

FLLS IDEA Statement

We encourage and empower **I.D.E.A.S.** at our system headquarters and 33 member libraries: **Inclusive, Diverse, Equitable, & Accessible Services**. Programs, collections, and services at our system and at our member libraries should both reflect the communities that we serve and offer diverse perspectives. Our libraries are for everyone.

Finger Lakes Library System is committed to advancing social justice, inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in our collections, programs, hiring practices, and services. We will routinely review our policies, procedures, and organization for bias, and will collaborate with our libraries and communities to do the same.

We will identify and share resources that reflect diverse experiences and amplify the voices of BIPOC individuals, the LGBTQ+ community, individuals with disabilities, individuals with neurodiversity, economically disadvantaged, and other historically underrepresented or marginalized populations. Increasing representation in collections, programs, and services ensures that our libraries are safe and welcoming spaces for everyone.

Inclusion, diversity, and accessibility provide more equitable services. This means that in order to achieve equality, we understand that some people may need different amounts of representation and resources to provide them with equal opportunities and access.

Action Steps

- Collaborating with SCRLC and other organizations with the same vision.
- Commitment to IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility) by system staff.
- Developing an IDEA audit tool (in conjunction with SCRLC).
- Developing an IDEA toolkit for member libraries.
- Developing the IDEA committee.
- Developing the Social Justice Book Club.
- Frequently reviewing and updating policies and procedures through an equity lens.
- Increasing diverse titles and authors in our physical and digital collections.
- Increasing IDEA-related workshops and viewing all programs, collections, hiring practices and services through an equity lens.
- Sharing our values on social media.

Glossary of Terms

- [Accessibility](#): “easily used or accessed by people with disabilities : adapted for use by people with disabilities”
- [BIPOC](#): “Black, Indigenous, (and) People of Color.”

(continued)

- [Diversity](#): “the condition of having or being composed of differing elements;” and “especially: the inclusion of people of different races, cultures, etc. in a group or organization”
- [Equity](#): “The term ‘equity’ refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures.” See also: [What’s the Difference Between Equity and Equality?](#)
- [Historically Underrepresented](#): “This term refers to groups who have been denied access and/or suffered past institutional discrimination in the United States and, according to the Census and other federal measuring tools”
- [Marginalized Populations](#): “groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions.”
- [Inclusion](#): “the act or practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability)”
- [LGBTQ+](#): “An acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer” with a “+” sign to recognize the limitless sexual orientations and gender identities used by members of our community.”
- [Neurodiversity](#): “the concept that differences in brain functioning within the human population are normal and that brain functioning that is not neurotypical should not be stigmatized”
- [Social Justice](#): “a state or doctrine of [egalitarianism](#),” i.e., “a belief in human equality especially with respect to social, political, and economic affairs”

Notes:

- The above statement would be added to the FLLS [About Us](#) page under “Mission Statement.”
- The statement would also be referenced on the new IDEA page which will be included in the “Resources” drop-down menu.
- The IDEA page will feature the new toolkit that has been developed.
- Both the statement and toolkit were approved by the FLLS IDEA committee, July 2022.
Libraries represented: FLLS (Jenny Shonk & Heidi Eckerson), Groton Public Library (Sara Knobel), Hazard Library (Lisa Semenza), Weedsport Free Library (Samantha Black), Edith B. Ford Memorial Library (Amber Pasiak), Tompkins County Public Library (Jen Schlossberg and Sarah O’Shea), and Phillips Free Library (Priscilla Berggren-Thomas).

Presented to the FLLS Board of Trustees September 21, 2022