Opening the Gates to Philanthropy:

Diversifying Communications in Institutional Advancement

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The thought of graduate school was something I always wanted to pursue. Yet, when I was accepted into the Masters of Arts in Communications and Technology program I felt anxious and afraid. I was unsure about the road ahead, unsure about how I would manage course work, my full-time job and spending time with my family and friends. Despite my worries, I was reminded of my family's story. My mom and dad are from the Philippines where their families had struggled to make ends meet. My mom's family had it especially hard. My grandfather ran a small stall in a marketplace and worked tirelessly to send all six of his children to school. He would tell them that "education is the one thing that no one can take away from you." It was this story that motivated me to persevere, to push myself even when it felt like giving up.

Special thanks to: my family, my mom, dad, and two brothers for their unwavering support these past few years. To my friends, thank you for understanding when I constantly declined your invitations and for continuing to invite me nevertheless. To my partner, for his patience, for cooking and feeding me when I couldn't pull myself from my desk. Thank you for helping me find the words when I could not. To my professors, especially, Dr. Nancy Bray, and Dr. Gordon Gow, thank you for your teachings, guidance and support. To Dr. Michael Polushin, thank you for your continued mentorship, and friendship and for always providing the best books, study break recommendations, and encouragement. To my supervisor, Dr. Katy Campbell, whose input and mentorship had a tremendous impact on my work. I cannot thank you enough for your guidance, and valuable recommendations. Last, but certainly not least, thank you to Courtney Wagner, Angela Baron, Tess Syrowik and Saba Al Hammouri (CAATS), my capstone mini cohort, confidants and constant cheer-meisters. Thank you for your friendship, support and shoulders to cry on.

<u>ABSTRACT</u>

Today, supporting equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization (EDID) has become one of the top priorities for Canadian post-secondary institutions. Universities across Canada have taken various steps to achieve this goal, efforts ranging from reviewing the composition of senior management teams to developing communication campaigns that celebrate cultural diversity. However, while universities have started implementing these initiatives, they often overlook considering EDID in donor communication strategies. This research will work toward answering the following question: to what extent does the University of Alberta (U of A) utilize inclusive development (fundraising) communications practices? This research will focus on the U of A as a case study and will utilize a mixed method approach. Through semi-structured interviews with fundraising and communication professionals and an analysis of quantitative data gathered from an annual donor communication piece this research will explore the extent to which EDID is considered in donor communication strategies at the U of A. The findings from this research suggest that donor communications at the U of A do not consider EDID in planning, measuring or developing donor communications in a way that is representative of diverse donor audiences. This research also provides several recommendations on how donor communication strategies at the U of A can be improved to become more accessible to equity-deserving donor populations.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, North American colleges and universities have not been the most inclusive spaces. Until the mid-twentieth century, educational policies prohibited people of colour from even pursuing higher education (N. Henry, 2021, para. 7). At first glance, it may seem like today's colleges and universities have become more inclusive spaces. For example, today, nearly half of undergraduate students in the US are people of colour (Brown, 2019, para. 1). While post-secondary institutions have continued to work towards supporting equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization (EDID), they have failed to develop inclusive practices in an increasingly important area: institutional advancement, fundraising communications in particular.

Institutional advancement (advancement), or the philanthropic support of educational institutions, can be traced back to ancient Greece and Cimon's support of the Academy of Socrates and Plato (Caboni, n.d., para. 2). Across North America, colleges and universities are faced with decreasing provincial and federal budgets, and as a result, have become more dependent on philanthropic support (Drezner, 2011, p. 2). The approaches that most colleges and universities use to cultivate support are geared towards traditional donor populations: predominantly white men who historically had more disposable income (Carlton, 2020; Capek & Mead, 2006). However, "with the growing middle and upper-class of communities of colour and an increasingly diverse alumni base, institutional advancement professionals must alter their practice" (Drezner, 2011, p. 26). A number of studies also provide context on the giving behaviour of women, and how their perceived agency over philanthropy and their philanthropic gifts has increased over time (Drezner, 2011; Capek & Mead, 2006). To engage donors of colour, advancement professionals must recognize the cultural differences that affect philanthropic giving. Despite the growing need for equitable fundraising practices in higher education, advancement professionals have not relied on research to guide their practice. Even today, most fundraising literature is written for practitioners offering supposedly "best" practices that are often not grounded in research (Brittingham & Pezzullo, 1989; Carbone,

1986; Kelly, 1991). This study will respond to this gap in the literature by examining what extent

Canadian higher education institutions implement equitable fundraising communications practices.

The following chapter will provide an overview of the positionality of the researcher and the

research question and objectives. Finally, I will also provide a definition of key variables that are of

particular interest to this topic.

Positionality: Interests in EDID in Canadian Higher Education Fundraising

Before delving into this topic further it is important to explore and explain my positionality,

a reflection of the position that I have chosen to adopt within this particular research study

(Savin-Baden & Major, 2013 as cited in Holmes, 2020, p. 2). As a Filipino-Canadian woman, I am

no stranger to the racism, anti-Asian and discriminatory structures and features present throughout

Canadian society. As a young girl, I vividly remember being told to "go back home" by kids in our

neighbourhood and have had similar experiences as an adult. Yet, I knew that my parents and

grandparents had worked so hard to give my brothers and me the opportunity to call Canada home.

For my parents and grandparents, it was their education that had given them the opportunity to give

us more than they had growing up, they said that "education is the one thing that no one can take

away from you." These teachings motivated me to work hard in school, since my family made it

clear that education had helped them overcome their challenges so perhaps it would do the same for

me.

After completing my undergraduate degree I started working in Donor Relations, part of the

U of A's Institutional Advancement Office. In this position, I had the opportunity to learn about how

donor funding has helped support access to higher education, something that really resonated with

my values and beliefs. I was especially passionate about the university's efforts to support EDID

initiatives at an institutional level. Despite the university's many initiatives, I noticed that donor

relations practices were not strategically developed with this in mind. Fundraising communications

were annually tied to Christmas, gendered suffixes were still included in communications, and

non-Christian cultural practices and holidays were not recognized. This reminded me of my life experiences and made me wonder if fundraising communications were creating similar experiences for donors who were part of equity-seeking groups. This research is a culmination of my passion for supporting EDID and an effort to continue to bridge the gaps in Canadian higher education. I hope that this research will help inform best practices to better support higher education institutions across Canada in their EDID practices, especially those in development communications, and in doing so help more families like mine access higher education. The following section will outline my overarching research question and a review of previous research in this area.

Research Question & Objectives

Research Question

This study will be guided by the following research question: *To what extent does the University of Alberta utilize inclusive development (fundraising) communications practices?*

Objectives

This study will aim to better understand to what extent fundraising or development communications, like impact reporting, storytelling and thank you messages should be guided by EDID strategies at the U of A. This study will be informed by existing academic research on fundraising communications, and preferences of equity-seeking donor groups as well as my education and experience on the subject. The findings of this study will aim to provide recommendations for future best practices in developing fundraising communications in higher education institutions across Canada. This research may also be applied to other communications in higher education as well as other post-secondary institutions outside of Canada.

Definitions of Key Variables

What is Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID)?

EDID has become central to various industries including post-secondary across Canada. Equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization not only acknowledges the differences across our

society but works to develop and maintain a diverse, fair, open and just community. Decolonization

is of special consideration in post-secondary institutions across Canada since Canada has had a

history of colonialism, racial injustice with Canada's First Nations. This has become especially

significant after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action, *94 Calls to*

Action, was released in 2015 to "redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of

Canadian reconciliation." The TRC's Calls to Action were divided into six categories, child welfare,

education, health, justice, language and culture. Canadian post-secondary institutions in particular,

were called to act on disparities and inequity in education. As such, Universities Canada, formerly

the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, is a membership organization providing

university presidents with a unified voice for Canadian higher education, research and innovation

both nationally and abroad. Universities Canada, outlines a commitment to seven principles of

EDID (Universities Canada, 2020):

1. Developing and/or maintaining an EDID action plan in consultation with students, faculty, staff and administrators, and particularly with individuals from under-represented groups.* [1]

2. A commitment to demonstrating progress over time.

3. Taking action to provide equity of access and opportunity. Identifying and addressing barriers and providing supports for the recruitment and retention of senior university leaders, university Board and Senate members, faculty, staff and students, particularly from under-represented groups.

4. Collaborating with our faculty and staff, search firms, and our governing boards to ensure that candidates from all backgrounds are provided support in their career progress and success in senior leadership positions at our institutions.

5. Seeking ways to integrate inclusive excellence throughout our university's teaching, research, community engagement and governance. In doing so, we will engage with

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[1] Under-represented groups include those identified in the federal Employment Equity Act – women, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities – as well as, but not limited to, LGBTQ2+ people and men in female-dominated disciplines.

students, faculty, staff, our boards of governors, senates and alumni to raise awareness and encourage all efforts.

6. Efforts guided by evidence, including evidence of what works in addressing any barriers and obstacles that may discourage members of under-represented groups to advance and sharing evidence of practices that are working, in Canada and abroad, with other higher education institutions.

7. Generating greater awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusive excellence throughout Canadian higher education (Universities Canada, 2020).

Fundraising in Higher Education

Fundraising in higher education, or institutional advancement (advancement), is also known as development, and describes approaches that most colleges and universities use to cultivate support. In this study, the terms advancement, fundraising and development are used interchangeably and are used to describe any form of institutional fundraising including, but not limited to crowdfunding, mail solicitation, and peer-to-peer fundraising.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Before exploring fundraising communications and EDID at the U of A in further detail, it is important to consider previous research in higher education. The following chapter is a literature review, exploring EDID in higher education, previous research on advancement, and the importance of developing communications and programming that considers the diversity of donor populations. Findings of this literature review reinforce the need for additional research on inclusive communication practices in advancement as a basis to help colleges and universities develop programming that better resonates with increasingly diverse donor communities. This review will begin by describing the search methodologies and strategies, providing a summary of the search results. It will then work to analyse the findings organized thematically in three key areas: (1) EDID

in higher education, (2) literature on institutional advancement, and (3) studies that have explored

the importance of considering EDID in advancement communications and processes. The review

will conclude by providing an overview of key insights that are relevant to the study of EDID in

institutional advancement through a Canadian context, setting the stage for the capstone project

research design.

Methodology

The following section will outline my research methods as I explored literature on EDID in

higher education, philanthropy in higher education and the importance of developing EDID

practices in institutional advancement. My research began by meeting with the Masters of Arts in

Communication Technology (MACT) librarian to identify which of the U of A databases would

yield the best results for my topic. The databases we identified included: Communication & Mass

Media Complete, ERIC, EBSCOHost, Race Relations Abstracts, and SocINDEX. My research was

supplemented with Google Scholar searches from my previous projects on this subject. With the

help of the MACT librarian I was also able to utilize Boolean logic to refine my search results and

combine key terms and phrases such as *"diversity in higher education,"* and *"diversity in*

institutional advancement" while excluding sources that contained *"body donation"* or *"blood*

donation."

Search Parameters

In an effort to yield the most relevant search results, I chose to implement a key search

parameter, i.e. peer review. Requiring peer-reviewed sources ensured that the research I considered

in my study met widely accepted academic standards. Since the process of peer review is

understood and accepted by the majority of researchers, limiting my articles to those that had been

peer-reviewed eliminated sources that may have not been widely accepted as expert knowledge by

other researchers in the discipline. Therefore limiting the use of utilizing falsified work throughout

this research topic.

Search Strings & Keywords

My professional background in institutional advancement provided a foundation for my research and allowed me to develop precise search strings utilizing Boolean logic. The search strings that yielded the most relevant results included "*(Donor OR charit* OR philanth*) AND (cultural divers* OR racial diversity),*" and *"("Institutional advancement" OR "Educational advancement" OR "Institutional development") AND ("Higher education") AND ("Stewardship communications" OR "Stewardship" OR "Donor relations")."* In addition to these search strings I also found the use of Boolean proximity operators such as, *Near* or *N#* searches to be increasingly helpful in narrowing my scope. For example, the search string "*("Charity" OR "Fundraising" OR "Fund Raising" OR "Fund-raising") AND ("Higher Education" OR "Post-secondary Education" OR "Post Secondary Education" OR "Universit*" OR "College") Donor* N5(Cultural Motivation*)*)" helped me uncover more sources that studied donor motivations based on their cultural background. This function allowed me to find articles that were more relevant, covering topics such as donor motivation, donor cultural preferences or donor cultural identities.

Initial Findings & Refinements

My initial findings yielded a wide range of results, from journal articles to monographs. Articles that focused on North American perspectives and individual donors (excluding corporations and foundations) were the primary focus. These initial findings also allowed me to uncover a few common themes in my literature:

- Diversity and inclusion in higher education;

- Developing equitable communications practices;

- Fundraising best practices;

- Donor behaviour, and giving motivations.

I also found it useful to review the keywords flagged by the author(s) themselves or the database. Doing so allowed me to identify other possible keywords to employ in my next search strings, such

as, *"development," "educational advancement,"* and *"multiculturalism."* This also helped uncover new keywords or variations on spelling that proved useful in my next round of research. For example, I was able to identify variations on the use of the word *"fundraising,"* such as *"fund raising"* or even *"Fund-raising."* My first search string also helped me uncover a particularly relevant article, Noah Drezner's (2011) monograph titled, *Special Issue: Philanthropy and Fundraising in American Higher Education.* I then combed through this monograph's bibliography to uncover other key articles which yielded other particularly relevant sources.

Summary of Search Results

All relevant articles were added to a literature review matrix (LRM) spreadsheet, utilizing the following columns: search record, citation, journal, year, title, research question or topic, design method, main findings, theory or key concepts, references to review, limitations, and keywords. I also added a column for the four key themes as previously mentioned and sorted my findings accordingly. Priority was given to articles on EDID in institutional advancement. While the majority of the literature considered were research articles, I also reviewed grey literature, including statistical publications such as the Burk Donor Survey (2019) and unpublished dissertations. Each article was ranked on a scale of one to five, five being the most relevant and one being the least. While reading through the articles I utilized the Cornell note-taking method (University of Guelph, 2021, para. 3), writing a summary after taking detailed notes and tracking key quotes on each article. I found this method extremely useful in organizing key findings, themes and insights. Once I completed my read-throughs, reviewing all of my findings, I was able to further distill my sources into the three themes I have chosen to discuss later in this review: EDID in higher education, literature on institutional advancement, and studies that have explored the importance of considering EDID in advancement communications and processes.

Limitations & Scope Considerations

While my research yielded a significant number of relevant articles, there are a few limitations to my findings, the most significant being the scope. I did not explore literature in languages other than English and only focused on studies on North American institutions. I also excluded research on the philanthropic support of education by corporations and foundations and only focused on individual donors. Despite these limitations, the available literature provides a robust foundation for my capstone project on EDID and the philanthropic support of education in the Canadian context.

Discussion of Literature

The following literature review will summarize the available research noting key themes and findings spanning three key areas: EDID in Higher Education, Institutional Advancement and EDID in Institutional Advancement. Each of these key areas is divided into three subsections according to the common findings in each area.

EDID in Higher Education

Barriers to Entry. Historically, higher education has been "a privileged institution, designed to advance a certain kind of student and exclude others" (Carlton, 2020, para. 3). Most research on EDID in higher education has focused on accessibility and how racialized minority groups continue to be underrepresented in higher education (Beattie et al., 2013; Brown, 2019; F. Henry et al., 2017; Michalski et al., 2017). Providing equal opportunity in higher education is a key focus in literature because evidence indicates that graduates from universities earn significantly more over their working lifetimes and have a reduced likelihood of experiencing unemployment (Michalski et al., 2017, p. 68). In addition, the "changing global environments require universities to meet the needs of their increasingly diversified student population" (Tamtik & Guenter, 2019, p. 42). For example, in the past 50 years, the U.S. has seen racial and ethnic disparities in higher education enrolment (*Advancing diversity*, 2016, p. 1). Moreover, the participation of underrepresented students of

colour continues to decrease at multiple points across the higher education pipeline including at

application, admission, enrolment, persistence and completion. In Canada, the largest discrepancies

are seen in the inclusion and access given to Indigenous peoples (White & Peters 2013; Spence et

al., 2007; Stonechild, 2006). "Institutional factors [barring entry] include the lack of understanding

of Aboriginal culture on campuses and the accompanying experiences of racism, which have been

compounded through forced assimilation and devastating impacts of residential schooling"

(Michalski et al., 2017, p. 70). To address these disparities institutions across Canada have

prioritized equity, diversity and inclusion activities, developing robust action plans and performance

reports. Further research suggests that these plans have been key mechanisms for formally

advancing and influencing equity, diversity and inclusion in Canadian post-secondary education

(Hurtado et al., 2012; Iverson, 2007). In addition to dismantling barriers to entry for racialized

students, literature has also focused on the disproportionate and unequal treatment of staff and

faculty members in higher education (Beattie et al., 2013; F. Henry et al., 2017).

 Faculty and Staff Recruitment. Research shows that campus leadership, including a diverse

faculty, plays an important role in achieving inclusive institutions (*Advancing diversity,* 2016;

Capek & Mead, 2006; Drezner, 2011; F. Henry et al., 2017). However, studies on faculty and staff

diversity and satisfaction point to the failings of EDID programming across North America. These

studies also suggest that Canadian institutions in particular have consistently promised social justice

and equitable treatment for racialized and Indigenous scholars but have persistently failed in these

endeavours (F. Henry et al., 2017, p. 3; Acker et al., 2012). As an example, these studies uncovered

that being successfully reviewed for tenure is related to gender, race and other factors (Acker et al.,

2012, p. 747). Moreover, findings also indicated that racialized faculty were disproportionately

represented across disciplines. Larger numbers of racialized faculty were aggregated in engineering

and business faculties, while fewer were located in the social sciences and humanities (F. Henry et

al., 2017, p. 28). The differences found in faculty representation occur even when credentials are

considered and the earnings of racialized faculty are lower than those of their non-racialized counterparts (Ramos & Wijesingha, 2017, p. 65). In addition, studies also suggest that despite proclamations by post-secondary institutions to develop equitable policies and practices that support racialized and minority populations within their community the institutional atmosphere these populations enter may remain less than welcoming.

Communications & Rhetoric. This ongoing presence of discrimination in higher education is concerning since academic institutions have been long thought of as a stronghold for liberal democracy (Henry et al., 2017, p. 3). Some scholars argue that post-secondary institutions need to completely reevaluate their approaches to addressing EDID within their communities. For example, Joseph (2017)*,* cautioned that "when we talk about racial disproportionality, we often do not discuss the role that language plays in constructing or maintaining our racialized world" (p. 3321) and that the use of words such as "tolerance, diversity and multiculturalism" (Joseph, 2017, p. 3307) in academia actually fail to center equity, and instead reinforce difference. These findings are supported by previous research that revealed the use of language as central to the development of equitable programming and perceptions of inclusive organizations (Edmonson et al., 2009). In summary, while Canadian universities continue to develop EDID strategies, these programs are unevenly developed and "racism and Whiteness continue to be seen in the Canadian academy" (Dua & Bhanji, 2017, p. 171). Therefore, it is crucial that institutions across Canada take immediate action and begin reevaluating EDID programming and initiatives throughout their campuses.

Institutional Advancement

Institutional advancement encompasses all of the processes and programming that foster support for colleges or universities (Muller, 1977 as cited in Richards & Sherratt, 1981b, p. 3). This programming includes fundraising, alumni relations, and public and government relations. While "regarded with suspicion in the past," (Richards & Sherratt, 1981a, p. 1) donor support has become fundamental to higher education, producing "in excess of $1 billion (USD)...among top tier

institutions in the early twenty-first century" (Caboni, n.d., para. 1). The increased importance of advancement programming has given rise to research in maintaining relationships between higher education institutions and their donor communities. In addition, a donor's choice to support non-profit organizations usually stems from their own personal interest and a sense of commitment, and "the extent to which one party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy on to maintain and promote" (Hon & Grunig, 1999 as cited in Waters, 2011, p. 460). The increased importance of donor relations and stewardship (acknowledgement) has given rise to research in maintaining relationships between higher education institutions and their donor communities. Therefore, much of this research is rooted in communications theory, ranging from relationship management theory (Harrison, 2018) to David Berlo's SMCR theory (Dee & Henkin, 1997). research that is fitting since institutional advancement practices are often communication sensitive: 25% research, 70% cultivation, 5% solicitation, and 10% recognition, therefore 75% of the process is dependent on communication (Burk, 2019, p. 20).

Historically, advancement communications have consisted of face-to-face interpersonal communications and written correspondence. However, with the rise of digital communications technology, online giving has become commonplace in fundraising, resulting in institutions shifting their practices to include video and social media fundraising. Research on institutional advancement practices has ranged from a study of "traditional 'snail mail' and email" (Bray, 2019, p. 115) to studies examining fundraising strategies on social media platforms (Agozzino & Fleck, 2016, p. 1). Digital communications, including social media, have become a useful tool for higher education institutions to build community, advocacy and development (Briones et al., 2011; Saxton & Guo, 2012 as cited in Gálvez-Rodríguez, 2016, para. 1; Kurniawan & Rye, 2013 as cited in Gálvez-Rodríguez, 2016, para. 1). Despite the differences in communication pathways, studies on institutional advancement are rooted in three basic concepts: trust, transparency and personalization and giving motivations.

Trust. Traditionally, fundraisers have recognized the value that relationships play in securing donor support. "Higher education institutions that are able to provide significant and meaningful donor experiences, more fully integrating the donor with the organization, may set themselves apart from the rest" (Chung-Hoon et al., 2005, p. 36). Findings from these studies are supported by survey results, which suggested that donor communications should be shared with donors "as soon as measurable progress can be reported so that they have an evidence-based understanding of how their support is making a positive difference" (Burk, 2019, p. 97). Various studies provide a theoretical foundation for this concept (Drezner, 2017; Capeck & Mead, 2006; Waters, 2011; Harrison, 2018). For example, social exchange theory and relationship marketing are often seen as the conceptual foundation of fundraising, suggesting that the key to maintaining donor loyalty, involvement and donations is establishing and developing meaningful relational exchanges (Drezner, 2017, p. 52). In addition, Harrison's (2018) work on non-profit organization donor relationships provides insight into relationship management theory. The theory "suggests that the balancing of interests of organizations and publics is achieved through the management of organization-public relationships" (OPRs) (Ledingham as cited in Harrison, 2018, p. 534). The management of these relationships also extends to ongoing relationship maintenance (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000; Ledingham, 2006). When managed effectively, OPRs can "increase feelings of donor loyalty to an organization" (Waters as cited in Harrison, 2018, p. 534). Complementing this study, Waters (2011) argues that relationships between a non-profit organization and its donors can be measured by assessing levels of trust, commitment and satisfaction, a concept based on interpersonal communication theory (p. 459). A unifying theme in the literature suggests that organizations demonstrating that they will "do what they say they'll do" (Ledingham & Bruning as cited in Waters, 2011, p. 459) develop trusting relationships with their donors and have a greater likelihood of donor retention. However, "without trust between donor and solicitor, relationships are difficult to build and maintain" (Garvey & Drezner, 2013, p. 201).

Transparency. Recent studies have shown that people are looking for more information about the activities of charities, disclosure of financial information, organizational outcomes and efficiency (Williams, 2007, p. 177). Findings obtained from structured and semistructured interviews suggest that donors, regardless of their age, background or giving level, were concerned about the organizational efficiency and outcomes of the organizations they support, and valued information about these factors (Williams, 2007, p. 186). The results of the Burk Donor Survey complements the findings from the studies above and suggest that donors are inspired to remain loyal and give more generously if three essential requirements are fulfilled:

1. Receiving prompt and meaningful acknowledgment whenever a gift is made;

2. Having the gift assigned to a specific program, project or initiative more narrow in scope than the mission of the not-for-profit;

3. Receiving a report, in measurable terms, on what was accomplished with the last gift before being asked for another (Burke, 2019, p. 111).

When following these recommendations, 67% of donors would definitely or probably renew their support the next time they were asked, compared to 35%, for donors who received less transparent fundraising communications (Burke, 2019, p. 112). This suggests that organizations that provide clear, transparent communications on the use and corresponding impact of donor support will help ensure donor retention and increased giving.

Personalization & Giving Motivations. Research findings have concluded that institutional advancement professionals must develop a strong case to show how an institution is worthy of its alumni's investment, and do so by developing ongoing personal contact that educates and informs its alumni (Cohen, 2006, p. 216). Research on the personalization of non-profit communications has ranged from focus group research to one-to-one interviews. A key part of developing personalized donor communications is understanding donor motivations:

When donors identify with a cause, their identification might trigger their motivation to make a contribution. In higher education, it can be as simple as a former scholarship recipient deciding to give a scholarship to a student at their alma mater, recognizing that they might not be as successful as they are had someone not done the same for them (Drezner, 2017, p. 50).

Theories about donor motivations identify two contrasting alternatives: giving is motivated by selfless altruism, or self-interest (Worth et al., 2019; Tsunoda, 2010). Altruism is often defined as philanthropy driven exclusively by concern with the benefits provided to others (Andreoni, 1989), or by a sense of obligation (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011). The second theory, self-interest, suggests that other donors give to receive something in return. Returns may be tangible, such as receiving tax benefits, or intangible, such as bolstering a donors' reputation, social status, prestige, and psychological benefits, such as warm feelings and the joy of giving (Andreoni 1989; Bekkers & Wiepking 2011; Harbaugh 1998). Herzog (2016) identifies seven key underlying personal and social orientations and concludes that givers and nongivers differ on prosperity outlook, acquisition seeking, social solidarity, collective consciousness, and social responsibility (p. 175). In conclusion, these findings suggest that it is important to develop comprehensive, personalized and timely communications for all donors. From these findings, one can infer that difference should be accounted for. Giving motivations can also differ across demographic groups such as women, people of colour and other equity-seeking groups. Therefore, the following section will review literature exploring EDID in institutional advancement.

Studies on EDID in Institutional Advancement

Despite the work being done within higher education to create equal access, privilege continues to shape post-secondary institutions today. Research has shown there is a "positive causal relationship between the extent to which a donor shares the beliefs of a non-profit organization and the degree of active commitment he/she will exhibit" (Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007, p. 53).

Furthermore, studies such as Jung's (2015) research on fundraising practices in non-profit art museums suggests that non-profit organizations that are too reliant on traditional white, wealthy patrons may neglect the needs and potential support of diverse populations (para. 14). Scanlan and Abrahams (2002) presented an overview of giving traditions throughout minority communities in the United States. The study argued that understanding traditions and perceptions of charitable giving among different minority groups are a vital step for development officers in order to reach out to diverse communities and succeed in future fundraising endeavours (Scanlan & Abrahams, 2002, p. 204). They argue this is especially true for higher education, suggesting that "understanding diverse traditions and perceptions of giving will be essential if educational fundraisers are to increase minority people's support of higher education" (Scanlan & Abrahams, 2002, p. 203). The following section will provide an overview of literature on EDID in institutional advancement, outlining research on non-traditional donor groups and their support of higher education. The non-traditional donor groups that will be discussed include women, Black support of higher education and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), 2SLGBTQ+ communities, East Asian communities and Indigenous Communities.

    Women. "Exploring the significance and variety of women's philanthropic action in education is important because both philanthropy and education were among the earliest spaces where women, though still acting within culturally prescribed roles, found opportunities to participate in the public sphere" (Walton, 2005, p. 5). Women have been part of higher education philanthropy since its beginning, first giving homemade candles, blankets, and other materials and eventually establishing women's colleges after their long exclusion from higher learning (Drezner, 2017, p. 43). Today, women's participation in philanthropy has greatly increased, and women are just as likely as men to be philanthropists or to lead influential foundations and nonprofit organizations (Shaw-Hardy & Beaudoin-Schwartz, 2010, p. 51). However, research on women's giving to higher education continues to lag (Drezner, 2017, p. 43). Historically, women are often

thought to be less generous than men (Capek, 2001, p. 23). Capek (2001) notes that even when accounting for age, income, number of dependents, and health, there are few differences between men and women donors (p. 45). Some literature suggests that "gender is a variable that affects giving, empathy, and altruistic behaviour" (Drezner, 2017, p. 43) and that empathy is more prevalent in women than men. When choosing an organization to support, women tend to donate their time or wealth to organizations that have affected them or someone close to them (Burgoyne et al., 2005; Parsons, 2004). Women are also more likely to spread their philanthropic giving across a larger number of organizations and women are more likely to give to education institutions and organizations than men (Einolf 2006; Rooney et al., 2007).

Black support of higher education and Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Previous studies have mostly looked at philanthropy in Black communities in terms of charity, volunteerism, religion, civic and social organizations; there is a lack of research on support of higher education (Cohen, 2006, p. 202). Black philanthropy is "proactive rather than reactive. Rather than being an adaptive mechanism, it is a form of resistance to the exclusion African-Americans perceive from the majority community" (Hall-Russell & Kasberg as cited by Drezner, 2017, p. 29). Black communities in particular consider education a mechanism of racial uplift (Gasman & Anderson-Thompkins as cited by Cohen, 2006, p. 204). Despite the value given to education in these communities, historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) continue to struggle to solicit and receive support from their alumni populations. "Historically Black colleges do not raise as much money as their predominantly white counterparts in either operational or endowment dollars" (Drezner, 2017, p. 35). These findings are especially interesting since other studies have shown that college-educated Black people and those that made more than $35,000 a year were more likely to be philanthropic than any other affluent, college-educated group (Opinion Research Corporation 1990 as cited by Cohen, 2006, p. 195). Evans (1988) presented why Black alumni do not support their alma mater:

1. Lack of cultural understanding of the economic process in higher education,

2. How they were treated while attending their alma mater,

3. High tuition costs,

4. Student debt,

5. Lack of institutional organization (p. 22).

This study draws parallels between Drezner's (2017) study which suggests that "lower alumni participation rate might be the result in part of alumni misconceptions about the needs of their alma mater and the myth that Black colleges are supported significantly by both the state and federal governments" (p. 35). Therefore, it is important for institutional advancement professionals to be aware of these unique perceptions and develop communications that counteract these perceptions.

2SLGBTQ+ communities. Some studies suggest that most 2SLGBTQ+ alumni had negative experiences during their undergraduate years, thus decreasing their likelihood of giving to their alma mater in any significant way (Sanlo as cited by Garvey & Drezner, 2013, p. 202). In addition, 2SLGBTQ+ alumni groups have been discussed only based on the alumni-relations perspective, ignoring fundraising as a critical component of alumni philanthropy and engagement. Garvey and Drezner (2013) discussed the influence of advancement staff and alumni volunteers as leaders in advocating for 2SLGBTQ+ alumni engagement (p. 214). Their findings suggest that "advancement staff play a pivotal role in fostering a positive culture of giving among 2SLGBTQ+ alumni, as do alumni advocates who volunteer their time to hold leadership positions within and outside of LGBTQ affinity groups" (Garvey & Drezner, 2013, p. 215). In addition, this study emphasized the importance of advancement professionals' understanding and familiarity with the experiences and language within the LGBTQ communities (Garvey & Drezner, 2013, p. 215).

East Asian communities. East Asian giving is motivated by a strong sense of duty and positive obligation; education is most frequently supported by Asian Americans with a strong preference to support the immediate needs of an institution" (Drezner, 2017, p. 38). Asian

communities, more than other donor groups, place notable importance on the "accountability and effectiveness of the nonprofits they donate to, attributable to the fact that most wealthy Asian Americans are self-made" (Chao, 1999 as cited by Drezner, 2017, p. 38). In addition, Tsunoda's (2010) research revealed that "Asian values of philanthropy emphasize time commitments, while financial support traditionally benefited members of the family or relatives exclusively" (p. 20). Therefore, for many Asian donors, financial support of higher education institutions contradicts traditional cultural giving values. These studies suggest that further efforts must be made to integrate cultural sensitivity into planning processes to establish improved relationships with Asian donors and that colleges and universities need to show the benefit of supporting the institution as part of the cultivation process for these donor communities (Drezner, 2017; Tsunoda 2010).

Indigenous communities. Giving has always been a part of most Indigenous traditional cultural practices. "For most [Indigenous] communities, it is not new to share and exchange; it is new to institutionalize and standardize these activities" (Berry as cited by Drezner, 2017, p. 39). However, despite its prevalence in cultural practices Indigenous populations are not considered philanthropic (Drezner, 2017, p. 39). As Canadian institutions, in particular, continue to develop closer ties with Indigenous communities and as Indigenous enrollment in higher education increases, more donors from these communities may choose to support higher education. Unfortunately, there is little research available on Indigenous giving practices and preferences, especially to higher education. As such, this is an area where further research is needed since a better understanding of how to engage this donor population in all aspects of higher education, including alumni relations, is important (Drezner, 2017, p. 39).

<u>**Conclusion**</u>

Research and literature on EDID in institutional advancement is still an emerging field. Ultimately, the study of EDID in institutional advancement is vital to the continued success of higher education institutions across the world. The growing diversity of student, alumni and donor

populations makes this research all the more important. Understanding and responding to giving motivations and practices of diverse donor groups remains vital to understanding best practices in advancement communications and how to support the continued development of inclusive post-secondary institutions. This is especially important as colleges and universities continue to grapple with provincial and federal budgets-cuts and have become more dependent on private donor support. Developing equitable and culturally inclusive institutional advancement practices would be beneficial for higher education institutions as well as all non-profits: "By understanding these differences, not only will individuals have deeper appreciation for their own philanthropy but institutions will also be more successful at engaging these populations that often are not motivated to give to higher education (Drezner, 2017, p. 205). In addition, diversifying institutional advancement will make "more effective, innovative philanthropy that meets the needs of diverse communities" (Capeck & Mead, 2006, p. 75).

Gaps in the Literature

Despite the wide range of literature available, this literature review reveals gaps in existing research. The first is the lack of articles on EDID in advancement that focus on EDID in higher education institutions in Canada. As previously mentioned, the majority of the literature available on EDID in institutional advancement focused on universities and colleges in the United States. Additionally, many of these articles focused on alumni donors and failed to take into consideration non-alumni donors to higher education. While research methods in the literature explored in this study range from qualitative research to unpublished dissertations and statistical publications, these studies have largely focused on qualitative research, utilizing surveys.

Applying Literature Review Findings

The findings outlined in this literature review will help inform my research on EDID in the U of A's institutional advancement programs. The findings were used as a foundation for developing this study's research design, and method. Furthermore, the theories outlined in this

research such as social exchange theory and relationship fundraising helped shape this study's recommendations for advancement professionals. While existing literature on EDID in higher education, advancement and EDID in post-secondary fundraising are valuable, there is a lack of research exploring the presence of EDID strategies in advancement, the diversity of higher education donor populations and how these populations perceive the universities' advancement programming. My research will aim to provide insight on this gap in knowledge, with hopes of aiding in the development of programming that better meets the needs of diversity in the philanthropic support of post-secondary institutions. Therefore this literature review will support my study focusing on the following question: *What role does communications play in increasing and retaining equity, diversity and inclusion with donor audiences in higher education?* The results from this study will help inform advancement communications and the continued success of higher education institutions. By analysing the diversity of a segment of the donor population at the U of A, while examining EDID considerations in Advancement communications, this research will help provide insight into gaps in the literature on the diversity of post-secondary institutions and studies on institutional advancement.

METHODOLOGY & RESEARCH DESIGN

The following chapter provides an overview of the research methodology and design chosen for this study, an exploration of the extent Canadian post-secondary institutions implement EDID (equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization) centred fundraising communications through a case-study at the University of Alberta (U of A). The chapter provides a brief explanation of how theoretical framework is applied to the research investigation and analysis. I then provide a rationale for the case-study and mixed-method approach. The chapter also discusses methods for selecting participants with further notes on confidentiality. I also summarize data collection

methods, followed by an overview of ethical considerations and approvals. Lastly, a summary of the data analysis process and the development of a coding scheme are presented.

Research Design

Across Canada there are over 223 public and private universities, and 213 public colleges and institutes (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, n.d.). Examining fundraising communications and the extent to which they employ EDID initiatives at all of these institutions would require a vast amount of resources and time. As such, this research employed a case-study approach, "the logic being invoked here is that the particular case is similar in crucial respects with the others that might have been chosen, and that the findings from the case-study are therefore likely to apply elsewhere" (Denscombe, 2010, p. 57). This study focused on the U of A, and reviewed the extent to which EDID strategy has been considered in the development of the institution's fundraising communications. This study was rooted in the critical paradigm, which assumes knowledge is formed when we "increas[e] our awareness of the ways in which society or the dominant group constructs our realities, primarily through the process of privilege and oppression" (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 294). Conducting this research fits within the critical paradigm because it relates to society and the purpose of this research is to criticize and justify the existing status quo in society and to provide alternative knowledge to produce a better social order (UGM, n.d.). As outlined in the previous chapter, higher education and philanthropy have been historically associated with racialization and privilege. The following section provides an overview of the research design for this study including participant selection and data collection.

Participant Selection

Taking a purposive sampling approach, this study intentionally focused on the target group and excluded other groups throughout the study (Smith, 1988 as cited by Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 66). Participants were recruited from the population of fundraising, communications and EDID professionals who are currently employed by the U of A. For this study, institutional knowledge is

key, therefore the only significant criteria are participants' current employment at the U of A and their job experience at the post-secondary level. As such, this study selected participants with a minimum of five years of experience working in Canadian post-secondary institutions and a minimum of three years work experience at the U of A. A minimum of five years experience was required based on previous research which suggests that there is a direct correlation with job experience and knowledge (Longoria, 1997; Quinones et al., 2001). Based on the criteria outlined above, I recruited participants at varying levels of employment (senior, junior etc.) to broaden the range of data collected. Participants' demographic information including age range, gender, and cultural background were also considered when recruiting participants. However, identifying variables such as age, and gender have not been included in the data summary to protect the participant's identity. The recruited participants needed to be proficient in the English language equivalent to the C1 level, as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Therefore, participants should be able to perform complex tasks related to work and study, a base-line standard determined by the CEFR (EFSet, n.d.). Previous research has suggested that five to fifty participants are ideal for collecting data. However, due to limited resources, this case-study consisted of three participant interviews.

Methods of Data Collection

I chose to conduct a cross-sectional study using data collected from a single point in time to draw inferences about my findings to the larger field of research, EDID in higher education fundraising (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 291). The data was collected through a mixed-method approach using qualitative and quantitative methods. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods is valuable, "tak[ing] advantage of the strengths of each approach and overcom[ing] their respective weaknesses when applied separately" (Bamberger & Marby, 2020, p. 262). Employing a mixed-method approach also strengthened the validity of these findings through triangulation, generating new insights and incorporating a wide diversity of values. The goal of the

mixed-methods approach is to combine depth and a holistic analysis with quantitative data and generalizability (Bamberger & Marby, 2020, p. 283).

Qualitative Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews. "One of the key benefits of qualitative research is that the findings will have been grounded extensively in fieldwork and empirical data" (Denscombe, 2010, p. 299). To collect qualitative data, I conducted semi-structured interviews, using a discussion guide rather than a strict interview schedule (Merrigan et al. 2022, p. 115). The discussion guide referred to experiences or concepts that were established prior to the interview and focused on the participant's understanding of each experience or concept (Merrigan et al. 2022, p. 115). "Semi-structured interviewing [is] useful because of its focus and flexibility, involve[ing] recording data while maintaining rapport, preserving focus, adjusting the wording and order of questions, developing new questions on the spot, and assessing and probing conversational leads that may yield unexpected information" (Bamberger & Marby, 2020, p. 251). In addition, this method of data collection is an effective method for the critical paradigm since this study explored participant thoughts, feelings and beliefs about a particular topic and also considered personal and sometimes sensitive issues around inequality in higher education. Participant recruitment was conducted via direct email distribution to fundraising, communications and EDID professionals at the U of A. These professionals were identified through publicly available information on the U of A Faculty and Staff Directory. The initial recruitment email (Appendix A) also included detailed information about the research study, contact information, and basic information about the interview process such as time commitment and scheduling. Once I received confirmation from interested participants I sent each participant a consent form, answered any related questions and provided additional information about the study. If I did not hear back from prospective participants I also sent a follow-up email to inquire again. After participants completed the consent form I scheduled a time to interview each participant according to their preference. Each interview was conducted remotely via the Zoom video communications platform or over the phone, depending on what each

participant was most comfortable with.

Conducting the Interviews. At the outset of each interview, I once again described the interview protocol, detailing the purpose of the study and addressing any participant concerns. Reintroducing myself and my research topic and discussing how the participants' responses would be used to help participants feel more comfortable before beginning the interview. These steps were taken to ensure that I developed a degree of rapport with the participants, and to develop and maintain the level of trust that would allow them to share their perspectives and experiences (Bamberger & Marby, 2020, p. 251). I then asked each participant to consent to audio recording before each interview session and confirmed whether or not the participants were comfortable about the process of taking written notes during the interview. Finally, I read each participant a statement of consent, reminding them that they could withdraw from the study at any time and refrain from answering any of the posed questions if they felt uncomfortable. Following each interview, I concurrently collected and analysed data (Mayan, 2009) as part of the iterative process for qualitative data analysis. The audio/video meeting recording for each interview was transcribed using [Scribbl](TM). My transcripts included not only participant responses but also my questions and probes as the researcher. It was of particular importance to note my contribution to the conversation to ensure transparency and reflexively and that I had not asked questions in a leading manner, which might have unduly influenced responses; avoiding desirability or acquiescence bias, for example, which often occurs in interview and survey settings (Fisher, 1993; Qualtrics, 2020). I emailed all participants a copy of the interview transcript for their records. I also reiterated that they could withdraw within two months following the interview and that their participation in the research was anonymous and confidential.

Quantitative Data Collection - Donor Impact Report Assessment. To collect quantitative data I analysed the key performance indicators from one U of A donor communications campaign, the 2021 Donor Impact Report (DIR). The DIR is sent to all donors once annually and provides

information on how donor support has positively impacted the university. Key performance indicators included email open rates and the number of clicks on each donor impact story. This provided a representative sample that reflects the "characteristics of its parent population" (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 131), in this case donors at the U of A. The following section will provide an overview of the ethical considerations and approvals conducted in order to begin this study.

<div align="center">**Ethical Considerations & Approvals**</div>

Ethical Considerations

The following section provides an overview of the ethical considerations taken into account throughout this study. Ethical considerations related to the balance of power, potential for change in respondents' professional actions and decisions post-interview are important to consider in this study. All interview participants in this study had a previous or current working relationship with me, the principal investigator. These working relationships were not managerial or supervisory in nature. Although relationships with participants were not supervisory, participants may have felt obliged to participate in this research because of their professional ties to the researcher. However, to mitigate ethical concerns regarding professional actions and decisions post-interview I ensured that participants knew their inclusion in the study would neither affect their work, nor our relationship as colleagues, and that their anonymity would be protected. Every participant was informed of their right to freely choose to participate or not participate in this research, and the choice to opt out or withdraw their participation. Each participant completed a consent form and also provided verbal consent prior to the beginning of each interview. To further protect the working relationship with each participant, the identity of all of the participants was protected and their right to privacy ensured at all times. This includes their contact details, their job title, background, and other demographic information.

Research Ethics Approvals

The U of A requires that all Faculty members, staff and/or students to complete the University of Alberta ethics approval to conduct research involving human participants. Human participants refers to those individuals whose data, or responses to interventions, stimuli or questions by the researcher, are relevant to answering the research question (University of Alberta - Research Ethics Office, n.d.). This study completed ethics approval on April 21, 2022 by the University of Alberta's Research Ethics Board 1, which reviews research that primarily involves in-person interviews, focus groups, ethnographies, community engagement, and instructor-led course-based research assignments (University of Alberta - Research Ethics Office, n.d.). The following section will provide a summary of the data analysis process.

Data Analysis

To analyse data collected through the semi-structured interviews, with the consent of each participant I took an audio recording of the interview to ensure data is captured accurately. The audio recording was transcribed using the transcription software, Scribbl. If the participant did not consent to an audio recording, written notes were taken and reviewed in lieu. Following data collection, the data was entered into the NVivio™ data analysis platform for analysis and coding.

Coding Methods

The process of qualitative inquiry is like solving a puzzle, the researcher piecing together a description of the phenomenon through iterative circular analysis, checking and rechecking the fit of the findings (Mayan, 2009). In order to analyse the data from my semi-structured one-on-one interviews, I took a thematic approach to coding the qualitative data collected. This included a "macro- and micro-examination of the data to identify emergent patterns and themes" (Bamberger & Marby, 2020, p. 262). Reorganizing the data highlighted interdependencies between details as themes emerged. I used inductive coding as the primary technique to capture emergent themes and

categories. In the following section I detail the sequence and iterative nature of the process. I analysed my data using four key steps:

1. First, I read each of the three interview transcripts as a whole.

2. I then identified overarching themes that emerged through each reading.

3. Detailed notes of codes according to each theme that appeared were taken for each of the transcripts separately.

4. Lastly, I explored multiple subsequent rounds of coding through numerous reviews of the transcripts, both individually and holistically, reflective of the circular and iterative approach to coding.

The table below provides a summary of the codes identified during the data analysis process:

THEME	CODE	DEFINITION
Fundraising Communications	Prioritization	Data that outlines the extent to which the University of Alberta prioritizes fundraising communications.
	Effectiveness	Content outlining the effectiveness of U of A's fundraising communications.
	Research	Data which outlines the extent to which the U of A utilizes research to inform the institution's fundraising commununciations.
EDID Communications Strategies	Prioritizaition	The extent of the U of A's prioritization of EDID communications strategies.
	Effectiveness	Content outlining the extent to which EDID communication strategies at the U of A are effective.
	Research	Data which outlines the extent to which the U of A utilzes research to inform the institution's fundraising communications.
Recommendations	Representative Employment	Outlines data recommending seeking more representative employment at the U of A.
	Leadership	Data illustrating that leadership at the U of A needs to take more action around EDID communications and strategies.
	Training	Data recommending that the U of A community needs to have more EDID training available.
	Consistent Measurement	Recommendations that suggest the U of A need to consistently measure their communications efforts.
	Time and Space	Suggests that the U of A needs to provide more time and space for their staff to better support EDID across the institution.

Table 1. Coding used during the data analysis process of this study.

The qualitative data collected from the U of A's 2021 Donor Impact Report was analysed against the previous research summarized in the literature review.

Summary of Research Design & Methodology

Guided by the critical paradigm, through an analysis of the experiences and opinions of fundraising, communications and EDID professionals at the University of Alberta, this study focused on the research question: t*o what extent the University of Alberta utilizes inclusive development (fundraising) communications practices*. This study provided insight on gaps in the literature on the diversity of institutional advancement communication practices. This was done in hopes of providing a framework for developing better suited communication practices in Canadian universities. Other approaches to the study were considered, such as conducting focus groups, surveys, or including the members of the U of A's donor population as participants. While these were also appropriate, the research, method and design described above were chosen as a result of resource and time constraints. Expanding research to include donor focus groups, semi-structured interviews, or survey research could be used in future studies. The following sections will summarize findings from the study and discuss and analyse these findings against previous literature.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

This chapter will present and discuss the findings from the data collected during three semi-structured interviews with communications, fundraising and EDID professionals. Guided by the study's literature review with foundations drawing from the critical paradigm, this study explored a research problem, addressing equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (EDID) in fundraising communications practices, posing the following research question:

To what extent does the University of Alberta utilize inclusive development (fundraising)

communications practices?

As outlined in the previous chapter, this research utilized a case-study and mixed-method approach. The qualitative analysis involved coding data collected through semi-structured interviews with donor relations and communications professionals currently employed at the University of Alberta (U of A). This was paired with a quantitative analysis of the U of A's 2021 donor impact report (DIR). The following chapter will present the data in detail followed by quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The discussion will then summarize the significance of the findings. In closing, this chapter will outline a few conclusions and recommendations that can be drawn from the study.

<div align="center">**Findings**</div>

Semi-structured Interview Findings

An exploration of existing fundraising communications practices at the University of Alberta may guide future success for Canadian post-secondary institutions and can also be applied to wider fundraising communication practices. The following section provides a summary of findings from the semi-structured interviews. The organization and presentation of the findings and the corresponding analysis of these findings were driven by participants' responses and is presented through individual narratives. The findings section considers each participant as separate and distinct, but also reflects a holistic exploration of how current fundraising and communications professionals at the U of A perceive EDID communications strategies. The discussion section illustrates emergent themes and explores the use of EDID in fundraising communications, their effectiveness, how the communications are measured, and also outlines participants' recommendations. The narratives surrounding donor communication EDID strategies at the University of Alberta are presented in chronological order based on when the interviews took place. Each interview participant was assigned a gender neutral pseudonym to help differentiate each participant; Emery, Haven and River.

Participant One - Emery. Emery has over 10 years of experience in institutional fundraising and is a senior fundraising professional at the U of A. They provided an overview of fundraising communications at the University of Alberta:

There's a lot of direct response communications, for example direct mail. Recently, I think I've seen a lot of activity go out through social media...what I've noticed from my experience is that the university does prioritize face-to-face communications. So in-person over the phone, those building relationships, kinds of communications are made priority.

Emery also provided a brief summary on how these communications are measured. For example, direct response communications are measured through industry standard key performance indicators (KPIs), including: participation, response, open, click, and engagement rates. Emery also noted that one-to-one communications, interactions between a fundraising professional and a donor individually, are measured through a number of different metrics, and tend to be based on communication frequency. These communications range from phone calls to emails and in-person visits. One-to-one communications are considered successful if they result in a gift proposal or closed gift agreement. When Emery was asked about whether they knew if these communications were informed by research, Emery noted that communications practices at the U of A are informed by what people regard as best practices or by industry experts. However, they stated that they would not say that the U of A's fundraising communications are informed by research and data. Finally, in relation to EDID in fundraising communications, Emery noted that:

I think that the university, like leadership within fundraising at the U of A, do regard it as something that is important to implement. More diverse kinds of voices and stories, engagement. I think they do see it as a priority. I don't know how effective any of the

> *implementation is, I don't know if they're putting into what they believe. Or what would be*
>
> *best practice?*

Participant Two - Haven. Haven has over five years of experience working in communications at the University of Alberta in a supporting role. Haven noted that while the U of A is making many efforts to support EDID across the institution they believe that EDID is important to some but not all individuals at the U of A:

> *I have heard these type of things saying that it's important to the University of Alberta but I*
>
> *think it's important to some people, and I appreciate that. Like, I appreciate that some*
>
> *people recognize that this is important and they're really trying and they're saying it should*
>
> *be important to the university. I struggle to say it's important to the entire university when*
>
> *there are certain members of administration that I do not believe for a second that it's*
>
> *important to them.*

Haven also noted that the U of A's communications were not consistently based in research and were instead grounded in administrative pressure. Haven also challenged the extent to which the U of A reviewed its communications in relation to EDID considerations. For example, Haven outlined that communications are not formally measured in relation to EDID. They did mention that there are some measurements completed in terms of relationship building, however this is more often measured on a personal basis rather than a formal or structural basis.

In addition, Haven suggested a few recommendations to improve the university's fundraising communications, noting that it is important to recognize differences within our donor population:

A lot of the times of like, we'd be like, like we say, happy holidays at Christmas so that we're, you know, culturally sensitive…There's still a very like, White Anglo-Saxon, Protestant recognition of how things are. Yes, we have like, we have similarities, but there are also differences.

Participant Three - River. The final participant, River, has over 10 years of experience in communications at the U of A and is currently part of the institution's senior communications team. River believes that EDID initiatives are important to the U of A and that peoples' knowledge is growing. However, while they believe that the U of A prioritizes EDID strategies, River questioned the effectiveness of measuring EDID across these communications:

The communication specifically. I would say, like anecdotal, yeah, some of the social media that we've done with those metrics, web page metrics and have some of that data for benchmark. Yeah, and then I guess like we do those sort of things. But I don't know if measurement has been so strong to be honest.

Similarly, to Haven and Emery, River also noted that this is a less formal measurement. They also noted that measuring effectiveness is especially difficult at the U of A because:

Things are moving really fast all the time and so there's this whole culture which I call "no news is good news." So you hear of things only if they are bad…

River also had a few recommendations for fundraising communications and other communications at the U of A. They stated that staff need more time to process EDID training and

more time to think critically about the communications they produce. River advocated for creating

safe spaces for faculty and staff to make mistakes as they are learning and supporting EDID:

> *There also needs to be a psychological safety and pushing back in some decisions and not*
>
> *feeling like you're gonna get back in some decisions and not back in some decisions and not,*
>
> *and not a culture of reprimand, but, like, with the restructure, right, people are trying to*
>
> *maintain positivity all the time in a new roles. So sometimes giving sensitive feedback about*
>
> *EDI stuff can be challenging for some people.*

Donor Impact Report Assessment Findings

Once annually the U of A develops the donor impact report (DIR) , a print and digital

publication that is distributed to individual donors (excluding most corporations and foundations) at

the U of A. The report is based on the fiscal year and is sent to a select number of corporations and

foundations as well as donors who have committed to a planned gift (estate giving). The DIR

contains impact stories made possible by donor gifts, statistics that illustrate the scale of the impact

of donor support, and financial totals of all giving at the university in four categories: research,

student awards, programs and facilities. The goal of the annual DIR is to convey the impact of

donor support and to increase the positive sentiment donors have towards supporting the U of A.

The following section reviews the data the University of Alberta used to develop and analyse the

success of the 2021 DIR.

Planning. The 2021 DIR was developed based on recommendations from a consultant, the

Donor Relations Guru, with the belief that behaviour-based donor relations communications help

ensure that donors feel that the institution or non-profit appreciate and value their support and thus

keep them engaged with the institution (Wester, 2019, p. 4 - 5). The main focus of behaviour-based

donor relations is how and where donors give. It is considered best practice to segment donor

groups based on their behaviour, for example, segmenting donors based on their first gift, whether

or not they gave online or through the mail and based on what program or area they supported,

"May you never forget that behind each and every gift, regardless of the amount, lies a human soul,

a giving soul, someone who vies to make a difference" (Wester, 2019, p. 90 - 91). With this in mind

the U of A segmented donors based on their giving behaviour using the table below:

Audience (Based on giving behaviours in hierarchical order)	Product	Customization
Individual Donors Rated 1 and 2	Booklet or email	Distribution method and messaging to be determined in consultation with Principal Gifts and /or Prospect Managers. Possible to include a letter from president, dean or appropriate contact.
Corporations and Foundations	Booklet or email	Distribution method and messaging to be determined in consultation with Corporate Relations and Foundations Office (mostly email)
Lifetime - Individual Donors $500K+	Booklet	Cover letter from Vice President, Advancement
Lifetime - Individual Donors $100 - $499K with email addresses	Email	Messaging from Vice President, Advancement
Legacy - Planned giving donors	Email	In consultation with planned giving lead
Loyalty - Donors who have given in the last 10+ years	Email	Customized language
Leadership - Individual donors who made a gift of $5 - $99,999 (no email address)	Email	Customized language for first time, faculty and staff and monthly donors
Leadership - Individual who made gift of $5 - $99,999 (with email address)	Postcard	Standard language
Endowed Fund Donors - Those who are eligible to receive an endowment fund report but did not give during fiscal year 21	Email	Customized language

Table 2. 2021 Donor Impact Report Audience Segmentation Based on Giving Behaviour of Fiscal Year 2021 Donors.

For the 2021 DIR, the U of A focused on five key themes: 1) investment in students, 2) research, 3) teaching and programs that helped surrounding communities, 4) how the province and country stayed resilient through recent challenges, and 5) preparing for the economic and social recovery ahead. The U of A chose five stories that fit into these themes.

Measurement. The success of the 2021 DIR was measured using a few industry standards, key performance indicators including, number of distributed reports, open rate, unsubscribe rate, positive email survey responses and comments collected 10 weeks post send date. This data is outlined in the table below:

Key Performance Indicator	2021 DIR Result
Total DIR sent (Print and email, one piece may meet multiple donors in the same household)	10,591 • Print: 1,155 • Booklets: 405 • Postcards: 750 • Emails: 9,378
Email open rate	55.3%
Email click throughs	6.4%
Email unsubscribes	0.8%
Positive email survey response rate	94.2%
Email survey click rate	3.4% • 139 clicks of 4,127 opens
Postcard print-to-web conversation	2.4% • 18 clicks from 750 postcards
Average time spent on report page	3 minutes and 6 seconds

Table 3. 2021 Donor Impact Report, Key Performance Indicators

The following section will analyse the data outlined above, and will put these findings in context with the research question: *To what extent does the University of Alberta utilize inclusive development (fundraising) communications practices?*

<u>Discussion</u>

Semi-structured Interviews

As outlined in the design and methodology chapter, my approach to data analysis was qualitative thematic coding. Through a process of coding the data, I captured emergent themes and categories, drawing comparisons and conclusions. After analysing the findings, several key themes emerged. Fundraising communications, EDID communications, and recommendations were the dominant themes discovered in this study. Reflecting back to the literature review, providing equal opportunity in higher education and the increased importance of advancement programming in higher education were the key focus.

The following themes emerged in relation to the research question: *to what extent does the University of Alberta utilize inclusive development (fundraising) communications practices?* Study participants' responses alluded to how higher education continues to fall short on providing equal access and opportunities, how current practices at the U of A may not be based in research, how EDID in development communications are inconsistently applied, and that EDID is a complex issue.

As previously outlined in the literature review, research suggests that while EDID and higher education fundraising has become more important in recent years post-secondary institutions are not implementing EDID strategies in their fundraising communications (Capek & Mead, 2006; Drezner, 2011). This mirrors the results of this study, since participants noted that the prioritization of fundraising is not consistent across the institution:

I think the university does prioritize fundraising, I think it is very important to the university. I

don't know if it is regarded that way across the entire institution, but I do see it as a priority for

The institution…I just don't think the whole organization sees it as a priority. - Emery

These findings suggest that there is an inconsistent understanding of the importance of higher education fundraising across the University of Alberta. Participants also noted that they were unsure about whether donor communications and other communications strategies at the U of A had been founded in research. All participants believed that most communications practices were based on perceived best practices or were inconsistent:

To my knowledge it is informed by what people regard as best practices. As informed by experts in the industry. I wouldn't necessarily say research and data. - Emery

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Um, I would not say consistently so… [communications are guided by] administrative pressure.

- Haven

These findings also suggest that while previous research highlights the importance of fundraising communications in successful post-secondary advancement strategies, the U of A may inconsistently prioritize fundraising and may not utilize fundraising communication practices that are informed by research. Furthermore, in relation to the implementation of EDID practices in fundraising communications, findings suggest that EDID practices are not considered or inconsistently considered.

No. I mean, it's hard to say, I do see a lot of stuff that does kind of reflect EDI. I don't know if it's done in the best way possible. Um, I know that people want to do it in the best way, but

I don't know how to do it in the best way. - Emery

In addition, findings have also suggested that the fundraising communication practices currently used are not consistently reviewed or measured based on their consideration of EDID. All participants mentioned that some communications practices measure EDID, however this is measured inconsistently and inadequately:

The communication specifically. I would say, like anecdotal, Yeah, some of the social media that we've done with those metrics, web page metrics and have some of that data for benchmark yeah, and then I guess like we do those sort of things. But I don't know if measurement Has been so strong to be honest. - Emery

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Not formally. I would say there's like there's a bit of measurement in terms of… like qualitative measurement, maybe not necessarily like hard numbers. But like good vibes and good feelings…So like it sometimes is measured on a very personal basis. I don't know if it's actually measured in like a structural basis. - Haven

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I find that's really challenging with the U of A in terms of measuring effectiveness is, things are moving really fast all the time and so there's this whole culture which I call "no news is good news." So you hear of things only if they are bad… - River

Donor Impact Report

After reviewing the development and assessment of the 2021 DIR, findings suggest that the U of A may need to reconsider the planning and assessment of the DIR and other fundraising communications to better support EDID fundraising communications. The planning of the 2021 DIR, though based on best practices outlined by a consultant, did not take into account the preferences of the U of A's donor population based on EDID. An understanding of the diversity of the U of A's donor population could be useful in the planning of the report, as this could help contextualize traditions and perceptions of charitable giving among different minority groups and foster trust across diverse communities helping future fundraising endeavours succeed (Scanlan & Abrahams, 2002, p. 204). Previous research has also suggested that this is especially true for higher education, as "understanding diverse traditions and perceptions of giving will be essential if educational fundraisers are to increase minority people's support of higher education" (Scanlan & Abrahams, 2002, p. 203). In addition, key performance indicators, while important, do not review the EDID reflected in the stories produced for the DIR, therefore it is unlikely that the diversity of stories is thoroughly considered.

In summary, the findings suggest that while previous research indicates that it is increasingly important to consider EDID in fundraising or development communications, the University of Alberta is inconsistent in prioritizing fundraising practices, the implementation of EDID in donor communications and the evaluation of these communications.

Recommendations

In addition to the preliminary findings outlined in the discussion section, this study also identified key recommendations for improving fundraising communications at the U of A. To improve fundraising communication practices and EDID strategies across the institution the U of A should consider the following four recommendations:

Representative Employment

Diverse faculty and staff play an important role in achieving inclusive institutions (Advancing Diversity, 2016; Capek & Mead, 2006; Drezner, 2011; F. Henry et al., 2017). However, studies on faculty and staff diversity and satisfaction point to the failings of EDID programming across North American higher education. Canadian institutions in particular have consistently promised social justice and equitable treatment for racialized and Indigenous scholars but have persistently failed in these endeavours (F. Henry et al., 2017, p. 3; Acker et al., 2012). The differences found in faculty representation occur even when credentials are considered, the earnings of racialized faculty are lower than those of their non-racialized counterparts (Ramos & Wijesingha, 2017, p. 65). Additionally, studies suggest that the institutional atmosphere these populations enter may remain less than welcoming, despite proclamations by post-secondary institutions to develop equitable policies and practices that support racialized and minority populations within their community. The diversity of staff and faculty may also play a role in improving the quality of communications, that better consider EDID and diverse audiences. Research suggests that diverse workplaces increase innovation, growth, creativity, a "diverse assemblage of skills and experiences coupled with the variety of alternative techniques for solving problems leads to efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of projects" (Greenberg as cited by Inegbedion, 2020, p. 3). Enhancing diversity amongst staff may allow the University of Alberta to better understand how to communicate with diverse donor audiences as well as their wider audience. Representative employment would also help spread the responsibility of reviewing all communications against

EDID strategies. While creating diversity in the workplace is important, of equal importance is institutional leadership.

Leadership

Many scholars have emphasized the crucial role of senior administrative leadership and deliberate and sustained conscious administrative planning in securing equity and diversity in a post-secondary education context (Chun, 2018; Pidgeon, Archibald, & Hawkey, 2014). This aligns with the recommendations gleaned from participant interviews in this research.

I think that senior leadership should really clearly establish and affirm their support of marginalized staff members. And also affirm their support of difference and those who identify as you know, marginalized or minority communities. - Emery

Research has also affirmed that system-wide engagement with the debates on diversity and policy is a necessary step in the process of institutional reform and change. "Examination of how power is manifested in practice is an important feature of changing institutions. Otherwise, subjective decision-making may continue with privileged groups making decisions for others" (Tamtik & Gunter, 2019, p. 43). However, it is evident that policy decisions are still largely made by the university leadership, consisting of a privileged racial group (Tamtik & Gunter, 2019, p. 47). Therefore, diversity in leadership plays an integral role in developing EDID across higher education. It is increasingly important for higher education institutions like the U of A to consider diverse hiring practices at the leadership level to include explicit voices of people from under-represented groups such as women, people from racialized minority groups, 2SLGBTQ groups, Indigenous communities, international students and faculty to ensure that these groups are able to influence decision-making regarding institutional EDID policy.

Training & Creating Space

Understanding, meeting diverse needs, and creating inclusive environments stems from being culturally competent. To meet the needs of culturally diverse groups, institutions must engage in the process of becoming culturally competent, set congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, or among professionals and enable professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Kruse, 2020, p. 7). Therefore, providing institution-wide mandatory EDID training is important in ensuring that communications developed across the institution, including donor communications, consider the needs of culturally diverse groups. While EDID training is valuable, one participant noted the importance of trauma informed training:

The other one I would suggest is trauma-informed. I think we underestimate that to a certain extent. Like, we are living in a pretty traumatic world, and we have some, like, people who like, are carrying it with them every day. Or it gets flared up on certain days and there's a lack of acknowledgment of that? And I mean, it's hard, it's hard to understand other people's realities, yes. We could still do better because sometimes it's real obvious and it still gets ignored or isn't recognized. - Haven

Research suggests that while articles, books, videos, e-learning modules, and other materials can be useful as tools to support diversity and inclusion work, these materials will not create organizational change if participants are not making an emotional connection to the work and gaining a deep understanding and acknowledgement of the importance of EDID (Rodgers & Kangas, 2022, Chapter One). Therefore, it is important for higher education institutions that provide robust training on EDID to all employees. Furthermore, to provide its faculty and staff with an opportunity to truly connect with the training provided, higher education institutions need to provide employees with time and "safe spaces" to unpack and apply their learnings. EDID training

that gives participants an opportunity to talk and hear each other's stories can create a human

connection. The human connection leads to an emotional awareness that generates action and

change. Without an emotional connection, EDID training remains at the intellectual level (Rodgers

& Kangas, 2022, Chapter One).

Consistent Measurement

The final recommendation based on the findings in this research is the development of consistent and replicable EDID measurement. In addition to implementing the recommendations above, the U of A should also create consistent and replicable EDID measurement across the institution and its donor communication practices. The university should first begin by assessing the representation across the institution, faculty, staff, students and—of particular importance for donor communications—the donor population. Understanding the make-up of these key stakeholder populations will inform communication practices and may provide insight into the possible gaps in current communication strategies. For example, a lack of equal representation in donor populations may point to the need to diversify communications that better resonate with equity-seeking donor populations. In addition, consistent EDID measurement of donor communication practices such as the donor impact report and fundraising communications may provide a better understanding of communication practices and will act as a regular check point for the evaluation of EDID across donor communication efforts. One way to ensure that communications are assessed consistently is to develop a rubric that analyses each communications based on EDID. In addition the U of A could develop a tool for EDID Communications that could be localized across different institutional populations and contexts, with key messages that could be utilized to ensure consistent language and communication.

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

Study Limitations

Despite the valuable results of this study it is important to consider the limitations of this research. The limitations of this study are a result of the scope and size of this research. Since the study focused on the University of Alberta and interviewed a small subset of its donor relations and communications professionals, it is important to acknowledge that the results of this study may not be an accurate representation of the opinions and insights of fundraising and communication professionals at the University of Alberta. Furthermore, since this data represents a small subset of one higher education institution in Canada it may not be able to be extrapolated to include all higher education institutions in Canada. This research is also limited since participant demographic data was not a factor recorded in the participant selection method in order to protect participants' identities. Despite these limitations this research still provides valuable insight on the extent to which EDID strategies are considered in the development of fundraising practices at the University of Alberta.

Suggestions for Further Research

In the future, to support utilization of future research it is important to consider a few improvements to this study, particularly in scope and scale. Future research may consider broadening the data collection methods used in this study. To strengthen this research on this topic, it may be important for future researchers to measure population diversity of the city, in this case Edmonton ahead of beginning the in depth study on donor communications. The U of A may then consider measuring the diversity within its donor population and comparing it with the city of Edmonton's data on population diversity. This would help in understanding the definition of equity-deserving donor populations. To broaden the scope of this research it may also be beneficial to conduct survey research and focused interviews across fundraising and communications professionals at the University of Alberta. It may be beneficial to survey or interview the donor population themselves to get a better understanding of how employed communications practices resonate with these groups. In the event that interviews and survey analysis is difficult to conduct due to resource constraints, focus group research may be considered since focus group research is effective for accessing a broad range of views on a specific topic, and "yield a large amount of information in a short period of time" (Mack et al., 2005, p. 51). In participant selection, it may be important to collect participant demographic information to get an understanding of participants' backgrounds. Incorporating the suggestions above into future research on this topic may help the results of this study be further extrapolated and utilized at institutions across Canada.

CONCLUSION

Research and literature on EDID in institutional advancement is still an emerging field. Ultimately, the study of EDID in institutional advancement is vital to the continued success of higher education institutions across the world. The growing diversity of student, alumni, and donor populations makes this research all the more important. Understanding and responding to giving motivations and practices of diverse donor groups remains vital to understanding best practices in advancement communications and how to support the continued development of inclusive post-secondary institutions. This is especially important as colleges and universities continue to grapple with provincial and federal budgets-cuts and have become more dependent on private donor support. In Canada, this is especially important after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action, *94 Calls to Action* was released in 2015 to "redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation." The TRC's Calls to Action were divided into six categories, child welfare, education, health, justice, language and culture. Canadian post-secondary institutions in particular, were called to act on disparities and inequity in education.

Through an analysis of the diversity of the donor population at the University of Alberta, an examination of EDI considerations in advancement communications, this study provided insight on to what extent inclusive communications practices affect the diversity of donor communities at the U of A. In conclusion, the U of A needs to continue to advance EDID strategies, especially in its fundraising practices. While these practices are seen as priority to some, it is inconsistently viewed as important across the institution. Furthermore, donor communications at the U of A are not founded in research and are inconsistently and irregularly evaluated for their consideration of EDID. This research also provided five key recommendations for developing better suited fundraising communication practices in Canada's universities: representative employment, leadership, training and creating space, and consistent measurement practices.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT EMAIL & REMINDER EMAILS

Recruitment Email

Dear [PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT NAME],

My name is Anne-Marie Aguilar and I am a Masters of Arts in Communications and Technology student. In partial fulfilment of the requirements for my Master of Arts in Communications and Technology, I am completing a capstone project, working to understand how post-secondary institutions across Canada consider equity, diversity, inclusion and indigenization (EDII) in their fundraising communications. This capstone project is supervised by Dr. Katy Campbell, Professor, Faculty of Arts, Department of Women's & Gender studies, katy.campbell@ualberta.ca. My study focuses on EDII fundraising communications at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

As a [fundraising professional OR communications professional OR EDII professional] at the University of Alberta, I would like to interview you to understand the extent to which fundraising practices at the University of Alberta consider EDII in their communication strategies.

Your views and experiences are extremely valuable in helping create strategies that develop equitable, diverse and inclusive fundraising communications. Your participation in this interview will be completely voluntary, and confidential.

The results of the project may be shared with the External Relations, Communications, Development and EDII portfolio. Your personal responses, however, will be completely anonymous and any identifying information will not be included in the completed study.

The interview will take approximately one hour to complete and will be conducted via Zoom or phone, depending on your preference and availability.

Interviews will be taking place from [DATE RANGE] you may choose a time within these dates that works best for you.

If you would like to participate in this research study please email me alaguila@ualberta.ca or call 780-909-0509 to set up a convenient interview time. Please feel welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about the interview.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anne-Marie Aguilar

Reminder Email (2-3 weeks following recruitment email)

Dear [PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT NAME],

Thank you for considering participating in my research study. There is still an opportunity to participate in this University of Alberta sponsored study, working to understand how post-secondary institutions across Canada consider equity, diversity, inclusion and indigenization (EDII) in their fundraising communications. The following study focuses on EDII fundraising communications at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

As a [fundraising professional OR communications professional OR EDII professional] at the University of Alberta, you are invited to interview to help understand the extent to which fundraising practices at the University of Alberta consider EDII in their communication strategies.

Your views and experiences are extremely valuable in helping create strategies that develop equitable, diverse and inclusive fundraising communications.

Your participation in this interview will be completely voluntary, and confidential.

Interviews will be taking place from [DATE RANGE] you may choose a time within these dates that works best for you.

If you would like to participate in this research study please email me alaguila@ualberta.ca or call 780-909-0509 to set up a convenient interview time. Please feel welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about the interview.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anne-Marie Aguilar

Reminder Email #2 (2-3 weeks following Email #1)

Dear [PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT NAME],

Thank you again for your time and consideration. This is a final reminder for this research opportunity sponsored by the University of Alberta.

The following study is working to understand how post-secondary institutions across Canada consider equity, diversity, inclusion and indigenization (EDII) in their fundraising communications. The following study focuses on EDII fundraising communications at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

As a [fundraising professional OR communications professional OR EDII professional] at the University of Alberta, you are invited to this interview that will work to understand the extent to which fundraising practices at the University of Alberta consider EDII in their communication strategies.

Your views and experiences are extremely valuable in helping create strategies that develop equitable, diverse and inclusive fundraising communications.

Your participation in this interview will be completely voluntary, and confidential.

Interviews will be taking place from [DATE RANGE] you may choose a time within these dates that works best for you.

If you would like to participate in this research study please email me alaguila@ualberta.ca or call 780-909-0509 to set up a convenient interview time. Please feel welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about the interview.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anne-Marie Aguilar

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Study: Opening the Gates to Philanthropy: Diversifying Communications in Institutional Advancement

Supervisor: Dr. Katy Campbell, Professor, Faculty of Arts, Department of Women's & Gender studies, katy.campbell@ualberta.ca

Researcher (main contact): Anne-Marie Aguilar, MA student, University of Alberta, Faculty of Arts, alaguila@ualberta.ca 780.909.0509

Name of Participant: _____

Job Title: _____

Years of Related Experience*:_____

BACKGROUND

As a post-secondary fundraising, communications or EDII professional you are being invited to participate in a research project about equity, diversity, inclusion and indigenization (EDII) in post-secondary fundraising communications at the University of Alberta. The results of the study will be outlined in a graduate Capstone project. Before you make a decision, one of the researchers can go over this form with you. You are encouraged to ask questions if you feel anything needs to be made clearer. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to understand the connections between EDII strategies and Canadian post-secondary fundraising communications and is a case study focusing on the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

***Working in higher education or relative field*

STUDY PROCEDURES

Research activities include one-on-one online structured interviews that will take place between [DATE], over Zoom. Interviews will take approximately one hour. Audio recordings will be used to ensure accuracy and will be solely used by the researcher. No video recordings will be taken during the interview process. The researcher will ask a few questions about overall donor communication practices at the University of Alberta and EDII.

Following the interview process, the researcher will send a transcript of the interview to you for your own records. The final report may be shared with the University of Alberta's External Relations team, particularly those in Communications and Marketing, Development and EDII portfolios. The results will not include any identifying information but may be shared with individuals in these portfolios who may be in a supervisory role related to your position.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study up to two months following the interview process and for any reason without penalty. Your interview responses will not be used in this study if you choose to withdraw participation within two months of being interviewed. If you choose to withdraw from the study outside of the two-month period outlined above your data will still be used to inform this research.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All data collected will be strictly confidential. All personal identifying information collected (names, email addresses, institution names) will be kept in confidence. Direct quotes from interviews will not be used, and data will instead be presented as a synthesis of information. Your official job title will be replaced by a generic description to ensure your identity is confidential. All identifiable data will be stored and kept on a password-protected file on the University of Alberta Google suite, accessible only by the researcher and supervisor. In accordance with the University of Alberta's policies, data will be transferred from the Google Suite and saved onto an encrypted hard drive after the completion of the study. The data will be kept on the encrypted external hard drive for five years following the completion of the study. After five years the data will then be destroyed.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefits to your participation. However, participation in the evaluation provides the opportunity to contribute to research on post-secondary fundraising and how to improve post-secondary fundraising communication practices across Canada. The results of this study may also help inform fundraising communication practices at the University of Alberta.

POTENTIAL RISKS

Although all data collected by the researcher will be kept confidential and all personal identifying information removed. However, any discussion of the organization's overall fundraising, communications, or EDII priorities and initiatives makes it impossible to ensure absolute confidentiality in the final report.

COMPENSATION

There will be no cost for your participation in this research study, and there will be no compensation provided for your participation.

FREEDOM TO WITHDRAW

Participants may withdraw from the study for any reason. Participants may withdraw from participation in this research within two months following the interview process. If you withdraw after the two-month period outlined above, your data will still be used in this study. If you wish to

withdraw from the study please contact the researcher, Anne-Marie Aguilar, via email, at alaguila@ualberta.ca or phone at 780.909.0509.

QUESTIONS

This study has been reviewed and received approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board 1 (REB 1), the research board that reviews research primarily involving in-person interviews, focus groups, ethnographies, or community engagement and instructor-led course-based research assignments. (File number: Pro00118424). If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study, you may contact the research supervisor, Dr. Katy Campbell at katy.campbell@ualberta.ca or the Research Ethics Board 1 at reoffice@ualberta.ca.

CONSENT STATEMENT

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

_____ _____
Participant's Name (printed) and Signature Date

_____ _____
Name (printed) and Signature of Researcher Date

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY

PLEASE RETAIN ONE COPY OF THIS FORM FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I am interviewing you to understand the extent to which you believe the University of Alberta considers equity, diversity, inclusion and indigenization in its donor communications efforts. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions. I am interested in your experiences as a fundraising professional at this institution.

CONSENT STATEMENT

Participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to complete the study. The interview will take approximately 1 hour, depending on how much information you would like to share. With your permission, I would like to take an audio recording of the interview to ensure I take an accurate account of your comments. I will also be taking notes. All responses will be kept confidential. Your de-identified interview responses will only be shared with the research team (myself and my supervisor) and we will ensure that any information we include in the final report does not identify you or your institution as a respondent. You may decline to answer any question or stop the interview at any time without penalty.

- Do you agree to these terms?
- Do you have any additional questions before we begin?
- Do you consent to the audio recording of this interview?
- Is it alright if I take notes during the interview?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ESTABLISHING RAPPORT
- How are you today?

BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE
- Can you tell me about your previous background and experience working in higher education?

FUNDRAISING COMMUNICATIONS
The following questions will be directed to fundraising professionals in particular. I will now ask you a few questions about fundraising, and associated communication practices at the University of Alberta.

PROMPTS
- To what extent do you feel fundraising is important to the University of Alberta?

- To your knowledge what types of fundraising communications are currently being used at the University of Alberta? (ex. hardcopy mailouts, email communications etc.)
- To your knowledge were these communications methods informed by research?
- To your knowledge how is the success of these communications measured?
- To your knowledge how often have these communication practices been reviewed for effectiveness?

EDII INITIATIVES
Now I will ask you questions about EDII and communications.

PROMPTS
- How do you feel about EDII initiatives?
- How important is EDII at the University of Alberta?
- To what extent do you believe the communications at the University of Alberta consider EDII?
- How do you think communications at the University of Alberta should be approached with EDII in mind?
  - Why do you believe this is the best approach?

CONCLUSION
Thank you for this conversation. That is all of the questions I have.

- Do you have anything else you would like to add?
- Is there anything that I may have missed?
- I will send you a transcript of this interview within the next thirty days.
- I will now stop the audio recording.