

The Equity Strategic Plan will inform the library's larger, full Strategic Plan, which is currently under development. Organization of the plan is structured on the four quadrants of racism. The plan was created by the library's Equity Advisory Team, composed of staff members and Downers Grove community members, and led by RGW Consulting. The plan is a living document and will evolve and be updated as needed. The Equity Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Library Trustees on April 27, 2022; a recording of the discussion by Trustees and the plan's approval can be found [here](#).

Internal Practices/Internalized & Interpersonal

Goals:

- Increase staff and Board of Library Trustees (Trustees) awareness of why Downers Grove Public Library (DGPL) is doing anti-prejudice, anti-racism, and anti-hate work and its connection to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and the library's mission and values.
- Create a welcoming, accepting, and inclusive workplace where all staff are treated with dignity and respect.

Objectives:

- Provide staff and Trustees with continuous opportunities for anti-prejudice, anti-racist, and anti-hate professional development, which will be required, to increase self-awareness, with space to process their thoughts.
- Build staff awareness of the historical context of racism, their own implicit biases, and how these inform their interactions and decisions.
- Continue to support affinity groups of historically, intentionally, and traditionally marginalized people groups (HITMPGs) and cultivate an environment in which staff may share their authentic selves.
- Develop staff skills to act as allies and intervene when they hear or see racist and/or hateful behavior, such as microaggressions in customer service situations and from other staff.

Implementation/Activities:

- Offer and require continuing education for all staff members and the Trustees.
- Develop onboarding training cohorts for new staff members and the Trustees.
- Offer team-building activities for staff members and the Trustees.
- Offer support for additional affinity groups.
- Invite the Friends of the Downers Grove Public Library and Downers Grove Public Library Foundation to participate in EDI training offered to Trustees and staff.

Evaluation/Benchmarks:

- Provide opportunities for staff feedback on continuing education through periodic surveys, which will include asking what actions they will take to implement what they learned.
- Complete onboarding training of new staff members and Trustees within their first six months, after which they will participate in a debriefing session to process, discuss, and provide feedback.
- Provide staff opportunities for anonymous feedback on safety, EDI, and workplace culture.

Resources/Budgeting:

- Survey software - Google Forms or Savannah Orangeboy (already owned)
- Training programs - varies
- Onboarding programs - \$1,600 per year
- Consulting support for affinity groups - BIPOC Affinity Group included in RGW Consulting Phase 2 Scope of Work
- Additional hours of paid time for staff to participate in affinity groups, continuing education, and onboarding cohorts

Internal Practices/Institutional & Structural**Goals:**

- Employ policies and procedures that ensure an equitable work environment.
- Promote library work as a career path for HITMPGs by offering resources for career exploration, professional growth and development, and job opportunities for those without a MLIS.

Objectives:

- Increase inclusion of HITMPG voices in programming and consult the Equity Advisory Team on choice points.
- Articulate and embody the purpose of the library's EDI work, including: the framework for anti-hate statements, shared definitions of racism, and the overarching goals of the equity strategic plan both internally and externally.
- Advocate for opportunities to advance in the library field without requiring a MLIS degree.
- Work to eliminate the traditional hierarchy of library positions to support the value of non-MLIS voices in library work.
- Model best practices as a library employer through equitable pay and benefits for all staff, including compensating HITMPGs fairly for the unique skill sets that are integral to their identities (i.e., Spanish-speaking staff translating documents).

Implementation/Activities:

- Create a method for capturing the current data in areas including staffing, vendors, vacation time, and programs to establish a baseline for evaluation and benchmarking.
- Include professional values and equity in its Statement of Service.
- Allot equitable benefits and vacation time.
- Recognize equivalent experience in job descriptions to allow for upward mobility and hiring of staff without a MLIS degree.
- Audit library policies, procedures, and communications strategies using a team that includes HITMPG staff members.
- Utilize the EDI Decision-Making Tool and consult the Equity Team for guidance regarding decisions.
- Explore staffing needs to support effective implementation of EDI goals, objectives, and ongoing work.
- Provide opportunities to promote the library profession to HITMPG communities through paid internships, mentorship, job shadowing, cross-training, and scholarships.

Evaluation/Benchmarks:

- Utilize data from benchmarking of current activities to measure progress.
- Utilize feedback from surveys of staff members and Trustees to implement initiatives and changes.
- Identify and communicate omissions of the usage of the EDI Decision-Making Tool. (A team of any two staff members, Trustees, or Equity Advisory Team members may do this)
- Re-evaluate policies, procedures, and communication strategies at least biannually.

Resources/Budgeting:

- Cost of paid internship(s) and scholarship(s) - TBD
- Cost of additional benefits and vacation time - TBD
- Survey software - Google Forms or Savannah Orangeboy (already owned)

External Practices/Internalized & Interpersonal**Goals:**

- Create opportunities for the community to engage in lifelong learning about EDI and anti-hate.
- Support the Downers Grove community in developing a common and shared language and understanding of EDI and anti-hate.

Objectives:

- Activate library programming that builds community awareness and capacity in anti-prejudice, anti-racism, and anti-hate.
- Engage in programming and outreach, leveraging past success and outcomes of programming, to develop new programs and services, such as Community Conversations.
- Allocate physical space for equitable and accessible use of library services and resources, arts and culture, and programming.

Implementation/Activities:

- Create an EDI glossary to establish a common and shared language in collaboration with community members and partners.
- Invite community organizations to utilize and implement tools that the library has created, including the EDI Decision-Making Tool and EDI glossary.
- Establish clear expectations and guidelines for respectful behavior through a Code of Conduct and Statement of Service for patrons and staff that are easily accessible in the building and online.
- Create a method for capturing the current data in physical space for equitable and accessible use of library services and resources, arts and culture, and programming to establish a baseline for evaluation and benchmarking.

Evaluation/Benchmarks:

- Host an annual roundtable discussion with community partners to share tools and feedback on EDI initiatives, as well as re-evaluate the EDI glossary.
- Utilize data from benchmarking of current physical space and library services to measure progress.

Resources/Budgeting:

- Code of Conduct and Statement of Service Signage
- Cost of programming
- Racial Equity Tools Glossary
- How to Be an Antiracist Glossary of Terms and Reflection Questions
- RGW - A Glossary of Terms

External Practices/Institutional & Structural

Goal:

- Demonstrate that, as a public library, DGPL advocates for and welcomes all HITMPGs for Downers Grove, the Midwest region, and the library profession in the expansion of EDI practices.

Objectives:

- Cultivate community and professional library partnerships that act as a network for HITMPGs.
- Share power and build allyship with HITMPGs.
- Partner with local government agencies and other organizations to discuss, develop, implement and commit to EDI policies, ordinances, and/or laws.
- Advocate for equitable practices in the library field and library legislation in the American Library Association and the Illinois Library Association.
- Provide opportunities for staff and community members to gain an understanding of racial trauma and trauma-informed communities, and provide services through this lens (for example, mental health first aid training).

Implementation/Activities:

- Inform staff about opportunities available in the RAILS BIPOC affinity groups and in RAILS, ILA, and ALA committees.
- Lead an annual EDI Institute Day in collaboration with other area libraries to offer training for our community.
- Inform the public about our commitment to the privacy and confidentiality of patron information.
- Make anti-hate statements to ensure HITMPGs feel seen and valued.
- Attract, retain, and provide opportunities for promotion of HITMPG staff at all levels.
- Actively seek to increase our relationships with HITMPG publishers, vendors, and partners.
- Partner with other area libraries and organizations that have alignment in EDI and anti-racism work to further the goals and missions of each.

Evaluation/Benchmark:

- Include information about the RAILS BIPOC affinity groups as well as RAILS, ALA, and ILA committees in onboarding documents.
- Survey participants of the annual EDI Institute Day to obtain feedback.
- Create onsite signage, digital marketing, and information in the library welcome packet that explains the library's commitment to patron privacy and confidentiality.

- Continuously gather and review feedback from the library's anti-hate statements.
- Create a survey for capturing the current diversity demographics of staff.
- Reach out to a minimum of ten different libraries/local organizations about partnering on EDI work.

Resources/Budgeting:

- Signage regarding patron privacy and confidentiality.
- Cost of EDI Institute Day - \$1,000-\$5,000, depending on presenters and venue.
- Increased cost of purchasing/programming due to utilizing smaller vendors.