"Equality in employment will not happen unless we make it happen."

— Judge Rosalie Silberman Abella, Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, 1985

The Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERCs) Program was launched by the Canadian Government in 2010. This Diversity Gap series presents disaggregated and intersectional data on diversity among chairs. All 19 inaugural chairholders were men. Between 2010 and 2018 only two women have held CERCs. Women now constitute 39% of CERCs. In 2010, 8% of CERCs were visible minority men. Today, 13% visible minority men and 6% visible minority women hold CERCs. In 20 years of the program there has never been an Indigenous chairholder. There is a persistent data gap for persons with disabilities.

The CERC program raises a number of equity questions. First, the federal government invests $10 million in each CERC over seven years and this is often matched by institutional and provincial funding. The program allocates significant research funds to a small number of scholars. Second, the CERCs are unevenly distributed across granting agencies and disciplines. Third, the CERCs are all recruited external to Canada, primarily from Europe, the United States, and Australia. These data highlight the need for comparable research funds to nurture and mentor diverse students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty talent across Canadian regions, universities, colleges, and disciplines.

To learn more, visit our website at https://uofaawa.wordpress.com/awa-diversity-gap-campaign/