

# Everyone Counts Census 2024 Frequent Questions & Answers

## **Why is RRU collecting Equity and Diversity Data?**

Gathering data on current employees is critical to accurately gauging the representation of groups historically under-represented in the post-secondary education sector, namely, persons with disabilities and neurodiverse individuals, Indigenous peoples, members of visible minorities, and sexual orientation and gender minorities.

## **How was this census designed?**

We comprehensively reviewed the best practices for data collection in post-secondary education institutions at provincial and national levels. We used that learning to develop and design the questionnaire, define the strategy to manage demographic data and privacy, and report findings. We also consulted guidelines from Statistic Canada and involved various RRU stakeholders in defining terminology and wording of questions.

## **Do I have to complete this census?**

Responding to the census is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or answer any question. If you decide not to participate, you will be requested to state so explicitly. You won't need to provide any reason to justify your decision. Please be mindful that your responses will contribute to generating an accurate picture of the diversity of our workplace, which is critical to removing barriers to ensure the hiring and retention of a diverse workforce.

## **Why self-identify?**

Your information will help us assess whether our membership mirrors our local, provincial, and national settings and develop plans and strategies to manage demographic gaps. We recognize that self-identifying can be uncomfortable or difficult for different reasons. If you do not wish to disclose self-identification information, you can choose "I do not wish to answer this question" for any or all questions.

## **What information is the census collecting?**

In alignment with other post-secondary institutions in the province and nation, we will gather data on gender identity, Indigenous status, race/ethnicity/colour, and disabilities. In addition, the census will collect information on sexual orientation, place of origin, language, religion, age, neurodiversity, and family status since these categories are linked to systemic barriers in the post-secondary education sector.

### **Why are the questions worded in the way they are written?**

The census uses terminology provided by Statistics Canada, the BC Human Rights Commission, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other post-secondary institutions at provincial and national levels. RRU subject matter experts reviewed the census. Aligning our census questions and terminology with those agencies/organizations' data collection tools will allow us to compare our demographic information with provincial and national benchmarks.

### **What does the census mean by "visible minorities," and why is it using this phrase?**

RRU recognizes that race is a socially constructed concept linked to processes of othering, marginalization and oppression. The census defines visible minorities in alignment with the Federal Employment Equity Act: "persons other than Indigenous persons, who are non-Caucasian or non-white in colour." We recognize that people identified as "visible minorities" in Canada have historically faced challenges accessing resources, opportunities and power. Creating a truly integrated organization must start with efforts to identify and address these challenges directly and meaningfully. We acknowledge that the term "visible minorities" does not identify a uniform group and, as such, has limitations. We complement this concept with those of place of origin, colour and ethnicity to grasp demographic representation more accurately.

### **Why is this census asking about language?**

This information will provide a profile of the linguistic diversity of the RRU workforce. We will use this information to assess the need for capacity building in the area of intercultural competency.

### **Why is this census asking about family status?**

We will use the information on dependents to design accommodation strategies and flexible work arrangements metrics.

### **Why is this census asking about sexual minorities and gender minorities?**

A sexual minority refers to people who self-identify as other than heterosexual, the most dominant sexual orientation. Gender minority relates to people whose gender identity differs from conventional expectations of masculinity or femininity. This includes transgender, gender-fluid, agender, and 2 Spirits. RRU is including these questions in the census because we recognize that persons who identify as a sexual minority and/or a gender minority have historically experienced bias in society and the workplace. This information will help remove barriers, enhance safety, and open new opportunities for everyone.

**I have been accommodated in the workplace. Should I still identify as a person with a disability?**

Yes, all persons with disabilities, including those who have already been accommodated in the workplace, are asked to self-identify. This information will help us create programs and strategies that improve the workplace experience of RRU employees.

**Can I identify in more than one group?**

You may self-identify in as many groups as they apply to you.

**Is this census anonymous?**

This census is confidential but not anonymous. Since we will collect the information via Survey Monkey, this platform will access your IP address. However, the census administrators won't have access to your IP Address and won't be able to identify respondents.

**Will my privacy be compromised in any way by providing this information?**

No. RRU has adopted some measures to protect your privacy. First, access to the raw data is limited to the census administrators (the Associate Director of Human Rights and EDI and the AVP Human Resources). Second, the information you will provide won't allow the census administrators to identify you. Third, RRU will only use data in aggregate form when developing initiatives to remove barriers to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce and drafting reports. Fourth, RRU won't release any information that could identify any respondent. Sixth, RRU will only generate reports on questions with up to five responses to protect the individuals' identities. Seventh, as the census will contain general comment text boxes, the census administrators will redact any personally identifying information noted.

**How will RRU benefit from this census?**

By completing this census, you will help expand our knowledge of the current workforce composition. For example, the data may identify if any gaps exist in the representation of the historically marginalized groups within RRU's workforce. Your replies to open-ended questions may provide insights into barriers that contribute to these gaps.

**How will I benefit from this census?**

The census will familiarize you with the lived experiences of other members of the RRU community. You will have concrete information on demographic representation and first-hand insights into our inclusion priorities. Likewise, you will have access to data to participate in the design of your unit equity plan. If you are a member of a historically marginalized group, the census will provide you with an accurate assessment of your group's representation in the university membership.

### **How will RRU distribute the census?**

Every unit will have a day and time to respond to the census. You will receive a calendar invite with the census link. On average, answering the census will take between 5 and 10 minutes.

### **What options are available to me to complete the census?**

You can complete the census electronically via a web link or in hard-copy format.

#### **Via the web-link**

The electronic version of the EDI census will be built using the Survey Monkey tool and accessed via a web link. Your supervisor will send this link along with a calendar invite to all your unit members.

#### **Via hard-copy census**

For employees who would prefer to complete the census in hard copy, you can request it from your supervisor. The hard-copy forms will have a paper-clipped return envelope. Once you complete the census, you can place the form in the envelope, seal it, and place it in the inter-office mail or drop it off at the Human Resources office. The information gathered in hard copy will be entered into the online census by the Census Administration team.

### **How will the information be used, and how will it be stored?**

We will use the census data to develop policies, recruitment and retention strategies, equity plans and capacity-building strategies.

We will collect data via Survey Monkey and store it within Canada. The information will only be accessible to the census administration team, and the file will be password-protected.

### **Is there a deadline to complete the census?**

Yes, for those who could not respond to the census in the day and time assigned to their unit, the census timeline is May 31st, 2024.