

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
- Internal projects – information only
 - *Internal HR Practices*
 - *Board Recruitment/Nomination Process*
 - *Presenter/Consultant EDI Directory for Members*

The RAILS Climate Team meets next on December 13, 2023.

RAILS Continuing Education and Training

Freedom Lifted

As part of RAILS' ongoing commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) we are offering a new online course to RAILS members: [Social Justice in Public Libraries from Freedom Lifted](#). This course content is relevant and applicable to all library types. Freedom Lifted founder Mia Henry says that the content allows learners to transition “from surface talk about diversity and

inclusion to real, honest conversations about justice.” This asynchronous course is a flexible learning opportunity that is suited for individual learners or a group learning environment.

Applications Now Being Accepted for RAILS Continuing Education Event Grants

RAILS again invites member networking groups, consortia, and libraries to apply for a [RAILS Continuing Education Event Grant](#). This grant supports CE events for RAILS member libraries towards the development of library staff and trustees. To qualify, CE events must be made available to all RAILS member library staff. **RAILS continues to prioritize events focused on equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility**, but will consider applications for all other CE topics of broad interest. The maximum grant award is \$2,000.

Grant applications will be accepted through February 2, 2024.

[RAILS Minute](#) – November 8, 2023

RAILS Executive Director Monica Harris introduces our new Director of Marketing and Communications, Dan Bostrom! Together, they discuss what's on the agenda for the upcoming RAILS Member Update, a new EDI resource for members called Freedom Lifted, and the My Library Is... grant opportunity that is now open to all types of libraries.

Dec 5, 9-10:30 am: [Resilience: This Moment and Beyond](#)

Presenter: Angela Locarno, Trainer, Right To Be

This interactive and experiential learning experience will teach you how to author your own resilience, using Right To Be’s resilience methodology: sit with what is, create your story, and be in choice. Starting with a discussion on resilience and how it’s different (and harder) than self-care, you'll then be guided on how to hold pain and still find joy through guided practices.

February 24, 2024: EDI Foundations for Library Trustees

Presenter: Elisabeth “Biz” Lindsay-Ryan, RAILS EDI Consultant

EDI Consultant and school board member Elisabeth Lindsay-Ryan will present a webinar focused on EDI for library trustees. After providing a broad overview of foundational EDI concepts and issues, Biz will explore the ways in which this work matters for libraries and the communities they serve and how trustees can support this important work. This webinar will be held the morning of Saturday, February 24 and will be recorded and available for all RAILS members. Final details including registration will be shared in early January. Watch RAILS e-news for more details.

Additional 2023 Learning Opportunities

[Inclusive Cataloging: Maintaining Your Momentum](#) (recorded on Nov 13, 2023)

Chicago-based cataloging librarian Violet Fox discusses the past, present, and future of inclusive cataloging. Participants will learn about projects being done around the world to address long-standing bias in our catalogs, providing new opportunities to continue this work in their own systems. Attendees will also come away from the session with a renewed awareness of how this work can positively impact both library workers and our users. No cataloging knowledge is needed for this conversation; anyone with an interest in making our knowledge organization structures more just and fair is welcome!

View the slide deck at: <https://tinyurl.com/RAILSinclusivecataloging>

Additional Opportunities for Initiatives and Tools

- Mar 18, 2024, [ALA eLearning: Serving Diverse Communities](#)
Purpose of Course: The purpose of this course is to create a heightened awareness of the various segments of library populations and their diverse needs. The course engages demographics and needs assessments to develop skills to analyze, plan and implement services to meet the library community's diverse needs. With particular attention to multiculturalism, topics explored include programming, facilities, marketing, technology, collection development, and staffing and recruitment.
- On-Demand ALA eLearning (free), [Centering Community, Building Equity: A Social Justice Approach to Outreach with Families and Children in Underserved Communities](#)
In this webinar, the Project VOICE team will provide an overview of the importance of outreach efforts to underserved communities; how to intentionally integrate the social justice concepts of equity, engagement, and empowerment into these efforts; and the role of community values in developing authentic outreach services for young children and families. The webinar will conclude with an introduction by the Library Service to Underserved Children and Their Caregivers Committee to their Toolkit series, which provides resources for working with different underserved groups

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.