DIMENSION II:
Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Library Organizational Culture Module

SERVING COMMUNITIES

A Framework for Inclusion-centered Library Leadership Development

Engaging Adults in Actionable Science Programs and Services that Address Community Needs

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THEME 1
Library Priorities Demonstrate Your Values on Equity and Inclusion

"Inclusive library services are holistic, spanning library policies, collections, space and services. Inclusive services reflect equity and accessibility for all members of the community."
— The Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide for Wisconsin Public Libraries

Libraries are human institutions, and like all human institutions, libraries have bias built into them. Some of this bias will be readily apparent to you, and some of it might be less visible. To mitigate this challenge, two core inclusion-centered documents that all libraries should consider creating, reviewing and/or revising are:
1. A Bill of Rights for Your Library and,
2. Assessment of Your Inclusion-centered Policies.

Action Remedies
Create A Bill of Rights for Your Library
Many libraries have a Bill of Rights. This is an excellent way to encapsulate and effectively communicate to your community your library's inclusion-centered policies and values. If you have not written a Library Bill of Rights, the American Library Association https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/EDI has a helpful overview of the wording and types of information that should be included in your Library's Bill of Rights.

"To ensure that every individual will feel truly welcomed and included, library staff and administrators should reflect the origins, age, background, and views of their community. Governing bodies should also reflect the community. Library spaces, programs, and collections should accommodate the needs of every user."
— American Library Association (April 2017)

Conducting an Assessment of Your Library's Inclusion-centered Policies
There are a number of useful examples of inclusion-centered library policies (created by other libraries) that you can use as a guide for your reassessing your library's policies. As an inclusion-centered leader, it will be important to gather multiple perspectives when considering the policies that most affect equity, inclusion, and access, particularly by underserved community groups. Groups include talking with your
1. government agencies,
2. library boards and friends groups,
3. staff, and
4. the community at large, particularly those groups not using the library.
Whether your library is small or large, urban, suburban or rural, *The Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide for Wisconsin Public Libraries* provides a framework and outline to help you get started.

The Serving Communities Library Policy Inventory and Assessment Worksheet #1 is a tool focused on helping you reassess your library policies in light of prioritizing accessibility and inclusion.
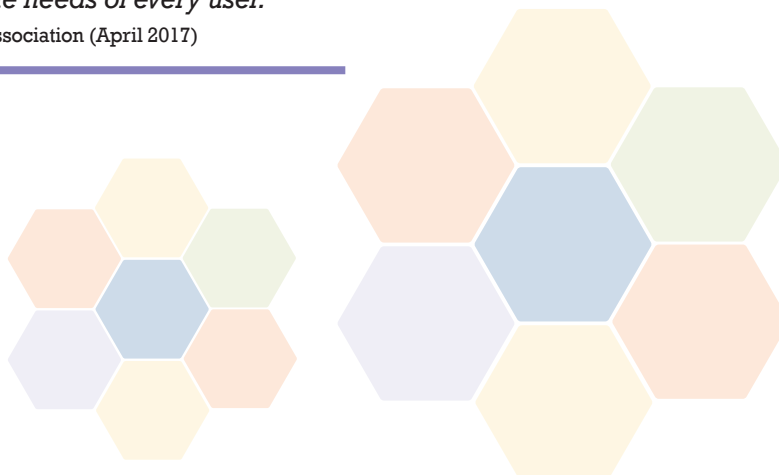
Policy Inventory and Assessment of Your Library

Objectives
• To determine the level of equity, inclusion and access by community members, particularly underserved community groups
• To understand what is really being communicated to staff and the community around the library's values and mission to serve all members of the community
• To identify, utilize, and revise existing library policies to create a more inclusive institution for the community
• To reflect upon and ensure that your library's policies and procedures demonstrate and support your library's values of equity and inclusion
• To give you familiarity with a tool that you can use to provide insight into areas of your operation that can assist you in planning, staff development, budgeting, and leadership

What You Need
• A way to refer to and check your library's policies
• A copy of the *Serving Communities Equity Library Framework for Library Directors*
• A copy of the *Wisconsin Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide*
• If possible, a small advisory group of 3-5 individuals representing different perspectives. These could include people from:
   1. government agencies;
   2. library boards and friends groups;
   3. staff; and,
   4. the community at large, particularly those groups not using the library.
• A place where you do your best thinking with few interruptions

Time
2-3 hours

Instructions
1. Review your library's policies to get reacquainted with them and to get a general picture of
   a) what your policies are,
   b) who they are serving and not serving,
   c) how and where your library's policies are being communicated internally and externally,
   d) the current level of equity, inclusion and access, and
   e) what the process is for reviewing and changing your library policies.

2. Use the *Serving Communities Library Policy Inventory and Assessment Worksheet* to assess the current policy environment of your library. The *Serving Communities*

Library Policy Inventory and Assessment Worksheet is a modified version of *The Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide for Wisconsin Public Libraries*[1] and is comprised of a series of 8 Policy Checklists. Each Policy Checklist represented in this worksheet aligns with one of the *Serving Communities Equity Library Framework Dimensions*
   1. Personal Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices Module,
   2. Leadership Practices in Library Organizational Culture Module,
   3. Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module, and
   4. Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Community Member Experiences Module.
In addition, we have added an assessment around culturally-responsive, actionable science information for adults.

3. Review the *Serving Communities Library Policy Inventory and Assessment* Policy Checklists on **pages 14–24** and circle the status of each policy. The status levels are:
   Yes ("Y") — This response indicates that the library is currently executing the checklist statement. Example — *"Yes: the library displays pictograms at the entrances of the restrooms."*

   No ("N") — This response indicates that the library is NOT currently executing the checklist statement. Example — *"No: the library does not display pictograms at the entrances of the restrooms."*

   In Progress ("IP") — This response indicates that the library is currently developing the checklist statement. Example — *"In Progress: the library is in the process of installing pictograms at the entrances of the restrooms."*

   NA ("Not Applicable") — This response indicates that the checklist statement is factually irrelevant to the library. Example — *"Not Applicable: The library does not have public restrooms because it is a bookmobile."*

   Place an "X" in each row of the Policy Checklists that best describes your library's current policy status level.

4. Score each of your responses.
   "Y" = 1 point
   "N" = –1 point
   "IP" = .5 point
   "NA" = 0 points

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[1]*Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide*, created by Wisconsin public library directors, staff and boards, was designed with the intent to foster inclusive library environments where everyone is safe, welcomed, and respected. They stated that "Inclusion is not a one-size fits-all concept, nor a complete-and-move-on challenge. Ultimately, changes and improvements depend on the leadership of library administration." *The Wisconsin Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide* is meant to be a self-evaluation tool designed to assist the library director in better understanding how it considers inclusion as an institution — an integral part of the library's daily operations.

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Serving Communities Library Policy Inventory and Assessment

ADMINISTRATION

Policy Checklist 1
Personal Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices

Leadership (from DIMENSION I)

1. Does the library director (or representative) actively engage with underserved community groups through dialogues and/or co-development of services and programs?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Does the library director (or representative) attend community meetings focused on the needs of underserved and vulnerable members of the community?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Does the library director and department heads (if any) have awareness of community member groups who live in the library service area and understand their strengths and the issues affecting them?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Does the library director articulate a library vision/mission centered in inclusion and support professional development opportunities for self and staff around this mission?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Does the library director (or representative) report back to underserved community groups on how their feedback has been used to broaden the vision and direction of their library?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Does the library director (or representative) review inequities and use their power to reduce or eliminate individual, institutional, and/or structural bias?	Y	N	IP	NA
Questions Specific to Actionable Science Policies				
7. Does the library director (or representative) leverage their spheres of influence to advocate for the co-development of initiatives, with local government and community partners, to support sustained access and support of actionable science information services and resources by and for underserved community groups?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Does the library director (or representative) actively seek guidance and advice from underserved community groups so that they can contribute to the library's vision, and express their wants and needs regarding actionable science information?	Y	N	IP	NA
Total				

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Governance (from DIMENSION II)

1. Does the library board reflect the demographics of the entire community?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Has the library director invited staff, board, friends group, as well as organizations and members that reflect the community, to collaborate on the library's Bill of Rights?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Do the bylaws or mission statement have language on equity and inclusion being foundational to the purpose of the library?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Are there policies that have language on equity and inclusion as being foundational to the purpose of the library?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Do written procedures include the library's primary commitment and operational strategies to support equitable services to all users?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Does the library regularly review all policies to determine if they are creating unnecessary barriers?	Y	N	IP	NA
7. Are policies regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the actual needs of underserved groups wanting and needing library services?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Are the policies accessible to all community members, including languages used and ability?	Y	N	IP	NA
9. Do the policies refer to users in a respectful, gender neutral, culturally responsive and, unbiased way?	Y	N	IP	NA
10. Upon hire, are there opportunities for the new director and/or management to meet members of the community not just at the library, but through invitations to events or places of the community's choosing (e.g., community center, PrideFest celebration, a Hindi service, the local Irish cultural center, etc.)	Y	N	IP	NA
11. When the library board develops its strategic plan, are community members from underserved groups invited to participate?	Y	N	IP	NA

Questions Specific to Actionable Science Policies

12. Does the library director's annual review ask if they know what issues (e.g., actionable science, like public health) are affecting community members?	Y	N	IP	NA
13. Are inclusion-centered goals and objectives to meet community needs included in the strategic plan, including broadening participation, access, and connection to relevant, meaningful actionable science information, services for populations in greatest need?	Y	N	IP	NA
Total				

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LIBRARY STAFF, FUNDING, COLLECTIONS, AND SPACE

Policy Checklist 2
Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Library Organizational Culture

Staffing (from DIMENSION II)

1. Are all library staff able to explain inclusion-centered library policies to the public?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Do library staff assist in inclusion-centered library planning efforts?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Do library staff project an image of unbiased competence, courtesy and inclusion?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Do library staff actively engage with a variety of community groups, particularly those from underserved communities?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Are library staff aware of professional development opportunities in relation to inclusion-centered practices and services?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Do library staff participate in the planning of inclusion-centered services at the county and system level?	Y	N	IP	NA
7. Do community members (who do not have library degrees), from underserved groups serve as volunteers and/or paid staff at the library?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Are inclusion-centered services part of the technology plan?	Y	N	IP	NA
Questions Specific to Actionable Science Policies				
9. Are library staff aware of professional development opportunities in relation to inclusion-centered actionable science practices and services?	Y	N	IP	NA
10. Do library staff participate in their library system's inclusion-centered programming for underserved families, youth and adults, particularly around actionable science information?	Y	N	IP	NA
Total				

Collections (from DIMENSION II)

1. Does the collection development policy have a statement about inclusion?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Are the library board and staff aware of the non-inclusive aspects of library classification systems and controlled vocabulary (e.g., the weight given to Christianity in Dewey Decimal Classification, or awareness of Homosaurus https://homosaurus.org/ focused on LGBTQ+ vocabulary in Library of Congress designations)?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Does the collection accurately reflect the community's tastes, beliefs or attitudes from the input and/or feedback from underserved groups?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Does library staff use a plan with identified steps for the involvement, co-development of services and programs with underserved groups?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Does the collection include authors, storylines and/or characters by and from a range of groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender identity, sexuality, disability, veteran status, education level, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Does the collection include accurate, respectful, and current information by and about different groups, characters in a storyline, or settings and contexts (e.g. racial, ethnic, gender identity, sexuality, disability, veteran status, education level, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
7. Is the collection accessible to people with sensory, ambulatory, social, emotional and intellectual differences who may be unable and/or not willing to go to the library?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Does the collection contain items in languages other than English?	Y	N	IP	NA
9. Do library displays regularly include materials by and about people of various dimensions of identity and/or diverse ethnic groups of people?	Y	N	IP	NA
Questions Specific to Actionable Science Policies				
10. Does library staff use a plan with identified steps for the involvement, co-development of actionable science services and programs with underserved groups?				
11. Do library displays regularly include actionable science materials by and about people of various dimensions of identity and/or diverse ethnic groups of people?				
Total				

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Facility — Indoor Spaces (from DIMENSION II)

1. Does the library use programs, literature, and publicity in creative ways and in a variety of settings to attract underserved groups?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Does library staff respectfully ask users how they would like to be referred to, if appropriate, when assisting them or seeking information for them?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Does the library create pathfinders, subject guides and read's advisory bookmarks related to topics of interest to a variety of communities (e.g., LGBTQ+, neurodiverse, ethnic and cultural groups, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Does the library offer discreet information, such as shortcuts to local services on computer desktops about potentially sensitive topics, such as public health information for Muslim women, that are relevant to the variety of community groups?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Does the library provide accessible schedules of library events?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Are programs and materials presented in both English and other prevailing languages within the community?	Y	N	IP	NA

Questions Specific to Actionable Science Policies

7. Does the library have a feedback mechanism to provide insight on the needs of specific services populations (e.g., ex-officio member of the library board representing the ethnic and cultural groups, adult learner advisory board focused on culturally relevant actionable science community issues they want and need)?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Does the library help non-English speaking community members understand and interact with relevant actionable science community information the need and want, like public health, social services local, state government agencies and community organizations offer?	Y	N	IP	NA
9. Is there information on actionable science community issues and information literacy available to all communities in the library service areas?	Y	N	IP	NA
10. Do community groups have the opportunity to help co-develop actionable science programs that adults want and need?	Y	N	IP	NA
Total				

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Inclusive Culture at the Library (from DIMENSION II)

1. Do library staff have an understanding of how to operationalize inclusivity?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Do library staff administration have conversations with staff about being an inclusive library?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Are staff members trained to serve all members of the community, particularly those that are marginalized, vulnerable?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Do staff adhere to core values of creating an inclusive environment at their library?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Are staff empowered to put the user first?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Is there a teamwork mentality in creating an inclusive environment at the library?	Y	N	IP	NA
7. Is there an atmosphere of respect among staff members and members of the community?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Do staff make thoughtful decisions in dealing with users and members of the community as part of their daily work routine?	Y	N	IP	NA
9. Is there a measurement in place to track outcomes regarding community engagement and relationship building in their community?	Y	N	IP	NA
Total				

INCLUSION-CENTERED LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Policy Checklist 3
Building Community Partnerships

(from DIMENSION III)

1. Does the library have a programming policy that also includes a diversity or inclusivity statement?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Does the library offer programming at different times of day and various days of the week, including nights and weekends?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Are efforts made to make library programs accessible in languages other English (e.g. movies with subtitles, Spanish/English versions of the same program, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Are people able to participate in library programming whether or not they have a library card?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Does the library include an inclusivity statement on promotional materials?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Does the library include a variety of community members in the development of programs?	Y	N	IP	NA
7. Are there multiple avenues available for diverse program attendees to provide feedback, particularly around themes they want, need and are most interested in?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Does the library offer programming targeting multiple dimensions of personal identity, including: race, ethnicity, age, citizenship, literacy levels, ability, family structure, income level, health status, gender identity, sexuality, style of dress, familiarity with public libraries?	Y	N	IP	NA
9. Does the library contract with performers, authors, and presenters who reflect multiple dimensions of personal identity, cultural and ethnic groups?	Y	N	IP	NA
10. Does the library regularly evaluate programming practices to determine if individuals or groups are potentially excluded (e.g., excluding adults with cognitive disability on the basis of age from sensory story times targeting children)?	Y	N	IP	NA
11. Does the library offer programs that celebrate a wide variety of heritages and cultural events?	Y	N	IP	NA
Questions Specific to Actionable Science Policies				
12. Does the library plan programs that are based on community needs and interests, particularly actionable science information and services for adult learners?	Y	N	IP	NA
13. Does the library collaborate with established community organizations when planning and promoting programs, particularly actionable science themes (e.g., public health, water and air quality, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
Total				

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OF UNDERSERVED GROUPS

Policy Checklist 4
Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Community Member Experiences

(from DIMENSION IV)

1. Does the library regularly analyze the demographics of the community in which it is located?	Y	N	IP	NA
2. Does the library involve users, residents, local businesses, and other key organizations and interested parties when preparing the strategic plan?	Y	N	IP	NA
3. Has the library identified the needs and issues of specific groups in the community?	Y	N	IP	NA
4. Does the library have multiple formats for receiving feedback from a variety of community groups concerning potential barriers?	Y	N	IP	NA
5. Is the library responsive to the feedback from groups and individuals in underserved communities?	Y	N	IP	NA
6. Does the library work with community ambassadors to help promote the library as well as their community's goals, wants and needs?	Y	N	IP	NA
7. Does the library have meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighborhoods, local organizations, schools and businesses, with a set of shared priorities for the library and community?	Y	N	IP	NA
8. Does the library collaborate with other institutions to ensure library service for people who have difficulty visiting the library (e.g., migrant workers, senior housing, neighborhoods not connected with the library, community centers, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
9. Does the library offer resource for people who are transient (e.g., migrant workers, homeless, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
Questions Specific to Actionable Science Policies				
10. Does the library work with community organizations to facilitate reciprocal sharing of actionable science information about programs, collections/materials and resources to all community members (e.g. public health, water quality, social services, NAMI, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
11. Does the library collaborate with other institutions to ensure library actionable science information programs and services for people who have difficulty visiting the library (e.g., migrant workers, senior housing, neighborhoods not connected with the library, community centers, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
12. Does the library send staff to represent the library at meetings and events held by the various organizations in the community (e.g. health and human services coalitions, government strategic initiative planning meetings, etc)?	Y	N	IP	NA
Total				

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Strengthening Your Practices and Policies

Add up the total Yes(es) and No(s). The total points will give you a quick understanding of how inclusive your library's policies are as well as help identify areas of library operation that might require additional input and resources. Are you happy with where you stand?

Totals	Y	N	IP	NA
Inclusion-centered Policy Checklist Totals				
Actionable Science Checklist Totals				

Review your responses to the Policy Checklists. Answer the questions highlighted in the *Strengthening Your Practices and Policies* questionnaire on **page 23** to explore possible factors influencing your practices and policies as well as ways you can strengthen them to be more inclusive and science actionable.

Strengthening Your Practices and Policies

1. What are the policies you wish to change/strengthen/enforce?

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2. What is one thing that you want these policies to accomplish? For/with whom?

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3. What makes you believe these policies will accomplish this (i.e., what are your assumptions about why this will work)?

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4. What is one activity/strategy that is representative of this policy?

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5. What are two things you want to know about this activity, strategy, or policy?

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6. If you were writing your ideal annual report, how would you write about this initiative's success? Use key words and short phrases.

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Decide

You probably have identified several actions for improving your library's policies, procedures, and the application of those policies to make your library more inclusive for all your users.

1. Identify **one** inclusion-centered actionable science policy that could greatly improve achieving your goal or outcome if it were revised, implemented differently, or acted upon more consistently. Example: *The library could plan a program based on community needs and interests, particularly actionable science information and services for adult learners, and the library needs to provide staff with more professional development opportunities specifically related to inclusion-centered actionable science practices and services.*

Act

Plan out an action for improving the inclusion-centered actionable science policy you identified, such as:

Action 1: Provide new language for the policy that needs to change.

Action 2: Review that language with your staff and those groups directly impacted by the policy.

Action 3: Discuss, if any, what training and support changes are needed to implement this change.

Action 4: Itemize the education chain for implementing that new policy or procedure (e.g., department heads, public and technical services, front lines).

Action 5: Present the new policy to your staff and those groups most directly impacted, explaining why the change is being made and what training and policy resources are available to support the change.

Action 6: Change the policy on the web and in written documentation.

Action 7: Enforce the new policy.

Inclusion-centered Goal or Outcome		
Policy	Improve or enhance policy to be more inclusive	What are the intended/unintended consequences for your library, users, and community members?
Inclusion-centered actionable science policy		