
RUSA Adopts Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

RUSA Working Group

*Working Group members: Robin Bradford, Alesia McManus, Amber Prentiss, and Chella Vaidyanathan.
Approved by RUSA Board June 2018.*

BACKGROUND

The American Library Association's (ALA) fourth strategic direction—equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)—is timely for many reasons given the current political environment in the United States and our country's difficult history around issues of bias, discrimination, racism, and privilege. These issues have deeply impacted library users and library workers. The pursuit of this strategic initiative provides RUSA members with an opportunity for conversation about how considerations of diversity, equity, and inclusion impact reference and user services in libraries and how we can try to effect positive change. To frame the conversation, RUSA formed a working group to draft an aspirational statement of RUSA values pertaining to EDI in service to library users and RUSA members. The RUSA Board approved this statement at the 2018 Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA. Working group members were Robin Bradford, Alesia McManus, Amber Prentiss, and Chella Vaidyanathan. Here is the statement:

STATEMENT

RUSA is an association of library personnel connecting people to resources, information services, and collections. Recognizing the importance of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion,¹ the association affirms the right of access to information for people of all identities, backgrounds, ages, and abilities, especially with regard to marginalized peoples. We value and support people seeking knowledge, enrichment, entertainment, and lifelong learning. We work within our communities to provide equitable access to library resources by building inclusive collections and providing accessible spaces and services. We are welcoming, open, and accepting of a diversity of viewpoints among our association members, and we strive to offer a safe environment for our colleagues to explore and express their ideas.

Please send any comments to rusa@ala.org.

Note

1. We employ the meanings of the words Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as defined in "Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" (adopted June 27, 2017, by the ALA Council, <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/EDI>).