

RAILS BIPOC LIBRARY WORKERS GROUP

AUGUST 2022 REPORT

OVERVIEW

The RAILS BIPOC Library Workers Group has been meeting bi-monthly to discuss a number of topics requested by members of the listserv. Some of the topics discussed are resources and recommendations for creating EDI committees at libraries that members are a part of, community outreach, MLIS/MLS requirements for certain positions, compensation and benefits, work environments, hiring and retention, and more. The group has established a [community agreement](#) that is introduced at the start of each meeting.

UPDATES

- Creation of affinity groups - Members of the group are able to curate their own affinity groups upon request
 - Mental health group
 - Led by Vanessa Villarreal
- Creating a mentorship program to allow members to connect with one another and provide mentorship to those who are new to their position, field, or interests within libraries
- Consistent sharing of resources within the group including, but not limited to:
 - Job opportunities
 - Scholarships
 - Grants
 - Additional career-related and professional development opportunities
- Creation of conference travel contact list to help members connect at those events
- Recruitment
 - Mostly done through word of mouth, but members of the group attended Reaching Forward and plan on attending ILA to get more members

Community Agreements for EDI Discussions

- Acknowledge and be open to admitting your own racial biases. We all have them.
- Understand that all of us bring different perspectives and experiences and anti-racism learning is fluid. We may be at different stages of development in addressing individual, interpersonal and institutional racism.
- Use “I” statements when speaking about your individual experiences; no one is speaking on behalf of their own race and no one is expected to respond on behalf of their race
- This is a discussion, not a debate. For the purposes of learning, sensitivity and growth, listen respectfully.
- Be aware of power dynamics in the room and share the responsibility of including all voices in the discussion. Encourage and appreciate those who choose to speak when it feels unsafe to do so. Also, understand that there are different forms of engagement and moments of silence can be helpful for everyone to process and reflect.
- Maintain confidentiality; we can only be honest and share when there is a solid foundation of trust.