



Our Commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Updated: May 2024

In 2020, Skate Canada made a formal commitment to making Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) fundamental in all that we do. We committed to listen and learn, to work to become an anti-racist organization, and to lead by example within the sport community.

This commitment continues to thrive today. As part of our journey, we are fostering connections in our skating community with Indigenous, Black, and racially marginalized people, 2SLGBTQIA+ and gender diverse people, and people with disabilities. We are striving for age inclusivity. We also reached outside of skating and sport to educate ourselves.

Grounded on these evolving relationships, Skate Canada is building a culture of collective responsibility to create a safe and welcoming environment for all individuals to experience the joy of skating. This pledge is outlined in our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan under the new initiative: Skating for Everyone.

Skate Canada has made progress in several areas identified by the Figure Skating Diversity and Inclusion Alliance (FSDIA) in their Six (6) Calls for Change and Action. We know that we have much more to accomplish but are actively making progress to make Skate Canada as diverse and inclusive as possible.

The following initiatives are highlights from the EDIA efforts to date:

Representation Amongst Employees and Leadership

- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Operating Committee**

In June 2020, Skate Canada created an EDIA group, comprised of diverse members of the skating community and experts in EDIA. Established in 2022 as the EDIA Operating Committee, the committee follows a social justice model and engages in ongoing self-education, develops educational plans, advises on resource materials for our community, identifies areas for change, and undertakes initiatives. This committee advises Skate Canada leadership on implementation of EDIA and anti-racism commitments.

- **Revised Skate Canada Board and standing committee skills/competency framework to recognize community-based experience, engagement, and leadership.**

This includes specific competencies related to anti-racism, Indigenous community engagement, EDIA knowledge and commitment.

- **Hiring and Staff**

To ensure that all EDIA initiatives are delivered in a timely manner, a full time EDIA Project Manager was hired in 2022. Going beyond the rink, we continue to build and promote at the National Office a culture and community that support diverse lived experiences and personal identities of staff members.



Policy Change

- September 2020: the **National Safe Sport Program** was updated with an enhanced framework, policies and procedures. As part of the National Safe Sport Program, Skate Canada created the Skate-Safe program available to all individuals which serves as an independent safe sport mechanism to implement the Misconduct Reporting and Resolution Policy, which includes adhering to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) and exists independently of the Skate Canada Safe Sport Program. Through the Skate-Safe program an independent external third-party Case Manager was retained as an external authority with responsibility for the end-to-end management of reports all complaints of misconduct received from individuals through the Skate-Safe program, including the independent review of the complaint of misconduct, the investigation (as appropriate) and resolution process, and final decision and disciplinary action.
 - November 2020: Change of terminology to C-Step and S-Step for all domestic applications in line with commitment to decolonizing skating terminology and to align with our commitment to anti-racism and Indigenous engagement
 - July 2021: **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** updated to reflect the current standards and appropriate language for implementing equity, diversity and inclusion.
 - 2022: **Skating for Everyone** introduced as a new strategic imperative in the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. For meaningful engagement and progress toward Skating for Everyone, the Skate Canada Strategic Plan recognizes EDIA must be more than a series of initiatives, 'add-on programming, or tokenistic participation or consultation. The Skating for Everyone strategic imperative commits us to taking action in ways that counter systemic racism, gender inequities, ableism, and various forms of intersecting hatred and marginalization.
 - December 2022: The Podium Pathway **definition of 'team'** was revised to 'a team consists of two skaters'. The previous definition of 'team' was one woman and one man. This definition of team as two skaters has been in place for the Star and Adult pathways since 2018. The change to the Podium Pathway definition further supports Skate Canada's vision of Skating for Everyone and our commitment to non-discrimination, including non-discrimination based on gender identity.
 - December 2022: Effective December 31, 2022 (Effective Date), Skate Canada retained the services of the SDRCC as a second independent third-party external authority for the implementation, administration, and enforcement of the UCCMS for program signatories only. Subject to this Policy, complaints or reports of violations of the UCCMS (maltreatment and prohibited behaviours, both as defined under the UCCMS) by a program signatory (as defined by Skate Canada) occurring after the Effective Date and falling within the jurisdiction of the UCCMS shall be governed by the policies and procedures of the SDRCC's Abuse-Free Sport Program).
- Note: All individuals, except program signatories, continue reporting complaints of misconduct through the Case Manager external authority under the Skate-Safe program.*
- January 2023: **Trans Inclusion Protocol** updated to help better understand experiences of trans people, protocols to respect the rights of trans participants in skating, and the key considerations and requirements to support an environment of inclusion and non-discrimination in skating to gender diverse individuals.



Education

- **EDIA Communities of Practice**

Skate Canada’s EDIA Community of Practice was piloted in October 2021. Community of Practice sessions bring together individuals with a shared commitment to learning and action to advance EDIA. The sessions build capacity for grassroots action at the club and Section level. Since its inception, we have conducted six sessions. Four sessions are to be delivered annually or as required when relevant pressing topics arise.

- **Indigenous Engagement**

In 2022, we began our Indigenous Engagement journey to learn to ‘Work in Good Ways’. The Skate Canada National office staff and our sections both participated in separate sessions with elder Clayton Sandy to learn the various actions we can take as individuals and as an organization to build meaningful and lasting relationships with the Indigenous community. This continued in 2023 where everyone participated in the Kairos Blanket Exercise, an interactive exercise in understanding and seeing Canadian history from an Indigenous perspective. We did not stop there, in 2024, Skate Canada took the opportunity to educate an international audience with the production of the Welcome Message video – delivered in Mohawk language and played each day during the World Championships .

- **EDIA and Anti-Racism Education Modules**

In 2021, Skate Canada launched EDIA and anti-racism educational modules available to all Skate Canada members and clubs. These were supported by targeted facilitated discussions with Board members, officials, and Section Chairs and Coordinators. Revised and updated educational modules and engagement strategies will be released in 2023-2024. This is supported by existing educational resources for 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion and gender diversity, and new resources for developing responsible practices for choreography and the creative process.

- **Coach Education**

The updated Coaching Foundations course now integrates education on EDIA, anti-racism, anti-ableism, gender diversity, and age inclusivity across training materials. ‘The Creative Process’ is added to the Regional Foundations as part of an in-person course to guide coaches as they establish an ethical and responsible creative process in developing and selecting a program. In addition, an in person educational session with the Aboriginal Sport Circle was also delivered for a full day to some coaches in Ottawa and the National Office staff.

Demographic Data

- In 2022, Skate Canada launched a Comprehensive Demographic Data Collection and Exit Survey projects. The collection of demographic data for Skate Canada registrants enables Skate Canada to identify areas of underrepresentation, address inequities, track impact of initiatives, apply evidence-based decision-making to inform ongoing EDIA strategies, report to the skating community, and undertake longitudinal analysis. This work is guided by Dr. Tracey Peters, Ph.D. of University of Manitoba, with analysis underway.



Media, Marketing & Communications

- Skate Canada’s **Skating for Everyone campaign** provides visibility to systemically marginalized members of the skating community. Intentional efforts are being made through all Skate Canada marketing and communications channels for broad-based representation. For example, Skate Canada released a new brand identity in August 2022 with a launch that included a national digital media campaign that featured racially diverse skaters from both our competitive and recreational programs.
- **Community Stories and Indigenous Stories in Skating**
We collaborated with individuals with diverse lived experiences and personal identities to feature their unique stories through video and written interviews. Community stories is an ongoing initiative, with many of the stories highlighted at key times including Black History Month, Asian Heritage Month, Pride Season, National Indigenous People’s Day, and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- **Pride Merchandise**
We partnered with Rainbow Railroad to feature a story on the important work they do but to also raise funds through Skate Canada branded Pride merchandise. Proceeds from this collection will go to Rainbow Railroad to support their initiatives in helping 2SLGBTQIA+ people escape state sponsored violence.
- **Promotion of Adult Skating Pathway**
As part of Skating for Everyone, we continue to support our adult skaters through hosting a series Communities of Practice dedicated to Adult Skating and Skating Pathways for all Ages. Additionally, we will have our first adult training camp in August 2023 that involves on and off-ice workshops (including EDIA sharing information) as well as the opportunity for networking and social gatherings.
- **Enhanced Video Library Resources**
An ongoing project to increase representation of people with disabilities, racial diversity, age inclusivity, gender diversity, and body types in video resources for coach and assessor training. Inclusion of different gender pairings for videos featuring skating teams.

Program Accessibility/Funding

- **Diverse Leaders in Skating Mentorship Program**
The program was launched in 2022 with nine mentees and twenty-seven mentors. Each mentee is paired with two mentors and given full access to the mentor pool directory, as well as a grant of \$1,500 to pursue their development as officials or coaches. The program seeks to form supportive networks and individualized mentorship that will not only lead to the mentees’ success as a coach or an official, but a mentorship experience that values full identities. We know that Indigenous, Black, racialized persons, persons with disabilities, and those from other under-represented groups may not have access to mentorship and training opportunities that recognize lived experiences, and this program aims to provide that.
- **Community Constellations**
Initiated in 2021-22, Community Constellations centers local community organizations to support their work for meaningful experiences for Indigenous communities, newcomers, refugees, and/or socio-economically marginalized individuals. Working directly with organizations who have identified exposure to sport, cultural experiences, or outings to be of value to their communities, Community Constellations provides opportunities to see live skating for individuals who otherwise would not likely attend a figure skating event.



We have partnered with a range of community organizations to distribute the tickets to groups under-represented in our skating community. Up to date, the program provided 700 tickets coupled with food vouchers for participants across the country to fully enjoy the experience.

Skate Canada recognizes the steps above are only a starting point and that major work lies ahead. Our commitment to meaningful and transformative changes remains strong. As we approach a new season, we look forward to working with all members of our community and to broadening membership so that together we make skating a place where everyone can truly experience the joy of skating.

[1] The Figure Skating Diversity and Inclusion Alliance has developed six areas of focus that we believe will lead to the best practices for equity, inclusion, and anti-discrimination within National Sports Associations (NSOs) worldwide. [\(Link\)](#)