



Strategic Diversity InitiativesTM

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Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: What Library Trustees Need to Know

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Agenda

Framing: Diversity, the Changing Landscape, and Equity

Video: *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man*

Microaggressions and Micro-inequities

Implicit Bias & Poll #1

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: The Trustee Role & Poll #2

Acting as an Ally

Next Steps

The Value of Diversity

From **How Diversity Makes Us Smarter: Being around people who are different from us makes us more creative, more diligent, and harder-working** by Katherine W. Phillips, Scientific American, 10/1/14

- Decades of research by organizational scientists, psychologists, sociologists, economists and demographers show that **socially diverse groups** (that is, those with a diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation) are more innovative than homogeneous groups.
- This is not only because people with different backgrounds bring new information. **Simply interacting with individuals who are different forces group members to prepare better, to anticipate alternative viewpoints, and to expect that reaching consensus will take effort.**

The Changing Landscape: Disability

From Julia Horowitz, “More people with disabilities are getting jobs. Here’s why.” CNN Business, 1/26/18.

People with disabilities have traditionally been underemployed (**only 40% of adults with disabilities in their prime working years (ages 25-54) have a job, compared to 79% of all prime-age adults**).

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), **1 in 5 Americans live with a mental health condition.**

More and more people are “coming out” about living with mental health conditions. **The stigma associated with mental illness is being addressed widely, with celebrities being open - and with campaigns like #CureStigma**

The Changing Landscape: Gender

- California, Colorado, Kansas, New Jersey, Oregon, and Washington **allow people to amend their birth certificates to replace their sex with a nonbinary designation** (neither male nor female). New York City has passed similar legislation.
- **14 states allow a third gender option for residents applying for driver's licenses.** In addition to "M" and "F," "X" can now be checked by any applicant who does not want to identify as male or female. **Nevada is the 10th state or region to offer a gender-neutral designation on IDs.**
- Millennials now make up over 1/3 of the U.S. workforce (Pew Research Center). GLAAD (LGBTQ media organization) estimates **as many as 12% of millennials may identify as transgender or non-binary.**

Framing: Living in this Moment

- To be Black in America is to live daily with the subtle and overt pain and trauma of racism. Consider how Black Americans are policed not just by law enforcement but by their neighbors, colleagues and community members, especially those who are white. **“Living While Black” refers to those things Black people attempted to do only to have police called on them, and includes :**

- cashing a paycheck • grilling in a park • birdwatching. • shopping
- sleeping in a study room at Yale • entering their home • playing golf
- eating with friends in a restaurant • working at their own business
- taking a train trip with a group of friends • sitting in Starbucks
- selling water (when you are 8 years old) • mowing the lawn
- staying at an Airbnb • visiting a pool • sitting in a hotel lobby

Framing: Living in this Moment

The policing, containment, enslavement, and destruction of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) bodies has been a central feature of American racism for 400+ years. **“Living While Black” has serious consequences for the physical, material, spiritual, and mental health of Black Americans.**

Consider these recent tragic and unnecessary deaths, just the tip of the iceberg, that have brought forward a new national conversation on race:

- **Ahmaud Arbery**, Feb. 23, killed by two white men while jogging in Georgia
- **Breonna Taylor**, March 13, killed by police in her own home in Louisville
- **George Floyd**, May 25, killed by police during an arrest in Minneapolis
- **Rayshard Brooks**, June 12, shot in the back & killed by a police officer in Atlanta
- **Jacob Blake**, August 23, shot in the back 7 times in front of his 3 young children

Framing: Living in this Moment

- The recent Black Lives Matter protests peaked on June 6, when **half a million people turned out in nearly 550 places across the United States.**
- Four recent polls suggest that about **15 million to 26 million people in the United States have participated in demonstrations** over the death of George Floyd and others in recent weeks.
- These figures would make **the recent protests the largest movement in the country's history**, according to interviews with scholars and crowd-counting experts.

Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History, The New York Times, by Larry Buchanan, Quoc Trung Bui, and Jugal K. Patel, July 3, 2020

Framing: Living in this Moment

- **More than 40% of counties in the United States — at least 1,360 — have had a protest.** Unlike with past Black Lives Matter protests, nearly 95% of counties that had a protest recently are majority white, and nearly three-quarters of the counties are more than 75% white.
- **Half of those who said they protested said that this was their first time getting involved with a form of activism or demonstration.** A majority said that they watched a video of police violence toward protesters or the Black community within the last year. And of those people, half said that it made them more supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History, The New York Times, by Larry Buchanan, Quoctrung Bui, and Jugal K. Patel, July 3, 2020

Framing: Living in this Moment

We must make sure, make a statement, that this is a true change in the American ideology and not an activist-chic, summer street festival for people who have been cooped up for months, not able to go to school or graduate, not able to go to concerts or bars.

This is not the social justice Coachella. This is not systemic racism Woodstock. This has to be a forever commitment, even after protest eventually subsides.

How will our white allies respond when this summer has passed? How will they respond when civil rights gets personal and it's about them and not just punishing the white man who pressed his knee into George Floyd's neck? How will they respond when true equality threatens their privilege, when it actually starts to cost them something?

Allies, Don't Fail Us Again, The New York Times, by Charles M. Blow, June 7, 2020

Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man

Emmanuel Acho

June 3, 2020

uncomfortableconvos.com

Questions to Consider:

- What has been *your experience* in these past weeks, as our country once again reckons with its past – and its present; with its legacy of racial injustice, hurt, anger, and trauma?
- What have you been thinking about? What conversations have you been having - and with whom?
- What has felt challenging? What has felt hopeful?
- How does your racial identity affect how this moment impacts you?

Micro-inequities or Microaggressions

From Microaggressions: Power, Privilege and Everyday Life
microaggressions.com

This blog seeks to provide a visual representation of the everyday of “microaggressions.” Each event, observation and experience posted is not necessarily particularly striking in and of themselves. Often, they are never meant to hurt - acts done with little conscious awareness of their meanings and effects. Instead, their slow accumulation during a childhood and over a lifetime is in part what defines a marginalized experience, making explanation and communication with someone who does not share this identity particularly difficult.

Examples of Micro-inequities

- “A security guard approaches me at an upscale shopping district. I am the only black person sitting in the waiting area. I am waiting for a friend and have been sitting for two minutes. **The security guard ignores the throng of people around me, comes to me and asks “What is your business here?” I am 31 & in Chicago & it made me feel like I was...nothing.**
 - **Are you a man or a woman?”** Repeatedly, everywhere.
 - **“Can I speak to a man?”** A male library patron looking for car repair books. I don’t have to be male (or know how to fix cars) to do my job of finding books for library patrons!
 - My boss isn’t around the business much. When he does come in, he firmly shakes hands with and looks into the eyes of every male employee. **I, a female, am the manager of these male employees, and he asks me to make him a cup of coffee and tells me to smile more.**
 - **Coworker:** So you were born and raised here? **Me:** Yeah. **Coworker:** And you’re STILL Muslim?
- At my first day of training at a new job, where he was trying to explain that Islam "has too many rules" for an American to follow. It makes me feel sad to have to deal with more determined ignorance of Islam.**

Examples of Micro-inequities

- **“I love people who are gay. I have lots of gay friends. I just don’t think you are.”** My friend, in response to my coming out as bisexual last year.
- I work in the Childrens’ Literature department of a library. **Ever since I started wearing a rainbow wrist band and button to work, mothers with their daughters won’t approach me to ask for help.** They wait to ask for help until I leave the desk. I’m 21, and it makes me feel awful.
- Pretty much any time I leave the house in my wheelchair and go to a public place, people feel entitled to come up and ask me the most intrusive personal questions. **On a weekly basis, someone asks me: “What’s wrong with you?”** People frequently talk over my head to my friends or family members like I am mentally impaired. Many people have told me that they can relate to my disability because they were on crutches for several weeks with a sprained ankle or broken leg. **I’m 27 years-old and the comments are always the worst in big cities and on public transportation. Makes me feel anxious, frustrated, angry, and sad.**

Examples of Micro-inequities

- My (white) supervisor at work comes up to me first thing in the morning and says, “I’ve been wanting to do this,” and puts her hands in my curly (African American) hair. It’s still wet because it’s early in the morning. She recoils and looks at me like I’m the gross one.
- I mention to a co-worker that I grew up in a trailer park, and she says, “But you’re so smart!”
- I am a woman. I have a Spanish - Latin background. I cleaned houses for many years. I now wear jeans and a t-shirt, and sneakers most of the time. So when I retired I joined the local Friends of the Library. One woman there treats me like I am lesser than her. She won’t speak to me, greet me, or smile at me. She treats all the other volunteers with dignity but me. She assigns all the heavy lifting and grunt work to me, like I am her servant.

Implicit/Unconscious/Unexamined Bias

“Unexamined bias is a form of stereotyping that is often **unintentional, automatic, and outside of our awareness**. Often contradicting to our conscious beliefs. Also called subtle or implicit bias. Framing it specifically as “unexamined” puts onus for change on the person who harbors or acts on bias, holding them accountable.”

Center for Institutional Change, University of Washington

Resources

Project Implicit

Project Implicit is a non-profit organization and international collaboration between researchers who are interested in implicit social cognition - thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control. **The goal of the organization is to educate the public about hidden biases and to provide a “virtual laboratory” for collecting data on the Internet.**

implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/research

Kirwan Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State University

kirwaninstitute.osu.edu

Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society

haasinstitute.berkeley.edu

Perception Institute - perception.org

Biased: Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice That Shapes What We See, Think, and Do, Jennifer L. Eberhardt, PhD, Viking, 2019

Research on Implicit Bias

“Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination,” (Bertrand & Mullainathan, American Economic Review, 2004)

- Stereotypical “white” vs. “black” names (in a U.S. context); otherwise identical resumes
- **Resume with “white” names had 50% more callbacks**
- Many other studies, including those dealing with housing, health care, online sales, and perceptions of risk and safety, have demonstrated that **people of all racial identities demonstrate a pro-white and anti-black bias.**

Research from Nextion, Consulting Firm

- 60 partners from 22 law firms received copies of a memo with 22 errors (minor spelling or grammar errors, technical writing errors, errors in fact, and errors in analysis of the facts).
- Half told memo written by an African-American man and half told writer was a white man (both Thomas Meyer).
- The reviewers gave the memo supposedly written by a white man a rating of 4.1 out of 5, while they gave the memo supposedly written by a black man a rating of 3.2 out of 5. The white Thomas Meyer was praised for his potential and good analytical skills, while the black Thomas Meyer was criticized as average at best and needing a lot of work.
- Reviewers found an average of 2.9 out of 7 spelling and grammar errors in the memo by the white Thomas Meyer and 5.8 out of seven errors in the memo by the African-American Thomas Meyer.

Research on Implicit Bias

“Science faculty’s subtle gender biases favor male students,” (Moss-Racusin, Dovidio, Brescoll, Graham & Handelsman, PNAS, 2012)

- **Male & female science professors asked to review apps for lab manager position**
- **Both male & female professors rated male applicants more competent, more hireable, more suitable for mentoring, and offered males higher salaries**
- **As with race-focused research, people of all gender identities demonstrate a pro-male and anti-female bias**

Research on Implicit Bias

“Pride and Prejudice: Employment Discrimination against Openly Gay Men in the United States,” (Tilcsik, American Journal of Sociology, 2011)

- Resumes identical except for which campus organization was listed; resumes sent for 5 different occupations in 7 states
- Overall, applicants who listed a gay campus organization vs. a more generic campus organization had 40% fewer callbacks, with largest difference in Ohio, Texas & Florida (compared to California, New York, Nevada and Pennsylvania)

Research on Implicit Bias

“Attitudes towards individuals with disabilities as measured by the Implicit Association Test: A literature review”, Wilson and Scior, 2013

- 17 articles were reviewed

- A consistent pattern of **moderate to strong negative implicit attitudes towards individuals with disabilities** was evident.
- Across all studies, **moderate to strong negative implicit attitudes were found** and there was little to no association between explicit and implicit attitudes.

Poll #1:

In your role as a trustee, have you ever taken part in training around equity, diversity, and inclusion?

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The Trustee Role

Every aspect of running a library or library system can be reviewed through an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) lens. The following are some particular areas where trustees can use their role to create equity & inclusion:

Suggest a review of all library policies and procedures, using an EDI lens. For example:

- Do you have equitable policies around parental leave (for parents of all gender identities, for those who adopt, etc.)?
- Do you have policies around PTO for all religious holidays?
- Are your policies up-to-date around accommodating staff with disabilities?

Remember that all policies and procedures can be reviewed with an EDI lens, but you don't have to review everything all at once. You can undertake this review one policy/procedure at a time.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The Trustee Role

Make sure you and your other trustees are aware of the EDI resources at your library:

- **Does your library have an EDI statement**, and is it on your library's website? How can potential staff, patrons, community members access it?
- **Does your library have an EDI Committee?** If so, do you know who chairs it and who is on it? Are trustees able to participate? If not, can there be an EDI Committee for the trustees?
- **What EDI training and educational opportunities are available for staff and trustees at your library?** If none are available, what can be done to bring them in?
- **Does your library have a separate EDI Strategic Plan?** If so, how are the trustees involved with this plan? If not, can an EDI Strategic Plan be requested by the trustees, with trustees involved in its development? And can EDI-focused initiatives be woven into the overall Strategic Plan?

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The Trustee Role

Pay attention to the make-up of your staff and board. Do the people who work in your library and who are responsible for oversight reflect the community surrounding your library? Do they reflect diversity in terms of race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, age, etc.?

- Ask for whatever demographic data you are able to access. If you need more data, convene a working group (of staff and trustees) to create avenues for gathering more data.**
- If diversity is lacking, make hiring a more diverse staff and creating a more diverse Board of Trustees a priority, with resources to back up new initiatives. Consider innovative programs that other boards have developed, like a “board mentoring” program where individuals from marginalized and underrepresented communities learn about boards and are paid to participate.**

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The Trustee Role

Review your relationships with external constituents and communities.

- **Do you have strong relationships with community leaders? If not, how can you develop them?** How can your trustees participate in community events so marginalized and underrepresented community members trust you want to engage with them and meet their needs?
- **Remember it won't work to expect community members to come to you – as representatives of your library, you need to be out in the community yourself.**
- **Pay attention to supplier diversity. From what vendors and suppliers do you purchase goods and services?** Can you create a policy that minority-, women-, LGBTQ-, disability-, and veteran-owned companies and providers will be used whenever possible?

Poll #2:

In your role as a trustee, what areas around equity, diversity, and inclusion do you think are **most important** for your library/library system to address?

- A. Diversifying staff
- B. Diversifying trustees/board members
- C. Reviewing policies with an EDI lens
- D. Supporting & growing EDI-specific resources
- E. Relationships with external communities & constituents

An Ally is someone who is willing to pay attention to – and take action around - the social, economic & political differences and inequities that attend to people based on distinctions of race, ethnicity, age, class, sexual orientation, gender identity & expression, disability, religious or spiritual identity, and nationality (this is not an exhaustive list)

Next Steps

Consider what your next steps can be as you use your role within your library system to create more equity and inclusion:

- What can you commit to do in one week?
- What can you commit to do in the coming year?
- How can you hold yourself accountable?

What questions do you have?



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Thank you!

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