

BECOMING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY HUBS:

INTERNAL EDI WORK FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES



CALIFORNIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE 2021





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GROUP 6

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Hannah Giles

Librarian III
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CLA Challenge Statement

Challenge Statement: How do libraries position themselves as community hubs (partnerships)?



Definitions

- Community Hubs - Welcoming spaces for *all* community members; a place for learning and connection; defined by the community.
- Partnerships - Mutually beneficial working relationships between libraries & community organizations and individuals already embedded in the community and focused on serving BIPOC populations.



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The Project

Becoming Inclusive
Community Hubs:
Internal EDI Work for Public
Libraries



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ALA Takes Responsibility

June 2020

American Library Association

We recognize that the founding of our Association was not built on inclusion and equity, but instead was built on systemic racism and discrimination in many forms. We also recognize the hurt and harm done to BIPOC library workers and communities due to these racist structures.



Methodology



Self-
conducted
Research



Obstacles



Interviews &
Questions



Interview
Privacy



Selected
Libraries &
Interviewees





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Interviewees

CALIFORNIA

Burlingame Public Library (CA)

Chula Vista Public Library (CA)

Long Beach Public Library (CA)

Marin County Free Library (CA)

Palos Verdes Library District (CA)

San Francisco Public Library (CA)

NATIONAL

Pima County Public Library (AZ)

Pflugerville Public Library (TX)



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Themes



Staff Support



Partnerships



Education for
Librarians



Trust &
Transparency





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Staff Support

I hate being the only one, and that's what I'm hoping to change. I'm not saying a lot of libraries are not doing as much, but if we're going to talk about diversity, equity, inclusion, you got to do better than me. I don't want to be applauded. You too can do this.

(D. Le, virtual interview, April 7, 2021)



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Partnerships: Connections with local organizations

There is a little bit of a lack in the process of identification and evaluation of community partnerships. A lot of the partnerships that we currently have, the partners found us, we didn't necessarily seek them.

(S. Cazarez, virtual interview, April 3, 2021)



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Partnerships: The community itself as a partner

We speak about libraries as hubs for community; hubs for opportunity. We've got to also know that in order to reinforce that belief, we've got to bring the voices who don't come to the library, who seldom come to the library if not at all.

(D. Le, virtual interview, April 7, 2021)



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Education for Librarians

We have to assess what an LIS degree does, because when we're talking about BIPOC library workers they are disproportionately non-professional librarians. The MLS is a big barrier. I'm not saying we need to get rid of the MLS, but we need to assess what we want out of those programs, and assess equity, diversity and inclusion within the curriculums that we're requiring.

(L. K. Pelayo-Lozada, virtual interview, April 15th, 2021)



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Trust and Transparency

Folks know when you're being honest with them or not. We have to be honest about the fact that we still have work to do. We acknowledge that we maybe did not do what we were supposed to in the past. At this point, we want to make a shift and we want to change. These are the ways that we are going to do this so that we can be held accountable.

(T. Phillips, virtual interview, April 5, 2021)



Considerations to start

- Take small but steady steps
- EDI is a core service, not a statement
- Library staff commits to EDI work
- EDI work requires a budget
- Measure success on different metrics



Action Items for Libraries



Assess: the
community,
the staff, and
the library



Recognize and
support BIPOC
library staff



Create and
incorporate
an EDI
framework



Develop an
EDI committee
and focus on
outreach





Action Items for California State Library

- Create a CA State and CLA landing page for EDI initiatives

- EDI Leadership Online Series

- Funding mentorships and internships



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Q & A

Feel free to ask any questions or provide feedback at this time!



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Contact Us

for questions on our research

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Interview Questions

- What did you notice about how your library was serving (or not serving) your communities of color?
- How did you identify community partners and organizations that serve BIPOC communities with which to work?
- Do you have a department within your organization/government structure that is focused on EDI? How well is the library supported in its efforts?
- Where can you envision the library going as a community hub which serves its entire community?