

Library Board: DEIA-BC Statement

The Village of Cottage Grove Library Board is committed to fostering **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging in Community (DEIA-BC)** in all aspects of our work. We believe that libraries and their services are not just places for the community but are co-created with the community. We believe that library programs are essential services that should reflect the rich diversity of our community and our experiences, cultures, and backgrounds and we strive to ensure equal access to resources, knowledge, and opportunities for all. We are dedicated to providing a public service where everyone in our community feels valued, respected, and empowered. Together, we can create an environment that serves as a catalyst for positive change, learning, and understanding, regardless of who you are or where you come from.

- *Diversity:* We celebrate the diverse backgrounds, cultures, experiences, and perspectives of our community members. Our library programming will actively seek to represent and engage with different voices, traditions, and ideas. We are dedicated to providing a platform for underrepresented and marginalized communities, both in our programming and as a resource for learning and sharing their stories.
- *Equity:* We are committed to providing equitable access to library programs, services, and resources for everyone, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, ability, socioeconomic status, or other identity factors. We will continuously work to identify and remove barriers that may prevent individuals from participating fully in our programs.
- *Inclusion:* We aim to create an inclusive and welcoming environment in all of our library programming. Our events and services will be designed to be accessible, respectful, and safe for all participants. We actively encourage the exchange of ideas and open dialogue, promoting a sense of belonging and shared community.
- *Accessibility:* Accessibility for library programming involves creating inclusive and welcoming spaces, where all community members, regardless of their abilities or limitations, can participate and benefit from the services and events offered. We should consider factors like physical accessibility (e.g., ramps and elevators in our spaces), providing alternative formats for materials (e-books, large print, or audiobooks, braille), and offering assistive technologies to ensure that patrons with disabilities can fully engage with library programming. In addition to physical accommodations, promoting accessibility in library programming also means prioritizing diverse and inclusive content, ensuring that events are well-publicized and open to all, and training staff to be knowledgeable and supportive in serving patrons with different needs.
- *Belonging in Community:* All are welcome at library events in Cottage Grove. Our own internal implicit or unconscious bias affects how we interact with our neighbors, and shape our culture. Thus, acknowledging unconscious bias in decision making is the first step toward fostering equality in our choices. We value the input and contributions of our community members in shaping our library programs and services. Ideas, feedback, and expertise help us co-create a library that truly serves your needs. We will actively seek community input, engage in partnerships, and offer resources and support to community members who wish to actively participate in library programming.