



# 2020 Diversity & Inclusion Report

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**Diversity** refers to variety and difference. As a concept, it includes characteristics such as race, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, socio-economic status, age and religion. United Way's approach to diversity considers how these characteristics, along with different perspectives, skills, learning and thinking styles, manifest uniquely in each person.



**Inclusion** is about incorporating diverse perspectives, interests, ideas and needs into the culture and practices of an organization in a way that values, respects and supports people.



United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) has a long history of working towards more equitable communities and since 2009, we have taken deliberate steps to ensure that our organizational culture reflects that work.

In 2009, the first iteration of a cross-functional committee was launched and tasked with embedding diversity and inclusion in all facets of United Way life. The mandate of the committee was redefined in the context of our 2020 organizational priority on equity. The evolution of United Way Canada's Equity Framework, an equity context paper that was completed in March 2021, and business plans for 2021-22 have culminated in the development of an Equity and Reconciliation Action Plan which embeds equity across all functions across United Way Greater Toronto operations. The committee's focus has transitioned from a broad mandate that looked at internal culture and operations, including work with external stakeholders, to one centered on supporting our workplace environment and employees as equity is operationalized across all department plans.

With this focus, the committee has been renamed the Reconciliation, Equity, Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (READI) Committee. The 3 key goals for the Committee are to:

- Support a shared language, learning mindset and open dialogue on issues relating to equity to help UWGT create a more equitable workplace culture.
- Leverage internal and external expertise to share knowledge and best practice examples that support UWGT staff and volunteers to apply an equity lens in their responsibilities.
- Strengthen a common internal understanding of equity, poverty and related issues that reflect the communities we serve.

This decade of cultural transformation has created a strong foundation as we now shift to address issues of systemic discrimination, including anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, in new and deeper ways. This is a journey, that we are all in together. It will be tough, and we are all accountable.

We, as members of the READI Committee, are honoured to be part of this work to contribute to our next collective phase of action.

Annique Farrell	Robin Crombie	Joan Taylor	Alpa Patel	Raj Sooknanan
Adam Hess	Seba Jessri	Nicole McVan	Lyndsay Nugent	Suzanne Justin
Suman Hota	Seigo Nishijima	Rowena Odina	Evon Smith	Lorraine Yang
Tony Lo	Anita Stellinga	Stephanie Procyk	Amanda Stephens	Colin Jenkins
Rubaiyat Karim				

## Over a decade of commitment to D&I

Diversity and Inclusiveness included in organizational values

5 publicly available D&I reports on culture and employee survey results

D&I considered from a geographic perspective after mergers among United Ways in Toronto, York & Peel Region

Diversity and Inclusion embedded in cultural behaviours

 **50** D&I Team Volunteers

 **130** D&I Learning Opportunities



## Employees share their thoughts

(taken from comments in the survey)

*"In our town halls, when you look at a filled room of colleagues, am always so proud to see a diverse representation."*

*"Was very struck by the session hosted by Black colleagues around the time of George Floyd's death. Unbelievably powerful session. But it really showed in a whole new light what is carried around by our Black colleagues and the reality of their situation on a day to day basis."*

*"We've been on this journey for a number of years and I am so grateful for the support/buy-in from all levels of the organization. Now it's time for our actions to reflect our values, for theory and practice to meet to a greater, more significant degree."*

*"Most recently, in the context of anti-Black racism conversations, I see colleagues trying to learn and support one another in their learning, people genuinely caring for one another and hearing and recognizing the experiences of our Black and Indigenous colleagues."*

*"Inclusion is about belonging. UW does a great job at creating space for staff to connect. In our new virtual reality, UW has encouraged staff to put their ideas forward and create space for people to connect and learn together. The way we recognize staff accomplishments also creates a sense of inclusion."*

*"United Way is uniquely placed because of its work with donors and community agencies and can be a huge influencer to bring about racial equity in workplaces it works with."*

*"We don't get to pretend that we've solved issues around diversity and inclusion because we work at a progressive employer in the social services. We need to accept that this work is continuous, and we can't rest on what we've achieved."*

## This Survey

This is our 6<sup>th</sup> D&I employee survey since 2009. It was conducted late summer of 2020 prior to the adoption of United Way Canada's Equity Framework which informed the development of UWGT's Equity and Reconciliation Action Plan. Our response rate was 88%, which was an 8% increase from the previous 2018 survey. It's the highest participation rate we've had since we started doing the Diversity and Inclusion employee surveys a decade ago.

The survey covers employee demographics and responses to statements relating to diversity and inclusion. The responses were then disaggregated to the demographics to provide insights into specific groups.

For the D&I statements, respondents were asked to provide a rating based on a scale of 1 to 5. The positive response percentage refers to responses of "4" and "5". D&I statements were disaggregated by demographic data where confidentiality of respondents could be protected (greater than 5 responses in a category).

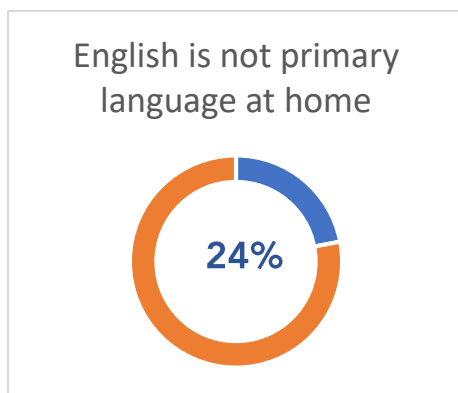
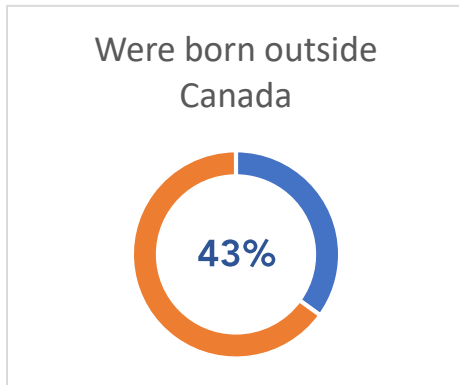
For the first time in 2020, experiences of Black and Indigenous respondents were reported on separately from racialized respondents. While racism impacts most racialized people, the specific experiences of different groups vary widely. Currently, Indigenous and Black peoples are disproportionately experiencing the extent of systemic racism and discrimination in Canada. The intention with identifying categories was not to spotlight individuals but rather to raise and address systemic issues as experienced by specific communities.

The objective of the survey was threefold. First, it was to understand employee identities and the issues that we face. Second, to separate experiences of our Black, Racialized and Indigenous colleagues because we have a responsibility to understand why and how racism lives within UWGT. Third, to have conversations that help us generate ideas on how to address issues that are surfaced in the results.

We are not immune to issues we face in our communities and we remain committed to understanding and addressing those issues in clear measurable ways. The responses mean we must dig deeper and strengthen our commitment to equity and inclusion across the organization. We will be thoughtful, intentional and ensure we are engaging colleagues in deepening understanding and outlining solutions as it relates to equity, diversity and inclusion.



## Who we are:

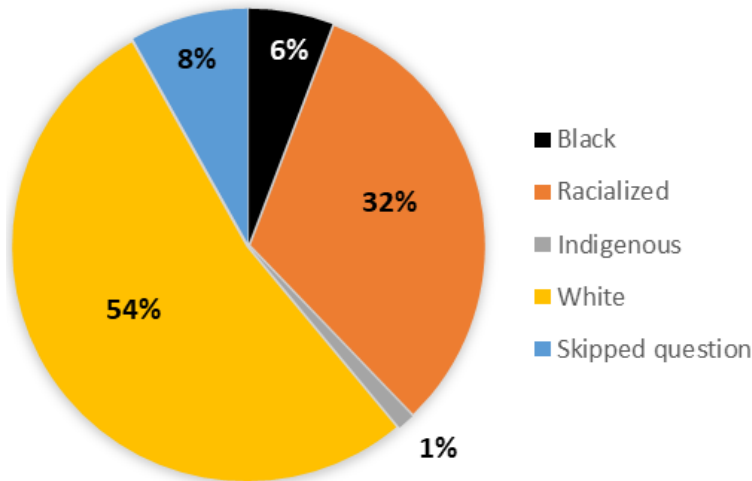


### Observations:

- Percentages are about the same from 2018 except for the percentage of newcomers, which went down from 7%.



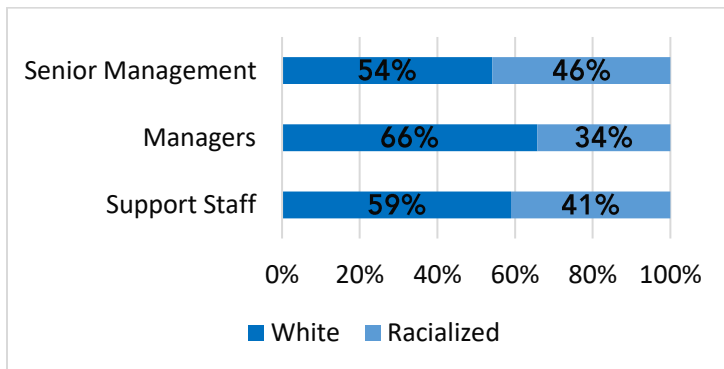
## Race Identity:



### Observations:

- 39% of respondents have identified as racialized. Of those racialized respondents, 6% identified as Black and 1% identified as Indigenous.
- This is the first time the survey included an option to identify as Black. There is a higher percentage of racialized employees among our recent hires compared to those who have been working longer at UWGT.
- Non-racialized employees tended to have more positive responses.

## Race Identity by Job Level

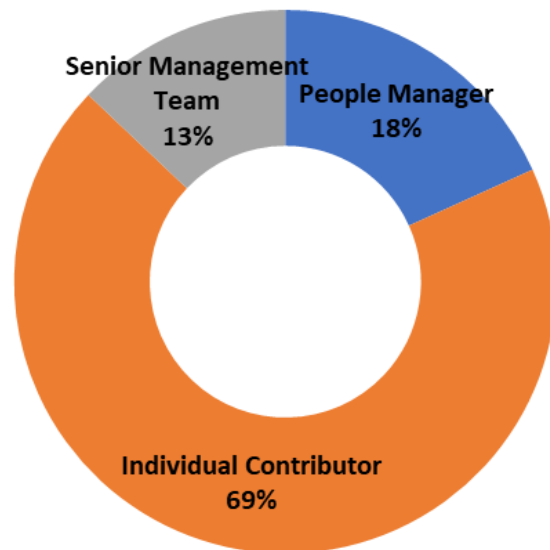


Note: Senior Management refers to respondents from the Director level up to the Senior Executive Team.

### Observations:

- The Senior Management level has the highest percentage representation of racialized employees (including Black and Indigenous), with 11 out of 24 or 46%.

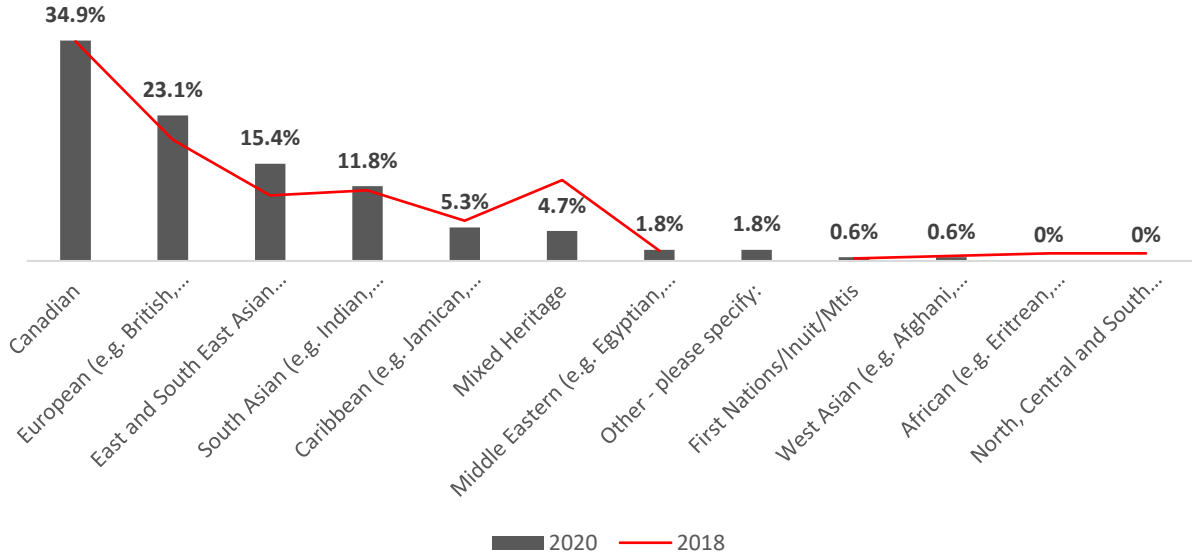
## Job Type:



### Observations:

- The Senior Management Team had more positive responses.
- Overall, people managers had the lowest positive response across job levels.
- We acknowledge that people managers face the challenge of not just reflecting their own individual experiences but also feeling a responsibility for supporting their teams.

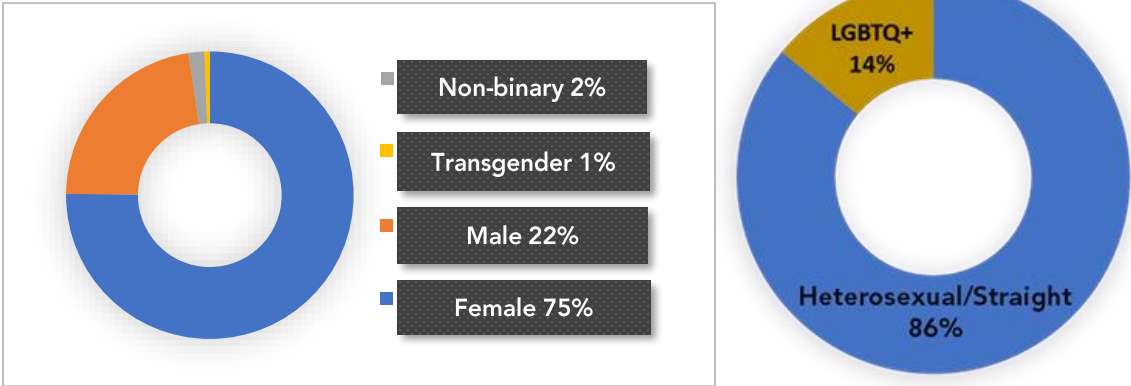
### Ethnic Origin:



#### Observations:

- The highest increases were seen in the East and South East Asian (+5%) and European (+4%) ethnic origin.

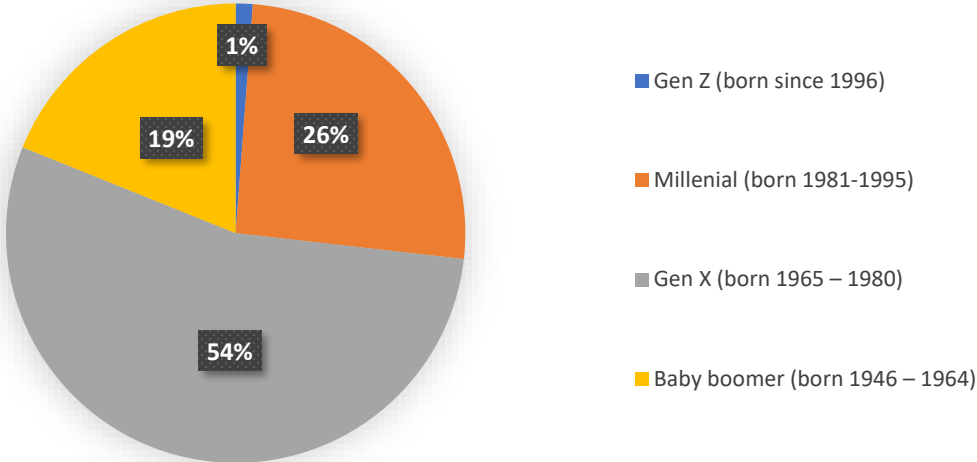
### Gender and Sexual Orientation:



#### Observations:

- Overall, males had more positive responses than females and fewer neutral responses.
- The proportion of non-binary and transgender is too small to disaggregate and report on with confidence.

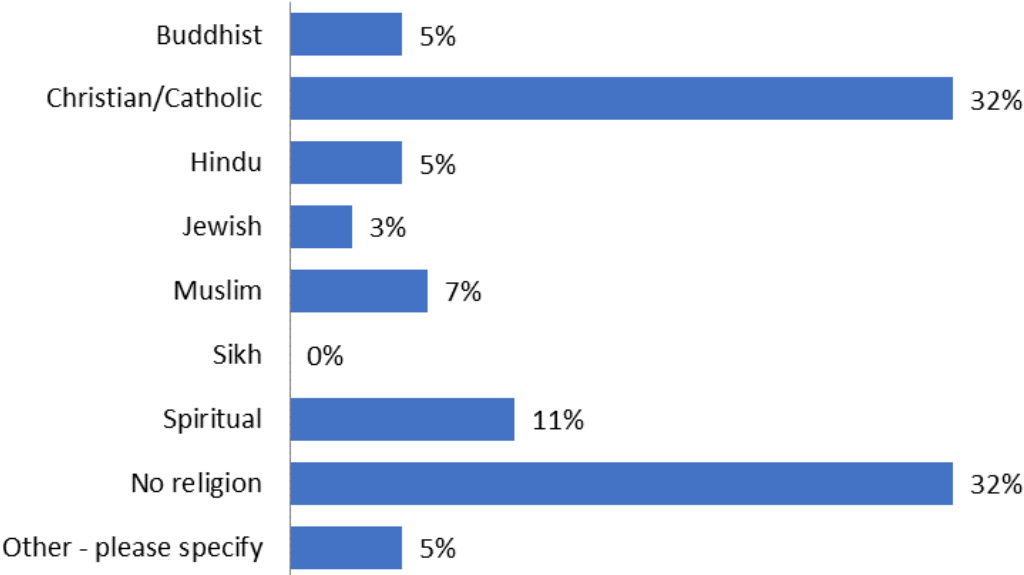
### Generations:



### Observations:

- This is the first D&I survey where we’ve had representation from Gen Z.

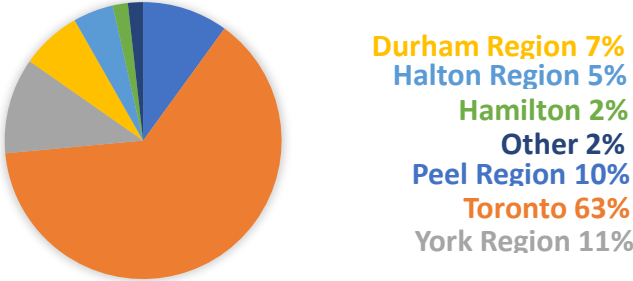
### Faith or Religion:



### Observations:

- People who identified as Christian/Catholic, Spiritual or No religion had higher positive responses compared to other faith identities.

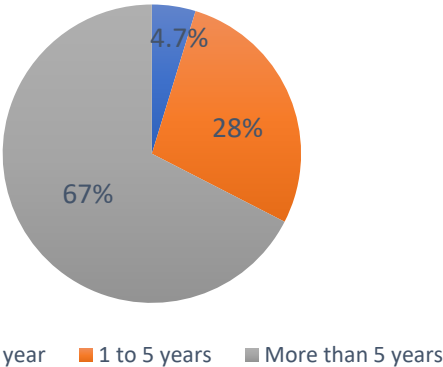
### Where we live:



### Observations:

- Since 2018, we’ve seen a 1.9% increase in respondents living in Peel region, a 6% decrease in respondents living in Toronto, and a 1.8% decrease in respondents living in York Region.

### Years at United Way:



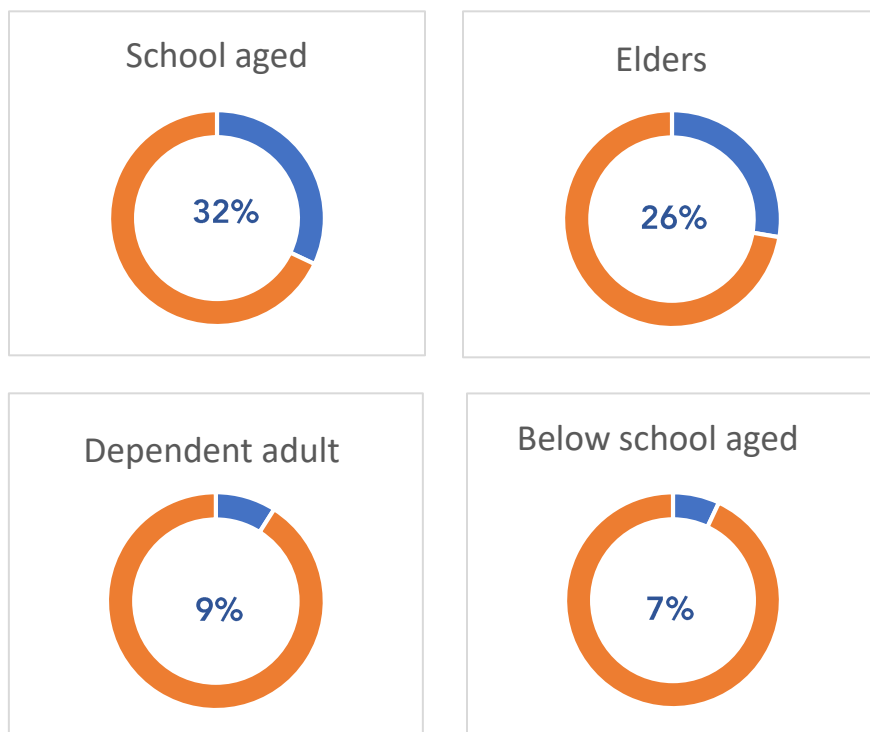
### Observations:

- The number of employees with less than 1-year service has gone down by 9% since 2018.

## Disability:

- 6% of respondents reported having a disability.
- 64% of those who reported having a disability said this was a mental (mental health or learning) disability. This number has almost doubled since 2018.
- 53% of those with a disability are satisfied with accommodation at work, down from 86% in 2018.
- Those who reported having a disability tended to be less positive in their responses.

## Caregiving Responsibilities:



### Observations:

- We have included this question in the survey, given the demands of caregiving responsibilities while working in a virtual environment during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Some respondents may have dual or multiple caregiving responsibilities.
- 59% of female respondents have caregiving responsibilities compared to 47% of male respondents.

## Survey results

The next few graphs will show responses to the 12 D&I statements grouped into categories and compare results to both the 2018 survey and the first survey in 2009.

- A notable difference in positive responses across key demographics such as race identity, job level, gender and sexual orientation was observed.
- The survey doesn't tell us why scores change over time.
- Changes may be due to changes in who is responding, changes in our social environment that make it easier for people to express opinions, and/or changes in people's experiences.
- Conversations are critical to help us understand why change is occurring.

### Focus & Commitment

United Way's focus on Diversity and Inclusion is important.



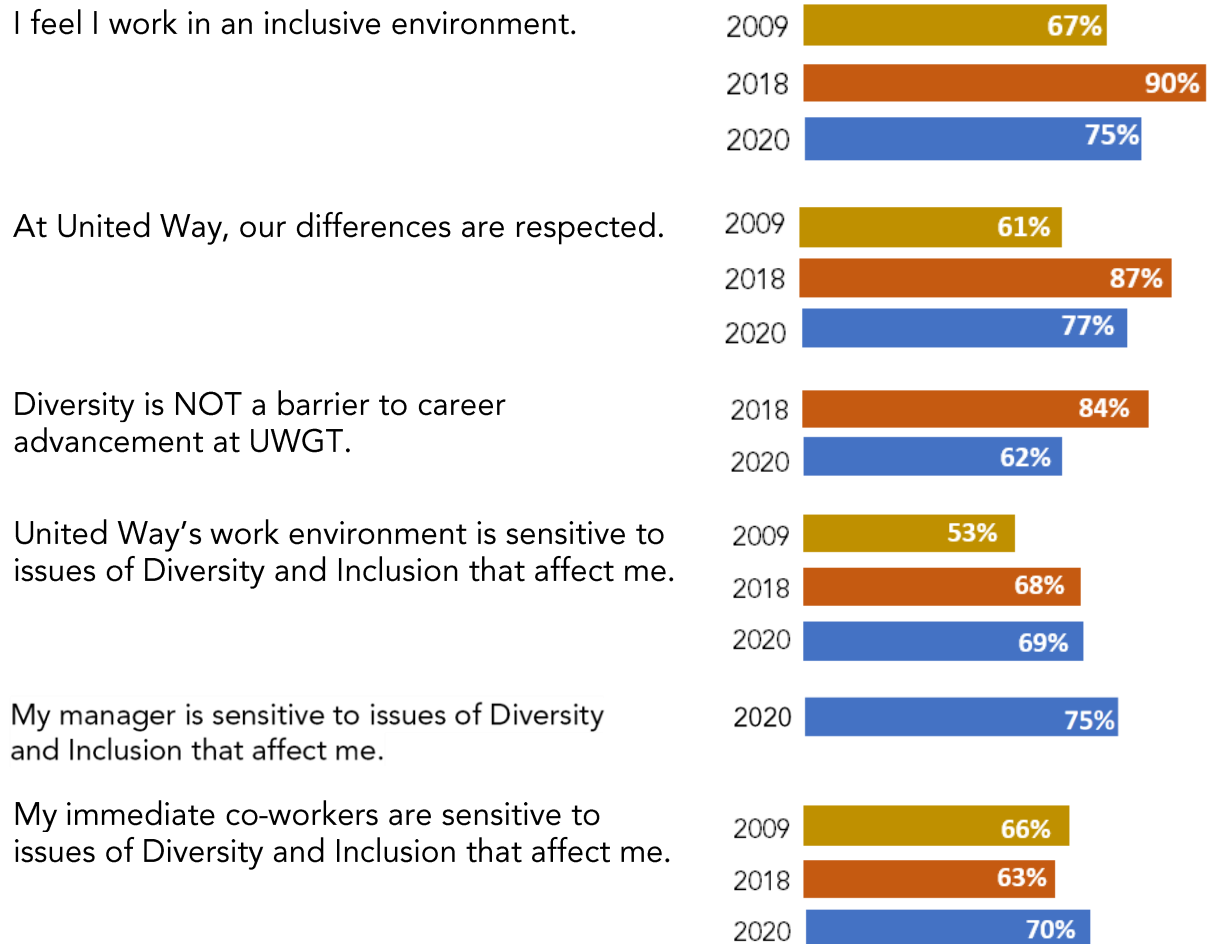
United Way is committed to promoting Diversity and Inclusion.



#### Observations:

- The positive responses to both statements have dropped and are even lower than the first survey in 2009.
- Heterosexual respondents and males had more positive responses to the second statement. Buddhists, Jewish and Muslim respondents had less positive responses.
- For the first statement, racialized respondents had 88% positive response compared to 97% for White respondents. For the second statement, racialized respondents had 72% positive response compared to 87% for White respondents.

## Work Environment



### Observations:

- There have been significant drops in positive responses to working in an inclusive environment, and respect for differences.
- Those who reported having a disability were less positive for both these statements. They were also less positive on the work environment being sensitive to D&I issues.
- The most significant decrease was on diversity not being a barrier to career advancement at United Way. This is also the lowest positive score across all statements. Heterosexuals and males had more positive responses to this statement. 74% of non-racialized staff had a positive response compared to 49% of racialized staff.
- This is the first time we included a statement on manager's sensitivity to D&I issues. LGBTQ+ respondents had more positive response to this statement.
- For all these statements, the positive responses of racialized respondents are significantly lower than White respondents.
- Sensitivity of co-workers to D&I issues has increased from the 2018 survey. Baby Boomers had less positive responses compared to other generations.
- Hindu, Jewish and Muslim respondents also had less positive responses than other faith identities.

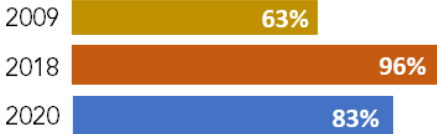


## Skills and Knowledge

I feel I have the skills and knowledge I need related to Diversity and Inclusion to be effective in my job.



I am aware of my rights and the expectations for my behaviour under UWGT Non-Discrimination and Harassment policy.



I am provided with opportunities to increase my Diversity and Inclusion knowledge and skills at UWGT.

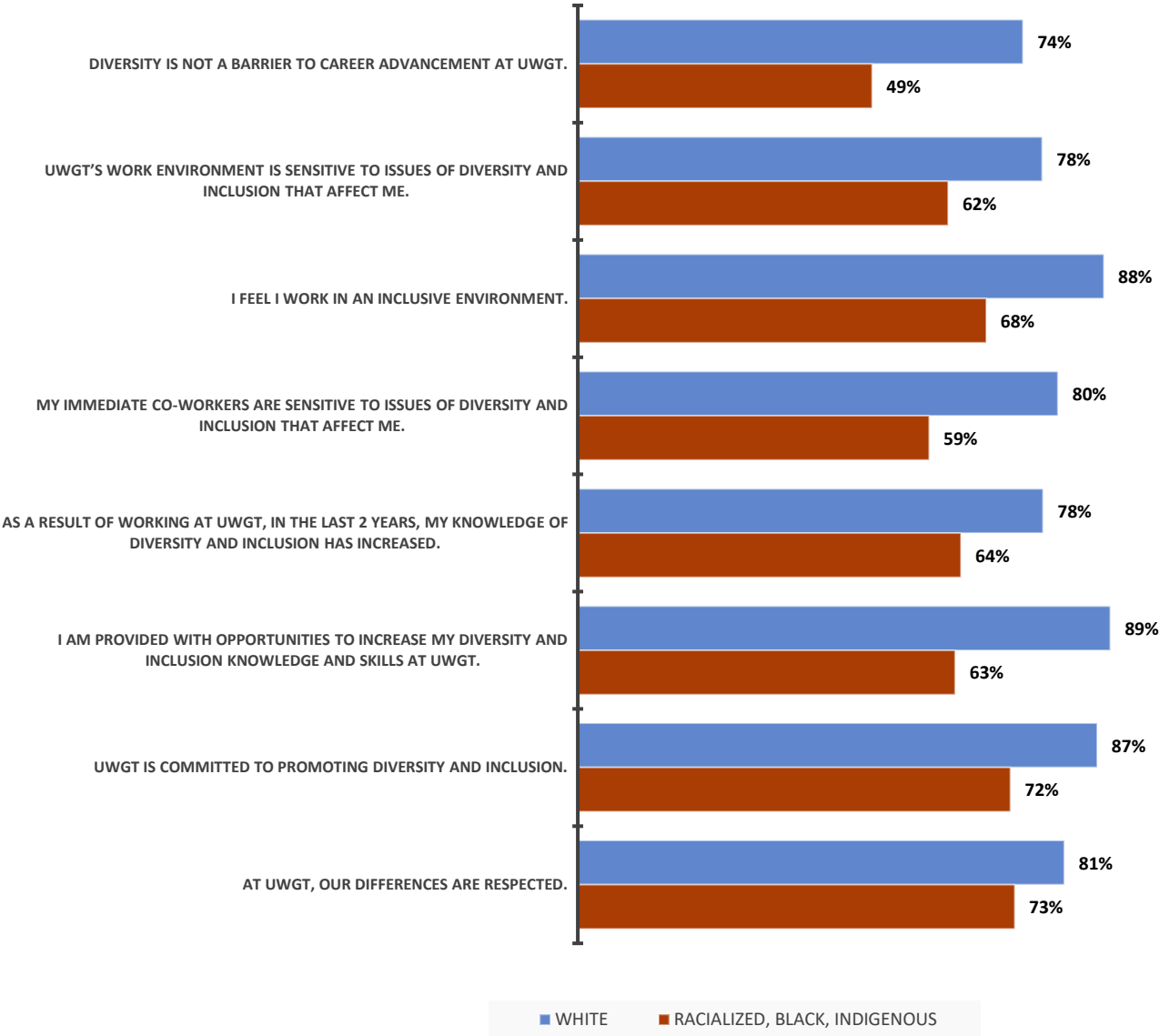


As a result of working at UWGT, in the last 2 years, my knowledge of Diversity and Inclusion has increased.



### Observations:

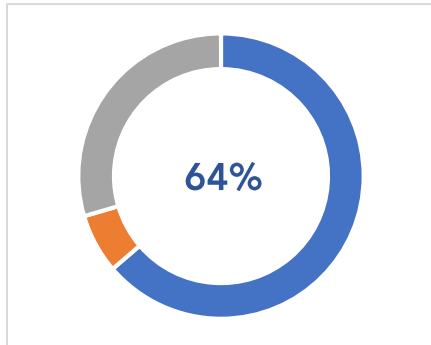
- LGBTQ+ respondents had more positive responses to having the skills and knowledge related to D&I.
- Black respondents had 90% positive response to being aware of rights and expectations compared to 88% of White respondents and 78% of other racialized respondents.
- Immigrants had less positive responses to the second and third statements.
- While the score on the fourth statement may have decreased, this does not mean that knowledge has decreased; it may be that it's not coming from UWGT.
- For all these statements, the positive responses of racialized respondents are significantly lower than White respondents.



**Observations:**

- This graph shows a comparison of responses of White respondents with racialized respondents on the 8 statements that had their lowest positive response.
- Positive responses of racialized respondents are much lower than White respondents.
- While we were not able to look at responses from Indigenous respondents because the sample size was too small, when we looked at responses of Black respondents, positive scores were even lower than racialized respondents combined.
- Disaggregated data shows that Black respondents had an overwhelmingly negative response to the statement of diversity not being a barrier to career advancement at UWGT.

## Positive examples of Diversity & Inclusion



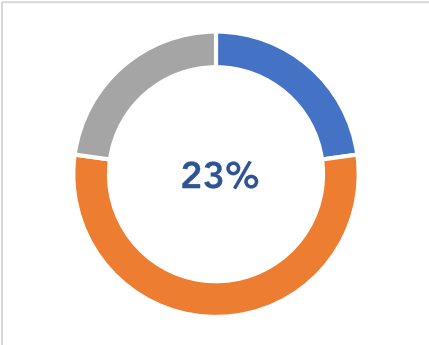
123 people (64% of all respondents) have witnessed positive examples of inclusion in action within United Way. 30% neither said yes or no. This is a significant decrease from the 162 people or 91% of respondents in the 2018 survey.

Examples from the comments provided by survey respondents include:

- Discussions on Anti-Black racism after the murder of George Floyd
- Opportunity to participate in Pride session, open dialogues, learning sessions, book reading and discussion
- Creating a safe space to share ideas, connect and learn together
- Learning about Indigenous history, Truth and Reconciliation, Indigenous ways of being and collaboration
- Diversity of employees, more representation from LGBTQ and youth
- Colleagues sharing their sexual orientation without fear of repercussions
- Individual accommodation and support
- Multicultural celebrations, religious holidays, prayer room
- Communicating our stand on equity, diversity and inclusion with external stakeholders
- Funding for Indigenous, Black, grassroots groups
- Offer of alternative options and supports for UWGT events and communications



### D&I Concerns



44 people (23% of all respondents) had a personal concern related to D&I compared to 20% of respondents in 2018.

The nature of concern was about:

In insensitive comment or behaviour	57%
Exclusionary practices	20%
Systemic issue	17%
Discrimination or abusive comment or behaviour	6%

Majority of the issues were related to race or ethnicity, position level within UWGT, culture, accent/language and gender.

Reactions to the personal concern with D&I were mostly irritation or discomfort that issues were not resolved at the level that was expected. For those who took action, there was a 21% satisfaction with response and even those who were satisfied felt the issue wasn't fully resolved.

More than half did not take action because they didn't feel comfortable, didn't know how to respond or felt it was too minor. Those who did take action mainly did it personally. The rest got help from their manager, their colleague or a member of the People & Culture team.

## Appetite for learning

Topics of interest:

<b>Anti-Black racism</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Racial Equity</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Anti-Indigenous racism</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Anti-Oppression</b>	<b>52%</b>
Opportunities for dialogue among colleagues on life experiences	45%
Race (e.g. cultural competency)	45%
Gender Identity and expression	34%
Barrier-free recruitment practices	33%
How other employers address D&I	31%
Intergenerational workforce	31%
Government policy related to issues of D&I	25%
Disability	22%
Sexual orientation	20%
Religion	15%
Other - please specify	3%

Micro-aggression training was mentioned several times in the comments. Requiring mandatory attendance in sessions, particularly for the Senior Executive Team and Senior Management Team, was also expressed by several employees.

Preferred methods of learning in order of preference are:

- Courses, seminars, lunch & learns
- Departmental or team meetings
- Facilitated cross-departmental discussions
- Self-study, recommended readings
- E-learning, e.g. webinars, online courses
- D&I Toolkit options
- Role play

Other suggestions included asking colleagues who represent a diversity aspect share their personal experience, bringing in diverse speakers, and equipping people managers to lead D&I strategies and conversations in individual teams.

## Focus on...

Issues at UWGT reflect the systemic issues within society at large. Many scores dropped which could signal more openness, honesty and sense of agency. In addition to this, pivotal moments in 2020 including the strength of the Black Lives Matter movement are potential catalysts for the responses from the survey. We are accepting the results, recognizing there are systemic issues we need to address within the context of UWGT and focusing on the following areas based on the results and comments from the survey.

### Anti-Black Racism

After the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 25, 2020 and the protests and pain that followed, we paused and reflected on the very real consequences of continuing injustice in our society and our institutions. Though confident in our relations with community, and the history of our work, we reacted by listening first before moving to action.

- Our D&I Committee hosted an open dialogue on race and equity with 117 employees in early June where colleagues shared their experiences with racism with a focus on anti-Black racism.
- A separate session was held with an external facilitator to provide more focused supports for our Black employees.
- A new resource library was developed with materials shared on our intranet specifically about anti-Black racism.
- Our CEO, Daniele Zanotti released [statements of support and solidarity](#) in June about *Standing together with community to build a future free from racism* with a focus on anti-Black racism and again in October on *Speaking out against hate and bigotry in our community*.
- At Town Halls in June and July 2020, we made space to reflect on our personal and organizational commitment to equity.
- We are dedicating resources to doing this work effectively with expert consultant Nicole Bonnie to support organization-wide learning that includes our Board of Trustees, and by hiring a Senior Manager, Equity and Anti-Racism to focus on how we can ensure greater equity in our community investments.
- We published 4 issues of a Black History Month digest in February 2021.

## Anti-Indigenous Racism



Illustration commissioned by United Way from Indigenous artist Chief Lady Bird accompanied an article on [why land acknowledgements matter as featured on LocalLove.ca](https://www.locallove.ca/why-land-acknowledgements-matter)

United Way remains focused on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action number 92 on business and reconciliation. Over the last two years, we have continued to employ a Senior Manager from within the Indigenous community to lead our work on Indigenous Collaboration.

Recent strides on our work with Indigenous communities across the GTA include:

- Responding to the COVID-19 crisis with focused Indigenous community outreach to equitably distribute funds to Indigenous organizations new to UWGT, including the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation.
- Partnership with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (T.A.S.S.C.) to distribute UWGT local love funding to Indigenous-led organizations, many of which were new to receiving funding from United Way.
- Two Indigenous paid interns were involved in our Indigenous Collaboration work and two Indigenous seasonal employees supported our 2019 fundraising campaign.
- Stories about Indigenous history, people and community solutions are prominently featured across our external media with a range of topics from [land acknowledgements](#) to how [Indigenous youth are fighting the opioid crisis](#).

Truth-telling and reconciliation efforts within our own organization:

- More than 150 employees have participated in formal cultural awareness trainings to date.
- Internal events recognize days like National Indigenous Peoples Day, Orange Shirt Day and opportunities for employees to purchase arts and goods from local Indigenous artists.
- Land acknowledgements are encouraged to reflect our commitment to reconciliation and personalized to our place and context.

- We are engaging Our Children's Medicine to work on sharing new job postings with members of the Indigenous community.

### Virtual Indigenous Collaboration learning series

Our four-part series offered a variety of opportunities to learn more about the lasting impacts of the residential school system in Canada on Indigenous people across the GTA. We started with a grounding lesson on Truth and Reconciliation followed by a virtual tour of the Mohawk Institute, the longest-running residential school and closest to the GTA. We engaged in dialogue on the impacts of historical harms against Indigenous people at an internal book club event with Jesse Thistle based on his memoir *From the Ashes*. Our series culminated in an event recognizing Orange Shirt Day attended by more than 50 colleagues. And we continue to raise our cultural awareness by promoting Indigenous authors and community participation to learn more about Indigenous people living across the GTA today.



Pictured left: Gift of appreciation presented to Senior Manager, Indigenous Collaboration Janine Manning

*Your support and guidance lead to a successful application and we can't thank you enough. The difference this funding makes has a huge impact on our own on-reserve members. The funding will allow our members to have the ability to complete a bulk shop and create food security.*

Chief Donna Big Canoe  
Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation



## COVID-19

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, we shifted to full remote work. Many of our colleagues faced new or deeper personal and family stresses, challenges with mental health, and needs to balance caregiving responsibilities with work.

UWGT has provided flexibility in work hours, new technology, an office furniture loan program, allowances for cell phone use, workshops on parenting in a pandemic, brought staff together to share experiences of elder and childcare, and moved all wellness initiatives online.

As we continue to work from home until January 2022, re-opening offices only if the pandemic is declared over or if number of COVID-19 cases significantly decreases in our regions, our Business Recovery Team sends out emails, providing status updates on our return to the physical office. We have informed our employees that we will take a voluntary, staggered, cohorted approach to our return to the physical office.

With no Pride parade to join in 2020, 53 employees came together on Zoom to learn about the bathhouse raids of the 1980's, discuss allyship and celebrate Pride with a guest appearance by Lady Shug, a Diné non-binary drag artist from the Navajo Nation in New Mexico.



In response to the impact of COVID 19, United Way has been supporting those who have been disproportionately impacted, including women, Black, Indigenous and racialized groups. This includes providing new and additional funding to people and places that need help the most.

## Building Equity Mindedness

With other United Ways across Canada, we have adopted an Equity framework from United Way Worldwide and are developing an Equity and Reconciliation Action Plan that will impact all areas of our work across 7 levers from fundraising to data collection to our investments in community. Equally important is how our culture will transform as we deepen our understanding of equity as employees, with our volunteers and all our stakeholders.

- A draft equity vision statement and guiding principles has been crafted and is currently in the process of being reviewed by staff, board and committees and community.
- We have completed an organization wide assessment on our current state that has helped inform the destination, 2021 tactics and metrics in our Equity and Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Beyond our READI committee whose focus is on internal culture, we have a new employee group named the Equity Reconciliation Action Group that includes employees leading equity initiatives along all 7 levers of our equity framework.
- We have entered an employer partnership with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion allows our employees to access webinars, toolkits and reading materials to strengthen their equity-mindedness.

## The Way Forward

### A message from Daniele



Friends,

Equity is implicit in how we achieve community impact. For over ten years now, we have built a solid foundation of diversity and inclusion on which to deepen and strengthen equity at UWGT.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly exposed the deepening inequalities in our communities and we're seeing people who are marginalized bearing the brunt as racialized and Indigenous communities are falling further behind. On top of that, the increasing threat to people's lives motivated by hate, bigotry and divisive political agendas cannot be ignored. I know that resilience will carry us all forward, and it is in these moments that we need to reach out and strengthen our bonds.

I'm proud that we've spoken out against anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, anti-East Asian racism, and against hate and violence that endanger individuals, families and neighbourhoods. I have been asking myself so many questions about my own journey to lead us to more equitable outcomes. I recognize that there is so much more that I need to learn. As we've all been on our diversity and inclusion journey together, I do know, without a doubt, that I have to keep learning on my own, and collectively with you.

Our survey results tell us that we have much work to do to build an equitable employee experience. We have shared results internally with our teams and continue to create spaces for deeper listening both at the organizational and team levels to inform the path forward. We continue to deepen our understanding of the core issues; build our organizational capacity to focus on race, equity and inclusion; and create a supportive and thriving workplace, a truly inclusive organization so we can drive more equitable community impact.

Thanks for joining me. For leaning in. In your own way. It's the only way we can be truly united.

Always, and with you,

**Daniele Zanotti**  
President & CEO  
United Way Greater Toronto