

Strategic Roadmap for the EDI Framework for NJ Libraries Project December 2024 Status Update

<https://librarylinknj.org/EDI/strategic-roadmap>

What We've Done And What We're Doing

We're making steady progress on the **EDI Framework for NJ Libraries**. This statewide initiative aims to coordinate and align the EDI-related activities and projects of professional library organizations across New Jersey under a unified framework. The primary goal of this project is to establish a sustainable roadmap for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in libraries statewide. The hope is that this comprehensive framework will serve as a guiding structure to ensure that the EDI efforts of NJ libraries and library organizations are cohesive, impactful, and enduring. Here are the latest updates:

For **Goal 1: Building Capacity for EDI**, we have completed an EDI Collective Impact Assessment with 15 responses from library organizations across New Jersey. The analyzed data has been compiled into [a report with actionable recommendations](#), which has been shared with participating organizations. Alongside this, we have formally invited them to join **EDI NJ**, a collaborative group dedicated to advancing strategic EDI initiatives in New Jersey libraries. Our vision is to start convening this group in 2025 so that we can co-create a plan for collectively supporting and sustaining EDI efforts across New Jersey libraries.

To support the development of a DEIA Toolkit for Directors, we conducted an EDI training needs assessment, gathering 118 fully completed responses. [The EDI consultant's summary report](#) outlines critical actionable recommendations for the toolkit, and the project group is currently recruiting participants to ensure diverse representation and expand the group's capacity.

Additionally, the insights from this assessment have informed priority training topics and speaker recruitment, which will contribute to the creation of a performers and speakers database. This database, along with other resources, will be included in the forthcoming EDI resource hub. Early planning has also begun for a statewide in-person program in Spring 2026, with discussions focusing on sharing collected data and developed resources and creating space for strategic visioning and action planning.

Under **Goal 2: Fostering Inclusive Library Environments**, drafts for the individual and institutional EDI assessments have been completed and will be undergoing review. Once these assessments are finalized, the EDI consultant will create accompanying modules to support their usage and utilization.

For **Goal 3: Strengthening Diverse Staff Power**- EDI-NJ is sponsoring the following event hosted by the MentorNJ African American Meet-up group:

- Culture Connection: African American Culture Event: Friday, Mar 14, 2025, 10:30am - 3:30pm @ Monroe Township Public Library (Middlesex County)
- A save-the-date announcement will be sent out in early January, and the full event details will be shared by the end of January or early February at the latest.

Finally, for **Goal 4: Enhancing Library Services and Accessibility**, we are in the early stages of developing a statewide assessment to identify gaps in accessibility and inclusivity. This assessment will be distributed to libraries across the state, with responses analyzed and compiled into a comprehensive report. The report will highlight trends, identify areas of opportunity, and assess collective impact. The goal is for this tool to serve as a benchmark for measuring progress at both the individual library level and statewide, supporting ongoing progress and accountability.

In addition to the activities included in the Strategic Roadmap project scope, here are the **EDI-NJ Group's activities in FY2024** so far:

- **Building an Inclusive Organizational Culture and Expanding Connection in Libraries through the Adaptation of Denver Public Library (DPL) Models for an IMLS Grant:** LLNJ has submitted a preliminary proposal to the IMLS for a one-year, \$100,000 [Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program \(LB21\)](#) Grant under the Community-Centered Implementation Grants category. This proposal aims to ensure that the EDI-NJ Group can continue its efforts beyond the current Strategic Roadmap Project. Notifications for full proposal invitations will be announced in January 2025.
- **EDI-NJ's Participation in Denver Public Library (DPL)'s EDI Cohort Meetings:** Initiated through the IMLS grant application mentioned above, Selwa Shamy, EDI-NJ Group Leader, and Ralph Bingham, LLNJ Executive Director, attended the DPL's cohort meeting on November 15, 2024. We will continue participating in these meetings to build partnerships and strengthen our EDI projects.
- **NJLA Conference 2025 Program Proposal:** A program proposal has been submitted to share the EDI-NJ Group's progress, statewide assessment results, and future plans to strategically and collectively enhance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in New Jersey libraries and organizations. This program is co-sponsored by the NJLA Diversity & Outreach Section (D&O) and the Library Workers of Color Section (LWOC).

Where We're Going and How You Can Engage

In the months ahead, our focus will shift toward acting on the data we've collected. This includes formally launching and convening the EDI NJ Collective to develop a shared vision for supporting New Jersey Libraries in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are conducting a thorough review of library-specific EDI resources to identify gaps this project can fill and find resources for the EDI Hub we will be launching. Additionally, we are prioritizing the creation of training resources based on the findings from the EDI training needs assessment and resource

review. To support this, we are actively recruiting more group members to help refine training priorities and ensure diverse perspectives are represented.

We're also preparing to launch the individual and institutional EDI assessments and modules, providing tools for library staff and organizations to engage with and measure their progress.

How You Can Engage:

You can get involved by:

- [Joining the monthly EDI meetings](#)
 - Third Wednesday of the Month, 3-4pm (No meeting in December 2024)
- Providing feedback on created project tools/assessments or participating in one of the project groups ([sign up here!](#))
- Attending upcoming training opportunities and events, which will be announced in early 2025

If you're interested or would like more information, please reach out to Mi-Sun, lyu@librarylinknj.org, the project manager. We'd love to have you join us in building a more equitable and inclusive future for New Jersey libraries.