SUBJECT: **EMPLOYMENT – INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

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PURPOSE

The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library ("The Library") is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of accessibility, inclusion, diversity, equity, and belonging. The Library strives to create a welcoming environment to all, and this policy provides a framework within which to implement and measure the success of these commitments.

- Embed Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) into all aspects of library governance, operations, service design, and community engagement
- Identify, remove, and prevent barriers that limit participation or access
- Ensure equitable access to programs, services, collections, spaces, and employment
- Foster a culture of belonging, dignity, and respect for all people
- Provide a consistent framework to guide organizational decision-making and accountability
- Support compliance with applicable human rights and accessibility legislation

POLICY

General

The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is equitable, inclusive, accessible, and respectful, and that upholds the dignity and human rights of all individuals. The principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) are central to promoting and practicing intellectual freedom and to creating a community of belonging.

The Library is committed to supporting the dignity of all community members, customers, employees, volunteers, and partners regardless of heritage, ability, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, and other protected or personally significant characteristics.

Cultural humility is a key guiding principle of this policy. The Library acknowledges that learning about equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging is an ongoing process that requires self-reflection, awareness of power dynamics, and a commitment to listening, learning, and adapting organizational practices.

We are committed to continuous improvement towards a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace. The Library affirms that IDEA principles are essential to fulfilling its public mandate to provide welcoming, barrier-free access to information, resources, and opportunities for lifelong learning.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees, prospective employees, volunteers, Board members, contractors, and any other individuals performing work for the Library; to Library customers; and to all Library facilities including Library-hosted online spaces.

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility is the design of products and environments for people with disabilities. It creates an equitable environment for all persons.

Accommodation is an individualized process designed to improve equality and eliminate disadvantages experienced by individuals or groups related to a prohibited ground, to the point of undue hardship. Accommodation includes appropriate steps designed to meet the needs of individuals and groups protected by the Human Rights Code. Accommodation is determined in consultation with the person requesting the accommodation

Barrier is anything that prevents a person from fully taking part in all aspects of society, including physical, architectural, information or communications, attitudinal, economic, and technological barriers, as well as policies or practices.

Cultural Humility is a practice of self-reflection to understand personal, institutional, and systemic biases, including the impact of power dynamics. It involves recognizing how history, privilege, and marginalization shape experiences, and committing to respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience.

Workplaces are facilities where employees perform work for the Library, including but not limited to library branches, outdoor spaces adjacent to branches, virtual spaces, outreach in the community, alternative work locations as approved in the Flexible Work Arrangement Policy.

COMMITMENT

The Library recognizes that advancing inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility is a shared responsibility that requires ongoing commitment at all levels of the organization. These commitments guide how the Library integrates IDEA into its workplace culture, service delivery, and organizational practices and reflect an ongoing process of identification, learning, and improvement.

Barrier Identification and Removal

- Proactively identify physical, digital, communication, attitudinal, and systemic barriers
- Remove barriers where they exist and prevent new ones from being created

Equitable Service Delivery

- Apply an equity lens to program planning, service delivery, and resource allocation
- Ensure services reflect the needs and experiences of diverse communities

Accessible Design and Accommodation

- Integrate accessibility into the design of spaces, services, and technologies
- Provide reasonable accommodations in a timely and respectful manner

Inclusive Workforce Practices

- Promote fairness and equity across recruitment, retention, professional development, and leadership opportunities
- Support ongoing learning related to IDEA and cultural humility

Community Engagement and Accountability

- Engage with communities in respectful, transparent, and meaningful ways
- Use feedback to inform continuous improvement
- Monitor progress and report on IDEA commitments as appropriate

ACCOUNTABILITY

All employees have a mutual interest and shared responsibility to secure and maintain a workplace environment that is fair and equitable.

- The Library Board commits to championing IDEA principles through governance, policy direction, and oversight.
- Library leadership commits to integrating IDEA into strategic planning, decision-making, and resource allocation.

- Staff and volunteers are expected to uphold the values of inclusion, respect, accessibility, and cultural humility in their interactions and work.
- Actions or behaviours that are inconsistent with this policy shall be reviewed and addressed in accordance with the Library's Respectful Workplace Policy, Code of Conduct Policy and applicable corrective action processes.

The Library understands IDEA as an ongoing practice requiring reflection, learning, community engagement, and continuous improvement.

This policy serves as a framework to support the Library in working alongside its communities to identify, understand, and address barriers to access, participation, and belonging.

Through community engagement, feedback, and reflective practice, the Library will use this policy to recognize instances of exclusion, bias, or discrimination and to inform responsive, equitable, and accessible approaches to service design and delivery.

ADMINISTRATION

The Innisfil Public Library Board endorses the Position Statement on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA), included as Appendix A to this policy. The Position Statement reflects the Board's values and public commitments and informs the interpretation and application of this policy.

In the event of any inconsistency, this policy and applicable legislation shall prevail.

This policy operates in conjunction with the Library's Respectful Workplace Policy and other related policies, and prohibits discrimination in employment, service delivery, and access to facilities in accordance with human rights and accessibility legislation.

The Innisfil Public Library Board and Innisfil ideaLAB & Library further endorse the following sector recognized statements and frameworks, which inform the Library's IDEA approach:

- Canadian Federation of Library Association's (CFLA) Position Statement on Diversity and Inclusion **(Appendix B)**
- Canadian Urban Libraries Council Statement on Race and Social Equity **(Appendix C)**
- CFLA Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom **(Appendix D)**

In support of the dignity and rights of all individuals, the Library complies with and is guided by the following legislation and declarations:

- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Canadian Human Rights Act
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Employment Equity Act
- United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights

EXCEPTIONS
There are no exceptions to this policy.

RELATED POLICIES
Staff Code of Conduct
Respectful Workplace, Harassment, and Violence Prevention
Vision, Mission Statement, Values and Commitment to Service
Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, June 22, 2026
Motion Number: 2026.37

Supersedes Policy #E-2022.17, approved May 16, 2022, Motion #2022.43

Appendix A

Innisfil ideaLAB & Library Position Statement on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Accessibility

The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Libraries have a responsibility to create an environment and contribute to a culture that respects people's dignity, ideas and beliefs and in which individuals can participate, maximize their contributions, and achieve their full potential. Our Library aims to demonstrate support for the dignity of all community members, customers, employees, volunteers, and partners regardless of heritage, ability, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, and other characteristics that make individuals unique.

We believe that respectful dialogue builds understanding and stronger communities. We strive to encourage mutual respect, inclusion, and celebration of differences by embracing *cultural humility* as a key foundation to our approach. Cultural humility is a practice of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust.
We understand too that the acceptance of differences can place individual and collective values in conflict with one another. We encourage the community to recognize, respect, and embrace each individual's diversity. We believe that by working together we can move from simply acknowledging diversity and inclusion to enabling an environment that is supportive, accessible, and equitable in its practices.
Innisfil ideaLAB & Library will make diversity and inclusion a priority in planning and decision making for staffing, collections, programs, services and organizational change.

Appendix B
CFLA Position Statement on Diversity & Inclusion

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) believes that a diverse and pluralistic society is central to our country's identity. Libraries have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that recognizes diversity and fosters social inclusion. Libraries strive to deliver inclusive service. Canada's libraries recognize and energetically affirm the dignity of those they serve, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, or income.

Libraries understand that an acceptance of differences can place individual and collective values in conflict. Libraries are committed to tolerance and understanding. Libraries act to ensure that people can enjoy services free from any attempt by others to impose values, customs or beliefs.

Appendix C

Canadian Urban Libraries Council Statement on Race and Social Equity

As leaders of North America's public libraries, we are committed to achieving racial and social equity by contributing to a more just society in which all community members can realize their full potential. Our libraries can help achieve true and sustained equity through an intentional, systemic and transformative library-community partnership. Our library systems are working to achieve equity in the communities we serve by:

- Eliminating racial and social equity barriers in library programs, services, policies and practices;
- Creating and maintaining an environment of diversity, inclusion and respect both in our library systems and in all aspects of our community role;
- Ensuring that we are reaching and engaging disenfranchised people in the community and helping them express their voice;
- Serving as a convener and facilitator of conversations and partnerships to address community challenges;
- Being forthright on tough issues that are important to our communities.

Libraries are trusted, venerable and enduring institutions, central to their communities and an essential participant in the movement for racial and social equity.