



## STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES FOR HIRING AND RETAINING DIVERSE TALENT

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### 1. Introduction

This document is intended for Canadian research library directors and senior academic library administrators who are seeking to foster, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) throughout their organizations. This document provides a set of broad recruitment and retention strategies, each with accompanying suggested practices offered in bullets and sub-bullets. These strategies and practices should be considered within the context of institutional priorities and applicable collective agreement(s) and be implemented individually or collectively (e.g. it is possible to implement single or all practices under “Target recruitment activities to underrepresented populations”).

We use the term “underrepresented” throughout this document to signify excluded, discriminated, vulnerable, disadvantaged and minority communities. We recognize that definitions will change over time based on community and societal feedback.

### 2. Recruitment Strategies and Suggested Practices

#### Understand EDI at your Institution and at your Library

- Review institutional EDI policies, practices, and collective agreements.
- Conduct a [diversity hiring audit](#) on your current hiring processes and policies.
- Review EDI data where available.
- Set measurable EDI goals.

#### Grow your Candidate Pool

- Develop pathways through collaborative initiatives with one or more of the library schools and library technician programs to promote librarianship to all underrepresented groups.
- Consider paid co-op placements, paid internships, and scholarships that specifically target applicants from underrepresented groups.
- Consider broadening the eligibility for librarian positions to be inclusive of LIS accredited degrees beyond ALA-accreditation.

- Consider asking applicants to use the Educational Credential Assessment (ECA) to compare their international credentials to those offered in Canada (see section 5 “Additional Resources” for link to University of Toronto’s Comparative Education Service). Institutions could offer to pay for the application fees.
- Support professional associations’ collective initiatives around EDI hiring (This may include creating your own ALA equivalency criteria for hiring)

### Advertise for Diversity

Target recruitment activities to underrepresented populations

- Promote your institution as an inclusive space and be an inclusive space.
- Create [inclusive](#) job postings.
- Cast a wider net!
  - Reach out to candidates through channels and networks (e.g., ViMLoC, LGBTQIA2S+ listservs, etc.).
  - Provincial Associations’ special interest groups such as BCCLA First Nations Interest Group and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Interest Group.
  - [Nation Talk](#) Indigenous Hyperlocal Network ([sales@nationtalk.ca](mailto:sales@nationtalk.ca))
  - [We Here](#) Job Board for BIPOC
  - American library caucuses such as BCALA, CALA, REFORMA, SAA – Archivists and Archives of Color Section

### Hire for Diversity

- Form an inclusive [hiring committee](#)
  - Provide EDI training, support, and resources for the committee.
  - Consider including an equity representative.
- Assess [potential candidates in terms of EDI](#).
- Create an [inclusive environment, conduct an inclusive interview and follow best practices](#)
- Follow up with candidates to provide feedback on the interview when possible.

## 3. Retention Strategies and Suggested Practices

### Ensure Commitment from Senior Library Leadership to Develop an EDI Culture

- Commit to learning more about EDI in your role as a senior library leader.
- Include EDI action items in strategic planning exercises (e.g., create an EDI committee, EDI training for all staff including leadership, specific and separate EDI training for leadership positions).
- Ensure that there is an ongoing budget allocation for EDI initiatives and staffing.
- Engage in succession planning at all levels and throughout the organization, including the senior leadership level (see [Kumaran, M.](#) 2015).
- Identify employees from underrepresented groups with leadership potential, and,

- Provide ongoing mentorship/career coaching and support for these new leaders.
- Offer financial support to these potential leaders to attend leadership programs
- Consider EDI in all areas of the library's work (e.g., collection development, research, instruction or teaching).
- Provide [EDI specific internship opportunities for students](#) and/or residency programs.
- Collect recruitment and retention data annually if possible, and share as appropriate.

#### Foster an Inclusive Environment and a Sense of Belonging

- Support the creation of affinity groups (e.g., for underrepresented library employees) as a safe space for people to meet and engage.
- Engage stakeholders internal and external to the library or institution (e.g. donors, campus partners) through collaborations on EDI goals, initiatives, etc.
- Record and feature 'stories of exclusion and inclusion' by underrepresented groups.
- Pursue pay equity.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for constructive conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Ensure conversations and decision making includes diverse voices without overburdening the same individuals each time.
- Encourage employees to demonstrate EDI engagement through everyday practices such as teaching, collection development, relationship building, and research.
- Demonstrate that all units, departments, and all library branches value EDI through setting achievable short and long term EDI goals and metrics around everyday library work.

#### Support on-the-job Mentorships and Career Ladders

- Provide transparent pathways for underrepresented employees to promotion and leadership.
- Have conversations with underrepresented employees to understand their career aspirations and collaboratively create a plan to support these goals.
- Encourage and support underrepresented employees to attend leadership and career development programs.
- Create opportunities for underrepresented employees to participate in mentorship programs.

## 4. Glossary / Definitions

Most biases can create or offer employment opportunities based on categorization. They also suggest a refusal to treat people as individuals or treating them based on generic views. The individual and compounding effects of biases have an impact on the recruitment, retention, and achievements of underrepresented employees. They cause a lack of recognition of minority employees, and this may limit the opportunities offered to them. There are numerous terms and definitions available that are relevant to EDI work. The list below consists of terms that are specific to recruitment and retention work.

- **Affinity bias** — Refers to the gravitation towards and therefore preferring individuals like oneself (e.g. physical attributes).
- **Colourism** — Is the tendency to favour lighter-skinned individuals (among the people of colour).
- **Cultural Competency** — A congruent set of behaviours, attitudes, and policies that enable individuals and teams to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. It constitutes learning new behavioural patterns about responding effectively to a diverse group of people and applying these patterns effectively as needed. In operational settings, it is about “the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services” (National Association of Social Workers, 2001, p.13). There are five important elements to consider:
  1. Valuing diversity.
  2. Having a capacity for cultural assessment of employees.
  3. Being conscious of the dynamics when individuals and teams from diverse groups interact.
  4. Institutionalizing cultural knowledge.
  5. Developing programs that reflect the value of diversity.
- **Groupthink** — A bias that occurs when people try too hard to fit into a particular group by mimicking others or holding back thoughts and opinions. This causes them to lose part of their own identities and causes organizations to lose out on creativity and innovation.
- **Halo effect** — Assuming everything about a person is good because of similarities to oneself (physical attributes).
- **Heteronormativity** — A bias in favour of opposite-sex relationships and against same-sex relationships of sexual nature. It places heterosexual relationships as the default and the norm, thereby positioning homosexual relationships as abnormal.
- **Implicit Bias** — Past experiences, attitudes, or stereotypes that influence understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. Implicit bias has five key characteristics: it is unconscious, pervasive, lacks alignment with explicit beliefs, has real-world effects on behaviour, and is malleable.
- **Inclusion** - The intentional act of creating philosophies, policies, practices, and procedures that create a respectful, fair, equitable, and welcoming environment that includes ideas, experiences, voices, and perspectives from diverse backgrounds especially of those from marginalized or underrepresented groups (CARL EDI Working group, 2019). Facilitating and implementing strategies such as including minorities in succession planning and into senior rank positions will help with retention.
- **In-Group Bias** —The tendency to favour members of one’s group to maintain a positive social identity. This may happen consciously or unconsciously.

- **Intersectionality** — Coined by Crenshaw to denote the effects of race and gender of black women that caused a complex convergence of oppression. This term was later used to indicate the interconnectedness of other social dimensions such as race, class, education, nationality, language, and other combined factors that create unique modes of discrimination. Other related terms are triple oppression or triple exploitation – where classism, racism, and sexism are compounded towards the oppression of an individual.
- **Invisible Racism** — Refers to racist behaviour that is accepted and normalized in society.
- **Microaggressions** — Coined by Pierce in 1970 to denote racially grounded insults and dismissals towards Blacks. Today, it includes discriminatory comments towards all underrepresented communities such as LGBTQ, elderly, disabled, gender minorities, immigrants, and racial and ethnic minorities. There are three types of microaggressions – microassaults, micro insults, and microinvalidations. *Microassaults* are explicit verbal or nonverbal attacks meant to insult (e.g. name-calling, racial slurs). *Microinsults* are rude and insensitive comments directed at minorities. (asking a person of colour how they managed to get the job). *Microinvalidations* exclude or nullify the experiences, thoughts, and feelings of minorities. (e.g. I am colour blind; we are all the same).
- **Privilege** — Having access to resources, funds, and people, having economic and material security, and higher representation and entitlement based on class, gender, race, ethnicity, and other phenotypic attributes and intersectionalities.
- **Stereotyping** — Categorizing people based on their physical attributes, nationalities, religious backgrounds, or appearance, and forming beliefs, assigning characteristics, making predictions, and interpreting behaviours or abilities. Such categorizing and characterizing may occur due to unconscious associations. There are four categories of stereotyping: *Stereotype activation* (distinguishes between activation and application), *Stereotype use* (stereotype activation counts as stereotyping), *Primary influence of stereotyping* (in hiring), and *stereotyping as communication* (forming and public expression of stereotyping).

## 5. Additional Resources

Where to post positions

- [Visible Minority Librarians of Canada Network](#)
- 2SLGBTQIA+ Listservs
- Indigenous Librarians Networks
- [WeHere.Space](#)

Accreditation Resources

- University of Toronto's [Comparative Education Service](#)

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## Links

1. [Think with Google: The power of difference: How to hire and retain diverse teams in brands and agencies](#)
2. [University of California, Berkeley A Toolkit for Recruiting and Hiring a More Diverse Workforce](#)
3. [EDUCAUSE A Checklist for Inclusive Hiring](#)

4. [University of Texas, Austin Inclusive Search and Recruitment Toolkit](#)
5. [RBC Diversity & Inclusion Blueprint 2020](#)
6. [2018 RBC Employment Equity Report](#)
7. [IDEAL Diversity Hiring: 6 Steps To Hiring More Diverse Candidates](#)
8. [Culture Plus Consulting Meaningful Metrics For Diversity And Inclusion](#)
9. [ALA Recruiting for Diversity](#)
10. [University of British Columbia Hiring checklist for diversity](#)
11. [SPEC Kit 356: Diversity and Inclusion 2017](#)
12. [Women in Science & Engineering Leadership institute Enhancing Department Climate: A Guide for Department Chairs](#)
13. [Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion Councils Toolkit for Diversity and Inclusion Practitioners](#)
14. [University of Buffalo How to Hire Faculty: Inclusive Interviewing Best Practices](#)
15. [ALA Inclusive Internship Initiative](#)
16. [Kirwan Institute's Implicit Bias Review](#)

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