
McGILL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY (EDIA) ACTION PLAN 2024

McGill University Libraries Equity, Diversity, Inclusion,
and Accessibility (EDIA) Planning Team



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McGILL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY (EDIA) ACTION PLAN 2024

JUNE 28, 2024

A MANDATE TO ACT

The McGill University Libraries are for everyone. At the centre of the downtown and Macdonald campuses, both physically and intellectually, the McGill Libraries represent knowledge, inquiry, exploration, learning, creativity, and broad exchange of ideas. Yet we know that our spaces, services and collections are not equally available to everyone. Physical, financial, historical, and social barriers continually affect individuals' ability to access universities or take advantage of their libraries.

To address these issues, our University is taking specific, strategic, and public action to make McGill a more equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible place. Campus-wide efforts start from an understanding of the reasons for this harsh reality: "Universities across Canada are presently called upon to recognize and address historical and contemporary forces that result in social inequities in postsecondary contexts. Many such forces have their roots in ideologies and practices – such as colonialism, slavery, and patriarchy. Although these ideologies and practices no longer reflect McGill's values, their harmful effects persist."¹

While a number of initiatives have already been undertaken by the Libraries to address these inequities, there is still much work to do. The Libraries must be proactive in adapting to the accelerating diversification of our campuses, city, province, country, and world. We must recognize differences in ability, gender identity or expression, creed, class, Indigenous identity, and any number of other ways in which we differ and provide a more inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome. As such, we look to match the Libraries' initiatives with those outlined in McGill's [Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism](#), McGill's [Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion \(EDI\) Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#), and our [peer institutions who collectively advocate for more action to be taken in all areas of the academic research library organization](#).

The McGill University Libraries are committed to engaging with this challenging and ongoing work in a variety of ways, and on an ongoing basis. We possess a clear vision of the future that will be the product of deep, meaningful, and lasting change.

OUR VISION

The McGill Libraries exist to support the University's mission – the "advancement of learning and the creation and dissemination of knowledge."² In our vision for libraries for everyone, we consider equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) to be key principles that guide us in our mission. We are

¹ McGill University Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategic Plan 2020-2025, 3.

² McGill Secretariat. McGill University Mission Statement and Principles. <https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/mission>

grateful that many organizations share these priorities, and value others' work as inspiration for our own.

In the McGill Libraries that we envision, we recognize that:

- Representation is not enough to be truly inclusive. We make space for all voices, not only to speak but also to lead.
- Consultation is also not enough. Full partnership is the goal when working together. We embody the disability rights community's motto "nothing about us without us" and reject organizational and interpersonal structures that attempt to place further control over those who have historically been kept powerless.³
- Barriers to equity and inclusion arise from systemic sources that embed racism, white supremacy, sexism, ableism, bias, and bigotry all aspects of society. We work to dismantle these frameworks and fight their harmful legacies. We seek out and embrace open dialogue among and with those who have suffered under these frameworks and understand that trust is not owed simply by engaging in conversation.
- Individual actions and organizational policies, procedures, and facilities all affect our users' experiences in our Libraries. We hold ourselves accountable for continuous growth in these areas.
- Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility must be the norm rather than the exception. We build these concepts into the fabric of our work so that they are a fundamental part of every decision we make and every action we take.

Underlying this vision is the principle that McGill Libraries view EDIA work as both an immediate imperative and an ongoing responsibility. While we have seen waypoints on the path and specific accomplishments which mark our progress, there are many more to come, and the journey itself is never truly over. Weaving the practices of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility into our organizational culture is the embodiment of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights' opening statement, reminding us that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."⁴

OUR PROCESS

To grow the McGill Libraries' capacity and maturity of EDIA efforts, in early 2024, the Libraries created an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Planning Team. This group was given the mandate to write an EDIA Action Plan that provides a cohesive vision for inclusion and belonging in the McGill Libraries and a set of specific projects for the remainder of the 2024 calendar year that strategically advance that vision. A similar and parallel group, the Indigenous Initiatives Planning Team, was convened at the same time. The two Planning Teams operated separately but shared some information-gathering activities and jointly conceived a handful of projects that are shared between the two Action Plans. Both

³ James I. Charlton, *Nothing About Us Without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 14

⁴ United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (10 Dec 1948), Preamble. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

groups involved Libraries staff across multiple job classifications, areas of work, and equity group statuses. Members of the EDIA Planning Team and its full mandate are in Appendix A.

From the EDIA Planning Team's mandate:

"The EDIA Action Plan is not a long-term strategic plan; rather, it is a statement of our organization's vision for just and equitable spaces, services, collections, and workforce, and a carefully selected list of short term projects or phases of larger projects that serve to add to the foundation of success that the McGill Library has already begun to build. It is the next concrete step in our long-term journey to embed EDIA practices in all aspects of our work."

The EDIA Planning Team met weekly from February through May 2024. The group spent considerable time discussing how we would approach our work, both in terms of how the group operated and what the outputs of our work should be. We agreed to model the behaviour we expect to see in an inclusive organization: to prioritize respect for difference, to practice cultural humility, to be aware of discomfort we create in others and its effect on ourselves, to be engaged throughout the process, and to be as transparent as possible while acting as a group rather than individuals.

To frame our work, we adopted the commonly-used acronym "EDIA" to mean Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, and rather than create our own definitions, borrowed from pre-existing sources. The following are excerpts from the definitions we chose:⁵

Equity, unlike the notion of equality, is not about sameness of treatment. It denotes fairness and justice in process and in results. [McGill EDI Strategic Plan 2020-2025]

Diversity should be understood as uniting rather than dividing. The term calls upon us to appreciate both differences and interconnectedness, and to recognize and respond to systemic and institutionalized discrimination. [McGill EDI Strategic Plan 2020-2025]

Inclusion is defined as the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are supported equitably in a culturally safe environment. [Canada Research Coordinating Committee]

Accessibility is a foundational principle necessary for the removal of barriers to equitable participation in all aspects of life by people who have a long-term, persistent or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric, or learning impairment. [University of Calgary; McGill Equity Group Definitions]

The EDIA Planning Team recognized the central importance of learning about our users' and staff's needs in EDIA areas. We asked ourselves questions such as: "Do visible minorities feel comfortable in our spaces?" "What are the web accessibility issues with our core online platforms?" and "In what areas does our collection need to grow?" We knew that answers to these questions are complex and not easy

⁵ Extracts of our full adopted definitions are presented here. For complete definitions and full citations to their sources, please see Appendix B.

to find. We did not seek to answer them comprehensively, but rather incrementally, starting from the most emergent needs and building up a pattern of improvement.

To this end, we performed three limited-scope needs assessments: an anonymous survey of Library staff, in-person consultations with staff in all Library departments, and student tabling in several libraries collecting feedback and ideas. Details of the survey and consultations, including process and results, can be found in Appendix E.

We are extraordinarily grateful for the time, creativity, and wisdom that Libraries' staff contributed to our consultations. What we heard is a foundation for the work presented in this Action Plan. The strongest themes that emerged from consultations included:

- Concern about meeting the needs of neurodiverse students and Library staff.
- Challenges to physical accessibility of both patron and staff spaces.
- A mismatch between our current collection development practices and the ability to purchase materials representing under-heard voices
- Training on EDIA issues for Libraries staff is sorely needed, especially for managers and administrators. Ongoing staff training should be a priority, and one key area should be cultural competence.
- Skepticism that the EDIA Action Plan and the Libraries' renewed focus on EDIA issues are serious or supported to the degree necessary to make them successful.

With the consultation feedback in mind, the EDIA Planning Team chose to build upon past EDIA-related work done in the McGill Libraries and to focus on advancing our organizational maturity. While a full accounting of these previous efforts does not yet exist, our analysis of the situation was that work done to date provides a solid foundation for the next steps. What is needed is to bring those efforts together to work across units, provide a path from idea to implementation, to bring in the lessons learned for our initial staff and student consultations, and to ensure that this work is visible and supported.

We also recognized that the EDIA journey is a perpetual one, and that the Libraries are fairly early in this process. We therefore conceived of and assisted proposed projects with planning for concrete, doable steps for the duration of 2024. While our staff have an abundance of inspirational, transformative, and visionary ideas for expanding EDIA efforts within the Libraries, these necessarily start with initial planning, pilot projects, and preliminary deliverables. While some are short-term initiatives, most of the Actions outlined in this plan are steps towards a larger goal. At this point in the McGill Libraries' organizational EDIA maturity, it is most important to move deliberately and incrementally. With this foundation, we will soon be able to take on opportunities to stretch ourselves.

This focus on concrete and doable actions also allows us time to focus on organizational culture. We know that talking about difference can be difficult, that one person does not interpret a statement the same way as the next, and that we all possess implicit bias. Knowledge of the research underlying good EDIA practices is one way to advance the Libraries EDIA organizational maturity, as is working through the inevitable discomfort that diversity and inclusion discussions bring to all of us.

June 28, 2024

McGill Libraries EDIA Action Plan 2024

OUR COMMITMENT

The McGill University Libraries take seriously our responsibility to improve the equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility of our collections, services, spaces, and workforce. In our everyday practice and in our work to achieve the vision presented in this Action Plan, we will hold ourselves accountable to support these goals. Specifically:

- We will invite under-heard and under-studied voices into our collections, spaces, and services, make room for them to be heard and to lead. We will learn from these voices on an ongoing basis.
- We will listen when users or Libraries staff speak about their needs from the Libraries, even if the message is critical or uncomfortable to hear.
- We will match our stated priorities for advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in the Libraries with appropriate resources.
- We will provide welcoming physical and virtual spaces where all are invited and feel that they belong.
- We will be diligent. ***We will do the work.***⁶

ACTIONS WE WILL UNDERTAKE

The Libraries EDIA Planning Team developed the following Actions for the McGill Libraries to take in the remainder of 2024. Ideas for specific Actions originated from Project Team deliberations or from other McGill staff members. Each is represented here with a short description and project title. While for each we identified a Project Lead, as much as possible we designed the memberships of the project teams to make use of volunteers from the Libraries staff rather than pre-named individuals, so as to allow as many staff members to contribute as possible.

For each Action, a concise project plan, written by the Chair of the Planning Team and the Project Lead, is provided in the appendices. We have identified six actionable projects to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in 2024 (Appendix C) and seven actionable projects that jointly address both Indigenous Initiatives and equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (Appendix D). Together, these Actions will allow as many as nineteen different staff members to become involved in supporting EDIA work in the Libraries.

⁶ “Do the work” is a common phrase in the social justice context exhorting individuals to act rather than talk. It is intended to carry the implication that the work is ongoing, difficult, and often unrewarded, but necessary. See, for example, W. Kamau Bell & Kate Schatz, *Do the work! An Antiracist Activity Book* (New York: Workman Publishing), 2022.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

ACTION EDIA-1. EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY (EDIA) PRIORITIES FROM SENATE COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES

Establish method of reporting on Libraries EDIA activities to the Senate Committee on Libraries. Raise ideas for EDIA initiatives in the Senate Committee on Libraries for discussion, feedback, and advice on prioritization.

ACTION EDIA-2. LIBRARIES EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY STANDING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Working committee facilitating information sharing on EDIA topics within the Libraries, organizing EDIA-related activities that are part of the regular embedding of EDIA perspectives that inform the Libraries' work, and assisting with realizing ideas for EDIA activities and objectives prioritized by the Libraries EDIA Steering Committee.

ACTION EDIA-3. STAFF TRAINING PROGRAM

Examine, document, and price a variety of options for EDIA 101 training with the goal of as many staff completing the training as possible. Identify options for more advanced training, and a propose a protocol for funding the more advanced sessions.

ACTION EDIA-4. COLLECTIONS DIVERSITY AUDITS BY SUBJECT

Pilot test methodologies to determine the scope of EDIA-related material currently in McGill Libraries' collections to serve as a baseline for future collection development plans and policies.

ACTION EDIA-5. INVENTORY ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES OF LIBRARIES SPACES

Inventory all study spaces in the Libraries and describe a set of features for each, including physical accessibility, noise level, lighting, size, bathroom access, etc., and place this information on the Libraries web site. We will also create short videos highlighting the spaces to allow people to access the information via various means.

ACTION EDIA-6. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ALL-GENDER WASHROOMS IN THE LIBRARIES

To create a more inclusive environment by updating all-gender washroom signage across all Libraries locations to be in keeping with new McGill design standards.

June 28, 2024

McGill Libraries EDIA Action Plan 2024

JOINT ACTIONS SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES AND EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

ACTION J-1. SIS BLACK AND INDIGENOUS STUDENT LIBRARIAN FELLOWSHIPS

In partnership with SIS, grow and implement a path to sustainability for the SIS Black Student Librarian Fellowship program. Introduce a new fellowship for Indigenous Student Librarians. Enhance support mechanisms provided in the Libraries for education and career planning for SIS Black and Indigenous Student Librarian Fellows.

ACTION J-2. INVENTORY CURRENT AND PAST EDIA AND INDIGENOUS-THEMED PROJECTS IN THE MCGILL LIBRARIES

Collect and document EDIA and Indigenous-related projects undertaken by Libraries staff in recent memory. Hand off completed list of EDIA projects to the Libraries EDIA Standing Committee, and the list of Indigenous-themed projects to the Libraries Indigenous Initiatives Standing Committee for sharing and maintenance.

ACTION J-3. LIBRARY WEB SITE EDIA & II CONTENT REFRESH

Review all current content within the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Indigenous Initiatives areas on the Libraries public web site. Add, remove, edit, and rearchitect content to showcase current initiatives and projects, make a clear distinction between EDIA efforts and Indigenous Initiatives, and ensure terminology is in keeping with equity guidelines and best practices as defined by Indigenous communities.

ACTION J-4. LIBRARY INTRANET EDIA & II CONTENT REFRESH

Provide resources for Libraries staff on EDIA and Indigenous topics, including training available, news & events, best practices, and campus support services outside of the Libraries.

ACTION J-5. COLLABORATE ON ADDRESSING OTHER UNITS' NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Review needs assessments for members of equity groups and Indigenous students, faculty, and staff done in other campus units - Dean of Students, Enrolment Services, IT, etc. Look for places the Libraries can help meet an identified need. Build relationships with these units to become part of their assessments, ask a question or two on their next assessment.

ACTION J-6. CONTENT WARNINGS FOR SENSITIVE COLLECTION MATERIAL

Convene a group to review current practices for placing statements regarding potentially sensitive or hateful material in collection descriptions, digital collections, and online and physical exhibits at the McGill Libraries, and draft a set of guidelines for providing these statements.

ACTION J-7. STATEMENT ON INCLUSIVE DESCRIPTION

Create a description of the current state of descriptive practices for library and archival materials, including an explanation of how metadata arrives in our catalogue, or is created locally. The document will outline our approach to metadata creation and will provide an acknowledgement of where current practices fall short. Statement will be approved first by Libraries Cabinet and then Libraries Council.

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**APPENDIX A:
EDIA PLANNING TEAM MANDATE AND MEMBERSHIP**

McGill Library EDIA Planning Team 2024

MANDATE

February 14, 2024

Preamble

The McGill Library has reached an exciting state where we have a solid base of projects led by McGill Library staff supporting Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) programs. We now have the opportunity to form a cohesive vision for inclusion and belonging in the McGill Library that guides our future equity work at all levels. In the context of increasing urgency around EDIA issues at McGill, in Canada, and across the world, now is the time for the McGill Library to take a step forward and make EDIA part of our overall strategy and daily work. To this end, we will convene an EDIA Planning Team to look comprehensively at the strengths and status of Library EDIA initiatives and our opportunities for growth. From this, we will write an Action Plan to guide our EDIA work through the end of this calendar year.

The EDIA Action Plan is not a long-term strategic plan; rather, it is a statement of our organization's vision for just and equitable spaces, services, collections, and workforce, and a carefully selected list of short-term projects or phases of larger projects that serve to add to the foundation of success that the McGill Library has already begun to build. It is the next concrete step in our long-term journey to embed EDIA practices in all aspects of our work.

Team Members

The 2024 McGill Library EDIA Planning Team will be composed of:

- Associate Dean for Strategic Initiatives (Planning Lead)
- 4-5 Librarians or Library staff
- 1 Recorder who also participates as a full team member
- 1 Representative from the McGill Equity Office

Care will be taken to ensure the Planning Team reflects as much diversity (in all of its forms) as is feasible.

Reporting Structure

The 2024 McGill Library EDIA Planning Team will report to Library Cabinet.

Term

The 2024 McGill Library EDIA Planning Team will perform its duties from February 5, 2024 through May 3, 2024 (3 months). Some members may be asked to join in project work or project oversight through the rest of 2024 after the completion of the EDIA Action Plan.

Meetings and Time Commitment

The 2024 McGill Library EDIA Planning Team will meet weekly for 60 to 90 minutes during its 3-month term. Members will be tasked with work performing Team activities and advancing deliverables outside of Team meetings. The estimated time requirement for Library EDIA Planning Team members is 5 to 8 hours per week, inclusive of weekly meetings of the full group.

Activities

During its mandate, the 2024 McGill Library EDIA Planning Team will:

- Develop a vision for an equitable, diverse, inclusive and accessible McGill Library.
- Perform consultations to gather information for its deliverables, at a minimum one consultation with Library staff and one with campus stakeholders for idea generation and discovering needs, and one consultation with Library staff and one with campus stakeholders for selection and prioritization of activities and projects to include in the Action Plan.
- Define best practice and organizational expectations for EDIA initiatives in the Library going forward.
- Develop initial processes for oversight, coordination, and communication for EDIA projects in the Library going forward. Write mandate(s) for any group(s) necessary to perform these tasks. It is expected that this process will change over time as our organization grows in the maturity of its EDIA efforts.
- Write the EDIA Action Plan for the Library covering May 2024 through December 2024.

Deliverables

- Report of findings from consultations.
- Action Plan document, including:
 - A cohesive statement of shared vision for an equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible Library;
 - A list of priority EDIA projects to be completed in 2024 that directly connect to the shared vision;
 - A statement of expectations for the design and execution of all Library EDIA initiatives, and;
 - A description of and Terms of Reference for one or more groups that perform ongoing oversight, coordination, and support for Library EDIA initiatives.

McGill Library EDIA Planning Team 2024

MEMBERSHIP

February 17, 2024

Team Members

Deborah Ahenkorah, SIS Black Student Fellow (member and recorder)

Aryanna Comodini, Collections (staff representative)

Lauren Goldman, Communications (staff representative)

Tellina Liu, Rare Books and Special Collections (librarian representative)

Andrea Miller-Nesbitt, Schulich Library (librarian representative)

Martin Morris, Schulich Library (librarian representative)

Jenn Riley, Associate Dean for Strategic Initiatives (planning lead)

APPENDIX B:
DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS ADOPTED BY THE EDIA PLANNING TEAM

McGill Library EDIA Planning Team 2024

DEFINITIONS OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

MARCH 1, 2024

Definitions

Equity

Equity, unlike the notion of equality, is not about sameness of treatment. It denotes fairness and justice in process and in results. Equitable outcomes often require differential treatment, resource redistribution, and removal of systemic barriers to achieve a level playing field among all individuals and communities. Equity is a proactive 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.

Based on definitions by CARL, McGill, CRCC, and Universities Canada

Diversity

Diversity should be understood as uniting rather than dividing. The term calls upon us to appreciate both differences and interconnectedness, and to recognize and respond to systemic and institutionalized discrimination. Embracing diversity relies on a recognition that the human condition hosts a range of unique attributes, qualities, and experiences anchored in, for example, to race, Indigenous identity, class, gender identity or expression, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, and religion. Discussions about diversity linked to access and equity require knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary experiences of oppression and exclusion.

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.

Based on definitions by CARL, McGill

Inclusion

Inclusion is defined as the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are supported equitably in a culturally safe environment. It is an 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. Inclusion calls for recognizing, reducing, and removing barriers to participation created by social disadvantage or oppression. The outcome of the act of inclusion is Belonging, 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.

Based on definitions by Universities Canada, CRCC, CARL, McGill

Accessibility

Accessibility is a foundational principle necessary for the removal of barriers to equitable participation in all aspects of life by people who have a long-term, persistent or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric, or learning impairment. It requires designing environments, programs, services, and products from the outset, so they are accessible to people living with various abilities. Accessibility is grounded in the recognition that what constitutes a disability barrier varies across visible and invisible ability differences.

Based on definitions by U Calgary, McGill

Sources

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<https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/edi-eng.aspx>

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https://www.mcgill.ca/equity/files/equity/mcgill_strategic_edi_plan_2020-20251.pdf

Universities Canada. Building a Race-Conscious Institution: A Guide for University Leaders Enacting Anti-Racist Organizational Change, p. 7.

https://www.univcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/UC-2022-Report_Building-a-Race-Conscious-Institution_EN_FINAL.pdf

University of Calgary Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Language of EDI – Glossary.

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/equity-diversity-inclusion/literacy-education/edi-glossary>

APPENDIX C:
PROJECT PLANS FOR ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF EQUITY,
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

McGill Libraries EDIA Action Plan 2024

EDIA PRIORITIES FROM SENATE COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES

PROJECT TITLE

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) priorities from Senate Committee on Libraries

PROJECT TEAM

Jenn Riley, Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives, Project Lead
Guylaine Beaudry, Trenholme Dean of Libraries
McGill Libraries EDIA Standing Committee

PROJECT GOALS

Establish method of reporting on Libraries EDIA activities to the Senate Committee on Libraries.

Raise ideas for EDIA initiatives in the Senate Committee on Libraries for discussion, feedback, and advice on prioritization.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Senate Committee on Libraries mandate includes the following areas of responsibility:

- “1. Recommend to Senate, as appropriate, broad policies concerning the Library in support of the University’s strategic plans and academic priorities.
2. Review and advise on planning documents and reports as they relate to the Library and advise Senate and others, as appropriate, on library and information service developments which are of academic significance to the University.”⁷

Libraries Dean Guylaine Beaudry will facilitate inclusion of EDIA planning for the Libraries into the Senate Committee on Libraries’ agenda and bringing in presentations on past, current, and potential future projects as appropriate. The McGill Libraries EDIA Standing Committee will solicit and generate ideas for new initiatives, prepare them for discussion at the Senate Committee on Libraries, and work to incorporate feedback and ideas from said Committee into the Libraries’ EDIA efforts. Project Lead Jenn Riley will attend relevant Senate Committee on Libraries meetings with EDIA on the agenda, as will other Libraries staff involved in EDIA efforts as appropriate.

⁷ <https://www.mcgill.ca/library/about/committees/senatecomm>

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Presentations on and discussions of Libraries EDIA efforts at regular intervals in the Senate Committee on Libraries.

Libraries EDIA planning documentation shared with the Senate Committee on Libraries.

Feedback from the Senate Committee on Libraries, as a representative body of the McGill faculty, incorporated into Libraries EDIA planning efforts.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Senate Committee on Libraries will have an agenda item for Libraries' EDIA accomplishments and planning twice per academic year, in September and in March. Additional EDIA-related agenda items may be added to other meetings as needed.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None.



McGill Libraries Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Standing Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

The McGill Libraries Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Standing Committee facilitates information sharing on EDIA topics within the Libraries, organizes EDIA-related activities that inform the Libraries' work, maintains EDIA-related information resources, and participates in discussion of ideas and priorities for EDIA projects in the Libraries.

MANDATE

The Libraries EDIA Standing Committee is a standing committee, established by Libraries Cabinet.

The Committee is responsible for:

- Providing project ideas and progress reports to the Senate Committee on Libraries, through Libraries Cabinet.
- Coordinating project planning for EDIA activities and objectives in the Libraries, new and under consideration.
- Performing or planning information sharing and outreach tasks as part of programs not naturally owned by any one Libraries department, such as an EDIA-related event calendar for staff, informational blog and intranet documentation, speaker series and other shared learning experiences.
- Maintaining selected EDIA-related information resources that are created by approved EDIA short term projects with agreed upon Libraries' commitment for ongoing support for their deliverables.
- Coordinating training priorities for staff on EDIA topics with Libraries HR.
- Assisting Library Communications staff with public-facing EDIA services, events, and Libraries news, including EDIA content on the Libraries web site.

COMPOSITION

The Committee is composed of the following members:

- Libraries Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives, Chair
- 3 Librarians, selected from a list of volunteers
- 2 Libraries staff members (MUNACA or MPEX), selected from a list of volunteers

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Committee members are selected from a list of volunteers, and are appointed by the Trenholme Dean of Libraries upon recommendation from Libraries Cabinet.

TERM

Members serve 2-year terms, staggered. When appropriate, 1-year appointments can be made in order to accomplish a staggered turnover schedule. Terms are renewable.

CHAIR

The Committee is chaired by the Libraries Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives.

FREQUENCY AND LOCATION OF MEETINGS

The Committee will meet monthly, at least 10 months out of the year, in an appropriate Libraries meeting space. Meetings will be hybrid when necessary, with in-person participation preferred.

LINES OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMUNICATION

The Committee is accountable to the Trenholme Dean of Libraries through Libraries Cabinet. Minutes of meetings will be taken and made available on the Libraries Intranet. An annual report will be delivered to Libraries Cabinet each year in June.

REVISIONS

The Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed in Summer 2026 in the context of the Libraries ongoing EDIA efforts and accomplishments.



McGill Libraries EDIA Action Plan 2024

STAFF EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

PROJECT TITLE

Staff Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility training opportunities

PROJECT TEAM

Jenn Riley, Project Lead

Isabelle Roberge

Aysha Panchbhaya

PROJECT GOALS

To create a baseline understanding of core EDIA concepts among Libraries staff.

To provide Libraries staff members who wish to learn more with a range of options and topics.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Staff consultations performed by the EDIA Planning Team revealed a strong desire for additional staff training on EDIA topics. Both baseline “101” style introductory content and more advanced options were requested, and there was a preference for in-person training. Given the large number of Libraries staff (~180) we would not be able to provide baseline training for all staff in a small number of in-person sessions. We must choose between many in person sessions (quite expensive) and online sessions (synchronous or asynchronous; difficult for staff to find time to commit to).

This project will examine, document, and price a variety of options for the EDIA 101 training with the goal of as many staff completing the training as possible. It further will identify options for more advanced training, and a propose a protocol for funding the more advanced sessions. The Project Team is expected to consult with the Equity@McGill office trainers and the Organizational Development staff in McGill Human Resources.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Document outlining EDIA 101 training options for Library Cabinet review and action.

List of recommended sources of more advanced EDIA training.

Proposal document outlining a recommended model for financial support for staff who wish to learn some of the more advanced training topics.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Finalize EDIA 101 curriculum and options for offering it to all staff.	July-August 2024
Identify a core set of more advanced training opportunities that the Libraires will support, for staff that are interested.	July-August 2024
Proposal to Library Cabinet	September 2024
Final training plan complete	October 2024
First EDIA 101 sessions offered	November 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Refresher funds for the Continuing Education Committee.

Possible costs for external speakers TBD.

FUTURE WORK

Repeat and expand EDIA 101 for future staff members or for those who would like a refresher. Offer more in depth, customized, and focused training to managers and Libraries administrators.

McGill Library EDIA Action Plan 2024

COLLECTIONS DIVERSITY AUDITS BY SUBJECT

PROJECT TITLE

Collections diversity audits by subject

PROJECT TEAM

Megan Chellew, Interim Associate Dean, Collections, Project Lead

4-5 librarians from the Collection Development Committee, or their delegates

Ensure branches/collections with significant collections on EDIA topics are represented

PROJECT GOALS

Pilot test methodologies to determine the scope of EDIA-related material currently in McGill Libraries' collections to serve as a baseline for future collection development plans and policies.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Phase 1 will take place in 2024, where the project group will select 3-4 subject areas to focus on and conduct an analysis of our collections in those areas. The work of the project group will include selecting appropriate analysis tool(s) to use.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Documented analysis of the collection.

Collection development plan to be implemented.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Investigation of collection assessment tools and analysis of their results.	August-December 2024
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FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None for Phase 1 2024.

FUTURE WORK

Later phases in 2025+ will involve drafting, piloting, adopting, and assessing formal EDIA collections development plans with appropriate stakeholders.



McGill Libraries EDIA Action Plan 2024

INVENTORY ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES OF LIBRARIES SPACES

PROJECT TITLE

Inventory of Accessibility Features of Libraries Spaces

PROJECT TEAM

- Andrea Miller-Nesbitt, Liaison Librarian, Project Lead
- 3 volunteers from library staff
- Student casual with video editing and web editing skills
- Libraries Web Editor

PROJECT GOALS

To describe the space features in each of the Libraries in order for users to be able to choose to visit whichever space best suits their needs.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Students are increasingly asking for spaces in the Libraries that better fit their needs. These needs are diverse, and as such, it is not possible to build spaces that will meet everyone’s individual needs. Providing students with detailed descriptions of what spaces have to offer will allow them to choose the best space for them. To this end, we will inventory all spaces in the Libraries and describe a set of features for each, including physical accessibility, noise level, lighting, size, bathroom access, etc., and place this information on the Libraries web site in an accessible way. We will also create short videos highlighting the spaces to allow people to access the information via various means.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Page on Libraries web site presenting information about Libraries spaces in an accessible way.
- Short videos showcasing various spaces in each of the branches and linked to from the appropriate branch page.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Environmental scan	July 2024
Develop criteria/rubric for information to collect for each study space	July2024
Branch visits by project team (in groups of 2)	August 2024
Develop web site text and format for presentation	September 2024
Create and edit videos for each space	October-November 2024
Launch web page	December 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Undergraduate (SSMU) student casual for video capture and editing. 18 weeks; 10 hours per week, pay rate \$15.85.

TOTAL APPROXIMATE COST: \$2,853

FUTURE WORK

Investigate the feasibility of a 'find a space' tool, whereby Library users can select different space features to meet their needs, such as the one at Harvard: <https://library.harvard.edu/spaces>.

McGill Libraries EDIA Action Plan 2024

ALL-GENDER WASHROOMS IN MCGILL LIBRARIES

PROJECT TITLE

All-Gender Washrooms in McGill Libraries

PROJECT TEAM

Lauren Goldman, Communications and Events Administrator, Project Lead
Communications student casual

PROJECT GOALS

To create a more inclusive environment by updating all-gender washroom signage across all Libraries locations to be in keeping with new McGill design standards.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The University has new standards for signage indicating washrooms on campus. In 2023, the University committed that its buildings should have “at least one gender-inclusive washroom (either single-stall or multi-stall) per floor”.⁸ In a first phase of implementation of the new policy, in summer 2023, Design Services replaced signage on all single-stall washrooms that could per code be converted to all-gender usage, and put an inventory of these all-gender washrooms on the [Equity@McGill web site](#).

However, many single-stall washrooms in Libraries spaces were missed. We will inventory the single-stall washrooms in all Libraries spaces, work with Design Services to add correct and up to date blue signage⁹, and ensure the web site contains correct information regarding the spaces where all-gender washrooms are available in the Libraries.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- 1) Appropriate signage indicating all-gender use on all qualifying single-stall washrooms in Libraries Spaces.
- 2) Accurate information about all-gender washrooms in Libraries spaces on the [Equity@McGill Office's web site](#) and on the Libraries website. To be determined whether the Libraries website will include the information on the location pages only or whether a new page will be created to list every all gender washroom across all libraries (or perhaps both these approaches will work in conjunction with each other.)

PROJECT SCHEDULE

To be determined. Library Heads have been contacted for information/ photos of their single bowl washrooms. The information will be brought together so needs can be assessed.

⁸ <https://www.mcgill.ca/equity/resources/gender-sexuality/gender-inclusive-washrooms>

⁹ We made an explicit decision to use the campus standard washroom signage in all locations, retiring the red/black design in places where new blue signage is installed.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Communications student casual; already budgeted.

No materials/facilities cost to us; Facilities is responsible for installation of new washroom signage.

FUTURE WORK

Future work may involve updating wayfinding signs to include any new all-gender washrooms, promotion of the initiative, outreach to student groups, creation of content sets for social media indicating locations of all-gender washrooms in libraries etc.

APPENDIX D:
PROJECT PLANS FOR JOINT ACTIONS SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES AND
EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

McGill Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Action Plans 2024 SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES (SIS) BLACK AND INDIGENOUS STUDENT LIBRARIAN FELLOWSHIPS

PROJECT TITLE

School of Information Studies (SIS) Black and Indigenous Student Librarian Fellowships

PROJECT TEAM

Jenn Riley, Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives, Project Lead

Katherine Hanz, Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning

Select Members from Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Standing Committees

2 inaugural SIS Black Student librarian fellows (2023-2025 cohort)

PROJECT GOALS

In partnership with SIS, grow and implement a path to sustainability for the SIS Black Student Librarian Fellowship program. Introduce a new fellowship for Indigenous Student Librarians.

Enhance support mechanisms provided in the Libraries for education and career planning for SIS Black and Indigenous Student Librarian Fellows.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Enrol 2 new first-year SIS Black students and one Indigenous Student into the Fellowship program. (Pending funding from SIS and sufficient eligible applicants.) Finalize and agree upon structure of the program going forward.

Write a formal job description for Fellows' placements in the Libraries.

Convene a Fellows support team composed of selected members of the Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Standing Committees to plan discussions and meetings to enhance Fellows' experiences and learning.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Work placements in the Libraries for the two 2023-2025 (SIS year 2) Fellows and for the two 2024-2026 (SIS year 1) Fellows according to new job description.

Documented list of support services that the Libraries provide for SIS Fellows.

A formally defined Fellows support program to coordinate and sustain these support services.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

SIS selects 2024-2026 Fellows	June 2024
Conversations among Libraries staff and Fellows about their experiences in the first year and support needs going forward.	June – July 2024
Write job description.	June – July 2024
Solicit Fellows placement options from Libraires staff	June – July 2024
In collaboration with supervisors and Fellows, finalize work placements.	August 2024
2024 Fellows cohort begins work in the Libraries; 2023 cohort continues	Late August 2024
Implementation of new Fellows support program	September - December 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

NOTE: New Fellows positions are dependent on SIS securing funding.

From the Libraries:

Salary at \$12,500 per fellow per year

- 2023 Cohort (returning) Black Student Librarian Fellows x 2 people = \$25,000 (1A funds; previously requested and allocated)
- 2024 Cohort (new) Black Student Librarian Fellows x 2 people = \$25,000 (Provost ABR funds; already received and allocated)
- 2024 (new) Indigenous Student Librarian Fellow = \$12,500 (Provost has indicated he will support)

FUTURE WORK

Will need ongoing discussions with SIS to ensure shared vision and mutual commitment to the sustainability of the program.

McGill Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Actions Plan 2024 INVENTORY CURRENT AND PAST EDIA AND INDIGENOUS-THEMED PROJECTS IN THE MCGILL LIBRARIES

PROJECT TITLE

Inventory current and past EDIA and Indigenous-themed projects in the McGill Libraries

PROJECT TEAM

3 volunteers from Libraries staff

PROJECT GOALS

Document and give credit for McGill Libraries' and its staff's achievements supporting EDIA and Indigenous-themed initiatives.

Provide a resource documenting past EDIA and Indigenous-themed projects that may be built upon for new and follow-up projects.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Collect and document EDIA and Indigenous-related projects undertaken by Libraries staff in recent memory. The scope is inclusive; collections purchased or described, conference papers given, service/committee work performed, for example, are all appropriate initiatives to be documented. Hand off completed list of EDIA projects to the Libraries EDIA Standing Committee, and the list of Indigenous-themed projects to the Libraries Indigenous Initiatives Standing Committee for sharing and maintenance.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Documents listing project name, project development dates, individuals responsible, and links to any outputs or internal documents that exist related to these projects. One document for EDIA and a second covering Indigenous Initiatives.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Research and discussions	June – November 2024
Deliver list to EDIA Standing Committee	December 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None.

FUTURE WORK

The Libraries EDIA Standing Committee and Indigenous Initiatives Standing Committee will maintain these lists after their original creation.



McGill Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Action Plans 2024 LIBRARIES WEB SITE EDIA & II CONTENT REFRESH

PROJECT TITLE

Libraries web site EDIA & II content refresh

PROJECT TEAM

Jenn Riley, Project Lead

Web content editor

2 Libraries staff volunteers

SIS Student Librarian Fellow (potentially)

PROJECT GOALS

Showcase the McGill Libraries’ current and planned efforts to be a more equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible organization and service provider, and the work we do on the path to reconciliation.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Review all current content within the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Indigenous Initiatives areas on the Libraries public web site. Add, remove, edit, and rearchitect content to showcase current initiatives and projects, make a clear distinction between EDIA efforts and Indigenous Initiatives, and ensure terminology is in keeping with equity guidelines and best practices as defined by Indigenous communities.

Ensure the two sections of the site are not overly duplicative and stand in complement and with coherence to each other.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Revamped EDIA and II content on the public Libraries web site reflecting current initiatives, deployed before the Fall 2024 semester begins.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Content analysis	June 2024
New content development	July – August 2024
Implement new architecture for EDIA and Indigenous areas of the web site and publish new content	August 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None beyond SIS Fellow salary already budgeted.

McGill Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Action Plans 2024

LIBRARIES INTRANET EDIA & II CONTENT REFRESH

PROJECT TITLE

Libraries Intranet EDIA & II content refresh

PROJECT TEAM

Jenn Riley (project lead)
2 Libraries staff volunteers

PROJECT GOALS

Provide resources on the intranet for Libraries staff on EDIA and Indigenous topics, including training available, news & events, best practices, and campus support services outside of the Libraries.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Review text in the current “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)” intranet space. Change the name of the space to include Accessibility. Add, remove, edit, and rearchitect content in this space, planning for it actively being kept up to date. Write new content as necessary.

Create a new Indigenous Initiatives space. Consult with relevant staff about the “Indigenous Issues in the Library Interest Group” intranet space regarding repurposing, archiving, or keeping the current content in that space. Design information architecture of the new space, planning for it actively being kept up to date. Write new content as necessary.

Ensure the two Intranet spaces are not overly duplicative and stand in complement and with coherence to each other.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Updated Intranet site structure and content for EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives resources easily findable and usable by Libraries staff.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Content analysis	September - October 2024
New content development	November – December 2024
Implement new architecture, add new content, and publish.	December 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None.

McGill Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Actions Plan 2024 COLLABORATE ON ADDRESSING OTHER UNITS' NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

PROJECT TITLE

Collaborate on addressing other units' needs assessments

PROJECT TEAM

Alisa Rod, Project Lead
2 Libraries staff volunteers
SIS Student Librarian Fellow

PROJECT GOALS

Make the most of EDIA and Indigenous-themed needs assessments already performed on campus.
Enhance relationships with various McGill administrative units regarding student, staff, and researcher support.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Identify and review needs assessments done in other campus units on the subject of supporting members of equity groups and Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. Units consulted could include the Dean of Students Office, Enrolment Services, IT, HR, SSMU and PGSS, department and faculty affinity groups, etc. Look for places the Libraries can help meet an identified need. Enhance relationships with these units to become part of their assessments, ask a question or two on their next assessment.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Report documenting sources of information on needs of Indigenous persons and needs of other equity groups at McGill, and providing recommendations for Library initiatives that could assist the collaborating unit with their response to those needs.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Research and discussions	June – November 2024
Write and submit report	December 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None beyond existing SIS Fellows commitment.

FUTURE WORK

Implementation of report's recommendations could potentially take place in 2025.

McGill Libraries EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Action Plans 2024 CONTENT WARNINGS FOR SENSITIVE COLLECTION MATERIAL

PROJECT TITLE

Content warnings for sensitive collection material

PROJECT TEAM

Anna Dysert, Coordinator, Receiving & Processing, and Archival Materials, Collections, Project Lead
Alex Kohn
Dawn McKinnon
Tellina Liu

PROJECT GOALS

Provide users with information about the contents of a fonds or special collection when it contains material some users might find sensitive, allowing users to make an informed decision as to whether they wish to view material.

Harmonize terminology and practice for content warnings across units of the McGill Libraries and among discovery and delivery systems for this material.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Convene a group to review current practices for placing statements regarding potentially sensitive or hateful material in collection descriptions, digital collections, and online and physical exhibits at the McGill Libraries, and draft a set of guidelines for providing these statements. The guidelines will consider the departments and platforms involved in providing access to collections and will provide examples of use cases to convey when, how, and by whom a content warning statement may be warranted. Topics to cover include high-level statements applicable to the Libraries' collection in general and statements for individual fonds, collections, or items; expectations for when a statement is required as standard practice vs when scholarly judgement applies; the strength of language to use; and where the final decision on application and terminology lies organizationally.

The guidelines will serve as an internal resource for cataloguers and curators with examples of specific terminology that may be used. The group will consult with and obtain approval of first Libraries Cabinet then second Libraries Council for these guidelines. Finally, the group will consider whether additional efforts related to successful implementation of the guidelines are necessary and make recommendations as needed.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Document approved by Libraries Cabinet and Libraries Council and made available to Libraries staff as a best practice guideline.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

June 2024	Initial group meeting to divide work and assign tasks.
July 2024	Draft guidelines and meet to review work.
August 2024	Review with interested stakeholders as needed and finalize guidelines.
September 2024	Present guidelines document to Libraries Cabinet and Libraries Council, revise if necessary, and then publish resource as internal Libraries documentation.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None.

McGill Library EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Action Plans 2024

STATEMENT ON INCLUSIVE RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

PROJECT TITLE

Statement on Inclusive Resource Description

PROJECT TEAM

Anna Dysert, Coordinator, Receiving & Processing, and Archival Materials, Collections, Project Lead

Megan Chellew, Interim Associate Dean, Collections

Andrew Senior, Coordinator E-Resources & Serials, Collections

PROJECT GOALS

Create an outward facing statement to help our community understand how descriptions come into our catalogues, and how we create descriptions locally.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

We will create a description of the current state of descriptive practices for library and archival materials, including an explanation of how metadata arrives in our catalogue, or is created locally. The document will outline our approach to metadata creation and will provide an acknowledgement of where current practices fall short. Statement will be approved first by Libraries Cabinet and then Libraries Council.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Outward-facing statement on Libraries web site.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Draft statement	December 2023
Statement reviewed by Equity Office and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives	January-March 2024
Statement revised based on feedback	April-May 2024
Statement reviewed, and approved by Libraries Cabinet and Libraries Council	September 2024
Statement revised based on feedback	October 2024
Publish statement on website	November 2024

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

None.

FUTURE WORK

Create documentation for staff with cataloguing responsibilities.

APPENDIX E:
CONSULTATION PROTOCOLS AND RESULTS

McGill Libraries EDIA Action Plan 2024 CONSULTATION PROTOCOLS AND RESULTS

The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Planning Team collaborated with the Libraries' Indigenous Initiatives Planning team to perform consultations with Libraries staff to identify needs and gather ideas. Staff consultations took two forms: (mostly) in-person¹⁰ sessions with Libraries' staff and an anonymous Library staff survey. In addition, the EDIA Planning Team conducted a student consultation via a tabling exercise in several of our Libraries.

IN-PERSON LIBRARY STAFF CONSULTATION

Design

We adopted a focus group, semi-structured interview approach to staff consultations. Consultations were organized by library or department, to which all staff in that unit were invited. In total, we performed fourteen in-person or MS Teams consultation sessions. Each consultation lasted one hour, and was led by a moderator, assisted by a notetaker; both of these roles were filled by members of either the EDIA Planning Team or the Indigenous Issues Planning Team. Staff were assured that they could speak freely and that their comments would be recorded without attribution.

To support those conducting interviews, we developed a Moderator's Guide and a Notetaker's Guide, which can be seen at the end of this appendix. The EDIA Planning Team's list of definitions for the terms equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility were distributed prior to the in-person consultations.

During the consultation, we asked two primary questions:

- 1) As a staff member in the McGill Library, what would you most like to see the Library do to advance our understanding of workplace equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, improve our practices, and work towards reconciliation?
- 2) In looking at McGill Library's services, spaces, and collections, what is the biggest need you see in relation to equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and reconciliation?

The moderator and notetaker were prepared with additional prompting questions to use when necessary.

Findings

At the conclusion of the in-person staff consultations, the notes from all fourteen sessions were combined and coded by theme. We conducted two separate analyses, one to extract those themes relating to EDIA issues, and another specific to Indigenous issues; we have not duplicated any Indigenous-specific comments here. Instead, please refer to the McGill University Libraries Indigenous Initiatives Action Plan 2024.

From the consultations, the themes that occurred most frequently were:

- Concern about meeting the needs of neurodiverse students and Library staff.
- Challenges to physical accessibility of both patron and staff spaces.

¹⁰ Two of the consultation sessions were held virtually on MS Teams, synchronously.

- A mismatch between our current collection development practices and the ability to purchase materials representing under-heard voices. The collection as a whole is lacking in diversity.
- Ongoing staff training should be a priority, and one key area should be cultural competence.
- Need to improve our recruitment and retention practices to be more welcoming to staff from under-represented groups.
- Skepticism that the EDIA Action Plan and the Libraries' renewed focus on EDIA issues are serious or supported to the degree necessary to make them successful.

STAFF SURVEY

Design

In addition to the in-person consultations, we ran an anonymous survey for Library staff. The goals of the survey were two-fold – to allow staff to provide ideas supplementing what was contributed in the in-person consults, and to generate new project ideas. The survey provided an opportunity for a respondent to indicate membership in one of the university-designated equity groups, repeated the two questions from the in-person consults, and introduced three new questions related to equity initiatives respondents wanted to see and where they believe McGill has strength to build upon. All questions except the first were text boxes that allowed somewhat lengthy responses.

We received 38 responses to the staff survey, from a population of around 180 Libraries staff members. The survey allowed for multiple submissions per person; therefore we cannot calculate a true response rate. We encouraged staff to defer filling out the survey until after their departmental in-person consultation, so as to let them reflect on the experience and facilitate the richest possible survey responses.

Findings

Major EDIA themes are reported here; comments specifically applying to Indigenous topics may be found in the Indigenous Initiatives Action Plan 2024.

- Training on EDIA issues for Libraries staff is sorely needed, especially for managers and administrators.
- Library descriptive practices can reinforce structural inequities and racism. We must make our descriptions more inclusive, findable by users with their own terminology, and consistent across the various places where these descriptions are created and displayed.
- Staff feel like they don't have information on EDIA efforts or places to go to for support in the Libraries or in McGill more generally. Managers and the Libraries Administration need to do better in pronouncing staff members' names correctly, and in referring to staff by their preferred pronouns. This is a highly personal issue that is perceived as a lack of respect for staff.
- Skepticism that the EDIA Action Plan and the Libraries' renewed focus on EDIA issues are serious or supported to the degree necessary to make them successful.

STUDENT TABLING

Design

To consult with students, the EDIA Planning Team designed and conducted a series of "tabling" events where members of the Planning Team stood at a prominently located location in various Libraries and

solicited written input from students passing by on how the Libraries can improve in equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

The consultation was structured as follows:

- Big board for main question “How can we make your experience of using the Library's collections, services, and spaces more equitable and accessible?”
- Main areas of input we are interested in:
- Collections (holdings and access)
- Programming (exhibits, events, etc.)
- Spaces (physical barriers and environment)
- Attitudes (interactions with staff)
- FOR STAFF: Prompting questions (how can library support the following equity deserving groups in any of the areas of input?) [women, persons with disabilities (e.g. visible and invisible), racialized people/visible minorities, ethnic minorities (e.g. religious minorities/international students), 2SLGBTQIA*]

Those performing a student tabling consultation used a “cheat sheet” to help them ensure the same protocol was used in all locations. The protocol was simple:

- Pick up materials (big board, pencils, paper, candy/snacks with baskets, tablecloth,
- Container to hold student comments, clipboards)
- Arrive at the table 15 mins early to set up
- Try to put ‘we welcome your feedback’ sign and snacks in a prominent place
- Up to the discretion of the people tabling on how to invite the students to participate
- Use main areas of input and equity deserving groups in conversation or have them available if student wants ideas
- Ask students to write their ideas/feedback on paper
- Be ready to help students as necessary
- Return materials

We conducted tabling at five libraries and received 64 student comments.

Findings

Thematic analysis of the responses revealed:

- As expected in any consultation process, not all feedback was directly related to the specific question asked.
- Students want longer open hours and more quiet study spaces.
- There is a lack of knowledge of what is in the Libraires’ collection, especially from diverse voices and in special collections.
- Building maintenance is not just an annoyance, it’s an inclusion and accessibility issue: flickering lights, extreme brightness or dimness of lights, and lighting color temperature all present challenges for neurodiverse students; hanging wires present barriers to physical access; and graffiti, especially in the washrooms, is often racist and sexist.
- There were a few unanticipated bits of feedback – that the “ding” of the elevators was distracting to focused work, a desire for more leisure reading in diverse voices, and more publicity surrounding Library events.

McGill Library EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Planning Teams 2024 CONSULTATION PROTOCOL, STAFF, PHASE 1 – IDEA GENERATION March 1, 2024

Research Questions

1. How could the McGill Library offer its staff a more equitable, inclusive, diverse, and accessible work environment?
2. How could the McGill Library services, spaces, collections, offer the McGill community, including Indigenous peoples, a more equitable, inclusive, diverse, and accessible experience, and work towards reconciliation?
3. What specific projects and activities relating to equity, inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and reconciliation have Library staff undertaken in the past, what have they learned from these experiences, and what projects and activities would they like to undertake in the future?

Activity 1: Consults in department meetings

- Each consult will have at least one member from each Planning Team present. One will act as moderator and the second as notetaker.
- Visit times are scheduled based on units' existing meeting plan. Consults should be scheduled for 25-30 minutes on the agenda.
- Meetings should be scheduled in person whenever possible, and we should similarly attend in person. Hybrid will be supported when needed.
- Consultation questions, EDIA definitions, and (if ready) list of relevant Calls to Action from the Truth & Reconciliation Commission and other bodies will be distributed to library staff prior to the first consultation session.
- Topics (slide deck provided)
 - a. Brief description of the goals/mandates of the Planning Teams.
 - b. Introduction to McGill designated equity groups.
 - c. Question 1 (internally focused): As a staff member in the McGill Library, what would you most like to see the Library do to advance our understanding of workplace equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, improve our practices, and work towards reconciliation?
 - d. Question 2 (externally-focused): In looking at McGill Library's services, spaces, and collections, what is the biggest need you see in relation to equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and reconciliation?
- The moderator will have prompts provided to them should the conversation around the original wording of the questions not generate much feedback. See staff consult questions.docx for possible prompting questions.
- Consult the *Moderation Guide* for additional information to prepare for the moderation task.
- Notes should be as detailed as possible but NOT include names of people who spoke.
- Notetakers should put notes in **REDACTED**. Consult the *Notetaking Guide* for additional information to prepare for the notetaking task.

Activity 2: Staff survey

1. The survey should be access limited to McGill community, but no name or email should be recorded, i.e., the survey should be anonymous.
2. Allow respondents to fill the survey out as many times as the staff member wishes, to help preserve anonymity.
3. All responses are optional; nothing required.
4. The survey will be implemented in Microsoft 365 Forms.
5. Question 1 will list the McGill designated equity groups and invite respondents, if they choose, to indicate which of these groups they are a member of.
6. Questions 2-3 are the questions from the in-person consultation.
7. 3-4 additional questions will be added with the goal of generating more ideas for possible projects. See Survey Questions for specifics.

McGill Library EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Planning Teams 2024
CONSULTATION QUESTIONS, STAFF, PHASE 1 – IDEA GENERATION
March 1, 2024

Question 1 (internally focused)

As a staff member in the McGill Library, what would you most like to see the Library do to advance our understanding of workplace equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, improve our practices, and work towards reconciliation?

Prompting questions for Q1 if discussion lags:

- If McGill libraries wants to be considered a leader in workplace accessibility, what steps do you think we should take?
- If McGill libraries wants to set an example of what it looks like to run a library where diversity and inclusion in the workplace is a priority, what would you like to see happen?
- Does the McGill Library offer a day-to-day work environment that feels equitable, diverse, accessible, and inclusive to you?

Question 2 (externally-focused)

In looking at McGill Library's services, spaces, and collections, what is the biggest need you see in relation to equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and reconciliation?

Prompting questions for Q2 if discussion lags:

- Do you think our collections are representative of the needs of students and faculty that we serve?
- Does the McGill Library offer its patrons services, spaces, and collections that are equitable, diverse, accessible, and inclusive? If yes, in what ways? If not, what are ways that we can improve?
- What programs related to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, or Indigenous Initiatives have you seen be successful or promising at another academic library that we can learn from?
- Do you have any suggestions on how the Library can increase accessibility in its physical and virtual spaces?

McGill Library EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Planning Teams 2024
MODERATOR'S GUIDE, STAFF CONSULTS, PHASE 1 – IDEA GENERATION
March 1, 2024

Procedures and Expectations

The moderator's role in staff consults is to frame the discussion, ask questions, and elicit thoughtful responses. Set the context, but then say very little once you get to the consultation questions.

The moderator is encouraged to ask follow-up or clarifying questions, to repeat back a paraphrase of a complex answer to ensure it was properly understood, and to ask for a participant to expand on a comment they've made.

Notetakers may also ask clarifying and follow up questions; make room for their participation.

You may be asked a question rather than a participant responding to your question. Do your best to answer in 1 sentence to clear up misconceptions, or not answer at all, and redirect back to the purpose of the session – our Planning Teams *listening* to staff ideas. Questions can be directed after the session towards the team members in the room or to Jenn.

Ensure the loudest and most eager voices do not take over the conversation. Do not be afraid to say that you've heard a lot from one participant, and now you would like to hear from others.

For privacy reasons, do not audio or video record the session. The notetaker will similarly not record names of speakers.

A few days prior to the consultation, confirm with your host that there is a projector available for your use. Bring printed slides if necessary.

A few days prior to the consultation, ask the host to distribute these links for participants to review before the consult: **REDACTED**

Have a stack of printed copies of our EDIA definitions for participants to view. The definitions have been circulated, but participants may find it useful to have them on hand, and we'd prefer not to spend consult time on reviewing them.

Spend less than 5 minutes on the introductory slides, then 10-15 minutes on each of Q1 and Q2.

You may wish to ask the notetaker to help you keep track of time.

General Advice

Embrace silence – participants may be thinking how to word a contribution or even start talking to fill the void. If no one is offering a comment, count slowly (and silently) to **FIFTEEN** before moving on or reframing your question. This will seem like an eternity, but it's really not. It's surprisingly effective.

If participants arrive late, do not go back to earlier content to catch them up.

You may wish to email a copy of the Questions and Definitions document before the session to the Branch/Unit head for the group you're consulting with.

Moderator's Script

The script refers to the survey in several places. Adjust your remarks based on whether we've already issued the survey at that point or if we haven't.

This script is intended to be only talking points—make the session your own with language and cadence that is natural to you.

Slide 1: Title Slide

[Introduce yourself; have notetaker introduce themselves]

[notetaker tells group their notes will be anonymous; no attribution]

Thank you for inviting us to be here and being willing to share your thoughts. just 2 questions to ask and 25-30 minutes of your time.

Slide 2: Why we're here

First some background

[Try not to read the whole slide aloud; paraphrase instead. You don't have to address every point verbally.]

[If staff survey **has not** yet been sent out, indicate it will be out soon.]

[If staff survey **has** been distributed, remind participants that they can fill it out as many times as they like, so if they've already filled it out, they can go back and send in additional responses.]

Slide 3: Definitions

The EDIA Planning Team recently adopted a set of working definitions for EDIA that will inform the rest of our work. These have been posted on the Intranet. If you'd like to have them during our consult today, there are a few copies [wherever in the room] for you.

Slide 4: Designated equity groups at McGill

McGill's approach to equity initiatives is important context for our Planning Teams' work.

McGill has intentionally taken an approach to its equity initiatives that is grounded in compliance, legal and otherwise.

Federal Employment Equity law designates 4 groups of people as requiring special measures to accommodate differences.

QC law adds Ethnic Minorities: “persons whose mother tongue is neither French nor English and who belong to a group other than the aboriginal peoples group or the visible minorities group.”

McGill adds 2SLGBTQ+ people as a designated equity group.

2SLGBTQ+ = Two spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, and inclusion of people who identify as part of sexual and gender diverse communities, who use additional terminologies.

While the identification of these groups has its origin in employment and hiring practices, at McGill we extend the use of these groups to other areas where equity concepts are a helpful framework, for example in library services to users.

When we talk about equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility at McGill, these are the groups of people we are talking about.

Slide 5: Q1

Internally focused - participants as workers/employees

As a staff member in the McGill Library, what would you most like to see the Library do to advance our understanding of workplace equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, improve our practices, and work towards reconciliation?

Prompting questions for Q1 if discussion lags:

- If McGill libraries wants to be considered a leader in workplace accessibility, what steps do you think we should take?
- If McGill libraries wants to set an example of what it looks like to run a library where diversity and inclusion in the workplace is a priority, what would you like to see happen?
- Does the McGill Library offer a day-to-day work environment that feels equitable, diverse, accessible, and inclusive to you?

Slide 6: Q2

Externally-focused – Library as service provider

In looking at McGill Library’s services, spaces, and collections, what is the biggest need you see in relation to equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and reconciliation?

Prompting questions for Q2 if discussion lags:

- Do you think our collections are representative of the needs of students and faculty that we serve?
- Does the McGill Library offer its patrons services, spaces, and collections that are equitable, diverse, accessible, and inclusive? If yes, in what ways? If not, what are ways that we can improve?
- What programs related to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, or Indigenous Initiatives have you seen be successful or promising at another academic library that we can learn from?
- Do you have any suggestions on how the Library can increase accessibility in its physical and virtual spaces?

Slide 7: Thank you

Express appreciation and invite participants to fill out the survey.

**McGill Library EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Planning Teams 2024
NOTETAKER'S GUIDE, STAFF CONSULTS, PHASE 1 – IDEA GENERATION
March 1, 2024**

Procedures and Expectations

Take notes in as detailed a manner as possible. The notes must stand on their own; for privacy reasons, do not audio or video record the session as a notetaking aid or supplement.

Do not record names of attendees or speakers; all notes should record contributions without attribution. The content of a contribution may signal the speaker's identity. In this case record the comment as it was made and do not try to de-identify.

After introducing yourself, tell the group that you will be recording comments without attribution.

It is OK to ask a speaker to repeat a certain contribution to ensure you record it adequately.

The notetaker may ask clarifying questions to supplement the moderator's questions.

The moderator may ask you to assist in keeping the session on time.

The notetaker may take notes on paper or electronically, as you prefer, but they must be submitted to the Planning Team in a digital, text-searchable format (not images of paper notes).

Following the session, please deposit notes in REDACTED.

General Advice

Have the question list handy as it may help you.

Prepare a template for your notes in advance of the session to save you time during the consult.

McGill Library EDIA and Indigenous Initiatives Planning Teams 2024
STAFF SURVEY, PHASE 1 – IDEA GENERATION
March 3, 2024

Intro

All questions are optional.

This survey is anonymous; your identity will not be captured when providing answers.

If the answer to one question may imply your identity, and if there are other answers you wish to submit anonymously, feel free to submit the survey multiple times.

If you wish to volunteer to work on an EDIA or Indigenous initiative, please email edia.library@mcgill.ca.

Q1

If you choose, please check any boxes for equity groups you identify as a part of. This question is optional; you may leave it blank.

Women

[Definition: People who self-identify as women.]

Racialized People / Visible Minorities

[Definition: This group refers to people (other than Indigenous peoples) who are non-white, regardless of their birthplace or citizenship. It also refers to those with a mixed racial background who self-identify as a person of colour (i.e., non-white), including those who have a mixed Indigenous and visible minority ancestry.]

Persons with Disabilities

[Definition: This group refers to people who have a long-term, persistent or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric, or learning impairment and who either consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment because of that impairment and the functional limitations it causes, or who believe that an employer might consider them to be disadvantaged. This group includes peoples who have been accommodated in their current job because of their functional limitations (e.g., by means of technical aids, changes to equipment or other working arrangements). This group does not include those who have relatively minor conditions that are experienced by larger segments of the population – for example, wearing glasses or contact lenses. The determining factor is the severity of the condition and the impact on one’s ability to perform their employment responsibilities.]

Indigenous People

[Definition: Included in this category are First Nations (status or non-status), Inuit and Métis people, as well as Native Americans and Alaskan Natives from the USA.]

Ethnic Minorities

[Definition: This group refers to people who do not identify as Indigenous or as racialized/visible minority, and whose mother tongue (first language learned and still understood) is neither French nor English.]

2SLGBTQ+ People

[Definition: Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex and Asexual. This group refers to people whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual/straight, and/or those whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth (i.e., who are not cisgendered).]

[check boxes; allow multiple selections]

Q2

As a staff member in the McGill Library, what would you most like to see the Library do to advance our understanding of workplace equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, improve our practices, and work towards reconciliation? *It is not necessary to duplicate your comments from the in-person consultations. However, please feel free to expand upon ideas expressed there.*

[big text box for answer]

Q3

In looking at McGill Library's services, spaces, and collections, what is the biggest need you see in relation to equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and reconciliation? *It is not necessary to duplicate your comments from the in-person consultations. However, please feel free to expand upon ideas expressed there.*

[big text box for answer]

Q4

Please describe any useful lessons learned from equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, or Indigenous initiatives that you have participated in or that you are aware of in other organizations.

[big text box for answer]

Q5

What initiatives related to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, or Indigenous initiatives would you personally like to work on in the future? *Your answer is anonymous; you are not volunteering for anything by answering this question.*

[big text box for answer]

Q6

Are there any areas related to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, or Indigenous initiatives that you believe the McGill Library is poised to play a leadership role in, either on campus or among the research library community? If so, which areas are these and why?

[big text box for answer]

Survey complete, thank you

This survey is anonymous, so your name will not be connected to suggestions made here.

Should you wish to volunteer to lead or serve on a project team for a specific project in 2024, please email details to edia.library@mcgill.ca.