

Using the Equity Principles to Take Action

Responding to these questions will help build equitable community services. The Equity Principles form a clover, showing their interconnectedness. Addressing one aspect of a principle often positively impacts the others.

CENTER COMMUNITY: When libraries prioritize authentic relationships, they create summer services that reflect community strengths and challenges. It's about ensuring that the voices of people experiencing marginalization are not tokenized and are front and center in all aspects of planning and implementation. Transactions and surface-level collaborations are not enough—we need to go deeper and focus on building transformational relationships.

CENTER COMMUNITY by asking: "How do we..."

Gather, analyze, and use input from community members experiencing marginalization?

Align decisions with community strengths and challenges?

Avoid making assumptions by identifying datasets that minimize bias and identify inequities?

Ensure voices of marginalized community members are heard and included in decisions?

Identify community members who can help to connect with those experiencing marginalization?

Shift from one-time interactions to building ongoing relationships with marginalized community members?

Leverage community relationships in the design and implementation of summer services?

Identify and break down external community barriers that impact the design and implementation of equitable summer services?

REFLECT CONTINUOUSLY: When library staff make reflection a regular habit, they're better equipped to be responsive to what communities need. Library staff that regularly take time to reflect are ready to spot opportunities for improvement. By taking a step back and reflecting on current equity practices, staff can stay on top of what's equitable and what's not. They can see where changes are needed so as to better serve local communities equitably.

REFLECT CONTINUOUSLY by asking: "How do we..."

Ensure ongoing reflection, learning and iteration is valued and part of library culture?

Spend time reflecting on personal lived experiences and how they impact work within the library and with communities experiencing marginalization?

Take time to reflect on summer services and determine what changes should be made and by whom?

Use what's learned from reflection to create equitable summer service practices?

Continuously ask if library services are addressing the needs and strengths of those experiencing marginalization?

Talk with others about what we are learning through reflection?

Rethink summer service traditions to better serve marginalized community members?

Review, analyze, and integrate data to ensure summer services and practices are equitable?

Center Community

Reflect Continuously

Rethink Internal Systems

Foster a Culture of Learning

RETHINK INTERNAL SYSTEMS:

When libraries reimagine systems they empower staff to make a difference in local communities. It's not about the library — it's about putting the community's strengths and challenges front and center. System change requires rethinking job descriptions and staffing models so staff can foster relationships outside of the building. By prioritizing hiring locally, staff who are already part of the community are empowered to bring their knowledge, connections, and understanding to the work. Rethinking systems requires less of a focus on traditional metrics (how many people come through the doors, or circulation numbers) and instead focuses on outcomes and asking, "Are we making a difference in our community?"

RETHINK INTERNAL SYSTEMS by asking: "How do we..."

Ensure job descriptions and staffing models support equitable summer services to provide staff with opportunities to foster relationships outside of the building?

Design recruitment and hiring practices that focus on hiring community members experiencing marginalization?

Identify and break down internal barriers in summer service planning and design by including input from all staff levels and departments?

Recognize personal and institutional biases?

Define the why for summer services to ensure it aligns with the needs and aspirations of community members experiencing marginalization?

Communicate the why for summer services to colleagues, leaders, decision-makers, community members, and vested partners?

Show commitment to achieving the why with those experiencing marginalization?

Promote the idea of rethinking summer services as a way to build equitable practices, both in the library and in the community?

FOSTER A CULTURE OF LEARNING:

Libraries focused on equitable summers create an organizational culture where staff have the capacity to learn and implement new things. This requires risk-taking, agility, and flexibility. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and openness to change, library staff are not bound by tradition, and can create summer services that make a difference for local communities.

FOSTER A CULTURE OF LEARNING by asking: "How do we..."

Learn about, implement, and sustain equitable practices?

Investigate equitable practices in other settings to help make local improvements?

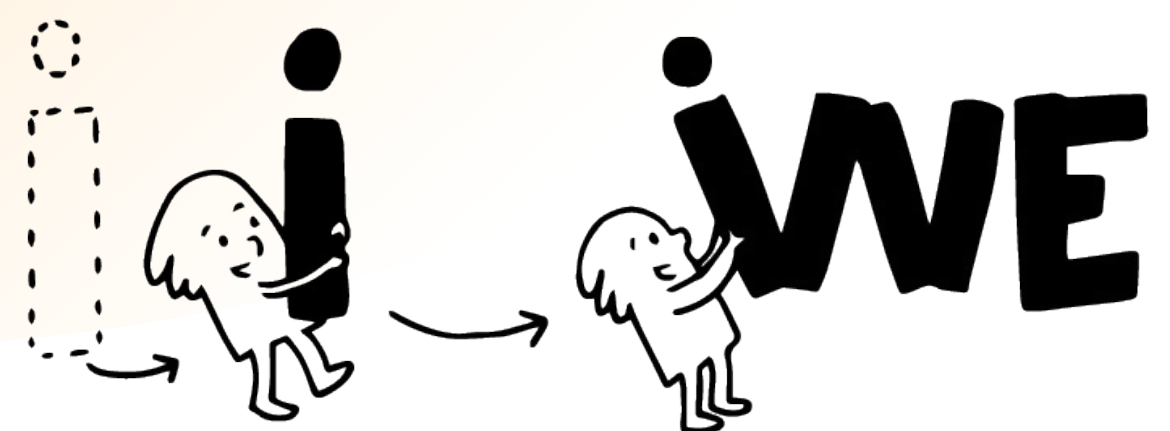
Help colleagues and partners understand the design and implementation of equitable summer services?

Integrate flexibility as we build equitable practices?

Take risks and try new things?

Build staffing that reflects different backgrounds and racialized identities?

Learn to support diverse backgrounds and racialized identities?



Building Equity-Based Summers is a program of the California Library Association, supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.