Public Library Association

Public Library Staff and Diversity Report

Results from the 2021 PLA Annual Survey

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Executive Summary

"The most important asset of any library goes home at night—the library staff."

—**Timothy Healy**, Former President, New York Public Library

T he Public Library Association (PLA) 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey focuses on this most important public library asset by updating information on beginning librarian and library director salaries; documenting traditional and emerging staff roles; exploring staff diversity, recruitment, and retention efforts; and capturing information about public library equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) goals and activities. These are among the most frequent questions PLA hears from our partners and members, and they are urgent ones as the profession seeks to be representative of our diverse communities and advance equity and inclusion for all.

The survey results highlight both opportunities and challenges for the future of public libraries. While there are different levels and capacities in libraries of varying sizes, virtually all (95.2%) of public libraries report that they engage in at least one type of EDI activity. More than a quarter (26.6%) of public libraries have formal EDI plans, and a similar percentage (25.1%) report they have dedicated staff roles for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

95.2% of public libraries report that they engage in at least one type of EDI activity.

"Traditional" library staff roles, such as children's services and collection development, are the most common, but the prevalence of roles that incorporate social media and digital outreach (74.0%), workforce and small business development (18.2%), and social work (8.1%) illustrate a growing range of programs and services in public libraries.

However, we face significant challenges. Beginning librarian salaries have remained virtually flat for more than a decade, and library director salaries have fallen and climbed but not recovered to pre-Great Recession levels. In 2021 the median annual salary of a public library director was $79,022, and the median annual salary of a beginning librarian was $41,864.

27% of all public libraries report that they lost staff positions in the prior twelve months.

Furthermore, over a quarter of all public libraries report that they lost staff positions in the prior twelve months. For libraries that lost positions, more than half report that this primarily stemmed from staff leaving the workforce and not being replaced.

Like all surveys, these results captured a snapshot in time. PLA invited all U.S. public library administrative entities to complete the survey in fall/winter 2021. In total, 773 libraries completed the survey, a response rate of 8.4%. Unless otherwise noted, survey results are weighted to account for differences between responding libraries and the universe of all US public libraries.

This report exists alongside ongoing research by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), to name a few. It is neither the first nor final word

in this vital space. The data provide an opportunity to learn and grow as libraries and all workplaces consider how they can best recruit, hire, develop, compensate, and retain a diverse workforce—particularly in the competitive labor market we see in 2022. To that end, the report includes not only a summary of the data collected, but suggestions of possible starting points for taking action with the results and additional resources that library staff may find helpful as they engage in further work. PLA is committed to supporting data-driven decision-making in public libraries and advocating for the needs of libraries and library workers as they continue to grow and innovate.

About the Survey Data

PLA fielded the Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey in fall/winter 2021. It is the second of PLA's new set of three topical surveys, administered on a rotating annual basis starting with the Technology Survey in 2020. The 2021 survey was designed in response to requests from the field for better data about staffing and diversity trends. This first year of results provide a baseline so that when we ask these questions again in 2024, we will see how the field has evolved.

PLA invited all U.S. public libraries (at the administrative entity level, as defined by IMLS) to participate in this survey. It opened in October 2021 on our new data platform, Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends (**librarybenchmark.org**). In total 773 libraries completed the survey, a response rate of 8.4%. Unless otherwise noted, the results presented below are weighted to account for differences between the responding libraries and the universe of all U.S. public libraries. All questions on the survey were optional, and the tables in the Detailed Results section include the number of respondents for each question. The percentage estimates reflect the percentage of respondents for a particular question, rather than the percentage of the full sample. See Appendix A for further details of the sampling and analysis methodology.

The charts and tables below highlight responses for public libraries overall and by locale type. Locale indicates the level of urbanization of a given location, with libraries divided into the categories of city, suburban, and town/rural.

Salaries, Roles, and Staffing Trends

Public library staff are essential for the development and delivery of quality services and resources to patrons. Questions on this survey asked about the roles staff fulfill, salaries, opportunities for advancement, and hiring and retention strategies.

The Public Library Data Service (PLDS) survey, administered through 2018, asked two questions related to staff salaries: the annual salary of the library director and beginning librarian (defined as a new hire with an MLS degree and no prior professional experience). PLA retired the PLDS in 2019 and adopted these questions for the 2021 Staff and Diversity Survey. In 2021 the median annual salary of a library director was $79,022, and the median annual salary of a beginning librarian was $41,864.

Figure 1 shows the trend for salaries from 2002 to 2021. However, data from 2018 and earlier has not been weighted and is subject to bias based on the nature of the sample. Nonetheless, the trend shows the impact of the Great Recession post-2008 on directors' salaries. Salaries for beginning librarians have remained fairly consistent over time, with a slight decline from pre-2008 levels. In 2021, city and suburban libraries report significantly higher median salaries compared to town/rural libraries (see tables 2 and 3).[1]
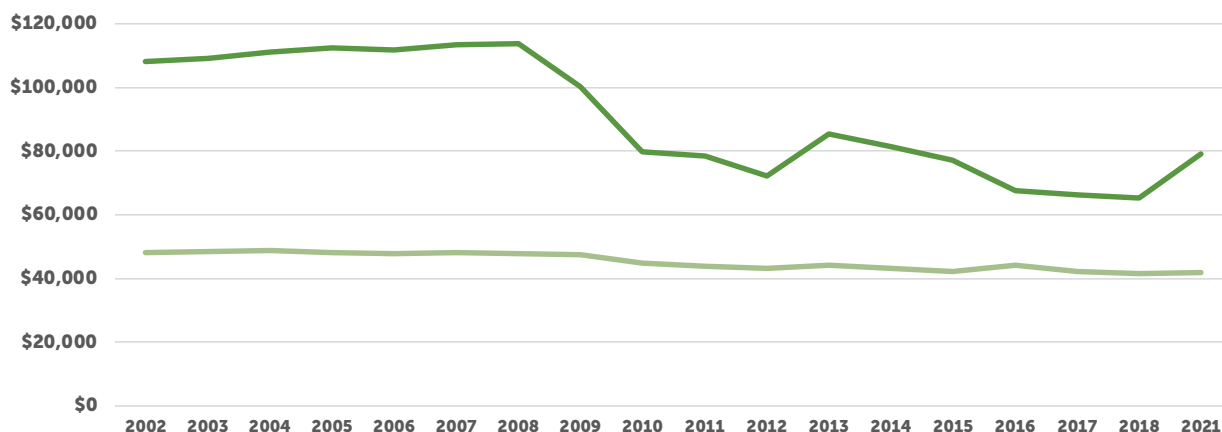

Figure 1: Median salaries of library directors and beginning librarians in the United States, 2002–2021 (in 2021 dollars). Note: Data from 2002–2018 is from the Public Library Data Service (PLDS) and is unweighted. 2021 results are weighted. All dollar amounts from 2002-2018 have been converted to 2021 dollars using the consumer price index (CPI). No data was collected in 2019 or 2020. See tables 2 and 3 below for detailed results from the 2021 survey.

■ Director ■ Beginning Librarian

The annual Public Libraries Survey (PLS) administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) asks libraries to report their number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. PLA chose to ask about the number of staff rather than FTE both to complement existing data and to center *people* rather than positions or hours. The survey also asked about temporary staff and volunteers. Our findings show that, unsurprisingly, the numbers of staff differ significantly by library type, with city libraries reporting an unweighted median of 45 full-time staff members and 28 part-time staff members, compared to 11 full-time and 14 part-time for suburban libraries and 1 full-time and 3 part-time for town/rural libraries (**Figure 2**). In terms of FTE, the results from the FY 2020 PLS show that overall public libraries had a median FTE of 3.9, with medians of 43.6 for city libraries, 11.0 for suburban libraries, and 2.2 for town/rural libraries.[2]

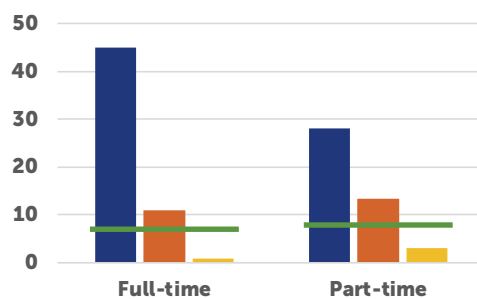The Staff and Diversity Survey asked responding libraries to indicate whether they have staff whose

Figure 2: Median numbers of full-time and part-time staff (unweighted). See table 5 below for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

job title or description falls under certain specified roles (**Figure 3**). Overall, the top roles represented in public libraries are children's services (91.2%), collection development (82.3%), adult services (81.6%), and youth/teen services (81.0%). Roles in children's services rank first for all libraries by type: 83.6% of town/rural libraries have staff dedicated to children's services, as do 97.7% of suburban libraries, and 100% of city libraries. Among town/rural libraries, collection development and public programs rank as the second and third most common roles. Among suburban libraries, adult services and youth/teen services rank second and third. For city libraries reference services replaces youth/teen services in third place (see table 6 for details). Emerging areas include roles in equity, diversity, and inclusion (25.1% of libraries overall), workforce and small business development (18.2%), and social work (8.1%).[3]

Two open-ended survey questions asked respondents what new types of roles the library hired staff to fill in the previous twelve months and what new types of roles the library would like to create if funding were available. In the first question, 41% of libraries (out of 234 responses) report hiring staff in core service areas and support services (access, collections,
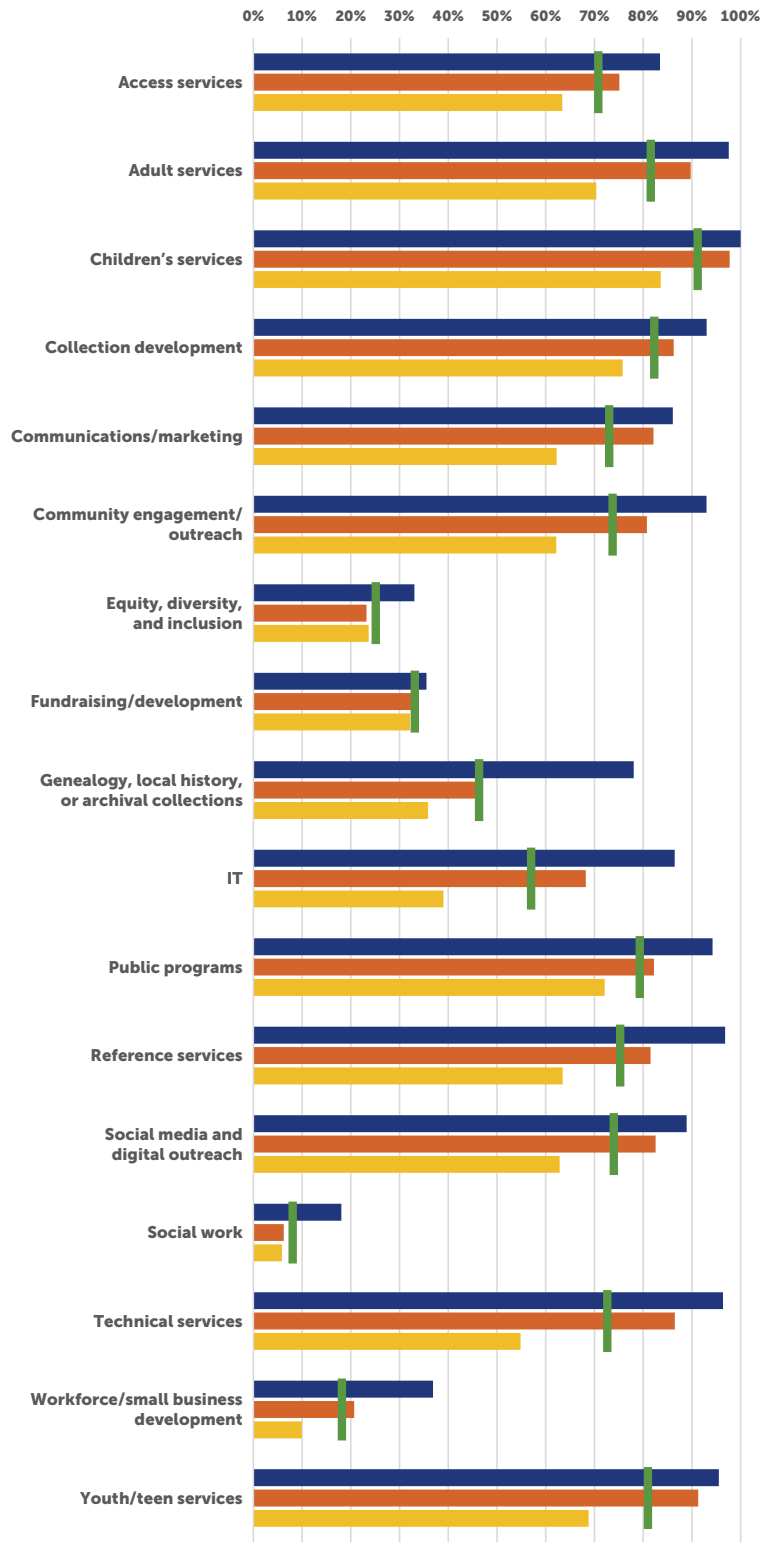

Figure 3: Staff roles. See table 6 below for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

Advocating for Staff

Result: 27.2% of public libraries lost staff positions in the previous year.

Why It Matters: Libraries depend on people to provide vital resources, services, and programs to their communities. The uncertainty of the pandemic combined with factors including budget cuts and hiring freezes has had a negative impact on public library staffing levels. The demands of other responsibilities, including caregiving, also likely had an impact on staff leaving the workforce.

In Practice: At the local level, libraries will need to make the case to their stakeholders, including the board and/or local government, about the necessity of filling vacant positions and opening new positions to meet current needs. Peer comparison data can help with this. Use this report and the data available in Benchmark (**librarybenchmark.org**) to explore how your library's staff numbers, roles, and other metrics compare to those of your peers. For example, if your library has fewer staff and lower salaries than other similar libraries, that could help you make the case for hiring additional staff. You can also show how reduced staffing has affected the library's offerings and outputs if you are seeing a reduction in the number or types of programs compared to pre-pandemic years. Engaging in advocacy at the state and national level can help garner support for libraries and library funding at a larger scale.[4] Providing better support for staff to reduce burnout, increasing flexibility, and creating opportunities for growth at your library can also improve the work culture and environment, mitigating some of the reasons staff leave.[5]

Limitations: The decision to fill vacant positions or open new ones may be outside the library's control and subject to budget constraints.

reference, and technical services, and other support staff and paraprofessional roles). The responses also show an emerging staffing trend centered on community engagement, outreach, and public-facing work, a need perhaps tied to encouraging patrons to return to the library after the changes and challenges of the pandemic. 41.9% of respondents report hiring for new roles in those latter areas. The roles the library would like to create, if funding were available, follow similar trends. 40% of libraries (out of 467 responses) want to hire for roles in core service areas, and an additional 4.7% specified managerial or leadership roles. 67% of libraries would like to create new roles in community engagement, outreach, and public programs.

While this survey did not explicitly ask about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it did include a question about whether the library lost staff positions in the prior twelve months. 27.2% of libraries overall report having lost staff positions. City (32.7%) and suburban (33.2%) libraries were more likely to have lost staff positions than town/rural libraries (21.1%). For libraries that lost positions, 55.3% report it was primarily due to staff leaving the workforce and not being replaced. Other contributing factors include staff budget cuts, reduced service hours, and the consolidation or restructuring of staff positions.

Public libraries are not alone in facing staffing challenges: many library staff are local government employees, and municipal employment fell by 4.5% between March 2020 and March 2022.[6] Looking at postings for open positions provides additional context for these findings. The number of ads for jobs in public libraries posted on ALA JobLIST dropped by 43% in 2020 compared to 2019.[7] New job ads posted in the first three months of 2022 suggest the possibility of a recovery, as the total number posted surpassed prior records.

Offering opportunities for staff to develop their skills and advance within the field can both help libraries thrive and improve retention. A recent study from the Pew Research Center found that low pay and no opportunities for advancement were the top reasons why U.S. workers left a job in 2021.[8] **Figure 4** shows the formal programs for staff advancement that libraries report offering. 97.9% of libraries overall offer at least one type of advancement opportunity. The most common is time during work hours or paid time off for professional development activities, which 97% of libraries overall offer (99.1% of city,

Figure 4: Formal programs for staff advancement.
See table 7 below for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

96.2% of suburban, and 92.3% of town/rural libraries). While 88.5% of libraries provide funding for professional development, other programs for advancement that incur costs—including tuition reimbursement and funding for professional association memberships—are less common.
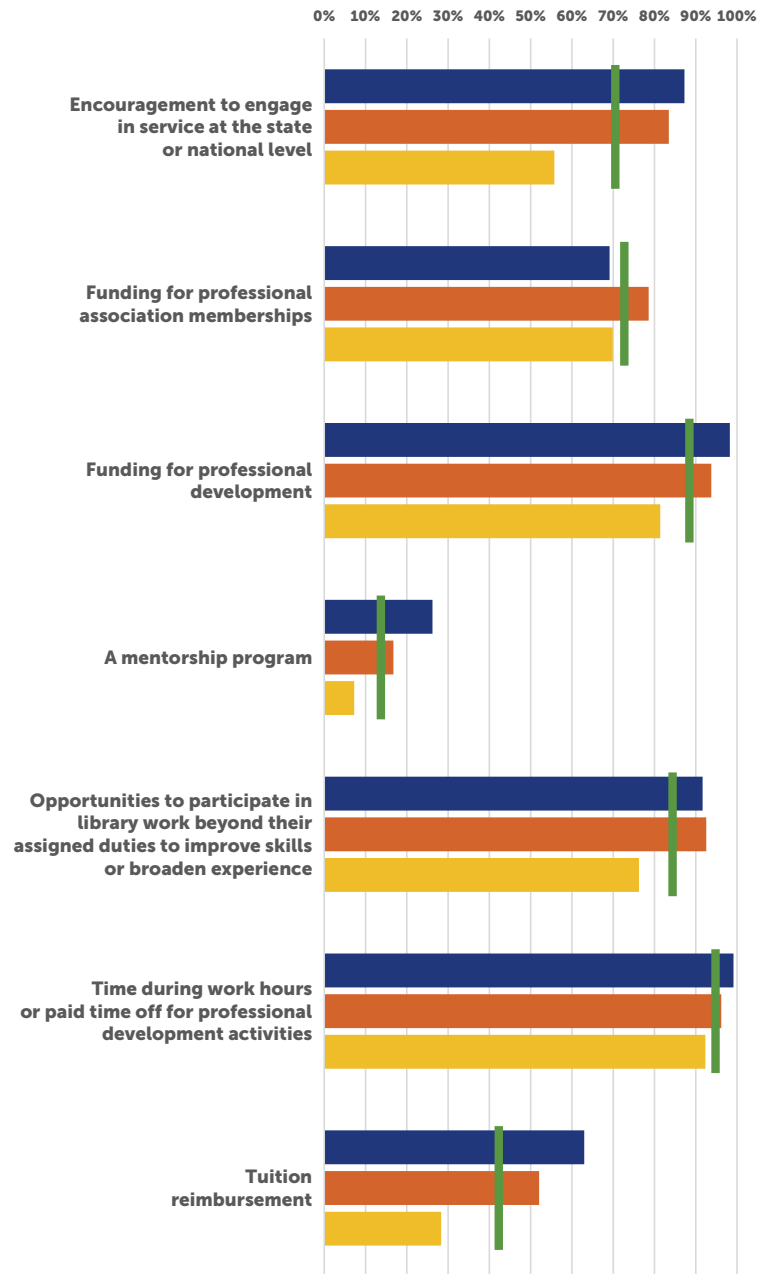
Staff Hiring and Retention

Strategies for staff hiring and retention are critical to sustaining, growing, and diversifying the library workforce. This matters for our nation's public libraries to continue to meet the needs of our communities now and in the future.

While library workers have become more diverse over the past few decades, the current demographics of the sector do not reflect those of the U.S. population. **Figures 5 and 6** show demographics of full-time and part-time public library staff, as reported on the 2021 survey. Data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey provides another source of information on the demographic make-up of library workers nationwide.[9] While the exact results and methods used differ, these data consistently show that the demographic makeup of library workers does not reflect that of the larger population. Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) are underrepresented in the library workforce, while white people—and white women in particular—are overrepresented. That is not a judgment, simply a statement of fact. For community members visiting the library, it's important for them to see themselves reflected in the people and collections they find there.[10] For the library as an organization, research has

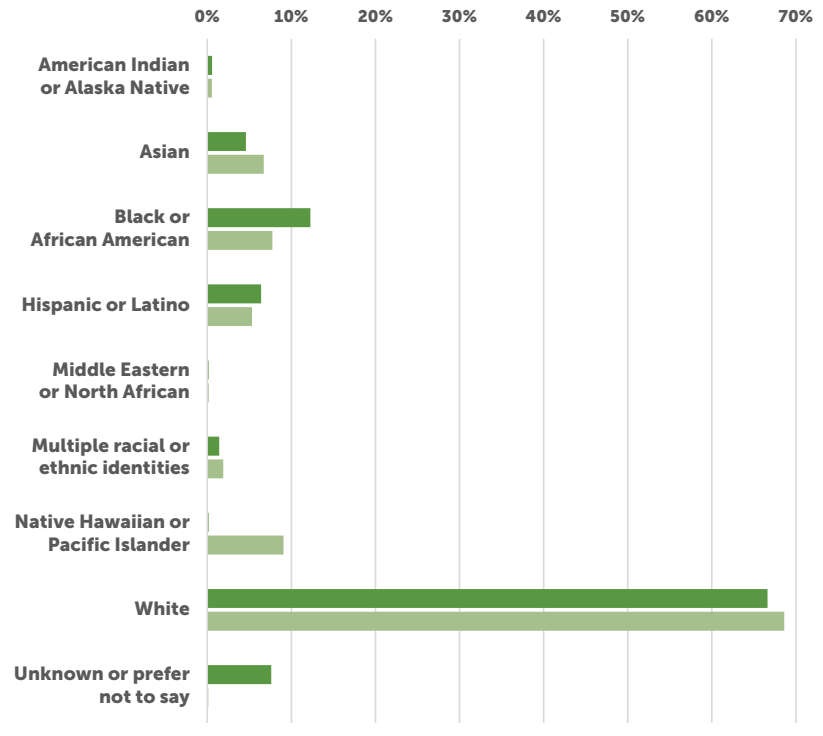**Figure 5: Full-time and part-time staff representation by race/ethnicity.** Unweighted estimates. See tables 11 and 12 below for detailed results and notes on methodology.

■ Full-Time ■ Part-Time

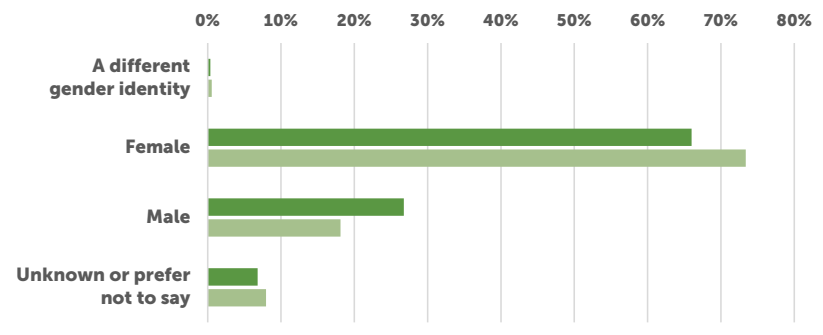**Figure 6: Full-time and part-time staff representation by gender.** Unweighted estimates. See tables 13 and 14 below for detailed results and notes on methodology.

■ Full-Time ■ Part-Time

shown that more diverse teams are better, more creative problem-solvers.[11] The team benefits when its members can bring different perspectives to the table.

Not all libraries or local governments collect data on staff representation and not all were able to accurately report it. 153 libraries shared reasons for being unable to report this data: of those, 59.6% said they do not collect the data, 16.0% said they do not feel confident about its accuracy, and 14.8% said the data is collected, but they do not have access to it (for example, if it is collected at the city or county level). Other reasons for not reporting included not being able to break down the data by full-time and part-time staff or having only incomplete or outdated data (see table 15).

Diversifying the profession will take continued purposeful effort. Nor is this a new issue: a 1985 report noted "a major crisis exists in the recruitment of minorities to the library profession." At the time, the report found that 88.5% of the library workforce was white.[12] While the profession has diversified gradually, many of the same problems and recommendations identified in 1985 do not sound out of place today: a focus on recruitment to the profession, the need for upward mobility within the profession, and the importance of support for staff development and growth.

To further this work, the 2021 survey asked about strategies for hiring and retaining staff from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, or ability (**Figure 7**). 91.7% of libraries report that they use at least one hiring strategy. The most common strategy is posting the position to a diverse range of audiences (73.6%). 50.9% of libraries offer implicit

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RESULTS FOR ACTION

Reviewing Résumés

Result: 44.9% of libraries overall conduct blind reviews of résumés or other application materials in the hiring process.

Why it matters: Reducing the potential for bias or discrimination to occur in the hiring process can help ensure that the candidates considered for a position are those with the best skills and experience. A blind review of résumés and other application materials offers one way of reducing potential bias. A blind review means removing identifiable characteristics from a résumé, including such elements as name, gender, and educational institutions. This matters because research has shown that discrimination can occur because of the applicants' name or gender.[13]

In practice: The department or person responsible for accepting applications could redact or remove identifying information from applications before sharing them with the hiring manager or search committee. Alternatively, applicants could be asked to omit some information—such as the names of educational institutions they attended—in the materials they submit.[14]

Limitations: Despite scrubbing some details, there may still be clues about an applicant's identity in the materials reviewed, and bias can still factor into other stages of the hiring process.

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Figure 7: Strategies for Hiring Staff from Underrepresented Groups. See table 16 below for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

bias and/or cultural competency training for staff, but this is much more common among city libraries (78.4%) and suburban libraries (65.9%) than town/rural libraries (28.4%). 44.9% of libraries conduct blind reviews of application materials, and 42.5% include explicit EDI statements in their job postings. In the open-ended responses about other strategies used, three libraries mention working with local schools, colleges, and other local organizations as ways to both create a more diverse pool of applicants and strengthen community partnerships.

Job Interviews

Results: While 50.9% of libraries overall report offering implicit bias and/or cultural competency training for staff, only 18.8% explicitly train search committees on best practices for inclusive hiring.

Why It Matters: In job interviews, perceptions of candidates may be affected by affinity bias—our tendency to like those with whom we share identities or characteristics, whether we attended the same school or follow the same sports team. While that may create a feeling of rapport in an interview, it is not a reliable means of evaluating a candidate's skills or ability to contribute to a team.

In practice: Have a clearly structured interview, use the same set of questions for all candidates, and follow a standard rubric to guide how the responses are evaluated.[15] Train staff and search committees to be aware of potential implicit biases and make discussion of bias an explicit part of a hiring process. Ruchika Tulshyan recommends beginning an interview debrief with the question, "Where could bias be showing up in this decision?"[16] While potentially awkward at first, it opens space for honest discussion of where perceptions of a candidate originate.

Limitations: Raising awareness, discussing bias, and having a structured interview process in place may all help disrupt bias among search committees. However, training alone may not be enough, and certainly not if it's treated as a one-and-done item.

In terms of strategies to improve retention of staff from underrepresented groups (**Figure 8**), 74.8% of libraries report they work to foster an inclusive workplace culture, and 52.7% report working to dismantle systemic racism in their organization. These are, however, relatively broad ideals, and far fewer libraries report concrete programs to support these staff members. Only 4.8% report creating action plans for employee retention, and 8.6% have a formal mentorship program for new hires. Other hiring and retention strategies respondents mention using or

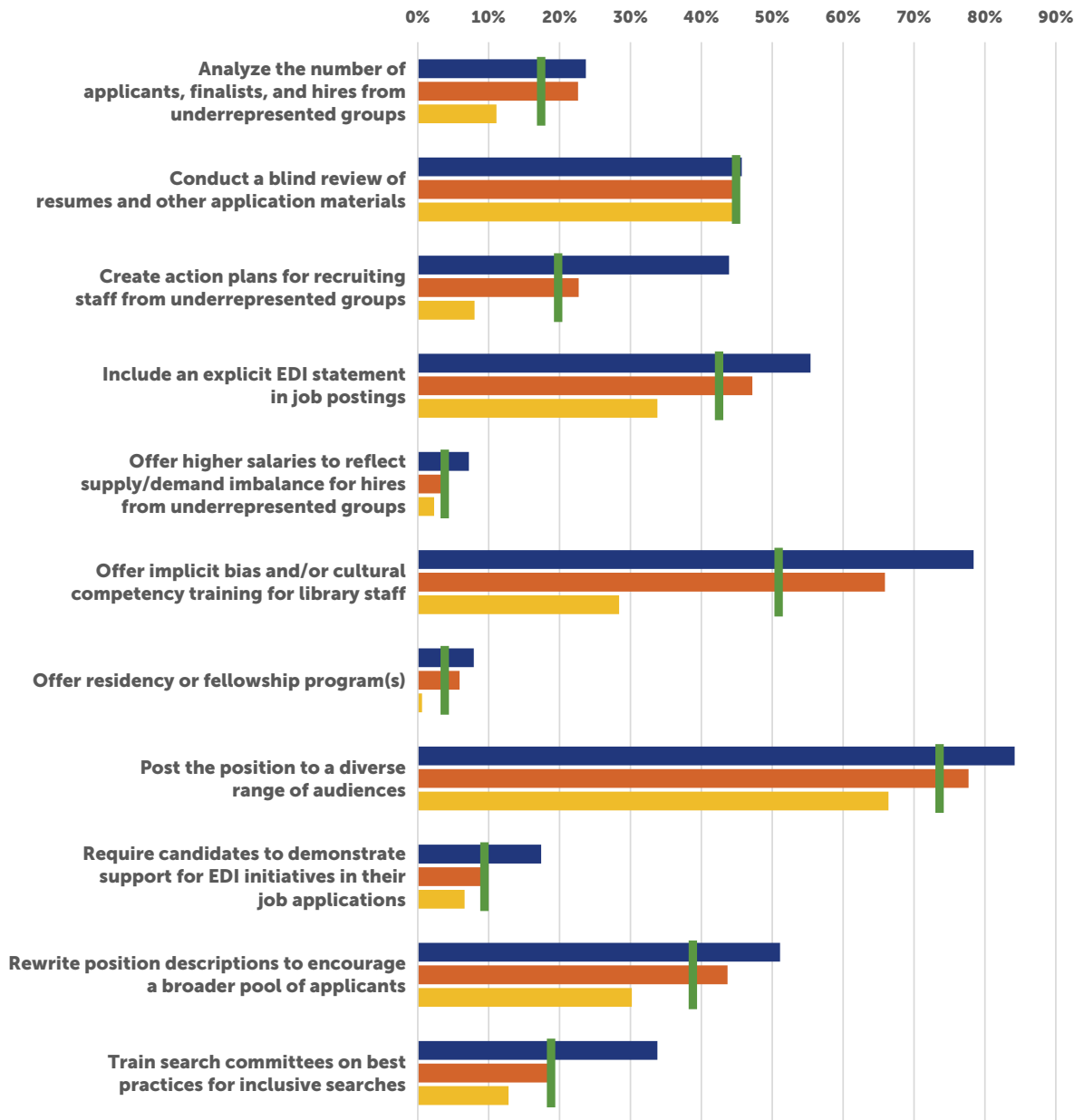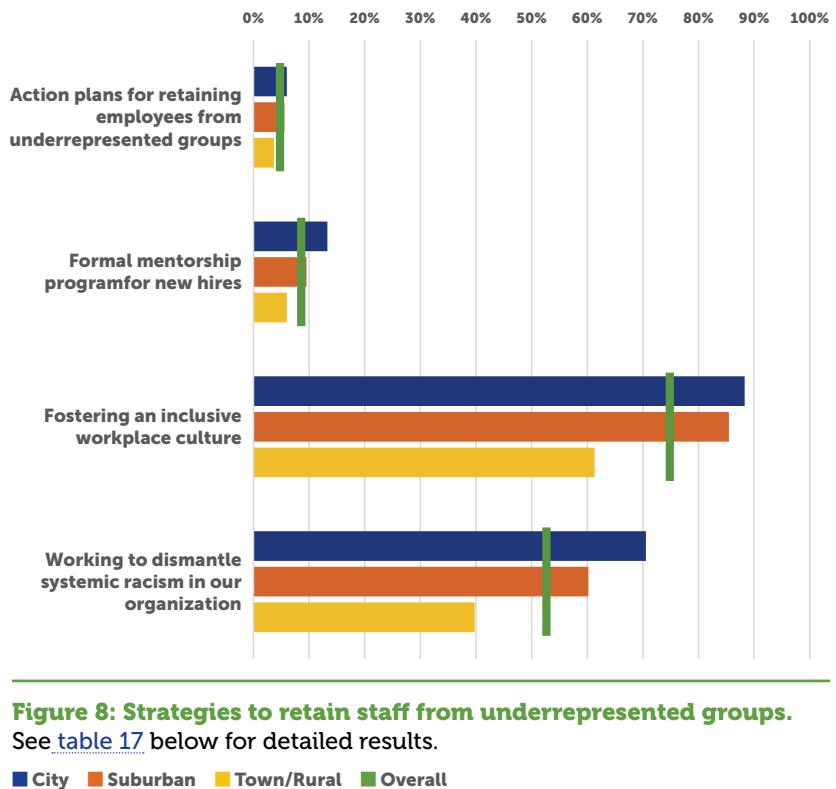**Figure 8: Strategies to retain staff from underrepresented groups.**
See table 17 below for detailed results.

■ City   ■ Suburban   ■ Town/Rural   ■ Overall

considering include the creation of affinity groups among staff, active support for professional development, and expanding the candidate pipeline through community partnerships, student internships, and fellowships for recent graduates.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Improving equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) for the profession supports the efforts of libraries to better serve their communities. Overall, 26.6% of public libraries report that they have formal, written goals related to EDI. The proportion is higher for city libraries (46.0%) and suburban libraries (28.8%) than for town/rural libraries (17.0%). Figure 9 shows the focus of the formal EDI goals for libraries that have them. More than 90% of libraries with formal EDI goals have goals related to fostering an inclusive climate for library users, library collections, improving the workplace culture for library staff, and library events and/or programming. While in the majority of the areas specified city libraries are more likely to have formal goals, when it comes to accessibility town/rural libraries are more likely have goals in that area (a difference of 12%).

The survey also asked libraries to report the types of activities
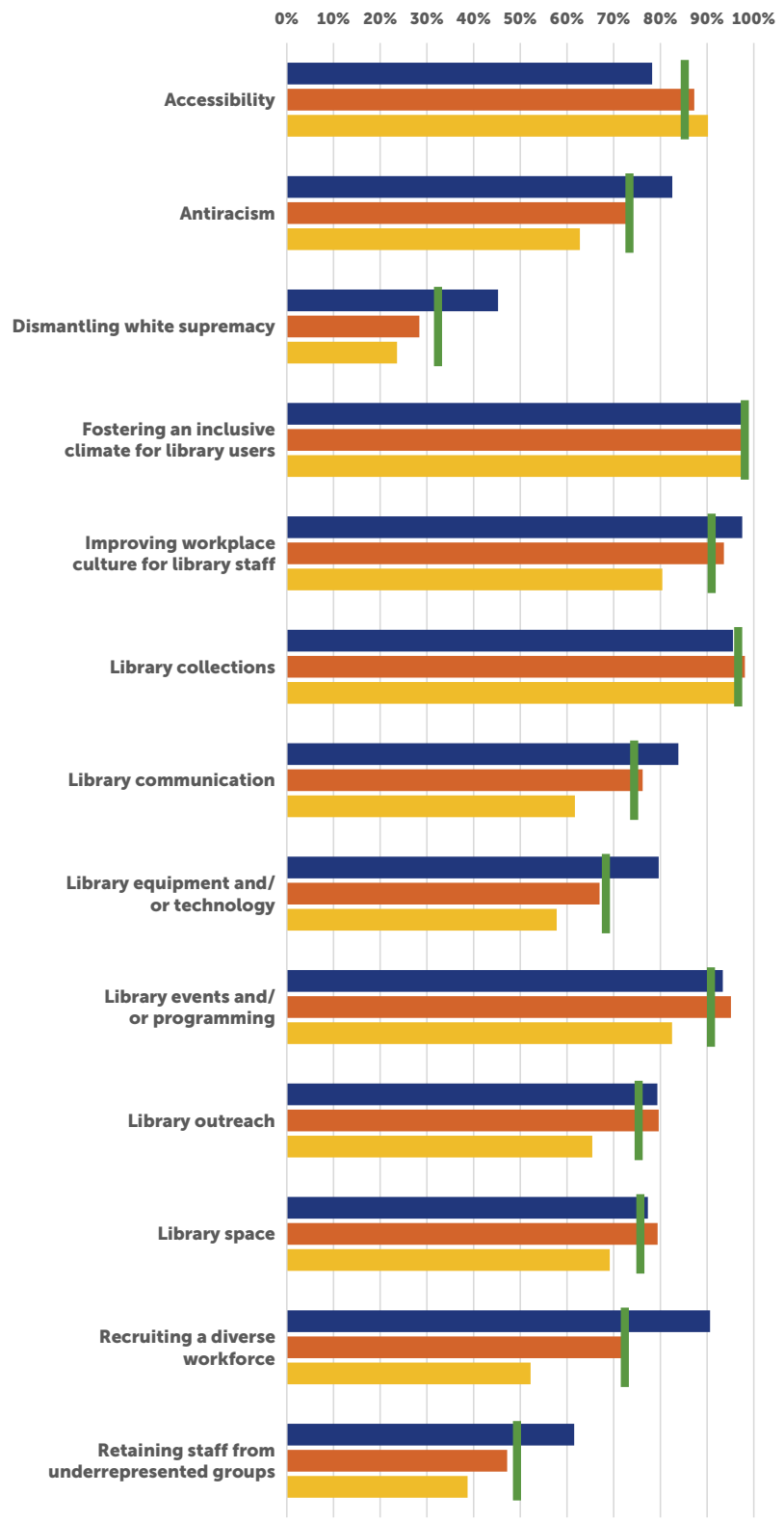
Figure 9: Formal goals for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). See tables 18 and 19 below for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

they engage in related to EDI (**Figure 10**). 95.2% of libraries report undertaking at least one type of activity. The most common are focusing collection development on better representing diverse authors and perspectives (87.9%), supporting staff participation in EDI training or professional development (78.5%), and analyzing the demographics of local communities for use in planning (76.0%). Other types of EDI activities mentioned, beyond the specified list, include partnerships with community groups and renovations to improve accessibility to library buildings.

Intentional work to further equity, diversity, inclusion, and access in public libraries is an ongoing, iterative process. No library answered "yes" to all of these questions—nor would we have expected that. However, none of these questions received all "no" responses either. The results presented here reflect the range of engagement at libraries of all types across the country at one moment in time. Small, rural libraries face more challenges when it comes to staffing and capacity. One director at a
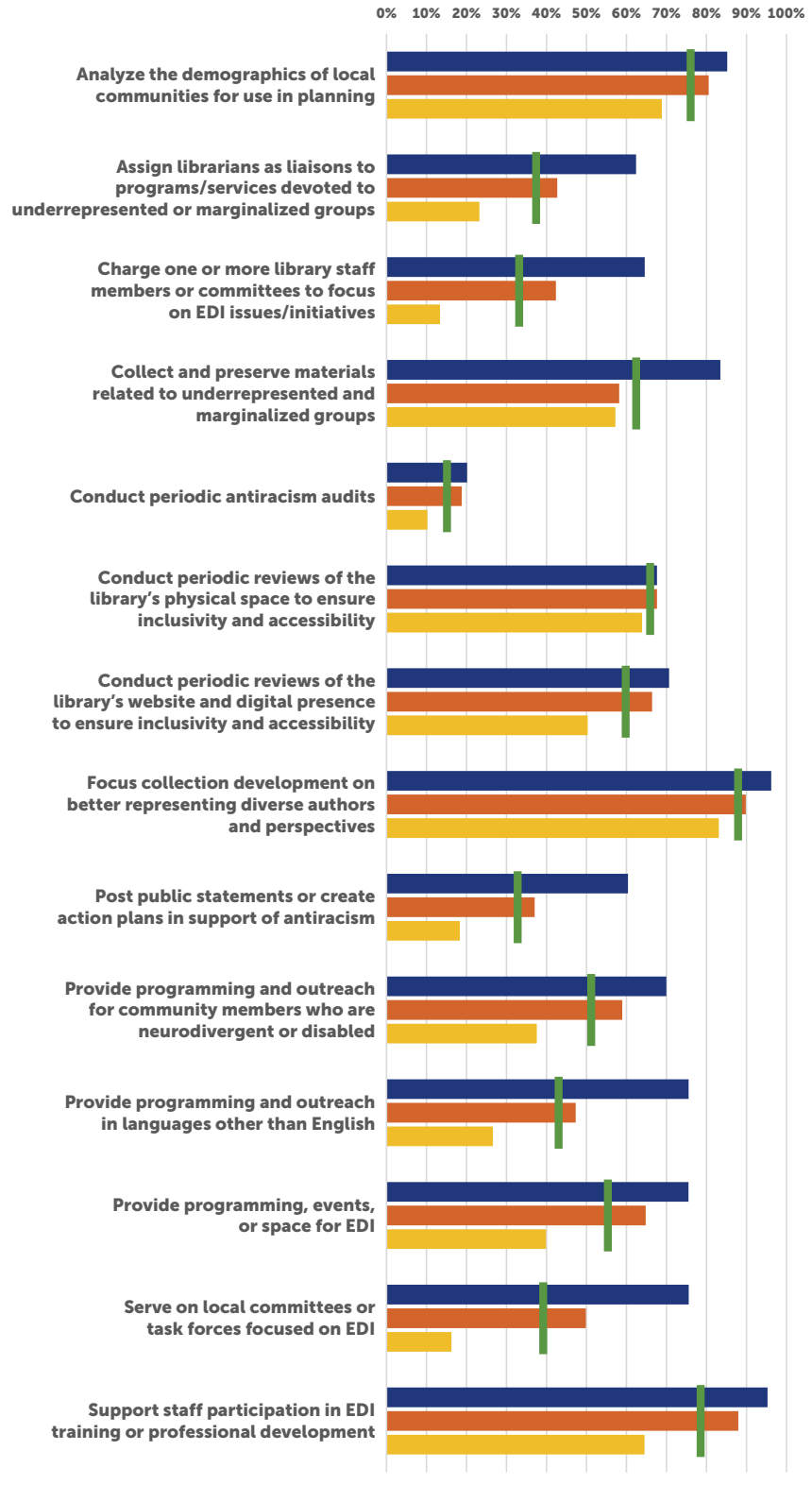

Figure 10: Equity, diversity, and inclusion activities.
See table 20 below for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

Accessibility

Result: 59.8% of libraries conduct periodic reviews of their website and digital presence, and 65.9% conduct periodic reviews of their physical space to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

Why It Matters: Accessibility audits are evaluations of how accessible a library's physical and digital spaces are. Conducting an audit regularly can help identify changes needed to make the library more inclusive.

In practice: Audits can take different forms, including self-assessments, external reviews, and/or surveys of library users. For physical and virtual spaces, improving accessibility is about making the space easier to navigate, whether with a wheelchair or a screen reader. For physical spaces, check that facilities comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). One tool available for that purpose is the ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities (adachecklist. org). For audits of virtual resources, tools exist that can automatically evaluate web content and identify areas for improvement in design and navigation. The Web Accessibility Initiative provides a list of tools and resources (w3.org/WAI). ALA resources related to accessibility can be found at ala.org/advocacy/diversity/accessibility.

Limitations: Keep in mind that audits can go beyond a checklist of minimum standards to also ask about the quality of access provided. As technology changes, patrons' expectations for accessible design may also change. Adding a budget line to address accessibility needs can help with regular updates.

rural library in the Far West staffed primarily by volunteers wrote, "Some of these more formalized EDI initiatives are simply beyond our organization's ability. However, we are working to promote EDI in small ways, such as diversifying our library collection." Over time, a rural library director from a Plains' state wrote, "I trust that many of the 'no's in the survey will become 'yesses'." That hope is shared by counterparts in libraries of all types. A city library director in the Great Lakes reflected, "The work is humbling. And important. We have a lot of change in front of us and for those items that we marked "no," we are hoping to be marking "yes" or at least "in progress" in the coming months and years." The types of questions asked on the survey may change over time, too, as our understanding evolves. PLA's hope by asking these questions is to prompt introspection—What is the field doing? What could we do better?—and to create opportunity and accountability for change.

Conclusion

The results of PLA's 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey capture essential information about the people who empower the nation's libraries to thrive and efforts to ensure equitable service to our communities. Libraries are wellsprings of potential, offering vital resources and support that drive literacy, education, access, innovation, and so much more. However, like many public services today,

libraries face significant challenges. These include persistent difficulties filling vacant positions and offering competitive salaries. Challenges also include those faced by our society at large addressing the legacy of persistent racism and taking steps to counter its effects. Libraries are not alone in this, nor will we solve these problems on our own.

We all have a responsibility to our profession and our communities to engage in this work, and the results of this survey show that it has already begun. In the words of one respondent, "reckoning with where we've been (as a library and profession)" is an "ongoing process." To make progress, we must be willing to "move past defensiveness and fear to be courageous." Going forward, ALA and PLA will continue to work closely with our members and partners to continue to support and advocate for library workers, and to strive for libraries as more inclusive and accessible places.

Notes

1. Another source of data on salaries is the ALA-APA Salary Survey Database, which includes a more detailed breakdown of salaries for different types of positions: **ala-apa.org/salary-survey**.

2. Institute of Museum and Library Services, Public Libraries Survey (FY 2020): **imls.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/public-libraries-survey**. Median calculations exclude libraries missing data and those reported as permanently or temporarily closed.

3. For additional detail of staff roles related to IT, see the *2020 Public Library Technology Survey: Summary Report* (PLA, 2021): **ala.org/pla/sites/ala.org.pla/files/content/data/PLA-2020-Technology-Survey-Summary-Report.pdf**

4. Jacob Gottlieb and Julia Bauer, "The Municipal Workforce through the Pandemic: Where Are We Now?" National League of Cities (2022): **nlc.org/resource/the-municipal-workforce-through-the-pandemic-where-are-we-now**.

5. Sara Goek, "Jobs in Library & Information Science & Technology," Tableau Public (ALA JobLIST data, 2006-2022): **tinyurl.com/ala-joblist**.

6. ALA, Advocate's Toolbox: **ala.org/advocacy/advocatestoolbox**; PLA, Turning the Page initiative: **publiclibraryadvocacy.org**.

7. Kaetrena Davis Kendrick, "The Public Librarian Low-Morale Experience: A Qualitative Study," *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*, vol. 15, no. 2 (2020), DOI: **doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v15i2.5932**; Sara Goek, "The Impact of COVID-19 on Library Staff: Supporting Health and Well-Being," *Public Libraries Online* (2021): **publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/04/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-library-staff-supporting-health-and-well-being**; Sara Goek, "The Future of Remote Work Is Flexibility," *Public Libraries Online* (2021): **publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/04/the-future-of-remote-work-is-flexibility**; and "Library Staff in and beyond the Workplace," *Public Libraries Online* (2021): **publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/04/library-staff-in-and-beyond-the-workplace**.

8. Kim Parker and Juliana Menasce Horowitz, "Majority of workers who quit a job in 2021 cite low pay, no opportunities for advancement, feeling disrespected," Pew Research Center (March 9, 2022): **pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/03/09/majority-of-workers-who-quit-a-job-in-2021-cite-low-pay-no-opportunities-for-advancement-feeling-disrespected**.

9. Sara Goek, "Demographics: Library Workers," Tableau Public (April 28, 2021): **public.tableau.com/app/profile/sara.goek/viz/LibrarianDemographics/Demographics**.

10. ALA, "Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" (2017): **ala.org/advocacy/ intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/EDI**.

11. Katharine W. Phillips, "How Diversity Makes Us Smarter," *Scientific American* (Oct. 2014): **scientificamerican. com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter**.

12. ALA, *Equity at Issue: Library Services to the Nation's Four Major Minority Groups—Report to the President's Committee on Library Services to Minorities* (1985-86), 233, 236-38: **ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org. aboutala/files/content/diversity/EquityatIssue_FullReport_1985.pdf**.

13. Marianne Bertrand & Sendhil Mullainathan, "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination," working paper 9873, National Bureau of Economic Research (July 2003): **https://doi.org/10.3386/w9873**; Ernesto Reuben, Paola Sapienza, and Luigi Zingales, "How stereotypes impair women's careers in science," *PNAS*, vol. 111, no. 12 (March 2014): **doi.org/10.1073/ pnas.1314788111**.

14. "Combating Unconscious Bias through Blind Recruiting," *HR Daily Advisor* (Feb. 2022): **hrdailyadvisor.blr. com/2022/02/11/combatting-unconscious-bias-through-blind-recruiting**; Daniel Bortz, "Can Blind Hiring Improve Workplace Diversity?" *HR Magazine* (April 2018): **shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/0418/ pages/can-blind-hiring-improve-workplace-diversity.aspx**.

15. ALA CORE, "Core Best Practices for Academic Interviews" (2021): **alair.ala.org/handle/11213/17612**; ALA ODLOS, "Recruiting for Diversity": **ala.org/advocacy/diversity/workforcedevelopment/ recruitmentfordiversity**.

16. Ruchika Tulshyan, *Inclusion on Purpose: An Intersectional Approach to Creating a Culture of Belonging at Work,* MIT Press (2022), 111-113.

Additional Resources

The resources below support continued learning on issues related to library staff and equity, diversity, and inclusion. These resources were recommended by ALA members and staff. Are there other resources or guidelines your library has found helpful in undertaking this work? Contribute to building this list by sharing your recommendations in this form: **forms.gle/GDqCfnPGzvhbx3L4A**.

ALA Allied Professional Association

- **Home page: ala-apa.org**
- *Advocating for Better Salaries Toolkit* **(ALA Allied Professional Association, 2017): ala-apa.org/files/2010/02/2017-ALA-APA-BETTER-SALARIES-TOOLKIT-6th-ed.pdf**

A companion organization to ALA, the ALA-APA is a nonprofit organization established "to promote the mutual professional interests of librarians and other library workers." The *Better Salaries* toolkit provides resources and strategies for library staff to help them advocate for better, more equitable salaries both individually and collectively.

Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends (Public Library Association, 2022)

- **Available from: librarybenchmark.org**

Explore interactive results and data visualizations from the 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey, as well as data from the IMLS Public Libraries Survey, the American Community Survey, and past PLA and PLDS surveys.

Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity: A Framework (ALA, 2022)

- **Available from: ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/diversity/Cultural%20Proficiencies%20for%20Racial%20Equity%20Framework.pdf**
- **Home page: ala.org/advocacy/diversity**

This new framework "provide[s] the grounding needed to effect change in thinking, behavior, and practice that will lead to better outcomes for racialized and minoritized populations" in the LIS sector. It was developed by a task force drawn from three ALA units (ACRL, ODLOS, and PLA) as well as the Association of Research Libraries.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scorecard for Library and Information Organizations (ALA, 2021)

- **Available from: ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/2021%20EQUITY%20SCORECARD%20FOR%20LIBRARY%20AND%20INFORMATION%20ORGANIZATIONS.pdf**

The DEI Scorecard is a tool to help libraries evaluate their current organizational effectiveness related to diversity, equity, and inclusion practices in the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of people of color. It provides a starting point for further action.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Resources (Maryland State Library, 2022)

- **Available from: marylandlibraries.libguides.com/c.php?g=1018501&p=7377349**

A guide to many existing resources covering collection development, programming and instruction, leadership and management, staff training, and building a foundation in equity, diversity and inclusion. This list was developed by the State of Maryland Task Force for Diversity and Inclusion in Libraries and is regularly updated.

Office of Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services (ALA)

- **Continuing Education: ala.org/advocacy/diversity/continuing-education**
- **Diversity in the Workplace: ala.org/advocacy/diversity/workplace**

ODLOS supports library and information science workers in creating responsible and all-inclusive spaces that serve and represent the entire community. They have compiled many resources online and regularly offer continuing education programs.

Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity (Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity, 2016)

- **Available from: racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Racial_Equity_ Toolkit.pdf**

This toolkit provides an actionable framework for evaluating intended and unintended impacts of actions by local government and community organizations.

Trigger Terms: Harmful Detours and Healing Redirects (Urban Libraries Council, 2021)

- **Available from: urbanlibraries.org/resources/harmful-detours-and-healing-redirects**

This guide is designed to help libraries facilitate more productive conversations around race and racism. It describes how conversations can be derailed by "harmful detours" and suggests ways to make "healing redirects" that foster respect and understanding.

2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey
Detailed Results

The tables below contain detailed results for each question on the survey by library locale (city, suburban, and town/rural) and nationally. For numerical questions, the median and mean (average) values are reported. For yes/no or check-all-that-apply questions, the percentage of respondents who selected yes is reported. The final row in each table reports the total number of respondents who answered that question on the survey. Results are weighted unless otherwise specified. See Appendix A for a description of the survey and analysis methodology.

Table 1: Number of library locations (outlets). These results are unweighted.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Mean	8.1	3.9	2.2	3.6
Median	4	1	1	1
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	40	85	47	85
Total question responses	111	258	403	772

Table 2: Library Director Annual Salary

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Weighted mean	$ 139,262	$ 107,175	$ 52,257	$ 85,929
Weighted median	$ 137,160	$ 100,000	$ 48,000	$ 79,022
Unweighted mean	$ 136,691	$ 104,681	$ 51,148	$ 81,559
Unweighted median	$ 132,732	$ 98,000	$ 46,883	$ 74,347
Total question responses	108	250	385	743

Table 3: Beginning Librarian Annual Salary

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Weighted mean	$ 49,353	$ 45,764	$ 29,968	$ 39,317
Weighted median	$ 48,671	$ 45,754	$ 33,000	$ 41,864
Unweighted mean	$ 48,984	$ 45,599	$ 29,660	$ 38,487
Unweighted median	$ 48,121	$ 45,559	$ 33,000	$ 41,000
Total question responses	108	245	327	680

Table 4: Standard Work Week. These results are unweighted.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Mean (hours)	39.1	38.5	35.8	37.2
Median (hours)	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0
Total question responses	109	257	400	767

Table 5: Numbers of Staff and Volunteers. These results are unweighted.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Full-time mean	110.4	42.1	7.0	35.0
Full-time median	45.0	11.0	1.0	7.0
Total full-time staff reported	10816	9636	2266	22721
Part-time mean	64.3	37.7	7.2	26.1
Part-time median	28.0	13.5	3.0	8.0
Total part-time staff reported	6109	8596	2360	17065
Temporary/occasional mean	10.4	6.0	1.7	4.6
Temporary/occasional median	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total temporary/occasional staff reported	828	1187	465	2480
Volunteers mean	81.5	29.2	12.0	27.2
Volunteers median	5.0	3.0	1.0	4.0
Total volunteers reported	6438	5980	3713	16131
Total question responses	98	230	332	661

Table 6: Staff Roles. Defined as staff dedicated to the following roles as part of their job title or description.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Access services	83.4%	75.1%	63.4%	70.8%
Adult services	97.6%	89.7%	70.4%	81.6%
Children's services	100.0%	97.7%	83.6%	91.2%
Collection development	93.0%	86.3%	75.8%	82.3%
Communications/marketing	86.1%	82.1%	62.2%	73.0%
Community engagement/outreach	93.0%	80.8%	62.2%	73.7%
Equity, diversity, and inclusion	33.1%	23.2%	23.7%	25.1%
Fundraising/development	35.5%	33.3%	32.2%	33.1%
Genealogy, local history, or archival collections	78.0%	45.5%	35.9%	46.3%
IT	86.5%	68.2%	39.0%	57.0%

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Public programs	94.2%	82.2%	72.1%	79.3%
Reference services	96.8%	81.5%	63.5%	75.3%
Social media and digital outreach	88.9%	82.6%	62.8%	74.0%
Social work	18.0%	6.2%	5.8%	8.1%
Technical services	96.4%	86.5%	54.8%	72.6%
Workforce/small business development	36.9%	20.7%	9.9%	18.2%
Youth/teen services	95.5%	91.3%	68.8%	81.0%
Yes to any of the above	100.0%	99.7%	97.2%	98.5%
Total question responses	111	257	402	771

Table 7: Programs for Staff Advancement. Libraries provide the following formal programs or benefits to staff to help them advance in the library field.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Encouragement to engage in service at the state or national level	87.3%	83.5%	55.8%	70.5%
Funding for professional association memberships	69.1%	78.6%	69.9%	72.7%
Funding for professional development	98.2%	93.8%	81.4%	88.5%
A mentorship program	26.2%	16.8%	7.3%	13.7%
Opportunities to participate in library work beyond their assigned duties to improve skills or broaden experience	91.7%	92.5%	76.2%	84.4%
Time during work hours or paid time off for professional development activities	99.1%	96.2%	92.3%	94.8%
Tuition reimbursement	63.0%	52.1%	28.3%	42.3%
Other	13.1%	7.1%	4.0%	6.6%
Yes to any of the above	100.0%	99.3%	96.3%	97.9%
Total question responses	111	258	403	773

Table 8: Determining Staff Eligibility for Support. The libraries that provide programs for staff advancement were asked how they determine staff eligibility for those types of support. 78.4% of libraries that offer programs for staff advancement (table 7) provided their eligibility criteria for support.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Educational achievement status	17.2%	12.8%	9.0%	12.0%
Full-time status	30.2%	20.3%	15.1%	19.9%
Internal application process and/or performance planning	47.4%	23.7%	11.5%	22.8%
Length of employment	13.5%	12.1%	7.2%	10.2%
Minority status	3.0%	1.1%	0.0%	1.0%
No restrictions, all staff are eligible for the types of support offered	53.8%	60.2%	70.3%	63.4%
Other	25.7%	19.9%	16.8%	19.7%
Total question responses	96	212	278	586

Table 9: Staff Positions Lost in Past 12 Months

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Percentage of libraries that have lost staff positions	32.7%	33.2%	21.1%	27.2%
Total question responses	111	256	401	769

Table 10: Reasons for Lost Staff Positions. Percentages below reflect the libraries that both indicated they lost staff positions (table 9) and provided a reason in response to the follow-up question.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Staff budget cuts	21.8%	11.7%	13.0%	14.5%
Cuts in library service hours leading to a reduction in staff hours	29.1%	20.3%	16.5%	21.2%
Staff leaving the workforce and not being replaced	45.6%	59.9%	56.3%	55.3%
Other	43.8%	36.0%	41.8%	39.7%
Total question responses	35	78	61	174

Table 11: Full-Time Staff Representation by Race/Ethnicity. Unweighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least 1 full-time employee. The denominator used to calculate the percentages was the total number of full-time staff the library reported. The percentages may not sum to 100 due to overlap among race/ethnicity categories (some organizations collect data that allows staff to identify with multiple categories, while others allow for selection of only a single category). Respondents with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of full-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in table 5 were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6%	0.4%	1.1%	0.6%
Asian	6.5%	3.1%	0.8%	4.6%
Black or African American	17.6%	7.5%	3.8%	12.3%
Hispanic or Latino	8.8%	3.9%	4.1%	6.4%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Multiple racial or ethnic identities	1.4%	1.3%	1.8%	1.4%
Unknown or prefer not to say	2.4%	13.7%	10.9%	7.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
White	62.3%	69.6%	76.9%	66.6%
Number of responses (meeting conditions specified)	72	159	233	464

Table 12: Part-Time Staff Representation by Race/Ethnicity. Unweighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least 1 part-time employee. The denominator used to calculate the percentages was the total number of part-time staff they reported. The percentages may not sum to 100 due to overlap among race/ethnicity categories (some organizations collect data that allows staff to identify with multiple categories, while others allow for selection of only a single category). Respondents with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of part-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in table 5 were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.6%
Asian	10.8%	5.1%	0.3%	6.7%
Black or African American	10.5%	6.6%	3.5%	7.8%
Hispanic or Latino	8.3%	3.3%	3.3%	5.3%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Multiple racial or ethnic identities	2.2%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Unknown or prefer not to say	3.4%	13.0%	12.3%	9.1%
White	64.3%	69.7%	78.0%	68.6%
Number of responses (meeting conditions specified)	66	150	246	462

Table 13: Full-Time Staff Representation by Gender. Unweighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least 1 full-time employee. The denominator used to calculate the percentages was the total number of full-time staff they reported. Respondents with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of full-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in table 5 were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
A different gender identity	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%	0.4%
Female	63.6%	66.0%	76.3%	66.0%
Male	33.3%	21.0%	17.8%	26.8%
Unknown or prefer not to say	2.7%	12.6%	5.5%	6.8%
Number of responses (meeting conditions specified)	71	171	245	487

Table 14: Part-Time Staff Representation by Gender. Unweighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least 1 part-time employee. The denominator used to calculate the percentages was the total number of part-time staff they reported. Respondents with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of part-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in table 5 were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
A different gender identity	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%	0.6%
Female	69.6%	74.1%	80.5%	73.4%
Male	23.3%	15.8%	12.0%	18.1%
Unknown or prefer not to say	7.0%	9.2%	7.0%	8.0%
Number of responses (meeting conditions specified)	66	145	263	474

Table 15: Reasons for Not Reporting Staff Representation Data

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
The library does not collect the data	44.6%	62.2%	71.2%	59.6%
The library does not have access to the data (e.g., if the data are collected at the city or municipality level)	19.6%	17.2%	4.9%	14.8%
We are not able to share the data	2.5%	1.3%	5.3%	2.6%
We do not feel confident about the accuracy of the data we have	20.2%	16.2%	10.8%	16.0%
Other	54.9%	18.6%	36.2%	32.9%
Total question responses	**37**	**75**	**41**	**153**

Table 16: Strategies for Hiring Staff from Underrepresented Groups

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Analyze the number of applicants, finalists, and hires from underrepresented groups	23.7%	22.6%	11.1%	17.4%
Conduct a blind review of resumes and other application materials	45.7%	45.0%	44.4%	44.9%
Create action plans for recruiting staff from underrepresented groups	43.9%	22.7%	8.0%	19.8%
Include an explicit equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) statement in job postings	55.4%	47.2%	33.8%	42.5%
Offer higher salaries to reflect supply/demand imbalance for hires from underrepresented groups	7.2%	4.1%	2.3%	3.8%
Offer implicit bias and/or cultural competency training for library staff	78.4%	65.9%	28.4%	50.9%
Offer residency or fellowship program(s)	7.9%	5.9%	0.6%	3.8%
Post the position to a diverse range of audiences	84.2%	77.7%	66.4%	73.6%
Require candidates to demonstrate support for EDI initiatives in their job applications	17.4%	8.9%	6.6%	9.4%
Rewrite position descriptions to encourage a broader pool of applicants	51.1%	43.7%	30.2%	38.8%
Train search committees on best practices for inclusive searches	33.8%	19.0%	12.8%	18.8%
Other	15.2%	10.4%	13.4%	12.6%
Yes to any hiring strategy	**94.2%**	**97.8%**	**86.1%**	**91.7%**
Total question responses	**101**	**230**	**323**	**654**

Table 17: Strategies to Retain Staff from Underrepresented Groups

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Action plans for retaining employees from underrepresented groups	6.0%	5.6%	3.7%	4.8%
Formal mentorship program for new hires	13.3%	9.5%	6.0%	8.6%
Fostering an inclusive workplace culture	88.3%	85.5%	61.3%	74.8%
Working to dismantle systemic racism in our organization	70.5%	60.2%	39.8%	52.7%
Other	9.5%	4.9%	6.3%	6.4%
Yes to any retention strategy	**92.1%**	**87.2%**	**67.6%**	**79.0%**
Total question responses	**99**	**226**	**316**	**642**

Table 18: Formal Goals for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Does the library have formal, written goals for EDI?	46.0%	28.8%	17.0%	26.6%
Total question responses	**99**	**222**	**310**	**632**

Table 19: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Goal Areas. Libraries were asked whether they have formal, written goals for equity, diversity, and inclusion (table 18). If they answered yes to that question, they were asked about the focus of those goals. However, many libraries responded to the question about the focus of their goals even though they had indicated they do *not* have formal, written EDI goals or they had skipped the question about whether they have goals. The table below shows the results for the libraries that indicated they have *formal* goals, and the combined results for *all* libraries that selected goal areas, regardless of whether they indicated they have formal, written EDI goals.

	City		Suburban		Town/Rural		Overall	
	Formal	All	Formal	All	Formal	All	Formal	All
Accessibility	78.2%	75.1%	87.3%	76.3%	90.2%	66.6%	85.2%	72.2%
Antiracism	82.5%	76.8%	73.8%	61.9%	62.8%	46.0%	73.4%	59.3%
Dismantling white supremacy	45.2%	44.4%	28.4%	23.9%	23.6%	19.9%	32.4%	27.2%
Fostering an inclusive climate for library users	97.7%	92.5%	98.4%	84.5%	98.0%	75.7%	98.1%	83.0%
Improving workplace culture for all library staff	97.5%	92.3%	93.6%	80.3%	80.4%	63.1%	91.0%	76.5%
Library collections	95.5%	90.7%	98.1%	86.9%	96.0%	76.4%	96.7%	83.8%
Library communication	83.9%	79.3%	76.2%	64.3%	61.7%	56.1%	74.4%	64.7%
Library equipment and/or technology	79.6%	76.2%	67.0%	54.4%	57.8%	47.0%	68.3%	56.8%
Library events and/or programming	93.4%	88.9%	95.1%	82.0%	82.5%	65.7%	90.8%	77.3%
Library outreach	79.3%	77.4%	79.6%	71.3%	65.4%	52.4%	75.3%	65.4%
Library space	77.3%	74.3%	79.4%	61.5%	69.2%	53.4%	75.7%	61.4%
Recruiting a diverse workforce	90.6%	86.7%	72.6%	64.0%	52.2%	41.8%	72.4%	60.8%
Retaining employees from underrepresented groups	61.5%	57.8%	47.2%	37.9%	38.7%	29.5%	49.3%	39.4%
Other	11.6%	15.4%	11.2%	12.0%	5.7%	9.6%	9.7%	11.9%
Total question responses	**54**	**54**	**61**	**98**	**50**	**113**	**155**	**265**

Table 20: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Activities

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Analyze the demographics of local communities for use in planning	85.2%	80.5%	68.9%	76.0%
Assign librarians as liaisons to programs/services devoted to underrepresented or marginalized groups	62.4%	42.7%	23.2%	37.4%
Charge one or more library staff members or committees to focus on EDI issues/initiatives	64.6%	42.4%	13.4%	33.2%
Collect and preserve materials related to underrepresented and marginalized groups	83.5%	58.2%	57.2%	62.4%
Conduct periodic antiracism audits	20.2%	18.8%	10.2%	15.1%
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's physical space to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	67.6%	67.6%	63.9%	65.9%
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's website and digital presence to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	70.7%	66.4%	50.3%	59.8%
Focus collection development on better representing diverse authors and perspectives	96.2%	89.8%	83.1%	87.9%
Post public statements or create action plans in support of antiracism	60.4%	37.0%	18.4%	32.8%
Provide programming and outreach for community members who are neurodivergent or disabled	70.0%	59.0%	37.6%	51.2%
Provide programming and outreach in languages other than English	75.5%	47.3%	26.6%	43.0%
Provide programming, events, or space for EDI	75.5%	64.8%	39.9%	55.3%
Serve on local committees or task forces focused on EDI	75.6%	49.8%	16.2%	39.2%
Support staff participation in EDI training or professional development	95.3%	88.0%	64.5%	78.5%
Other	2.1%	4.7%	5.5%	4.6%
Yes to any EDI activity	100.0%	95.8%	92.7%	95.2%
Total question responses	99	223	310	633

Appendix A. Methodology

Sample

The 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey collected data at the administrative entity (AE) or "system" level as defined by IMLS. The AE was used as the sample unit because of the extensive data about each AE available from the annual Public Libraries Survey (PLS) from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. The original sample frame was based on the FY 2019 PLS public use data file. PLA modified the sample to include eight (8) tribal libraries as well as six (6) libraries that IMLS reported were new for the FY 2020 data collection. PLA also removed 25 libraries that IMLS reported had been excluded from the FY 2020 data collection due to temporary or permanent closures. In all, 9,182 libraries were eligible to participate in the survey and 773 completed the survey for a response rate of 8.4%. Two libraries (one tribal, and one law library) were given a weight of 0, effectively excluding them from the national weighted analysis due to their lack of an identified legal service area population area and/or locale and legal basis (more details on this are below). Thus, the weighted results presented in the report are based on a total of 771 completed surveys.

Table A1 below outlines the percentage of respondents by four key characteristics—locale, region, legal basis, and legal service area population—compared to the percentage of public libraries (AEs) nationwide with each of those characteristics (based on the FY 2019 IMLS Public Libraries Survey). The section on analysis and weighting below describes how the final estimates were calculated to account for these differences.

Table A1

	Survey Respondents	All AEs
Locale		
City	14.4%	5.5%
Suburban	33.4%	25.5%
Town/Rural	52.1%	68.9%
Other	0.1%	0.2%
Region		
Far West	10.3%	5.7%
Great Lakes	18.5%	20.6%
Mid East	19.8%	16.8%
New England	11.3%	13.8%
Outlying Areas	0%	0.0%
Plains	15.0%	17.3%
Rocky Mountains	5.2%	4.3%
Southeast	10.9%	12.7%

	Survey Respondents	All AEs
Southwest	9.1%	8.8%
Legal Basis		
County or City/County	14.0%	11.1%
Library District	19.9%	15.3%
Municipal	45.8%	52.5%
Nonprofit	13.2%	14.4%
Other	7.1%	6.8%
Legal Service Area Population		
< 10,000	36.7%	57.1%
10k–24,999	19.1%	19.1%
25k–99,999	25.6%	17.0%
> 100,000	18.2%	6.2%
Other	0.3%	6.8%

Survey Design

The 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey was developed primarily by PLA's Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Committee (MEAC). Four questions on the survey had been asked on prior surveys: the question about number of locations was also asked on the Technology Survey in 2020; and three questions (two about salaries and one about hours in a standard work week) had appeared on the now-retired Public Library Data Service (PLDS) annual survey. Four questions were inspired by questions asked on ACRL's Academic Library Trends Survey in 2020, and these were modified and adapted to a public library context. A reference copy of the full 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

PLA staff invited volunteers to participate in field-testing the survey in July 2021. 19 libraries completed the field-testing process. For each section of the survey, they were asked to evaluate its level of difficulty and to share any feedback about how the questions could be clarified or improved. PLA staff also solicited input from ALA partners, including the Public Programs Office, the Public Policy and Advocacy Office, the ALA-APA, and the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services. In consultation with PLA staff, MEAC reviewed all feedback and determined the final version of the questions for the survey.

The 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey opened on October 25, 2021 and closed on January 14, 2022. PLA staff attempted to email all public library directors in the sample and sent printed invitations to 4,015 libraries to account for missing or outdated email contact details. In addition, the survey was publicized via PLA's e-news, website, and publications. Several reminders were sent via email while the survey remained open. PLA staff also called approximately 100 libraries to encourage their participation and followed up with libraries with incomplete responses.

Analysis and Weighting

The responding libraries differ somewhat in their characteristics compared to all public libraries nationwide. To account for those differences, an inverse propensity score weighting methodology was used to calculate weights for libraries that elected to participate in the survey and to control for response bias. Inverse propensity weighting can mitigate response bias given the non-random nature of the survey deployment. To calculate the weights for participating libraries, first logistic regression was used to create a propensity score (likelihood of participating in the survey), with the outcome variable defined as a binary variable of completed the survey or did not complete the survey.

Confounding variables included:

- **Population of Legal Service Area**
  - <10,000
  - 10,000-24,999
  - 25,000-99,999
  - >100,000
- **Locale**
  - City
  - Suburban
  - Town/Rural
- **Region**
  - Far West
  - Great Lakes
  - Mid East
  - New England
  - Plains
  - Rocky Mountains
  - Southeast
  - Southwest

- **Legal Basis**
  - County of City/County
  - Library District
  - Municipal
  - Nonprofit
  - Other

The propensity score is calculated as:

$$(Z_1 = 1/X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4)$$

Z_1 = Participation in survey (completed/not completed)
X_1 = Population of legal service area
X_2 = Locale
X_3 = Region
X_4 = Legal basis

The calculation was conducted using the SPSS Binary Logistic analysis methodology, with:

- Participation in survey set as the dependent variable
- Population of legal service area, locale, region, and legal basis selected at the confounding variables
- Probabilities selected as the predicted values (propensity score).

From the regression, a predicted value of participation (*Pr*) is obtained. To calculate library weights, an inverse propensity score weight approach was used:

$$w_l = 1/P_r$$

w_l = Library weight
P_r = Library propensity score

The calculation was conducted using the SPSS Compute Variable procedure, with:

- First selecting libraries that completed the survey (Data/Select Cases)
- Using the Transform/Compute variable procedure
  - Target variable defined as "weight" (to identify and create a new library weight variable)
  - Numeric expression defined as $1/P_r$
  - Population of legal service area, locale, region, and legal basis selected at the confounding variables

Appendix B. Survey Reference Copy

2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey

PublicLibrary ASSOCIATION

Introduction

The Public Library Association (PLA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), is conducting this survey to better understand library staff roles, hiring and retention practices, and equity, diversity, and inclusion work in public libraries across the nation. The *Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey* gathers information about staff and staff-related policies within your library system.

We ask that you respond to questions at the **library system** (administrative entity) level. Some questions ask about whether your library offers resources/services in "at least one location." In these instances, please note that **location** refers to a building that is usually open to the public and provides services to the community (e.g., lends books, offers public access to computers, etc.). Unless otherwise stated, your responses should reflect the **current situation** within your library system at the point in time when you are completing this survey.

Your input will help to ensure that findings from the survey reflect the unique characteristics of your library system as well as similar library systems across the country. In addition, your response will enable us to provide nationally representative data to inform elected officials, the media, and funders about public library initiatives and needs. Findings from the survey will be analyzed and reported in aggregate across all public libraries and/or in groups of similar libraries. PLA will use results from the survey to advocate on behalf of public libraries at the national level. In addition, PLA will publish a summary of aggregate results on its website to share the results widely. Results will be incorporated into the *Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends* data tool.

The survey does not request your name or the names of any staff members, and your library's survey responses will remain private. To read ALA's privacy policy, please visit http://www.ala.org/privacypolicy.

It should take 30-45 minutes to complete this survey. You do not need to complete the survey in one session. Rather, you may save your responses and return to the survey at another time. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the project team at plabenchmark@ala.org.

Additional Survey Information

What type of information does this survey collect?

The Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey asks for information about your library's staff and policies and practices related to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The main sections on the survey are: Salaries and Hours; Library Roles; Staff Representation, Hiring, and Retention; and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Who should complete the survey?

One person should complete the survey on behalf of a single library system (administrative entity). Often that person is the library director, administrator, or data coordinator. However, you may need to work with the HR department that serves your library to complete some of these questions.

How do I enter my library's responses?

Log into your library's account at https://librarybenchmark.org/. Click on "Surveys" in the menu, and then you will see this survey listed under "Open Surveys." The survey will remain open through December 10, 2021.

Why should my library complete the survey?

Data about staffing and diversity are among the top requests PLA hears from public library leaders. Your participation will help make the results powerful and actionable for your library and library staff across the country. Your input will enable PLA and ALA to provide nationally representative data to engage and inform elected officials, the media, and funders about public library initiatives and staff needs. PLA also will share aggregate results widely with the field, develop tools for peer comparison, and plan relevant professional development opportunities. In addition, the survey questions may inspire new ideas for your library. The data we collect in 2021 will serve as a baseline and when we next ask these questions (in 2024), we will see how the field has evolved.

How long will it take?

We estimate the survey will take 30 to 45 minutes to complete. However, you may need to gather some information from colleagues before or during the process. We recommend reviewing all the questions beforehand to help you prepare.

How will the survey results be used?

The survey results will be incorporated into the Benchmark data dashboards, so your library will be able to see how you compare to your peers and to other libraries in the United States. PLA will publish a report summarizing the aggregate results on the PLA website and will use the survey results to advocate on behalf of public libraries at the national level.

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Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey

This document is a copy of the survey *for reference purposes*. Please enter responses in your library's account in <u>Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends</u>.

Section 1: Background

The questions in this survey ask about your *library system* (i.e., all stationary locations within your system) unless otherwise specified. Note that "location" refers to a building that is open to the public and provides services to the community (e.g., lends books, offers public access to the Internet and computers, etc.). Do not consider bookmobiles or other mobile services unless noted in the question. We recognize that the number of locations within a library system varies; some library systems may have 1 location, while others may have more than 80.

1. Please report the number of stationary locations within your library system. Exclude bookmobiles.

    _____ [numerical value]

Section 2: Salaries and Hours

2. Current annual salary of director:

    $_____ [numerical value, US dollars]

3. Salary of beginning librarian. Report the current annual salary that would typically be paid to a beginning librarian with an MLS degree and no professional experience.
   Provide the salary of the library's most recent hire in a beginning librarian role. If the library has recently (within the previous 12 months) made multiple hires for a beginning librarian role, you may provide an average of those salaries.
    $ _____ [numerical value, US dollars]

4. Define your library's standard full-time work week in terms of hours (e.g., 35 hours, 40 hours, etc.):

    _____ hours [numerical value]

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5. Numbers of staff: how many staff members does the *library system* currently have in each of the following categories? Report the actual number of staff members, *not* full-time equivalent. [Numerical values]

Staff are employees or contractors of the library who are paid on either an hourly or salaried basis. Full-time staff *members are those who regularly work the full number of hours in a standard work week.* Part-time staff *members are those who regularly work less than the number of hours in a standard work week.* Volunteers *are unpaid persons under the supervision of library staff.*

Full time	
Part time	
Temporary or occasional paid staff (e.g., summers only)	
Volunteers (annual average)	

Section 3: Library Roles

6. Does your library system have staff dedicated to the following roles as part of their job title or description?

Answering "yes" could indicate there is a single staff person for whom this is their primary role, or that multiple people cover these duties. Exclude staff who may do these tasks under the remit of "other duties as assigned."

	Yes (at least 1 location)	No
Access services*	○	○
Adult services	○	○
Children's services	○	○
Collection development	○	○
Communications/marketing	○	○
Community engagement/outreach	○	○

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	Yes	No
Equity, diversity, and inclusion	○	○
Fundraising/development	○	○
Genealogy, local history, or archival collections	○	○
IT	○	○
Public programs	○	○
Reference services	○	○
Social media and digital outreach	○	○
Social work	○	○
Technical services	○	○
Workforce/small business development	○	○
Youth/teen services	○	○

* Access services is defined as staff who develop and provide services that connect library users to library resources. Access Services staff are the primary point of contact for library users. (Definition adapted from the ACRL Framework for Access Services Librarianship)

7. Does your library provide the following structured or formal programs or benefits to staff to help them advance within the library field?

	Yes	No
Encouragement to engage in service at the state or national level (e.g., serving on library association committees)	○	○
Funding for professional association memberships	○	○
Funding for professional development	○	○
A mentorship program	○	○

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	Yes	No
Opportunities to participate in library work beyond their assigned duties to improve skills or broaden experience	○	○
Time during work hours or paid time off for professional development activities	○	○
Tuition reimbursement	○	○
Other (please specify)		

8. [*If you answered yes to any of the above options*] How does your library determine staff eligibility for those types of support? [Select all that apply]

   ☐ Educational achievement status
   ☐ Full-time status
   ☐ Internal application process and/or performance planning
   ☐ Length of employment
   ☐ Minority status
   ☐ No restrictions, all staff are eligible for the types of support offered

   Other (please specify)

   _____

9. In the *past 12 months*, has your library lost staff positions?

   ○ Yes
   ○ No

10. If your library has lost staff positions, why? [Select all that apply]

   ☐ Staff budget cuts
   ☐ Cuts in library service hours leading to a reduction in staff hours
   ☐ Staff leaving the workforce and not being replaced

   Other reason (please specify)

   _____

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11. In the *past 12 months*, what new types of roles has the library hired staff to fill?

12. What new types of roles would the library like to create if funding were available?

Section 4: Staff Representation, Hiring, and Retention

Please work with the HR department that serves your library to complete these questions. No individually identifiable information will be shared; the staff numbers reported will be used to calculate percentages in aggregate for libraries in peer groups and nationwide.

13. How many *full-time* library staff members identify with each of the following racial or ethnic groups? [Numerical values]

American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	
Black or African American	
Hispanic or Latino	
Middle Eastern or North African	
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	
White	
Multiple racial or ethnic identities	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

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14. How many *part-time* library staff members come from each of the following demographic groups? [Numerical values]

American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	
Black or African American	
Hispanic or Latino	
Middle Eastern or North African	
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	
White	
Multiple racial or ethnic identities	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

15. How many *full-time* library staff members identify with each of the following gender identities? [Numerical values]

Male	
Female	
A different gender identity	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

16. How many *part-time* library staff members identify with each of the following gender identities? [Numerical values]

Male	
Female	
A different gender identity	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

17. If your library is unable to answer the questions above about race/ethnicity and gender, please explain why. [Select all that apply]

☐ The library does not collect the data.

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☐ The library does not have access to the data (e.g., if the data are collected at the city or municipality level).

☐ We are not able to share the data.

☐ We do not feel confident about the accuracy of the data we have.

Other (please specify)

_____

18. Does the library use any of the following strategies to hire staff from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, or ability? Please only select strategies that have been adopted or implemented and are currently part of the library's regular practice.

	Yes	No
Analyze the number of applicants, finalists, and hires from underrepresented groups	○	○
Conduct a blind review of resumes and other application materials	○	○
Create action plans for recruiting staff from underrepresented groups	○	○
Include an explicit equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) statement in job postings	○	○
Offer higher salaries to reflect supply/demand imbalance for hires from underrepresented groups	○	○
Offer implicit bias and/or cultural competency training for library staff	○	○
Offer residency or fellowship program(s)	○	○
Post the position to a diverse range of audiences	○	○
Require candidates to demonstrate support for EDI initiatives in their job applications	○	○
Rewrite position descriptions to encourage a broader pool of applicants	○	○

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	Yes	No
Train search committees on best practices for inclusive searches	○	○
Other (please specify)		

19. Does the library use any of the following strategies to retain staff from underrepresented groups? Please only select strategies that have been adopted or implemented and are currently part of the library's regular practice.

	Yes	No
Action plans for retaining employees from underrepresented groups	○	○
Formal mentorship programs for new hires	○	○
Fostering an inclusive workplace culture	○	○
Working to dismantle systemic racism in our organization	○	○
Other (please specify)		

20. If the library is currently developing strategies for hiring or retention of people from underrepresented groups, please share details of what you are considering.

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Section 5: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Goals and Activities

For clarification on the meaning of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) or social justice, please see ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services (ODLOS): http://www.ala.org/aboutala/odlos-glossary-terms

21. Does your library have formal, written goals for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)? [If no, skip next question.]

   ◯ Yes
   ◯ No

22. Which of the following are area(s) of focus within your library's EDI goal(s)?

	Yes	No
Accessibility	◯	◯
Antiracism	◯	◯
Dismantling white supremacy	◯	◯
Fostering an inclusive climate for library users	◯	◯
Improving workplace culture for all library staff	◯	◯
Library collections	◯	◯
Library communication	◯	◯
Library equipment and/or technology	◯	◯
Library events and/or programming	◯	◯
Library outreach	◯	◯
Library space	◯	◯
Recruiting a diverse workforce	◯	◯
Retaining employees from underrepresented groups	◯	◯
Other (please specify)		

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23. Does your library do (or has it done) any of the following activities related to EDI?

	Yes	No
Analyze the demographics of local communities for use in planning	○	○
Assign librarians as liaisons to programs/services devoted to underrepresented or marginalized groups	○	○
Charge one or more library staff members or committees to focus on EDI issues/initiatives	○	○
Collect and preserve materials related to underrepresented and marginalized groups	○	○
Conduct periodic antiracism audits	○	○
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's physical space to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	○	○
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's website and digital presence to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	○	○
Focus collection development on better representing diverse authors and perspectives	○	○
Post public statements or create action plans in support of antiracism	○	○
Provide programming and outreach in languages other than English	○	○
Provide programming and outreach for community members who are neurodivergent or disabled	○	○
Provide programming, events, or space for EDI	○	○
Serve on local committees or task forces focused on EDI	○	○

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	Yes	No
Support staff participation in EDI training or professional development	○	○
Other (please specify)		

Section 6: Thank You and Final Thoughts

24. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Please take a moment to describe any other issues or concerns related to your library's staffing and EDI initiatives that were not reflected in this survey. In particular, please explain challenges and/or successes and trends you are watching for the future.

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Appendix C. Survey Instructions and Glossary

2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey

Instructions

Log into your library's Benchmark account to enter your responses for the 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey. Please submit your responses by **Friday, December 10, 2021**.

Click on "Surveys" in the menu at the top and select "2021 Staff Survey." You do not need to complete the survey in one session. Rather, you may save your responses and return to the survey at another time. It should take 30-45 minutes to complete this survey on behalf of your library.

We recommend using the **Survey Worksheet** (a PDF form) to collect responses before entering them in the online form. This form is provided for your convenience and contains FAQs about the survey.

We ask that you respond to questions at the **library system** (administrative entity) level. Some questions ask about whether your library offers resources/services in "at least one location." In these instances, please note that **location** refers to a building that is usually open to the public and provides services to the community (e.g., lends books, offers public access to computers, etc.).

Unless otherwise stated, your responses should reflect the **current situation** within your library system at the point in time when you are completing this survey.

One person should complete the survey on behalf of a single library system (administrative entity). Often that person is the library director, administrator, or data coordinator. You may need to work with the HR department that serves your library to answer some of these questions. No individually identifiable information will be shared; the staff numbers reported in section four, "Staff Representation, Hiring, and Retention" will be used to calculate percentages in aggregate for libraries in peer groups and nationwide.

A glossary of terms can be found below.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the project team at plabenchmark@ala.org.

Glossary

Equity, **diversity**, and **inclusion** (EDI): This survey relies on the definitions adopted by ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services (ODLOS): http://www.ala.org/aboutala/odlos-glossary-terms.

- **Equity** is not the same as formal equality. Formal equality implies sameness. Equity, on the other hand, assumes difference and takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately, a fair (or equitable) outcome. Equity recognizes that some groups were (and are) disadvantaged in accessing educational and employment opportunities and are, therefore, underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. The effects of that exclusion often linger systemically within organizational policies, practices, and procedures. Equity, therefore, means increasing diversity by ameliorating conditions of disadvantaged groups.

- **Diversity** can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. Visible diversity is generally those attributes or characteristics that are external. However, diversity goes beyond the external to internal characteristics that we choose to define as 'invisible' diversity. Invisible diversity includes those characteristics and attributes that are not readily seen. When we recognize, value, and embrace diversity, we are recognizing, valuing, and embracing the uniqueness of each individual.

- **Inclusion** means an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully; are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives; have equal access to resources and opportunities; and can contribute fully to the organization's success.

Staff are employees or contractors of the library who are paid on either an hourly or salaried basis.

- **Full-time staff** members are those who regularly work the full number of hours in a standard work week.

- **Part-time staff** members are those who regularly work less than the number of hours in a standard work week.

Volunteers are unpaid persons under the supervision of library staff.

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