

# **Building a data collection culture with Dimensions: equity, diversity and inclusion Canada**

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# Dimensions: A Tri-agency initiative



**Canadian  
Institutes of  
Health Research**



**Natural Sciences  
and Engineering  
Research Council  
of Canada**



**Social Sciences and  
Humanities Research  
Council of Canada**



# What is Dimensions?

## 2 parts:

- Charter of 8 principles
- Recognition scheme

“To advance institutional equity, diversity and inclusion, specific, measurable and sustainable actions are needed to counter systemic barriers, explicit and unconscious biases, and inequities.”

*Dimensions Charter (Principle 2)*



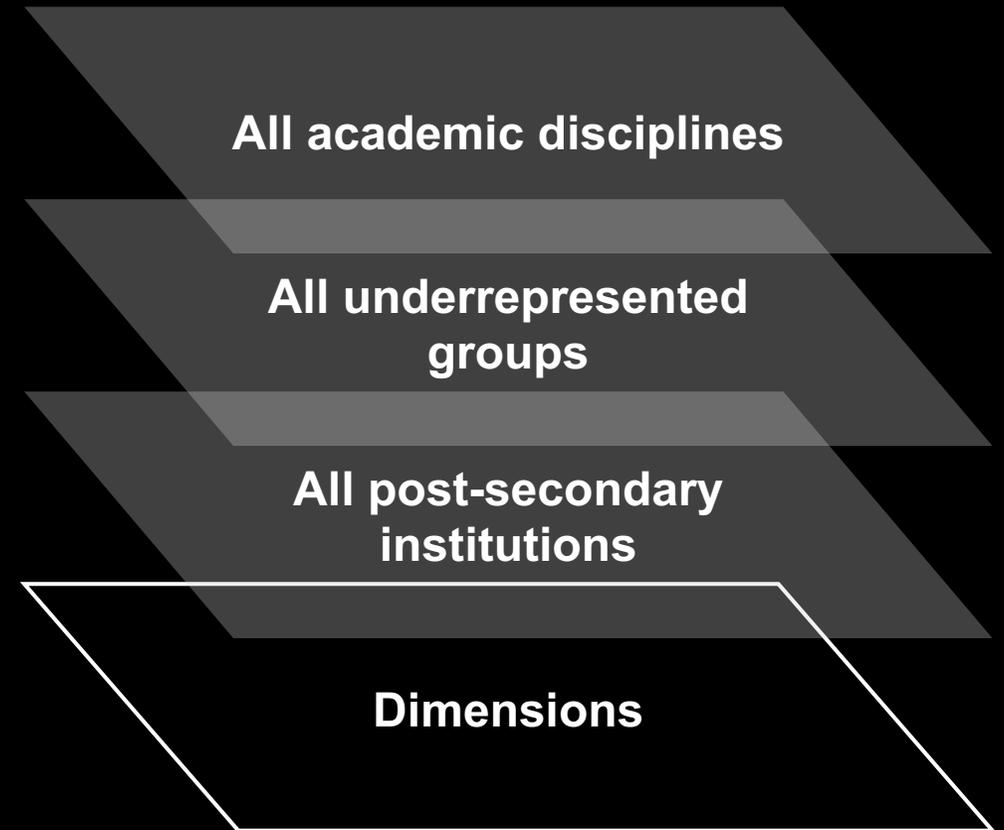
# A broad scope

Equity-deserving groups including, but not limited to:

- Women
- Indigenous Peoples
- Persons with disabilities
- Members of visible minority/racialized groups
- Members of LGBTQ2+ communities

- Colleges
- Cégeps
- Polytechnics
- Universities

- Sciences
- Engineering
- Humanities
- Health
- All!



# Objectives

- Foster transformational change within the research ecosystem across Canadian post-secondary institutions by identifying and eliminating obstacles and inequities.

Specifically:

- Create a culture of critical self-reflection related to EDI;
- Support evidence-based EDI work, using both qualitative and quantitative data;
- Address key challenges that present barriers to research career progression;
- Foster a community of practice that shares promising practices and resources.



**140**  
charter  
endorsements



- 75 universities
- 25 colleges
- 1 polytechnic
- 29 other (organizations/networks)
- 10 government departments
- Representation from across the country

## Charter

**Dimensions**  
Equity, diversity and  
inclusion Canada

Canada



**Dimensions**

Equity, diversity and inclusion Canada



# Institutions in the Pilot



# An Inclusive Assessment Approach

3 principles:

## 1. Voices

## 2. Mutuality

- Central to participation in the Dimensions program
- An institution's commitment to this work is not just a commitment to itself, but to the research community as a whole

## 3. Context-specific



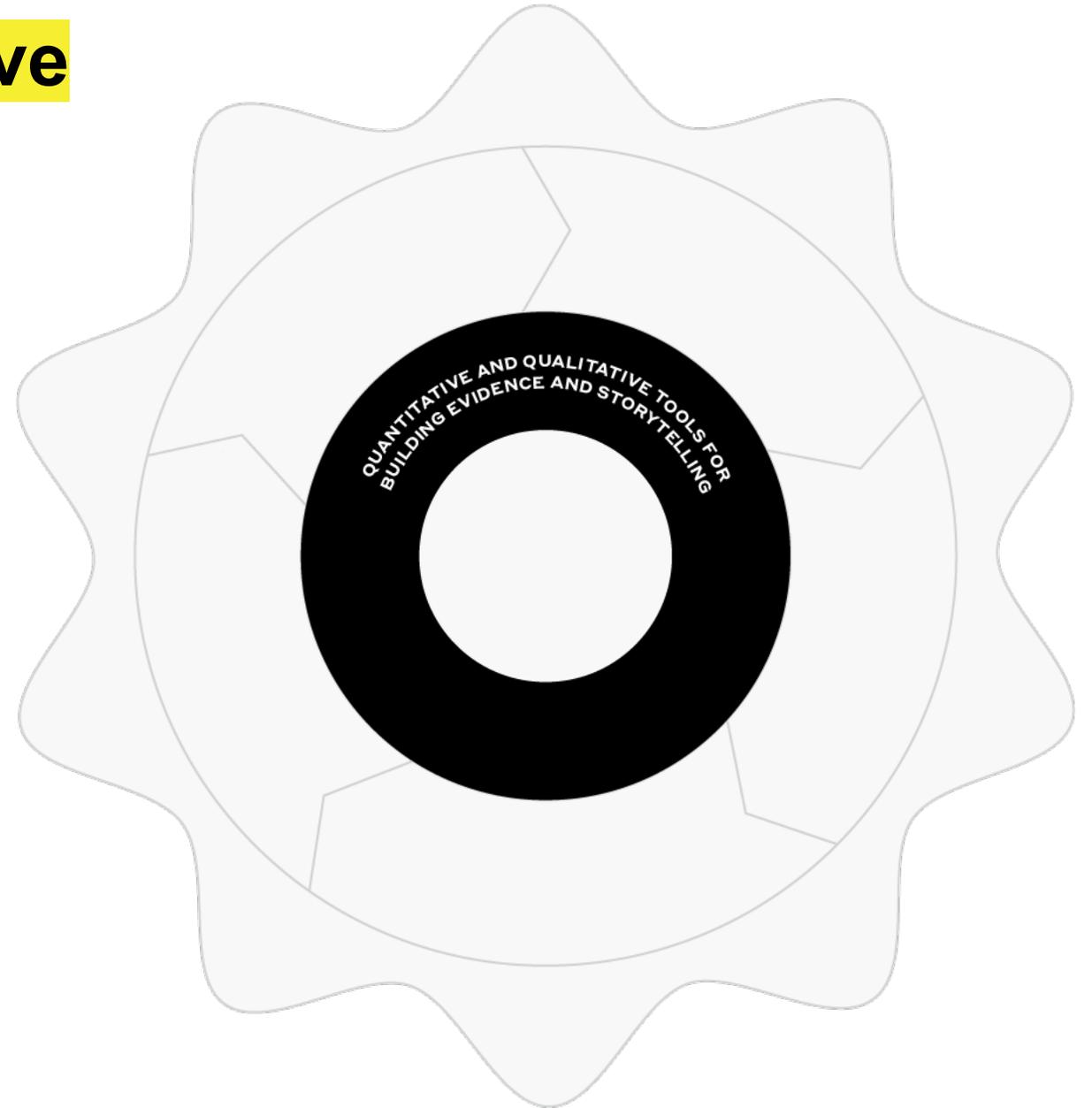
# Voices

- Meant as a metaphor
- At the center of the engagement strategy
- Representatives of underrepresented groups should be involved in the application process



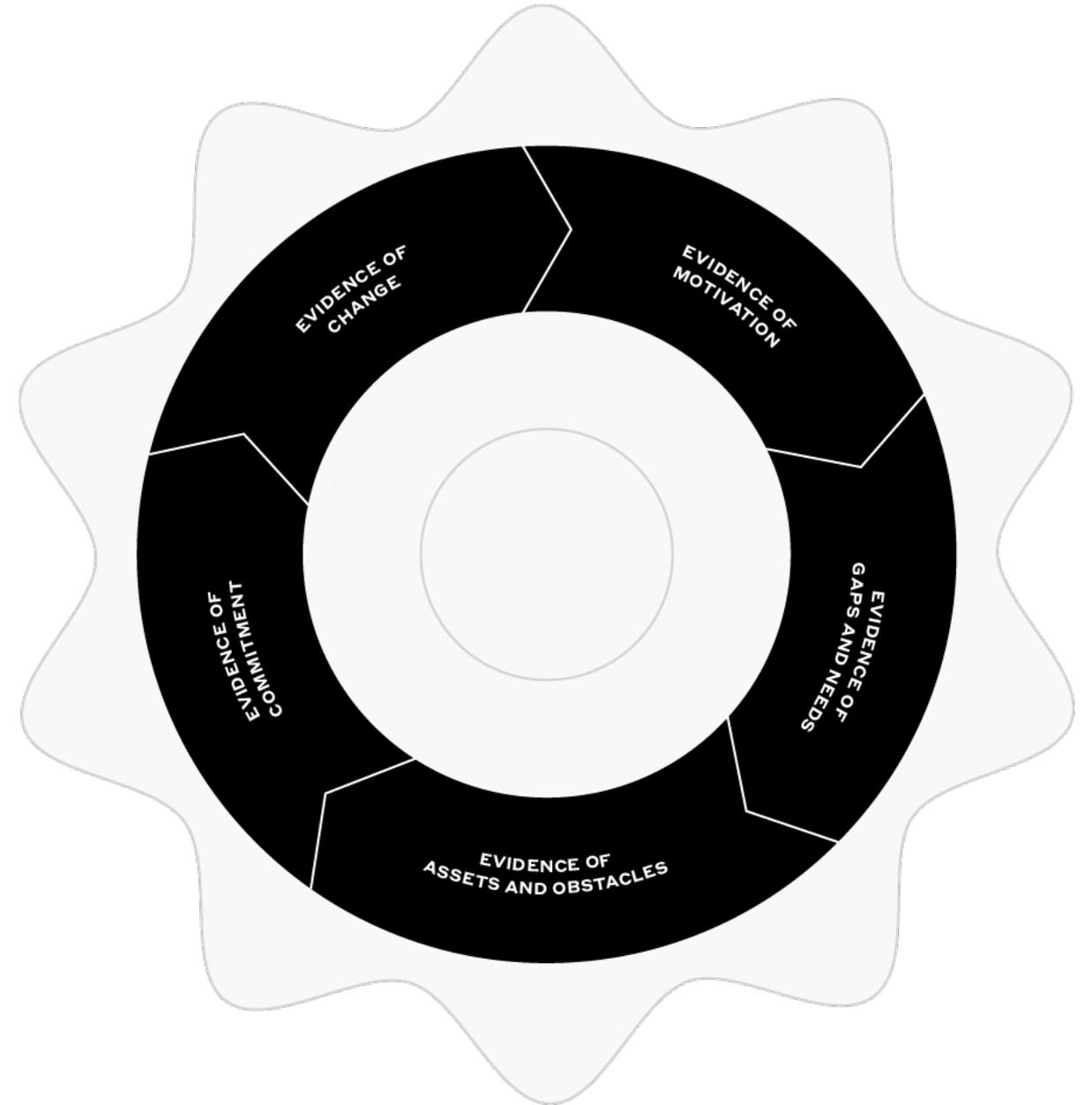
# Quantitative and qualitative tools building evidence and storytelling

- Different tools should be used as the voices are different.
- More tools will bring a better picture of the institution.
- Should be employed with the goal of telling stories, drawn from the institution's research community



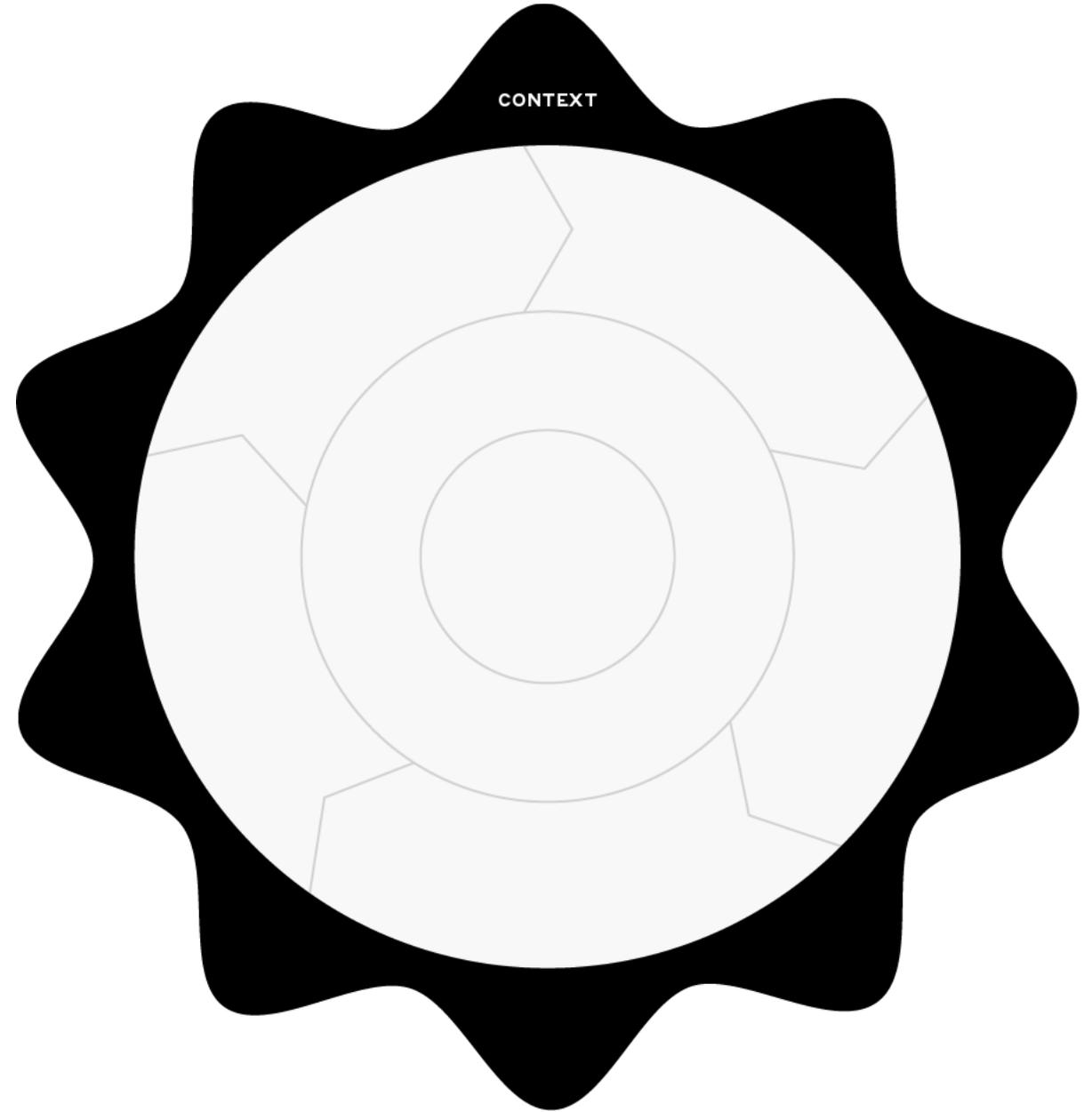
## 5 types of evidence

- Institutions should then use various tools to build the evidence and tell the story.
- Provides not only a numerical but an experiential picture



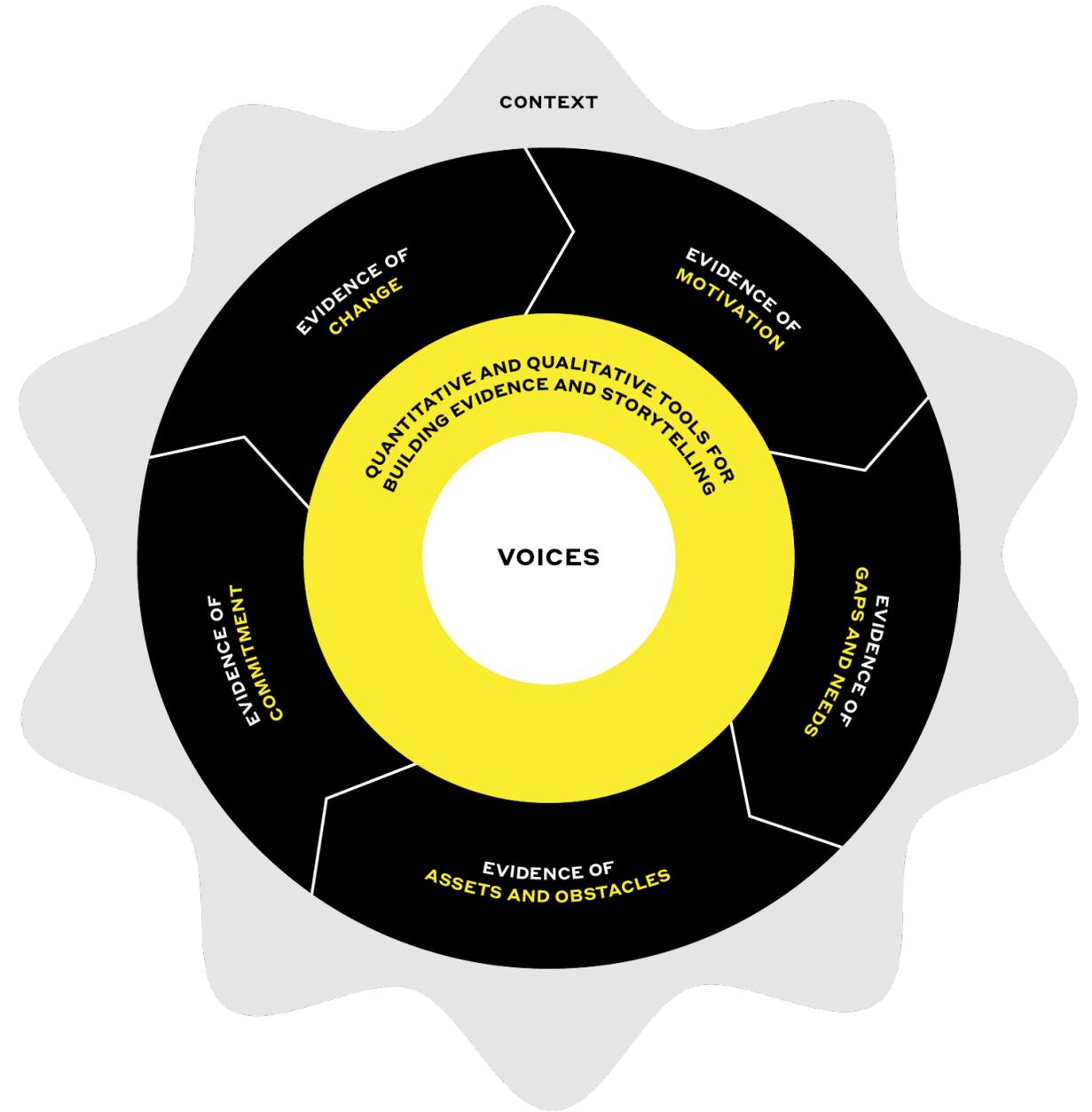
# Context

- Throughout the Dimensions process the context in which an institution is operating is considered.
- Inclusive of institutions of varying types, sizes, and locations confronting different challenges and opportunities



# Inclusive Assessment

- Created using an 'inclusive-by-design' process.
- Holistic approach.



# Recognition Scheme

- **Institutions will be able to apply to four recognition stages**
- **Increasingly comprehensive data requirements**
- **Four stages:**
  - Stage 1 – Foundation
  - Stage 2 – Construction
  - Stage 3 – Consolidation
  - Stage 4 – Transformation



# EDI data is driving the Dimensions program

“Institutions require qualitative and quantitative data to measure, monitor, understand and publicly report on challenges and progress made.”

*Dimensions Charter (Principle 3)*

- **Significance of demographic data**
  - Tri-agency self-identification questionnaire



# Reporting data and using it to take action

- **Dimensions action plan**
  - Data and engagements as the basis for initiatives and activities
  - Communication findings to internal and external communities



# Data-related challenges

## Preliminary insights from the Dimensions cohort

- **Benchmarking and comparing data**
  - Metrics changing over time
  - No framework or established baseline to compare data across the Canadian post-secondary system
- **Where data is located in institutions**
  - Centralized vs. decentralized



# Data-related challenges

## Preliminary insights from the Dimensions cohort

- **Data governance and privacy**
  - How data is collected, managed, used, and stored
- **Emotional labour/overburdening communities**
- **Communicating data**



# Data-related opportunities of Dimensions

- **Community of practice**
  - Sharing of promising practices across institutions
- **Knowledge-sharing on EDI data**
  - Dimensions handbook
  - Workshops, working groups, and webinars
- **Expansion of UCASS (Universities and Colleges Academic Staff System)**



# Questions?

Email us | [DimensionsEDI@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:DimensionsEDI@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)



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