

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

“Today’s racial equity and inclusion efforts must flip that premise on its head. Instead of trying to change some people to fit the organization, we must focus on transforming our organizations to fit all people.” Ben Hecht, *Moving Beyond Diversity Toward Racial Equity*, HBR, June 16, 2020.

“Every person in Canada—regardless of whom they love, or how they identify or express their gender—has the right to live free without fear of discrimination, violence or exclusion, and to be fully included and embraced in all facets of Canadian society.”
Canadian Human Rights Commission, LGBTQ2I+ Rights.

Board Discussion

Trustees bring a breadth of experiences, skills, knowledge, and questions to public library board work. Board policies and practices vary across the province and BCLTA is focused on common issues of common concern for board development. We support trustees with the “why” and “how” of governance so that each board can respond with the best “what” for their public library and their community.

Your board chair, your library director, and BCLTA all have a role in helping you find further resources specific to your needs. The Libraries Branch staff are available for all questions regarding the *Library Act*.

The resources found in this Discussion Starter are just a small sample of what is available. They may not be the best sample. Hopefully they trigger a discussion, open ended and curious questions, a place for safe and non-judgmental learning, and further investigation that leads to change.

Encourage your governance team to stay current with news and events and to explore and share writings and other materials, particularly materials by those people who have experienced systemic barriers to accessing leadership and governance in public libraries. Include those that through their stories, opinions, evidence, and experience may make us uncomfortable with the status-quo of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in public library governance.

See the *Discussion Starter on Reconciliation* for your board’s discussion regarding reconciliation, decolonization, and indigenization.

Your board’s equity, diversity, and inclusion discussions will be ongoing and might cover a wide range of topics such as:

- The broader local and library community discussions that are informing the environment of your board work such as anti-racism, LGBTQ/2S+ rights, decolonization, and the many other important aspects of building an equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization.
- The disconnect between diversity and inclusion and how equity is key to ensuring that we are open to changing our board and organizational cultures to being not just diverse, but inclusive.
- Public library statements, policies, strategic plans, and other board level reports regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- The alignment of equity, diversity, and inclusion with public library values such as equitable access and intellectual freedom.
- The importance of addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion in your board succession and recruitment planning.
- Building a shared understanding among the board and staff of equity, diversity, and inclusion and what this means to the community the library serves.
- Supporting the library director so that they are successful with their day-to-day work of managing and overseeing what equity, diversity, and inclusion means to library operations.

Resources

Government

BC Provincial Government

- [Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#)
- [Anti-Racism](#)

Local Government

- Consult your community's Official Community Plan (OCP) or recent program and planning documents for statements regarding inclusivity and diversity and for opportunities for the public library to further the EDI goals of the community.
- Discuss who is missing from the OCP and what the public library might do, through its unique mandate and role in the community, to further discussion on EDI and to amplify the voices of those not being heard in your community.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities

- [Inclusive Communities](#)
- [FCM Reaffirms Commitment to Confront Racism](#), June 18, 2020

Library World

Canadian Federation of Library Associations

- [Position Statement on Diversity and Inclusion](#)

Librarianship.ca

- [Statements and Commitments from the Canadian Library and GLAM Community On Racism, Injustice, and Violence](#). Accessed June 28, 2020.

American Library Association

- [Glossary of Terms](#): equity diversity, and inclusion. 2017

Open Shelf, Ontario Library Association

- ["Cultural diversity and inclusion in the workplace"](#). September 10, 2018
- ["Sharing our words, transforming our relationships"](#). November 11, 2018

Chris Bourg, Director of Libraries at MIT, and sought after speaker on inclusivity, diversity and equitable access in librarianship and technology

- [“For the love of baby unicorns: My Code4Lib 2018 Keynote”](#), Feral Librarian, February 14, 2018.

Tara Robertson, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Partner for Mozilla

- [“blah blah blah: diversity and inclusion”](#), November 2018.
- Keynote delivered at the National Digital Forum in Wellington, New Zealand that includes critical questions such as “who is in the room?” and “who is missing?”.
- [Video via Youtube](#).

Governance and Organizational Leadership

[Moving Beyond Diversity Toward Racial Equity](#). Ben Hecht, *HBR*, June 16, 2020.

[The Problem with Resilience](#). Cyndi Suarez, *Nonprofit Quarterly*, April 21, 2020.

- Discusses the challenge of resilience giving preference to the status quo and what that means for embracing equity, diversity, and inclusivity.

[The Inclusion Imperative for Boards](#). *Deloitte Insights*, April 2, 2019.

- Concise overview of the role of the board in supporting organizational inclusion.
- Discusses the “why” and the board’s responsibilities in 5 areas (strategy, governance, talent, integrity and performance).

[Why Are We Still Struggling with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Nonprofit Governance?](#) Elizabeth A. Castillo, *Nonprofit Quarterly*, November 20, 2018.

[Practical Ideas for Improving Equity and Inclusion at Nonprofits](#). Emily Teitsworth, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, September 13, 2018.

[How do we Design Workplaces for Inclusivity and Diversity.](#) Dr. Pragma Agarwal, *Forbes*, July 19, 2018.

BoardSource

- [Diversity, Inclusion and Equity](#), n.d.
- [Where is Race on Your Board's Recruitment Agenda?](#), n.d.
- [Taking Action on Board Diversity: Five Questions to Get You Started](#), 2017

[Anti-Racist Organizational Change: Resources & Tools for Nonprofits.](#) CommunityWise Resource Centre Calgary, Alberta, Treaty 7 Territory, 2017.

More to Explore

[Canadian Human Rights Commission](#)

- Up to date information and resources in the “Key Issues” including:
 - Disability Rights
 - Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
 - Indigenous Rights
 - LGBTQ2I Rights
 - Prisoner Rights
 - Racial, Ethnic & Religious Rights
- Section on employer obligations and discrimination

Canadian Civil Liberties Association

- [Equality Rights 101](#)
- [Our Work, The Issues](#). An overview of current issues regarding race and equality, LGBTQ2S+ rights, and discrimination.

[Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion](#)

- Resources such as webinars and conferences, a [weekly blog](#) and a [Byline Articles](#) section on topics such as gender equity in leadership, LGBTQ self-identification and the workplace, and anti-black racism.
- No-fee newsletter [Diversity Ink](#).

[Laurier Institution](#)

- Mission: “We collaborate with partners to ignite collaboration, deepen shared learning, and inspire action around equity, diversity and inclusion.”
- Website includes podcasts, events, and publications.

[Canadian Museum for Human Rights](#)

[AMSSA: Strengthening Diversity in BC](#)

- Association of member organizations throughout BC that serve newcomers and immigrants and build inclusive communities.
- Offers diversity and inclusion workshops.

[Black Lives Matter, Vancouver](#)

[Resources for Ending Anti-Black Racism](#). Canadian Women's Foundation. June 1, 2020.

[Inclusive Spaces Help Everyone Thrive](#). Qmunity, BC's Queer, Trans and Two-Spirit Resource Centre.

- Resources such as community guidelines for events and a gender-neutral language sheet and services such as workshops and presentations.

[SOGI 123](#)

- Created in collaboration with the BC Ministry of Education this initiative provides educators and families with support and resources for more inclusive and safe classrooms.
- SOGI stands for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and the initiative connects educators to proven tools and resources for aligning schools with provincial policies protecting people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

[Trans Rights BC](#)

- Information "relevant to the safety and well-being of trans and gender-diverse individuals and their supportive allies across British Columbia."

[Trans and queer supportive spaces: Equity, diversity, and inclusion \(EDI\) resource guide](#), Simon Fraser University, 2019.

- Easy to understand graphics for how to start a conversation, address an email or confirm someone's name with gender neutral language.
- Other helpful resources include how to build gender-neutral surveys and questionnaires and design inclusive spaces.

[Disability Alliance BC](#)

- Advocacy by and for people with disabilities as well as access to the resources and support needed for ending the systemic barriers throughout society experienced by persons with disabilities.

[Inclusion BC](#)

- A federation that is committed to enhancing the lives and rights of those with intellectual and development disabilities. Includes advocacy campaign updates and learning resources.

[Neil Squire](#)

- Committed to “social inclusion, economic equity, and a productive society that includes people with disabilities and gives them equal opportunity to contribute and participate.”
- Includes a section on information for employers.

[Diversity and Inclusion](#), SPARC BC, n.d.

- Videos include the importance of active participation in decision making.

[The Problem with Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity](#). Geraldine Cochran, *The Scholarly Kitchen*, June 22, 2018.

- While focused on academia and scholarly research, this short article’s discussion on defining diversity, inclusion, and equity along with the need to pro-actively address and dismantle barriers, will benefit your board’s discussion on EDI in their work.

BC Public Libraries in Action

Organizations value and assess what they state as important.

Let BCLTA know (email babs.kelly@bclta.ca) about your public library’s demonstrated commitment through board documents such as policy, strategic plans or annual reports to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

© 2020 British Columbia Library Trustees Association. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 License.