Milton Public Library
Be Inspired

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-racism and Accessibility Strategy

A Commitment to our Community

Land Acknowledgement

Milton Public Library operates on treaty lands and the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, and Haudenosaunee people. As we centre the truth and support reconciliation across Milton, our commitment to provide the highest quality service for all is inspired by First Peoples' traditional knowledge, laws, and philosophies.

First People, Beautiful People.

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Our Commitment

MPL will Encourage our community to consider new perspectives, Inspire our community to Read, Learn, Create and Connect and Unite our community to include everyone.

We imagine a world that celebrates differences and understands that we are better and richer for the differences we share.

We envision a Canadian society that recognizes and engages with the Truth before Reconciliation and shifts from sympathy to empathy when addressing inequity.

We envision a community that gathers without prejudice and with open minds. Community spaces that bring diverse people and groups together and allow for conversation, sharing and belonging.

We aspire to have a shared understanding of the mission of the public library and uphold intellectual freedom.

We will provide a library environment where the community feels safe, accepted and included and is able to access materials and opportunities for lifelong learning.

We will promote library spaces where inclusion means everyone is valued and welcome as they are.

We will create and sustain an organizational culture that is safe, inclusive and representative of the community it serves.

Advancing IDEAA is the work of growth and change driven by openness and curiosity.

Our Vision

MPL believes in a society that is diverse, just and provides equal access for all people.

Our Mission

Our IDEAA strategy will enable and advance our Mission to empower the community to read, learn, create and connect and our Vision of inspiring discovery, collaboration and creation.

Our Values

We are guided by the Values of Intellectual Freedom, Inclusivity, Accessibility, Exceptional Public Service, Lifelong Learning and Accountability.

Our IDEAA strategy uses these foundational elements and is informed by:

Community	We will bring people and communities together to share, learn and create.
Collaboration	We will share and exchange knowledge, strengths and resources that exist internally and within our community.
Growth	We will provide access to knowledge, resources and opportunities to learn and grow.
Openness	We will support a safe space for vulnerability and be open to new ideas and possibilities.
Respect	We will listen to understand, respect diverse views and perspectives, and be open to learning.

Our Guide

Our strategy is led by our Leadership Team who is informed by the Diversity Council and together support our teams in the achievement of our goals.

The pillars represent the core areas of priority and action which will guide our work:

Leadership

Employee Experience

Workplace Culture, Learning & Development

Programs, Collections, Services & Community Relations

Marketing and Communication Strategy

Leadership

This area focuses on recommendations around Organizational Leadership and Accountability and represents five of the plan recommendations, which are:

1. Establish an internal structure to implement the recommendations from this review, including identifying an IDEAA lead/director and project sponsor from the Leadership Team.

2. Implement IDEAA training specific to the Leadership Team focusing on IDEAA leadership competencies, with training tracking and completion incorporated into leaders' performance reviews.

3. The training to incorporate the following content with the goal of advancing IDEAA principles beyond minimal requirements of compliance: Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA); Employment Equity principles; Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) report; Ontario Anti-racism Framework Intersectionality Theory.

4. Address the lack of racial diversity within Management and Leadership by reviewing and implementing an internal advancement strategy to identify candidates for promotion who are BIPOC, 2SLGBTQ, and people with disabilities and facilitate access to mentorship/sponsorship and leadership development.

5. Explore an accountability process/ framework to support those who have completed the IDI assessment in completing their Intercultural Development Plan (IDP).

Employee Experience

This area will focus on the recommendations regarding policies, procedures and process around the employee relationship and lifecycle and represents nine of the plans recommendations, which are:

1. Develop an equity hiring strategy with measurable short, medium and long-term goals, with targets, progress indicators and actions designed to remove systemic barriers and improve accessibility. The data should be analyzed to track and monitor trends and patterns in hiring, promotions, and job competitions with an accountability framework to document and report on process for those involved in the hiring decisions.

2. Address systemic barriers regarding credentials and academic requirements for specific positions (e.g. considering degrees from accredited bodies other than ALA) and engage external stakeholders and community partners around recruitment across diverse networks and communities.

3. Continue to follow best practices in interviewing and hiring that address and remove barriers to equity, including:

   a. A multi-person panel for conducting formal interviews, with the panel reflecting the diversity available in the organization;

   b. Set questions are developed in advance;

   c. All applicants asked the same questions;

Employee Experience

d. The questions are based on the job's essential duties and bona fide requirements;

e. Before the interviews, create an answer guide for the panel that shows the desired answers and a marking scheme allowing each interviewer to record and score each candidate's answers

4. Make adjustments to the current onboarding program to include a suite of learning and development modules that include foundational components of IDEAA principles and practice.

5. Review plans for fair, inclusive, and equitable succession and career progression, including determining why and how some staff are not moving forward. Look for those who are interested or have potential for growth and provide guidance and mentorship.

6. Exit surveys and interviews should be conducted and closely examined from an IDEAA perspective to determine where BIPOC employees worked, as well as their work experience and reasons for leaving MPL.

Employee Experience

7. Conduct an Employment Systems Review (ESR) involving a comprehensive workforce analysis and an in-depth assessment of all employment systems, policies and practices and the way these are implemented across the organization to identify barriers to the full employment of underrepresented designated groups by occupational groups in the MPL workforce with their availability in the appropriate workforce and flow data analysis to identify the shares of hires, promotions, and terminations of designated group members in the workforce.

8. Engage in policy revision and development work to address IDEAA gaps/challenges stemming from this project:

   a. Adopt a standard format for policy documents;

   b. Develop a policy on human rights data collection;

   c. Have a policy review mechanism in place that regularly reviews and contextualizes existing and new policies through an IDEAA lens;

   d. MPL should collect disaggregated data of its employees based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, etc. to obtain a clearer picture of its workforce and inform future IDEAA strategy and implementation

# Workplace Culture and Learning

This area will focus on the recommendations regarding MPL's organizational workplace culture and the learning to support this enhancement which represents ten of the plan's recommendations, which are:

1. Develop an internal Learning & Development program and rollout to address core components and foundations of IDEAA including but not limited to addressing unconscious bias and micro aggressions in the workplace and in interactions with patrons/community members.

2. The curriculum should relate to and build upon the organizational IDI assessment baseline results to help advance Intercultural Competence for all employees, managers and senior leaders.

3. Provide a forum for open and frank discussion about equity issues impacting employees, such as regular town halls, coffee chats with Diversity Council, IDEAA Council led activities, and more.

4. Review the current process to address complaints of discrimination by employees through MPL's Employee Experience Department.

5. Review current gaps around accessibility and increase accessibility and accommodation measures/options for employees with neuro, sensory and physical disabilities.

Workplace Culture and Learning

6. Provide access to culturally appropriate, inclusive, and accessible resources to support employees who have experienced trauma due to racism and discrimination in the workplace.

7. Increase employee engagement in IDEAA initiatives by providing opportunities to share experiences, voice opinions, and access regular information and updates about organizational IDEAA strategy, progress and activities.

8. Collect and implement an internal intercultural observances calendar at MPL to honour diverse faith, cultural and human rights-based observances.

9. Provide employees with the information, tools and supports to address issues around race and racism through both formal avenues (policies and reporting) and informal support through community resources.

10. Increase internal resources, support and employee capacity to address challenging behaviour by library users including bullying and behaviour stemming from trauma.
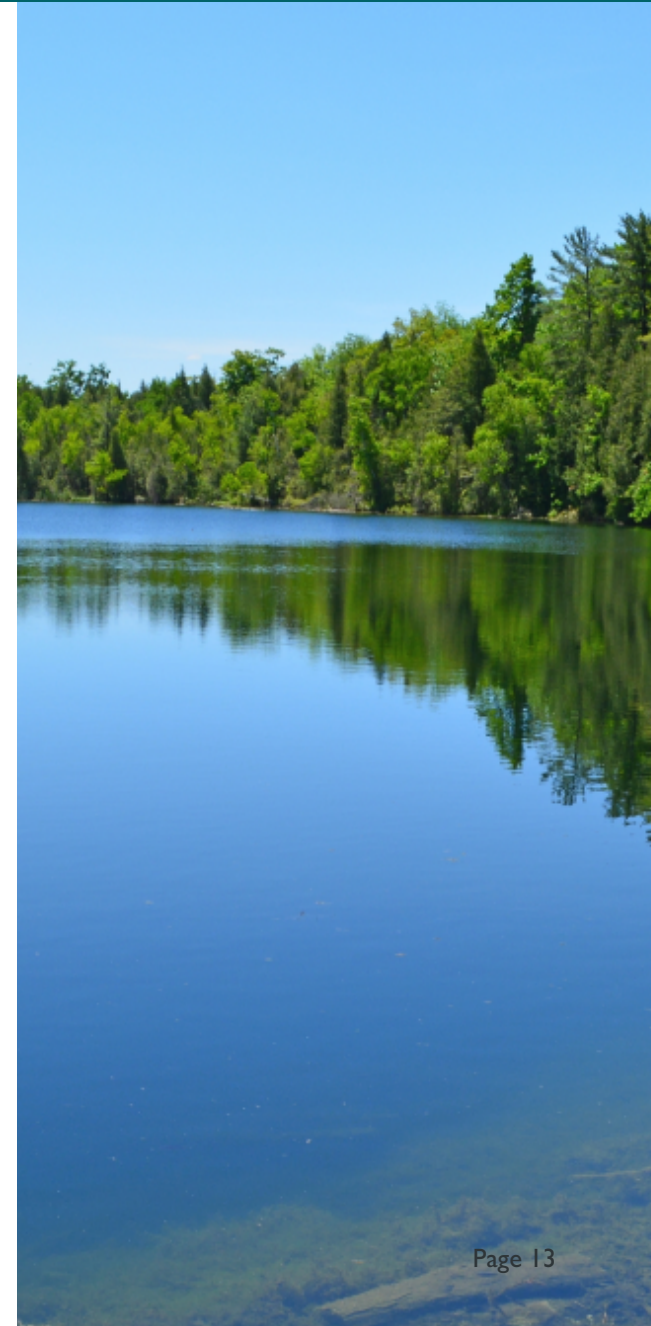
# Programs, Collections, Services and Community

This area will focus on the recommendations regarding MPL's enhancing MPL's commitment to representing the community and our community-led philosophy which represents five of the plan's recommendations, which are:

1. Continue to build upon the positive relationships established within the wider community to continuously improve program/service accessibility and inclusivity. This may include engaging and partnering with local organizations on initiatives to better serve specific under-represented groups, and engage community members as advisors on targeted/inclusive approaches to hiring.

2. Collect disaggregated data of patrons (library users) based on gender, race, ethnicity, race, religion, etc. to understand current access/use trends and identify gaps and opportunities for engagement.

3. Recruit and engage volunteers from under-represented communities and engage diverse volunteer in IDEA initiatives and strategy development.

4. Engage youth groups and youth-serving organizations to ensure service design and delivery are youth-friendly/youth-accessible, including creating youth advisory roles/ opportunities.

5. Explore additional and new ways to disseminate information about library programs and services to individuals with digital access and language barriers, including community centres, direct mail, and collaboration with school boards to send information home with students.

Marketing and Communications

These two recommendations will guide how we communicate to the community our successes and stories regarding our IDEAA journey:

1. Build a distinct brand and communication/ engagement campaign for MPL's IDEAA work to ensure it is positioned as a priority within the organization and is sustainably embedded in the organization's culture.

2. Have consistent and regular communication regarding IDEAA initiatives and progress for both internal and external stakeholders/communities.
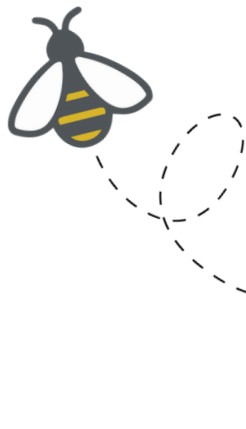
The IDEAA strategy reflects MPL's Leadership Team's vision and commitment to creating an organization that exhibits and responds to the needs of our changing community and provides a workplace where diversity thrives and inspires growth and innovation.

A special thank you to Hamlin Grange and the team at DiversiPro whose knowledge, time and commitment were instrumental in the development of the above strategy and providing us with the tools for success.

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