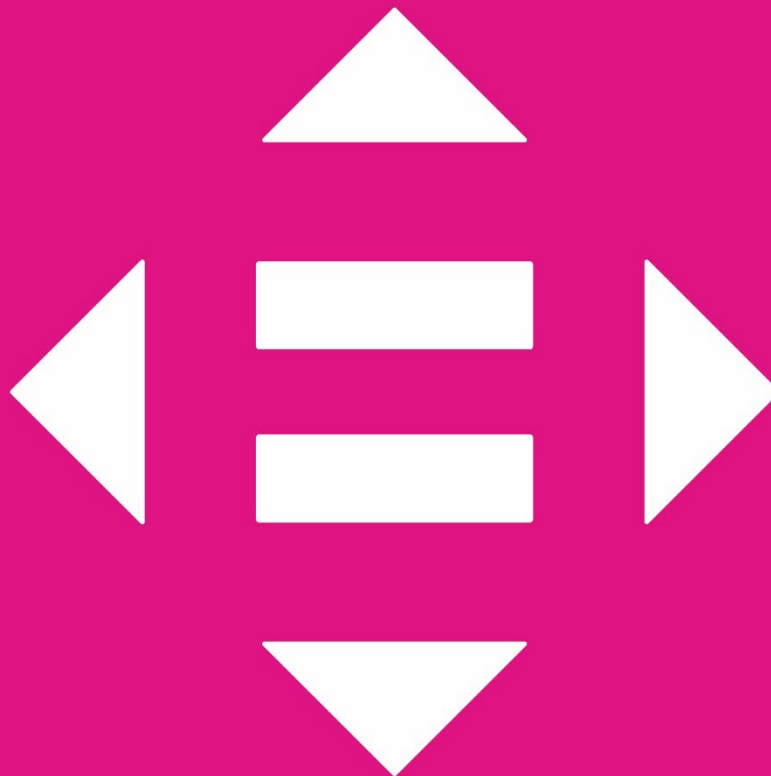




10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Moderation Team
Shannon Clarke
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SDG 10: Reduce inequality within
and among countries

Event Description

On **June 21, 2021**, Queen's University hosted its first [17 Rooms](#) event, which brought together Queen's faculty, students, and staff to identify next steps for advancing the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) at the university.

Participants were divided into 17 virtual rooms, one per SDG, and asked to identify actions **that Queen's University could take in the following 12 to 18 months to advance their specific goal.**

Rooms participants were also asked to identify:

- The most important issues related to their SDG that Queen's should address,
- Connections and common themes amongst these issues,
- How their SDG connects with reconciliation/conciliation, decolonization, and Indigenization,
- How their SDG connects with other SDGs.

Each room had two hours to brainstorm ideas before presenting their recommended actions to all participants. Following the event, each room's moderation team authored a summary report.

Room Participants

John Berry	Rosie LaLande (Staff Facilitator)
Margaret Biggs	Danielle Macdonald
Linda Cheng	Nerissa Mulligan
Shannon Clarke (Student Facilitator)	Beverley Mullings (Moderator)
Ross Denny-Jiles	Carolyn Prouse
Bishal Gywali	Nathalia Santos Ocasio
Samantha King	Claudia Venevongsa
Reena Kukreja	

Actions Summary

Room 10 brought together 14 individuals from across Queen’s University to discuss approaches to addressing SDG 10. The group identified four areas for action.

1. Statement in Support of Vaccine Equity

Action Description	That Principal Deane, on behalf of Queen’s University, support Covid-19 Vaccine Equity by issuing a statement in support of the call by poorer countries, led by India and South Africa, for a temporary patent waiver that would transfer vaccine technology to them. (Supports SDG 10.3, 10.4, 10.b)
Problem Statement	<p>There is a widening gap between rich countries who are able to vaccinate on a vast scale, and poor countries who have been left behind.</p> <p>While countries like the United States, Britain and Canada have amassed stockpiles of vaccines that have helped more than 50 percent of their populations to become at least partially inoculated, poorer nations continue to struggle to distribute doses even to their medical workers on the front lines of the pandemic. In April 2021, the UN reported that: “of the 832 million vaccine doses administered, 82 per cent have gone to high or upper middle-income countries, while only 0.2 per cent have been sent to their low-income peers. In high-income countries alone, one in four people have received a vaccine, a ratio that drops precipitously to 1 in 500 in poorer countries”.</p> <p>Rich governments, including Canada, have been reluctant to support efforts to waive intellectual property protections on some of the Western coronavirus vaccines, even though doing so would make it cheaper and easier for countries in the Global South to manufacture and effectively distribute their own vaccines.</p> <p>Vaccine equity is also a problem within rich countries. Underserved communities with large BIPOC populations are both more vulnerable to contagion and less likely to be vaccinated.</p>

	<p>The unequal distribution of vaccines is allowing the virus to continue to spread, increasing the odds of new variants emerging that could render these existing vaccine treatments ineffective.</p> <p>By maintaining inequalities in the distribution of doses, resources, and technologies, we will remain vulnerable to new forms of infection, lost incomes and lost lives at Queen's, in Kingston, Canada and across our planet. We all benefit from the efforts of our Principal to urge Prime Minister Trudeau to support the vaccine waiver.</p>
Resources Required	A statement from Principal Deane and written letter to Prime Minister Trudeau.

2. Establishment of a Fund to Support Activism

Action Description	That Queen's establish a fund to support innovative and creative activist initiatives, and the creation of a strong and vibrant activist practice at Queen's and in the wider community. (Supports SDG 10.2, 10.3 and 10.7)
Problem Statement	<p>Activists often need funding for one-time initiatives that involve relatively small costs, such as event registration, tabling fees, printing costs, or venue rentals for workshops, but have few opportunities to access funds. Many often need access to rapid response funds for urgent mobilizations or to react swiftly to emerging and unexpected sociopolitical situations and emergencies.</p> <p>Establishing a fund built on the principles of social justice philanthropy (that centers the people who are most impacted as key decision-makers, that respects their self-determination by giving with no strings attached; and that strives to be accountable, transparent and responsive in the grant-making process) helps underserved communities to build capacity in their efforts to effect social justice.</p>

	Everyone at Queen’s will benefit from building transparent and trusting relationships between activist and grassroots communities that seek to bring about social transformations that prioritize social and ecological wellbeing.
Resources Required	Involvement of local community groups, Queen’s Office of Advancement, the Human Rights & Equity Office; funding.

3. Equity Audit of Substance Use and Harm Reduction Protocols

Action Description	That Queen’s build partnerships with local and campus communities to conduct an equity audit of substance use and harm reduction protocols, and support reduction and prevention of harms related to drug criminalization through advocacy, research and funding (Supports SDG 10.2, 10.3 and 10.6) .
Problem Statement	<p>Harm reduction approaches on university campuses aim to provide people who use substances with non-judgmental and non-coercive strategies to reduce harm. However, these protocols can enact their own harms if they are not mindful of the ways that the creation and enforcement of Canadian drug policies and laws disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC).</p> <p>For example, university policies governing substance misuse (such as that found in the Student Code of Conduct) that involve the intervention of campus safety and law enforcement agents can potentially increase harm if they dissuade students from reporting emergencies.</p> <p>Everyone at Queen’s and the Kingston Community will benefit from efforts to reduce the effects of criminal sanctions on people who use substances, while maintaining support for community and public safety.</p>
Resources Required	Close consultation with the Queen’s Substance Use and Harm Reduction Forum, Queen’s Mental Health Initiative, Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy (Queen’s), Queen’s Public Safety and Kingston Police would be required.

4. Equity Audit of Systemic Barriers to New Immigrant Employment at the University

<p>Action Description</p>	<p>That Queen’s conduct an equity audit to identify hiring regulations, conventions, policies and practices that pose systemic barriers to new immigrants to Kingston securing employment at the University (Supports SDG 10.2, 10.3, 10.4 & 10.7).</p>
<p>Problem Statement</p>	<p>Studies at Queen’s indicate that newcomers to Kingston face challenges in accessing employment and affordable housing in the city, and many also experience language barriers that make it difficult to access services and supports.</p> <p>As a major employer in the City of Kingston, Queen’s can play an important role in making Kingston a more welcoming city. An equity audit can highlight how employment expectations such as the requirement for “Canadian experience”, or language proficiency can act as a barrier to new immigrants who want to work at Queen’s.</p> <p>An audit that identifies and eliminates policies and practices that are barriers to employment at Queen’s will build and strengthen relationships between Queen’s and the local community and create an inclusive and welcoming environment in which diversity is valued and celebrated by all members of the campus community.</p>
<p>Resources Required</p>	<p>Partnerships with Human Resources, the KEYS Job Center, the Human Rights and Equity Office, Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures (LLCU).</p>