

ARL Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Institute Framework and Metrics

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Planning Materials

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) developed the recommendations for a curricular framework and success metrics for an ARL Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Institute with the support of an [Institute of Museum and Library Services FY2020 Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program](#) award (RE246354-OLS-20). This work was led by the DEI Institute Task Force whose membership comprised:

- Yolanda Cooper (Case Western Reserve University)
- DeLa Dos, Chair (ARL)
- Monica Figueroa (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)
- Carol Kassel (New York University)
- Sandra Riggs (University of Georgia), representing the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)
- Jung Mi Scoulas, Research Scholar (University of Illinois Chicago)
- Kevin Strowder (American Library Association (ALA))

The ARL DEI Institute envisions gallery, library, archive, and museum (GLAM) organizations that acknowledge and nurture our diverse communities.

The ARL DEI Institute provides an action-oriented experience that prepares attendees to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in their respective organizations through a workshop-driven structure that fosters collaboration, innovation, evaluation, and reflection.

The ARL DEI Institute aims to:

- Provide tools, knowledge, skills, strategies, and resources to implement change
- Provide space and a sustainable platform for innovation, evaluation, and reflection
- Provide materials and ideas for furthering DEI-related key activities at participants' institutions
- Establish a community of practice to support ongoing commitment to institutional change
- Encourage the recognition of the needs of the broader diverse society served by GLAM institutions

Curricular Framework

The ARL DEI Institute design focuses on generating sustainable organizational transformation. The institute structure includes four components:

- Online orientation session
- Three-day in-person meeting
- Online follow-up session

- Community of practice of institution participants

The ARL DEI Institute curriculum will be updated to ensure relevance and efficacy. A task force convened by ARL staff will be charged with managing the institute curriculum. The implementation will be led by a combination institute faculty selected through an open expression of interest process and ARL staff.

After participating in the institute, attendees will be able to:

- Identify institutional/community needs related to DEI
- Identify strategies to translate statements into practice
- Determine DEI training needs and program preferences
- Describe the benefits to diversity
- Describe the value of DEI professional development
- Describe challenges to effecting institutional change
- Describe opportunities/strengths to effecting institutional change
- Describe strategies for effecting institutional change
- Describe the value of relationships in efforts to advance DEI
- Discuss strategies for ensuring the sustainability of efforts to advance DEI
- Utilize assessment strategies to measure impact of efforts to advance DEI
- Develop institutionally relevant DEI programming
- Develop an action plan for their institution

The prerequisites for institute participation are:

- A series of topical trainings
- (Proto)needs assessment
- Document review
 - [ALA/ARL Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity](#)
 - [ALA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scorecard for Library and Information Organizations](#)

Applications to participate are submitted on behalf of institutions. Institutions selected to participate will send a delegation of up to three individuals, at least one of whom must be a senior leader who has direct influence on resource allocation, human capital decisions, and/or advancing DEI strategy. No more than 75 individuals shall attend a single institute. Applications will include a statement of intent that addresses the following items:

- The institution's preparedness for impactful DEI work
- The desired outcomes of institution participation in the institute
- The potential value of using the ALA DEI Scorecard and/or ALA/ARL Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity in the institution's efforts to advance DEI
- The proposed institutional delegation

- The commitment by the institution’s executive leader to support the institution’s efforts to advance DEI

Accepted institutions will complete the following institute pre-work:

- ALA DEI Scorecard
- Responses to reflection prompts
- Institutional profile
- Demographics matrix

The three-day in-person meeting of the institute will include a combination of community sessions, small-group engagement, skill building, and working/planning sessions.

Institute participants will complete the following post-work:

- Finalizing an institutional action plan
- Providing action plan progress reports to ARL

Success Metrics

The following information will be used as metrics of success for the ARL DEI Institute (specific targets for each metric will be determined by the ARL DEI Committee):

- Institutional Applications
- Institutional Participants
- Institute Evaluation
- Institute Assessment
- Completion of Institutional Action Plans
- Institutional Utilization of Institute Resources
- Institutional progress on ALA DEI Scorecard
- Institutional Engagement with the Community of Practice

The following metrics can be used by institutional participants to measure success of their efforts post-institute:

- Pulse/engagement/climate survey results
- Progress toward meeting institutional DEI goals

Process Notes

The ARL DEI Institute Task Force undertook a process that included multiple opportunities for input from various stakeholders including outreach to organizations engaged in DEI work within GLAM communities, a community input survey, a series of focus groups, and an in-person session during the 2022 ALA Annual Conference and

Exhibition in Washington, DC. Highlights from the survey and focus groups are included below.

Community Survey

The ARL Diversity Equity Inclusion Institute Task Force created an online survey to assess the involvement of individuals working in libraries and archives in the existing DEI programs. The survey aimed to understand their perceptions and preferences regarding DEI needs. It was distributed to 19 professional associations and organizations in the US and Canada in the spring of 2022. A total of 316 individuals responded, with the majority (92%) from the US. Among the respondents, most worked at the library, followed by academic institutions, while 23% worked at archives; 40% of respondents identified as BIPOC.

Key findings:

- In terms of the types of DEI programs or activities provided by their institutions for employees, respondents were asked to select multiple options. Out of 316 respondents, the majority (83%) reported having a DEI committee, taskforce, council, or similar structure, while over 60% answered that their institutions shared resources with employees through internal communications, followed by sponsored employee attendance at DEI-related conferences. More than half of the respondents indicated that their institutions developed DEI-related professional development opportunities internally (59%) or externally (55%). About 6% of the respondents answered that they did not know, and 4% selected “none.”
- The majority of respondents indicate that Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (GLAM) should not be neutral (89%) and are in a good position to act on social change (78%). Furthermore, their individual satisfaction with the DEI work was higher than organizational and GLAM levels.
- Respondents reported being most satisfied with DEI work on an individual level, but least satisfied with DEI work at the GLAM level. Further analysis revealed that satisfaction with DEI work at the institutional and GLAM levels was statistically correlated with the GLAM’s neutrality agreement regarding DEI. This implies that respondents who are likely to disagree with GLAM’s stance of remaining neutral are less likely to be satisfied with the institution’s and GLAM’s DEI work.
- There was a significant difference in the level of satisfaction at the individual level between BIPOC and non-BIPOC respondents, with BIPOC respondents reporting significantly higher satisfaction with DEI work at the individual level than non-BIPOC respondents; however, there was no statistically significant difference in the level of satisfaction with DEI work at the institutional and GLAM levels between BIPOC and non-BIPOC respondents.

- The survey respondents provided further information on the DEI related needs in their work and the field. Four major themes were revealed, including (1) the need for GLAM to comprehend, recognize, and acknowledge DEI aims and concerns; (2) the requirement for systematic reforms in various areas such as hiring, resource collection, and training techniques to support BIPOC employees and leaders; (3) the lack of dedication and sustainability in DEI work; and (4) the necessity for tools and assessments to move forward.

The survey findings shed light on the satisfaction levels, perspectives, and needs of GLAM workers in relation to DEI programs and demonstrated correlations between satisfaction levels and perceptions of DEI work. However, to bridge the gaps between these findings, further research is needed to explore the underlying reasons.

The raw data from this survey is available in [this spreadsheet](#).

Focus Groups

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the DEI gaps, perceptions, and needs within the GLAM sector, a series of focus groups were conducted, building upon the results of a previous survey. Three focus groups were conducted between April and May 2022, with 22 participants; 55% of the participants held managerial positions, and 86% were female. More than 90% worked in academic libraries, with 86% from the United States.

Findings from focus groups were organized into five themes, including DEI program needs, gaps, learning topics, strategies, and measuring challenges. An additional theme, suggestions, was included to highlight the potential future impact.

- Perceptions of DEI program needs include: diversifying people and collections to better serve users, addressing systemic issues such as racism and white dominance, and addressing these issues throughout the profession from collections to policies.
- Among the gaps in the current DEI programs noted by all focus group participants, one significant deficiency was the lack of structure in DEI work across the profession. Another gap was the absence of institutional support. Additionally, there is a lack of best practices and implementation in DEI work. Although there are many training opportunities available, participants found it challenging to apply what they learned in practice due to the focus on theoretical knowledge rather than actionable items.
- During the focus groups, several emerging learning topics were identified, including: (1) building skills for self-reflection and empathy, which can lead to changes in behavior and attitudes; (2) incorporating historical context, particularly in relation to US history and the history of libraries and information systems, as a way to increase awareness and understanding; (3)

training for individuals interested in DEI work within resistant or hostile organizations—an essential topic.

- Participants emphasized the importance of recognizing the diverse needs of individuals in DEI programs. They noted that everyone has different levels of knowledge, experiences, backgrounds, and interests. Therefore, DEI programs should be tailored to meet these needs to encourage continued engagement in DEI work.
- Measurement issues were raised when assessing DEI programs, specifically the lack of strategic goals, which make it difficult to measure the expected outcomes effectively. To address this issue, some participants stressed the importance of defining success criteria within the context of these DEI programs, as it enables measuring the program's impact.
- Participants provided recommendations for future DEI work and programs, falling into three categories: (1) connecting DEI training and knowledge to real-world situations to build an understanding of how this work is put into practice, (2) creating safe and inclusive spaces where they can openly discuss historical harm in libraries, and (3) integrating assessment as part of the workflow and continuing to measure programs, with the understanding that there is no endpoint or conclusion to these efforts.

These findings could potentially serve as critical content for the DEI Institute's curriculum as they offered insights into improving the current DEI program strategies and addressing the challenges in measuring their effectiveness. Incorporating these suggestions into the curriculum could provide GLAM professionals with practical knowledge and skills to develop and implement more effective DEI programs in their organizations.

About the Association of Research Libraries

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is a nonprofit organization of [research libraries in Canada and the US](#) whose vision is to create a trusted, equitable, and inclusive research and learning ecosystem and prepare library leaders to advance this work in strategic partnership with member libraries and other organizations worldwide. ARL's mission is to empower and advocate for research libraries and archives to shape, influence, and implement institutional, national, and international policy. ARL develops the next generation of leaders and enables strategic cooperation among partner institutions to benefit scholarship and society. ARL is on the web at [ARL.org](#).

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