



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

INTERCULTURAL CAPACITY FRAMEWORK

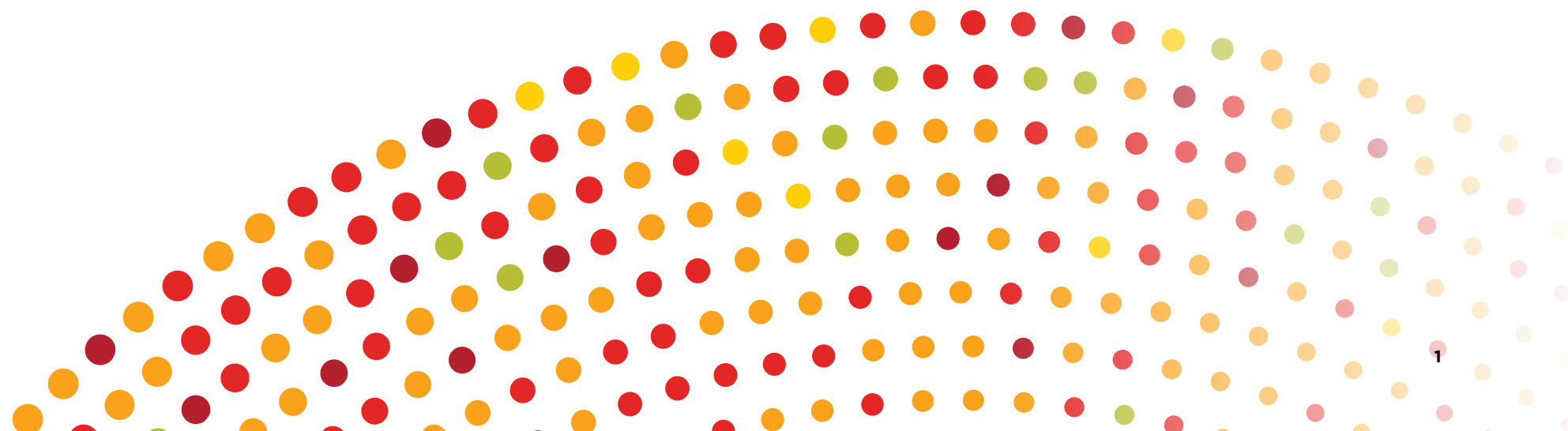
**A Foundation for
Advancing Intercultural Capacity**

The University of Calgary is a global intellectual hub located in Canada's most enterprising city. In this spirited, high-quality learning environment, students will thrive in programs made rich by research, hands-on experiences and entrepreneurial thinking. By 2022, we will be recognized as one of Canada's top five research universities, fully engaging the communities we serve and lead.

EYES HIGH STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2017-22

To serve as a global intellectual hub is to seek knowledge, to advance and recognize diverse voices, to foster innovation and creativity, and to pursue solutions to global challenges together with partners from around the world.

University of Calgary's Global Engagement Plan is integral to the *Eyes High* vision, and is located in the Academic Plan 2018-2023 in the priority area "Connecting Communities." A key requirement to fulfil this vision is intercultural capacity within our campus communities, as identified in goal 2 of the Global Engagement Plan.



Background

University of Calgary's International Strategy (2013–2019) and Global Engagement Plan (2020–2025) set out to 'Improve intercultural capacity within our campus communities,' as one of the main goals. As a global intellectual hub, the university has an obligation to societies worldwide to contribute to the grand challenges facing humanity and to develop leaders who will further cultural understanding and social justice, improve quality of life, and help to secure a prosperous and sustainable future for all. To advance this work in support of a deeper understanding and responsiveness to diversity, a task force co-chaired by Dr. Colleen Kawalilak and Dr. Florentine Strzelczyk conducted an environmental scan, a detailed literature review, and engaged in extensive consultations. The task force, a sub-committee of University of Calgary International (UCI), conducted its work in four phases and generated several reports and recommendations (see reports¹, 2018) that were presented to the University of Calgary Provost, Vice Provost (International) and Deans. An implementation committee was then struck to action the recommendations, co-chaired by Dr. Cheryl Dueck and Dr. Colleen Kawalilak. The Intercultural Capacity Framework results from the work of both committees.

Purpose

The purpose of the framework is to serve as a foundational reference to identify and advance specific intercultural capacity areas. The rubric and descriptors can inform program design and learning outcomes specific to the University of Calgary context, not only for courses (credit and non-credit), co-curricular programs and work-integrated learning, but also for professional development, events and activities. The strength of this framework is that it is created to support all members of the community, including students, staff in every part of campus life, post-doctoral and visiting scholars, alumni and other stakeholders.



¹ Kawalilak, C., & Strzelczyk, F. (February 2018). Supporting the Development of Cross-Cultural Competencies at the University of Calgary, PHASE I and PHASE II; Kawalilak, C., & Strzelczyk, F. (September 2018). Supporting the Development of Cross-Cultural Competencies at the University of Calgary, PHASE III and PHASE IV.



Advancing Intercultural Capacity

Definitions of intercultural competence have been contested for decades. Darla Deardorff arrived at a consensus definition through a survey of predominantly U.S. scholars in 2006: Intercultural competence refers to “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (p.247). This definition is based on a compositional model, which focuses more on the components of intercultural competence than on the process of development. Co-orientational models, such as Paige and Goode (2009) or Fantini, Arias-Galicia and Guay (2001), focus more on the capacity to

build relationships and behaviours that enable compliance and cooperation. Our framework, described below, combines these two. It draws some elements loosely from the Association of American Colleges and Universities Global Learning Value Rubric for Intercultural Knowledge and Competence, and shares some elements in common with the NCSSFL-ACTFL Proficiency Benchmarks in Intercultural Communication². These, however, focus predominantly on student learning, while the University of Calgary framework broadens the scope to include staff, faculty, and administrators.

Scholarship has differentiated between culture-specific skills which can include language proficiency, cultural knowledge and contextual social skills for a particular region or group, and culture-general skills that may include self-knowledge and reflection, and the awareness and adaptation to accommodate the cultural factors that influence behaviour and interactions. Both are valuable, and can be targeted by different activities and approaches at the university. Specialists emphasize that cultural competence is a process, “a state of becoming rather than a destination” (Leask 2015, p. 63). The term “intercultural capacity” conveys the focus on skills, attitudes and knowledge, together with process and growth.

Advancing Intercultural Capacity can serve to ignite the innovation potential of diverse teams, both local and global. By enabling productive engagement with difference, university community members will be able to comfortably and effectively work to elicit full potential from a diversity of people, ideas, and perspectives. They will be equipped to apply principles learned in order to be successful in various fields; for example, they will have the necessary skills to effectively collaborate across departments or institutions, negotiate multilateral contracts, or design products and services for diverse populations. They will also be well-positioned to create and promote workplace civility in collaborative work with colleagues different from themselves.

As we seek to address equity, diversity and inclusion within our campus communities, the attention to the cultural diversity at home has emerged as a core element of the intercultural capacity project. Advancing Intercultural Capacity refers to a deepened and expanded awareness of cultural differences and to engaging with and responding to cultural differences with sensitivity, appropriateness, purpose and thoughtful intention. This capacity to value and respond to diversity involves navigating a myriad of cultures embedded in the many contextual dimensions of our lives—the personal, professional, and academic, and the organizational and disciplinary layers of our scholarship and practice (Dunne, 2011). Valuing and responding to cultural differences also encompasses an increased awareness and acceptance of diversity and fostering positive relationships by attending to issues of (in)equity and social (in)justice pertaining to cultural differences (Deardorff, 2006). Advancing Intercultural Capacity is not defined by geographical borders; it seeks to welcome and include diversity of cultures in our encounters globally and here at home, and interrelates with the work toward reconciliation with Indigenous cultures and communities set out in *ii'taa-poh-to'p*, University of Calgary's Indigenous Strategy.

² Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Global Learning Value Rubric, <https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics>; National Council of State Supervisors for Languages and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NCSSFL-ACTFL) Proficiency Benchmarks in Intercultural Communication, actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/ncssfl-actfl-can-do-statements





Applying the Framework

This framework is not intended to be a ‘Strategy’ in itself for University of Calgary. Rather, it is offered to all members of the campus community as foundational to advancing intercultural capacity. Regardless of where we are located within this community, we should be able to see ourselves within it.

In order for faculty, students, administrators and staff to build capacity to understand cultural contexts and connections at home and internationally, value diversity, communicate well within and across cultures, to conduct research on culture to produce new insights, and innovate through diverse perspectives, it is helpful to work with a shared terminology.

The framework is designed *not to prescribe*, but to:

- *Educate* others about intercultural knowledge, skills, and abilities
- *Connect* research engagement(s) with institutional attention to intercultural capacity
- *Inform* learning outcomes and program goals for students within the formal and informal curricula
- *Guide* conversations when exploring potential agreements and initiatives with others from diverse cultures
- *Guide* preparations for travel and for welcoming students, faculty, post-docs, and guests from other cultures and contexts
- *Inform* faculty and staff onboarding initiatives
- *Support* goal setting and program design for staff, faculty and administrators in a variety of contexts
- *Identify* professional development avenues, department or faculty-level planning, target-setting, and assessment
- *Serve* as a tool for guiding individual personal and professional development, personal reflection and growth
- *Prompt* meaningful dialogue within and across the campus community on important issues, opportunities, and challenges

The Intercultural Capacity Framework identifies three core capacity areas:

- Understanding Global Connections and Cultural Differences
- Communicating Across Cultures
- Engaging Respectfully, Learning Cultures, Valuing Diversity

Individuals and groups can demonstrate capacity at three levels:

- Awareness — Knowing About
- Engagement — Knowing How
- Leadership — Growing Knowledge

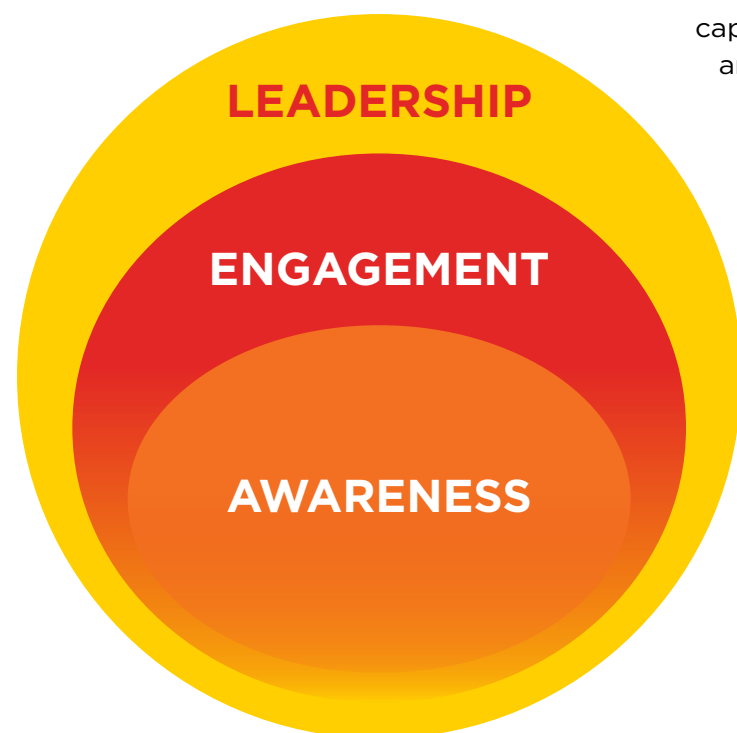
Intercultural Capacity Levels

An institution that demonstrates a high level of intercultural capacity involves everyone on campus: administration, faculty, students, staff, and other engaged community members. As an institution, we are committed to building culturally inclusive environments that foster safety and bravery inside and outside the university. This commitment requires a certain level of capacity from *every member of the university*, moving along a continuum of expertise. The campus community will develop a variety of levels of intercultural capacity: *Awareness, Engagement, and Leadership*.

It is not expected that all faculty, students, administrators and staff acquire capacity to the same extent and achieve a high capacity level in all three of the below areas. Leadership or engagement might ebb and flow as new information emerges and new situations arise, such that an individual's capacity areas and levels may shift. Cultures are fluid and changeable, and understanding them requires continuous involvement. A combination of capacity levels, and a commitment to ongoing cultivation of intercultural capacity, will support the institution's efforts to internationalize its students, faculty, staff and culture.

Leadership, mentoring activities and responsibilities increase with capacity level.

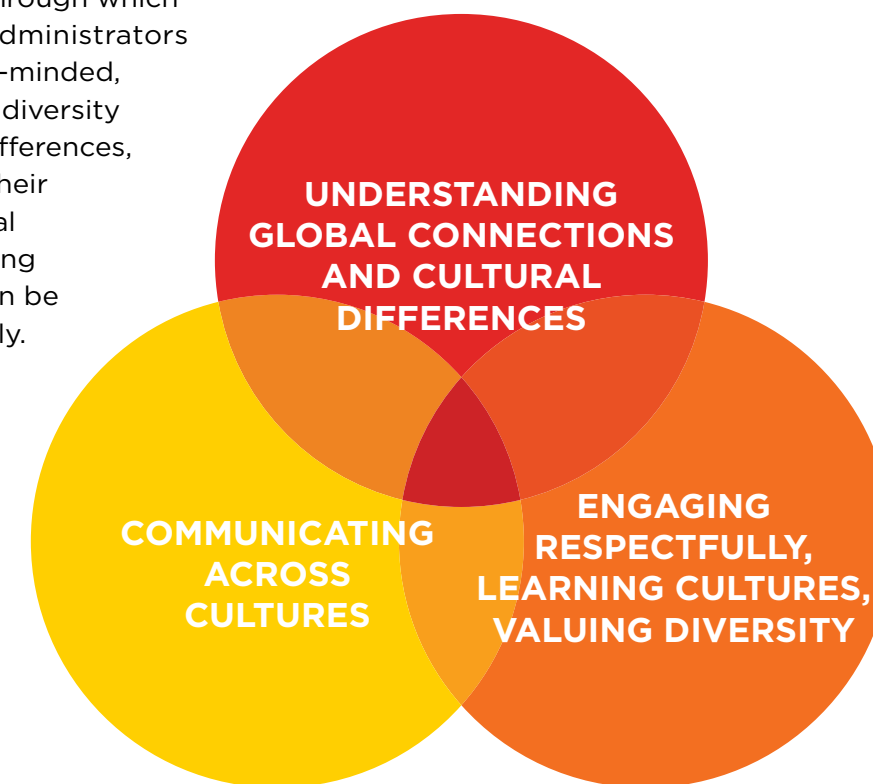
Capacity levels align to roles, responsibilities, and work tasks.



Three Core Capacity Areas

The three capacity areas identified facilitate the engagement with complex, interdependent global processes. Students, faculty, staff, and administration require the capacity to meaningfully engage across cultures, and the ability to place their own and other perspectives in historical and political contexts in order to reach common goals. The three capacity areas assist in defining a process through which students, faculty, staff and administrators will become informed, open-minded, responsible, and attentive to diversity across a wide spectrum of differences, seeking to understand how their actions affect local and global communities, and how pressing problems in today's world can be best addressed collaboratively.

Intercultural Capacity for Administration, Faculty, Staff and Students



CAPACITY AREA

Understanding Global Connections and Cultural Differences

Refers to the complex interdependency of worldwide systems that include natural systems (associated with the natural world including biological, chemical, and physical sciences) and built systems (developed by humans, such as cultures, economies, political institutions, social structures, knowledge systems, and knowledge-sharing traditions) (AAUC Global Learning Rubric). These systems are often the result of human design, interference, and the privileging of certain knowledge systems. Understanding cultural differences within and across local, global and international contexts includes realizing

how cultures can be marked and assigned a place within built systems and relates to power structures in which hierarchies, inequalities, and opportunities may vary and change within time and place (Paige & Goode, 2009). Cultural differences may span, but are not limited to constructs such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationhood, religion, traditions, age, class, and other norms. Inequities and injustices related to cultural differences can impact the work and learning of students, staff, administrators and faculty (Bennett, 2009).



Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Understanding Global Connections and Cultural Differences

AWARENESS KNOWING ABOUT

COMMUNICATES basic awareness of interdependencies and interconnectivities of worldwide systems (natural and built) and international interconnections.

EXPLAINS how worldwide systems are interconnected, and applies this knowledge to a number of situations and topics.

RECOGNIZES cultural differences and power differentials across diverse cultural contexts.

IDENTIFIES appropriately cultural differences within and across diverse cultural contexts.

EXPLORES strategies to identify knowledge gaps pertaining to natural and built global system.

ENGAGEMENT KNOWING HOW

ANALYZES the interdependencies and interconnectivities of worldwide systems (natural and built) to advance international interconnections.

IDENTIFIES knowledge gaps pertaining to natural and built, worldwide systems and responds appropriately to cultural differences within and across diverse cultural contexts.

APPLIES knowledge of complex international relations as appropriate to a wide range of new situations and contexts.

ENGAGES comfortably in conversations and initiatives focused on cultural differences, within and across diverse cultural contexts.

MANAGES international connections with ease in a variety of situations and with obvious expertise.

LEADERSHIP GROWING KNOWLEDGE

EVALUATES AND CRITIQUES the interdependencies and interconnectivities of worldwide systems (natural and built) and in increasing international connections.

INTEGRATES deep knowledge of interdependencies and interconnectivities of worldwide systems (natural and built) and responds appropriately to cultural differences in educational or professional settings.

EDUCATES others in appropriately responding to cultural differences within and across diverse cultural contexts.

LEADS initiatives that support international connections and the advancement of equity and social justice.



CAPACITY AREA

Communicating Across Cultures

Refers to the ability to traverse cultural boundaries to bridge differences and collaboratively reach common goals in a variety of ways: a) by becoming aware of the relation between language and meaning in a societal context; b) by communicating and behaving effectively and appropriately in cross-cultural situations; and c) by

understanding language as a vehicle that shapes cultural ideas and assumptions, contains cues of social communication and is inextricably linked with non-verbal behaviours and conduct (Ellis, 2006; Hanningan, 1990; Smith, Paige, & Steglitz, 2003; Teekens, 2003).

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Communicating Across Cultures

AWARENESS KNOWING ABOUT	ENGAGEMENT KNOWING HOW	LEADERSHIP GROWING KNOWLEDGE
<p>ACKNOWLEDGES that there is diversity in languages and cultures and that all languages and the corresponding cultures are to be valued.</p> <p>RECOGNIZES that language is behaviour, a social practice that encompasses an understanding of the world.</p> <p>DEMONSTRATES a basic awareness of the value of effective communication across cultures.</p> <p>REALIZES that language is not a neutral tool, but always loaded with meaning — therefore, the way we label or address each other may affect the success of our interactions.</p> <p>UNDERSTANDS the value and benefits of appropriate communication across cultures in building harmonious human relations.</p>	<p>COMMUNICATES effectively across cultures, including in other languages, and knows how to decode and interpret verbal and non-verbal behaviours.</p> <p>ENGAGES appropriately in various intercultural interactions.</p> <p>ANALYZES the role of language and cross-cultural communication in worldwide systems.</p> <p>DEVELOPS strategies to enhance communication across cultures (i.e. defusing a situation that could be potentially problematic).</p> <p>RESPONDS appropriately to conflict and difference arising in communication.</p>	<p>EVALUATES the role of language in worldviews, by raising consciousness of attitudes and beliefs embedded in language (linguistic norms, stereotyping and naming).</p> <p>EDUCATES others on the impacts of intra-cultural and intercultural factors in successful collaborative work.</p> <p>INITIATES mediation between various languages and cultures; supports international initiatives by providing basic to intermediate knowledge of the cultural context, and by drawing attention to do's and don'ts, cultural faux-pas (thereby augmenting the success rate of the initiative).</p> <p>LEADS by example in the use of appropriate behaviours in official communications.</p>



CAPACITY AREA

Engaging Respectfully, Learning Cultures, Valuing Diversity

Refers to the understanding that the cultures we traverse in our personal, academic and professional lives exist in contexts, such as disciplines, departments, and institutions, but also cultural groups, social classes, or nations (Hiller & Wozniak, 2009). Cultures change over time and vary according to circumstance; therefore, understanding culture is an ongoing process (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2007). The ability to analyze culture and demonstrate a valuing of diversity includes: a) the ability to compare how cultures are embedded in power

structures including hierarchies, inequalities, and opportunities, which change across time and place; b) the capacity to respect multiple perspectives (personal, political, and disciplinary) and learn from them; c) a high degree of self-reflexivity defined as a critical perspective of the rules that govern one's own cultural contexts; and d) awareness of how place as well as historical legacies and ideologies shape the nature of knowledge, individual actions and interpretations of culture (Sorrells, Sekimoto & Nakagawa, 2016).

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Engaging Respectfully, Learning Cultures, Valuing Diversity

AWARENESS KNOWING ABOUT	ENGAGEMENT KNOWING HOW	LEADERSHIP GROWING KNOWLEDGE
<p>DESCRIBES the experiences of others (both historical and contemporary), primarily through one's own cultural perspective while integrating other cultures' perspectives, worldviews, legacies, experiences or systems of knowledge generation.</p> <p>IDENTIFIES one's cultural rules, biases, knowledge, traditions, power and privilege.</p> <p>DEMONSTRATES a basic understanding of the cultural diversity of the student body and staff resulting in respectful interactions with individuals and groups from all cultures.</p> <p>RECOGNIZES the learning potential of working with a diverse team.</p>	<p>ANALYZES connections between historical and contemporary worldviews, legacies, power differentials, inequalities, opportunities, and the uniqueness of/within cultures, demonstrating an acute awareness of the constructedness of cultures and their knowledge systems.</p> <p>INTEGRATES critical perspectives about one's own cultural rules, preferences, and knowledge systems with appreciation of complexities that other perspectives offer.</p> <p>DEMONSTRATES a deep understanding of the cultural diversity of the student body and staff, based on the knowledge and support of the university's policies regarding diversity.</p> <p>ACTIVATES the potential of a team by inviting and incorporating divergent perspectives and approaches.</p>	<p>APPLIES a deep and broad understanding of multiple worldviews, experiences, legacies, power differentials, inequalities, knowledge systems, opportunities, and the uniqueness of/within cultures, other than one's own, to critique crucial global and international problems and opportunities, advancing knowledge transfer across cultures in both research and instructional settings.</p> <p>ARTICULATES critical insights into one's own cultural rules, processes, biases, and knowledge traditions based on a developed awareness that distinct and selective experiences have shaped one's views, resulting in the ability to recognize and respond to cultural biases, and mediate between different worldviews in international contexts.</p> <p>INITIATES AND LEADS university policies regarding equity, diversity, and internationalization based on deep understanding of prevalent discourses in international higher education and cultural contexts; institutes policies that facilitate faculty, student, and/or staff achievement of advanced knowledge, skills, and abilities in these areas.</p> <p>MAINTAINS AND ADVANCES meaningful and respectful dialogue and working relationships with students, staff, and faculty from a variety of cultures and backgrounds based on a thorough knowledge of the university's policies.</p>

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Find more information on initiatives and resources
in Intercultural Capacity at University of Calgary:

ucalgary.ca/international/funding-and-resources/intercultural-capacity