



**Use a word or short phrase to describe your experience with diversifying collections**

You have not responded

🔒 This question is anonymous. No names will be tracked.

Type here...

Submit

No responses submitted yet.

# Welcome!

## Diversifying collections

Please respond to our opening poll at:

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July 2024

## Diversifying collections with authentic and inclusive collection development strategies



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Library Partnership



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Coordinator, Humanities Collections  
University of Toronto Libraries

# Road map for this session

- Overview of interview findings (Merrilee)
- Operationalizing values in collection development (Eva)
- Your turn – table discussions
- Report out (use the mic!)
- Reflections



Join by Web [PollEv.com/oclc](https://PollEv.com/oclc) Join by Text Send **oclc** and your message to **22333**



Use a word or short phrase to describe your experience with diversifying collections

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

# Interviews

- Structured interviews December 2022 – January 2023
- Eight institutions engaged in DEI collecting activities
  - Binghamton University, Emory University, Louisiana State University, New York University, University of Nevada Las Vegas, University of Texas – San Antonio, University of Denver, University of Toronto
- Collection managers and/or selectors
- [Casting a different net: Diversifying print monograph collecting in research libraries](#)

# Webinars

- OCLC Research Library Partnership “Works in Progress” webinar series
- [Diversifying library collections through student-led collection development](#) (Bryn Mawr College Libraries)
- [Towards diversifying collections—implementing strategies](#) (University of Nevada, Las Vegas and South Puget Sound Community College)

# Insights into collection development work

- Ideal approach: discussion/consultation with those with expertise (faculty, students, community members)
- Pain point: trend of reducing investment in collection development staff—less time/fewer people to do this important consultation

# Motivations

- *Intrinsically motivated*
- Outgrowth of previous anti-racist work at library and / or in response to local contexts/histories



# Areas of focus

- For some, specific focus—e.g., African American history and culture, Indigenous communities
- For others, considering broadly how to change patterns of collecting to be more inclusive
- Analogy: “casting a net to get content... the net determines what you get. **How do you make a different kind of net?**”



Image by [J. Ketelaars](#) from [Pixabay](#)

# Benchmarking against peers

- Consortia not yet working on EDI collective collections; consulting around *practices*
- Need to look at collections with specific, targeted subject focus for comparison— **“peers” in these focused areas**
- Certain libraries have “fantastic sub-collections”; want to know “what is in this call number range at this library and run it against our holdings”
- Thinking broadly about whether to acquire items based on library's role within larger **local, regional, and national network of collections**

# Expertise and authentic voice

- **Expertise** in DEI topics can come from faculty/students, and importantly, **from community members**, based on building trust and relationships with them
- Need to understand and use the terms that these communities have defined for themselves
  - Informed by direct engagement, understanding the community context

# Making choices: Formats

- For the academic community, default is electronic
- **Access** for people in the community—physical
- Other needs for **physicality**—exhibits, display, formats such as zines, graphic novels, chap books

# Reparative collecting

- *Opportunity*: Buy from BIPOC bookstores or book dealers; recognize their deep knowledge and expertise and invest in local businesses
- *Challenge*: purchasing systems/workflows create barriers

Example: Bryn Mawr College Libraries “[Students Shape the Shelves](#)” program

“Goal: promote diversity in the library collections by providing students with the knowledge and a budget to purchase popular reading material from Philadelphia independent bookstores whose collections reflect diverse voices.”

# Operationalizing this work

- Iterative and focused approaches (pilots)
- Accountability in and visibility of collection development plans
- Sharing practices and building on EDI work in the profession more broadly

# UTL's Collection Diversity Plan

Process and Progress

Eva Jurczyk, Coordinator, Humanities Collections

This document is intended to serve as an **actionable plan** for collections services to meet the University of Toronto Libraries' (UTL) commitment to creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment that supports learning, teaching, research and work. The EDI statement has to be **tied in to action** and as a commitment to action, with a **timeline of implementation** (rather than just an empty statement).





**June  
2021**



**Established  
a working  
group**



**October  
2021**



**Circulated  
first draft  
for  
feedback**



**May  
2022**



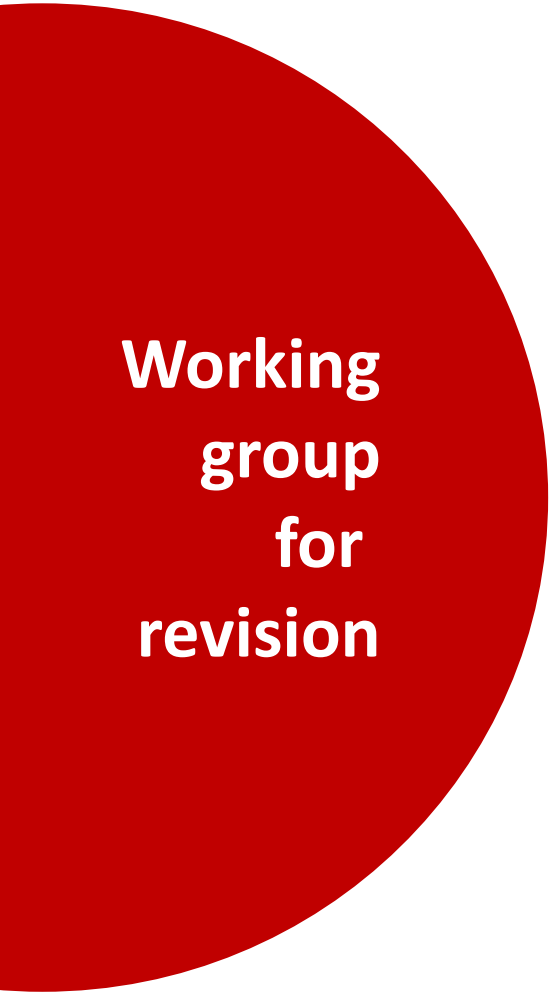
**Publicly  
posted  
the plan**



**First  
progress  
report**



**November  
2022**



**Working  
group  
for  
revision**



**December  
2024**



## Challenge

The majority of central libraries' budget for collections is allocated to Big Deal contracts and large-scale approval-plan vendors. This results in **limited discretionary funds** to broaden and diversify content and contributes to an overall knowledge divide.

## Action

Encourage deliberate vendor choices (Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ+ publishers, private presses, self-publishers, and local, in-country, regional suppliers), and strongly encourage selectors to **develop purchasing relationships** with booksellers, publishers, and other stakeholders (i.e., flexible supply chains) who represent or support diverse communities.

## Outcome

Partnered with the Eastern Door, a small community newspaper for the Mohawk community in Ontario. Purchased a digital archive directly from the newspapers, with hosting and metadata creation handled through Scholars Portal (a locally managed digital hosting platform). This approach, **establishing a reciprocal relationship** that extends beyond the simple purchase of content, allows the newspaper to sell directly to other Canadian institutions.

## Challenge

Vacant selector positions, cross-appointments, and selector workloads may be affecting the ongoing expansion of diversity of our collections. Our staff may not have the **time, knowledge, or experience to diversify collections** appropriately.

## Action

**Provide training opportunities** for staff to learn about endangered or lesser-taught languages.

## Outcome

Secured special funding and partnered with Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na to provide Mohawk Language training for 30 library staff. The goal of this online course was for UTL staff to learn the basic elements of the Mohawk language, and through this instruction, also learn more about Mohawk worldviews and history. The course **enabled staff to better engage Indigenous library users** through collections development, cataloging, services and programming for Indigenous Language learners



# Talk with one another!

- Building reparative relationships with book dealers and book sellers as a collection building practice
- Developing non-extractive relationships with community experts to identify gaps
- Creating a collection diversity strategy
- Benchmarking against peers in specific areas
- Using collection analytics including subject headings to guide collecting activities

