

# **EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION @AECON**

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## Overview

In support of our ambition to become the #1 Canadian infrastructure company, we have been working diligently to equitably increase the diversity and inclusivity of our workplaces. As a North American company with work locations and projects in Canada, the U.S., and internationally, Aecon has access to one of the most highly skilled talent pools in the world. To attract and retain the best talent we strive to be the First Choice Employer in our industry.

In 2021, Aecon created a Community of Expertise (COE) of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)---Committing the resources required to prioritize EDI as part of our operating structure. Our Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy is driven by three intended outcomes with all performed in support of at least one of these desired outcomes.

1. Improved diversity at all levels and areas in the organization
2. Increased opportunities for development and/or promotion for members of diverse groups
3. A more inclusive workplace and environment

## Areas of Work

In 2023, we prioritized supporting our community and strengthening our culture to one of safety and belonging. Our achievements in talent development, recruitment and culture are amongst those we're most proud of.





## EDI Data & Measurement

2023 marks the fourth annual *Aecon Diversity Census*, a workforce-wide survey that measures diversity, as well as the experiences of inclusion and belonging of employees at Aecon. Our annual census has enabled Aecon to identify and respond to biases that exist within our processes and policies and monitor how those resolutions are working for those employees impacted.

## Diverse Talent Development

Champions for Diversity in Leadership is an executive sponsorship program for high potential talent who are underrepresented in our organization and industry. Our first cohort of the Champions for Diversity in Leadership concluded in 2023. More than 50% of this cohort received a new development opportunity (promotion or lateral transfer) during the program or within three months of the cohort's successful completion.



## Diverse Talent Recruitment

Partnerships are integral to how we attract more diverse talent to Aecon. In 2023, our partnerships with EngiQueers, March of Dimes Canada, and ACCES Employment, to name a few, have led to recruitment of key talent from LGBTQ+, disabled and immigrant communities.

## Community & Culture

Supporting our leaders to create inclusive and collaborative teams is core to the work of EDI at Aecon. Leveraging our extensive network of Employee Resource Group members, we have prepared communication materials with the information managers require to create inclusive workplaces such as, our 2023 education campaign, "So, someone on your team has a disability?" Which outlined how managers can navigate disability disclosure from their direct reports.

# BROADENING POLICIES & PROGRAMS

## Workplace Accommodation Policy

At the end of 2022, we formally approved our new Workplace Accommodation Policy. An accommodation policy typically sets out an employer's process for receiving and responding to requests for accommodation from employees. 2023 became our year to receive, support and respond to requests as they came through and we were impressed by how Human Resources and management has dealt with these requests since the passing of this policy.

## Aecon Women in Trades

Our Utilities group continues to welcome women into the construction trades through the Aecon Women in Trades ("AWIT") program.

In 2023, we welcomed 44 women into the trades, placing them in our Telecommunications and Oil & Gas Yards in the Greater Toronto Area, Ottawa and Barrie.

## Bereavement Leave Policy

In 2023, EDI Council members brought forth that there might be an opportunity to update the Bereavement Policy to recognize non-traditional family structures, and ensure that all employees receive the time they need to grieve their loved ones.

The proposal resulted in a broadened policy that does not limit time-off to a member of a traditional nuclear family, but includes chosen family - a concern that was particularly important to our Pride ERG who struggle to redefine family following estrangement from birth family.



# WORKFORCE STATISTICS

As a Canadian company, we continue to measure the representation of minority groups highlighted in Canada’s Employment Equity Act (listed below) against the representation of these groups in Canada’s general population.

**Table 1: Canada Census of Population (2021) Results, Aecon Diversity Census**

	Canada, 2021	Aecon, 2023
Women & Gender Minorities	< 50.9%	37.4%
Indigenous Peoples	5.0%	2.1%
LGBTQ2+	N/A	3.2%
People of Colour (Visible Minorities)	26.5%	34.5%
People with Disabilities	22.3%	2.4%

Given Canadian construction industry trends, we know there is work to be done to create more welcoming work environments for women, gender minorities (including trans\* and non-binary folks), Indigenous Peoples and People with Disabilities. We have many programs that speak to our commitment to greater diversity, inclusion and respect in our workplaces that are discussed in the **Broadening Programs and Policies** section.

Also, although the proportion of employees who identify as People of Colour at Aecon exceeds the national census numbers, these numbers do not translate to senior leadership positions. We are working diligently to support People of Colour in their quest to become leaders at Aecon.

# DIVERSE SUPPLIER SPEND

At Aecon we understand that supplier diversity programs are an important component of a Equity, Diversity & Inclusion strategy, and that diversifying a supply chain is becoming increasingly more important in today's global marketplace. We continue to encourage diverse suppliers to get to know our Strategic Procurement teams and work closely with the diverse vendor associations to become verified.

**Table 2: Aecon Diverse Procurement Supplier Diversity**

	<b>Total 2023 Supplier Spend (in thousands)</b>
Women-owned businesses	\$21,670
Indigenous-owned business	\$275,527
Minority-owned business	\$56,697
Other diverse supply categories (i.e. DBE)	\$42,100

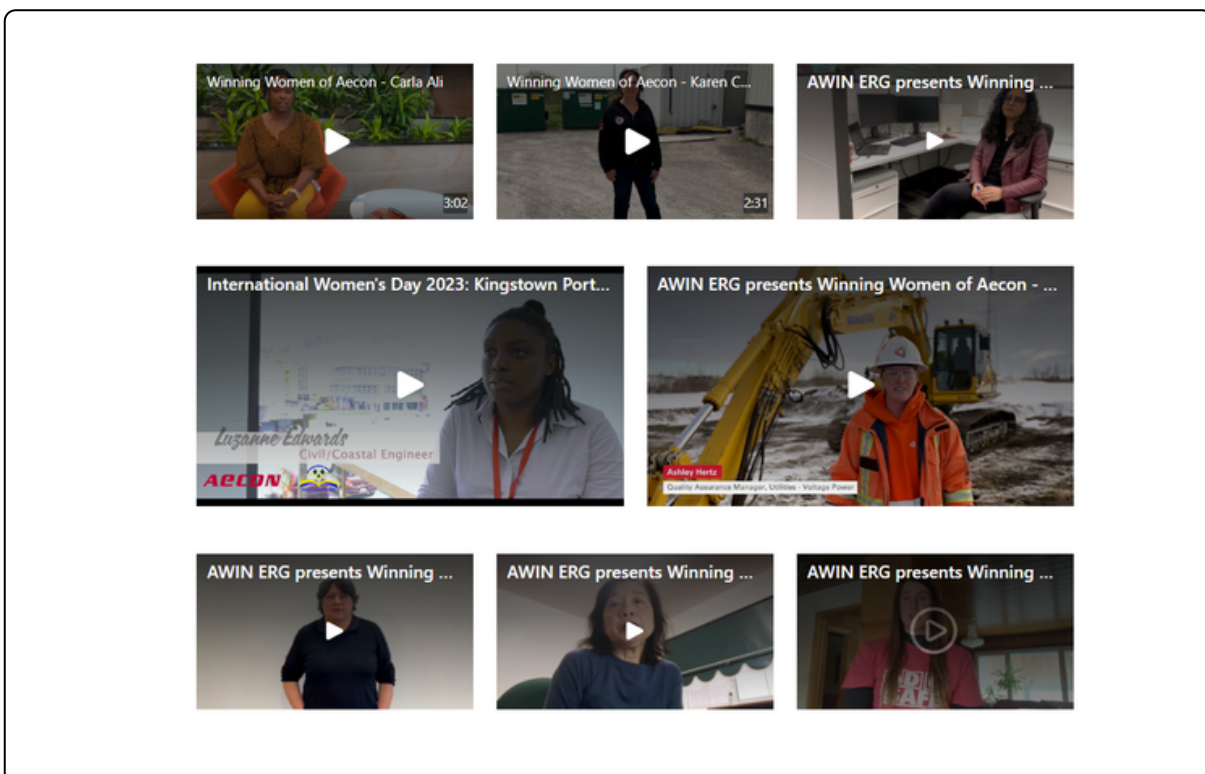
Note: All diverse supplier spend is not verified. Vendors must work with one of the following organizations to be verified: Women Business Canada (WBE), the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council (CAMSC), or the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB).

The categories within diverse procurement that we have highlighted include women-owned (at least 51% owned by a woman), Indigenous owned (at least 51% owned by an Indigenous person), and minority-owned (at least 51% owned by a visible minority) businesses. As a growing global company, we have included a fourth-category which includes U.S. vendor classifications including spend with: Airport Concession Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), Veteran-owned businesses and Section 8(a) Business Development Program Participants.



In 2023 our primary focus was on highlighting the women that are doing incredible things at Aecon. To this end, we started *Winning Women of Aecon* - a video series that follows women on the job, covering a day-in-the-life segment.

Our secondary focus was on ensuring that women could gain access to well-fitted personal protective equipment (PPE), a rarity across the industry. We partnered with EHS and Procurement to find suppliers that provide woman-fitted PPE, and are currently testing Safety Glasses, Protection Gloves, Fall Harnesses, Hi-Vis Clothing and hearing protection on the BHP Project.





# DISABILITIES @ AECON

This year we continue to raise awareness of the various types of disabilities that exist and strive to make Aecon a safe place for employees to disclose their disabilities.

Our first initiative of the year was an educational campaign on how to navigate disability disclosure (find below). Helping our workforce understand what is and is not appropriate to say or do in these cases.

Our second initiative of the year was to participate in an Accessibility Walk, where we conduct an internal audit on the accessibility of three Aecon offices. The audit informed an accessibility guide that is used by the Human Resources and Facilities Management teams.

**Aecon** Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

**So.. someone on your team has shared they are neurodivergent.**

**NAVIGATING DISABILITY DISCLOSURE**

**Neurodiversity**  
Neurodiversity describes the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one "right" way of thinking, learning, and behaving, and differences are not viewed as deficits.

**Talent & Performance**

# INDIGENOUS @ AECON

Our ongoing priority is to support the cross-cultural exchange between Indigenous groups and non-Indigenous groups. This year we hosted three events to share ways of living and awareness.

In May 2023, we hosted Sheila North for a discussion on the ongoing crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited Peoples. Given the impact of this crisis on communities across Turtle Island, we felt it was important to raise awareness of the issue and share what Aecon employees could do to help.

In June 2023, we hosted Professor Rick Monture from McMaster University for education on the History of the Haudenosaunee People.

And in September 2023, we hosted Bob Watts (former Interim Executive Director of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee) for education on the origins of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

This past year, our Indigenous Relations team did incredible work actioning Aecon's Reconciliation Action Plan, and achieving Silver-Level in the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business' Progressive Aboriginal Relations Program for work we are doing enterprise-wide to support Indigenous communities.

**Progressive  
Aboriginal  
RELATIONS**

**SILVER  
LEVEL**

Canadian Council for  
Aboriginal Business





# PEOPLE OF COLOUR @ AECON

In February 2023, we hosted a Black History Month event where we highlighted Marilyn Francis. Marilyn is a Black woman Boilermaker working in our Nuclear group.

Throughout the year, the People of Colour ERG had discussions on how to best highlight the talent that exists at Aecon, and plans to release a new program in 2024.



# PRIDE @ AECON

We were AeconPROUD to participate in the EngiQueers Canada conference. Attracting LGBTQ+ talent into the construction and infrastructure industry is an important part of our long-term Talent Acquisition strategy.

We kicked off Pride Month with a conversation with Jade Pichette from Pride at Work Canada on Putting Safety First. The discussion centered on prioritizing the psychological safety of LGBTQ+ employees. Also during Pride Month, we sent out a series of profiles to our fellow employees offering insight into what it's like to be out--or not out-- at work.

Thank you to our partners EngiQueers Canada and Pride at Work Canada.





# LOOKING AHEAD

In 2024, we are broadening our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion focus from building an internal influence from 2020-2023, to playing a larger role in the communities where we work from 2024-2026.

This shift to a focus on our social impact will support Aecon's growth into a global company with clients, partners and communities with diverse needs and expectations.

We look forward to continuing to publicly report on our progress and to contributing to a community of practitioners who are building towards a more equitable and inclusive world.



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