

Working Draft: EDI Action Plan 2021-2024

Context:

As charged by the Dean of University Libraries, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee at William & Mary Libraries excited to share this Action Plan for 2021-2024. William and Mary Libraries is joining efforts, such as the work of [The Lemon Project](#), across the university to reconcile and rectify the wrongs perpetuated against historically marginalized and underserved communities. We will continue to reflect and explore the complexities of our own history as we take steps to enact change in the present. The 2021-2024 Action Plan framework aligns with [William & Mary's Inclusive Excellence model](#), emphasizing the core significance of diversity, equity and inclusion to achieving organizational excellence.

We at William and Mary Libraries are committed to fostering an environment where equity, diversity, and inclusion are viewed as fundamental to our mission, and integral to our service model on campus and in the broader community. We believe an environment that is open and welcoming to all patrons is crucial to fulfilling the research, teaching, and service mission of the University. We strive to create a climate of belonging, which we believe promotes self-agency, participation, collaboration, and innovation.

Our shared understanding of diversity and inclusion places emphasis on recognizing and equally valuing the perspectives of all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, class, religion, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other differentiating characteristic. Our Action Plan focuses on objectives and actionable goals that correspond to each area of our strategic plan: 1) library spaces, 2) employee recruitment, development and retention, 3) library collections and discovery systems, and 4) services, programs, and outreach. Our Plan objectives demonstrate our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in these areas.

We believe the Libraries' success requires involvement of individuals with diverse talents and backgrounds as stakeholders in our agenda. Further, we believe all Libraries personnel and administrators are responsible for creating an inclusive community that offers opportunities for all.

The [first version of this plan](#) was finalized in 2017 and was effective until 2020, at which point it underwent a revision process. This plan will be in effect for 2021-2024. We are grateful for the work of all the members of previous iterations of the committee, whose efforts informed our revision process, and for our colleagues across the library who will join us in carrying out this work.

2021 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Members:

Brionna Atkins

Tami Back

Liz Bellamy

Abbey Childs (co-chair)

Alex Flores (co-chair)

Jordan Williams

Ali Zawoyski

Objectives:

- 1. Library Spaces:** W&M Libraries is committed to providing physical and digital spaces that are accessible, welcome, and affirming to all. We will begin by assessing our current physical and digital spaces and identifying areas for improvement to ensure the library and its resources are accessible to all who seek them.
- 2. Employee Recruitment, Development, and Retention:** W&M Libraries seeks to recruit, develop, and retain a diverse workforce that includes underrepresented and/or marginalized groups at all levels of employment.
- 3. Library Collections & Discovery Systems:** W&M Libraries seeks to ensure the library's collections include and preserve the voices of historically marginalized peoples. To achieve this goal, the library will audit available collections and digital projects to identify representational gaps. We will establish a process for annual evaluation of library holdings to identify and remediate areas where increased collection support for diversity is needed. We will provide access to a more inclusive catalog by removing or reducing instances of outdated and offensive terms in records.
- 4. Services, Programs, and Outreach:** W&M Libraries will strive to support equity, diversity, and inclusion in all library services, programs, and outreach efforts. We still work to build robust relationships on campus with various diversity-related offices and units in order to better serve and connect with all parts and members of our community.

Objective 1: Create and sustain welcoming library spaces.

W&M Libraries is committed to providing physical and digital spaces that are accessible, welcoming, and affirming to all. We will begin by assessing our current physical and digital spaces and identifying areas for improvement to ensure the library and its resources are accessible to all who seek them.

Accountable: Lisa Nickel, Associate Dean of Research & Public Services

Short-term Goals

Goal	Action Items	Status
Assess physical spaces for accessibility and inclusivity	Conduct audit of physical spaces in order to develop a list of needed accessibility improvements	
	Regularly publicize EDI report form as a method of reporting accessibility issues.	
	Identify space where W&M's land acknowledgement could be physically displayed at entrance to Swem Library and other branch libraries as desired	
Assess digital spaces for accessibility	Conduct audit of library website and affiliated websites and social media channels (research guides, digital collections and exhibits, YouTube channel, transcription and oral history websites, etc.) in order to develop a list of needed accessibility improvements	In progress
	Create a document that outlines minimum accessibility requirements that all new database purchases adhere to	

Long-term Goals

Goal	Action Items	Status
Improve diversity of representation in exhibits within the library	Reconvene and expand committee charged with overseeing exhibits and displays, to include lobby and rotunda exhibits, book displays, DVD displays, displays in the Botetourt Gallery, Media Wall exhibits, online digital exhibits, and any other public exhibit in the library.	

	Continue to ensure that all library exhibits be well-rounded, prioritize traditionally marginalized perspectives, and include diverse voices and authors with a preference for Own Voices (#OwnVoices) .	
	redevelop process for soliciting exhibits from audiences external to the library (student groups, faculty members, community groups) - encouraging exhibit proposals from traditionally marginalized groups and topics featuring marginalized voices, while considering equal access guidelines in ALA's Intellectual Freedom guidelines for Exhibits, Displays, & Artwork	
Improve accessibility of physical spaces	Install automated doors in all bathrooms in the library	In Progress
Improve accessibility of physical spaces (continued)	Install automated doors to the Reeder Media Center	In Progress
	Determine action plan to implement changes recommended by the accessibility audit of physical spaces	
	Explore options for improving the physical accessibility of the Botetourt Gallery	
Improve accessibility of digital spaces	Determine action plan to implement changes recommended by the accessibility audit of website	
	Conduct accessibility audit of databases and create list of vendors who have products that need to be addressed	
	Revise Library Accessibility Services webpage to include helpful, up-to-date information for patrons with questions about accessibility	

Objective 2: Employee Recruitment, Development, and Retention

Diversity of perspectives and experiences strengthens our workforce in ways that are imperative for success. W&M Libraries seeks to recruit, develop, and retain a diverse workforce that includes underrepresented and/or marginalized groups at all position levels. We will begin by increasing our staff awareness for EDI within workplace practices, as well as building trust with current staff by improving the workplace environment and positively impacting retention of our diverse workforce. We also seek to promote library careers to people who don't already know the library is an employment option, and hope to foster a culture of inclusion by engaging in continuing education for all staff in order to better fulfill the mission of the library.

Accountable: Carrie Cooper, Dean of University Libraries; Lindsay Blount, Assistant to the Dean

Short-term Goals

Goal	Action Items	Status
Expand diversity efforts to student hiring processes	Include EEO Statement in all student job postings to have a more inclusive and transparent hiring process for student employees	In progress
	Include commitment to diversity in required qualifications	
	Listing physical requirements of each job	
	Evaluate how and where we advertise student job postings	
	Create an action plan to advertise jobs more broadly to underrepresented student groups across campus, increase awareness to a variety of people across campus	
Create and advertise opportunities for staff development around EDI	Regularly share training and resources to library staff, including student staff.	
Advertise EDI Suggestions Form	Periodically send out email to library staff, mention it in all-staff meetings	

Revise recruitment processes and communication practices to facilitate the hiring of applicants from diverse backgrounds.	Develop a list of diverse library associations, listservs, and interest groups to communicate with about postings. Provide list to HR liaison to aid in wide recruitment.	In progress
Formalize ongoing EDI work as part of performance planning	Craft standard language for performance planning to include a percentage dedicated to EDI learning, committee work, serving as a Mosaic mentor, etc. All employees' performance evaluations and check-in conversations will include a percentage of responsibility dedicated to ongoing work around EDI issues	
Support new hires through onboarding process	Find and create resources for new hires to connect them with resources & groups across campus to support community building	

Long-term Goals

Goal	Action Items	Status
Implement revised recruitment processes and communication practices to facilitate the hiring of applicants from diverse backgrounds.	Utilize a variety of job search tools, including both library-specific tools and commercial tools, in order to reach underrepresented and/or marginalized communities as well as to promote library careers to people who don't already know the library is an employment option	
	Examine diversity ratios in search pools and track candidate entry points to application to assess reach of job postings	
	Provide opportunities through the Mosaic program for people from underrepresented backgrounds to gain experience in libraries	

Support library staff with professional development towards equity, diversity, and inclusion	Regular (once a semester including summer) EDI programming, chosen in consultation with campus EDI partners	
	Encouragement from supervisors to attend/support EDI events, trainings, and conferences.	
Assess EDI form and reporting process	In regards to transparency, streamlining the reporting process and follow up	
Foster an environment that allows staff to flourish	Standardize exit interview process for all staff	
	Design and regularly conduct a climate survey within the library to identify opportunities to better support staff	
	Assess & revise onboarding processes to ensure they are inclusive and affirming to all new hires	

Objective 3: Library Collection & Discovery Systems

W&M Libraries seeks to ensure the library's collections include and preserve the voices of historically marginalized peoples. To achieve this goal, the library will audit available collections and digital projects to identify representational gaps. We will establish a process for annual evaluation of library holdings to identify and remediate areas where increased collection support for diversity is needed. We will provide access to a more inclusive catalog by removing or reducing instances of outdated and offensive terms in records.

Accountable: Laura Morales, Associate Dean for Collections and Content Services; Jay Gaidmore, Marian and Alan McLeod Director of Special Collections

Short-term Goals

Action Items		Status
Evaluate diversity of library collections	Audit available collections and digital projects to identify representational gaps in order to inform digital and collection development efforts.	
	Use results of audits to develop strategic plans or guiding principles for collection development and digital projects.	
Remediate outdated and offensive terms in records	Evaluate language used in search tools and the library catalog.	

Long-term Goals

Action Items		Status
Engage in national dialogue around EDI in library records	Advocating for changes to Library of Congress subject headings and other problematic language in vendor-generated resources	
Identify representational gaps in the collection	Based on the initial audits, establish processes for annual evaluation of library holdings including physical, digital, and archival collections, to identify and remediate areas where increased support for diversity is needed.	

Identify representational gaps in the collection (cont'd)	Solicit feedback from campus partners including student groups, faculty, and departments about new majors and class offerings to determine if collections are adequate	
Increase diversity of library collections	Execute strategic plans or guiding documents for collection development and digital projects to improve representational gaps as identified by audit.	
Remediate outdated and offensive terms in records	Begin conducting record clean-up project to remove or reduce instances of outdated and offensive terms in library-controlled records.	

Objective 4: Services, Programs, & Outreach

W&M Libraries will strive to support equity, diversity, and inclusion in all library services, programs, and outreach efforts. We will work to build robust relationships on campus with various diversity-related offices and units in order to better serve and connect with all members of our campus and broader community.

Accountability: Tami Back, Director of Communications & Strategic Planning; Lisa Nickel, Associate Dean of Research & Public Services

Short-term Goals

Action Items		Status
Evaluate efficacy of EDI-supporting library services	Gather a list of student groups and/or offices on campus representing historically marginalized or underrepresented students to solicit feedback from.	In process
	Create survey to administer to groups listed for contact.	
Expand existing services to serve a more diverse body of W&M patrons	Explore extending document delivery services to (student?) patrons through the Office of Student Accessibility Services and Human Resources	
Incorporate diverse materials and inclusive teaching practices and outreach into outward-facing library initiatives across departments.	Maintain online tutorials, 24 Speed, Oral Histories, promotional videos that are fully accessible, including the use of closed captioning.	Ongoing
	Incorporate diverse research into library instruction and outreach by introducing resources or materials beyond that of traditional, mainstream academic sources, including open educational resources.	
Engage in outreach efforts to diverse groups on campus, within the local community, and with library donors, volunteers, and board members	Publicize the Library's wide range of services through various channels such as Diversity Happenings and Office of Community Engagement listservs to reach different communities	
	Holistically evaluate outreach initiatives across library departments and the greater community (Literacy for Life, Farmers' Market, etc.)	
	Include a description of physical access and a statement of accommodation on all library event advertisement	

Engage in outreach efforts to diverse groups on campus, within the local community, and with library donors, volunteers, and board members (cont'd)	Devise alternatives to holding events in the Botetourt Gallery	
	Build engagement and development opportunities from a diverse pool of volunteers, donors, and board members.	
Diversify representation in programming within the library	Annual audit of the previous academic year's programming to identify areas to improve representation	

Long-term Goals

Goal	Action Items	Status
Develop and enhance services that support the library's EDI work	Annually solicit feedback from student groups and/or offices on campus representing historically marginalized or underrepresented students to improve library offerings.	
	Share recommendations with library departments based on feedback	
Build relationships with campus partners	Seek out opportunities to co-host events with student organizations and campus units representing historically marginalized or underrepresented students	
	Partner with student groups and campus units to curate books displays, pop up libraries, collections, exhibits to support better representation in library programming	
	Advertise to student organizations for inclusion in the University Archives/Web Collection/Oral History Collection to ensure collecting is more representative of the current student body	

