Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee's Glossary of Terms

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The following is a list of commonly used terms in Anti-Oppression Anti-Racism work. Terms and definitions are tricky in this work because they are always changing and evolving, as does the work. The terms below are curated with the best efforts of TRO's DEIB committee and should not be considered exhaustive and or even correct. It is always important to check in with people, people who use your services, groups and co-workers about how they understand these terms and most importantly how they themselves wished to be defined or identified. The definitions below come from a variety of sources, most notably the work done by several academic departments within University of Toronto, including the Department of Public Health and the Department of Medicine.

TRO's DEIB Committee reflects on the knowledge and lived experiences of it's members. If you would like to submit a revision or new term to be included in this resource please email your suggestion to d-i@trontario.org

Term	Definition
2SLGBTQIA+	An acronym for Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, and Asexual. Two Spirit (2S) is placed first in the acronym as a reminder that Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Metis, and Inuit) and to acknowledge that their understandings of gender and sexuality predates binary colonialist definitions. The '+' includes all new understandings of sexuality and gender.
Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression	Anti-Racism involves actively engaging in identifying and addressing racism and oppression by altering institutions, organizational structures, rules, practices, and attitudes to equitably redistribute and share power. A process that acknowledges the existence of systemic racism and oppression and, through policies and practices, seeks to actively identify, challenge and reduce systemic racism and oppression in all its various forms.
Allyship	It refers to persistent and active action by those in positions of privilege, in solidarity with and accountability to equity-deserving groups. Allyship is a practice, not an identity.

	An ally is a member of a dominant group who acts against oppression out of a belief that eliminating oppression will benefit the targets of oppression and dominant group member: example, in the struggle against racism, White peoples are allies who take leadership from activists who are racialized people and indigenous people.
BIPOC	An acronym that stands for Black, Indigenous, and a Person of Colour (BIPOC).
Brave Space	Diversity refers to the wide range of elements or characteristics of the people who make up a community. This includes, but is not limited to, intersecting characteristics such as age, racial identity, ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, ability, and citizenship status.
Colonialism	A process by which a foreign power dominates and exploits an indigenous group by seizing their land and resources, extracting their wealth, and using them as cheap labour. Also refers to a specific era of European expansion into the overseas territories between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. Racial dogmas that reinforced patterns of superiority and inferiority have often been invoked to explain, justify, and promote the exploitation of indigenous minorities
Culture	Totality of ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, norms, communication styles and way of life of a group of individuals who share certain ethnic, historical, linguistic, racial, religious and social background. Culture is a complex and dynamic organization of meaning, knowledge, artifacts and symbols that guide human behaviour. It accounts for shared patterns of thoughts and action, and contributes to human, social and physical survival.
Cultural Competence	A set of congruent attitudes, behaviours, and policies that come together in an agency, system, or among professionals to enable them to effectively work on cross-cultural issues. Culturally Competent Agencies and Systems understand, celebrate and respect cultural differences. They involve people who are reflective of

	diverse groups in the community - in the development of policies, services and programs, which are appropriate and relevant to them. A culturally competent organization respects differences and pays attention to the dynamics of difference. They do continuous self-assessment, expand cultural knowledge and resources, and adapt their service models to effectively meet needs. Such organizations consult with ethno-cultural communities and are committed to hiring culturally competent
Dominant Group	Refers to people whose social identity confers on them unearned power and privilege. Most of us have one or more dominant identities. In most parts of Canada, dominant identities are White, male English-speaking, heterosexual, able-bodied, Christian, affluent and middle class, thirty to sixty-five years of age, university educated, from central Canada."
Essentialism	A practice of unconsciously or consciously privileging a certain ethnic group over others. This involves judging other groups by the values of one's own group.
Equity	Equity is about achieving equal outcomes by providing resources and opportunities based on the unique circumstances and needs of individuals or groups.
Equity-Deserving Groups	Equity-deserving groups refers to communities that experience barriers to equal access, opportunities, resources, and outcomes as a result of historical and/or ongoing discrimination and exclusion. The term is mean to shift the onus away from those groups seeking equity toward consideration of the ways in which organizations ought to identify and address barriers to equity.
Hegemony	Social, cultural, religious or moral traditions and ideas that reinforce the power of the dominant group at the expense of other groups.
Identity	A subjective sense of coherence, consistency, and continuity of self, based in both personal and group history.

Ideology	A complex set of ideas that strive to explain, justify, legitimate, and perpetuate the circumstances in which a collectivity finds itself. It provides a basis for explaining situations, guiding behaviour, imparting meaning to life, instilling a common bond among group members, and making sense of the world.
Inclusion	Inclusion is a product of intentional organizational culture and practices that create a sense of belonging for its members, regardless of their individual background and characteristics. Inclusion results from an organizational culture where everyone feels welcome, respected, and heard.
Inclusiveness of services	Refers to the right of every individual and groups to equitable opportunity, equitable access, equitable participation in all that society has to offer regardless of age, ability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, income, gender or religious differences."
Indigenous Peoples	The term refers to First Nations, Inuit groups, and Métis of Turtle Island. It is important to recognize that each Indigenous group has its own history, identity, spiritual traditions, and language.
Integration	The process that allows groups and persons to become full participating members in the cultural, economic, political and social life of a society while at the same time permitting them to maintain their won cultural identity. This term refers to the renegotiation of a more equitable power sharing equation in the society.
Intersectionality	Intersectionality is a term defined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, and initially used within legal scholarship, to identify how multiple forms of discrimination can overlap in complex, cumulative, and mutually reinforcing ways to impact particular people and groups. The concept reminds us that if we are addressing discrimination, we need to consider a person or group's whole identity, rather than any one aspect of that identity on its own.
Intolerance	An unwillingness to consider, endure and /or respect the beliefs and practices of an individual or group. Conversely, tolerance may encompass willingness to endure and/or respect the beliefs and

	practices of others. Racial intolerance refers to the unwillingness to permit equal opportunity and full societal participation to members of other racial groups; religious intolerance is the unwillingness to accept, endure or respect those of other religious beliefs.
Marginalization	Behaviours, actions, policies, and social institutions that serve to keep various forms of power and privilege away from specific individuals and groups. Denying individuals and groups access to educational, social, legal, and economic resources ensures that they remain "on the margin" or disadvantaged.
Meritocracy	This concept is connected to the idea of white privilege. Meritocracy assumes that if you work hard you get what you deserve. While working hard is an important concept in general, meritocracy purports that if someone doesn't succeed it is because they haven't worked hard enough - this ideology blames the victim as opposed to looking at the systemic barriers tha have been a major factor in that person's life.
Microaggression	The phrase term encompass the subtle, every day, and (often) unintentional slights or insults that indicate hostility and bias (i.e., ableism, sexism, homophobia, etc.) experienced by members of any equity-deserving community.
Misogyny	A term used to describe women hating. It is sometimes used to describe sexism and sexist oppression.
Neurodiversity	Neurodiversity is used to describe the various ways in which a people can experience and interact with the world. It addresses stigma against people with neurological and developmental conditions such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
Positive Space	Positive Space is an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and respectful of members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
Oppression	Oppression exists when one social group exploits (knowingly or unconsciously) another social group to its own benefit. It results in

	privilege for the dominant group and disenfranchisement for the subordinated group. Oppression is achieved through force or through the control of social institutions and resources of society. After a while, it does not require the conscious thought or effort of individual members of the dominant group, and unequal treatment becomes institutionalized, and looks "normal". Systemic - the conscious or unconscious policies, procedures and practices that exclude, marginalize, and exploit racialized and marginalized people. Systemic oppression is supported by institutional power and by powerful (often unexamined) ideas, which make oppression look normal and justified. • Individual - Beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate oppression. Individual oppression can be conscious or unconscious, active or passive. • Institutional - The network of institutional structures, policies and practices that create advantages for people of the dominant culture and discrimination, oppression and disadvantage for racialized and marginalized groups of people.
Social construction	A perception of an individual, group, or idea that is "constructed" through cultural and social practice, but appears to be "natural" or "the way things are". For example, the idea that women "naturally" like to do housework is a social construction because this idea appears "natural" due to its historical repetition, rather than it being "true" in any essential sense.
Safe Space	Safe Space is focused on providing support without judgment, discrimination, harassment, or harm. In a safe space, people are able to show up as themselves, share their experiences, and be comfortable that their identities will be affirmed without having to take on the weight of educating others.
Systemic Discrimination	The institutionalization of discrimination through policies and practices which have become historically entrenched in systems (systemic),

	resulting in barriers to equality of opportunity for members of minority groups.
World Majority People	This term reminds us that racialized people are 70 to 80 percent of the world's population. It is a helpful name that links racial equity work in organizations to global struggles for justice.

Other Relevant Resources:

CCDI Glossary of Terms

DEI Dictionary | The Rainbow Disruption

Glossary | Racial Equity Tools

The Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology: an essential tool! - Canada.ca

Glossary of Terms: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion | Department of Medicine (utoronto.ca)