The IBET PhD Project, initiated by the University of Waterloo’s Faculty of Engineering, was launched in January 2021 to increase Indigenous and Black representation in the academic world.

- The objective of the project is to have future engineering faculty as well as PhD students complement and better reflect Canadian society.
- With atrociously low numbers of Indigenous and Black professors teaching in engineering across Canada, there is a demonstrated need to create and support a talent pipeline for PhD students.
- It is only when Indigenous and Black professors are fairly represented in classrooms that we will be able to recruit more Indigenous and Black students to become the next generation of engineers and technologists, as well as increase diversity in the talent pipeline.
- The IBET PhD Project is based upon the successful PhD Project in the US that supports and mentors Black, Hispanic, and Native American students in pursuing doctoral degrees in business, with the goal of introducing these minority groups into academia as business professors to increase diversity.
- The Engineering and Mathematics faculties of the University of Waterloo, McMaster University, Queen’s University, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, and Western University were the inaugural institutions of the IBET PhD Project in 2021. Later in the year, engineering faculties from major universities across Canada including McGill University, Ryerson University, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary (Schulich School of Engineering), the University of Windsor, and York University (The Lassonde School of Engineering) enthusiastically joined the project to roll it out. Each faculty has pledged between $500,000-$1M to support the project. The intention is to continue rolling out the IBET PhD Project nationwide to all engineering schools, regardless of size.

Each university participating in the IBET PhD Project has committed to fund a minimum of 1 IBET Momentum Fellowship valued at $30k per year for four years.

- These prestigious fellowships will allow the recipients to pursue advanced degrees and undertake both traditional and/or non-traditional areas of research without incurring financial hardship.
- This fellowship acknowledges that our academic community is racialized, and that Indigenous and Black candidates’ areas of research and accomplishments have not been adequately recognized, supported, or rewarded due to systemic racism.
- This fellowship is intended to help build and support an equitable environment that is reflective of Canada’s population and reconcile the underrepresentation of Indigenous and Black scholars across Canadian universities.
- IBET Momentum Fellowships acknowledge that the criteria for success must be measured differently, and should not be determined by the traditionally non-inclusive interpretation of what constitutes experience and expertise in a scholar.

- By supporting Indigenous and Black PhD candidates through defined mentoring programs (including youth outreach, access scholarships for undergraduate and graduate programs, online/in person networking, and IBET Momentum PhD Fellowships), we are building a community that respects, values, and promotes Indigenous and Black faculty as well as their research areas.
- Industry and academic support, mentoring, and networking are proven methods of increasing the success of underrepresented groups in large organizations and institutions.
- Notably, Mitacs is contributing to the IBET PhD Project by offering work-integrated learning in the form of paid internships for IBET PhD Fellows.

For more information, please contact:

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