March 4, 2024
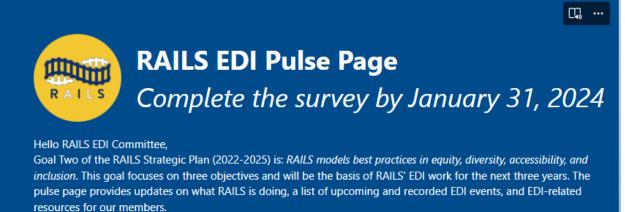
TO: **RAILS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee**

FROM: **Joe Filapek, RAILS Associate Executive Director**

SUBJECT: **RAILS EDI Pulse Page**

One of the features of the RAILS website is "The Library Pulse", which highlights current issues for Illinois Libraries and a corresponding resource page. In an effort to share best practices and provide resources to support member libraries, we have maintained an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Pulse Page since 2020. You can find our Pulse Pages at the bottom of the RAILS home page, and the direct URL to our EDI Pulse Page is https://railslibraries.org/edi. In addition to the general information on the main page, you will find links on the right-hand side to listings of EDI events, presentations, networking groups, and resources.

Following our December 12 meeting, RAILS staff sent committee members a survey to invite resource suggestions or other feedback on this EDI pulse page. We received quite a few responses from the committee, and this information has been included on the pulse page survey document included with your meeting materials.

We thank committee members for your feedback, and will review these comments during our March meeting.

RAILS EDI Pulse Page
Complete the survey by January 31, 2024

Hello RAILS EDI Committee,

Goal Two of the RAILS Strategic Plan (2022-2025) is: *RAILS models best practices in equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion.* This goal focuses on three objectives and will be the basis of RAILS' EDI work for the next three years. The pulse page provides updates on what RAILS is doing, a list of upcoming and recorded EDI events, and EDI-related resources for our members.

As a member of the EDI committee, we are looking for your expertise to review the EDI Pulse Page (**https://railslibraries.org/edi**) and to suggest any additional content to the current three sections, *EDI Events & Presentations, EDI Networking Groups & Email Lists,* and *EDI Resources from Libraries & Organizations.*

EDI Resources from Libraries & Organizations:
(https://railslibraries.org/edi/resources)

EDI Resources from Libraries & Organizations Section:
Are there any resources that you do not see? If so, please include the resource and the link here.

One thing I feel like people struggle with after EDI trainings is how to take what they learned and put those concepts into practice within their workplace. In this section I would like to see a document (maybe created by this committee or RAILS staff) that explains some of the tangible changes we can make in our policies that address some of the systemic issues that are discussed in trainings. An example of this could be a list of potential updates to personnel policies that can be added/edited and how they fit into the scope of EDI work. For things like the benefits divide between professional vs. non-professional full-time staff, part-time and full-time staff, paid paternal leave, etc. We could have explanations of the changes, how they impact historically, intentionally, and traditionally marginalized people groups, and then link to or include samples from libraries that have made these updates. This way, people are gaining insight into how to recognize ways to change their own policies and procedures while also giving them policy verbiage to do so.

Library examples:
dglibrary.org/edi - this page has a lot of our homegrown resources including the EDI decision making tool, frameworks for releasing anti-hate statements, information about land acknowledgment development, etc.

General resources:
https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language - APA's Bias-Free Language resources

https://www.apa.org/about/apa/equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines?_gl=1*114akz*_ga*MTcxMDU3Njg3My4xNzAxOTYyMDU1*_ga_SZXLGDJGNB*MTcwMzY5NDM2MC4zLjAuMTcwMzY5NDQwNy4wLjAuMA.. - APA: Inclusive Language Guide with suggested alternatives tables

No

ACRL EDI Libguide
https://acrl.libguides.com/edi

Anti Oppression LibGuide Simmons University
https://simmons.libguides.com/anti-oppression

Library Accessibility Alliance
https://www.libraryaccessibility.org/

Publications
Up//root https://www.uproot.space/
In the Library With The Lead Pipe https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/

Podcast - Overdue: Weeding out Oppression in Libraries https://www.buzzsprout.com/1948067 In general, missing: Book titles from the field and journals on DEI and librarianship. There are a few open access options that can be added. Resources to support academic libraries can also include critical information literacy, critical cataloging, etc.
Looks good
This looks great
n/a
Resource needed, but uncertain of a link.   What resources are available for a library employee, fearful of retaliation punishment or job loss, to seek support?   I've known library employees who have no one to consult when facing difficulties in the workplace.   Most of the resources presented appear focused on educating workers about EDI.

EDI Events & Presentations Section: **Are there any recorded events and presentations that you do not see? If so, please include the information and the link to the information here.**
I could see putting Freedom Lifted here again. Especially if there is consideration on whether or not to renew based on how much it is used.
There are a lot of non-RAILS continuing ed programs and recorded presentations that are not listed; however, they are often taken down after a specific amount of time or are only for individuals who pay to participate in the training. Do we have a process to ensure the programs submitted are still live and available for the masses?
No.
Unless you would like to post RERFORMA programs
n/a
Equitable hiring and selection of library employees.   Again, I don't have a resource other than the discussion presented by the Library Director from Illinois Wesleyan University

EDI Networking Groups & Email Lists Section: Are there any networking groups or email lists that you do not see? If so, please include the name and the link to the networking group or email list here.
Nothing I can think of.
No
wehere.space is for BIPOC library workers only but anyone can sign up for their public facing newsletter
SPARK (Spanish programs and resources for Kids) networking group it's kid's programs but we focus on Spanish language or supporting the multitude of cultures.
Everyone I use is there
n/a
I have no suggestions to offer.

Along with the current three sections, EDI Events & Presentations, EDI Networking Groups & Email Lists, and EDI Resources from Libraries & Organizations, would you like to see another section added?
It would be helpful to see a list of participating organizations that do have an active internal EDI/DEI/IDEA/JEDI/etc committee/department/workgroup. Having that list and maybe a contact email (perhaps not a direct point of contact for safety reasons) might be beneficial to organizations looking to start their own internal EDI cohort. The only disadvantage that I can see in having this list available publicly is the potential targeting that these organizations may face from individuals/groups actively seeking to be disruptive/hateful.
We need a place to share non-training resources from libraries (such as policies). I think there's a lot of high-level training listed but not enough practical applications being shared. It would probably be beneficial to have a form where library staff can submit questions/feedback/etc for where they need support on each page; it would be nice to be able to see trends of what topics and themes libraries are looking to increase training on. It can also be used to give feedback on listed training (if some recordings should not continue to be listed, library staff can communicate why, etc). Perhaps a networking or contact list of library EDI committees? We don't need the

individuals on the list, but the group email (eg: equityteam@dglibrary.org) could be helpful so committees can connect and bounce ideas off each other if needed. That means we can all connect with each other without it being a single staff member's responsibility to communicate.
No
I don't think so
I think the three components are very beneficial.
The three sections are adequate.

Any additional feedback?
The navigation between the pages threw me off initially. I am not sure if this is just a me thing, but the first couple times I navigated through these pages I didn't recognize the blue box on the right of the page as a shortcut to move through the different pages. I noticed the option to go to the next page at the bottom of the page that first time I looked at the pulse EDI page and briefly after that I took that as the only way to move from page to page.
The design and layout of the EDI Pulse Page is difficult to navigate and is not user-friendly. I think there needs to be a larger discussion around what is the goal and purpose of this resource, and how we can best communicate the information to library staff and leadership. There's a lot of great information here, but it's not easy to find. Honestly, I think the reason people do not use this page is not because they want updated information, but because they can't find or understand what they're looking for/at.

Navigation suggestion: having the parent page with three sub-pages was confusing to me. The navigation tool at the bottom was the primary way I was able to navigate between the various pages, but it kept me working in sequence when I wanted to see all of the resources at once. The blue box at the top right becomes visual noise and it doesn't communicate that it's a menu bar.
General suggestion: this entire EDI pulse page needs a disclaimer that everyone is learning and on their own journey of growth. That means some of the program presenters will have their own biases and that we (as active participants in creating equitable workspaces) need to think critically about: how are a presenter's suggestions, recommendations, etc. informed by their own experiences and how do these items apply to our own libraries and staff members. As we know better, we do |

better. Some of these programs may not be the best resource anymore and we should make sure we are reevaluating older resources.

Resource/Program suggestion: organizing resources and programs by theme! The page feels like a huge wall of text and it's hard to weed through. When library staff come to this page, I imagine they have an idea of what they are looking for (introduction to EDI, LGBTQ+ specific, etc) and it is hard to identify what kind of resources and programs we have available when everything is mixed together.

Grateful for the resources

I still feel so new to the RAILS EDI Committee and how to even be on a committee, but sometimes I find things that make me think about how this sort of thing would be useful to share with others to learn about a culture that might be different than their own. For example, I will be going to see an event that is part of a visiting artist series. The woman performing is a Muslim American Hip-Hop dancer. I know what hip-hop is, but I learned so much more about it from her and then she also uses her platform to inform people about her culture. I know it is just one aspect, but I think learning about as many cultures and their history and how it connects to our world can make a difference in our communities.

Nothing at this time.