



Diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency in the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's research programs

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Background

The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competence (DEIC) Committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (Commission) advises the Commission on how it can serve as a leader among natural resource management organizations in defining and enhancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competence in the operation of the organization and fulfillment of its duties.

The Commission's Science Directorate recognizes that considering DEIC in all stages of the research process, including in the formation of research teams, results in more relevant, innovative, and ethical scientific results ([read more](#)) that will advance the Commission's mission and fulfill its duties under the Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries. Our goal is to ensure equitable access to research and its benefits to bring a holistic perspective and knowledge to bear on solutions for promoting the health and sustainability of Great Lakes fishery resources.

Definitions

- **Diversity** is expressed in myriad forms, including, but not limited to, race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, language, culture, national origin, religious commitments, age, ability status, and political perspective.
- **Equity** is the act of ensuring that processes and programs are impartial, fair, and provide equal possible outcomes for every individual.
- **Inclusion** ensures that the Commission is a place where differences are welcomed, differing perspectives are respectfully heard, and where every individual feels a sense of belonging and connection.
- **Cultural Competence** is the ability to understand, appreciate and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own.

Changes to the research proposal submission and review processes

Beginning during the FY2024 proposal cycle (pre-proposal submission deadline of 15 January 2023), the Science Directorate added a requirement to include a DEIC statement with all pre- and full proposals submitted to the Fishery Research Program and Sea Lamprey Research Program.

Purpose: Encourage investigators to consider DEIC in all stages of the research process and in formulating their research teams.

Details:

- A separate “DEIC statement” will be required. DEIC statements will be a maximum of one paragraph (250 words; 11-pt font; single spaced) for pre-proposals and one page (11-pt font; single spaced) for full proposals. DEIC statements will not be structured; rather, investigators are encouraged to self-reflect on how considering DEIC could strengthen their proposed research.
- Investigators will also be encouraged but not required to integrate reflections on aspects of DEIC throughout their proposals.
- Helpful guidance, including guiding questions for investigators to reflect on DEIC at all stages of the research process, plus additional resources, can be found at https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/EDI_guidance-Conseils_ED1_eng.asp (Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada, 2022).
- Refer to the [proposal templates](#) for further details on submitting DEIC statements.
- External peer reviewers will be provided guidance on how to evaluate DEIC statements.
- Successful pre-proposal applicants will have the opportunity to expand their DEIC statement at the full-proposal stage. Funded investigators will be asked to reflect on their DEIC statement in progress and completion reports.

Additional changes to these processes are being considered and may be implemented in the future.