CARL Definitions for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Equity:

CARL defines equity as a process that creates fair access, opportunities, and respectful treatment of all people in a diverse community, recognizing the disadvantage of marginalized individuals and groups. Equity is achieved through improving transparency and designing policies, practices, and principles that serve to remove biases and obstacles that limit the full participation of marginalized groups by acknowledging unequal starting places and addressing the imbalance.

Diversity:

CARL defines diversity with the recognition that the human condition hosts a range of unique attributes, qualities, and experiences anchored in race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, abilities, appearance, socio-economic status, belief systems, place of origin, language, and historical experience. Diversity is advanced by a supportive and nurturing environment to invest in collective success and to develop a positive framework for inclusion. Diversity creates value in an organization and should be recognized, pursued, and evidenced through recruitment, retention, professional development, services, and spaces that are representative of our diverse voices.

Inclusion:

CARL defines inclusion as the intentional act of including voices and perspectives from diverse groups, especially from marginalized groups and the intersectionalities within, to implement philosophies, policies, practices, and procedures that create a respectful, fair, equitable, and welcoming environment.

In the context of EDI, members of marginalized groups often don't feel a sense of belonging, which CARL defines as:

> an individual state of well-being whereby members from marginalized groups have a sense of comfort, acceptance, and support from their colleagues and administrators; are heard, valued, and recognized; play an integral role in designing the structures where they will function; and can meaningfully contribute at all levels. The journey towards belonging requires the inclusion of underrepresented groups in the design of equitable institutional structures, policies, and practices, and that all members of the library workforce work towards understanding and embracing differences, being open minded, and connecting formally and informally with each other. Belonging is the opposite of *Othering*, where people and their ideas are excluded due to indifference, lack of awareness, intolerance, bias, ignorance, or prejudice. Belonging creates a space where every individual truly feels empowered to speak up, make change, and shift the culture.