

RAILS Strategic Plan

Goal Four: Prepare libraries for the future

RAILS strives to ensure the long-term sustainability of all libraries. Libraries have always played a vital role in building a civil and engaged society by upholding core library values such as intellectual freedom, access to information, and providing resources and services that educate and inform all library users and potential users.

RAILS helps our members to stay resilient by providing leadership on issues affecting them, helping them to navigate an ever-changing world, and assisting them in determining how to best respond to their customers' changing needs. In addition to preparing our member libraries for the future, RAILS also helps to ensure the future of libraries and librarianship as a profession by preserving and advancing core professional values.

Objective: Help libraries anticipate, understand and respond to changing social issues and customer needs

Objective: Partner with libraries and other stakeholders to foster an educated, engaged, and civil society

As articulated in Goal 4, RAILS has a responsibility to speak out against and work to eliminate systemic racism and bias.

RAILS condemns the systemic racism and bias that cause inequities in individual access to education, employment and other opportunities that everyone needs to live a successful and fulfilling life.

The fundamental role of a library is to provide equal and equitable access to information and educational resources and to encourage social responsibility, civility, diversity, inclusion and free expression of ideas. Libraries are essential for building and maintaining a democratic, enlightened society.

Libraries have long been and continue to be forces for good. We are regularly engaged in work that brings people and communities together, as we help build understanding of each other and what is happening around us and provide opportunities for the community to talk together.

But, library organizations and the library profession itself are not immune to systemic racism and bias. We must hold ourselves accountable and interrogate ourselves honestly about our own systems of racism and bias before we can truly help our communities.

The RAILS strategic plan Goal 4 calls for leadership and for assisting libraries in responding to social issues and in partnering to build an educated, engaged and civil society. What does this goal mean now? What is our call to action?

- RAILS internal work to recognize, acknowledge and eliminate system racism and bias
- RAILS works to promote equity, diversity and inclusion in the library profession
- RAILS leads and supports libraries – staff and boards – as they work in their organizations and communities to eliminate systemic racism and bias.