



Office of Equity
and Inclusive
Communities

Black Excellence Awards

Information and Guidelines

Award Description

The Black Excellence Awards, presented by the Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, recognize and celebrate Black students, alumni, and employees (faculty, staff, and administrators) who demonstrate exceptional commitment, leadership, and impact at KPU and beyond.

These annual awards honour individuals and groups whose work embodies excellence in areas such as advocacy, education, mentorship, cultural celebration, community engagement and wellbeing at KPU and beyond, and systemic change—especially as they relate to the experiences and contributions of the people of African descent.

Through these awards, KPU seeks to uplift the voices, labour, and legacies of Black community members and support the ongoing work of racial justice and Black liberation across all areas of university life.

Eligibility

- All current KPU students, KPU alumni, and employees who self-identify as Black, African, or of African descent or mixed heritage
- Past recipients are not eligible for an award in the same category (individual or group) within five (5) years of their initial award

Structure

- Up to five (5) awards will typically be given out each year
- The selection committee will endeavor to recognize a significant range of KPU community members, types of achievements, and areas of impact

Selection Criteria

The Black Excellence Awards recognize impactful work in areas including but not limited to the following:

- **Leadership in community building** and fostering a sense of belonging for Black/marginalized students, or employees at KPU and/or in the broader community
- **Mentorship, teaching, or advocacy** that uplifts and empowers marginalized voices and experiences
- **Cultural expression and celebration** of Black identities, histories, and contributions through art, storytelling, events, or research and scholarship
- **Contribution to racial justice, equity, and systemic change**, whether through institutional advocacy, public and/or community engagement, curriculum development, or policy work
- **Ongoing commitment to provide access, and/or opportunities** for representation of Black/marginalized individuals at KPU
- **Collaboration and solidarity-building**, including work that brings together Black communities with other equity-denied groups or supports intersectional identities

Examples of relevant contributions may include (but are not limited to):

- Creation of culturally affirming learning spaces, programs, or events
- Delivery of workshops, courses, or public talks on Black histories, experiences, or futures
- Organizing or participating in initiatives that address racism and/or amplify excellence (community engagement events, research and scholarship, creativity etc.) at institutional or community levels, including awareness, informational, and/or activist campaigns and events
- Supporting student success and wellbeing through mentorship, advising, or advocacy
- Advancing knowledge production through research, scholarship, and storytelling grounded in Black perspectives

The selection of recipients will also consider the impact in advancing KPU's EDI, anti-racism, and social justice-related objectives as outlined in the following documents:

- [Vision 2026](#)
- [Task Force on Anti-Racism Final Report and Recommendations](#)
- [The Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion](#)
- [EDI Action Plan](#)
- [Accessibility Plan](#)
- [xé?elł - KPU Pathway to Systemic Transformation](#)

Nominations

- Nominations are welcome from current KPU students and employees as well as KPU alumni
- Nominee/s must self-identify as Black, African, or of African descent or mixed heritage
- Individuals and/or groups (two or more people) may be nominated
- Nominee/s must accept nomination / consent to consideration and associated processes

Nomination Package

- **Nominator Statement:** Max. 500-700 words statement by nominator outlining nominee's relevant activities and achievements; if a group is nominated, each group member's role/contributions should be highlighted
- **Letters of Support:** Up to three (3) letters of support (max. 500 words each), ideally from a diverse range of KPU community members and/or community members who are familiar with the impact of the initiative/s and reflecting the range of the nominee's impact
- **Supporting Documents:** if supporting documents are provided by the nominator, they should connect actions and achievements to the award criteria

Selection Committee

- Comprised of 4–7 members, appointed by the VP, Equity and Inclusive Communities
- Will include a minimum of one student, one staff member, one faculty member, and one administrator
- At least two to three members must identify as Black
- Additional representation from equity-deserving groups will be prioritized
- Committee members may serve terms of up to two (2) years
- The committee will recommend awardees to the VP, who will notify recipients

Timelines

- Nominations **open** in January
- Nominations **close** the second week of February
- Announced at the Annual Anti-Racism Symposium in March

Recognition

- Recipients are notified by the VP, Equity and Inclusive Communities
- Framed certificate of achievement
- KPU Bookstore gift card
- Public recognition via KPU News