

THE

ADVANTAGE

# The #EDIAvantage Impact Report

At the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE), we believe that equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are core elements of a healthy engineering profession and a strong, prosperous, and socially cohesive society.

Last year's global anti-racism movement ratified the importance of taking action to address systemic barriers that continue to impact whether everyone can enter, succeed, and grow within engineering and STEM more broadly. It is no longer sufficient to create awareness of the issues facing underrepresented groups within our sector – there is an urgency now more than ever to generate solutions.

**+2%♂**

the dismal increase in the number of women working in engineering from 21% to 23% in the decade between 2005 – 2015 in Ontario.

**+45%**

of all international engineering graduates are underemployed in Ontario.



**1 in 4**

women in engineering experience harassment, discrimination or bullying at work.

These solutions are rarely one-size-fits-all, but we can take steps to ensure that engineering and STEM university programs, workplaces, and supporting organizations create cultures of inclusion, and are representative of the society we live in today.

We know that to make change, we must re-distribute power within our organizations. EDI involves building trust and transparency to connect honestly with those in our community. With long-term considerations in mind, we must make sure that we are leaving behind a legacy for the generations that come after us.

OSPE is ready to lead this change. We know that together we can tackle this challenge. To learn more about our work please visit [www.engineeringforchange.ca](http://www.engineeringforchange.ca). Thank you for your commitment and perseverance. We applaud you for your continued efforts and we stand with you in your journey. Do you stand with us?

Sandro Perruzza  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ontario Society of Professional Engineers

Angela Wojtyla, P.Eng.  
Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force  
Ontario Society of Professional Engineers

## OSPE's Role

OSPE is committed to acting as a convener of knowledge-sharing to generate awareness and be a catalyst for change. Our role is not to create solutions but rather to unite the sector in the pursuit of better outcomes for all engineering students, engineering graduates, and professional engineers. We seek to be thought leaders, and we do so through consultation with our members, subject matter experts, and core stakeholders.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Task Force works diligently to ensure that:

1. Unsung members of the engineering community are recognized for their work and accomplishments
2. Members of equity seeking groups have the tools to succeed
3. The engineering community understands the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion for the overall progression of the profession

## Engineering for Change

In 2020, OSPE launched a diversity and inclusion campaign titled *Engineering for Change*. The campaign is a call to action for members of the engineering community to state their claim that we can no longer sustain a culture of discrimination and exclusion within the profession. We know that our members are ready for change.

OSPE has committed to a four-point action plan to:

1. Take concrete actions and reaffirm that diversity and inclusion remain part of our core values
2. Offer regular diversity and inclusion training (through our DiversifySTEM website and app) to any members of the engineering community who seek it
3. Launch a new featured Diversity and Inclusion Champion Award in 2021 to honour those OSPE members who are making real systemic change
4. Convene a summit with Ontario's engineering leaders in 2021 to develop an industry-wide action plan

## Events and Workshops

Every year OSPE hosts several events to provide a platform for members of the engineering community to share their experiences and generate awareness both of barriers and opportunities. We also provide stakeholders with the platform to share best practices, challenges, and renew their commitment to change. These events create spaces for members of underrepresented groups to be heard and opportunities for organizations to learn and implement new policies and procedures.

We also work with diversity and inclusion experts to bring forth workshops and educational content for our members on topics of importance within the diversity and inclusion realm.

## DiversifySTEM

OSPE continues to build and improve its DiversifySTEM website and app. The purpose of the microlearning app is to provide employers with practical tips on attracting and retaining women and members of other underrepresented groups in STEM careers. The modules are flexible, enjoyable, and action-oriented, with thought-provoking content that can be discussed and shared with others.

## Government Relations

Government ministries, departments, and agencies are important partners in the pursuit of a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive engineering profession. We work diligently to provide recommendations to government on how to develop policies that will support this objective at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels. We attend roundtables, meet regularly with government departments and ministries, and respond to consultation requests to advance this agenda.

## Event Summary

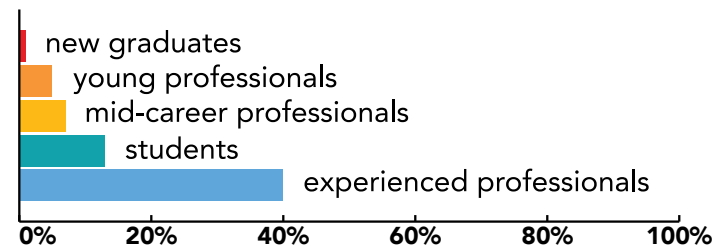
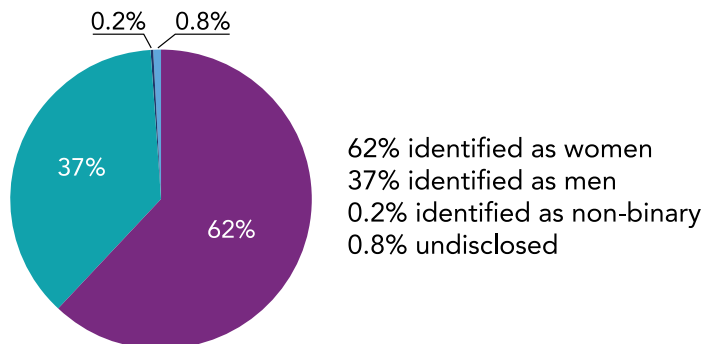
On November 26 and 27, 2020, more than 1,500 individuals from industry, government, and academia came together to attend OSPE's annual diversity and inclusion forum *The #EDIAdvantage*, presented by OSPE's Diversity and Inclusion Task Force.

The event took place virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the fluctuating nature of the crisis. Having a virtual event meant that we were able to reach a larger audience and have increased impact across Canada and abroad.

The #EDIAdvantage built on the success of our 2019 *It's Time We Build* and *The EDI Imperative* forums by focusing on the core benefit of creating a more diverse and inclusive profession: human capital. While we know that EDI leads to innovation, competitiveness, and growth, this is contingent on the talent organizations, companies, and governments attract and retain.

Our workforce is increasingly diverse and our economies undoubtedly global. It is to our own peril that we continue to lose out on core talent by failing to understand the diversity and inclusion advantage.

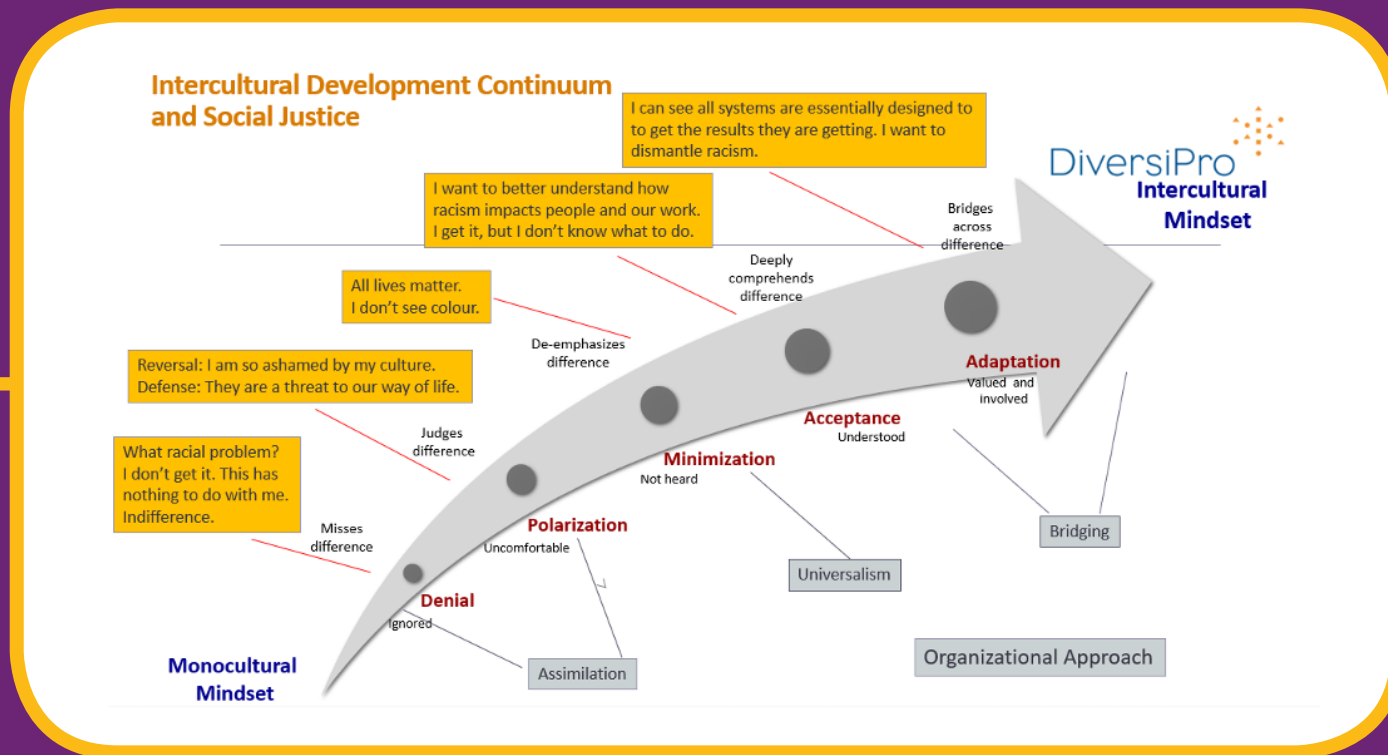
**40+** partners   **1500+** registrants   **62%** of which identify as members of equity seeking groups



# Where are we today? A Snapshot of Intercultural Competence

## The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

As part of this year's forum, we asked members of our partner organizations to complete the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). The IDI is a tool that enables individuals and teams to reflect on stages of cultural sensitivity. The tool was used to create a snapshot of the sector and understand how individuals are making sense of cultural differences across workplaces. These include values, perceptions, conflict styles, etc. Results place the participants on a continuum that starts with denial (missing differences) and ends with adaptation (accepts differences and creates bridges). The objective is to transition individuals along the continuum from a monocultural orientation to an intercultural or global orientation.





When looking at the group profile developed for the STEM sector, the most significant findings include:

1. Most participants understand the importance of intercultural competence;
2. Most participants believe organizations need to do a better job at inclusion; and
3. The sector is in a minimization orientation; however, most consider themselves to be in an acceptance mindset. This indicates that the perceived orientation and the developmental orientation are different, and so a gap exists between intention and practice.

### GROUP PROFILE RESULTS:

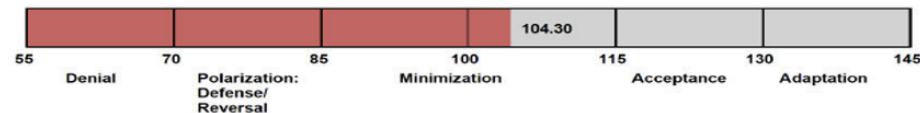
Perceived Orientation vs. Developmental Orientation  
INTENTION VS. PRACTICE



#### Perceived Orientation (PO)



#### Developmental Orientation (DO)



Minimization is an orientation that highlights cultural commonality, universal values, and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences. According to Hamlin Grange, Founder of Diversipro, a minimization orientation is problematic, as it causes:

1. Overestimation of sensitivity to diversity
2. Emphasis on organizational culture which creates pressure to conform
3. Poor retention of equity seeking groups

This presents a developmental opportunity to focus on increasing individual cultural self-awareness and learning about culture in general.

## Findings

### Become a culturally adaptive leader

- Multicultural teams require a unique leadership approach – understand your own cultural programming to recognize your conflict resolution and management style to better lead others
- Be aware of the cultural worldview of your employees and appreciate their unique abilities
- Be vulnerable and constantly expand horizons by exploring new ways of thinking, ideas, and approaches

### Don't hire for diversity and onboard for conformity

- Focus on shifting recruitment practices and creating a culture that is receptive to new perspectives and ways of thinking
- Shift the culture – do not expect diverse employees to conform as it will likely impact retention

### Empathy will benefit you and your team

- Promote engagement within teams by creating safe spaces where team members can express their needs, wants, and concerns openly without judgment
- A virtual work environment requires less focus on deliverables and timelines and more emphasis on the human part of work
- Active listening will lead to a team that feels valued and respected and is more productive, and will nurture a positive work environment

### Hiring for cultural fit can be problematic

- Sometimes management will hire candidates whose experiences, perspectives, and values align with their own
- If individuals within an organization are homogenous in gender, race, religion, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, etc., this can lead to discriminatory hiring practices

### Recognize the value of internationally educated professionals

- Professionals coming to Canada from other countries bring unique perspectives, have at times been exposed to increasingly advanced technologies, and can contribute to the creativity and innovation of Canadian enterprises
- Seek them out and support them in integrating into Canadian society, including supporting their path to engineering licensure



## **Underrepresented groups persevere but should not have to**

- Awareness and education and recognizing that lived experiences differ, as do career trajectories, requires accountability
- Holding individuals accountable for perpetuating bias, stereotypes, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace is imperative

## **Be intentional when seeking out mentors**

- Mentors and sponsors are an essential component to the success of an individual to support career development, promote work, and provide advice
- When supporting a mentorship program or relationship, ensure expected outcomes are clear

## **Sustained commitment is crucial to success**

- Focus internally on the diverse candidates that are already part of your staff compliment and work to support their growth and success
- The reputation of an organization will depend on its ability to demonstrate sustained commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout all activities

## **Commitment to diversity and inclusion means saying no when necessary**

- Learn when to cut ties or simply deny requests from businesses or individuals that violate company values

## **Allies are needed**

- Allies support members of underrepresented groups and are willing to actively listen and intervene on a another's behalf when necessary
- They hold others accountable for inappropriate behaviour and help create positive work environments

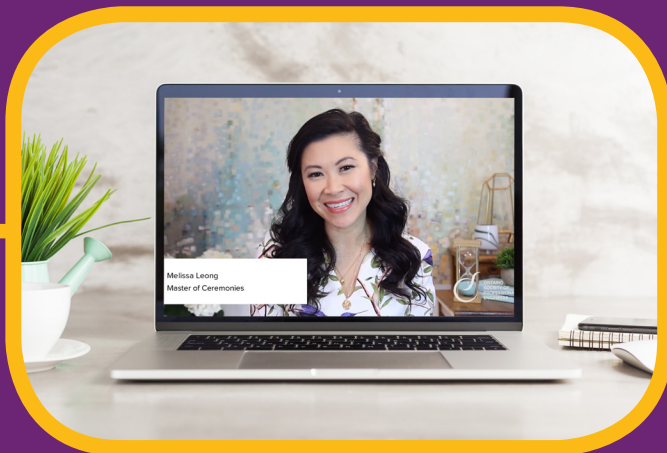
## What Our Attendees Told Us

"We must continue the conversation. We must help the younger and mid-career generation achieve their goals and have the opportunities to climb to higher level positions, because they are qualified to do so!!"

"As [an] HR [professional], I feel we need to do a pulse check on EDI in order to plan ahead. Being an advocate for EDI and having worked for several organizations, I've seen how the mindset of the senior leadership team and the organization's core values differ across industries. I feel like the engineering industry is more reluctant to change, hoping that having members of the leadership attend this forum may widen their perspectives. I learnt that shifting the mindset is crucial, and as long as there is intent, there will be positive change."

"We need to be the change in the companies. If we are part of a minority, we should not feel inferior, but instead motivated for the challenge we are experiencing."

"We're often hiring people of various cultures and diversities but not doing anything to highlight or foster their strengths."

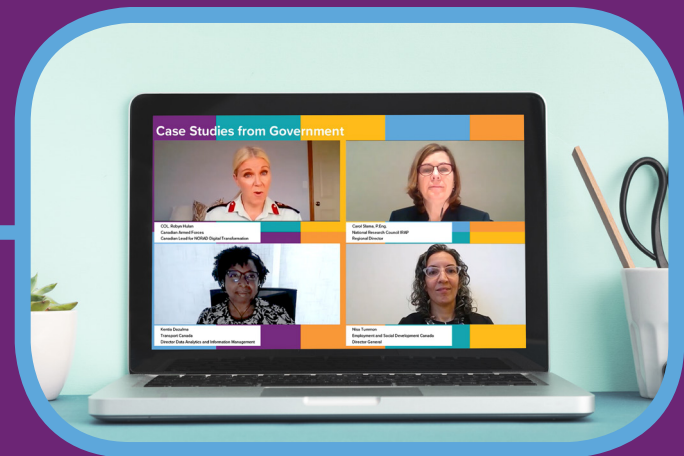
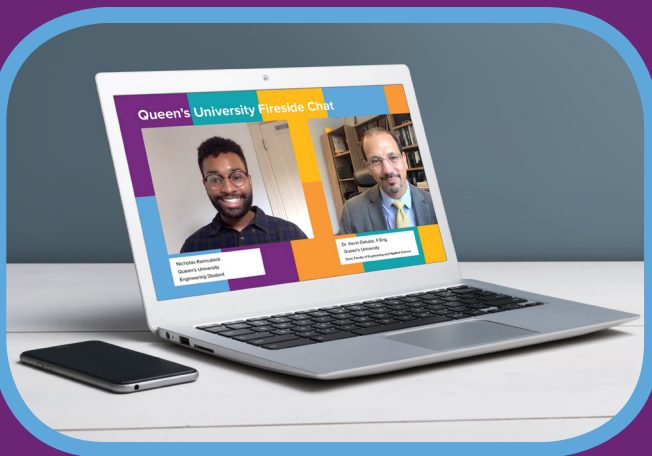


"I found the information on the spectrum of monocultural mindset to the intercultural mindset very interesting, the points from leading with empathy, and the danger of being "colour-blind" all things that I will be continuing to reflect on."

"Diversity is a fact. Inclusion is the actual action of making sure that diverse groups/people participate in the organisation. Employment with dignity is superior to respect in the workplace."

"It's ok to feel uncomfortable because you don't know all the right language or have all the answers. As long as you have the right intentions and want to learn and grow and 'show up' at your organization (and in life!) to be a part of change, you're on the right track."

"A diverse workforce should be a source of pride. We all should be eager to share our authentic voices at the table, eager to listen to other diverse perspectives and begin now to sponsor and groom diverse individuals to become future candidates for leadership and executive level positions in the future. These actions lead to more accessible/reflective outcomes for all."



# The Future of Engineering: First Annual Engineering Conference

On October 6-7, 2021, OSPE is bringing the engineering community together with industry, academia and government to present and discuss the latest opportunities, challenges and innovations in engineering, and what must be done in Ontario and Canada to collaborate, share knowledge and remain competitive.

Delegates will:

- Network with colleagues while learning about the innovative engineering work taking place in Ontario
- Participate in interactive presentations by professional engineers and subject matter experts on important issues facing the profession, with opportunities to provide input

**Programs will include:**

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

INNOVATION & SUSTAINABILITY

THE FUTURE OF THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION

THE ENGINEERING WORKFORCE IN ONTARIO & CANADA

For more information, visit [www.engineeringconference.ca](http://www.engineeringconference.ca)





## Looking Ahead

OSPE is continuing to champion a movement towards more a more diverse and inclusive profession. We know that this matters to our partners, our members, and our community. We encourage you to keep up with news on our diversity and inclusion work at [www.engineeringforchange.ca](http://www.engineeringforchange.ca).

**Stay tuned for our 2021 Leaders Summit and our Spring 2022 Diversity and Inclusion Forum The #EDIEvolution.**

**For questions or inquiries regarding OSPE's Diversity and Inclusion work  
please contact us at [advocacy@ospe.on.ca](mailto:advocacy@ospe.on.ca).**



# A Special Thank You to Our Partners

## Presenter Level



## Leader Level



## Champion Level







ONTARIO  
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