



SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT – EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

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POLICY STATEMENT

As part of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library’s commitment to an inclusive, respectful work and community environment, the Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Policy endeavours to provide fairness and equity in employment and services that foster an environment which respects people’s dignity, ideas and beliefs.

The Library is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in the workplace and recognizes the value that diverse staff bring to the activities and initiatives of the Library and community.

We understand that our employees are the Library’s most valuable asset. The sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities, and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of our culture, reputation, and achievements.

The Library is committed to supporting the dignity of all community members, customers, employees, volunteers, and partners regardless of heritage, ability, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, and other characteristics that make individuals unique. The Library is committed to valuing and supporting individual differences to create and foster an environment in which individuals can participate, maximize their contributions, and achieve their full potential.

The Library believes that respectful dialogue builds understanding and stronger communities. We strive to encourage mutual respect, inclusion, and celebration of differences by embracing **cultural humility** as a key foundation to our approach. We encourage the community to recognize, respect, and embrace each individual's diversity. We believe that by working together we can move from simply acknowledging diversity and inclusion to enabling an environment that is supportive, accessible, and equitable in its practices.

We are committed to continuous improvement towards a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace. This commitment will be embedded in all aspects of library endeavours, including, but not limited to: customer service, programming, collections, community partnerships, policy development, and hiring practices.

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility – refers to the design of products and environments for people with disabilities. It creates an equitable environment for all persons.

Accommodation – is an individualized process designed to improve equality and eliminate disadvantages experienced by individuals or groups related to a prohibited ground, to the point of undue hardship. Accommodation includes appropriate steps designed to meet the needs of individuals and groups protected by the Human Rights Code. Accommodation is determined in consultation with the person requesting the accommodation

Barrier – Anything that prevents a person from fully taking part in all aspects of society, including physical, architectural, information or communications, attitudinal, economic, and technological barriers, as well as, policies or practices.

Cultural Humility – is a practice of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience.

Designated Groups – As defined in the *Employment Equity Act*, means women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.

Discrimination – Differential treatment based on a personal characteristic which has an adverse impact on an individual or group.

Diversity – The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within an individual, group or organization. **Diversity** includes factors such as age, sex, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, religion, sexual orientation, educational background, and expertise.

Employees - For the purposes of this Policy, this term shall include full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal, casual, student/co-op employees; Board Members, and new hires/employees.

Equity – Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person’s life.

Equitable Outcomes - A result where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential resulting in equal opportunity.

Inclusion – Appreciating and utilizing our unique differences – strengths, talents, weaknesses, and frailties – in a way that shows respect for the individual and ultimately creates a dynamic multi-dimensional organization.

Systemic Discrimination – Patterns of behaviour, policies, or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for groups identified under the Human Rights Code.

Workplace – facilities where employees perform work for the Library, including but not limited to library branches, outdoor spaces adjacent to branches, virtual spaces, outreach in the community, alternative work locations as approved in the Flexible Work Arrangement Policy.

PURPOSE

The Library is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. The Library strives to create a respectful and welcoming environment to all, and this policy provides a framework within which to implement and measure the success of these commitments.

The main objectives of this policy are to eliminate **barriers** in the Library, including all forms of **discrimination** and to develop an environment and atmosphere that promotes **accessibility, equity** and **inclusion**.

To speak up for diversity and inclusion we will:

Reflect our diversity in the present and future

- Create and sustain a work environment that recognizes the individual needs of employees, with a focus on mental and physical well-being.
- Improve equitable outcomes for marginalized groups in hiring and advancement at all levels, including Board recruitment, to better reflect community diversity.

Ensure our spaces and services are truly barrier-free

- Integrate a diversity and inclusion approach in core organizational systems and practices.
- Connect intention with impact by supporting inclusive leadership behaviours across all levels of the organization.
- The Library will ensure that policies, procedures, and practices are provided in a manner that is timely and guided by the principles of integration, independence, dignity, and equal opportunity.

Celebrate diversity in all that we do

- Develop deeper knowledge of the diverse needs of our community members.
- Embed a diversity and inclusion lens in all aspects of library services and community engagement.

Amplify under-represented voices

- Champion and support equity seeking groups in the workplace and in our community.
- Create initiatives that help equity seeking groups to advocate for themselves and the community.
- Create a process to continuously seek advice and consult with equity seeking groups and to receive, evaluate, analyze and respond to feedback on diversity and inclusion.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees, prospective employees, volunteers, Board members, contractors, and any other individuals performing work for the Library; to Library customers; and to all facilities of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library including Library-hosted online spaces. All employees of the Library have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other employer sponsored and participative events.

RESPONSIBILITY

All employees have a mutual interest and shared responsibility to secure and maintain a workplace environment that is fair and equitable. All members of the Library's workplace community are expected to meet individual responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

Our Commitment

The Library is committed to ensuring that all members of our workplace community, including Library Board members, contribute to a positive and inclusive workplace environment through:

1. Knowledge: Ensuring all employees understand the values and responsibilities expected of them.
2. Empowerment: Empowering all employees to contribute to an environment and ensuring our interactions are consistent with the standards and principles defined in this policy.
3. Accountability: Holding all employees accountable for achieving the required standards defined in this policy.

i) CEO

The Library is committed to fostering an environment of understanding and respect, supporting everyone's learning and development regardless of their background or personal beliefs.

The CEO ensures the Library's commitment to **equity, diversity, accessibility** and **inclusivity** by providing a supportive work environment and corporate culture that welcomes members of **designated groups**. Under the direction of the CEO, the Library will make reasonable efforts to ensure:

- Employees and job applicants are treated equitably with respect to recruitment, retention, promotion and advancement, and that recruitment and selection processes are free from any form of **discrimination**;
- Reasonable accommodation of individual needs is undertaken;
- Salary and wage structures are always based on the value of the work performed;
- Mutual respect, **inclusion** and differences are celebrated and promoted (cultures, customs or religious backgrounds);
- **Equity, diversity, accessibility** and **inclusion** are made a priority in planning and decision making for staff, training, professional growth, and service development.
- Innisfil's many communities are engaged and consulted with as direct sources of information, to ensure that services are inclusive and appropriate for all Innisfil residents.

ii) Management Responsibilities

Managers and Librarians are responsible for providing a work environment consistent with the objectives stated in this policy. This responsibility includes ensuring that the policy is consistently applied and communicated to Staff.

Responsibilities further include the following:

1. Understanding and upholding the following principles of this policy by setting a good example which includes but is not limited to:
 - Create and maintain a workplace free from any form of **discrimination**.
 - Ensure that the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy is communicated to Staff, and that it is accessible and supported.
 - Implement and encourage **equity** and **inclusion** including training, resources and tools to raise awareness and ensure that all employees develop the requisite skills to understand their responsibilities.
 - Implement changes to employment systems, removal of **barriers** and other related actions as appropriate.
 - Identify and address any barriers to diversity and inclusion, including those reported by employees, and/or customers

2. Incorporating **equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion** principles into strategic objectives and operational initiatives.
3. Taking accountability to ensure they conduct themselves in a manner consistent with commitments under this policy.
4. Taking the necessary steps to ensure that employees conduct themselves in a manner consistent with commitments under this policy.
5. Conferring with the Town of Innisfil's Human Resources regarding effective processes for handling any concerns raised under this policy.
6. Providing support to employees and customers regarding the implementation of this policy.
7. Not allowing or condoning any behaviour contrary to this policy.
8. Addressing complaints related to Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion.

iii) Employee Responsibilities

1. Every employee is responsible for adhering to the spirit and intent of this policy.
2. Employees should support diversity and inclusion commitments by providing any feedback and/or suggestions for improvement under this Policy and are strongly encouraged to report areas in which barriers to equal opportunity may exist.
3. Employees are responsible for respecting, valuing and supporting individual differences in backgrounds, experiences, values, perspectives, behaviours, communication styles, and abilities among all Library employees, and customers. Employees are responsible for providing services and working in an inclusive and barrier-free manner
4. Employees should advise their Supervisor or Manager of any issues that relate to **equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion** that may arise or become apparent.
5. Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior contrary to this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

iv) **Non-Employee Responsibilities**

Any individual who interacts with Library employees is required to ensure their interactions are consistent with the standards of this policy. Such persons include, but are not limited to volunteers, elected representatives, appointed officials, contractors, consultants, and members of the community accessing the Library's services.

ADMINISTRATION

The public library recognizes and embraces the diverse nature of every Ontario community. The Library Board endorses a statement on diversity and includes that the library has:

1. Assessed the barriers to accessing its services through an inclusion lens;
2. Created a collection development policy statement regarding the inclusion of diverse materials that enables a broad range of authors, content creators, and experiences to be included and highlighted and;
3. Actively promotes collections and services of a diverse nature.

In conjunction with the Respectful Workplace Policy, this policy prohibits **discrimination** in the workplace, and in the provision of services and facilities to the public as defined by Human Rights legislation.

Innisfil ideaLAB & Library and the Innisfil Public Library Board endorses the following:

- Innisfil ideaLAB & Library Position Statement on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (**Appendix A**)
- Canadian Federation of Library Association's (CFLA) [Position Statement on Diversity and Inclusion](#) (**Appendix B**)
- Canadian Urban Libraries Council [Statement on Race and Social Equity](#) (**Appendix C**)

In order to ensure the dignity and rights of all individuals, the Library embraces and complies with the:

- [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- [Canadian Human Rights Act](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)
- [Employment Equity Act](#)
- United Nation's [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

EXCEPTIONS

There are no exceptions to this policy.

RELATED POLICIES

Staff Code of Conduct

Respectful Workplace, Harassment, and Violence Prevention

Vision, Mission Statement, Values and Commitment to Service

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, May 16, 2022

Motion Number: 2022.43

Appendix A

Innisfil ideaLAB & Library Position Statement on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility

The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Libraries have a responsibility to create an environment and contribute to a culture that respects people's dignity, ideas and beliefs and in which individuals can participate, maximize their contributions, and achieve their full potential.

Our Library aims to demonstrate support for the dignity of all community members, customers, employees, volunteers, and partners regardless of heritage, ability, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, and other characteristics that make individuals unique.

We believe that respectful dialogue builds understanding and stronger communities. We strive to encourage mutual respect, inclusion, and celebration of differences by embracing *cultural humility* as a key foundation to our approach. Cultural humility is a practice of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust.

We understand too that the acceptance of differences can place individual and collective values in conflict with one another. We encourage the community to recognize, respect, and embrace each individual's diversity. We believe that by working together we can move from simply acknowledging diversity and inclusion to enabling an environment that is supportive, accessible, and equitable in its practices.

Innisfil ideaLAB & Library will make diversity and inclusion a priority in planning and decision making for staffing, collections, programs, services and organizational change.

Appendix B

CFLA Position Statement on Diversity & Inclusion

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) believes that a diverse and pluralistic society is central to our country's identity. Libraries have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that recognizes diversity and fosters social inclusion.

Libraries strive to deliver inclusive service. Canada's libraries recognize and energetically affirm the dignity of those they serve, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, or income.

Libraries understand that an acceptance of differences can place individual and collective values in conflict. Libraries are committed to tolerance and understanding. Libraries act to ensure that people can enjoy services free from any attempt by others to impose values, customs or beliefs.

Appendix C

Canadian Urban Libraries Council Statement on Race and Social Equity

As leaders of North America's public libraries, we are committed to achieving racial and social equity by contributing to a more just society in which all community members can realize their full potential. Our libraries can help achieve true and sustained equity through an intentional, systemic and transformative library-community partnership. Our library systems are working to achieve equity in the communities we serve by:

- Eliminating racial and social equity barriers in library programs, services, policies and practices
- Creating and maintaining an environment of diversity, inclusion and respect both in our library systems and in all aspects of our community role
- Ensuring that we are reaching and engaging disenfranchised people in the community and helping them express their voice
- Serving as a convener and facilitator of conversations and partnerships to address community challenges
- Being forthright on tough issues that are important to our communities

Libraries are trusted, venerable and enduring institutions, central to their communities and an essential participant in the movement for racial and social equity