

RAILS EDI Committee Report

Each quarter, RAILS will share a mix of what is happening at RAILS, ILA, and other relevant organizations as it relates to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility. If you know of an upcoming learning opportunity, networking group, or resource that we should highlight in our next RAILS Report to the committee, please feel to share with RAILS Associate Executive Director Joe Filapek.

This report is intended as both an opportunity to be aware of the wide variety of activities around EDI that RAILS is involved with, as well as an opportunity for EDI Committee members to receive additional training around EDI principles and best practice.

RAILS Climate Team

The RAILS Climate Team continues to work on issues of RAILS internal culture with a focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion for all RAILS staff. Emphasis is placed on teamwork, a supportive learning environment, sharing of resources, and opportunities for deep discussions. The Climate Team has also been focused on staff engagement in a hybrid organization over multiple locations. The team works directly with EDI consultant Biz Lindsay-Ryan.

Projects included:

- Member Training Cohort (including evaluation)
- Connections Program for New Hires
- Staff Relationships/Staff Engagement Initiative
 - National Library Week initiative recently added
- Internal projects – information only
 - *Internal HR Practices*
 - *Board Recruitment/Nomination Process*
 - *Presenter/Consultant EDI Directory for Members*

The RAILS Climate Team meets next on October 19, 2023.

RAILS Continuing Education and Training

Sept 26, 1-2:30pm: [It's Not Them, It's Us: Understanding and Addressing the Factors that Negatively Impact the Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of BIPOC Librarians](#)

Presenter: Dr. Kawanna M. Bright, Assistant Professor of Library Science, East Carolina University

This session will address the recruitment, hiring, and retention of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), focusing on what library leaders can do to address these issues in their organizations and how to implement inclusivity and belonging practices in the workplace. Participants will learn more about what negatively impacts the recruitment and retention of BIPOC employees and actions that can be taken to address those issues.

Oct 03, 9am-4pm: [Ethnographic Research Methods in Libraries](#)

Library UX Chicago is pleased to host Drs. Donna Lanclos and Andrew Asher for an in-person workshop on ethnographic research methods in libraries held at DePaul University's John T. Richardson Library on the Lincoln Park campus. This event will take place on October 3, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and is open to all Illinois libraries.

CARLI and RAILS will sponsor this full-day workshop that empowers participants to think critically about the contexts in which their library's services and spaces operate. Participants will work together to identify patterns and trends in ethnographic data which they will be asked to collect prior to the workshop. They will learn frameworks for analyzing qualitative data, strategies for identifying and communicating actionable insights with these data, and approaches to developing areas for future inquiry or partnership.

Oct 03, 10-11:30am: [Putting the "U" in Digital Equity](#)

With the mega-funding coming for broadband improvements across the US, digital equity is suddenly a hot topic everywhere. We know that equity is at the very core of library services, but how can we apply the equity lens to digital services to include as many library patrons as possible?

Please join technology consultant Carson Block and librarian and educational consultant Sarah Morris for a fun and engaging look at digital equity and an onramp to improve technology-driven library services for patrons and staff alike.

Oct 06, 1-2:30pm: [Collaborating for Digital Equity and Inclusion](#)

As digital access becomes increasingly essential for participating in community life, libraries can play an important role in the digital equity and inclusion ecosystem. Hear about real-world examples of digital equity partnerships and learn to apply their lessons in your own library.

Additional 2023 Learning Opportunities

- Oct 17, 1-2pm: [Public Library Association: Disability Inclusion in Library Services](#). To best serve patrons with disabilities, we need to understand their community, culture, and needs. In this webinar, we will explore disability experiences, how to provide safe and inclusive spaces, and how to serve patrons through programming and collections.

Although the examples will be youth focused, they can be adapted for any age. Panelist is Shelley Harris, Oak Park Public Library.

Additional Opportunities for Initiatives and Tools

[RAILS EDI Learning Cohort](#) by Diana Rusch, Reaching Across Illinois Library System and Katie Clausen, Gail Borden Public Library; ILA Reporter, September 2023

RAILS Networking Groups

BIPOC Library Workers

This group aims to foster connection, share resources and discuss specific experiences in a safe, welcome, and open space for all library workers members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color. We will meet virtually every other month for two hours via Zoom. Meetings are posted to the L2 calendar and communications about them will be posted to the group's mailing list.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Metadata Networking Group

Would you like to be part of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Metadata Networking Group? The group aims to foster the importance of a shared understanding to create and maintain more equitable, diverse, and inclusive metadata content. This group is open to all library staff of all types and sizes. This group will host regular discussions on DEI topics related to catalog data. Meetings will be listed on the L2 calendar as they are scheduled.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Team in Youth Services

Are you interested in meeting with like-minded Youth Services library staff to discuss diversity of all kinds? Whether it be hiring diverse presenters, planning inclusive programming, selecting diverse materials for collection development and more...we want to discuss it! Join us to help diversify Youth Services.