



Hamilton Immigration  
Partnership Council



# Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Checklist

Prepared by: HIPC's Anti-Racism Working Group

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## Overview

This tool was created at the direction of the HIPC's Anti-Racism Working Group, a subgroup of HIPC created to promote anti-racism and anti-oppression within HIPC itself. Some content was adapted from the City of Hamilton's draft Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Handbook. HIPC commits to reviewing the content at least once every two years.

This checklist is intended to help remind us of the many specific steps we can take, even if we cannot check off all of them for each event or project. **You are encouraged to adapt this checklist for your own use.** The list is not exhaustive and we encourage you to send suggestions to [immigration.partnership@hamilton.ca](mailto:immigration.partnership@hamilton.ca).

IDEA refers to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. This framework seeks to increase awareness about barriers diverse groups face, take steps to consciously remove those barriers, and attend to the distinct needs of individuals, groups and communities.

**Inclusion** is about being intentional in appreciating and responding to the dimensions of diversity. Inclusion creates environments and spaces for everyone to feel welcomed, respected and valued, and to be able to participate and have a voice.

**Equity** describes fairness and justice in process and outcomes. It is not about treating everyone the same, but about directing resources and services towards those most in need to ensure equal outcomes for all.

**Diversity** refers to the variations within a population. It is about acceptance and respect for various dimensions of diversity such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, and religious belief.

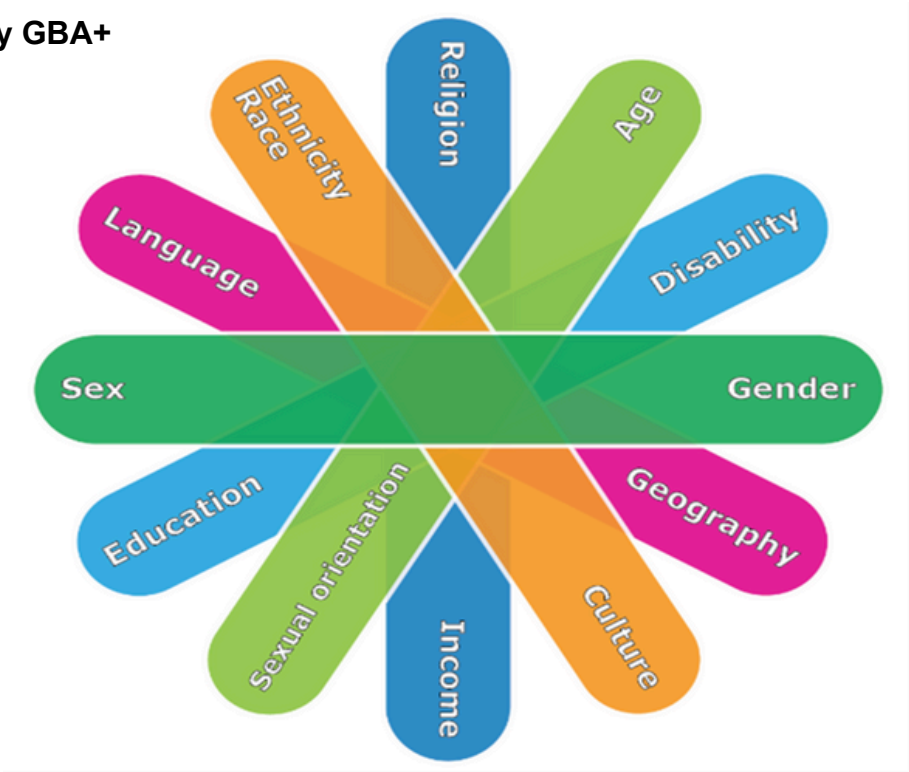
**Accessibility** refers to the inclusive practice of ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, can access the same information, engage in the same interactions and enjoy the same services. It involves removing barriers and providing accommodations to enable individuals to participate fully and equally.

### Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) Integration

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) serves as a critical analytical framework developed by the Government of Canada to assess how policies, programs, and initiatives impact diverse groups within society. Beyond focusing solely on gender, GBA+ incorporates an intersectional approach that recognizes individuals' multiple identity factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, and more. Figure 1 includes an intersectionality image illustrating some of the identity factors that are considered in GBA+ (Government of Canada, 2024). This approach acknowledges that these intersecting factors influence how different groups experience and interact with policies and programs.

By examining these dynamics, GBA+ aims to ensure that initiatives are inclusive and equitable, addressing the specific needs and barriers faced by marginalized or underrepresented groups. The GBA+ principles were integrated into HIPC's IDEA Checklist to allow for more thoughtful planning and implementation of services, policies, events, or programs.

Figure 1: Intersectionality GBA+



## Events and Meetings

Designing inclusive events and meetings starts from the planning stages. In planning inclusive events and meetings, you have the power to make them better and safer.

Checklist	Comments
<b><i>Scheduling, Registration and Venue Selection</i></b>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Event/meeting time and date does not conflict with important events/days for diverse groups, such as cultural or religious celebrations. A diversity calendar is cross-checked to ensure meetings/events avoid these dates. Link to diversity calendar: <a href="https://multifaithcalendar.org/">https://multifaithcalendar.org/</a></p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Time is selected to be convenient and accessible for most people, with virtual attendance offered when possible. Additionally, time is selected while considering different time zones and access to technology for diverse groups in virtual settings.</p> <p>E.g., Some members may be picking up kids from school or daycare at certain times of day, or some may have longer/unpredictable working hours.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate advance notice for meetings/events, and materials are sent in advance. Make them available languages other than English upon request.</p>	

Checklist	Comments
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Registration for event/meeting is free (or has subsidy option), accessible and simple, and contains request for accommodation information from participants. Where applicable, provide this information in multiple languages. Registration utilizes gender-neutral language wherever applicable.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parking or transportation needs for in-person events/meetings are considered. Parking is accessible and clear directions and map are provided (e.g., where to park, cost of parking or which bus to take).</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide accommodations for visible and invisible disabilities. Venue is accessible for people living with disabilities, including stage, podium, and washrooms.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Washrooms onsite are inclusive and welcoming to gender diverse individuals.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Participants are requested to keep the space free of perfume and cologne and are notified if Indigenous medicines will be used.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Location is familiar to intended audience, such as places of worship, community centres, and service provider organizations.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Venue provides space for spiritual observance/“interfaith space” where participants can go to pray, meditate, or reflect quietly.</p>	

Checklist	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> When selecting vendors, consider diversity in vendors and attempt to support those from the equity-deserving community being represented and consider their dietary, cultural, and religious preferences.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Venue is welcoming, and considers the safety and comfort of all participants, including women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other marginalized groups.	
<b>Promotion</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Plain language used in emails and marketing and promotional materials. Materials are available in AODA format (e.g., utilize Alt text for images).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Promotional materials, documents, and other written communication are available in other languages (which may likely include official languages)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Font sizes meet accessibility requirements. Accessibility and inclusion symbols are incorporated into marketing materials where appropriate. Visit City of Hamilton's policies on AODA at <a href="https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/equity-diversity-inclusion/accessibility-services/accessibility-guidelines-policies">https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/equity-diversity-inclusion/accessibility-services/accessibility-guidelines-policies</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Event is promoted via platforms used by diverse audiences, such as ethnic print publications and social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp).	

Checklist	Comments
<b><i>Food</i></b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> If food is served, participants are consulted about their dietary preferences and requirements (e.g., Halal, Kosher, gluten free, vegetarian) and food offered caters to the different dietary, cultural and religious preferences.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek vendors/food vendors from diverse backgrounds	
<input type="checkbox"/> During the fasting month of Ramadan for Muslims, consider scheduling inclusive events that do not focus on food but do not exclude these populations if events take place. If food is offered, also offer take-out containers to allow for later consumption.	
<b><i>Planners and Speakers</i></b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Event planning team is diverse and includes those with lived experience of immigration.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Panelists/presenters are representative of diverse groups and include different age groups, genders, and people with lived experience of immigration.	

Checklist	Comments
<b><i>Filming and Photography</i></b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Participants provided with options around being photographed or filmed (waivers may be required).	
<b><i>Meeting or Event Materials</i></b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> If participants are expected who do not speak official languages, multilingual materials are made available. Materials are shared in advance if possible.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Presentations and presentation materials are accessible (font size, colours and images used). Consult City of Hamilton's policies on AODA at <a href="https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/equity-diversity-inclusion/accessibility-services/accessibility-guidelines-policies">https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/equity-diversity-inclusion/accessibility-services/accessibility-guidelines-policies</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Language interpretation is provided for events attended by non-English speaking persons. If people who are deaf or hard of hearing attend, make sure ASL is provided. Where applicable, offer closed captioning, advance written materials or assistive listening devices.	



Checklist	Comments
<b><i>Tips to Consider During the Meeting or Event</i></b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> A land acknowledgment is used to start formal meetings and events, preferably a land acknowledgement that is personalized, educational and meaningful.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff, volunteers and attendees are asked to use preferred pronouns, including by asking invitees to indicate on name tag or as part of their name in virtual meetings.	
<input type="checkbox"/> No tolerance for offensive language during the meeting/event.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Presenters are encouraged to speak clearly and at a moderate pace to make it easier for participants to understand.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Everyone is provided opportunities to contribute to the discussions or conversations.	
<input type="checkbox"/> For online events, mechanisms are in place to ensure safety of participants to prevent/respond to 'Zoom-bombing' (such as assigning a person to monitor). Information on how to prevent Zoombombing or respond to Zoombombing.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda includes time for bio breaks, health/mental health breaks, and quiet time.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Event/meeting (especially in-person ones) ends in time to ensure people with special transportation arrangements can meet their bus schedules, including those who use accessible transit.	

## Project Development and Planning

IDEA should be included in strategic decision-making, including project development planning and project management. At this level, it is possible to identify systems-related barriers to diversity and inclusion, and to attempt to eliminate them during planning and implementation.

Checklist	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Identify key stakeholders, beneficiaries or communities impacted by a project and include them in the development, planning and implementation processes. Partner with community organizations, especially those that serve the demographics impacted by the project.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider who is not included in project development/planning and what is contributing to their exclusion. Examine ways to remove structural barriers to participation.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Explore multiple ways to engage diverse communities/stakeholders to include in the project planning &amp; development, via online/in-person/phone meetings, or focus groups.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ When developing, planning and evaluating the project, use GBA+ to assess how different groups (including equity-seeking groups) might be affected by the project and ensure their needs are considered from the outset</li> </ul> <p>E.g., A settlement project reveals that newcomer women face barriers accessing language class due to childcare needs.</p>	

Checklist	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Include perspectives of diverse stakeholders in the project plan or scoping document.	
<input type="checkbox"/> In scanning, scoping, reviewing or researching an issue, take into consideration evidence that addresses the impact of a project on diverse groups.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider if the project reflects the needs and concerns of diverse groups and key stakeholders	
<input type="checkbox"/> Allocate budget for translation/interpretation where necessary.  E.g., If the project is a research report or a resource, translate it into French and other target languages. If the project includes consultation with non-English speaking individuals, provide interpretation.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the project does not contribute to stigma or alienation of certain groups of people.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure project documents are written in plain language and accommodate for visual, auditory and linguistic needs or other physical, mental or social needs of stakeholders.	

Checklist	Comments
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Collect gender-disaggregated data to understand the specific needs and use this data to improve programs, projects, or processes in the future. This can be done by ensuring project outputs are tracked and evaluation/feedback forms are used after project completion.</p> <p>E.g., A woman may face unique barriers to accessing services then a man.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure expected outcomes of project reflect equity and inclusion goals.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Consider whether the project builds on the strengths and assets of people it is intended for, contributes to equitable access to resources, and benefits the larger community.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure project aligns with HIPC strategic plan's outcomes and operating principles.</p>	

## Research and Evaluation

Increasing representation from equity seeking groups strengthens research and evaluation efforts and will proactively work towards eliminating systemic barriers faced by equity-deserving groups. This includes, but is not limited to, activities around obtaining data/information on communities, including community surveys.

Checklist	Comments
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Community-based research principles and diverse perspectives are incorporated into research and evaluation. Ensure research design and methodology consider intersecting identities and experiences.</p> <p>E.g., Research results on White women may differ from the research results of South Asian women.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Multiple methods of data collection (interviews, focus groups, consultations, feedback forms) and multilingual data collection to accommodate a diversity of voices over different platforms.</p> <p>Ensure accessibility of participants for each collection method and tailor methods to respect cultural sensitivities.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Data gathered capture the diversity of the population, meaning they have been broken down (disaggregated) to make differences visible.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive language used in research, including gender-neutral language that respects diverse gender identities and cultural contexts.</p>	

Checklist	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> People most affected by an issue are consulted to ensure validity of data, approach and findings. Community leaders and representatives from various identities are engaged.	
<input type="checkbox"/> People most affected by an issue are consulted to ensure validity of data, approach and findings. Community leaders and representatives from various identities are engaged.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wherever possible, honouraria are provided to research participants not already being compensated for their time. Ensure the compensation is fair and considers the financial realities of different groups.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Generalizations and assumptions about research participants are avoided.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Language or medium used that is accessible to the newcomers or any other group being consulted.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Community leaders with experience in a subject area are consulted.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Final research or evaluation report includes findings on specific equity and inclusion concerns identified and actions to address such concerns.	

Checklist	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> People involved in the research or evaluation process are able to access the report and findings are communicated in plain/simple language.	
<input type="checkbox"/> All relevant ethical considerations are made in research and data gathering, including confidentiality and consent.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Final research reports are available in other language (which may likely include official languages).	
<input type="checkbox"/> For more detailed best practices, visit HIPC's Guide to Inclusive and Meaningful Research with Newcomers in Hamilton.	

## Communications

Communicating to diverse audiences requires intentional efforts to ensure inclusion and foster a sense of belonging.

Checklist	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Mark and acknowledge special dates on various HIPC platforms, keeping in mind that some dates change from year to year. Examples of special dates: International Women’s Day, International Day for Elimination of Racism, Pride Month, Eid, Black History Month. Use a diversity calendar, such as <a href="https://multifaithcalendar.org/">https://multifaithcalendar.org/</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pictures/images are inclusive of diverse communities and individuals imagery preferred over stock photography.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Content of the communication reflects equity (in language and imagery) in terms of all aspects of diversity such as gender, gender expression, age, ability, and culture.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Terms reflect current usage preferences of diverse communities and individuals, for example “racialized people” or “people of colour” instead of “visible minorities”. Use appropriate pronouns as chosen by gender non-conforming, non-binary, and transgender individuals.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Are newcomers the target audience? If yes, have marketing/promotional materials translated into most common newcomer languages. Ensure these translations are sensitive to cultural nuances and accessible to different literacy levels.	



Checklist	Comments
<p><input type="checkbox"/> What individuals or communities are excluded from our communication? Actively seek feedback from underrepresented groups to identify and address gaps in communication and ask community partners to forward to any who may have been missed.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> A variety of formats are used (i.e., audio, visual, print, described images, braille and digital tools) to reach members of the target group, including diverse social media platforms, print media, and printed materials. Ensure the platforms used are accessible to people with varying levels of digital literacy and access to technology.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Language adheres to plain writing standards. It is simple, easy to understand and respectful of diversity.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and inclusion symbols are used in marketing materials, if applicable.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Communication accommodates for visual, auditory or linguistic abilities, and meets AODA standards <a href="https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/equity-diversity-inclusion/accessibility-services/accessibility-guidelines-policies">https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/equity-diversity-inclusion/accessibility-services/accessibility-guidelines-policies</a>.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Content contains contact information about source of the communication and directions for providing feedback.</p>	

## For Further Reading

- City for All Women Initiative. Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide for Municipalities, June 2015. [https://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/publications/advancing-equity-inclusion-web\\_0.pdf](https://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/publications/advancing-equity-inclusion-web_0.pdf)
- City of Ottawa. Equity & Inclusion Lens Handbook, 2015. <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/creating-equal-inclusive-and-diverse-city/equity-and-inclusion-lens>
- City of Saskatoon. Equity Toolkit for Projects, August 2021.
- Government of Canada. 2024. Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA PLUS). <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus.html>
- Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council. A Guide to Inclusive and Meaningful Research with Hamilton Newcomers, May 2021. <https://hamiltonimmigration.ca/wp-content/uploads/HIPC-Guide-to-Inclusive-and-Meaningful-Research-with-Hamilton-Newcomers.pdf>
- Myrie, Evelyn. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Handbook: A Guide to Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Practices in the City of Hamilton – Draft.
- St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership. Planning Events that are Culturally Inclusive: A Guidebook  
Planning Events that are Culturally Inclusive (stelip.ca)

## About the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC)

The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) is a community table whose members work together to create a positive settlement experience for newcomers. HIPC members represent settlement agencies, educational institutions, the private sector, municipal departments, persons with lived experiences of immigration, and more. HIPC is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and housed within the City of Hamilton's Economic Development Division within the Planning and Economic Development Department.

Visit our website at [www.HamiltonImmigration.ca](http://www.HamiltonImmigration.ca) and follow us on social media @HIPCHamilton (IG/X).