout this study. It also wishes to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the witnesses for their insightful presentations.

This dissenting opinion aims to provide additional observations and recommendations raised by witnesses during their testimony and through written briefs submitted to the Committee.

However, before going into the details of the report, the Bloc Québécois wishes to reiterate that academic research is an integral part of the education system in which it is carried out. Yet education falls in no way within the jurisdiction of the federal government.

In reality, Quebec, as a minority nation, would never have agreed to join the Canadian federation had it not obtained exclusive jurisdiction over education. And for good reason: no people would accept having a neighbouring people, however friendly, control their citizens' education or direct the research topics they choose to pursue. This principle, which was central to the federal compact as originally understood, has been seriously weakened today.

For this reason, the Bloc Québécois calls into question the very legitimacy of direct federal funding for academic research in Quebec. In our view, the funds allocated for this purpose should be transferred to the Quebec government, which could incorporate them into its own research funding programs and granting agencies. Yet, although this position is consistent with Quebec's traditional demands for more than half a century and with our people's right to self-determination, it has never received a favourable hearing in Ottawa.

Accordingly, until this issue is resolved, either through an intergovernmental agreement or through Quebec's independence, we urge the federal government to make its research-funding criteria more respectful of Quebec and its scientific community. Hence this dissenting opinion.

Despite the significant level of participation, we believe that the recommendations contained in the current report do not fully reflect the range of expectations and concerns expressed by the scientific and academic communities, and that several viewpoints presented by participants in this study are not adequately represented.

In this regard, and in addition to what is already included in the committee members' report, we wish to reiterate the following points highlighted by witnesses during the study sessions, which reflect the Bloc Québécois' position regarding the impact of various federal research funding allocation criteria on research excellence in Canada.

The Bloc Québécois recognizes the importance of reviewing federal research funding allocation criteria to ensure a system that promotes excellence, equity, and innovation. However, it believes that the final report adopted by the Committee fails to fully address several concerns raised throughout the study, particularly with respect to the concentration of funding, the recognition of diverse forms of excellence, consideration of the realities of the Francophonie, and the potentially counterproductive effects of certain mechanisms currently in use.

Concentration of Resources

First, the Bloc Québécois notes that concentrating resources within a limited number of institutions, researchers, or research models risks undermining overall scientific vitality. Several witnesses emphasized that current mechanisms tend to reward past successes and favour institutions that already possess substantial infrastructure and established networks. The Université du Québec network demonstrated that the share of federal funding received by its institutions remains significantly lower than their actual proportion of Canada's professoriate. These findings suggest that the system does not always adequately recognize excellence in its various forms, particularly when expressed through social, economic, cultural, or regional impacts.

Distribution of Research Funding

The Bloc Québécois also shares the view of several witnesses that a broader distribution of research funding would increase Canada's innovation potential. Witnesses reminded the Committee that scientific discovery is inherently unpredictable and that excessive concentration of resources among a limited number of researchers ultimately produces diminishing returns. A more diversified funding model, including dedicated funding envelopes for interdisciplinary research and institutions of varying sizes, would broaden the pool of supported talent and strengthen the country's overall innovation capacity.

Equity in Research Funding

Furthermore, the Bloc Québécois believes that discussions surrounding equity in research funding should place greater emphasis on socio-economic inequalities. Several witnesses pointed out that social background remains one of the primary factors influencing access to higher education and research careers. In this respect, the Committee would have benefited from a more thorough examination of the economic barriers limiting access to scientific careers, particularly at a time when many graduate

students live below the poverty line despite making essential contributions to the advancement of knowledge.

Research Evaluation Mechanisms

The Bloc Québécois also believes that research evaluation mechanisms must evolve to better recognize the tangible impacts of funded research. While traditional bibliometric indicators remain useful, they cannot serve as the sole measures of excellence. Several briefs and witness statements demonstrated that these criteria tend to favour already-established networks, large universities, and English-language publication. The Bloc Québécois believes that any genuine modernization of scientific evaluation should give comparable weight to the social, economic, cultural, and regional impacts of research projects. The Université du Québec network also proposed to “operationalize the principles of DORA by providing more targeted guidance to peer-review committees: impact on the community (social, economic, cultural) and regional relevance should be considered with the same weight as traditional international recognition.”

Research in French

This reflection is particularly relevant in the case of French-language research. The Bloc Québécois is concerned by the persistent disparities between applications submitted in French and those submitted in English, both in terms of success rates and funding levels. Data presented to the Committee by Montréal’s École de technologie supérieure show a significant decline in the share of federal funding awarded to Francophone institutions, as well as a widespread perception among researchers that applications written in English enjoy a structural advantage. Across the country, only 400 applications were submitted in French compared to 13,000 in English. These figures reveal that many Francophone researchers choose to submit applications in English because they perceive their chances of success to be greater, a perception supported by available statistics. This situation weakens French-language research and risks increasing pressure on Francophone researchers to abandon their working language.

Francophone Peer Review

The Bloc Québécois believes that the final report does not devote sufficient attention to the linguistic challenges specific to scientific research in Canada. Difficulties related to the evaluation of French-language applications, the limited availability of experts capable of assessing projects in French, and the additional costs imposed on researchers who must translate or adapt their work are genuine obstacles that warrant more ambitious corrective measures. These shortcomings have real consequences. As Martin Normand noted, “researchers received evaluation reports containing completely unrealistic suggestions, or suggestions that were already addressed in the grant applications themselves.”

Assessment of Funding Policies and Criteria

The Committee also notes that it is not enough to establish criteria and objectives for research funding. It is equally important to be able to measure their actual impact. While many policies pursue legitimate objectives, their effectiveness and their effects on the distribution of funding must be assessed on the basis of evidence. Such assessments should determine whether the criteria being used are achieving the intended results or whether they are producing unintended effects on certain disciplines, institutions, or research communities.

Governance and Access to Data from the Three Federal Granting Agencies

The Committee also notes a lack of consistency among the three federal granting agencies with respect to access to data for research purposes. While researchers have been able to obtain data from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to study the distribution of funding, comparable data could not be obtained from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) or the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). This situation limits the ability to conduct consistent analyses of the federal research funding system as a whole and to assess its impacts.

Access to such data must comply with the highest standards of ethics, confidentiality, and privacy protection. However, these requirements should not prevent legitimate scientific research from being conducted when data can be made available in a secure environment and within the framework of duly authorized research projects.

Cumulative Effects of Institutional Size, Language, and Institutional Advantages

The Bloc Québécois also believes that the various factors likely to influence the distribution of funding should not be examined in isolation. The size of an institution, its research infrastructure, its past success in funding competitions, the resources available to its researchers to prepare applications, and the language in which those applications are submitted may all have cumulative effects.

This issue is particularly important for Quebec and its French-language university network. The data presented to the Committee show significant disparities in the distribution of funding based on institutional size and the language of applications. While these disparities alone do not establish their causes, they warrant rigorous investigation rather than being taken for granted.

Effects of EDI-Based Criteria

With respect to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), the Bloc Québécois believes that the testimony heard demonstrates the need for a nuanced approach. Several participants emphasized the importance of combating discrimination and systemic

barriers that limit access to research. However, other witnesses raised concerns about certain mechanisms that may be perceived as restrictive, create new forms of exclusion, or unnecessarily complicate funding allocation processes. Witness Dave Snow added that “the tendency of granting agencies to use EDI has had a net effect on their perceived political independence and has reinforced the impression that they themselves have become politicized.” He further stated: “The perception is that these agencies are not funding the creation of knowledge or objective new knowledge, but rather funding ideological projects through which activists can continue advocating while gaining access to greater amounts of federal funding.” The Bloc Québécois believes it is essential to distinguish equity objectives, which it supports, from the tools used to achieve them, which should be subject to ongoing evaluation based on evidence.

More generally, the Bloc Québécois takes from the witness testimony that confidence in granting agencies rests on transparent processes, diversity of perspectives in peer review, methodological rigour, and the ability of the system to recognize different forms of excellence. Any reforms undertaken will succeed only if accompanied by careful attention to the practical operation of evaluation committees, disciplinary cultures, and the quality of expertise involved.

Finally, the Bloc Québécois reiterates that the development of research in Quebec and Canada cannot be separated from Quebec’s distinct reality, its university network, and the status of the French language. Any reform of funding criteria should seek to promote greater institutional, disciplinary, linguistic, and regional diversity. The Bloc Québécois therefore believes that the final report should have placed greater emphasis on decentralizing funding, supporting research in French, recognizing the societal impacts of research, and reducing the economic barriers that hinder access to scientific careers. By failing to address these issues with the necessary breadth and depth, the report only partially reflects the concerns expressed before the Committee and the solutions proposed to strengthen research excellence in Canada on a lasting basis.

Additional Recommendations to the Report

The Bloc Québécois believes the following recommendations should be included in the Committee’s report:

- **Recommendation 1:** That the federal granting agencies, namely the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), support interdisciplinary research by establishing dedicated funding envelopes for interdisciplinary projects;

- **Recommendation 2:** That the federal granting agencies, namely the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), support research conducted in French by establishing dedicated funding envelopes to promote institutional and linguistic diversity, address observed imbalances, and counter the demonstrated productivity-saturation effect in scientific research;
- **Recommendation 3:** That SSHRC, NSERC, and CIHR ensure diversity of viewpoints on their evaluation committees;
- **Recommendation 4:** That SSHRC, NSERC, and CIHR ensure that evaluation committees reviewing French-language applications are systematically composed of individuals with a genuine understanding of French;
- **Recommendation 5:** That SSHRC, NSERC, and CIHR remove EDI criteria from recruitment and integration plans and replace them with institutional guidelines that funded projects must comply with, including mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and improvement, while focusing assessment on elements directly related to the research projects or programs;
- **Recommendation 6:** That the Government of Canada adopt upstream structural measures to promote equitable access to graduate studies and research careers for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, rather than relying primarily on corrective measures implemented later in the process;
- **Recommendation 7:** That SSHRC, NSERC, and CIHR align their support policies with socio-economic inequalities rather than criteria related to race or gender;
- **Recommendation 8:** That the Government of Canada ensure that the policies and criteria used in the allocation of federal research funding are subject to periodic evaluation of their impacts and effectiveness, based on objective and measurable indicators, in order to determine whether they are achieving their intended objectives and to identify any unintended effects;
- **Recommendation 9:** That the three federal granting agencies harmonize their practices to allow qualified researchers access, for research purposes, to the data necessary to study the federal research funding system, including both funded and unfunded applications, while respecting the highest standards of ethics, confidentiality, and privacy protection;
- **Recommendation 10:** That the federal granting agencies assess the cumulative effects of their funding criteria and mechanisms on the distribution of funds among institutions, particularly with respect to institutional size, institutional capacity, previous funding success, and the use of French in funding applications, and that they make the results of this analysis publicly available.

Dissenting Opinion of the Bloc Québécois

In addition to the proposed additions, we believe it is necessary to remove Recommendations 14 and 18 through 20. These recommendations run counter to the majority of views expressed by witnesses and directly contradict Recommendations 13 through 17.

It is important to note that the many testimonies supporting equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) were primarily framed in relation to research projects themselves.

However, as previously stated, the objective of representativeness within research teams or academic institutions should not be confused with the objectives of research itself. This position was also supported by several witnesses who argued that such considerations do not, strictly speaking, fall within the scope of EDI. In their view, incorporating diverse populations into the design and conduct of research is, above all, a matter of sound scientific practice. Under these circumstances, we question the content of paragraphs 116 and 134 to 136 of this report, as well as Recommendations 14, 18, 19, and 20 derived from them. These passages depart not only from testimony critical of EDI, but also from testimony supportive of it, by failing to accurately reflect the nuances and distinctions expressed by witnesses who appeared before the Committee.

Conclusion

Finally, the Bloc Québécois wishes to emphasize that French-language research should not become yet another category within the federal government's EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) policies. In recent years, the Francophone and Quebec scientific community has repeatedly called on Ottawa to address its concerns, yet these appeals have largely gone unanswered. We want these concerns to be heard and acted upon, and for the federal government to take meaningful measures without imposing policies whose effects on scientific advancement have not been adequately assessed. We therefore reject any proposal to introduce Francophone EDI quotas and call on the government to respond directly to the concerns raised by French-speaking researchers.

