



SEEDS OF TRANSFORMATION

A Loving Framework for Equity,
Reconciliation and Belonging

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMUNITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND EQUITY COMMITMENTS	4
WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO	8
Guiding Principles	9
The Evolution of Our Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation Work	10
Our Partners in This Work	11
SEEDS OF TRANSFORMATION	13
The Learnings That Guide This Journey	15
PART ONE: MOVING TOWARD EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM, AND RECONCILIATION	18
Reflection	20
Reshaping	22
Respectful Communication	23
Reciprocal Engagement	23
Review	24
PART TWO: THE ROLES NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT THIS PLAN	25
PART THREE: A VALUATION FRAMEWORK GROUNDED IN LOVE	29
Priorities and Mindsets We Embedded	33
Questions Considered in the Development of Our Valuation Framework Grounded in Love	34



PART FOUR: OUR ACTION PLAN**36**

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | Support Tamarack members and learners to take action to close community-identified equity gaps | 38 |
| 2 | Foster a diverse team and a culture that supports team well-being and personal and professional growth | 43 |
| 3 | Build reciprocal partnerships with equity-denied communities | 48 |
| 4 | Implement accessibility measures that support equitable participation in all parts of the Tamarack network | 55 |
| 5 | Use our public policy, learning, and communications platforms to further advance Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals | 60 |
| 6 | Foster supportive and inclusive governance structures | 65 |
| 7 | Promote transparency, accountability, collaboration, and psychological safety among the Tamarack team and Tamarack members and learners | 70 |

APPENDICES**76**

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Appendix 1: Our Process | 76 |
| Appendix 2: The DARCI Framework | 80 |





COMMUNITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND EQUITY COMMITMENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We at the Tamarack Institute recognize that the majority of our work occurs on the ancestral homelands of [Indigenous](#) Peoples including the [First Nations, Métis, and Inuit](#). We recognize the contributions of Indigenous people and support their ongoing struggle for self-determination and sovereignty. We work to understand the history of the lands upon which we are guests and to contribute to [justice](#) for all Indigenous Peoples.

RECONCILIATION COMMITMENT

We at the Tamarack Institute recognize that, across this land, Indigenous rights holders continue to endure systematic [oppression](#) and inequities that have resulted from widespread colonialist systems and ideologies. Recognizing the importance of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives, knowledges, and sovereignty, we commit to building intention, respect, reciprocity, collaboration, and cultural humility into the relationships we hold with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit rights holders. We seek to create opportunities for shared learning, co-creation, and collective action that honour First Nations, Métis, and Inuit values, traditions, and aspirations and that honour [reconciliation](#).

Through our commitment to reconciliation, we will also incorporate [Indigenization](#) and [decolonization](#) frameworks into our work. While connected, each are distinct in their goals and approaches, and each are equally important in fostering [equity](#) and justice for Indigenous Peoples.

In recognition of Tamarack's position as guests on the ancestral homelands of Indigenous Peoples, we commit that work related to reconciliation will be led by individuals who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, seeking external support where internal team member capability is limited.



AFRICAN ANCESTRAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We also wish to acknowledge those who came to Turtle Island – as migrants either in this generation or in generations past – and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. Tamarack pays tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent and thanks them for their contributions toward transforming systems in ways that promote everyone's sense of [belonging](#) and safety. At Tamarack, we are taking action that allows us to be aware of, recognize, and address the systemic ways in which [anti-Black racism](#) manifests.

Black and Indigenous communities demonstrate that we can work together in solidarity toward peace and equity as we use collective wisdom, knowledge, and gifts that promote healing within our communities.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY IN DISMANTLING OPPRESSION

Across the globe, people continue to feel the impact of historical and modern-day violence and oppression. We work to build communities that acknowledge these impacts, that heal, and that work toward belonging and justice.

To build community, we must understand historical and modern-day oppression. Building community can:

- ♡ Alter the goals, power structures, policies, practices, and culture of oppressive structures.
- ♡ Break legacies and cycles of violence and trauma.
- ♡ Promote caring for ourselves and others.
- ♡ Help us work across our differences.
- ♡ Build spaces that welcome the most marginalized.

EQUITY COMMITMENT

Grounded in the French word pérégrination, meaning a meandering voyage, our Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation work is a transformative journey of seeking equitable outcomes across communities. We will take bold and informed actions to address systemic inequities. Throughout this process, we will strive for fair and just methods. We will be honest and transparent in our communication about our journey. This journey needs as many people as possible, and we are grateful to do this work with so many others.



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Tamarack Institute exists to end poverty in all of its forms.

Poverty is multifaceted. It is systemic. Ending poverty requires changing the systems that produce disproportionate disparities in education; health; belonging; culture; climate; income; wealth; and access to food, water, shelter, culture, and digital infrastructure.

Ending poverty – and moving toward prosperity – also calls us to understand and address the systemic inequities facing First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Black, racialized, and equity-denied communities more broadly.

At Tamarack, we partner with 37,000 learners and over 180 communities. We help people build skills to engage in collective efforts to build prosperity for all, collaborate in places around community-defined dimensions of poverty, and bring communities' wisdom to inform public policy and perception. If you are not already a part of this community, please reach out.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Tamarack Institute's [2030 strategy](#) includes principles of connection and belonging, place, strength and optimism, equity and justice, courage and learning, and action and impact. These concepts continue to guide all aspects of our work.



Connection & Belonging

We strengthen connections and collaborations between diverse people, organizations, and sectors to build trust, alignment, and accountability to achieve more together than we can apart. A sense of belonging is often tied to feeling valued, being accepted, and being able to participate fully regardless of background.



Place

We focus our efforts on places where people live and centre their unique assets, knowledge, relationships, and local priorities as they seek equitable outcomes in their communities.



Strengths & Optimism

We imagine equitable futures. We seek out the unique gifts of each person and group. We orient attention – one of our most valuable forms of capital – toward what can be and toward the examples – however small – that represent the future we want.



Equity & Justice

We centre lived/living experience and amplify work in service of equitable outcomes. We are transparent and open about our journey and learnings. We name the hard truths and work through our discomfort. We work to close equity gaps.



Courage & Learning

We ask difficult questions about the systems and structures of oppression. We share what we are learning, try to stay curious, and are open to leaving conversations having gained new perspectives.



Action & Impact

We focus on the how and share practical stories, tools and processes to build individual capacity, guide change at the scale of entire communities, and shift policies and systems in service of ending poverty in all of its forms.



THE EVOLUTION OF OUR EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM, AND RECONCILIATION WORK

Systemic oppression is real and prevalent across Earth Mother. As an organization and as individuals, we are part of harmful systems from which we have benefited. For this reason, we strive to become an organization that is anti-racist and anti-oppressive.

Tamarack was founded in 2001 with a commitment to centring those most impacted by poverty. In July 2020, in response to several events – including the murder of George Floyd – Tamarack published a statement that reiterated our commitment to transform the community-based and organizational work that we were doing and continue to do. We have since engaged in learning as a team; built an Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation team; created cross-functional, equity-focused teams; launched a board committee to advance our Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals; and transitioned into a new leadership structure. We are grateful to the movements and the leaders who preceded us and whose legacy informs our work ahead.

The inequity we and our partners in this work see across Canada demands systemic change that is shaped by our guiding principles: **Connection, Place, Belonging, Strengths & Optimism, Equity & Justice, Courage & Learning**, and **Action & Impact**. These principles were reconceptualized through the process of creating this framework and were specifically updated to ensure equity was embedded in each one.

It has been (and it will continue to be) essential to engage in dialogue, hold diverse perspectives, and seek to understand how we move forward together as a community committed to equity and justice for all.

Our [Equity and Anti-Racism webpage](#) includes definitions of key terms and bite-sized pieces of information from our framework that learners might find useful.



OUR PARTNERS IN THIS WORK

While our team and board members are excited to do the work of promoting equity, when we first started out, we realized there wasn't an overarching strategy that would provide a roadmap for staff with a corresponding way to evaluate the impact of our work.

With the support of [Power of Discourse Consulting](#) and with questions informed by [Imagine Canada's Equity Benchmarking Project](#), we have listened to Tamarack's team members, board members, and learners and worked to align our actions with what we heard. We have identified our strengths and opportunities to grow, informed by the experiences of the people in Tamarack's network. This reflective process has reinforced our commitment to taking necessary, bold action while moving at the speed necessary to safely and equitably advance together. As reflected in our principles, we are dedicated to working with transparency, intentionality, a willingness to adapt, and a relentless focus on ending poverty in all its forms.

While creating this resource, we recognized that we needed to own this process. After Power of Discourse Consulting completed the first draft of the framework, we spent another year sensemaking this document; engaging key partners needed in this journey; developing an understanding of what we were committing to organizationally; and writing, editing, rewriting, and re-editing to get to this stage.

We have named this framework Seeds of Transformation because we believe we are planting new ideas and ways of being into the organizational fabric of Tamarack. We see this work as part of our collective journey as we seek systemic change at local, regional, national, and global scales.





Rooted in the Francophone concept of *pérégrination*, or an ongoing voyage resulting in spiritual or intellectual exploration, Seeds of Transformation commits to a continuous, transformative journey of adaptation and growth. This journey will evolve as we learn, unlearn, and act with empathy and understanding.

For this reason, we would like to give special thanks to Ruth Nakalyowa, Venecia Williams, and Donniel McNab from Power of Discourse Consulting for their leadership, patience, and flexibility throughout this process. We would also like to thank Tamarack team members who offered significant contributions to the development of this framework and action plan, including Rochelle Ignacio, Shanese Steele, Danya Pastuszek, Chúk Odenigbo, Natasha Pei, Mairead Stewart, Jaime Stief, Alison Homer, and Owen Henderson. We also thank Tamarack's board members – Nation Cheong, Ana Guerrero Gonzalez, Dina al-Khooly, Mary Pickering, and Equity, Anti-Racism and Reconciliation committee members Sunshine Chen, and Lori Hewson – and Tamarack team members who are no longer on the team, including former Co-CEO Liz Weaver.



SEEDS OF TRANSFORMATION

The inequity we and our partners in this work see across Canada demands systemic change that is shaped by our guiding principles: **Connection, Place, Belonging, Strengths and Optimism, Equity and Justice, Courage and Learning, and Action and Impact**. These principles were reconceptualized through the process of creating this framework and were specifically updated to ensure equity was embedded in each one.

While our team and board members are excited to do the work of promoting equity, when we first started out, we realized there wasn't an overarching strategy that would provide a roadmap for staff with a corresponding way to evaluate the impact of our work.



Our response has been to work with our partners at *Power of Discourse* to develop a framework that can help the Tamarack team, board, and broader network of members and learners to build equity into their work in a meaningful way.

Rooted in the Francophone concept of *pérégrination*, or an ongoing voyage resulting in spiritual or intellectual exploration, Seeds of Transformation commits to a continuous, transformative journey of adaptation and growth. This journey will evolve as we learn, unlearn, and act with empathy and understanding.

It has been (and it will continue to be) essential to engage in dialogue, hold diverse perspectives, and seek to understand how we move forward together as a community committed to equity and justice for all.

We have named this framework *Seeds of Transformation* because we believe we are planting new ideas and ways of being into the organizational fabric of Tamarack. We see this work as part of our collective journey as we seek systemic change at local, regional, national, and global scales.

THE LEARNINGS THAT GUIDE THIS JOURNEY

Our journey towards equity, belonging, and reconciliation is one of learning and change.

At the Tamarack Institute, we commit to deeply understanding the diverse and intersectional experiences of those most affected by exclusion in the communities we support. This includes people excluded because of age, language, [gender](#), [sexual orientation](#), [race](#), and/or Indigeneity, as well as refugees, migrants, newcomers, and/or those living with a [disability](#) or experiencing poverty.

We'll continue to:

- ♡ Broaden our understanding of the multiple forms of oppression and marginalization that people face.
- ♡ Reflect on how we contribute to inequitable systems.
- ♡ Work with our members and learners to disrupt these systems.
- ♡ Sharing updates that reflect the diverse needs of our network by creating a Biennial Report to Community (once every two years).
- ♡ Take accountability, grow from challenges, and remain committed, even in the face of obstacles.



Naming and changing beliefs and actions is uncomfortable - and can also be connective, validating, and joyful.

We're learning to build ways of connecting with people with whom we can talk about what's hard, rewarding, and unexpected. People who are willing to be honest about discomfort are required throughout the journey. We are learning how grace, understanding, and honesty are required as we work to better include new perspectives in the spirit of achieving justice for all.

Everyone has gifts to contribute to the work of building equitable outcomes for communities.

Systemic change requires action from each and every one of us. Our contribution is more powerful when it is intentionally connected with other people's work and toward addressing bold and meaningful goals that allow us all to be seen, to be heard, and to belong.

Community is essential.

The more often we come together to learn about systems of oppression, the more we learn about the brilliance of the people around us, our agency to interrupt oppression, and the capacity that we each have to listen, ask questions, sit in silence, honour each other's pain, and work together to change the structures of oppression that harm all of us.





Place matters.

Place is complex.

The places where we live can seed connection and belonging. They can be centres of hope, experimentation, and action. Place can nurture community-building that contributes to peace and equity-building. Place can be where people can grieve, heal, and experience belonging.

And – historically and today – places are sites of conflict, violence, theft, enslavement and other forms of oppression. The work that happens in local places – even if it holds a commitment to equitable process and outcomes – is not sufficient on its own, but it can be the impetus for the other work that is required and support the work that has already started.

Place is one of many organizing tools that allow communities to gather in the pursuit of equity. For this reason, we'll continue to nurture place as a way to turn toward each other.

This framework marks a milestone, not an endpoint, in our collective journey of learning, sharing, and applying learnings across the Tamarack network. We celebrate where we are today.



PART ONE: MOVING TOWARD EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM, AND RECONCILIATION

REFLECTION, RESHAPING, RECIPROCAL ENGAGEMENT, RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION, REVIEW

Achieving our Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals – as well as those around [accessibility](#) – is a non-linear process requiring both individual and collective action. It involves dedicating time to reflect on our experiences and roles, collaborating, engaging with others, communicating processes, and continuously reviewing and adapting what we do, how we do it, and how we prioritize and complete our commitments. We're guided by an emergent, non-linear process.

In the following section, we propose a five-phase process that will help the Tamarack team, board, and broader network of members and learners to achieve their Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals in a sustainable and values-focused way. In each case, we unpack what purpose each action serves and the role it plays in ongoing Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation work.





Reflection

Reflecting on our goals and roles helps us:

- ♡ Connect meaningfully with others and our work.
- ♡ Build skills and confidence essential to advancing Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals.
- ♡ Examine individual privileges, biases, and worldviews that impact our work.
- ♡ Identify strengths and growth opportunities
- ♡ Determine our roles in driving progress.



EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM, AND RECONCILIATION ANALYSIS TOOL

We have developed an Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation Analysis Tool to consider the ways which Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation have been incorporated into how we work, and if the way we are working is moving us toward our goals. The tool includes these inquiries:

- ☐ Who benefits from how things are now?
- ☐ Who is currently excluded? What intersectional identities do they carry?
- ☐ What factors contribute to this exclusion?
- ☐ How will we know that Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation are centred in the work? How will you contribute?
- ☐ How will we assess and share progress and learnings? How do we use, validate, and interpret data? Who stewards and owns these processes?
- ☐ How do your biases, privileges, and experiences shape your perspective and decision-making processes?



Reshaping

Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation requires collaboration. Our experiences and worldviews are what make our work authentic, innovative, and meaningful. By working across -sectors and involving multiple generations, we can deepen our understanding of systemic inequity.

Reshaping Commitments Allows Us To:

- ♡ Facilitate partnerships to achieve goals.
- ♡ Leverage our collection of knowledge and perspectives.
- ♡ Gain an understanding of our individual and collective responsibilities.
- ♡ Use the indicators we've committed to reporting on to identify:
 - ♡ methods of engagement
 - ♡ data and feedback collection strategies, and
 - ♡ other types of evaluation that are sustainable, transparent, and inclusive



Reciprocal Engagement

Communities are diverse and engaged individuals that drive equity, reconciliation, anti-racism, and accessibility efforts. Reciprocal and mutually beneficial engagement are an important part of this process.

Reciprocal Engagement Commitments:

- ♡ Use participatory and inclusive methods to involve the community in co-designing approaches and driving systemic change.
- ♡ Prioritize reciprocal engagement with equity-denied individuals and organizations to ensure their experiences shape decision-making.
- ♡ Foster a shared understanding of what reciprocity looks and feels like.



Respectful Communication

Promoting open, transparent, and respectful communication that enables trust and transparency.

Respectful Communication Commitments:

- ♡ Engage in open dialogue.
- ♡ Seek to hear and understand people's experiences without judgment.
- ♡ Ask questions and aspire to empathize, learn, and connect.
- ♡ Accept feedback – including constructive feedback – and explore how to work through and incorporate it in a generative way.¹

¹ Hassen, Y. (2024). *TOOL | Conflict Navigation: A Guide Towards Transformation*. <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/interactive-tools/conflict-navigation-guide-towards-transformation>



Review

Reviews help us celebrate successes, encourage sensemaking, and adjust based on feedback.

Review Process Commitments:

- ♡ Identify progress and areas for improvement.
- ♡ Build on strategies that are bringing about intended systemic change.
- ♡ Rework strategies that need to be refined.

Our process for moving towards Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation and the Analysis Tool will allow us to continuously build our mindset, heartset, and skillset necessary to evolve our understanding of systemic oppression and the impact it has on our collective work.



PART TWO: THE ROLES NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT THIS PLAN

Everyone plays vital roles in implementing this plan. Our roles vary based on our strengths, knowledge, and experiences, which evolve our worldview as we learn. You may also find yourself embodying multiple roles simultaneously based on what you have to offer. Our responsibility is to be honest about our mindsets, heartsets, and skillsets; to seek out information and collaborators that complement our strengths; to do the work that we are uniquely positioned to do; and to set the boundaries that help us work within our qualified roles.

In this section, we present the Roles Needed to Implement This Plan – a framework for how we'll bring our unique and evolving experiences to the work.



Adapted from a graphic by
Power of Discourse Consulting



Idea Generators People who are creative, visionary, and innovative. They can excel in roles where they contribute to idea generation sessions, innovation, and strategic development.



Relationship Builders People who are empathetic, people-orientated, and inquisitive. They play a vital role in fostering collaboration, leading engagement, conducting outreach, cultivating partnerships, and building support for the action plan.



Analytical Thinkers People who are detail-oriented and adept at solving complex problems. They contribute by identifying patterns, analyzing data, understanding and improving processes, and making data-driven decisions to optimize plan execution.



Storytellers People who are skilled communicators, persuasive speakers, and compelling storytellers. They help articulate the vision, convey key messages, and inspire others to take action through effective storytelling and communication strategies.



Change Agents People who are adaptable and comfortable navigating uncertainty. They play a crucial role in guiding groups through transformational initiatives, navigating resistance, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.



Coaches People who are empathetic, patient, and experienced at asking questions and providing guidance. They can cultivate talent, support the development and autonomy of others, and foster the confidence and growth mindset essential for complex, collaborative work.



Team Collaborators People who excel at building consensus, facilitating group discussions, and fostering teamwork. They can contribute significantly in roles that involve cross-functional collaboration, team building, and facilitation of spaces where diverse perspectives are valued and collaboration thrives.



Visionary Strategists People with a long-term perspective, strategic thinking skills, and the ability to articulate a compelling vision. They can guide the development of clear goals and roles that align with overarching priorities.



Advisors People who leverage specialized knowledge and experience. Advisors review information, analyze data, and give advice. They offer specialized guidance, recommendations, and feedback.

REFLECTION

- ☐ Which of the Action Plan roles listed above do you take up in your work?
- ☐ Which of the Action Plan roles listed above do your partners and collaborators play?
- ☐ What roles might be absent? Are they necessary? Who could hold them?
- ☐ How will you support youth and historically excluded people in holding their powerful roles?



PART THREE: A VALUATION FRAMEWORK GROUNDED IN LOVE

“Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public.”

– Cornel West

As previously mentioned, this framework and action plan are an ongoing journey, also known as a *pérégrination*; how we navigate this process is just as important as the end goal. By designing a valuation and evaluation framework that focuses on how we do the work, we are liberated to explore new ways of measuring impact beyond traditional methods. This approach allows us to build an evaluation strategy rooted in social justice that is guided by principles of truth, care, openness, courage, respect, and a strong commitment to justice.²

² hooks, bell, 1952-2021. (2000). *All about love: new visions*. New York: William Morrow

In 2019, [Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice](#) introduced the idea of using catalytic, decolonizing, and transformative love as a way to document change:

- ♡ Catalytic love sparks action, pushing us toward justice and meaningful change.
- ♡ Decolonizing love challenges harmful systems and unlearning oppressive ways of thinking, making space for new ways of being in relationship with ourselves and others.
- ♡ Transformative love is about deep, lasting change; it encourages growth, healing, and liberation.

This approach sees love as a powerful force in creating justice. As noted in *Measuring Love*, “to authentically love yourself and others around you: that is the sign of the true revolutionary in a society that teaches us to hate ourselves.”

Measuring Love also highlights the fact that love is a powerful response to injustice. When we build love into the way we measure progress, we can ensure that our goals – and how we achieve them – reflect the values of **Equity, Anti-Racism and Reconciliation**. This approach encourages a balance between different ways of understanding, bringing together **“intellectual, intuitive, and spiritual” knowledge systems, while our commitment to decolonization will also include ancestral ways of knowing**, so that we can, as the authors of *Measuring Love* write, **“see with both our hearts and minds.”**³

³ Nuñez, S., & Teng, S. (2019). *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*.

Note: In 2024, after this publication was deep in development, we discovered that Sammy Nuñez has been convicted of causing significant harm (to learn more, please click [here](#)). Although we have chosen to move forward with citing the Brown paper, as we continue to engage with the evolving fields of Equity Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation, we are committed to ongoing reflection, reshaping, and critical dialogue to ensure alignment with our values of equity and justice.

DEFINING OUR BLENDED METHODS

Our evaluation process combines Western, Eurocentric, and decolonial perspectives, considering the effects of both historical and modern-day oppression. To ensure clarity and consistency, we define key terms as follows:

Evaluation is a structured way to assess an initiative's design, implementation, or results for the purpose of learning and decision-making.⁴

Impact is a measure of what has been transformed and offers a measure of long-term, large-scale change resulting from an intervention

Outcome is a measurement of what has changed. In other words, it is the short- or medium-term changes generated or directly caused by an intervention.

Result is a generic term that can refer to any change brought about by an action, strategy, or process, whether partially or fully complete.

Valuation is the understanding of the purpose, worth, and meaning of the work by considering and integrating different ways of knowing that are inclusive of one's thoughts, emotions, and experiences.⁵

The dimensions of **Self-Love**, **Love for Others**, **Love as a Community Practice**, and **Love fused with Power** help us understand how valuing our work can be rooted in kindness, solidarity, and resistance.⁶

⁴ Canadian Evaluation Society. (No date). What Is Evaluation? <https://evaluationcanada.ca/career/what-is-evaluation.html>

⁵ Audrey Jordan's definition in Nuñez, S., & Teng, S. (2019). *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*.

⁶ Nuñez, S., & Teng, S. (2019). *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*.



Self-Love is about personal reflection – taking the time to evaluate our own actions, growth, and mindset.

Love Others applies to Tamarack as an organization. Since we are a community of people working to end poverty in all of its forms, this means looking inward – reflecting on our progress, the work we’ve done, and how it affects us as a team.

Love as a Community Practice recognizes the power of *la force du lieu et des liens* (the power of place and connection). With 37,000 learners and over 180 communities in our network, this means showing up with humanity, compassion, and care, using our shared knowledge and relationships to drive change.

Love Fused with Power acknowledges that Tamarack has the ability to shift [power dynamics](#). This means using our platform to advocate, amplify voices, share tools and stories, and engage with decision-makers who can help end poverty in all of its forms while upholding our commitments to reconciliation as guests on the ancestral homelands of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples.



PRIORITIES AND MINDSETS WE EMBEDDED

To ensure our valuation work aligns with our values and leads to transformative change, we've adopted the following priorities and mindsets:

Centre people's lived/living experiences of our evolving policies and practices. Policies and practices should serve people. By gathering both positive and negative experiences, and both intended and unintended consequences of decisions and interventions, we ensure our work builds equity and belonging.

Using both numbers and narratives. Numbers establish a baseline, help track progress and scale, and are often required for reporting and accountability purposes. Narratives provide deeper insights and embed nuance, revealing the lived/living experiences of the changes, including how decisions affect individuals and communities. In order to deeply explore the lived/living experience narratives, we require trust and transparency between both parties.

Shifting focus from actions to outcomes. Instead of just measuring what we do, we evaluate how our actions have helped to create systemic change. This moves us beyond surface-level and quantitative success metrics.

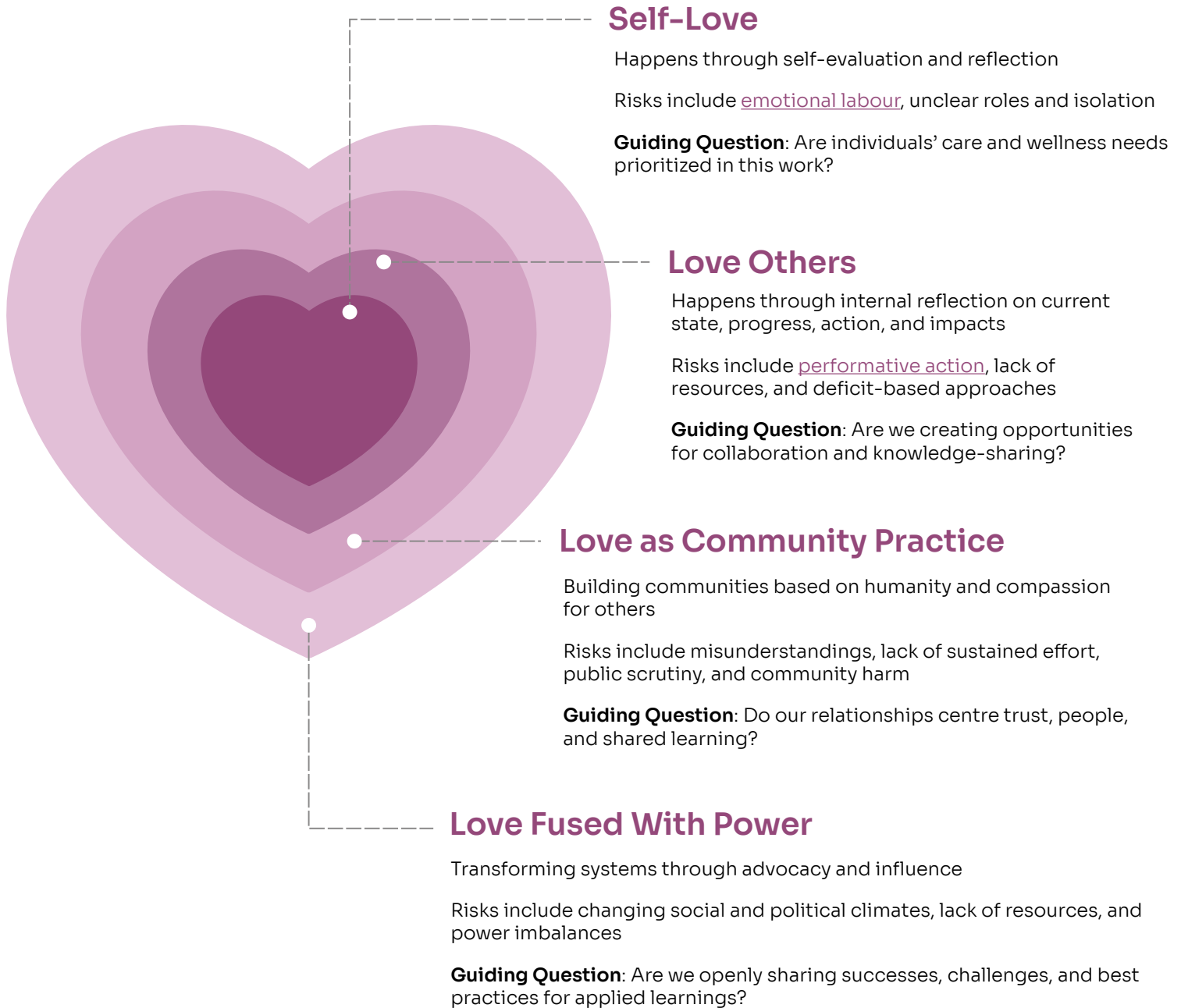


QUESTIONS CONSIDERED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR VALUATION FRAMEWORK GROUNDED IN LOVE

Part of our work has been developing a decolonial framework that centres the love and care required to do equity-related work well. In developing this framework, we have asked and will continue to ask these questions:

QUESTIONS FOR BUILDING LOVING ACCOUNTABILITY

- ☐ What information will give us the confidence that what we're doing is working?
- ☐ What stories add depth to this data?
- ☐ How can we collect data in a way that prioritizes the care and well-being of those involved?
- ☐ How can these measures support learning and improvement?
- ☐ How can data collection be embedded into existing processes/tools?



Data Collection Considerations:

We can evaluate engagement and impact measurement through resource utilization, such as downloads and participation rates. We can also monitor feedback, such as information gained through strategic collaborations and our ability to influence policies and decision-making. We can measure Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation integration by tracking policy updates and experience ratings through annual surveys and pulse checks.

By embedding love into our evaluation process, we move beyond conventional impact measurement and embrace a framework that is inclusive, justice-driven, and transformative. A more detailed list of Data Collection Opportunities is embedded within each priority section.



PART FOUR: OUR ACTION PLAN

In this final chapter, we propose a series of concrete actions that connect to the work that the Tamarack team, board, and network of members and learners will work to implement.

Our action plan requires sufficient allocation of resources and capital that will enable long-lasting change. We will develop implementation strategies that are responsive to the current realities of our capability to resource the work across the various capital types.

Financial Capital: The financial resources used to support a task or project, including core funding, staff salaries, and, in some cases, relational compensation (recognition, learning opportunities, etc.). Implementation strategies will consider financial capital considerations that:

- ♡ Prioritizes language access through interpretation, translation, and publication of bilingual resources that includes French and Indigenous languages, as well as voices from equity-denied communities.
- ♡ Addresses financial barriers to taking on board roles.
- ♡ Addresses people's stated accommodations requirements.
- ♡ Offers gratitude and relational compensation to partners.
- ♡ Offers barrier-free admissions to learning activities.
- ♡ Sustains national collaboratives and other working groups that centre community in analysis and decision-making.
- ♡ Supports upskilling of team members leading out on complex implementation strategies.

Social Capital: The social relationships and networks that support the completion of a task or project. Implementation strategies will consider social capital considerations that:

- ♡ Utilizes inclusive and accessible practices as a way to strengthen partnerships with equity-denied communities.
- ♡ Bring new people into designing curriculum, programming, and policy.



- ♡ Enables connections across Tamarack team and board members, government and community leaders and Tamarack members and learners.
- ♡ Supports French language learning and cultural exchange.
- ♡ Accelerates individual communities' progress toward systems change and achieving equitable outcomes.
- ♡ Aligns efforts across scales – from local to national – towards achieving equitable community outcomes.
- ♡ Aligns internal systems, work plans, and priorities.

Human Capital: The skills, knowledge, and training possessed by individual team members that support the completion of a task or project. Implementation strategies will consider human capital considerations that:

- ♡ Supports restitution and healing when harm is experienced.
- ♡ Develops resources, policies, and tools centring equity, anti-racism, and reconciliation.
- ♡ Addresses discrimination, harassment, and accessibility using trauma-informed approaches.
- ♡ Enables equitable recruitment, mentorship, and training for Tamarack team and board members, as well as Tamarack members and learners.
- ♡ Strengthens capacity for culturally-responsive communication, including French language support and Indigenous intercultural competency.



Technological Capital: The technology available to a team that supports the completion of a task or project. This includes technology such as secure databases, project management applications, and telecommunications products such as Zoom. Implementation strategies will consider technological capital considerations that:

- ♡ Adopts tools fostering inclusion, data security, and accessibility (e.g. captions and assistive technologies).
- ♡ Prioritizes Indigenous data sovereignty and equitable data governance.
- ♡ Creates collaboration, community-building and digital learning opportunities that are accessible and inclusive of remote participation and bilingual diversity.
- ♡ Bolsters connection and support across communities.
- ♡ Is built with business and government partners to improve the availability of localized and disaggregated data.

Cultural Capital: The knowledges, experiences, and behaviours that help an individual navigate culture and cultural norms⁷ when completing a task or project. Implementation strategies will consider cultural capital considerations that:

- ♡ Embeds equity principles into interactions with team members, learners, and partners.
- ♡ Continues toward governance structures that address power imbalances and integrates Indigenous ways of knowing.
- ♡ Resources community-led research.
- ♡ Honours oral traditions and cultivates practices that prioritize accessible, reciprocal, and non-extractive partnerships.

⁷ Fink, G. (2023). *The Theory of Cultural Capital in Higher Education and Its Influence on Equity*. <https://www.everylearnereverywhere.org/blog/the-theory-of-cultural-capital-in-higher-education-and-its-influence-on-equity/>



Each Priority section includes:

- ♡ A clear explanation of what this priority is about, what the main goals are, and why it matters.
- ♡ An explanation of how to assess progress on the proposed work.
- ♡ A proposal of actions to be carried out over a three-fiscal year (FY) timeline.⁸
- ♡ A list of data collection opportunities for the proposed work.
- ♡ An overview of desired outcomes and identified risks that align with each type of love identified in the [Valuation Framework Grounded in Love chapter](#).

⁸ The FY acronym in the action plans stands for fiscal year. The Tamarack Institute's fiscal year runs from December 1 to November 30 each calendar year. These proposed timeframes can be adapted to an external team's fiscal year setup as needed.

1

Support Tamarack members and learners to take action to close community-identified equity gaps

We aim to help communities identify and dismantle systems that unfairly benefit certain groups over others. Recognizing that change takes time, we'll offer the knowledge and support needed to help Tamarack members work toward closing at least one equity gap in their community. Support will recognize that communities are at different stages of their Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation journeys.

Why is this important?

Look at any dimension of poverty – education, employment, health, social connection, transportation, culture, energy, food, housing, financial inclusion – and you will see outcomes that vary predictably based on race, Indigeneity, gender identity, language, family income, and other factors. Our systems are systematically designed to perpetuate oppression and embedding equity requires skills, knowledge, and a strategic approach. The evidence is clear: to end poverty in any of its forms, we must focus on equity gaps.

How do we assess progress?

More learners report that Tamarack's learning offerings improve their understanding of inequitable systems and help them develop skills to close equity gaps.



Priority 1 Actions

FY2024-2025

Name Equity and Anti-Racism as one of Tamarack's interconnected practice areas ([Skills for Change](#)).

[Offer Equity and Anti-Racism coaching to Tamarack members.](#)

Introduce Community Pathways, which provide progressive milestones (rather than linear prescriptions) to equitable outcomes and large-scale change.

FY2025-2026

(Re)develop all workshop offerings to embed Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation.

Review contracts created or signed by Tamarack with an Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation lens.

FY2026-2027

Develop offerings that lead to the creation of community plans that eliminate equity disparities in their communities.

Develop offerings that incorporate Equity and Reconciliation in governance structures, strategic planning and engagement.

Develop an organization-wide data collection, management and retention framework that is openly accessible and prioritizes disaggregated and intersectional data, addresses data sovereignty and engages community in planning, development and implementation phases.

DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

Using the **DARCI** (Decision-Makers, Accountable, Responsible, Consulted, Informed) Accountability Framework found in [Appendix 2](#), we will develop implementation strategies that are responsive to data collected through:

Check-ins, surveys, and conversations that track experiences related to belonging, morale, professional growth, and career progress.

Competency audits, team feedback sessions, and observations that measure the impact of the Community Pathways Map on team discussions and decision-making.

Community feedback, participation tracking, and post-collaboration surveys that assess inclusivity, transparency, and alignment with communicated goals and objectives.

Revenue, resource allocation, and advocacy metrics that evaluate the financial impact of equity-focused work and its influence on strategic planning and partnership cultivation.



	Self-Love	Love Others	Love as a Community	Love Fused with Power
Desired Outcomes	<p>Tamarack team members experience a stronger sense of connection, professional growth, and alignment with values and opportunities for developing equity- and justice-focused skills.</p>	<p>Team members from equity-denied communities feel safer and more valued, fostering confidence and creativity.</p> <p>Facilitating equity enhances collaboration, builds empathy, and aligns work with goals, empowering team members through role clarity and stronger relationships.</p>	<p>Team members embody personal and professional growth, fostering inclusivity and community ties.</p> <p>Equity initiatives strengthen workplace culture, build trust with communities, and improve transparency and collaboration using tools such as the Community Pathways Map as a guide.</p>	<p>Equity and Anti-Racism are integrated into policy advocacy.</p> <p>Defined roles allow Tamarack to adapt to emerging issues and respond effectively.</p> <p>Community collaboratives have prioritized a specific equity gap, know their starting point, and have a plan to close it.</p> <p>A growing number of learners report that Tamarack learning offerings have contributed to their understanding of inequitable systems and helped them build skills to close equity gaps.</p>
Identified Risks	<p>Team members may have to navigate emotional labour, stress, and burnout when handling sensitive and challenging topics or navigating resistance. Increased focus on measurable outcomes may increase anxiety, while changes to workflows create hesitation or scrutiny.</p>	<p>Team members require time and training to effectively understand equity best practices, apply Reconciliation ways of knowing, and implement the DARCI Framework as an accountability tool. For an overview of the framework, please see Appendix 2.</p>	<p>Communities may feel unseen if their contributions are not captured. Delays during transitions and higher community expectations for transparency and accountability pose additional challenges.</p>	<p>Navigating the reality of a settler-led organization profiting from equity-centred and anti-racist work is a significant risk.</p>

2

Foster a diverse team and a culture that supports team well-being and personal and professional growth

As we work to shift policy and systems at the community, regional, and national levels, we recognize the need to shift internally. We are committed to hiring and advancing people from equity-denied groups and co-creating a culture that prioritizes people, relationships, and distributed decision-making.

Why is this important?

Engagement, recruitment, and retention efforts foster a supportive and inclusive workplace where team members feel valued, have a sense of belonging, and are accountable to contribute to Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals.

A supportive culture attracts diverse talent, fosters multiple perspectives, enhances teamwork, honours diverse learning and working styles, and drives individual and organizational well-being and progress.

How do we assess progress?

Tamarack's team and board members increasingly reflect the diverse identities and experiences of its broader network of members and learners.

Policies eliminate [systemic barriers](#) and close gaps between policy intent, activation, and impact and promote participation from individuals from equity-denied communities.

Team members across demographics report high inclusion and engagement, with access to clear and effective support systems and required resources.



Priority 2 Actions

FY2024-2025

Building from the DARCI framework, develop an accountability framework for decision-making and collaborative work. Create tools and procedures for feedback and continuous improvement.

Develop a comprehensive list of support services and resources available for team members who belong to equity-denied groups.

Develop an accessibility framework that includes guidance on style, accommodations, Universal Design for Learning, Web Content [Accessibility](#) Guidelines, and offering inclusive meetings and events.

FY2025-2026

Develop community engagement protocols, agreements, and tools for safer spaces.

Review employment benefits; the Conflict of Interest Policy; [harassment](#) and discrimination policies, procedures, and training plans; and career advancement approaches.

Update annual team capability-building strategies to build understanding of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities.

FY2026-2027

Revise advancement policy and competency frameworks (including Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation competencies) for each team.

Review team member mentorship strategy.

DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

Sharing circles and surveys that capture lived/living experiences with internal policies and supportive practices, as well as their impact on personal and professional growth.

Case studies, relationship mapping, and community-driven assessments that evaluate Tamarack's learning offerings and trust in the organization.

Experience surveys that assess the perceived impact of Tamarack's actions on supporting place-based systems change work.



	Self-Love	Love Others	Love as a Community	Love Fused with Power
Desired Outcomes	<p>Team members from equity-denied groups feel valued and supported, fostering inclusion and belonging. Tailored support services, like mentorship and mental health and wellness resources, alleviate stressors, align team members with Tamarack's mission, and enhance their ability to navigate systemic barriers.</p>	<p>The framework improves transparent decision-making, collaboration, and accountability. It fosters accompliceship, enhances team member morale, and connects equity-denied groups with support networks. This will ultimately deepen relationships within Tamarack and the community while promoting a culture of care and connection.</p>	<p>Communities gain clearer roles and faster issue resolution, enabling meaningful participation.</p> <p>Supporting equity-denied team members strengthens authentic relationships, removes barriers to community engagement, and empowers communities to adopt accountability frameworks and participate more inclusively.</p>	<p>Centring equity in decision-making enhances Tamarack's systemic impact, empowers equity-denied team members, and strengthens community capability.</p> <p>Offering tangible support builds trust, sets a standard for inclusivity, and enables systemic change by valuing and compensating lived/living experiences and contributions.</p>
Identified Risks	<p>Team members who do not belong to equity-denied groups may feel alienated or resistant, perceiving the policy as preferential treatment or inequitable.</p>	<p>Policies risk framing equity-denied team members through a deficit lens, focusing on needs rather than strengths and gifts. Unclear processes can create uncertainty about roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Undefined compensation and recognition processes can lead to community distrust and tensions. Meeting expectations may challenge the organization's capacity, risking dissatisfaction.</p>	<p>Changing social and political pressures may impact Tamarack's ability to outwardly enact equitable systems transformation. This can dissuade team members and communities from believing Tamarack's commitment to Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation.</p>

3

Build reciprocal partnerships with equity-denied communities

We are committed to fostering genuine and equitable relationships with communities most impacted by oppression. This includes understanding how historical contexts have unfairly disadvantaged groups based on intersecting identities, such as age, language, gender, sexual orientation, race, and/or Indigeneity, as well as refugees, migrants, newcomers, and/or those living with a disability or experiencing poverty. As described in Priority 1, it includes developing partnerships aimed at addressing systemic inequalities, self-determination, and decision-making that respects diverse cultural norms, worldviews, histories, and rights of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities.

Why is this important?

Establishing reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities fosters mutual respect and understanding. It is the starting point to address historical injustices and to catalyze equitable opportunities.

This work honours our reconciliation commitments. By centring First Nations, Métis, and Inuit voices, honouring traditional knowledges, and acknowledging historical injustices, Tamarack can begin to dismantle colonial structures impacting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

Through genuine collaboration and mutual respect, Tamarack can contribute to equitable systems transformation and reconciliation.

Building reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities fosters mutual respect and understanding. These relationships are essential for addressing historical injustices and creating equitable opportunities. Tamarack has a unique role in supporting local and national movements for systems transformation by ensuring that reconciliation and justice are embedded in community change efforts.



This work aligns with Tamarack's reconciliation commitments by centring First Nations, Métis, and Inuit voices; honoring traditional knowledges; and actively working to dismantle colonial structures that continue to impact Indigenous communities. Through this, Tamarack contributes to advancing self-determination, equity, and reconciliation.

While it is important to understand all [94 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission \(TRC\) Calls to Action](#), our work aims to specifically address the following:

#43 - Self-Determination: Aligning with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by ensuring that Tamarack's policies, programs, and strategies reflect its principles.

#57 - Education for Public Servants: Supporting training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism, which aligns with Tamarack's commitment to building community capacity.

#92 - Business & Reconciliation: Encouraging nonprofits and organizations to adopt reconciliation frameworks, ensuring Indigenous leadership and equitable access to opportunities.

Where appropriate, we will centre decolonization frameworks and Global Indigenous Knowledge Systems that show us alternative ways to embed love in change efforts.

How do we assess progress?

Tamarack builds genuine, long-term, and reciprocal relationships with equity-denied communities (e.g., where intersecting identities include age, language, gender, sexual orientation, race, and/or Indigeneity, as well as refugees, migrants, newcomers, and/or those living with a disability or experiencing poverty).



Priority 3 Actions

FY2024-2025

Implement a Community Compensation and Recognition policy that nurtures relationship-building and equitable participation.

Gain meaningful knowledge and an understanding of the specific First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied groups that Tamarack engages with.

Explore developing a First Nations, Métis, and Inuit community advisory group.

FY2025-2026

Develop a First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Guideline that identifies protocol considerations for working with communities and that includes cultural and facilitation protocols.

Enhance awareness of issues impacting equity-denied communities. Address topics such as age, language, gender, sexual orientation, race, and/or Indigeneity, as well as refugees, migrants, newcomers, and/or those living with a disability or experiencing poverty.

Research frameworks for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit advisory councils. Explore roles, responsibilities, and the potential relationship such a council could have to Tamarack, ensuring clarity on its decision-making power, areas of influence, and the mechanisms for meaningful collaboration and engagement.

FY2026-2027

Co-create tools and resources with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities that provide guidance on how non-Indigenous Tamarack members can uphold and respect First Nations, Métis, and Inuit rights to sovereignty, self-determination, and land stewardship. Such a resource should introduce culturally informed practices.

Develop a framework that includes guidelines for engagement, representation, and collaboration, ensuring meaningful input from Indigenous communities on Tamarack's initiatives, policies, and programs.

DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

Pre- and post-learning surveys that assess team members' understanding of equity issues; historical and modern oppression with equity-denied communities; and distinctions-based approaches with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

Communications about the reasoning for why specific advisory group recommendations, team feedback, and policy recommendations do not align with Tamarack's values and commitments.

Participation metrics, relationship mapping, and community-led evaluations that measure trust and engagement with equity-denied communities.

Demographic data, case studies, and surveys that assess Tamarack's reach, policy advocacy influence, and adherence to our reconciliation commitments.



	Self-Love	Love Others	Love as a Community	Love Fused with Power
Desired Outcomes	<p>Policies foster fairness and cultural competence among team members, enhancing their ability to effectively engage with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities.</p> <p>Team members gain inclusive communication skills and take pride in deepening relationships with communities experiencing systemic barriers to accessing Tamarack's services.</p>	<p>Team members feel more connected to Tamarack's Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation Strategic Priorities.</p> <p>Learning about diverse groups boosts morale, intercultural understanding, and purpose.</p> <p>Accountability; deep understanding of systemic challenges; and collaboration with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities is supported.</p>	<p>Communities benefit from sustainable networks, compensation, and culturally relevant programs that respect their needs and histories. Tamarack team members apply intercultural competence to avoid perpetuating harm, empower underrepresented voices, and foster intergenerational connections, expanding learning opportunities for equity-denied groups.</p>	<p>Policies and decision-making tables value lived/living experience and place-based knowledge, amplifying equity-denied voices in policy and program design. Tamarack aligns with community-generated calls to action, leveraging advisory insights to address systemic barriers and advocate for Indigenous rights, fostering community-driven change and equity.</p>
Identified Risks	<p>Team members may feel overwhelmed by the knowledge demands or frustrated by ambiguity in advisory roles, scope, and decision-making.</p> <p>Advisory board members risk burnout if workloads exceed capacity, recognition is inadequate, or protocols are not honoured.</p>	<p>Failure to translate team member knowledge into meaningful actions may lead to frustration.</p> <p>Without clear commitments, the advisory group could appear performative.</p> <p>Reduced fees or free attendance may strain revenue, requiring external funding.</p>	<p>Communities may perceive policies and decision-making as performative if implementation lacks authenticity and applied action.</p> <p>Missteps with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit protocols and inadequate representation on the advisory group could harm relationships and trust.</p> <p>Clear policies are needed to avoid fairness issues in subsidized participation.</p>	<p>Space is not made to hear voices and perspectives from First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities and policies. Consequently, decisions are seen as <i>tokenistic</i> and not representative of the entire community, harming Tamarack's reputation as an organization committed to equitable systems change.</p>

4

Implement accessibility measures that support equitable participation in all parts of the Tamarack network

We aim to remove barriers preventing full contribution and participation of individuals of diverse abilities. By prioritizing accessibility in our policies, practices, and spaces, we can ensure equitable opportunities for all Tamarack members, learners, and partners, as well as team and board members.

Why is this important?

Comprehensive accessibility measures foster an inclusive culture that promotes diversity and equity. It also enhances innovation and creativity by harnessing the unique perspectives and talents of all individuals.

How do we assess progress?

Tamarack's accessibility and communications policies create inclusive spaces and reduce barriers to participation.

Barrier reduction initiatives (e.g., Gratitude and Relational Compensation policy, barrier-free event registration) are well-resourced and increasingly accessed by individuals from equity-denied communities.



Priority 4 Actions

FY2024-2025

Review and update Tamarack's policies for reduced fee (or no cost) events for Tamarack members and learners needing financial assistance.

FY2025-2026

Develop a menu of available accommodations for team members and board members.

Develop guidelines for inclusive meetings and events that include communication and engagement practices.

FY2026-2027

Develop an accessibility framework that supports team members in producing accessible content and offerings.



DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

Completion rates of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) training and the Tamarack internal policy refresher quiz.

Experience surveys and sharing circles that can be used to assess team, board, and network members' understanding of accessibility practices and how to request and access accommodations.

Website analytics (e.g., visits, time spent, click-through rates, and sources of web traffic) and community engagement metrics (e.g., participation, scholarship use, resource downloads).

Partner engagement metrics that can be assessed to evaluate the depth and breadth of collaborations.

	Self-Love	Love Others	Love as a Community	Love Fused with Power
Desired Outcomes	A centralized platform that helps team members align their work with Tamarack's Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation commitments, fostering a shared vision.	Public updates promote accountability and encourage team members to stay actively engaged in Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation initiatives.	Financial assistance enables participants to gain skills, tools, and a sense of belonging while enriching Tamarack's work with diverse perspectives. Knowledge dissemination to communities and partnerships with aligned organizations are also strengthened.	Communities with fewer financial resources gain access to tools for systems change, reducing inequities. The repository of online resources also serves as a platform to attract partners or funders sharing similar goals.
Identified Risks	Team members may feel overwhelmed in understanding and accessing accessibility accommodations and best practices.	Keeping information accurate and timely requires dedicated team member time and resources for regular updates.	A public-facing platform invites scrutiny, requiring careful messaging and follow-through. Misunderstandings may arise if updates or progress lack clear context.	Lack of resources leads to outdated and stagnant resources that don't align with best practices and impede broader systemic change.

5 Use our public policy, learning, and communications platforms to further advance Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals

We will promote policies that prioritize Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation, including equitable resource distribution. We will advocate for legislative changes that address systemic inequities and promote justice and reconciliation. We will incorporate diverse perspectives and histories into curriculum, tools, and publications. We will highlight stories and perspectives from equity-denied communities. We will share progress and challenges to build trust and accountability.

Why is this important?

Revising the internal communications strategy to align with organizational Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation objectives is crucial for fostering a culture of belonging and respect and equity across the organization and network.

This involves prioritizing diverse voices and perspectives, promoting transparency and accountability, and actively addressing systemic inequalities and historical injustices.

How do we assess progress?

Tamarack's communications strategy aligns with its commitments to Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation.

Learning initiatives prioritize amplifying first-person narratives from equity-denied communities, demonstrate a commitment to reciprocity and align with Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation priorities.



Priority 5 Actions

FY2024-2025

Design a dedicated Equity and Anti-Racism page on the Tamarack website to provide official statements; a map of the organization's journey, updates, and progress reports; and plans for future initiatives.

Support team members in understanding their [social location](#) and how it shapes the biases that show up in their work.

Review all public policy positions and priorities using the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation Analysis Tool or equivalents.

FY2025-2026

Ensure that Tamarack members have control of their narrative and can opt into a process to share their own experiences, achievements, and challenges.

FY2026-2027

Ensure that team members understand how to apply inclusive writing and communication principles in their work.



DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

Pulse surveys that measure confidence and satisfaction in Tamarack's externally facing commitments to Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation.

Board member surveys and sharing surveys that assess engagement satisfaction and support in advancing Tamarack's strategic priorities and commitments.

Organizational culture reviews that track [bias](#) reduction, accountable decision-making, and equity integration, including the integration of perspectives from Tamarack's members who identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied communities.

Community surveys that assess feeling valued and heard when offering feedback on Tamarack's ways of doing.

	Self-Love	Love Others	Love as a Community	Love Fused with Power
Desired Outcomes	<p>Team members deepen their understanding of identities, <u>privileges</u>, and systemic influences, fostering personal transformation, critical thinking, and policy evaluation skills.</p> <p>Board members align decisions with shared goals and priorities.</p>	<p>Increased awareness of social location fosters empathy, respect, and openness among team members.</p> <p>Equipped with tools and a shared framework, team members engage confidently in equity work, while board members contribute more informed participation.</p>	<p>Communities trust Tamarack's transparent equity commitments and feel seen and heard through inclusive policies.</p> <p>Programs align better with equity-denied groups' calls to action, reducing harm, addressing systemic inequities, and fostering mutual respect and trust.</p>	<p>Tamarack's journey inspires communities to apply equity efforts, fostering inclusive policies and reconciliation.</p> <p>Teams navigate power dynamics effectively, ensuring policies reflect First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and equity-denied community priorities and reduce systemic inequities.</p>
Identified Risks	<p>Exploring social location and biases can be emotionally taxing. Team members may resist new frameworks or workloads, while frequent updates risk overwhelming board members.</p>	<p>Team members' varying levels of understanding require tailored approaches. Balancing diverse Tamarack member priorities with organizational goals may cause tensions or slow decision-making.</p>	<p>Without sustained organizational commitment, equity efforts risk appearing superficial or performative.</p>	<p>External factors may limit the organization's ability to drive broader systemic change.</p>

6 Foster supportive and inclusive governance structures

Our board and members bring diverse perspectives, experiences, and contributions to Tamarack. We aspire to create spaces for open dialogue, shared decision-making, and collective action. By evolving our governance structure, we will transform power structures through building a board more representative of the communities we work with, reduce historical barriers to participating in governance, and share decision-making authority with Tamarack members. This will involve understanding leaders' lived/living experience and prioritizing their well-being and participation.

Why is this important?

Fostering a supportive and inclusive board culture that prioritizes board member well-being and equal participation is essential for maintaining the effectiveness of Tamarack's decision-making and governance and its ongoing success.

By creating a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, and inclusivity, Tamarack's board can harness the collective wisdom and diverse perspectives of all board members and reflect a commitment to Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation at the highest levels of leadership. Paying attention to board dynamics involves ensuring that board members feel valued, heard, and supported in their roles, regardless of background or identity.

How do we assess progress?

Board members report that governance structures support open dialogue, equitable participation, and shared decision-making.



Priority 6 Actions

FY2024-2025

Share changing priorities and goals with all board members, including Tamarack member priorities.

Launch a Gift Acceptance policy and an Investment Policy Statement to guide our decisions on what financial capital to accept.

Codify an observer role to support the well-being of board members during difficult conversations.

Continue to implement our decision – in 2023 – for Tamarack’s public policy priorities to rest not with the board but with a collaborative of engaged Tamarack members.

Revise Tamarack’s bylaws to provide clarity on board terms and roles, support diversity that is representative of the communities with which we work, and reduce barriers to full participation.

FY2025-2026

Develop a list of available supports and a process for how board members can request them.

Update policies around discrimination within the board. Agree on whether/ how board members will intervene if they witness bullying and discrimination.

FY2026-2027

Share changing priorities and goals with all board members, including Tamarack member priorities.



DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

Annual board surveys that measure experiences related to belonging and accessibility.

Tracking accessibility measures and policy changes.

Tracking team members' and Tamarack members' level of awareness of and input into strategic decision-making processes.

Uptake of website resources that offer strategies for supportive and inclusive board participation, with analytics used to assess engagement.

	Self-Love	Love Others	Love as a Community	Love Fused with Power
Desired Outcomes	Board members feel valued and connected when their input shapes organizational goals. At the same time, team members benefit from clear guidelines for handling sensitive situations, reducing stress and uncertainty.	Transparency and shared knowledge enable board members to make aligned, collaborative decisions, while consistent policies minimize biases in addressing issues.	Community priorities inform board decisions, leading to inclusive outcomes. A safer environment fosters trust and supports incident reporting, enhancing organizational impact.	Tamarack's approach serves as a benchmark for others, driving systemic improvements across sectors.
Identified Risks	Board members offering diverse perspectives do not feel seen or heard and opt out of offering additional emotional labour in their roles.	Enforcing policies may create emotional and administrative strain on board peers and team members without adequate support.	Board or team members may resist or misunderstand the policy changes, requiring ongoing education and dialogue.	Board power asymmetry is ignored and structures remain status quo, limiting the ability to transform board structures and relationships.

7

Promote transparency, accountability, collaboration, and psychological safety among the Tamarack team and Tamarack members and learners

We aim to create an environment where the Tamarack team and Tamarack members and learners can contribute, share ideas, and deeply collaborate. Through transparent communication, clear accountability structures, and mutual respect, we build trust and strengthen relationships. By nurturing a culture of psychological safety, we foster creativity, innovation, and collective problem-solving.

Why is this important?

This culture is the foundation of Tamarack's vitality and sustainability. It ensures shared understanding and confidence about decisions.

Prioritizing psychological safety supports members to voice their opinions, share ideas, and contribute to decision-making.

How do we assess progress?

Learners from across diverse demographics report high levels of transparency, accountability, and psychological safety when engaging with Tamarack.

Learners from across diverse demographics report having meaningful opportunities to co-create content and share learning stories.

A growing number of Tamarack members report:

- ♡ Recognizing inequitable systems and developing skills to close gaps.
- ♡ Identifying specific equity gaps and systems-level success measures and developing corresponding action plans.
- ♡ Successfully closing equity gaps through policy, practice, and structural changes.



Priority 7 Actions

FY2024-2025

Develop and communicate policies and procedures surrounding instances of harassment and discrimination involving team members.

Develop a list of available supports and a process for how members can access them.

FY2025-2026

Review program and service offerings available to members that centres Francophone inclusion, missing voices, and time zone diversity.

Continue developing a Francophone Strategy that centres Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation to ensure consistent offerings.

FY2026-2027

Engage Tamarack members in revisiting our Community Pathways Map, including to define expectations for how we work toward Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation.

Develop clear communication and reporting processes that better define the relationships we hold and the expectation for them to commit to and uphold Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation values and practices.

Develop Tamarack member supports and resources that centre accessibility and access, which includes financial accessibility. In addition, prioritize space for reflection, co-creation, and feedback.

Create a “spaces protocol” that defines the differences between safe, brave, accountable, and ethical spaces and offers community agreements for each of those spaces. This protocol will apply to team members, board members, and community members.

DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES

Tracking resource and policy page views and click-through rates.

Support request trends and feedback from surveys that can be assessed for improvement insights.

Engagement through participation rates in learning offerings, looking for trends in repeat learners across diverse identities.

Citations for Tamarack's content that can be used to measure Tamarack's influence on equity-related policy shifts.



	Self-Love	Love Others	Love as a Community	Love Fused with Power
Desired Outcomes	A structured approach to harassment and discrimination reduces emotional strain on team members. At the same time, clear resources empower them to engage confidently with the Tamarack network.	Members of the Tamarack network participate in co-design of community agreements.	Transparent mechanisms empower Tamarack members to raise concerns safely, fostering trust, inclusion , and well-being. Clear processes for support access enable Tamarack members to proactively address challenges, benefiting both individuals and the broader community.	Accessible resources promote equity, particularly for equity-denied groups, while Tamarack's practices serve as a model, inspiring systemic improvements across the sector.
Identified Risks	Team members may report feeling isolated and excluded when resources are allocated to equity-denied groups and accomplices working toward equitable systems transformation.	Regular updates and clear communication about available resources are essential to maintain transparency and accuracy. Team members' varying levels of understanding require tailored approaches. Balancing diverse team member priorities with organizational goals may cause tensions or slow decision-making.	The initiative's success depends on adequate and accessible resources that meet the community's needs.	There is incongruity between commitments, action, and Tamarack member priorities leading to the exclusion of Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation from policy, advocacy, and decision-making.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Tamarack has created an Equity, Reconciliation and Belonging Framework and Action Plan with the guidance of Power of Discourse Consulting. By dedicating time and resources to develop and implement this plan, we are publicly showing our commitment to centring Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation in our work, both in closing equity gaps in the communities we serve and within our organization.

Our core principles shape the seven Strategic Priorities outlined in the plan, which align with our 2030 Strategic Plan. Each priority has specific objectives that require collective effort from both our internal team and external partners to achieve success. While we will remain flexible to adapt as needed, this plan serves as a living roadmap for our journey, recognizing the individual responsibilities we all share.

We remain grateful for the relationships, time, knowledges, experiences, and learnings that have not only informed this message, framework, and action plan but that continue to propel us forward. These include those from our team, our board, and our community members. We recognize this as an expression of where we are at this moment in time and invite you to continue being on a journey focused on addressing inequitable systems across communities.

If you have any questions about this document or our *pérégrination* journey and commitment to achieve equitable outcomes, please contact our Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation team at tamarack@tamarackcommunity.ca.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: OUR PROCESS

Between March 2023 and September 2024, the Tamarack Institute invested in an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Justice, and Reconciliation (EDIJR) audit in collaboration with [Power of Discourse Consulting](#).

This audit resulted in several findings both in areas where Tamarack is excelling and areas where there is room for improvement. Recommendations were made to address gaps and areas for improvement at all levels of the organization.

Who was consulted throughout this process?

- ♡ Board members (April 2023 – September 2024)
- ♡ Team members (June 2023 – September 2024)
- ♡ Tamarack members and learners (July – September 2023)

How was feedback gathered from Tamarack's community?

- ♡ Anonymous surveys (in English and French)
- ♡ 1:1 interviews (in English and French)
- ♡ Listening sessions
- ♡ Document reviews

Through these various engagements, it became clear that at the centre of our Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation work there is a deep connection to community and a commitment to ensure that:

- ♡ All of Tamarack's team members, board members, member communities, and broader Tamarack network feel included and welcomed and have access to equal opportunities to bring their gifts and passions to shape the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Reconciliation goals we have for Tamarack's internal and external community today and into the future.
- ♡ Tamarack is contributing to closing equity gaps in outcomes identified by communities.



What do we care deeply about?

“Building a sense of belonging through inclusive and vibrant communities”

“Ending working poverty (deep, working, racialized, Indigenous)”

“Ending poverty in all its forms”

“Youth as the future - working alongside Elders and ancestors”

“Our people”

“Reciprocity”

“Building connections and community resilience”

“Intersectionality (including language)”

“Moral and ethical obligations”

“Policy advocacy”

“Caring for our climate”

“Capacity building”

“Deep relationships”

“Staff are fulfilled by their work and feel they are contributing to Tamarack’s strategic goals”

Figure 1: Areas that Tamarack Institute team members indicated that the organization cares about.

Between December 2023 and August 2024, Tamarack organized sessions for team members to consider, validate, and reflect on the audit findings. We also invited team members to lead the transparent and sustainable implementation of recommendations closest to their work.

As we move into implementation, we've assigned each team member at least one role in decision-making and use a shared work plan process to provide transparency about who is holding what pieces of work and the identified timeline to complete each action.



APPENDIX 2: THE DARCI FRAMEWORK

One tool to build a culture of distributed, intentional, and clear decision-making will be the DARCI (Decision-Makers, Accountable, Responsible, Consulted, Informed) Framework, which will be communicated using our shared work plan process. Throughout the process, we requested Power of Discourse to include the DARCI Framework to support decision-making and role clarification across the team.

The DARCI Framework

A tool used to identify the various roles and responsibilities to achieve success in a project

Decision Makers	Accountable	Responsible	Consulted	Informed
A short list of individuals who have the ultimate and final approval or veto for decisions	The sole person fully accountable for making the project happen. They should also part of the decision-makers group.	The individuals responsible for doing the work on the project. They have the ability to deal with roadblocks along the way and ask questions to ensure the project makes progress.	The specific group from whom input will be solicited throughout the different stages of the project.	The individuals who are kept apprised of relevant developments throughout the project.

Figure 2: The DARCI Framework

This Equity, Reconciliation and Belonging Framework and Action Plan outlines how Tamarack will work toward achieving the overarching goals derived from the Final Equity Audit Report.